



## 1 Samuel 31

### "When Hope Fades: Lessons From A Failed King"

11\_03\_2024

Speaker: Pastor Drew Hunsley

Anaheim Hills, CA | RockCC.com

24:30

So, I always have kind of weird feelings when we come to the end of one of our studies, the end of a book. It's always kind of strange. We've spent time with this. We've spent a chunk of our lives together studying these different books when we get to the end of Luke, or Ecclesiastes, or now 1 Samuel.

24:48

We've gone through these different passages, and it's always strange to see them go, but we have just a wonderful, kind of simple passage, but I was talking to someone this morning. I'm so thankful, so excited that God has lined everything up just perfectly, bringing us this passage this morning.

25:11

It'll become a little clearer for you as we work our way through, but please, please, please don't give me credit for what's about to happen this morning because this is God at work giving us exactly what He wanted us to have, exactly when He needed us to have it.

25:26

So make your way to the end of 1 Samuel. 1 Samuel 31, we're going to see kind of the end of King Saul's story. So if you've been with us over the past several weeks, you've seen kind of at the end of 1 Samuel, we've had this back and forth.

25:41

We've had these two storylines kind of running simultaneously through the last 5, 6, 7, whatever it is, chapters that we've been going back and forth bouncing between David's story and King Saul's story.

25:54

So ever since the Philistines mobilized against Israel, they came out. They were going to attack, going to go to war, and David was rejected from fighting alongside the Philistines. You probably remember that a few weeks ago.

26:08

Here's what's happened chronologically if I give you just kind of the cliff notes of what's going on here. So we remember after they went out to attack the Israelites, the Philistines set up camp at Shunem, which was on the northern side of the Jezreel Valley, and then the Israelites gathered.

26:25

They assembled in Gilboa, which was on the south side of that same valley. We saw back in 1 Samuel 28, we saw King Saul terrified. He decides to visit a medium in Endor. He conducts this strange seance, this weird picture that we don't really expect to see in the Bible.

26:44

But King Saul, the king of God's people, consults Samuel from on the other side of the grave. He conducts this seance, talks to dead Samuel. Samuel reminds him again that God has rejected him and tells him that his life is going to come to an end in this battle that we're going to look at today.

27:04

Meanwhile, what last week we looked at in 1 Samuel 30, we saw David, excuse me, come back to to Ziklag. He discovers this catastrophe that has happened as the Amalekites have attacked and and stolen their possessions, stolen their wives and their children.

27:19

All these terrible things happened and and David pursues the Amalekites and resolved the situation, to put it politely. So as God gave David victory over the Amalekites, simultaneously the events of what we're gonna see here in chapter 31 are taking place.

27:35

As God is giving victory to David, he's giving defeat to King Saul as the Philistines are simultaneously engaged with Saul while David was fighting the Amalekites. In 1 Samuel 31 in our passage this week, there's there's actually no account of the battle itself, or a very abbreviated story of the battle itself.

27:56

We see it talks about how the Israelites are defeated. We see it mentions the death of Saul and his sons in verses 1 through 6. We see how the Israelites, the rest of the non-fighting Israelites, they decide to flee.

28:12

We see that Saul's body is taken, is beheaded, is stripped, is displayed as a trophy in the middle of our passage. And then finally, we're gonna see some small glimmer of dignity for Israel as Saul's body is recovered and given a respectable burial.

28:27

Saul's death has clearly been indicated. They've been telegraphing this for chapters and chapters, about half of the book of 1 Samuel. We know that God has decided he has rejected King Saul and had explicitly said so.

28:41

The night before, as Saul consulted Samuel one final time, Saul was told before this battle, before this day ever started, he knew that this was going to be his last day. So in some sense, chapter 31, there's not a lot of surprises that are in here for us this morning.

28:57

The death of Saul has been a long time coming and certainly not unexpected as we come to it here at the end of 1 Samuel. But as we come to the end of Saul's story, I hope that we see a clear reminder.

29:11

Because this is the man, King Saul is the man who Israel had placed their hope in and this man had failed them. This is the tragic end of King Saul's story that started with such great promise but now has ended in such uneventful simplicity.

29:30

Reminds us that our hope cannot be found in wealth or power or influence. Saul looked the part, Saul had everything that you could look for in a human man, a human king to lead you. But true hope is only found in God.

29:47

True hope is only found as we follow God's leading in everything. And so we're gonna look to the text, we're gonna read 1 Samuel 31 this morning and then go back and kinda see what God might have for us this morning as we try to apply this to us today.

30:01

1 Samuel chapter 31 starting in verse 1 it tells us, now the Philistines were fighting against Israel and the men of Israel fled before the Philistines and fell slain on Mount Gilboa. The Philistines overtook Saul and his sons and the Philistines struck down Jonathan and Abinadab and Malchi-shua, the sons of Saul.

30:22

The battle pressed hard against Saul and the archers found him and he was badly wounded by the archers. Then Saul said to his armor bearer draw your sword and thrust me through with it lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through and mistreat me.

30:37

But his armor bearer would not for he feared greatly therefore Saul took his own sword and fell upon it. When his armor bearer saw that Saul was dead he also fell upon his sword and died with him. Thus Saul died and his three sons and his armor bearer and all his men on the same day together.

30:57

When the men of Israel who were on the other side of the valley, those beyond the Jordan, saw that the men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned their cities and fled.

31:07

The Philistines came and lived in them. The next day when the Philistines came to strip the slain, they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. So they cut off his

head, stripped off his armor, sent messengers throughout the land of the Philistines to carry the good news to the house of their idols and to the people. They put his armor in the temple of Ashtaroth.

31:29

They fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan. But when the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, all the valiant men arose and went all night and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth-shan.

31:45

And they came to Jabesh and burned them there. Then they took their bones and buried them under the Tamarisk tree in Jabesh and fasted seven days. These are the words of the Lord. Would you pray with me, church?

31:59

God, we thank you for your perfect, inspired, inerrant word. God, we thank you for this book, this story that we've been able to examine through 1 Samuel this year as we have seen people step out and try to lead, try to make decisions, try to do things in their own power.

32:18

And God, as we come to the end of this story, we are reminded of just how short our own power falls sometimes. God, we pray that as we consider the death of King Saul, as we consider his foreseen demise, we pray that you would give us ears to hear what you would say to us this morning.

32:38

God, that we would see clearly in our own lives how this might apply to us today, this week, this month, this year, in our context. So we pray that you would speak, that you would give us ears to hear what you have to say this morning.

32:50

It's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. All right, well the first 6 verses we see kind of abbreviated spoken to us, Saul's final downfall. A summary of Saul's life and achievements was actually given back about 15 to 20 chapters ago, back in 1 Samuel 14.

33:10

You may remember, we kind of pointed this out as we were studying through chapter 14. I pointed out that this is the kind of a review that a king's life might have at the end of his life. We might expect to appear after his death, but for the last 16 chapters, what we've seen is that Saul has descended further and further into madness, further and further into rebellion, further and further away from what God would have him to do and to be.

33:39

Saul's reign was over a long time ago, but the final day has finally come. Verses 1 and 2, we see a very simple summary of the battle that took place between the Israelites and the Philistines. If you were hoping for a long drawn out battle sequence, there's not one here.

33:56

The details of the battle actually weren't the primary concern to the narrator here. We simply get an explanation that the Philistines had struck a mighty blow. We see it mentioned that the three of Saul's sons, Jonathan, very familiar to us.

34:10

We've seen Jonathan several times throughout this book. Abinadab and Malchi-shua, they were all killed in battle. Now there's a fourth son that King Saul has. He was referred to as Ishvi in 1 Samuel. We're going to see him show up under a different name, Ish-bosheth in 2 Samuel.

34:28

He's the lone male survivor of Saul's family. We'll get to him in a little bit in 2 Samuel. But it tells us in verse 1 that the men of Israel fled before the Philistines. That struck me as kind of interesting.

34:43

There's only a couple of times in 1 Samuel that we see and mentioned that Israel fled from an enemy. First time that we saw it was back in 1 Samuel 17, or one time that we saw it was in 1 Samuel 17. What tells us that Israel fled when they saw the giant Goliath.

35:00

Certainly a 9 to 10 to 11 foot tall man, depending on which calculations you want to use. That's certainly a sight that many of us would probably run from. Someone that big screaming, I'm going to kill you.

35:11

I'm out of here, right? I'm out of here. But this story, this instance where it tells us that the men of Israel fled before the Philistines, it's kind of reminiscent of the story that we see back all the way near the beginning of this book in 1 Samuel chapter 4.

35:28

If you remember all the way back in chapter 4, Israel had fled from the Philistines who had gathered at Aphek, the same place where they gathered today for this battle. That was a disastrous story for the Philistines.

35:40

It was a disastrous day for Israel that day because Israel's failed leader, you may remember, the high priest Eli and his sons, his evil sons, Hophni and Phinehas, they were all killed on that same day as well.



35:55

1 Samuel 4:22 tells us that the glory had departed from Israel that day. It's kind of ironic because in that instance, in that other time where we saw Israel flee from their enemies, it's ironic because the same response that we see, Israel fleeing, that situation from back in chapter four was actually the situation that led Israel to demand we want a king like all the other nations.

36:23

No, no, Eli and his sons are not good enough leaders for us, we need a man, we need someone that looks the part, someone that we can look to that will fight our battles. And so everything that happened that day back in chapter four led them to the point of saying we need King Saul.

36:40

Now we see King Saul's story play out and we end up in the same place. King Saul, we've come to the end. Verse 3 it tells us, we turn our attention now from the men of Israel and of Saul's sons to actually to Saul himself.

37:00

It tells us that Saul does not fall in the initial attack, but that he's pressed hard, that he and his men have no escape route, that they're surrounded, the archers have this fleeing group surrounded with the king fully within their range.

37:15

It tells us that Saul was badly wounded by the archers here as he's being surrounded. And we see knowing that Saul at this point, he's aware today's his last day. He had heard from God the night before.

37:29

And so we see here in these verses, it tells us that Saul gives up. Saul essentially just surrenders himself to his fate, surrounded by Philistine troops. He decides that this is the

end. And so rather than allowing the circumstances to play out, rather than allowing himself to be taken prisoner or to fall at the hand of a Philistine who he's convinced are going to torture him or dishonor him in some way,

37:57

mistreat him in some way. Saul decided that he was going to die before he fell into Philistine hands. It tells us that he turns to his armor bearer and says, go ahead, grab your sword, take the sword and thrust me through.

38:11

Kill me now. He looks to his armor bearer, but his armor bearer refuses. We don't know why it doesn't explain to us. Maybe he valued the life of another human being too much to kill his leader. Maybe he responded with a similar response that we saw from David a few chapters ago that to say, this is God's chosen man.

38:32

And who am I to put an end to God's plan prematurely? Whatever it was, the armor bearer refuses, says, no, no, no, Saul, I'm not going to do this for you. And so Saul summons the remaining strength that he has tells us that he takes his sword and he falls on his own sword.

38:48

He kills himself. The Bible doesn't comment on the fact that Saul committed suicide. It doesn't condemn it. It doesn't condone it. It simply says this is what happened. While we shouldn't make any special conclusions based on Saul's decision to kill himself, I do want to point out it certainly didn't help anything.

39:08

It certainly didn't fix the problems that he was worried about. There were no benefits to this for Saul. In fact, it didn't lessen the tragedy at all. Didn't save him from the dishonor like he hoped he was going to be saved from.

39:20

I don't want to fall into the hands of the Philistines. I'll be dishonored if I fall into the hands of the Philistines. Well, if you were listening a few minutes ago when we read through all of our passage, you'll realize Saul wasn't saved from dishonor today.

39:34

We're gonna see that in a few verses very clearly. In Saul's final moments, I think there's a noteworthy absence of something as we look at Saul's final breaths. A lot of people, when they come to the end of their life, when they know that these are their final moments,

39:53

they have some moments of clarity. I've heard story after story after story of people who, it tells us that they have those moments and they reevaluate their lives. They start to think about the things that mattered to them.

40:04

They start to think about things like faith and God and how they've lived their life. The moments before their death, they have a level of clarity. But what we see here from Saul, there is no moment of clarity.

40:20

There is no, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me like we saw from both Jesus and from David at various times in their lives. Saul seems to have accepted his fate. Saul seems to just be resigned to, well, I guess this is it.

40:35

He makes no pleas to God and he makes no appeal in his moment of distress. He simply says, I guess this is it. He grabs his sword and he ends things. It seems fitting to me. It seems fitting to me that Saul ends his life with no consideration of God at the end.

40:56

You know, Saul's faith had become such a small portion of his life, such a small little detail that was kind of stuffed in the corner that God was only something to be pulled out, only a tool to be used when Saul perceived some need to look to God.

41:11

And certainly there was no thought of God now as he approaches the end of his life. There is no comment that Saul has any sort of religious thought, any sort of Godward thought in his final moments. And in verse 6, we see this simple little summary of what happened in these events.

41:32

Verse 6, it tells us, thus Saul died and his three sons and his armor bearer and all his men on the same day together. No fanfare, no elaboration, no grand farewell, no parade, nothing. The king that had failed so prominently that we've seen for half of the book of 1 Samuel, the failures of a man, King Saul.

41:56

His failure was complete. The king is dead. In verses 7 through 10 we see defeat and disgrace for King Saul and for the Israelites. This section, these 4 verses right in the middle of our chapter, they reveal two different losses that Saul and that Israel were going to suffer in this battle on this day.

42:19

The first one is that the Israelites, who were on the other side of the Jordan River, they could see the events of that day happening from a distance. They're watching from the

other side of the river and it tells us that they could see what happened, that the Israelites were fleeing, that they were falling, that the Philistines had won, and it tells us that the Israelites that weren't in the battle,

42:41

they immediately fled from the Philistines. We also see in these verses that the next day Saul's body is discovered and is disgraced pretty terribly. First, let's look at the Israelites on the other side of the Jordan River.

42:56

So, it tells us that the defeat of Saul and the troops on Mount Gilboa, it was demoralizing for the rest of Israel. It was demoralizing to the non-combatant men of Israel that we see that are back at home, that are back in the villages that were across the river.

43:16

It seems to me that, as best we can tell, they assumed that as the Philistines were gaining a victory there on Mount Gilboa in the attack that they had planned and executed, seems that now the Philistines were just going to continue their push forward, right?

43:32

The people of Israel, they decided to pack up. They abandoned their homes, they abandoned their towns, and they run in fear that the Philistines were coming for them next. But by abandoning the cities that they abandoned, Israel was essentially cut in half that day.

43:49

The northern tribes of Issachar and Zebulun and Naftali, these three tribes that were at the northern end of Israel, they were cut off from the remainder of the Israelites. The Philistines struck a great blow that day.

44:02

They punched a hole right in the middle of Israelite territory. They weakened the land. Both the military prospects and the economy was essentially destroyed that day, was certainly severely damaged that day.

44:16

As Israel was cut in half, two small, very irrelevant, fairly weakened enemies, Israel's prospects today are far weaker than they had been when King Saul began his reign all the way back in chapter 13. Israel is severely damaged, certainly in no position to fight back today.

44:41

But we also see that the next day that as they're out cleaning up the battlefield, looting the bodies, King Saul's body is discovered and is disgraced in verses 8 through 10. Philistines were out looting the bodies to take whatever weapons, whatever valuables they could find, a pretty normal practice for soldiers in that day.

45:02

But when they were out, they discover King Saul, they discover his three sons were among the dead. Philistine troops decided that they were going to dishonor the body of Saul in the same way that had been done to Philistine warriors in the past.

45:18

Philistines dishonor the body of Saul and 1 Chronicles 10 kind of telling the same story. It tells us that his sons were also caught up in this crossfire. The Philistines take Saul's body, they cut off Saul's head similar to what David had done to their war hero Goliath back in 1 Samuel 17.

45:38

But Saul's head, Saul's armor and weapons were being displayed as trophies of their conquest, trophies of their victory. Saul's head was presented to the temple of Dagon.

You remember Dagon? That was the same temple, the same God that they worshiped that they had taken the Ark of the Covenant to back 20 - 25 chapters ago.

46:00

You remember that was the story where the Ark of the Covenant was brought into the temple and overnight somehow the the statue of Dagon fell down face first before God's Ark of the Covenant, perhaps worshipping, perhaps acknowledging the power of God.

46:18

So the Philistines panicked and they set Dagon back up. Oh no, something happened. He must have tipped over. We left the air conditioner on. I don't know what it was. They propped Dagon back up. Oh no, no.

46:29

And then the next day they come in and Dagon has fallen down again, this time with his hands and his feet cut off of his statue, bowing down before the Ark of the Covenant, bowing down before the God of Israel, the true God.

46:44

Now Saul's head is taken to that same temple, is hung up as a trophy, a victory for the Philistines over these terrible Israelites that they've been fighting with, wrestling with for years at this point.

46:58

Meanwhile Saul's armor, his weapons are taken to the temple of the Ashtaroth. Ashtaroth was a war goddess. Her temple was an appropriate place for trophies of war like the armor of a fallen king to be displayed, to be celebrated.

47:15

Meanwhile Saul's body didn't go to waste either. Saul's body tells us that he was impaled and hung on the wall in the city square in Beth-shan as a symbol of the Philistine victory. Don't go against us or this is what happens to our enemies.

47:32

Saul had killed himself to avoid being mistreated, to avoid being abused. That worked out well for him, didn't it? His death did not spare him that indignity. His headless corpse was impaled and hung on a wall as a public symbol of his shame as his head sat in this temple, his weapons and his armor sat in that temple, and meanwhile his corpse is displayed for all the Philistines to see.

47:59

It tells us that the Philistine sent messengers out throughout the land to announce the good news that Saul, King Saul of Israel, was dead. They proclaimed a gospel, that word gospel, it simply means good news.

48:12

The gospel to the Philistines was that the leader of Israel was dead. This man that had been such a thorn in their side, such a pebble in their shoe for years. Saul is dead and they proclaimed the good news of Saul's demise.

48:29

What a day that must have been for the people of Philistia. The defeats that they had suffered at the hands of Saul were a thing of the past. This is over, they they had won. We see this defeat and disgrace.

48:46

In verses 7 through 10, but in verses 11 through 13 we see honor and hope. Honor and hope for Israel. The only positive note in this entire chapter is the initiative that is displayed by some of the the valiant men that are mentioned in verses 11 through 13.



49:02

In these final few verses of 1 Samuel that the brave men of Jabesh-gilead, they set out to rescue Saul and his boy's bodies, the the corpses from the dishonor of being displayed in Beth-shan . Word of what had happened to Saul and his sons had had made its way through Philistine territory.

49:20

The good news had gone out to the Philistines that Saul and his sons were hung to display in the city square. Meanwhile that same word, not good news to the people of Israel, had reached the people of Jabesh-gilead.

49:36

What had come as good news to the Philistines had a very different tone to the people of Jabesh-gilead. Saul had rescued, you may remember back in chapter 11 of 1 Samuel, Saul had rescued the people of Jabesh-gilead from the Ammonites.

49:51

It was one of Saul's first battles. It was the moment that kind of confirmed that Saul was going to be the king, that the Savior that Israel hoped for. And so the valiant men of Jabesh-gilead set out on a brave rescue mission, sneaking through Philistine territory for miles to recover the remains of their fallen royals.

50:11

These brave men traveled through enemy territory to reclaim, to remove from the wall, and to take home four mutilated carcasses from the wall and Beth-shan taking it back home. So after they returned to Israelite territory it tells us that they burned the bodies.

50:29

And surrounding nations that the cremation of royal remains was viewed as an act befitting a king. But Israel didn't practice cremation. So what occurs here, it seems to be some sort of an emergency measure.

50:44

Perhaps they were scared that the Philistines would hear, would see, would realize that Saul and his boys were gone and they would come looking for the bodies. Maybe it's to save the bodies from further disrespectful treatment or maybe there was some other reason, but it tells us that they burned the bodies of Saul and his boys that day, but that they took the bones of these men and they buried them under the Tamarisk tree in Jabesh and 1 Samuel ends.

51:13

Saul's bones, the bones of his boys, buried under a Tamarisk tree and in that moment Saul's story comes full circle. Saul's victory at Jabesh-gilead back in 1st Samuel 11 had confirmed his leadership over Israel.

51:31

It's also fitting to me, you may remember this term, this tree, the Tamarisk tree that we actually saw a couple other times throughout this book of 1 Samuel, how Saul used to sit under a Tamarisk tree.

51:46

As the image of power, he would sit there with his royal robes on, with his spear in his hand, surrounded by servants as the symbol of strength to Israel. But now Saul's bones are laid to rest under the same tree or similar tree.

52:00

Any power that Saul had previously displayed was gone. Saul, the man that had been this image of power, is now a pile of bones buried underneath the tree. The king is dead. And that's it. 1 Samuel ends.

52:24

The bones of King Saul laid to rest. They fasted seven days, and it was over. There's no glory in Saul's death. There's no honor in Saul's death. In fact, it was pretty dishonorable the way that his body was treated by the Philistines.

52:44

He had valued his throne. He had valued his power and his wealth and his influence. He valued all these things over obedience to God, and it cost him dearly. All the things that he loved and treasured and chased after so passionately.

53:01

By the end, they were gone. I think it's appropriate for us to pause and to reflect here. In fact, if we did continue reading, maybe you turn the page, maybe it's on the same page in some Bibles. But if you were to continue reading and pick up 2 Samuel chapter 1, you know what you would find?

53:23

Another story of Saul's death. Another reminder that Saul is gone. That things didn't end extravagantly for Saul. I think the narrator, the writer here of 1 and 2 Samuel, they want us to slow down and to reflect on the ultimate futility of King Saul's story.

53:46

The ultimate futility of human power because Israel had insisted we need a man. God had led Israel for generation after generation after generation up to this point. That God had provided prophets, that God had provided men who would speak on his behalf, but

ultimately that God was their leader ever since they had been led out of Egypt by the cloud, the pillar of cloud, the pillar of fire.

54:14

God had been their leader. God had led them through the wilderness. God had led them into the Promised Land. God had given them victory over all of these enemies that they had faced. God was the one that had led Israel all the way up to this point, but they get to 1 Samuel and they say, no, no, no, no, God's not enough anymore.

54:30

We need a man to do the job. Israel had insisted that God was not enough. You remember? Back in Chapter 8. 1 Samuel 8 verses 19 and 20. It tells us that the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel, God's prophet that he had given.

54:48

They said, no, there shall be a king over us that we may also be like all the nations that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles. There you go. Israel, behold your king, laying dead on a battlefield, cremated and his bones buried under a tamarisk tree.

55:18

All the honor, all the hope, everything that Israel believed that this man was going to be for them was beheaded and hung on a wall, dishonored like a common man. The foolishness of the Israelites, the foolishness that is like the foolishness that we all see when when people place their hope and human power.

55:48

It's clearly seen in Saul's uneventful death. It's clearly seen. Saul was just a man. Saul's power had limitations. Saul's reach only went so far. Now this is the point that I said at the beginning, I wish I could take more credit for this because I didn't plan this out.

56:12

I'm not smart enough to have figured this out, but as I was studying this week, I just got a kick out of the way that God lined up everything the way that he did. Because as we finish this book, which highlights Saul's failure and Saul's death and Saul's insufficiency two days before election day, don't let that go unnoticed, right?

56:41

We've looked at story after story after story, please don't miss this. Israel insisted God wasn't enough. Israel insisted we need a man to lead us. We need someone to place our hope in, someone to look to as the one who will carry us through whatever it is that we're going to face.

57:00

And that man failed because ultimately all men fail, all women fail, all of us are limited because all of us are sinners. But you know what? God promised that Saul wasn't the end of the story. I'm going to steal some thunder from us as we start into 2 Samuel next week, but just so you know, King David is coming, right?

57:31

God makes a promise to King David that was going to be a promise that we still hold to today, that King David was going to have one come after him, that there was going to be a king in David's line who would establish an eternal kingdom, that there was going to be no one to overthrow the king that was going to come from David's line.

57:56

We get the joy of seeing the big picture. We get the joy of stepping back and having perspective that the promised one that God promised to David, the promised one, the messiah is coming. In 2 Samuel chapter 7 spoiler alert, don't listen if you don't want to. 2 Samuel chapter 7, God is promising to David this one that was going to come, the hope that was going to last beyond David's days.

58:25

In 2 Samuel 7 verses 12 and 13, God tells David, when your days are fulfilled, when you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up an offspring after you who shall come from your body and I will establish his kingdom and he shall build a house for my name and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

58:46

You guys have put the pieces together, right? That sounds familiar to us. It sounds kind of Christmasy, doesn't it? That a kingdom shall come, that a king that shall last forever whose kingdom shall never fall is going to come.

59:00

And we realize, oh wait, no, that's the seed of Jesse, that's the promised one from David's line that was spoken of by the angels to a bunch of shepherds out in the field keeping watch over their flocks by night. The promised one that was going to come is going to establish his kingdom forever.

59:21

Jesus is the one whose kingdom will never fall. Jesus is the king who will never have the moment like King Saul does, will never have the moments like King David does, the moments like any other man or woman that you place your hope in on Tuesday will have.

59:41

Whether your candidate wins or loses this week, I don't know what Tuesday night's news holds. But I want you to know whether your candidate wins or loses, they're not your savior. They're not an appropriate place for you to put your hope, because they're flawed, because they're sinful, because they're just a man or just a woman, and that's not ultimately a safe place for us to put our hope.

01:00:11

They're going to fail you if you put your hope in them. They will come up short, because every man comes up short. Every woman comes up short. When we place our hope in human leaders, that hope fails.

01:00:29

And when our hope in human leaders fails, we're reminded to renew our trust in God. We're reminded that God's promises are steadfast, that God's policies never fail. That God's plans are always perfectly executed.

01:00:46

That God doesn't get into a circumstance and go, uh-oh, I guess we have to go back to the drawing board. God's purposes prevail beyond anyone or anything. So I want to encourage you, aim properly this week.

01:01:02

Aim your hope in the proper direction this week. Because we have a Savior. We have a Savior. He's not on the ballot. You can fill him in if you want to, but he's not on the ballot. His name is Jesus.

01:01:23

Do you know him? Do you place your hope in him? What happens to your hope if Tuesday goes poorly for you? Does your hope crumble, or does your hope stand because your hope is not placed in the person that you filled in their little square on your ballot box?

01:01:46

Aim your hope properly this week. Realize the shortcomings of any leader and hold them appropriately. Because there is a king. There is a leader who has come who never fails us. There are a lot of men.

01:02:14

There are a lot of women who are simply out. One common complaint that I hear is that people in politics, they're just out for themselves, right? Anybody ever thought that or heard that or said that?

01:02:28

I think of leaders who are just out for themselves. Meanwhile, I think of the one leader who kind of appropriately could have been all about himself. There is a king. There is a God who deserves every bit of attention, every bit of worship,

01:02:41

everything that anyone could ever be offered. God is deserving of all of it, but you know what? Instead of receiving it all like he was so appropriately due, Jesus humbled himself, taking the appearance of a man, taking the appearance of a servant.

01:02:58

He humbled himself to the point of death, paying a penalty that he didn't deserve, so the people that did deserve it wouldn't have to pay it. That's unlike any other leader that has ever walked the earth.

01:03:17

That gives us hope in a way that any other leader will not give us this week. We have a Savior. Place your hope in Him. In just a moment you've probably noticed the tables. We're gonna take communion together, and we're gonna celebrate, and we're gonna remember, and we're going to to have a moment to pause and to reflect on the this incredible sacrifice that Jesus has made, making our salvation possible.



01:03:46

We have an incredible opportunity today to face a tangible reminder of the grace that is available to us in Jesus Christ. Because when Jesus sacrificed his life, when Jesus laid his life down on the cross to pay the sin debt that I owe and that you owe, for those of us who placed their faith in him, we're able to remember that and we're able to celebrate this morning.

01:04:12

We're gonna take communion this morning to remember Jesus's sacrifice. So if you have not humbled yourself before God this morning, if you cannot sit here and say this morning that Jesus is your savior, that Jesus is the one that you place your hope in, the only place that you place your hope, if Jesus is not that for you, please deal with that first.

01:04:35

Don't come take communion. This moment, we love you, but this moment is not for you. But if you have, if you have placed your faith in Jesus, if Jesus is your savior, if Jesus is your hope, if Jesus is the promised one that is coming that is going to save us, I wanna invite you in just a moment to come and to partake of these elements.

01:05:00

Take the bread that symbolizes Jesus's broken body. Take the cup of juice that symbolizes Jesus's blood that was spilled out for you. And pause to remember the sacrifice of our true king, our true savior, our true leader.

01:05:19

Humble yourself before him this morning, confess any sin, make sure that you're right with him, but then come to him and celebrate. We've got fresh elements available here at the front. We've got a table back at the back doors as well.

01:05:35

And so after I read and pray, I'd encourage you to take some time to. Simply pause to reflect, to prepare your hearts, to confess before God any known sin that you might have in you. As David said in Psalm 51, David confessing his sin before God, he said, God have mercy on me according to your steadfast love, according to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions, wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

01:06:09

Come take the elements, return to your seat, make sure that you're right with God, make sure that that that heart that we see in David is the heart that you see in yourself. Then take and eat together.

01:06:23

Jesus was preparing to go to the cross. Matthew 26, he looked at the disciples. Matthew 26 tells us that now as they were eating, Jesus took the bread and after blessing it, he broke it and gave it to his disciples and said, take and eat.

01:06:38

This is my body. He took a cup and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them saying, drink of it all of you for this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

01:06:51

Would you pray with me? God, you are so good to us. God, I look at these stories of Israel, their demand that you weren't enough, that they needed a man, they needed a king, they needed someone else to put their hope in.

01:07:19

That hurts sometimes because it hits a little close to home. God, it's easy to sit in church and to say that you're enough, but then when we leave here we put our hope in anything and everything else.

01:07:35

God correct our misguided thoughts. Teach us that you are enough, that you are sufficient, that you are the only one that we can place, we can fix our hope upon. God, we need you this morning. God, we thank you for the cross.

01:07:59

We thank you for the willing Savior who would go, would lay His life down for a bunch of sinners like us. We thank you for the grace that was made available to us, that you would look at sinful, wretched people, objects of deserving wrath.

01:08:18

And you would look at us and you would say, no, no, no, not guilty because of the sacrifice of Jesus. God, what an incredible joy that is for us to be able to look to our Savior and to say Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe.

01:08:38

As we come to this table, as we take these moments as we reflect upon Jesus's sacrifice. God, we pray that you would use these tangible elements in a supernatural way. God, that you would take this pita and grape juice and that you would use it to restore a joy of our salvation.

01:08:57

God, that you would use it to remind us of the beauty and the majesty that we can be adopted by the king of the universe. That we have hope that doesn't rest on a flawed human, but that we have a Savior whose kingdom shall never end.

01:09:15

God, we thank you for Jesus. We thank you for his sacrifice. And it's through his accomplished work on the cross that we come to you and that we pray. Amen.