



*Honing in on the Heart!’ Sermon Series*

**Sermon #35:**

***‘Who has your Best Interest at Heart?’***

Wednesday, November 20th, 2024

***Last week in ‘Honing in on the Heart:***

- Last week Pastor Steve did a great job of bringing us into 1st Samuel 8.
  - Last week, Pastor Steve did a great job of looking at Hearts of Fire, as we studied Johnathan’s heart, and then Saul’s heart.

***‘Who has your best interest at Heart?’***

***1st Samuel 8:17-30***

**Sermon in a Sentence:**

***Here we find that people who do not have your best interest at heart have a plotting, perverted, and preying nature.***

**Intro:**

- As human beings, it can be hard for us to discern and determine who really actually has our best interest at heart.
  - ***Just think about it, at every turn in our world it seems someone is trying to scam you, or get the best of you in one way shape, or form.***
    - Many times when I do any kind of personal business, I do it with a recommendation from a family member or friend who also trusts that person or business.
    - ***We live in a world where it’s very hard to trust others for fear of being taken advantage of.***
      - ***As we are getting ready to see in our text, the Bible times are no different. Saul was getting ready to take advantage of David’s youth to the point of trying to get him killed...***
- ***\*Illustration\****
  - In 1938, a man by the name of Bernie Madoff was born in New York City. He was the grandson of Jewish immigrants.
  - He married the daughter of a wealthy accountant and began working in his office in the early 1960s as a stock trader.
    - ***In the early 1960s, he began a small investment company where he would***

**handle people's money, and invest it for them.**

- Over the years, he maintained what became a large stock trading business that was legally legit and did things above board.
  - ***In the same building where his stock trading business was, his investment handling business was on the 17th floor.***
- ***What started in the 1960s as a side job, quickly became a multi-billion dollar fraudulent business.***
  - By the 1990s, many people wanted to invest their funds with Bernie Madoff because of the returns he was getting consistently for his clients.
    - ***But that's just it, he wasn't investing their money at all. He was running a panzi scheme...***
      - A Panzi scheme is where you take people's money, don't invest it, and then give the money to other people that are wanting to take their money out...
- ***Who was investing with Bernie?***
  - Since Bernie was a Jew by ethnicity and the son of Jewish immigrants, most wealthy Jews, especially in Palm Beach

Florida, wanted to invest their money with Bernie Madoff.

- They trusted him, because they thought since he was one of them (a Jew), that they could trust him.
- ***It wasn't until the stock market crash of 2008, where everyone wanted their money back, and Bernie didn't have it (since he wasn't really investing it anyway), that Bernie told his sons, who then took him to the police.***
  - In 2009 Bernie Madoff was sentenced to 150 years in prison... He died in federal prison in NC in 2021...
- ***It is believed that over Bernie Madoff took over 65 Billion Dollars from his clients. Only 4.2 Billion of that has been recovered and returned to some of the victims...***
  - Many people lost their entire life savings and their livelihood from the Panzi scheme of Bernie Madoff.
  - ***Church family, not everyone who says they have your best interests at heart, actually does....***
    - ***Tonight in our passage of scripture, we are going to study by looking at Saul, how we can detect someone from scripture, who does not have our best interests at heart.***

- This is yet another reason why I love verse-by-verse preaching, we can't skip over this, and I believe God wants us as believers to be strong and not to be taken advantage of.

- ***In this text, we are going to look at three qualities that are present in someone who doesn't actually have our best interests at heart...***

***\*Read 1st Samuel 18:17-30\****

***Question to Ask:***

***How does this passage show us the qualities of someone who does not have your best interest at heart?***

***Truth #1: They have a Plotting Nature. (vv. 17-19)***

- ‘Then Saul said to David, “Here is my elder daughter Merab. I will give her to you for a wife. Only be valiant for me and fight the LORD's battles.” For Saul thought, “Let not my hand be against him, but let the hand of the Philistines be against him.” **18** And David said to Saul, “Who am I, and who are my relatives, my father's clan in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?” **19** But at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, she was given to Adriel the Meholathite for a wife.’

- ***One thing about Saul that has definitely been evident in our study of 1st Samuel, is that he was always plotting.***

- For anyone who ever got any attention apart from himself, he was plotting to take them down, and the same is true with David...

- ***If you are trying to figure out if someone actually has your best interest at heart or not, look at how their mind works, their thought process.***

- It seems, especially in this passage tonight, that Saul was always scheming. Always working on the next ‘thing’.

- ***Someone who does not have your best interest at heart will not stop until they see your downfall...***

- We see the Plotting nature of Saul unfold in verses 17-19 in **3** distinct ways...

- ***The Deception. (v. 17)***

- ‘Then Saul said to David, “Here is my elder daughter Merab. I will give her to you for a wife. Only be valiant for me and fight the LORD's battles.” For Saul thought, “Let not my hand be against him, but let the hand of the Philistines be against him.”
- ***Back in 1st Samuel 17, we were told that whoever slayed Goliath, would get to marry the King's daughter. (1st Samuel 17:25)***

- Now it would seem that Saul is coming through on the promise to David here, but that's not the case.
  - *In Israel, there was a historical precedent that existed to gain entrance into a royal family. Work or money had to be paid to the royal family, in order to enter into it through marriage.*
    - For example, in Genesis 29:15-19, Jacob had to work to pay the 'bride price' for a wife.
  - *Saul doesn't come through on his promise of his daughter as a reward, instead, he puts a stipulation.*
    - Saul's willing to waive the 'bride price' on one condition: ***Only be valiant for me and fight the LORD's battles.***
    - The narrator of Samuel reveals Saul's reasoning, and it takes us into the dark depths of Saul's mind.... The purpose of his plotting...
      - ***For Saul thought, "Let not my hand be against him, but let the hand of the Philistines be against him."***
  - *I can only imagine that Saul is still eaten up from what the women of Israel were singing in 1st Samuel 18:7...*
- "Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands."
  - Saul can't be happy that God used David to take care of Goliath (notice that Saul wasn't willing to go and fight Goliath).
    - ***Someone who doesn't have your best interest at heart will not be happy for you when you succeed in life.***
      - Why? They are privately plotting in private to take you down...
  - Essentially what Saul is doing is that he wants David to go and fight in battle whenever he is called upon, so that he (saul), doesn't have to kill him, but that the Philistines will do that part for him...
    - ***Talk about plotting and deception...***
  - Stephen J. Andrews said ***'Saul put no time limit on the service. If David accepted, Saul could dictate what David would be required to do.'***
    - In Saul's mind, the more time David spent on the battlefield, the higher likelihood that he would be killed.
  - To make it even worse, Saul uses the name of the Lord to entice David.
    - ***David was so loyal to God as we've already seen, we know He will fight the battle for the Lord, regardless of what Saul's proposed stipulations...***

- But Saul seeks to use his knowledge that David is close with God, to entice him to accept this offer.
- How evil to use the Lord’s name to try and get the Lord’s servant (David), killed.
  - *Saul’s fear of David and his popularity twisted his mind even further.*
    - *This is a warning to us: Don’t let your obsession or fear of others change who you are and how you treat others...*
- The deception of Saul’s offer is real....
- ***The Decline. (v. 18)***
  - ‘And David said to Saul, “Who am I, and who are my relatives, my father's clan in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?”
  - David seemingly still very humble, responds with *‘Who am I?’*
    - I think David was sincere, in that he did not feel his family genealogy was worth the King’s Oldest Daughter in marriage (the King’s oldest daughter was the most sought after usually).
    - David probably didn’t realize the irony in his statement, but he sounded like the

younger Saul, who was chasing donkeys and hiding behind luggage back in 1st Samuel 9:21...

- ‘Saul answered, “Am I not a Benjaminite, from the least of the tribes of Israel? And is not my clan the humblest of all the clans of the tribe of Benjamin? Why then have you spoken to me in this way?”
- *David’s response in verse 18 is a decline of Saul’s offer. Not because he was afraid to fight, but because he didn’t feel he possessed the right genealogy.*
  - He felt unqualified to enter into the royal family because of this.
- To compare and contrast...

<i>Saul</i>	<i>David</i>
Wealthy Family	Non-Wealthy Family
King of Israel	Rural Shepherd boy
Benjamite Blood (1st Samuel 9:21)	Moabite Blood (Ruth 4:13-17)

- *So, David declines Saul's offer, but what would happen to Merab? The oldest of Saul's daughters...*

- **The Devastation. (v. 19)**

- 'But at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, she was given to Adriel the Meholathite for a wife.'
- Because of David's decline, she was given in marriage to another man.
  - *Adriel is only mentioned here in 1st Samuel 18:19 and in 2nd Samuel 21:8...*
- This marriage between Merab and Adriel produced 5 sons...
  - But, they would be punished because of the lingering sin of their grandfather...
- 'The king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bore to Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of Merab<sup>[a]</sup> the daughter of Saul, whom she bore to Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite; 9 and he gave them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them on the mountain before the LORD, and the seven of them perished together. They were put to death in the first days of harvest, at the beginning of barley harvest.' 2nd Samuel 21:8-9
  - *Saul's sin kept leading to devastation in his own family...*

**Truth #2: They have a Perverted Nature. (vv. 20-25)**

- 'Now Saul's daughter Michal loved David. And they told Saul, and the thing pleased him. 21 Saul thought, "Let me give her to him, that she may be a snare for him and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him." Therefore Saul said to David a second time,<sup>[b]</sup> "You shall now be my son-in-law." 22 And Saul commanded his servants, "Speak to David in private and say, 'Behold, the king has delight in you, and all his servants love you. Now then become the king's son-in-law.'" 23 And Saul's servants spoke those words in the ears of David. And David said, "Does it seem to you a little thing to become the king's son-in-law, since I am a poor man and have no reputation?" 24 And the servants of Saul told him, "Thus and so did David speak." 25 Then Saul said, "Thus shall you say to David, 'The king desires no bride-price except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, that he may be avenged of the king's enemies.'" Now Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.'
- We just saw how Saul was plotting against David, now we get to see his perverted nature persists in verses 20-25.
  - Saul is going to make another offer to David, very similar to the first, but with a small little twist on it.
  - It all gets going on with another of Saul's daughters, Michal.

- There are **3** things to point out with the perverted nature of Saul.
- **Pushy Love. (vv. 20-21)**
  - ‘Now Saul’s daughter Michal loved David. And they told Saul, and the thing pleased him. **21** Saul thought, “Let me give her to him, that she may be a snare for him and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him.” Therefore Saul said to David a second time,<sup>[b]</sup> “You shall now be my son-in-law.”
  - Nowhere in these verses are we told that David loved Michal, we are just told that Michal loves David.
    - **Saul finds out that his other daughter, Michal, loved David and plans to use that to his advantage.**
    - **Verse 21 takes us back to the perverted mind of Saul...**
      - ‘Saul thought, “Let me give her to him, that she may be a snare for him and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him.” Therefore Saul said to David a second time,<sup>[b]</sup> “You shall now be my son-in-law.”
  - This is the second time in this passage where we find the phrase **‘a snare for him’**

- This is strong evidence that Saul does not have the best interest at heart for David...
- One scholar made the interesting observation about Michal loving David... **‘the only instance in all biblical narrative in which we are explicitly told that a woman loves a man.’**
  - Let me remind you that it is Biblical that the man seek the woman. Not vice versa.
- **But since Saul’s original idea of Merab didn’t work, he goes to plan B which is Michal.**
  - The Hebrew word that is translated to snare, is important for us to look at...
- **\*Word Study\***
  - The word snare is translated from the Hebrew word **‘Moqes’ מוֹקֵשׁ** **which literally means a snare, or trap that is intended to catch prey.**
  - This word occurs 27 times, many occurrences in the Torah, but there is theological significance in this word being used.
    - **In Exodus 23:33, Exodus 34:12, and Deuteronomy 7:16, this is same Hebrew word is used to describe the dangers of idols and idol worshippers.**

- Robert D. Bergen concluded *‘Perhaps Saul was spiritually astute enough to recognize that in marriage his daughter’s idolatrous inclinations could easily lead David astray, in which case David would become the Lord’s enemy and come to a disastrous end.’*
- That’s what Saul wants, is to destroy David anyway.
  - In [1st Samuel 19:13](#), we are told of Michal’s struggle with idolatry.
  - ‘Michal took an image[a] and laid it on the bed and put a pillow of goats’ hair at its head and covered it with the clothes.’
    - This is pushy love.
- **Persistent Offer. (v. 22-23)**
  - ‘And Saul commanded his servants, “Speak to David in private and say, ‘Behold, the king has delight in you, and all his servants love you. Now then become the king’s son-in-law.’” **23** And Saul’s servants spoke those words in the ears of David. And David said, “Does it seem to you a little thing to become the king’s son-in-law, since I am a poor man and have no reputation?”
  - **Someone who does not have your best interests at heart, will lie to you constantly.**
- In verse 22, Saul tells his servants to tell David ‘the King has delight in you.’
  - *That could not be further from the truth. The king does not like David and is actively seeking to kill him.*
    - Someone who will constantly lie to you to put you in harms way or to get what they want from you, does not have your best interest at heart.
- *The phrase ‘the king has delight in you’ would also convey to David that the King was willing to look past David’s genealogy and allow him into the royal family.*
  - In verse 23, we are told that David gives a further reason for why he is declining the offer...
    - He does not have money to pay the ‘bride price’.
    - *This would mean that Saul did not keep his earlier promise from 1st Samuel 17:25, that the slayer of Goliath would have plenty of wealth.*
  - *Perhaps David didn’t trust the offer in verse 17 that it would just be for fighting and not some kind of monetary price tag...*



- Lack of money, lack of strong genealogy, and vocation is the reason that David declines, but Saul was ready with a comeback offer...
- **Planned Response. (vv. 24-25)**
  - ‘And the servants of Saul told him, “Thus and so did David speak.” 25 Then Saul said, “Thus shall you say to David, ‘The king desires no bride-price except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, that he may be avenged of the king's enemies.’” Now Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.’
  - **Saul is a great example here of someone who doesn't have your best interests at heart and how they will plan their next response ahead of time...**
    - Saul probably knew that it had something to do with money. He hadn't fulfilled his promise of wealth to the one who killed Goliath and David was just a shepherd boy... Not getting paid much.
  - **So, Saul plainly and clearly says in verse 25 that there will be no bride price.**
    - That was not said in verse 17, though implied, could be the reason David didn't take the offer then. He didn't trust Saul if he didn't clearly say it? It's a strong possibility.

- **The offer now, is that David will kill 100 philistines and Saul yet again, adds a bit of manipulation by saying...**
  - ‘That he may be avenged of the king's enemies.’
  - **Which would have implied his patriotic duty to GET to fight for the King against his enemies.**
- Someone who does not have your best interests at heart will plan their next move based on what they think you will or will not do. Pure manipulation...
  - Tonight we've seen that people who don't have your best interest at heart have a plotting nature, perverted nature, and now we will see a preying nature...

**Truth #3: They have a Preying Nature. (vv. 26-30)**

- ‘And when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to be the king's son-in-law. Before the time had expired, 27 David arose and went, along with his men, and killed two hundred of the Philistines. And David brought their foreskins, which were given in full number to the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law. And Saul gave him his daughter Michal for a wife. 28 But when Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David, and that Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him, 29 Saul was even more afraid of David. So Saul was David's enemy continually. 30 Then the

commanders of the Philistines came out to battle, and as often as they came out David had more success than all the servants of Saul, so that his name was highly esteemed.’

- Saul has a preying nature.
  - *Not the good kind of praying, but the bad kind, the kind that seeks to kill like a hunter.*

- *Too often in our Churches today we are focused on preying on people to fall than we are praying for their successes.*

- Saul set up the challenge for him to kill 100 philistines as another trap to try and kill him, not as something that would make David even more popular... Yet again, it didn't work out in Saul's favor.
  - God had His Hand on David...
- *David Succeeds. (vv. 26-27)*
  - ‘And when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to be the king's son-in-law. Before the time had expired, 27 David arose and went, along with his men, and killed two hundred of the Philistines. And David brought their foreskins, which were given in full number to the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law. And Saul gave him his daughter Michal for a wife.’

- *What was going through Saul's mind was probably the fact that David had gotten 'lucky' the first time.*

- Saul probably thought that the small pebble killing such a big man was a fluke. Since it's evident all throughout 1st Samuel that Saul did not trust nor have faith in God.
- *So, in Saul's mind, he's going to get David with this one. In Saul's mind, there's no way that this boy can get past 100 philistine soldiers who hate him for killing Goliath.*

- *But that's just it, people that are not believers and don't have your best interests at heart do not include God into the equation that with Him all things are possible!*

- Not only does David kill 100 men, he kills double what was asked of him.

- *He went over and beyond.*

- Saul's preying plan, yet again, had failed...

- *John Woodhouse said 'Not only was David still alive and kicking, his reputation had gone up several notches, and he was about to be joined to the royal family.'*

- *Saul Stews. (vv. 28-30)*

- ‘But when Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David, and that Michal, Saul’s daughter, loved him, **29** Saul was even more afraid of David. So Saul was David’s enemy continually. **30** Then the commanders of the Philistines came out to battle, and as often as they came out David had more success than all the servants of Saul, so that his name was highly esteemed.’
- While David Succeeds, Saul is no doubt stewing over this.
  - *I’m sure that he is upset and is not happy that his plan completely backfired.*
- Verse 29 tells us that Saul is now more afraid of David than he was before, but why?
  - *People will become very afraid of you when they realize there is little to nothing that they can do to control you.*
- *This is the first time that we are told that Saul knew that the Lord was with David.*
  - Saul knows the Lord has left him, and now realizes that the Lord left him, and went to David.
  - Oh did that make him stew I’m sure.
- *Saul also knew his own children (jonathan and michal) loved David and were bonded to him.*

- This backfired with Saul again because he thought that Michal’s love for David would lead him astray.
- In Saul’s mind, David was the biggest threat to his throne...
- Which is why verse 29 also says...’So Saul was David’s enemy continually.’
  - *This will not be the last time that Saul tries to kill David, but we’ll have to wait until 2025 to dig into that...*

### Conclusion:

- Tonight we’ve been able to look at one of the best manipulators in the Bible, Saul.
  - *Sadly, many people who claim Christ today, manipulate just as much if not more than Saul.*
- Tonight’s message had a two edged sword.
  - *#1: To help us know the qualities of a person that does not have our best interests at heart.*
  - *#2: If these qualities are prevalent in your life, we must seek to cleanse ourselves and get them out.*
- *If you try to manipulate people, take advantage of them, and cheat them, there’s good news. There’s hope. You can change.*
  - You can come to Christ tonight. You can ask Him to cleanse you. You can ask Him to make you whole.

- Maybe tonight you weren't aware that the Bible listed out qualities in this passage of someone who didn't have David's best intentions at heart...
  - I encourage you to memorize these three qualities and always be aware...
    - **Truth #1: *They have a Plotting Nature.***  
*(vv. 17-19)*
    - **Truth #2: *They have a Perverted Nature.***  
*(vv. 20-25)*
    - **Truth #3: *They have a Preying Nature.***  
*(vv. 26-30)*