

LESSON 55

Saul Disobeys the Lord

1 SAMUEL 10:1-8; 13:2-14; 15:1-23, 34-35



BIBLE TRUTH

TO OBEY GOD IS BETTER THAN SACRIFICE

LESSON SNAPSHOT

- 1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN**
Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.
- 2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN**
Read 1 Samuel 13:2–14 from the Scriptures or read story 55, “Saul Disobeys the Lord,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.
- 3. OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN**
After God’s Own Heart
- 4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN**
- 5. OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN**
Obeying on the Outside
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ interlocking plastic building blocks
 - ✓ broom
- 6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN**
- 7. ACTIVITY TIME 15 MIN**
Saul and the Sheep
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ colored pencils, crayons, and paper
- 8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN**
- 9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN**
Sin Begets Sin!
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ pencil or pens
 - ✓ paper

TOTAL 80 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

Saul disobeys God—After Samuel first anointed Saul, Samuel tells Saul step-by-step the things that are about to happen to him. It ends with Samuel telling Saul to wait seven days for him at Gilgal. There, Samuel will offer a sacrifice to God.

Saul goes to Gilgal to prepare to fight the Philistines. During the weeklong wait for Samuel to arrive, the Israelite men become afraid and begin to scatter because the Philistines are gathering an enormous army. So Saul becomes impatient and offers a sacrifice to God on behalf of the people, even though God's law says that he should not. He should have waited for God's prophet, Samuel, to offer the sacrifice.

Samuel corrects Saul—Samuel tells Saul that God is looking for a king whose motive is to do God's will, a man after God's own heart. For this king, God will establish his kingship forever. Saul showed through his disobedience to God that he was not to be this king.

After Saul disobeys again, God rejects Saul—God sends Samuel again to give Saul a step-by-step battle plan for fighting the Amalekites. The instructions are simple: strike Amalek and destroy everyone and everything, including the animals.

Saul defeats the Amalekites, but he and the people spare the Amalekite king and the best of the animals. They only destroy what is despised and worthless. God looks at what Saul has done and tells Samuel that Saul has “turned back from following me” (1 Samuel 15:11). Yet Saul tries to say he has obeyed God when clearly he has not. This represents the end of Saul's disobedient reign as king.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Peace Offering

The peace offering is sometimes called the fellowship offering. It is an offering brought to the Lord out of thanks for what he has done (Leviticus 7:11–15). This offering may be accompanied by a vow to the Lord or simply be made as an expression of thanks. For Saul to “force himself” to make a peace offering to the Lord, shows his disregard and lack of affection for the Lord.

WHERE IS JESUS?

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Read Luke 22:42.

As a king, Saul failed. One day God would anoint another Man to be king who would not fail. Even when it was difficult, Jesus (the greatest king) obeyed God. The difficult task in front of Jesus was to die on the cross (see Acts 13:22–23).

When faced with the cross, Jesus prayed to his Father in heaven saying, "not my will, but yours be done" (Luke 22:42). Saul placed his own will above God's; Jesus did not. As a result of Jesus' obedience, we have salvation through his sacrificial death.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read 1 Samuel 13:2–14 from the Scriptures or read story 55, "Saul Disobeys the Lord," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

After God's Own Heart

Read through the instructions for a peace or fellowship offering from Leviticus 7:11–15. Ask the class to describe the purpose for bringing an offering like this to the Lord. Then read 1 Samuel 13:1–13. Ask the class the following questions:

- Why was Samuel so upset with Saul for offering the peace offering?
(Samuel was upset with Saul because he had acted foolishly and did not keep the Lord's command. Samuel knew that Saul would now lose his kingdom.)

- How is Saul different from the man God wants to have in office as king?
(God wants a man after his own heart. Saul was clearly not the man.)
- Read Acts 13:22–23. Who was the man who fit this description?
(David was the one, and through David's lineage, God brought the greatest King of all, Jesus.)

TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

Obeying on the Outside

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ interlocking plastic building blocks
- ✓ broom

This skit is designed to help the children understand that mere obedience is not enough. God wants our attitudes to honor him as well. The part of the Voice is John's thoughts verbalized and should be read by a person hidden from view.

Mom: *(calling to her son)* John.
John: *(Playing with his blocks, building a tower, and looking intent; every time the voice calls his name he makes an annoyed facial expression.)*
Voice: Oh, I wanted to finish this castle.
Mom: John, I need you.
Voice: Okay, I hear you, I just need to finish.
Mom: *(going over to John)* John, didn't you hear me calling you?
John: I guess I was wrapped up in what I was doing. *(He looks down at his castle.)*
Voice: I think I will build a drawbridge next.
Mom: I need you to pick up your things and sweep the floor.
John: Can I just finish my castle?
Voice: She never lets me finish.
Mom: No, sweetheart, we have guests coming over for dinner. *(leaves the room)*
John: OK. *(starts breaking the building apart and throwing it into the block box)*
Voice: I never get to finish. It was a dumb castle anyway. Sweep the floor. Why do I always have to be the one to sweep the floor?
John: *(picks up broom and starts sweeping)*

Voice: Fine, I'll sweep the floor; I just won't get any time to play at all. I could be out playing. I could be riding my bike. I could be building castles or even doing my homework, but no, I've got to sweep the floor. Figures! Well, I might as well force myself to finish the whole floor 'cause I'll never hear the end of it if I don't sweep it all.

John: *(John finishes sweeping the floor and puts the broom away.)*

Mom: Thank you, John.

John: My pleasure.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- Did John do what he was told to do?
(Yes, John did what he was told to do though he was a bit slow in responding.)

- Did John obey on the inside?
(No, John did not obey on the inside. All the time he was doing what he was told on the outside, John was rebelling against his mother on the inside.)

- Did John obey his mother?
(No, even though John outwardly obeyed, inwardly he was disrespecting his mother.)

- How was John's halfhearted obedience like Saul's?
(Saul obeyed God on the outside for the most part, but his heart was not given to God. Even when Saul performed the sacrifice, his heart was not doing it in worship. In 1 Samuel 13:12, Saul used the same words as John: "I forced myself.")

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 15 MIN

Saul and the Sheep

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ colored pencils, crayons, and paper

Have the children draw a picture of Saul with sheep all around him.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Sin Begets Sin!

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ pencil or pens
- ✓ paper

Have the children read through 1 Samuel 15:1–24. As they read the passage, have them list as many of Saul's sins as they can find (with the verse).

1. Saul disobeyed God and took King Agag alive (verse 8).
2. Saul disobeyed God and did not devote everything to destruction; he only destroyed what was worthless (verse 9).
3. Saul set up a monument to himself instead of giving God the glory for the victory (verse 12).
4. Saul lied to Samuel and said he had performed the commandment of the Lord (carried out the Lord's instructions) when he had not (verse 13).
5. Saul said that it was the people who had spared the animals instead of taking responsibility himself (verse 15).
6. Saul lied again saying he had obeyed God when clearly he had not (verse 20).
7. Saul confessed that he did not fear God but wanted to please the people instead (verse 24).

Finally in verse 24, Saul tells the truth. He was afraid of what the people would say if he didn't allow them to keep the animals. Instead of fearing and obeying God, Saul wanted to please the people.

See if the children can think of examples from their own lives of how they sinned like Saul. Then ask them if they can tell you what the Bible tells us to do when we sin. (The answer is confess, turn away from sin, and trust in Jesus' death and resurrection.)