

IDOLATRY OF THE SOUL

Idolatry

April 22, 2018

Introduction: I want to stick to one story this morning. A story we are familiar with but may not have thought thru the implications this story reveals about our own lives. When faced with choices, we often either have the ability to walk with God or play God ourselves. When we presume to know what God is thinking and wanting and act upon those presumptions, it becomes idolatry of the soul – at least it did for King Saul.

Scripture: 1 Samuel 15:18-23

I. Idolatry

*"You shall have no other gods **before** me" (Exodus 20:3).*

"An idol is not an idol because of some property a particular object has;
it is an idol because we project an absolute value to it."

– Peter Rollins, *The Idolatry of God*

II. Idolatry of the Soul

A. Joshua's defeat of the Amalekites – Exodus 17:8-16

*Then **the LORD said to Moses**, "Write this as a memorial in a book and recite it in the ears of Joshua, that I will utterly **blot out the memory of Amalek** from under heaven" (Exodus 17:14).*

B. Why did God require Amalek destroyed? – Deuteronomy 25:17-19

*...he attacked you on the way when you were **faint and weary**, and cut off your tail, those who **were lagging behind you**, and **he did not fear God** (Deuteronomy 25:18).*

C. The idolatry of King Saul.

¹⁸ *"And **the Lord sent you on a mission** and said, 'Go, devote to destruction **the sinners**, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.'* ¹⁹ ***Why then did you not obey the voice of the Lord?** Why did you pounce on the spoil and do what was evil in the sight of the Lord?"* ²⁰ *And Saul said to Samuel, "**I have obeyed the voice of the Lord.** I have gone on the mission on which the Lord sent me. I have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and I have devoted the Amalekites to destruction."* ²¹ *But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the best of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the Lord your God in Gilgal."* ²² *And 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 listen than the fat of rams.**"* ²³ *For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and **presumption is as iniquity and idolatry.** Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has also rejected you from being king" (1 Samuel 15:18–23).*

D. The regret of God

¹⁰ **The word of the Lord came to Samuel:** ¹¹ ***"I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following me and has not performed my commandments." And Samuel was angry, and he cried to the Lord all night (1 Samuel 15:10–11).***

So the Lord said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for **I am sorry that I have made them**" (Genesis 6:7).

"And also the Glory of Israel will not lie or have regret, for he is not a man, that he should have regret" (1 Samuel 15:29).

And Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death, but Samuel grieved over Saul. And **the Lord regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel** (1 Samuel 15:35).

Principle: When we presume to speak or act for or against God, we become our own idol and commit idolatry.

⁷ Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud; be gracious to me and answer me! ⁸ You have said, ***"Seek my face."*** My heart says to you, ***"Your face, Lord, do I seek."*** ⁹ Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger, O you who have been my help. ***Cast me not off; forsake me not, O God of my salvation! (Psalm 27:7–9).***

Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. ***Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded (James 4:8).***

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B. Why did God require Amalek destroyed? (*Deuteronomy 25:17-19*)

C. The idolatry of King Saul. (*1 Samuel 15:18–23*)

D. The regret of God. (*1 Samuel 15:10–11*) (*Genesis 6:7*) (*1 Samuel 15:29*) (*1 Samuel 15:35*)

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(*Psalm 27:7–9*) (*James 4:8*)