



UNIT 10 | SESSION 3

SAUL SINNED AND WAS REJECTED

1 SAMUEL 13-15

KEY PASSAGE:

Isaiah 6:5

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why does sin separate us from God? Because God is holy, sin has broken our relationship with God.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

God gave the Israelites a king, but Saul did not obey God. God had a plan to send His Son, Jesus. King Jesus trusted and obeyed God perfectly and died so sinners could be forgiven and accepted.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

The sacrificial system of the Old Testament was the rhythm and practice of the people of God for many generations. It brought about reminders of the authority of God and the sin of the people. God used these sacrifices as temporary atonement for sin and a foreshadowing of the permanent sacrifice of Jesus that was to come.

Some Old Testament figures practiced these sacrifices with precision as prescribed by God. For others, the sacrifices were a good luck charm or “Get Out of Jail Free” card. In 1 Samuel 14–15, Saul built an altar and used sacrifice to try to earn back the favor of both God and Samuel. Samuel’s response to these things cut Saul deeply. “Does the Lord take pleasure in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the Lord? Look: to obey is better than sacrifice, to pay attention is better than the fat of rams” (1 Sam. 15:22).

The answer to Samuel’s rhetorical question is a resounding “No!” God does not desire sacrifice more than obedience; He desires obedient sacrifice. Though it was possible to sacrifice and disobey, it was never possible to obey and not sacrifice. God’s desire was for sacrifice to come from a broken and contrite heart that understood the weight of one’s sin and the need for forgiveness before a holy and righteous God. To practice sacrifice with any other motivation was to disobey.

Though we don’t live under the ceremonial law of the Old Testament, we do live under the authority of God. And though we don’t use the blood and meat of animals to try to satisfy God, we are certainly guilty of trying to please Him with religious practices.

For some Christians, there is a quiet hope that checking the boxes of daily disciplines will satisfy God’s wrath toward our sin. For some Christians, the applause of men drives the public display of their faith. In either instance, Christians are seeking to earn the favor of both God and man through their “sacrifice,” when God’s desire is for our whole-hearted obedience out of love for Him.

Today, consider where you may be tempted to try and impress God or earn back His love. Confess those things and be reminded that what God wants is your love for Him above all else, and your confidence that His sacrifice of Christ is sufficient to make you right before Him.

TERMS TO KNOW

Sacrifice and offering: physical elements a worshiper brings to God to express devotion, thanksgiving, or the need for forgiveness



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “Have you ever been punished for disobeying your parents? Why do you think obedience is important?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Worth the Wait” on the activity page. Kids should draw pictures of things that they might have to wait for. (Examples: Christmas presents, birthday, playing with friends, screen time, dinner)

SAY “Waiting is hard. It’s difficult to be patient when we really want something. As we will see in today’s Bible story, doing something we want at the wrong time could bring big consequences.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: THE LORD SAYS



This game will resemble the game Simon Says. Use the following six statements for the activity: 1. “The Lord says we should pray.” 2. “The Lord says we should not say mean things toward others.” 3. “The Lord says love your neighbor.” 4. “The Lord says to be strong in Him.” 5. “The Lord says no stealing.” 6. “The Lord says to worship Him.” Allow the kids to come up with fun motions for each statement. After motions are decided, explain to the kids that as you read each statement, they must follow the statement with the assigned motion. After a practice round, begin the game. As kids fail to follow the instructions, they are out. Continue the game until there is only one remaining.

SAY “Sometimes following instructions is hard. In today’s story, we will learn about a king who did what he wanted instead of following God’s instructions. Today, we will learn that there is only one King who could perfectly obey God.”

OPTION 2: COTTON BALL RELAY

Form two teams. (Additional teams may be necessary for larger groups.) Place the buckets on one side of the room and the two teams on the opposite side. Mark a spot on the floor for each team with tape. Explain to the kids that they must carry a cotton ball in the spoon to the other side of the room, dump the it into the bucket, and walk back. The next person on their team cannot take their cotton ball until they get back to their line. The first team to dump all cotton balls into the bucket first wins. As the game progresses, kids will begin to start too early, run instead of walk, etc.

SAY “Knowing you had to try and beat the other team, was it hard waiting your turn? How badly did you want to run instead of walking? We don’t like to wait. We are all impatient. Today, we will hear how King Saul was impatient too and was disobedient to God.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to 1 Samuel 13–15. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Saul Sinned and Was Rejected.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

SAUL SINNED AND WAS REJECTED

“**King Saul gathered an army and took some of the men into the hill country.** The rest of the army went with Saul’s son, Jonathan, to the city of Gibeah. **Israel’s enemies, the Philistines,** were in the land.

The Philistines **came out to fight** the Israelites. They had more chariots, more horses, and more soldiers. **The Israelites were outnumbered. They were all afraid; some of them hid. Saul wanted to ask God for help. Maybe if he made an offering to God, they would win the battle.**

There was one problem: only the priests, like Samuel, were allowed to give offerings to God. Saul waited, but Samuel did not come. Saul’s soldiers started to leave, so Saul decided to make an offering to God himself.

Then Samuel showed up. “Saul, what are you doing?” Samuel asked.

“You hadn’t come, and the men were leaving me. I wanted to ask for God’s help before we went into battle against the Philistines,” Saul replied.

“You have disobeyed God,” Samuel said. Saul was king, not a priest. It was a sin for Saul to make the sacrifice! **“You will not be king much longer. God is going to find someone obedient to be king.”**

Some time later, Samuel came to Saul with a message from God. God wanted Saul to attack the Amalekites (uh MAL uh rights). **God wanted Saul to destroy everything, but after Saul defeated the Amalekites, he only destroyed things that weren’t valuable.**

God told Samuel, “I regret that I made Saul king because he does not obey Me.” **Samuel confronted Saul** and told him what God had said.

“I did obey Him!” Saul argued. “I only saved the best animals to sacrifice to the Lord.”

Samuel asked, “Does God care more about obedience or sacrifices? You rejected His instruction, so God has rejected you as king.” Saul admitted his sin and pleaded for forgiveness. Samuel said, “God has taken away your kingship today, and he is giving it to another king.”

Christ Connection: God gave the Israelites a king, but Saul did not obey God. God had a plan to send His Son, Jesus. King Jesus trusted and obeyed God perfectly and died so sinners could be forgiven and accepted. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Use facial expressions:
As you teach, use facial expressions to emphasize key points in the story.

Call for active listening:
As you teach the story, instruct kids to give a thumbs down every time they hear the words “sin” and “disobey.”

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Open your Bible to 1 Samuel 13. How many Philistines lined up to fight God’s people? Look at verse 5. [Choose a volunteer to read aloud 1 Sam. 13:5.] Thirty-thousand chariots, six thousand horsemen, and troops like the sand on the seashore. When the Israelites saw the thousands of Philistines, what did they do? Look at verses 6-7. [Choose a volunteer to read aloud 1 Sam. 13:6-7.]

Have you ever been so afraid that you hid? Maybe you hid under the covers during a storm? There are times in life when we are overwhelmed because we are faced with a situation that is scary and seems impossible. In those moments, we can choose to trust God, or we can trust in ourselves. King Saul grew impatient and chose to trust in himself rather than trust and obey God.

This reminds me of the story in Exodus 32. Moses, the leader of God’s people had gone up Mt. Sinai where God would give him the Ten Commandments. God’s people grew impatient because Moses was gone for a long time so they decided to build an idol, a golden calf to worship. Rather than trusting God, they chose to worship an idol like they had seen in Egypt.

Why do you think we so often fail to obey God? [Choose a volunteer to read aloud Rom. 3:23.] Because of our sin, we choose our way instead of God’s way. We can always trust God because He is perfect, holy, and righteous. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ God gave the Israelites a king, but Saul did not obey God. God had a plan to send His Son, Jesus. King Jesus trusted and obeyed God perfectly and died so sinners could be forgiven and accepted. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 10, Session 3” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Will God reject us if we sin?
2. Have you trusted in Jesus to rescue you from sin?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

SAY “ Have you ever forgotten something? Sometimes I forget my phone or even lock my keys in my car! But there is something worse than forgetting something: feeling forgotten. Josh Valdez is a missionary who understands what that’s like. Josh is Native American. He grew up in a town where the people are poor and need lots of help, but most of all, they need Jesus! God called Josh to go home and be a missionary in his own hometown. ”

Play the missions video.