

1 Samuel 26-27 • The Danger of Weariness

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1 Samuel chapter 26. And while you turn there, the chapters that we're going to be covering here tonight are going to cover some of this incredible ability that we have as human beings to be right on the mark one minute, and then just completely blow it the next.

I mean, to be really on course as it relates to understanding God, and knowing how best we are to serve Him, and walk with Him, and relate to Him. And then just to completely throw it all away, and just like be complete idiots about who God is, and what He's going to do. And we just toss out His promises, and we give up hope, and we become discouraged, and we let our circumstances wear us down.

Have you ever been weary? That's a stupid question. Of course you have. And when we're weary, we're at our, probably our, the height of danger as it relates to the tendency that we all have as human beings to become distressed, and despondent, and disappointed with the things of God.

If you're weary tonight, and what I mean by that, if you're just weary of fighting. And the battle has been just wearisome to you, I hope and pray that tonight's study in the Word will be an encouragement to you in some way to find those things in life that are going to encourage you. And build you up and strengthen you in the midst of the difficulties that many of you are facing.

And the potential of those things to weary you to the point of hopelessness. And that is a very real possibility. That can happen if we're not careful. If we're not careful, we can become wearied to the place of hopelessness.

And here we go. 1 Samuel 26. Father God, open our hearts to the ministry of Your Word. We thank You, praise You, worship You. Speak to us we pray now, Father in Jesus name, amen.

Verse number 1 of Samuel, 1 Samuel 26 says, *“Then the Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah, saying, “Is not David hiding himself on the hill of Hachilah, which is on the east of Jeshimon?””* (ESV) Stop there.

If this sounds a lot like something we read before, you're absolutely right. This is the second time now that the Ziphites have ratted on David. Here they are, the descendants of Caleb. They're part of David's own tribe of Judah. And here they are, siding again with Saul. And because David is hiding in the desert of Ziph, and that's why these people are called Ziphites, they just live in the region of the desert of Ziph, that, they're aware of his movings and places where he's staying from time to time.

So they're sending intelligence back to king Saul, who has promised by the way, that he's not going to bother David anymore. Yeah, right, so much for that. And here we go again, here we go again with the... And how do that can be just tremendously discouraging.

By this time, by this time—again, as we talked last week, David has been running from Saul for a period of right around 10 years. He's at the end of it. But listen to me, he doesn't know that. Okay. As far as he knows, that could go on for another 20 years. We don't know. Saul is probably about 60 years old at this time, maybe older. This has already been going on for about 10 years and David has to be weary. You can only camp out in caves for a little while before it gets really old.

And he's coming to the end of his ability to handle this sort of a situation. And to have people who you've done nothing to, people who you have never once lifted your finger against, and they hate you for some reason. And you think, what is this about? What is this all about? Why are these people trying to get me? I haven't done anything to hurt them.

How easy it is, don't you know, to become very discouraged and bitter against these people. And pretty soon, you find out that this bitterness is just well, overwhelming you, and you're just. Pretty soon you're just getting mad and then what use are you to God? Because you're mad at people. You're mad at the world. Yeah, people, people are jerks. And you just let it just absolutely, this is where you live. Boy, that can be really hard.

Doesn't say that David is responding necessarily that way to the Ziphites, but boy, that's the temptation that... I mean, far and away, isn't that something that you and I deal with on a fairly regular basis? When people are just against us for no reason.

It says in verse 2 that, in response to this intelligence that the Ziphites gave him, *"...Saul arose and went down to the wilderness of Ziph with three thousand chosen men of Israel to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph."*³ And Saul

encamped on the hill of Hachilah, which is beside the road on the east of Jeshimon. But David remained in the wilderness. When he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness, ⁴David sent out spies and learned that Saul had indeed come."

Remember that David is now a tough person to hide anymore because he's traveling with 600 men. Well, and there's women and children now. These men have now slowly brought their families along. We know there's 600 men. How many women and children is anybody's guess. We know that here in the next chapter, they're going to be enough to fill a town.

That's a very, very difficult group of folks to hide for very long. David used to be able to go out into the wilderness and be pretty much, unreachable. Probably very little cell service out there in the wilderness. And it's just, but now he's this entire company of people and he can't keep his location a secret for very long.

And it tells us here that David sent out some of his own reconnaissance and they came back and they said, yeah, he's coming. He's here. He's got 3,000 men. Well, 3,000 men is more than 600, and that's pretty simple math. I didn't do that well in math, but I know that one.

So it says in verse 5, *"Then David rose and came to the place where Saul had encamped. And David saw the place where Saul lay, with Abner the son of Ner, the commander of his army. Saul was lying within the encampment, while the army was encamped around him."*

It seems like a smart plan. If you're going to go out with your king, you literally at night put the king in the middle of the whole encampment and you're all at your whole army. Three thousand men are encamped around him to create this wall of protection, for the king. But David is obviously going out at night because this is the time when they're bedding down for the night and they're going to sleep and so forth. And that's the time when David chooses to go and see Saul's army.

And it says in verse 6, *"Then David said to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Joab's brother Abishai the son of Zeruiah, "Who will go down with me into the camp to Saul?" And Abishai said, "I will go down with you.""*

These sons of Uriah, they were brave to the point of being stupid. I mean, you know that there's a fine line, don't you, between bravery and stupidity. I mean, we used to call it bravery when we jumped off the garage roof as kids, but later on learned that it was stupidity. We just thought it was bravery.

But these guys are just like, I'll go, and these are warriors. And to go down into an encampment, you got to know that there's 3,000 guys, somebody's got to be a light sleeper, some... And you try to walk in as stealthily as possible. Somebody's bound to hear you. And as soon as they do, all he has to do is wake up and give the word, and these other warriors, spring up and pretty—and you're caught, right?

So you're going down there with David and the odds are not good. Two against three thousand. And the guys who are watching from the bluff probably nearby, they can't get to you in time to save you. But Abishai is like I'll go, which makes you wonder a little bit about the guy. But he's brave.

“⁷ So David and Abishai went to the army by night. And there lay Saul sleeping within the encampment, with his spear stuck in the ground at his head, and Abner and the army lay around him. ⁸ Then Abishai said to David, (all right, and there he's even talking to him, then Abishai says to him) “God has given your enemy into your hand this day. Now please let me pin him to the earth with one stroke of the spear, and I will not strike him twice.””

Abishai, first of all, offers to do the dirty deed and that's got to be a little bit compelling. But the second thing Abishai says is, this is God. This is the second time now that this has happened where God has given Saul into a place where David could take advantage of it, and kill him, and be done with it.

No more running. No more living in caves. I can go back to my house. I can live a life that has some level of normal to it. All you got to do, David, is let me take my spear and just thrust him through once. I won't even have to do it twice, and it's all over. That has to be tempting. I don't care who you are.

That has to be tempting. And if you don't think so, then maybe you need to take 10 years out in the wilderness, running for your life, and see how you feel then when an opportunity presents itself to be done. And to go home. And to have this thing finished.

“But David said to Abishai, (verse 9) “Do not destroy him, for who can put out his hand against the LORD's anointed and be guiltless?” ¹⁰ And David said, “As the LORD lives, the LORD will strike him, or his day will come to die, or he will go down into battle and perish. ¹¹ The LORD forbid that I should put out my hand against the LORD's anointed. But take now the spear that is at his head and the jar of water, and let us go.””

And again, we read this and we respond the same way that we did before when David called Saul, the Lord's anointed. And we're thinking, David, are you still doing that? Doesn't that seem a little naive to you to call this man, the Lord's anointed, when he's such an animal. I mean, his cruelty knows no bounds. He's insane. He just, he's on this... He's filled with jealousy and you keep calling him the Lord's anointed.

What's interesting about this, and I don't know that David saw it this way at all, but when you and I look at this situation, I have to say that, if anything, Saul was still the Lord's anointed from the standpoint that he was anointed by God to do something for David, and that is prepare him for the kingship.

And sometimes we don't think about that, but these 10 years in the wilderness did a huge work toward preparing David to be the king. And one of the things that God wanted to clean out of David's system was that heart of revenge that just says, I'm getting you back. I'm going to get you back for what you did against me. You'll remember last week, he came very close to giving into that very, very damaging emotion.

God is using Saul to prepare David for the work that He has for David to do. Have you ever thought about the people that are closest to you that maybe push your buttons the most as being placed there by the Lord to bring preparation in your life, that you might be more in the image of Christ?

It's funny how, sometimes when that happens, we just want to get away from the people that really cause us trouble. We just, we don't want anything to do with it. It's like—and we'll pray and we'll even blame it on Satan. Boy, Satan's really stirring up my wife. I mean, she just has a bee in her bonnet. Or my boss, or my parents, or my this, or my that. We often don't take time to think about the fact that this was God's purpose and plan to bring about an individual into our lives that we might be changed. That we might be purified. That the rough edges in our lives might be knocked off.

Listen if somebody is going to bug you, it's probably going to be the person who's living the closest to you. Don't you suppose? One of the things about marriage is that you get to see the other person in all their glory and yet all their warts and wrinkles. And I mean everything. You see them at their best and you see them at their absolute worst. That's just no way. There's two ways about it. Every one of us who are married, we have enough dirt on our spouse to put them in prison forever. But we don't. Well, Sue has enough dirt on me, okay. We'll just leave it at that.

But if somebody is going to bug you, it's probably going to be somebody who is with you the most. And yet sometimes when that happens, when that irritation begins, we just want to be away. We want to get rid of it. Get this thing away from me.

How often have we stopped and thought to ourselves, maybe the Lord brought that person into my life. Maybe they are anointed for a day such as this, to knock the rough corners off my life. That I might be reformed in my life into the very image of Jesus Christ. That I might learn to be patient, and loving, and kind, and forgiving, and tender hearted, when I don't want to be. But yet this person...

Have you ever noticed that the person, sometimes, you... It's funny, marriage is very interesting, isn't it? I, this is, I don't want to get all lost on this, but you find out when you get married, that every one of us would totally flunk one of those computer things that would put us together. Whatever the computer dating services do to match people up according to their likes, dislikes, or whatever. We all look at those things and we go, you know what?

We never would have been put together in a billion years because Sue and I, the longer we live together, we've been married now 36 and a half years. We like everything the opposite. I mean, whatever she likes, I don't, whatever I like, she doesn't. I mean, there's a few things that we get along okay on, and I, don't get me wrong. I adore the woman and I think she likes me. We are so opposite. It's gotten funny. It's actually gotten humorous.

Now in our younger years, we probably fought over those things that we differed on. It's like, no, we're not going to do it that way, we're going to do it this way, or whatever. Now we just laugh. She'll say, well, I really like it this way. I go, well, that's funny. I like it the other way. And it's just, and we just look at each other and go, sure. Of course, that's the way we feel because we are completely opposite people.

But if you don't just, if you don't just look at that situation and say, you know what? You are a marvelous, wonderful opportunity for me to learn how to love you in a way that God wants me to love you. If it were just as easy as pie, and everything that we liked was perfectly the same, where would the challenge be? But God is working in our lives, even through the people that he puts us with. Maybe that boss who makes your life miserable or whatever situation might be going on in your life.

Saul was very much that for David. He was still the Lord's anointed, at least as it related to the situation that God was using him to do that work in David's life that could only be done by Saul hunting him down for about 10 years.

David says to Abishai, no, don't kill him, *“But (here, do this) take now the spear that is at his head and the jar of water, and let us go.”* So David took the spear and the jar of water (verse 12) from Saul's head, and they went away. No man saw it or knew it, nor did any awake, (that is crazy, of 3,000 guys, look at this though, it explains) *for they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from the LORD had fallen upon them.*” Stop there for just one second. Let me just comment on this, just for a second.

A deep sleep had come upon Saul and his entire army, so that they didn't wake up while David and Abishai were there, and had this little conversation. And you might say, well, that's interesting. That seems a little bit unfair that God did that because, it's like Saul didn't really have an opportunity.

Well, first of all, you got to understand Saul's in the wrong. But second of all, what's interesting about this idea that God put his whole army into a deep sleep is that this was further temptation for David.

This was an opportunity for David to realize, you know what, these guys aren't waking up. I think there's something special going on here. I think the Lord is just really keeping the— we could do our dirty deed and we could get away and no one would ever know it was us. I mean, it just further gives David of an open door to respond the way he wants to respond rather than the way he knows the Lord would have him to respond. But still, David refuses to do that. I think that's interesting.

It goes on and says in verse 13, *“Then David went over to the other side and stood far off on the top of the hill, with a great space between them.”*¹⁴ And David called to the army, and to Abner (who of course is the commander of Saul's army) *the son of Ner, saying, “Will you not answer, Abner?”* Then Abner answered, *“Who are you who calls to the king?”*

¹⁵ *And David said to Abner, “Are you not a man? Who is like you in Israel? Why then have you not kept watch over your lord the king? For one of the people came in to destroy the king your lord.”*¹⁶ *This thing that you have done is not good. As the LORD lives, you deserve to die, because you have not kept watch over your lord, the LORD's anointed. And now see where the king's spear is and the jar of water that was at his head.”*

David is almost gently taunting Abner by saying, hey, you've fallen down on the job here, bud. And truly that was his responsibility as the commander of the army. He is there to protect Saul at all costs. And David is saying, hey, you fell down, buddy. You really dropped the ball on this one. Did you, do you happen to see Saul's spear or that jug of water anywhere near him right now? And this does not look good.

And by the way, he could actually be put to death for this if Saul wanted to. And frankly, if Saul had been killed and Abner spared, Abner could have, would have probably, definitely been put to death by somebody for allowing that to happen for the king, to the king, rather.

“Saul recognized David's voice (verse 17) and said, “Is this your voice, my son David?” And David said, “It is my voice, my lord, O king.”¹⁸ And he said, “Why does my lord pursue after his servant? For what have I done? What evil is on my hands?¹⁹ Now therefore let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If it is the LORD who has stirred you up against me, may he accept an offering, but if it is men, may they be cursed before the LORD, for they have driven me out this day that I should have no share in the heritage of the LORD, saying, ‘Go, serve other gods.’” What is David saying right there? Kind of an interesting statement.

First of all, he says, if this is God who has brought you out against me, in other words, if God holds something over me, and He's using you as the instrument of discipline or judgment in my life, then may God accept an offering on my behalf. In other words, may God forgive me, if I've done something to deserve you doing this. But if it is not the Lord, Saul who is bringing you out against me, and it is in fact the influence of evil men, may they be cursed. And he knows, David knows that is partially what is going on here too.

And notice what he says here, because they've driven me away from the presence of the Lord, right? He's saying they've driven me away from my share in the in the heritage that I have through God. And what they're essentially doing is they are forcing me to go live away from the land of promise that was given to our fathers by God. Promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And what you see what they're doing is they're driving me away from God's intention for where I should live that I might be living among pagans instead, and be tempted to live that pagan lifestyle. And that's what he means by serve, going and serving other gods. He's not saying he would, but he's saying that's essentially what's going on by you guys hounding me constantly.

Verse 20. *“Now therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth away from the presence of the LORD, for the king of Israel has come out to seek a single flea like one who hunts a partridge in the mountains.”*

²¹ *Then Saul said, “I have sinned. Return, my son David, for I will no more do you harm, because my life was precious in your eyes this day. Behold, I have acted foolishly, and have made a great mistake.”*”

These are great words. I mean, I like his words from the standpoint that Saul is seeing things properly. But what's interesting about Saul, and maybe, these kinds of people is that he seems to respond to whoever is influencing him at the moment. When other men are speaking into his ear, David, David, David, he's doing this. And that he gets all, I'm going to kill him.

And then when David speaks to him and twice now saves his life. Spares his life, I should say. Immediately Saul is like, you're right. I'm wrong. You're more righteous than I am. I've done this. This was a terrible thing to do. And notice he even says to David this time, come back with me. Come back. David's not going to do that. We talked about that before. We won't belabor it tonight. He knows that Saul still has no moral anchor with which to hold on to these things.

Do you understand? Do you guys understand? When morality is based on who happens to be yipping in your ear at the moment. And this happens in people's lives. Somebody comes along and they go, well I don't think quack, quack, quack, quack, and they talk in your ear. And pretty soon that influence begins to overtake your sense of what you think is right. And it's like pretty soon they get y'all riled up and it's like, yeah. Yeah!

Well, then somebody else comes along and they might speak something from the other perspective, well... And because there isn't a moral anchor to the life of an individual, they can be swayed, can't they? And they can just go back and forth, and pretty soon they're against this thing, and then they're for this thing. And then they're back against this thing, and then...

And they're changing their thoughts and ideas based on just who made the best argument related to influencing them about that situation, rather than having, a standard of moral base that establishes you and anchors you to the understanding of, well, this is what's right and here's why, right? Here's why,

Rather than being this leaf blown in the wind, or this thing that's just tossed on the waves, morally speaking. There's a sense of rightness that says, no, this is never right. No matter what the circumstance may be. We have a moral anchor

in our understanding of what God has revealed in the Bible through His Word. And that's why we feel the way we feel about various things.

That's why we understand what we understand about adultery or murder. Or fornication, or theft, or deceit, or whatever the situation might be. It is predicated upon the moral anchor that we have through the essence of God's Word. And we don't vacillate on those things.

We, we believe what we do because it is founded upon the eternal principles of God's Word and the truth that He's laid down in the Scriptures. So when people speak to us about things, we have the ability to discern and say, you know what, that's hogwash. I mean, that's ridiculous. Your argument is based in some kind of moral relativity and whatever all else. And it's just all this gobbledygook out here. But I believe what I believe because God's Word has laid this thing out clearly for me. And I understand the essence of what is going on here. Very, very important.

But again, in Saul, we just see this total vacillation, this waffling back and forth. Oh, David, you're right, what I've done is evil and so forth. And I've acted foolishly. It was a great mistake.

Verse 22 says, *“And David answered and said, ‘Here is the spear, O king! Let one of the young men come over and take it.’²³ The LORD rewards every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness, for the LORD gave you into my hand today, and I would not put out my hand against the LORD's anointed.²⁴ Behold, as your life was precious this day in my sight, so may my life be precious in the sight of the LORD, and may he deliver me out of all tribulation.”*

You know what I love about that little speech right there? He doesn't say to Saul, because your life was precious in my sight, may my life be precious in your sight. He doesn't say that. He doesn't say, because I spared you this day, may you spare me tomorrow. He doesn't say that.

He says, because your life was precious in my sight, now may my life be precious in the Lord's sight, and may he deliver me from all these tribulations. You see, he is responding appropriately toward other people, but if other people don't respond appropriately toward him, that's not going to, that's not going to rattle him. That's not going to shake him as it relates to trusting in God or the way he feels about human beings. He's going to do this and he's going to, he's going to do what he's going to do because it's right. And then he's going to trust in the Lord to take care of him. Boy, there's something pretty cool about that.

“²⁵ Then Saul said to David, “Blessed be you, my son David! You will do many things and will succeed in them.” So David went his way, and Saul returned to his place.”

Again, David did not go along with Saul. He knew better. He knew that Saul had not given his heart to the Lord in any way so there was no anchor of morality. There was nothing to keep him right where he was that moment.

Chapter 27 begins, and it's a really a pretty short chapter, but it begins with a, just a complete switch over in attitude. Now David has been so strong in this chapter, and we love reading about this. But here's where the Bible gets real.

And it begins by saying, *“Then David said in his heart, (and that's a very important statement, let's see what he said) “Now I shall perish one day by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than that I should escape to the land of the Philistines. Then Saul will despair of seeking me any longer within the borders of Israel, and I shall escape out of his hand.””* Stop there.

This remark seems so out of place to what we just looked at in the previous chapter. David was confident, even though God provided him with an opportunity to end Saul's life, he refused to do it, knowing in his heart what was proper and right. And he said, listen, God is going to take care of Saul. That's what he said to Abishai, remember, when Abishai offered to kill him? No he'll die some other way. And I'm not going to be the one to do it.

And now, look at the difference in what is going on. And I really believe that this is what can happen when weariness sets in. We talked about weariness here at the very beginning.

And I think David is that— because we know he's at the very end. In fact, he's about a year from the very end. And that may sound like still a long time, but he's been doing this for a long time, and he's tired. And when you get weary, you get to the point where you just can't, you just don't think right anymore.

Can I just tell you that when you're weary, when you're discouraged, when you're fighting discouragement, that is the worst time to make long-term decisions in your life or for your life or for your family. The absolute worst time. Don't make big decisions when you are weary and when you are disappointed and when you are on the verge of just throwing your hands up in despair. Don't do that. Just be very, very cautious, and stop yourself.

Say, you know what? This isn't the time to make that a decision. You want to be thinking clearly. You want to have an open heart and open mind. You want to be able to pray. You want to be led by the Lord, but this is what's going on. David didn't pray about this situation. He didn't come to the Lord. He didn't inquire the Lord, is Saul going to get me one of these days?

He just, you know how this chapter starts off by saying, "*David said in his heart...*" In other words, he's having a conversation with himself. Have you ever noticed you're a lousy counselor to yourself? Have you ever noticed that? You can even be known as a good counselor for other people and be the worst counselor for yourself? I have discovered that to be absolutely true. I am my worst counselor. I've rarely, if ever counsel myself properly or truly.

And the conversations that go on in my heart are usually the worst. And this is what's happening with David. He says in his heart, you know what? And here's what he's basically saying. I'll just put it in our the way you and I might say it today. You know what? It's just a matter of time before I'm dead. It's just a matter of time before Saul gets me.

I've been running for 10 years, but you know what? The odds are against me. You can't run forever. Things have gone my way, I guess you could say, up to this point, but how long. How long can I keep this up and not get caught by this man? And so he, what does he say? He says, there's only one thing I can do. There's only one place where I can go where he won't come after me. And that is to go live among the Philistines.

Did you notice in the last chapter, that was the very thing he said other people were trying to get him to do by constantly speaking bad things in Saul's ear. He says, they're trying to drive me away from my heritage. And saying, go serve other gods, meaning, go live in the land that is overseen by these pagan gods. You can, leave the land of the inheritance of your fathers, which is the land given to Israel by, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. You can tell why he said that in the previous chapter. It was something he was afraid of. And now his worst fears are realized.

But here's the interesting thing. He's making the decision himself to go do it. God hasn't made this decision. No one came up to him and said, well, here's what I think. He did it to himself. Isn't that interesting?

Have you guys noticed that sometimes we're our worst enemies? We'll sit and talk about Satan like he's all that. And, to be sure, the enemy is not to be trifled with, but you know what? I think you're worse sometimes. Honestly, the things

you say to yourself, the way you treat yourself, the counsel you give yourself, and the negativity that you allow to breed and to be nurtured in your mind. The thoughts that you play with. You're your worst enemy half the time.

And have you ever noticed the buildup of anxiety in your life when you're dreading something that's coming up? David is obviously at the point of dreading one day that he's going to get caught by Saul. And what happens when you begin to dread something? You start playing out a potential scenario in your mind, don't you? It's going to go like this, then he's going to come in and attack.

And isn't it funny? We never sit and play out a scenario that's all positive on our behalf. We always play out the worst possible scenario where when the thing is all over, we're dead. Right? I mean, whatever it might be. You got to go have surgery. What is it that goes through your mind? I'm going to die. In fact, I'll probably die on the table. I can see it now. They're having to resuscitate me on the table.

And it's just, we just do this. We think of the worst possible thing and then we stay there. And we just grind it on in our hearts and it just becomes this... And pretty soon we're a basket case and we're walking around, and just being weird. And it just, it breeds. It breeds despair, and despair breeds hopelessness. We become hopeless.

Pretty soon we're just like, you know what? This thing is just, there's just, there's no way. There's no way in the world this is ever going to get better, and that's where David is at right now. This thing isn't going to get better. The only thing I can do is go live with the pagans. This is not God's direction for David, but God is going to let him do it. Because sometimes, you know what? Sometimes God lets us make our own decisions, doesn't He? He lets us make our mistakes.

But one thing David is also going to learn is that, you can't go live among the Philistines or if you do go live among the Philistines, don't be surprised if you start acting like a Philistine. And when you warm yourself by the enemy's fire, pretty soon you find yourself in all kinds of compromising situations. Reminds me of Peter.

Peter wanted to follow Jesus the night He was arrested, but he was afraid. So what did he do? He followed at a distance. That describes a huge amount of people who come to church on a regular basis. They're followers of Jesus, but from a distance, and then what did Peter do? It says he was sitting in the outer courtyard of the high priest, and it was cold, and so he sat there warming himself by the fire.

Now he's warming, so not only following at a distance, now he's warming himself at the enemy's fire, and then what happens after that? Some girl comes along to him and goes, you're one of His followers, aren't you? No. Trying to just get warm. Leave me alone. Happens again. No, you're one of His, I know, because I can tell it by your voice. You're a Galilean. I'm not, okay?

Pretty soon he's calling down curses and obscenities and saying, I don't know the Man! And it comes to the place of just utter denial. But sometimes that's what happens when you follow from a distance and warm yourself at the enemy's fire. Again, compromise ensues.

So here's David who has made the decision out of pure weariness and people I understand weariness. I know you understand weariness. We're not judging David. We're not criticizing David. But we are pointing out that this is a very dangerous place for him to be.

Verse 2 goes on and says, *“So David arose and went over, he and the six hundred men who were with him, to Achish the son of Maach, king of Gath.”*

Again, David's idea, David's plan, let's see what happens in the short term. *“³ And David lived with Achish at Gath, he and his men, every man with his household, and David with his two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel, and Abigail of Carmel, Nabal's widow.”*

“⁴ And when it was told (okay, verse 4 is important, you ready? Pay attention here. And when it was told) Saul that David had fled to Gath, (which is the region of the Philistines, look at this) he no longer sought him.” You guys, this is huge because you know what's going on here? It worked.

There's only one thing worse than taking life in your own hands and fighting your own battles. There's only one thing worse. And that is when you're successful at it. And God allows you at least in the short term, to experience some level of relief because pressure can build up, can it? In life. Sometimes we just want to, all we want to do is just lance the boil. We want to release the pressure because there's a buildup of pressure.

The problem is many times you and I reach for the knife or we reach for whatever means we have within our disposal to try to release that pressure valve. And we do it and you know what we do, you know what happens? The pressure is released. And then we go, oh, thank you God. But it wasn't God. It was us. And we have just walked out on extremely thin ice. We are in danger

zone like you wouldn't believe because we are so apt to convince ourselves that because the pressure's off, it's all good. We're good.

And when we take hold of our lives in our own hands, we fight our own battles, we fix our own problems, we deliver ourselves from whatever issues we're involved in, and it works in the short term, we tend to walk away going, yeah. And then sometimes we'll even credit God.

I had a woman sit in my office one time who just decided she was just going to leave her husband because life was challenging. It's like, well, when isn't it? But she sat down in my office, this was many years ago. And she said, and God told me, and she started telling me all these things God told her to do, which were completely contrary to the Word of God.

And I just said, or I said, I tried to be as respectful as I could. I said, I'm sorry, but God did not tell you to do that. Because it's totally contrary to the Word, and God is not going to contradict Himself. She said, well, why do I feel better then? Do you understand that statement? She based the will of God on how she felt. In other words, if I feel good, then God wants me to have this in my life. If I feel bad, then it's something God wants me to get rid of. That's a very carnal response to life. Do you understand?

I mean, that's like bringing your thinking down to the level of a dog, right? And you become a base animal. You are following animalistic instincts rather than being led by the Spirit. Why do I feel better then? Well, you feel better because you release the pressure valve. But it was still you that did it, and it was contrary to the Word of God.

You should have trusted the Lord to take care of the situation and work it out in accordance with His time. And you should have been giving Him the right and freedom and the privilege to bring, the pressure to a place where it was bearable. Rather than you striking out with your own hand and doing it yourself.

Why is that a problem? Because it makes it easier to do the next time, and the next time, and the next time, and the next time. And pretty soon, you're living your own life, you're calling yourself a Christian, but you're living your own life, doing your own thing, fixing your own problems, and calling it God. Well, eventually that's going to catch up to you and big time.

And then you're going to be so self-deceived that this is God doing all this and then you're going to crash and burn. And you're going to say, wow, God isn't

very smart. I crashed and burned. And you will refuse to believe that you are in control of that crash.

I've seen it happen so many times in people's lives and they then they blame God for something that was them. They did. Well, why did God let that happen in my life? It's just... So here we are, guys, guess what? Saul stopped looking for him. So I'm sure David even had some of his men say, hey David, this was a good idea.

Then David said to Achish, verse 5, *“Then David said to Achish, “If I have found favor in your eyes, let a place be given me in one of the country towns, that I may dwell there. For why should your servant dwell in the royal city with you?”*⁶ *So that day Achish gave him Ziklag. (the whole town, the whole city) Therefore Ziklag has belonged to the kings of Judah to this day.”*

Ziklag was actually meant all along to be part of the tribe of Judah. It was in the boundary lines of Judah, what God had given Judah. But you know what? They never ever possessed it because when Joshua came in the land with the people of Israel, they didn't take... Do you guys understand that Israel never ever, to this day today, has ever lived in all of their land that God gave them. Never. They've never possessed all of it. They were given it by God, but they've never lived in all of it. And that's certainly true today.

But here was this town of Ziklag that was meant to be in the tribe of Judah and it was now under Philistine control. And so the king likes David, so he gives him Ziklag. And it says from that point on, it never ever went back to the Philistines.

Verse 7, *“And the number of the days that David lived in the country of the Philistines was a year and four months.”* Almost a year and a half until... And by the way, that year and four months is going to count up to the time of the end when Saul will finally die.

“Now David and his men went up and made raids against the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites, for these were the inhabitants of the land from of old, (meaning they were Canaanites) as far as Shur, to the land of Egypt.”

Again, these are people living in the land whom Joshua was told with the nation of Israel, to drive out of the land and they didn't. They're still there all this time later. David is just spending his time going out and actually fulfilling, he's clearing more of the area of Judah from these Canaanite tribes who never were kicked out of the land, if you will.

And it says, *“⁹ And David would strike the land and would leave neither man nor woman alive, but would take away the sheep, the oxen, the donkeys, the camels, and the garments, and come back to Achish.”* Meaning he would present a gift to Achish.

And Achish would ask him, where have you been? *““Where have you made (your) ...raid today?” David would say, (oh) “Against the Negeb of Judah,” or, “Against the Negeb of the Jerahmeelites,” or, “Against the Negeb of the Kenites.”*

And what he's leading Achish to believe is that he was actually raiding his own people in Judah, and he's not. Well, he's raiding areas of, that were supposed to be in Judah, but they're controlled by the Canaanites. But he's not telling Achish that. So he tells him this stuff.

“¹¹ And David (again) would leave neither man nor woman alive to bring news to Gath, thinking, “lest they should tell about us and say, ‘So David has done.’” Such was his custom all the while he lived in the country of the Philistines.” And it says, *“¹² And Achish trusted David, thinking, “He has made himself an utter stench to his people Israel; therefore he shall always be my servant.”* He'll always bring me neat little gifts from the places that he goes and raids.

This is that part where I was saying that when you live among the Philistines, you start to act like a Philistine. And what David is doing in raiding these places that were meant to be destroyed anyway, way back during the time of Joshua. That part isn't necessarily wrong, but he's lying about it, because he's in a situation where he's compromising.

Now he knows that he's not living where he's supposed to be living, so to be able to perpetuate his ability to live there, he has to sit and lie every day. And when the king asks him, so where'd you go out raiding today? Well, we were just raiding some of the cities of Judah. Not really.

You see, what David doesn't know, and we're not going to get to it here, maybe not even next week, but in a few chapters, maybe next week, we'll see. Is that David is going to, by coming to Philistine territory, put his entire family and all of the families of all of his men into complete and utter danger by this decision.

Like I said, when we make decisions apart from the Lord and they release pressure, we always feel better. And in the short term we can even say, oh, it wasn't that wonderful. God let me release the pressure. What we can't see is the long-term effect of our actions. What David couldn't see was the long term

effect of his actions. He is literally going to threaten his family's entire life in a very short period of time within the context of this year and four months. But he doesn't know it and probably wouldn't have made this decision had he known it. But then again, hindsight is always 20/20, right? And that's what they say.

But that's the point that we want to make from this chapter that weariness is a real danger in your life and my life, because once again, we are tempted greatly to want to just release the pressure valve, and to do something. It could be a job that's not presenting itself the way it should be. It could be a relationship that just isn't coming together. Somebody is just anxious to be married and they're just tired of waiting for the Lord to bring about that right person. Or any number of other issues that could be pressing in on our lives. And we just get weary.

We get weary of the difficulty, we get weary of the problems and we just strike out and say, well, let's just fix this thing. And in the short term, we find a release of the pressure. But in the long term, we find that we have invited a bushel basket full of additional problems we wouldn't have had to deal with had we waited on the Lord. And that's the important thing to remember.

If you guys are weary tonight, and I understand that, then just come to the Lord and tell Him. Tell Him that you're weary. I'm tired of waiting. I'm tired of just sitting on this thing and it's getting... Now, it's not just a matter of impatience. It's a matter of pain. This is painful to continue on in this way. I'm tired of this.

You got to find your rest in the Lord. You got to find your satisfaction in the Lord and not in the effort of fixing problems in your own strength. You see, it's an addictive thing. It becomes addictive to fix my own problems because I like the feeling of feeling better on my timetable. And it truly is very addictive.

And pretty soon I just do it all the time. Instead of saying, God, I trust in You. I wait on You. That's the challenging part is trusting. Don't ever let anybody tell you that trusting the Lord is an easy thing to do. It's not. Very, very challenging thing to do.

David struggled with trusting the Lord sometimes made some pretty serious mistakes that the Lord had to get him out of eventually.

And if you've made some of those mistakes, God can get you out of those too. Just go to Him and confess. Thank Him for his grace, goodness, power, forgiveness, and wisdom. Come to Him anew and afresh. Lord, I need a fresh start.