

Is God Listening?

Robert Lupo

King Saul was a serious disappointment. When we are introduced to him in 1 Samuel 9, he was impressive in his own right. Although Saul didn't come from a great tribe of Israel, he had a powerful father, and he became the tallest and most handsome man in Israel.

But Saul wasn't just impressive to look at. Saul also had a great sense of duty and humility. When his father lost his prized donkeys, Saul diligently looked for them. Eventually, he inquired of Samuel to seek his advice as a man of God. There, he learned of God's plans for him to become king. His response was to ask 'why him?' (1 Sam. 9:21). And when it came time for him to be anointed, he didn't rush to take power but was found hiding (1 Sam. 10:22).

However, it wasn't long before the humble, obedient Saul became the Saul we are more familiar with. Eventually, he let his fears and pride consume his every action. He profaned the sacrifice, disobeyed God's command to destroy the Amalekites, and sought to murder David over and over again. Saul lost God's favor. In 1 Samuel 15:11, God declared, "I greatly regret that I have set up Saul as king, for he has turned his back on Me..."

Saul had made himself as far from God as he could possibly be. So, when the Philistines rose up against him and he knew he was in trouble, he went back to Samuel, the man of God who helped all those years ago. However, Samuel was dead, and so Saul sought a witch to conjure his spirit. But Samuel's response wasn't what Saul wanted to hear. Samuel said, "So why do you ask me, seeing the Lord has departed from you and has become your enemy?" (1 Sam. 28:16). Saul wanted good news from God, but God was no longer listening.

Many of us are familiar with the verse from James 5:16, "The effective fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." It is one of the greatest blessings of being a Christian. However, what does this imply about an unrighteous man? Proverbs 15:29 tells us that instead of hearing his prayers, "The Lord is far from the wicked..." If we stop living for God, He will stop hearing our prayers.

Many Christians have a life that looks like Saul's. We follow God's words, and He answers all of our prayers. At some point, we allow sin to reenter our lives. We make a few moral compromises here and there, but God still seems to be listening. So, we make more compromises. Eventually, we find ourselves living a life no different from the world except for one thing: before we lay our head on our pillow, we say our prayer and ask for God's help. If we stop listening to God, we should not be surprised when He responds, "Why do you ask Me?"

Our Sick

- Brooke has an appointment on Wednesday.
- Barney is back home.
- Alice Wright has been moved to Shady Oaks for rehab. Room 117.

There are several with continuing health struggles that need our prayers: Barney Barnes, Treva Atkins, Janie Flynn, Margie Busch, Charlotte Cochran, Ted Clarke, Tiffany Flynn, Heather Melton, Brooke Tate, Carolyn Smith, Jayce Haven, Bob and Joan Simers, Wanda Carter, Coy Stark, Buddy and Alice Lou Wright, and Barbara Madison.

Announcements

- Men’s Class will meet today in the auditorium at 5:00.
- The new quarter for Bible classes will begin today.
- There will be a baby shower for Michael and Baylee Greenstreet tonight after services. Hostesses are Regina Caldwell, Taylor Kimball, Andrea Nicholson, Ashlyn Powell, and Meghan Thompson.
- There will be a 65 & Older Holiday next Sunday, Dec. 14th after morning services at Jerry & Kim’s. A signup sheet is posted in the foyer.

Youth News

- Girl’s Class will meet today 5:00.
- Pew Packers will meet today at 5:40.

Children’s Home Items - sweetened condensed milk, cereal, cocoa powder, hamburger helper, salad dressing, light bulbs – The next pick-up will be **Feb. 16**.

Nursing Home - Mary Busch, Charles French, Dana Mills, Wilma Rogers

Works We Support

Stacy & Kathy Ferguson and Nathaniel & Rachel Ferguson - **Pacific Islands Bible College**
Zachariah Lockhart - **Memphis School of Preaching**
Fulton County Gospel News

Elders

Kevin Hedden
(417) 280-6709
Derek Hufstedler
(417) 280-6002
Steve Simers
(870) 625-7648

Deacons

Jeremy Allen
(417) 867-3375
Robert Cox
(870) 219-4993
Jeff Lancaster
(417) 372-1702
Monty Ragsdale
(870) 710-2596
Reggie Richardson
(870) 243-2302
Keith Rose
(870) 966-4399
Jay Towell
(417) 274-0180

Preacher

Barry O’Dell
(870) 710-1043

Serving In Worship Next Sunday

Opening Prayer - Don Powell

Song Leader - Stan Caldwell

Worship Prayer - Derek Hufstedler

Scripture - Coltin Powell

Romans 5:6-8

North Side

Jay Towell
Gavin Sims
Jeremy Allen

South Side

Forrest Rose
Robert Cox
Joe Henry

Closing Prayer - Steve Simers

Live Stream - Collin Powell

Paperless Hymnal - Reece Ragsdale

Sunday Night

Worship Prayer - Jeff Lancaster

Scripture - Remington Richardson

Matthew 13:41-43

Closing Prayer - Joe Flynn

Wednesday Night

Opening Prayer - Zack Flynn

Closing Prayer - Jeremy Allen

Serving in December - **Announcements** - Stan Caldwell **Counter** - Braden Hufstedler
Food Committee - Holly Lancaster & Emily Richardson **Deacon** - Jeremy Allen

Serving In Worship Next Sunday

Opening Prayer - Raymond Owsley

Song Leader - Kevin Hedden

Worship Prayer - Garet O’Dell

Scripture - Jacob Simers

North Side

Tony Kerley
Reggie Richardson
Jerry Johnson

South Side

Jerry French
Tim Tate
Danny Busch

Closing Prayer - Reece Ragsdale

Live Stream - Monty Ragsdale

Paperless Hymnal - Remington Richardson

Sunday Night

Worship Prayer - Collin Powell

Scripture - Brice Thompson

Closing Prayer - Darren Richardson

Wednesday Night

Opening Prayer - Robert Cox

Closing Prayer - Gavin Sims