

SLIDE PARENTING CLASS

- 4-week class on what it looks like to Parent with Wisdom.
 - The goal of this course is WISDOM.
 - Wisdom does not give you the answer.
 - This course will give you principles, attitudes and strategies.
 - Think of it as giving you a tool-bag for parenting!
- This class is for those with kids of any age or stage of life,
- as well as young people who have yet to start families.
- DATES: every other Sunday morning in June & July
- CHILDCARE AVAILABLE

REGISTER using QR code or fathomchurch.org/info

SLIDE INTRODUCE

Well, if you have your Bibles, and I hope you do,

- please grab them and turn to 1 Samuel chapter 31.
- You can open a phone or a tablet to 1 Samuel 31,
- or you can use one of the hard-backed black bibles
 - under every single chair.
 - You'll find 1 Samuel 31 on page **252**.

INTRODUCTION

Hey, happy Mother's Day!

- Man, can we hear it one more time for the mommas...
 - we love you guys!
- We wouldn't be here without you...literally!

Now, we don't normally do special holiday themed messages.

- But today our text just happened to coincide
- with the fact that it's Mother's Day.

So, we're still gonna talk about dying...

- Happy Mother's Day!

This is our 38th sermon in 1 Samuel!

- And today we come to the end.
- I'm calling the sermon: **SLIDE THIS IS THE END**

And as we end this book, we come to the end of Saul's life.

- And I hope we are challenged about the end of our lives,
- and how to live the life that gets us to the end we desire.

So, I want you to think about legacy today.

- What is the legacy you want to leave?
- What is the legacy you want to leave to your family?
- What is the legacy you want to leave to your friends?
- What is the legacy you want to leave for those you disciple?

Cause we will all, one day, will be at our end.

And I want you to think a little bit about your death.

- And I know you don't want to think about your death...
- in fact, most evangelicals like to pretend...
- that death isn't coming for you.

But the mortality rate in America is still hovering just around 100%...

Even with COVID over!

- And historically, preachers have always preached sermons
 - on death,
 - and how to die well.

So, today...I want you to think about your last day.

THIS IS THE END.

TRANSITION

So, let's dig into the text, and we'll apply it to legacy as we go.

1 Samuel 31 starting in verse 1:

BLANK SLIDE

1 SAMUEL 31:1-2

[1] Now the Philistines were fighting against Israel, and the men of Israel fled before the Philistines and fell slain on Mount Gilboa. [2] And the Philistines overtook Saul and his sons, and the Philistines struck down Jonathan and Abinadab and Malchi-shua, the sons of Saul.

EXPLAIN: SAMUEL

So, the very things...

- that the spirit of Samuel had prophesied over Saul...
 - Remember this from chapter 28?
 - Saul, in his deep fear of the invading Philistines,
 - goes to a medium to have her conjure up
 - the spirit of the dead prophet, Samuel.
 - This was forbidden in the Old Testament law.
 - But Saul didn't care.

- Well, the spirit of Samuel is none too pleased.
 - He tells Saul that Israel will be taken,
 - and that Saul and his sons will be struck down
 - the very next day.
- And here it is. It's all happening exactly as it was told.

EXPLAIN: JONATHAN

And the one son we know is Jonathan.

And gosh, if this isn't so sad.

- Jonathan,
 - David's best friend,
- would NOT be next to King David,
 - as he had hoped.
- He remained a true friend to David.
 - And surrendered his kingship to David.
- He remained a faithful son to Saul.
 - And in the end, he sacrificed his life for Saul.

Jonathan remained faithful in the calling God had assigned him.

And we are to take note of this:

- Jonathan laid aside a kingdom he could not have...
- to enter a kingdom he could not lose.

Jonathan is the tragic hero of 1 Samuel.

POINT 1: FAMILY

And I want to stop and take a moment

- to make my first point about THE END of your life,
- and the legacy you leave behind.

The first thing you should be thinking about, is the legacy you leave your

SLIDE FAMILY

Man, one of the hardest parts to reckon with in this book

- is Saul's lack of care for his family,
 - especially his son, Jonathan.
- I mean, he tries to kill him with a spear at one point!

But there are a couple things to consider when it comes to FAMILY legacy

First, parents, be careful!

- Our children always feel the effects of our mistakes,
- and they may actually pay the price for them.

One of the lies that our enemy tells us...especially to men...

- is that your choices affect nobody but you.
 - What an ignorant viewpoint!
 - What you do affects the lives,
 - and maybe even the eternities,
 - of many connected to you.
- So, be careful.

Second, listen, one of the very best things you can do for your family...

- is to pray for them.
 - Grab them.
 - Get a hand on them.
 - Pray for them.
 - Pray with them.

ILLUSTRATION: HARPER

We pray with our daughter, Harper, every night.

- We pray for our family.
- We pray for her friends.
- We literally pray for every dog and horse we've ever met.
 - I don't have the heart to tell her they don't have souls...
 - but whatever.
 - I'll correct her theology later.

And, if I'm honest, when she was younger,

- sometimes at bedtime, man, I would just be so exhausted,
 - and I didn't want to pray for every hamster we know,
- and so, I would try to slip out before we prayed.
 - Yes, I'm a pastor...
 - and I tried to skip out on praying with my baby girl!
- But she would call me on it...
 - *"Daddy, you pray me?"*
 - Listen, it marked her.
 - Even at a young age, she knew.

And I pray for us every time we sit down to eat a meal.

- And once she started to talk,
- she started to ask if she could pray before dinner.
 - And gosh it was cute...
 - Sometimes, literally, she'd just pray gibberish.

She'd just start babbling on,

- and I thought it might be tongues.
 - so, was going to give her a time-out...
- no...just kidding...
 - we spank!

But she just wanted to pray. Even at a young age, she knew.

- And to this day, she prays at dinner.
 - She prays for us, her mom and dad.
 - Man, there's times she prays for you guys...
 - as she knows things are going on in our church.
 - She prays for her neighbor friends to know Christ.
- Gosh, it's so good.

APPLICATION: PRAY

Listen, Mom's...Dad's, Grandma's...Granddad's, pray for your kids.

- Bless your kids.
 - All the time.
 - Every day.
 - Do this.
- Listen, you don't know when you'll die.
 - Don't waste these times.
 - Pray for them.

This is a low bar. You say,

- *"I don't know what to say..."*
- *I don't have big spiritual words...*
- *I'm not a good pray-er."*

Hear me...

- You have to be a seminary trained theologian to kill this one.
- You just pray what you've got!
 - *"God, bless them..."*
 - *God, grow them..."*
 - *God, move in them..."*
- You can do this!

So many guys come to me and say,

- *"How do I be the spiritual head of my home?"*
- *I don't know Greek.*
- *I haven't read the entire Bible.*
- *I'm not a preacher."*

Here's how you lead your family spiritually:

- Pray for them.
- Put your hands on them.
- Bless them.
- That's how you lead your home.

TRANSITION

So, the first part of Saul's failure...

- that instructs us when dealing with our legacy,
- is FAMILY.

Now, on to verse 3:

BLANK SLIDE

1 SAMUEL 31:3-4

[3] The battle pressed hard against Saul, and the archers found him, and he was badly wounded by the archers. [4] Then Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and mistreat me."

EXPLAIN: SUICIDE

And I do think we should pause here for just a sec to talk about suicide.

- In 2020 almost 46,000 americans took their own lives,
- and there were an estimate 1.2 million suicide attempts.
- The rate of suicide is highest in middle-aged white men.
 - That was a surprising fact to read.

Now, the Bible only records 6 incidents where a person takes his own life.

- All are found in the Old Testament...
- with the exception of Judas Iscariot.

And it is worth noting...

- that in each of these cases
- the suicide is the end to a life that did not...
 - at least in its latter stages...
- meet with God's approval.

Now, in Christian theology, people often ask:

Is suicide the unpardonable sin?

- People often answer "yes" to this question
- because suicide leaves no room for repentance.

But nowhere does the Bible say that suicide is an unforgiveable sin.

- Furthermore, the Bible teaches that all sins...
 - past, present, and even future sins...
- are forgiven through faith
- in the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

One's eternal destiny is sealed and set at the moment of justifying faith.

So, let me just say this:

- While suicide is clearly a sin...
- it is not in a different category than any other sin.

And it would be foolish not to take notice of the rise in this, culturally.

- Suicidal thoughts,
- and ideations,
- and attempts are real...

So, if you are struggling, please come talk with us...

- As someone who has struggled with anxiety
 - and depression...
- Y'all, there are massive mental health issues...
 - running in my blood-line...

You come to us, and you will find nothing but love and support.

- Gosh, we will walk with y'all through anything
- you might have going on in your life.

TRANSITION

So, Saul is asking for his armor-bearer to kill him...
to help him end his life.

- He did not want the uncircumcised Philistines...
 - either to shame him
 - or to torture him,
 - as they had done with Samson;
- so, he ordered his armor-bearer to kill him.

1 SAMUEL 31:4-5

[4] Then Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and mistreat me." But his armor-bearer would not, for he feared greatly. Therefore Saul took his own sword and fell upon it. [5] And when his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell upon his sword and died with him.

POINT 2: FAITH

It's at this point where I want to stop and make my second point about our legacy at THE END of our lives.

The second thing you should be thinking about is the legacy of your

SLIDE FAITH

Saul's lack of faith is on display here.

- He has just watched his three sons killed in battle...
 - he just witnessed his own children slain...
- and he's STILL primarily concerned with himself.
 - And I don't think that's terribly shocking,
 - considering his life up to this point.

But I just wondered this week:

- Why isn't he wrestling with God at this point?
- Why wouldn't he be begging for his forgiveness?
- Why doesn't he have a "death-bed" conversion?

Well...

- Saul's whole life has been consumed with...
- what others would do or think about him.
 - Why would he just flip the switch now?

And this just might speak into those who think,

- *"Hey, I can live however I want right now..."*
- *because at the end of my life,*
- *I can just repent and God will accept me!"*

And listen, that is true...

- God will accept you if you genuinely repent,
 - even on your death-bed.

But be very careful here...

- who you are in life
- WILL BE who you are at your death.

You WILL leave a legacy of your FAITH.

APPLICATION

Here's a good question to ask yourself:

What's most important to you?

And you might be tempted to say,

- *“Well, God...”*
- *then my family...*
- *then my job...”*
 - or whatever.

But really, if you asked those closest to you,

- *“What do you think are the most important things to me?”*
 - If you asked that of your spouse,
 - or your kids,
 - or your friends,
 - or your parents...
- what would they say?

I asked this of my daughter, Harper, back when she was 3-years-old.

So, I was like,

“Sweetie, what’s the most important thing in the world to daddy?”

- And she said, *“Me!”*
 - And I was like,
 - *“alright! Dad of the year!”*

And I said, *“what else is important to daddy?”*

- And she said, *“Frozen!”*
 - *Well, that’s most important to her...*

“Ok, what else is most important to daddy?”

- And she said, *“Pipes!”*
 - Cause I smoke a tobacco pipe.

And I'm like, "Yo, how'd that beat out mom?"

- But it reminded me that what I SAY I value...
- and what I SHOW that I value...
- can be seen very differently by those around me.

Now listen,

- there's nothing wrong with having hobbies
- and being passionate about things.
 - But if what you want your FAITH legacy to be,
 - doesn't match up with your lifestyle,
 - then your lifestyle needs to change.

TRANSITION

You'll leave a legacy for your FAMILY...

you'll leave a legacy of your FAITH.

One more. Look at verse 6:

BLANK SLIDE

1 SAMUEL 31:6-7

[6] Thus Saul died, and his three sons, and his armor-bearer, and all his men, on the same day together. [7] And when the men of Israel who were on the other side of the valley and those beyond the Jordan saw that the men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned their cities and fled. And the Philistines came and lived in them.

EXPLAIN: PHILISTINES

Notice that at the end of Saul's life...
the Philistines are now occupying Israelite territory.

Now, I told you this way back in 1 Samuel chapter 4,
but here's a little trick I learned in Seminary:

- the Philistines were the scourge of God's people
- and we can look at the relationship
 - between Israel and the Philistines
- as something of a barometer
 - for how God's people were doing
 - in their relationship with the Lord.

So, as you can see,

- Saul's end is more than just personal,
 - his very people are in distress.
- He hasn't only damned himself...
 - in some ways he's damned
 - the very people who he was supposed to lead.

Verse 8:

1 SAMUEL 31:8-13

[8] The next day, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. [9] So they cut off his head and stripped off his armor and sent messengers throughout the land of the Philistines, to carry the good news to the house of their idols and to the people. [10] They put his armor in the temple of Ashtaroath, and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan. [11] But when the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, [12] all the

valiant men arose and went all night and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth-shan, and they came to Jabesh and burned them there. [13] And they took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree in Jabesh and fasted seven days.

EXPLAIN

This is how the whole book of 1 Samuel ends.

- Saul is dead.
- His sons are dead.
- David is in exile in Philistia.
- Israel is now occupied by the Philistines.
- The prophet, Samuel is dead.
- The priests of Yahweh have been killed.
- There is no king in Israel.

You see why I called this sermon series: prophets, priests, and kings?

1 Samuel is the primary account of Saul, the king.

- Israel earnestly desired a king,
 - so they could be like all the other nations...
 - because they didn't trust God to meet their needs...
- and they thought Saul would be the perfect king.

But Saul turns out to be a coward.

- He consults a witch in a time of trouble...
- He doesn't defeat the Philistines; in fact,
 - they've lost ground to the Philistines,
 - the Philistines are now living in Israel's cities.

And Saul's last act is to watch his own sons die...

- and then he commits suicide.
 - His armor was stripped
 - and put on display in the temple of Ashtaroth,
 - a Philistine god,
 - as a testimony to how strong the Philistine god was.
- And then his body is fastened up on the wall of a Philistine city
 - to hang in shame
 - until the birds eat away his flesh.

It is impossible for the Bible to give a more devastating end to a life.

THIS IS THE END.

POINT 3: FUTURE

And it's here I'll make my final point about our legacies at THE END.

The third part you should be thinking about is the legacy of your

SLIDE FUTURE

- Listen, we've talked about FAMILY...
- we've talked about your FAITH...
 - but even after your end...
 - there is a FUTURE.

Yes, for you in eternity...

- but there is also a FUTURE for everyone around you.

And here's the great news:

- no matter where you're at in life,
- it's never too late to start a legacy!

Cause for some of you this sermon has been a rough one to hear.

Because, for some of you:

- You've already raised your kids.
 - Or you don't have any kids.
- Or you've made some big mistakes
 - with your family or friends.
- Or you've been so backwards on your life's priorities.

Some of you are already in the place where you're like,

- *"Pshhh...my legacy is a wreck."*

But hear me:

- if you are living and breathing...
- it's not too late to start a new legacy.
 - Start it with your grown children.
 - Start with your grandkids.
 - Start it with young men & women at church.
 - Start it with your spouse.
 - Start it with your friends.
- Your legacy need not be defined from your first day to today...
- no, it can be defined from today until your last day.

I know for some of you today you're like,

- *"man, my legacy needs to change."*

And I want to encourage you...

- 1 Samuel is about the contrast between...
 - a man after HIS own heart...that's Saul.
 - and the man after God's own heart...that's David.

And hear me:

- no matter who you are,
- and where you've gone,
- and what you've done,
 - you have a God who is seeking men and women
 - after his heart!
- And he will bless you,
- and take you back,
- and write a new legacy for you...
- a new FUTURE!

EXAMPLE

Listen, If you're an older man or woman in this room...

- and by older I mean, you are older than someone...
- even if it's just a few years.

But if you're older...

- get to know a younger man or woman in here!
- Man, you can bless and encourage them.

No one ever does that!

- Most of our younger Christians
- aren't sure if they're doing a good job or a bad job.

They don't know what they're doing.

- They're here at Fathom studying their Bible,
- Going to school...
- Or working their jobs...
- Raising their families...

- Praying,
- Serving,
- trying to figure it out.

And it might change their life...

- if just one older guy or gal put a hand on their shoulder,
- looked them in the eye,
- and told them,
 - *"You're doing well.*
 - *And if more were like you...*
 - *the world would be more like heaven!"*
- That would keep them going!

That would leave a legacy for their FUTURE!

- Listen, your life matters
- in setting up legacies for the FUTURE
- of anyone around you!

CONCLUSION

Now, hear me, you already know this stuff!

- You know you're only alive once.
- You know you only get one shot at this.
- You know you are only passing through in this life.

What I'm saying is when you get to THE END:

- When you get there,
- I don't want you to experience the end that Saul did.
- One of regret and sadness.

So, I heard my friend Ryan Kwon use this illustration:

Imagine you saved up for an epic vacation. Like Hawaii or something!

- You got the pamphlet.
 - And you just start wishing and hoping.
- You changed your wallpaper on your phone to inspire yourself.
 - You start saving money.
 - You start working extra...
 - side hustles or whatever.
 - You start making your lunch rather than hitting Chipotle.

You're doing everything you can to get to that destination.

So, after months...maybe even years of preparing,

- you finally get to the day
- where you're finally going on that vacation.

So, you get to the airport...

- and you get to your gate,
- and you sit down,
- and you look at your plane...
- and you're like,
 - *"It's happening!"*
 - *I'm going to Hawaii!*
 - *I can almost smell the salty air!*
 - *I can almost feel the sun and the waves and the water!"*

I'll tell you something that you'll never do in that moment.

- You'll never get to the gate 1-hour early...
 - or 3-hours early for you type-A people...

- But, you'll never think to yourself,
 - *"Man, I better squeeze every benefit*
 - *out of this terminal*
 - *that I possibly can!*
- *I gotta sit at every gate.*
- *I gotta use that plug under that seat!*
- *Man, I better get a cup of Caribou Coffee and a dry muffin!*
 - *Even though it's really bad!*
 - *It's only twelve bucks!*
- *And gosh, I better make time to hit that Hudson News...*
 - *you know that weird magazine place!*
 - *I haven't read a physical magazine in years...*
 - *But today's my day!*
- *But I gotta experience everything,*
 - *I gotta see every shop,*
 - *I gotta get every benefit!"*

No, you would never do such a thing!

Why?

- Because you aren't there for the terminal!
- You're there for the destination!

SLIDE W/PADS THIS IS THE END

ENDING

Listen, church, so many of us are living for the terminal!

- And you're so focused on getting the benefits of the terminal...
- That you're gonna miss the destination.

Legacy is all the planning.

- All the hoping.
- All the saving.
- All the responsibility.
- All the preparation.
 - For the destination!

It's focusing on your FAMILY and your FAITH and your FUTURE...

- but oh my friends, don't get distracted by the terminal.
- You've gotta live for the destination!

Hey, real quick...look at me...you're gonna die.

Happy Mother's Day...but...

- you are going to die.
- And you can live in one of two ways.
 - You can live for the terminal.
 - Or you can live for the destination.

So, let's live for THE END.

Let's live for the destination!

Let's live out our legacy!

Pray with me.

RESPONSES:

Well, every week at Fathom we respond in 4 ways:

- COMMUNION – THE LORD’S SUPPER
- GIVING TITHES & OFFERINGS – fathomchurch.org/give
- PRAYER - fathomchurch.org/prayer
- SINGING

So, I’m going to read the Words of Institution from the Apostle Paul, we’ll take communion, and then we’ll sing:

1 CORINTHIANS 11:23–26 – WORDS OF INSTITUTION

[23] For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, [24] and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[25] In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[26] For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

Love you church, let’s stand and sing together.

RESOURCES CONSULTED:

- <https://afsp.org/suicide-statistics/>
- Davis, Dale Ralph. Focus on the Bible. 1 Samuel: Looking on the Heart.
- Davis, Dale Ralph. *When the Bottom Drops Out*.
- Heitzig, Skip. *1 Samuel 30-31*.
- Tsumura, David Toshio. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. The First Book of Samuel.