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### Paul's First Missionary Journey, part 4

W. O. Vaught

*Ouachita Baptist University*

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THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY  
(Continued)

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS  
NUMBER 51  
ACTS 13:22-23

Dr. W. O. Vaught, Jr.  
Immanuel Baptist Church  
Little Rock, Arkansas

ACTS 13:22-23 "And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will. Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus"

We have before us two of the statements Paul made in his sermon preached in the synagogue of Antioch in Pisidia. The story of the lives of King Saul and David gave us a vivid contrast. One knew Bible doctrine and the other did not. One lived by Bible doctrine and the other did not. Both of these men were believers. Each one had a human soul. This means each had self-consciousness, mentality, volition, emotion, and an old sin nature. So both of these men had identical characteristics in their soul. Both also had a human spirit. One had the Word of God in his human spirit and the other was void of the Word of God in his human spirit. Both of these men at a certain time in their lives were said to have been indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Both were described as very handsome men. But one succeeded and the other failed miserably. The real difference was Bible doctrine in their minds. One had his mind filled with the Word of God while the other was almost void of any of the truth of the Word of God. King Saul had mental attitude sins. He was full of envy. He operated on the basis of works. He had pseudo love and never did fulfill the plan of God for his life. He was perpetually carnal and died the sin unto death as described in 1 John 5:16. The phrase "When he had removed him" refers to the fact that God personally had to step in and remove King Saul from being king over the nation. Because of envy and pride and ego, King Saul failed to understand God's grace and this is why God had to remove him.

Read 1 CHRONICLES 10:13 "So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it;" This verse describes the sin of King Saul. He was guilty of many sins, but the sins that removed him from being king are summed up in the phrase "Against the Word of the Lord". He was never interested in the Word of the Lord. In fact, he was totally disinterested in it and for this reason he failed. He was ignorant of the Word of God, therefore he never understood the grace of God and consequently never understood the plan of God for his life. So here is an analogy. God has a plan for your life, but you can never understand the will of God or carry out the will of God for you unless you know Bible doctrine. It is just that simple.

If you don't know Bible doctrine, you will fail--if you know Bible doctrine and apply it to your life, you will succeed. Knowing Bible truth gives you a basis for the solution of every problem you have. So King Saul died for his transgressions and the Word of God which he did not keep.

1 CHRONICLES 10:14 "And enquired not of the Lord: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse." This verse explains how God brought on him the sin unto death. He simply refused to live by the Word of God and instead went to the witch in the cave at Endor for information. You simply can't substitute demon information for information from the Word of God.

2 TIMOTHY 4:7-8 "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Here Paul gives the reason for his own death. "I have kept the faith...and I have finished my course...". This simply means that he had lived by the Word of God and that his work had been finished. So when his work was finished he died.

King Saul in the Old Testament died the sin unto death because he refused to obey the Word of God, and his namesake and counterpart in the New Testament, Saul of Tarsus, lived by the Word of God and died when his work was finished. Both were from the Tribe of Benjamin, and both had a great opportunity--the difference in each was the Word of God.

You see, believers die because their work is finished. Or they die to glorify God. Or sometimes, because of disobedience, they die the sin unto death as direct discipline from God.

For forty years King Saul ruled but he superimposed his negative volition over against God's positive volition and refused to live by Bible truth. So all God could do was to discipline him with the sin unto death. Saul committed suicide, fell on his own sword. But he really died of negative volition. He lived a life of self-induced misery, a life minus Bible doctrine.

Just contrary to this kind of life we see Saul of Tarsus. He also served for a period of about forty years. He was also from the Tribe of Benjamin. But after his experience of salvation on the Damascus Road, it was Bible doctrine all the way. He lived by doctrine and gave doctrine to the world.

ACTS 13:22 "And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will." King David also ruled for forty years. But even though he had an old sin nature and sinned often, he gave to the world one of the greatest examples we have in history of a Christ-centered man. He also left the world some of its finest literature, and many of the Psalms he wrote have never been surpassed.

The words "He raised up" refers to how God raised up David at a time when the nations needed moral leadership most. God raised up David. They had had forty years of the negative volition of wicked King Saul and now God raised up David to lead the nations back to God. David is said to have been a man after God's own heart. David faithfully studied the Word of God three times a day, morning, noon and night. We know this from his testimony in the Psalms. David was oriented to the Word of God and the grace of God.

"Unto them" is the dative of advantage. It was to the advantage of the people of the nation that God raised up David.

Now we are to get God's estimate of David. We read, "I have found". God found David to be a prepared man. Since his early youth, David talked and walked with God and filled his mind with Bible truth. Notice it says, "I have found a man". The usual word for man in Greek is "Anthropos". But the word used here is "Andra" and means man in the noble sense. A man with the Word of God in his mind. The words "After mine own heart" means a man according to the norm and standard of God's standard. Now God knew that David was going to sin, but God also knew that David would repent, rebound and pick himself up and move on. In other words, David is the standard of what a man ought to be. David failed often but he always recovered. Read Psalm 32 or 38 or 51 or 89 and you will discover the secret David had in repentance and rebound. How could God take a man who sinned like David did and yet say of him, "He is a man after mine own heart"? Yet this is what happened and he became one of the greatest believers of all times.

Look for a moment at the sins of David.

1. David told a lie. 1 Samuel 21:1-10 and 22:18-20. Because of the lie he told, a whole city was wiped out and many died. But once David realized his sin, he sought forgiveness and got up and started over again. He didn't mope and cry, but rather repented and rebounded.
2. David feigned madness. 1 Samuel 21:11-18. The Philistines invaded and killed thousands and David feigned madness in order to save his own life. Many at Gath were killed as a result of his action.
3. David failed in responsibility. 2 Samuel 11:1  
Instead of leading his troops into battle he stayed at home and as a result he fell into sin.
4. David committed adultery and murder. 2 Samuel 11.  
Most believers would really fall apart here and would never recover. But David repented and God forgave him and he started over again. He moved on and never looked back.
5. In this instance David did not honor the Word of God. 2 Samuel 6:1-13  
God had told in his word how to handle the Ark of the Covenant and David disregarded the Word of God and some died as a result of his disobedience.
6. David ignored the promises of God on this occasion. 1 Chronicles 21  
God had told David that he would make the nation as "The sand of the sea" but David ignored it and took a census to discover the real strength of the nation. David was checking up on God and it was an act of direct disobedience.
7. He failed to forgive his son Absalom.  
As a result there was the Absalom rebellion and many died.

But the principle in all these events is this--he never let his sins defeat him. He confessed his sins, picked himself up and moved on. He named his sins to God, he didn't cry over them, get emotional over them, or fall apart because of them. He confessed them and then started over again. You see, David was a man of honor and truth. David knew the meaning of the Levitical offerings and he knew that one day Christ would come and die on the cross for all the sins of the world. He understood the meaning of the Passover and the real significance of the brazen altar. David didn't try to make it up to God for the sins he had committed. David rested on the grace of God and didn't try to make it up to God with human good. The Lord was more real to David than anything else in the world, even his own terrible failures. You see, David lived by Bible doctrine. You see, you can have all kinds of so-called Christian experiences, you can feel sorry for your sins, you can cry, you can dedicate, or try to make it up to God for all you have done, and yet all of this doesn't mean a thing. The only way you can ever come to know God is through Bible doctrine and once you know doctrine then you have a basis on which to live.

The Bible refers to David again and again as a man like unto Christ. It compares all other kings to him in such words as, "Like thy father David". The grace of God operated in David's life. You see, there is no sin in your life too great for the grace of God. We have a hymn called "Grace Greater Than All Our Sin" and this is Scripturally correct. No sin, no disaster, no trouble is too great for God. This principle is stated in 1 Corinthians 2:16, and though that verse was written many centuries after David's time, David lived on that principle.

Then this verse goes on to say, "A man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will". That is one of the greatest statements in all the Bible about a man. David did the will of God. Yes, he sinned, and he sinned terribly. But he repented and God forgave him and lifted him up. God cannot tolerate sin, but neither can God tolerate human good. "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags in his sight." Isaiah 64:6. God cannot stand anything connected with the old sin nature.

King Saul lived out his whole life under the influence of his old sin nature and, three times with great sincerity, he told David that he was sorry he had tried to kill him--but he didn't mean it and went right back to his old pattern of hatred and bitterness again.

REBOUND IS A LICENSE TO SERVE. REBOUND IS NOT A LICENSE TO SIN. This was the impact of the life of David on the nation.

ACTS 13:23 "Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus". "Of this man's seed" introduces the Lord Jesus Christ.

David was a man according to the norm or standard of the mind of God. Jesus Christ is going to be the same kind of a person, according to the norm or standard of the perfect promises of God. God sustained David in the disasters of his life, and God sustained Jesus in the disasters of his life. When Jesus went to the cross and God forsook him and the Holy Spirit forsook him, it was one thing that sustained him--  
THE WORD OF GOD.

So here is a parallel--

David lived by the Word of God and did God's will.

Jesus Christ lived by the Word of God and did God's will.

David is one man who truly loved God and did it on the basis of Bible truth. This is the great truth Paul presented in his sermon to the Jews in the synagogue that day in Antioch in Pisidia.