

Repentant & Committed To Enter (But Later Disqualified)

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When we commit our life to God, we enter a 'spiritual race'. After qualifying via humbly repenting in prayer before God, however, it is then possible through one's wrong choices, unScriptural decisions, a lack of spiritual growth, and so, moving away from a position of trust on God, or as (Matt. 13:22 warns us all) *"the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches,"*..(can choke the Word and we can become disqualified).

Just as there are rules for competing in a race set up by man; so, we also have Scriptural guidelines when we commit ourselves to running in that 'spiritual race' toward a prize of God's Heavenly calling. (1 Cor. 9:24-27) *"Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown."* *"Therefore, I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus, I fight: not as one who beats the air."* (the apostle said), *"But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified."*

[Jesus instructed that we should 'strive' to enter the Kingdom of Heaven via the narrow path to a narrow Heavenly Gate.] And, God's Word calls for us to make progress in a Christ-like life, and that we need to bear 'spiritual fruit', (lest we become disqualified). (Matt.7: 18-20) *"A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them."*

We run the Christian race for an 'eternal prize'. That eternal prize is eternal life! So

(Heb.12:1) encourages us all, *"And let us run with patient endurance the race that lies before us"* (a race that leads to God's eternal Kingdom)!

And Jesus assured us of His Father in Heaven's desire for each one of us (Luke 12:32) *"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."* His kingdom is entered only by real faith and trust on the Atonement sacrifice of His Son, via faith that endures. (Luke 18:17) *"Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein."*

(Again, the apostle said) *"But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified."* (These clear and direct Scripture verses, leave no room for any 'once saved, always saved' doctrine in the true Christian life!)

No one can afford to let the devil deceive them, by distorting the 'principles of trust' concerning God's full Truth. We need to recognize 'false teachers' by the fruit of their false teaching (Matt.7:20)..which is no faith and no trust on God for anything in life, (but rather, to always be dependent on Satan's plans and policies as are set up by man.)

King Saul had begun the race well, but he ended in serious defeat. His life is a warning for all (Gal.6:7) that *"God is not mocked; for what a man may sow—that also he shall reap."*

Samson and other judges had been ruling the nation of Israel, and God also spoke to the people through prophets like Samuel. (which was before God sent His Holy Spirit to this earth to guide His people, those who would believe in and trust on His Son Jesus, who sacrificed His life that we may have life [only through our enduring faith on the work that He did for us, and no dependence on any works of our own, but just obedient faith on Him.])

That arrangement of Sampson and other judges appointed by God, had worked well, but the Israelites wanted a king. The prophet Samuel asked God, (1 Samuel 8:7-8) *"And the LORD told him: 'Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king."* *"Ever since I brought them from Egypt, they have continually forsaken me and followed other gods."* Those backsliding Israelites wanted to trust on some-thing (an idol), or someone that they could see to trust on, instead of trusting on an unseen 'God in Heaven'!

Their prayer should have been—'*If our request is not Your will, O- Lord, please reveal it and overrule it.*'

King Saul had seemed qualified to do 'good things' for Israel, but he ignored 'God's commands', acted foolishly, and was later disqualified. It is all too easy for a good beginning to become a tragic ending. (1 Sam.9:1-2) 'Kish', "*had a son named Saul, an impressive young man without equal among the Israelites—a head taller than any of the others.*"

God often calls people when they are doing very mundane tasks. Saul was looking for his father's animals when God selected him as king; Moses was tending sheep when he heard God speak from a burning bush; Elisha was plowing a field when he was told he would take Elijah's place; and David was running an errand, when he was inspired by God to conquer Goliath. God said to Samuel (1 Samuel 9:16) "*I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin. Anoint him to be the leader of my people, Israel.*"

God then told Saul; (1 Samuel 10:6) "*The Spirit of the LORD will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man.*" God was with him, and (1 Sam.10:26 says) "*Saul also went home to Gibeah; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched.*" (Saul had started the race, right, but 'wrong decisions' cost him his 'soul'.)

A first test came when the Ammonites surrounded an Israeli city. The wicked King Nahash ordered the people of Israel to surrender, but (1-Sam. 11:1 says) that "*the citizens of Jabesh asked for peace. 'Make a treaty with us, and we will be your servants,' they pleaded.*" Nahash wanted to disgrace them, so (1 Sam.11:3) the elders said, "*Give us seven days so we can send messengers throughout Israel; if no one comes to rescue us, we will surrender to you.*"

(1 Sam.11:6) "*When Saul heard their words, the Spirit of God came upon him in power, and he burned with anger.*" With God's help, the enemy was defeated. Some of the men wanted to get back at those Israelites who did not support Saul, but the king said (1 Sam.11:13), "*No one shall be put to death today, for this day the LORD has rescued Israel.*" (Again, King Saul had started the race well.)

God warned (1 Sam.12:) "*Here is the king whom you have chosen and whom you have*

desired. And take note, the LORD has set a king over you. If you fear the LORD and serve Him, and obey His voice, and do not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then both you and the king who reigns over you, will continue following the LORD your God. However, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then the hand of the LORD will be against you, as it was against your fathers."

The condition spiritually of 'life's race' that lies before us, is, to trust and obey God, do what He says; follow His precepts; trust on His power by faith, and 'all will be well with you'. (Hebr.12:1-2) "*Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, Who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the 'throne of God.'*" [He, Jesus Christ, is the perfect example for each and every one of us to follow, and to also be led to His Kingdom!]

If they (Israel) rebelled and disobeyed, they would reap what they sowed. (Gal.6:7) "*Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.*" (After Saul rebelled in one thing, it led to his disobeying many things.)

Another test came when the Philistine army had mounted an attack. Saul prepared to defend, but his troops were fearful and (1 Sam.13:8-11) "*rapidly slipping away. So, he demanded, 'Bring me the burnt offering and the peace offerings!' And Saul sacrificed the burnt offering himself.*" "*Just as Saul was finishing with the burnt offering, Samuel arrived. Saul went out to meet and welcome him, but Samuel said, 'What is this you have done?'*" (The king (Saul) 'did not have Scriptural authority' to do that.

Saul tried to explain, but the prophet of God said (1 Sam.13:13-14) "*How foolish! You have disobeyed the command of the LORD your God. Had you obeyed, the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your dynasty must end, for the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart.*" (God knew that the king's heart had already turned away from Him, in unbelief, so, a successor was already chosen.)

Saul, however, was determined to follow his own rules. Little sins can easily lead to big ones. After disobeying God with the sacrifice, the king is told to destroy the Amalekites—completely. But Saul just partially obeyed, and he brought back some of the livestock (as well as their king). When the prophet Samuel confronted Saul, Saul then tried to excuse his disobedience again—(saying) *‘I planned on giving it all to the Lord—that is why I brought some back.’*

(1 Sam.15:22-23) *“Samuel said: ‘Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the Word of the LORD, ‘He’ also has rejected you from being king”* (Saul also became disqualified in the race to ‘Eternal Life’! (and ended his own life in suicide).

It could be like an unfaithful friend who betrays our confidence and re-tells an important confidence that we had shared only with them. They ‘say’ that it will not happen again, but if it does happen again (and again), they are simply not a true friend. .. In the same way many people claim to be followers of Christ, but do not live by His teaching— they are simply not true followers. (Luke 6:46 Jesus said) *“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?”*

God is pleased with our words or our songs, when they are from a ‘sincere heart’, that will trust and obey. (John 15:14) *“You are my friends if you ‘do what I command.”* (1 Cor.7:19) *“Obedience to God’s commandments is everything.”*

It is good to glorify God with our words or music, or to witness for Christ via our humble appearance, but the verse keeps coming back: KJV 1 Samuel 15:22 *“to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.”* True worship is about a ‘willing heart’ that truly desires to trust God in believing faith for all things in this life. If our ‘outward life’ contradicts our ‘inward heart attitude’, God would have to say to us (Amos 5:23) *“Take away from Me the noise of your songs, For I will not hear the melody of your stringed instruments.”*

So, our ‘prayer of repentance’ should be as King David’s (Psalm 51: 10) *“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right [steadfast]*

spirit within me.” King Saul went on from bad to worse and eventually tried to take David’s life. After Samuel the prophet had passed away, Saul consulted a witch to make contact with him.

Later, when realizing he was defeated in battle, Saul committed suicide and met the fate of all unrepentant murderers. Saul was defeated via his pride and dissident rebellion, and lack of obedient faith on God’s Word, and so, disqualified from the ‘spiritual race’ to ‘Eternal Life’ (that race that is set before each one of us). [Saul had challenged the authority of God’s own Words through the prophet Samuel.]

We are all reminded and admonished from (Gal.3:1-4) *“You foolish Galatians!”* (the apostle admonished them), *“Answer me this one question, “Is it on the ground of your obedience to the Law that you received the Spirit, or is it because, when you heard, you believed?” Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now going to reach perfection through what is external? Have you endured such sufferings to no purpose—if indeed it has been to no purpose?”*

A summation of King Saul’s life could be quoted from his own words (1 Samuel 26:21) *“I have played the fool and erred exceedingly.”* He ‘started well’, but ‘ended tragically’. The apostle also queried (Gal.5:7) *“You were running a good race. Who cut in on you and kept you from obeying the Truth?”* Saul was disqualified in life’s race because he allowed envy to become pride, and, which led to anger, dissident rebellion, and murder.

Saul chose his own ways, rejected God’s Word, made serious mistakes, and never corrected those wrong decisions. He started okay, but he began to ignore what God had plainly instructed. We cannot pick and choose what parts of Bible teaching we like (and dispense with or ignore the others). [Jesus gave us many verses of assuring and encouraging Promises, as well as many verses of admonition and warning. We need to comprehend and give the whole counsel of God in our words and actions, as Jesus inspired apostle Paul to declare for the benefit all of us! We are to obey God in small things of not misplacing our trust, so they do not become big sins of unbelief, then our life as guided by God’s Word and the direction of the Holy Spirit, can become that Light for others to see and follow in their own ‘spiritual race’ to

'Eternal Life', (and as Jesus told us that we should be). (Matt.5:16) *"Just so let your light shine before all men, in order that they may see your holy lives and may give glory to your Father who is in Heaven."* (Via our Christlike decisions and actions, we become a Light and witness to others, as Jesus instructed us that we be.)

It is up to us, as an individual believer, to make 'right choices', to 'run the race well', and to 'play by the rules of God's Word'. We are running this race (1 Cor.9:25-27) *"for an eternal prize" [which is by faith and trust on the Atonement Blood of Christ]*. (1 Cor. 9:26-27) *"That is how I run, not being in any doubt as to my goal. I am a boxer who does not inflict blows on the air, but I hit hard and straight at my own body and lead it off into slavery, lest possibly, after I have been a herald to others, I should myself be rejected."*

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