

## Application Guide: “Letting the Bible Study Us”

**Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>, 2004:** Kimber Kauffman, Sr. Pastor of College Park Church, presented a message on the story about Israel’s desire for a King (1 Samuel 8). To begin with, Pastor provided a short overview of 1 Samuel 1-7, chapter by chapter, describing the process Israel went through in changing from a Theocracy to a Monarchy. He challenged us to consider, not so much what we can find out about God from the story, but rather, what 1 Samuel tell us about ourselves. The bulk of this application guide will focus on some of the applicational principles that Pastor was able to elaborate on during his sermon.

1. During our opening worship time, Pastor Eric Anderson brought to our attention the last “Fruit of the Spirit”, self-control (Gal 5:23).
  - a. Why is self-control an important facet of the Christian life, and what does self-control really look like (Prv. 25:28; Prv. 29:11; Tit 2:2-5; 1 Pet. 5:8)?
  - b. What are some areas in your life on which you need to practice better self-control, and how are you going to grow in self-control in these areas (eg. eating, shopping, patience with others, anger, etc)?
2. As we begin discussing Pastor Kimber’s message, why was it wrong for Israel to want a king (see Gen. 17: 6, 17; Deut. 17:14-20; 1 Sam. 8)? Would changing the mode of leadership from a Judge to a King bring about the type of heart change that the people of Israel needed?
  - a. In light of these questions, let us consider Pastor’s 1<sup>st</sup> application by way of the quotation he provided by Dale Ralph Davis: *“We have a tendency to assess our problems mechanically rather than spiritually. Our first impulse is to assume there is something wrong in our techniques...How easy for even energetic evangelicals to look for a new gimmick rather than cry out for a new heart.”*
  - b. In your life, when do you find yourself trying to change the externals by human methods rather than going to God, desiring true repentance and heart-change?
3. App. #2 – “We are not content to cry out to God for His deliverance, but we feel we must tell God how to go about doing His saving.”
  - a. How does this tendency of *telling God what we would like Him to do*, reveal a self-focused attitude rather than an attitude that places God at the center?
  - b. How should this principle of *crying out to God for His deliverance* influence how we pray and the way we view our relationships with God?
4. App. #3 – “WARNING: God may allow you to have your way as a concession, not a gift”.
  - a. Could there possibly be things in our lives (or in our culture) that we call blessings but are actually curses?
  - b. Is America’s wealth or technology a curse? Is democracy a concession rather than a gift? Is it really a blessing living in a culture where “the pursuit of happiness” is deemed as an inalienable right? Could these “gifts” actually be things God has given us over to in order to see how hollow they are compared to an authentic relationship with him (cf. Rom. 1:21-23, 28-32; 1 Tim. 6:9-10)?

5. App. #4 – Our ideas + plans + proposals + solutions can seem completely reasonable, clearly logical, & easily plausible and yet – in reality – be utterly godless.
  - a. Can you think of a time when you went head first into planning an event or doing a ministry without spending time in prayer or first looking for God's direction (e.g. in preparation for a small group meeting, planning a vacation, or casting next year's vision at work)? What was the outcome?
  - b. How much do you rely on God's wisdom for the *daily* choices that you make?
6. App. #5 & 6 – This passage reveals to us our immunity to wisdom/aversion to holiness.
  - a. How quick are you to heed the advice and wise counsel of others? Would your closest friends call you a good listener and one who takes advice?
  - b. If you were to rate your desire for holiness on a scale of 1-10 (ten being the best), where would you be at this point in your life? How can you tell? How do you think those closest to you would rate your desire and the fruit of your life?
7. App. #7 – This passage reveals to us how stubborn we are to learn.
  - a. Pastor noted that Abraham was a man who walked by faith who often looked like a fool. In what ways in your life, do you find it easy to give up the life of faith to which God calls us (Prv. 3:5-6) and rely on human wisdom or physical objects?
  - b. When you are around others who have a teachable spirit, how is it manifested? Are you drawn towards them or away from them?
  - c. To what degree do you see yourself as having a teachable spirit? To what degree do others see a teachable spirit in you?
8. App. #8 – What praise to the Almighty that He still did not give up on His people!
  - a. Spend some time thanking God for his marvelous grace and mercy that he constantly extends to us even though we continually fail and sin against him!