

## **Saul's Leadership Failure Small Group Guide**

**Warm-up Question:** (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. Who is one person who has made a significant impact on your life? What was it that he/she did that was so impactful for you?
2. Has someone you looked up to as a "leader" in some way ever let you down? How did that effect you?

**Read the following passage:** 1 Samuel 13:5-13.

The people of Israel longed to have a king like the nations around them. Saul was identified as the one who would be the first king of Israel. However, this did not go well. From the very beginning Saul's desire to seek the approval of men over obedience to God led him to make repeated mistakes. He sought the approval of people instead of following what God had said. He performed religious rituals but lacked the heart of true devotion. He had the look of a leader but not the necessary character. This turned out to be disastrous for him personally and for the entire nation.

**Questions for Discussion** (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. Read 1 Samuel 9:1 and 1 Samuel 10:21-23. What do we notice about the incongruence between Saul's physical appearance and his character?
2. In a later example of Saul's disobedience he explains his reasoning saying, "I was afraid of the men and so I gave in to them" (1 Samuel 15:24). Proverbs 29:25 says "fearing people is a dangerous trap, but trusting the Lord means safety." In what sense is it wrong to "fear man"? Can you think of any ways in which you are tempted to fear man rather than "fear the Lord"?
3. Proverbs 31:30 says, "Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised." What implications does this have for the way we should value character over physical beauty/charm?
4. Are there character gaps that you see in your own life? Consider the following list and prayerfully consider where you need to grow in this season: courage, loyalty, kindness, patience, creativity, love, honesty, hopefulness, confidence, generosity.
5. Read 1 Samuel 15:22 and John 14:23-24. What is the connection between our love of God and our obedience to what God says? Are there any ways where you can drift into a hollow form of spirituality detached from true worship?

6. Based on this discussion, what reflections do you have about how these lessons can apply to your own life? Are there areas where you need to more fully obey the Lord?

**Pray**