

9-10-23 Facilitator – The Hidden Hand of God from 1 Samuel 9-10, Lyle Caswell

1. **Launchers: Questions to challenge our hearts.**

- How do you recognize and enjoy God's control the details of your life?

2. **Worship God: Enjoy together both the Call to Worship and Assurance of Pardon**

Lyle's Notes on the Call to Worship: Psalm 73:23-26 (what a great call. It is playing off 9:20, "And to whom is all the desire of Israel turned, if not to you and your whole family line?" That in contrast to this very familiar Psalm. It also touches the theme of the providence of God as well.)

WF - CALL TO WORSHIP | Psalm 73:23-26 (ESV)

We read God's Word, the Bible, together. It reveals to us who God is and what He expects of us.

Lyle's notes on the Assurance of Pardon: Acts 2:22-24, 38-39 (This assurance ties nicely with the hidden hand of providence that we have in I Samuel. It was the definite plan of God to redeem us through the death of XP)

WF - ASSURANCE OF PARDON | Acts 2:22-24, 38-39 (ESV)

3. **Sermon Reflection: The Hidden Hand, Various verses from 1 Samuel 9 and 10**

WF – Read scripture passage from WF.

Sermon Gist: In my intro I really want to show how the author is foreshadowing that this king thing is not going to work out well. The story makes it quite clear that even though a 'king' was the last thing God and Samuel wanted for Israel, when it becomes clear that Israel would settle for nothing less, God entered into the process of selection in minute detail. There is nothing haphazard in Samuel's God-directed finding of Saul. He mercifully stays in the story with his people after they reject him. Hmm, that sounds familiar. I will show how God engineered the anointing of Saul in the smallest of details.

- Do we believe that degree of providence is at work in our life?
 - What would change if we did?
- How do we begin to live in light of God's providential care?

I will use the Heidelberg to help me define and to stir our imaginations around what providence really means, and the mysterious nature of it. I will talk a little about the importance of prayer stories, and how staying in the story is how we begin to live in the beauty yet mysterious truth of God's providence.

- How do your prayer stories cause you to enjoy the mystery of God's providence?
- Why are we still suspicious of God as our loving Father and King?

Communion Table Reflections -

And heading to the table I will talk about how we have been sent more signs than Saul to bolster our faith and trust in God and his care for us in Jesus. And that belief will create a solidness in our faith and practice. That is where I am at today, but hey things could change. Let me know if your liturgist has any questions.

4. **Kingdom Centered Prayer:**

1. Praise the Lord that he upholds and rules everything by his eternal counsel and providence, as my Father.
2. Where have you lived as if he is not concerned or active in your life, that he does not see you or care for you? Where have you become prayer less?
3. Thank the Lord that underneath every story going on in my life both good and bad is my Good Shepherd holding me, directing me, and ordering all things so that I will get more of Him and become more like Him.
4. Ask the Lord to help develop an eye for His work in your life as to make you a more grateful person.

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5. **Mission: How does God's providence encourage and fuel you in your mission?**

26 Q. A. What do you believe when you say, "I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth"?

That the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who out of nothing created heaven and earth and everything in them, who still upholds and rules them by his eternal counsel and providence, is my God and Father because of Christ the Son. I trust God so much that I do not doubt he will provide whatever I need for body and soul and will turn to my good whatever adversity he sends upon me in this sad world. God is able to do this because he is almighty God and desires to do this because he is a faithful Father.

27 Q. What do you understand by the providence of God?

A. The Almighty and ever-present power of God by which God upholds, as with his hand, heaven and earth and all creatures, and so rules them that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and lean years, food and drink, health and sickness, prosperity, and poverty— all things, in fact, come to us not by chance but by his fatherly hand.

Think you through your week and the adventures of this season of your life.

- What reflections, relationships or circumstances cause you to have confidence in God's providence?
- What reflections, relationships or circumstances cause you to doubt His love and care for you?