

a life of conflict

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W hat is the Old Testament's contribution?

1. The O.T. primary contribution is that it reveals God's _____ and _____.
2. The O.T. secondary contribution is that it reveals Israel's response to _____ and _____.

2. Self-reliance produces conflict in our _____ . 1 Sam. 14:49-51

TAKE HOME TRUTH

Self-reliance produces _____ conflict.
1 Sam. 14:52

W hat does self-reliance produce?

1. Self-reliance produces conflict in our _____ . 1 Sam. 14:46-48

Today's Core Practice:

Prayer: I pray to God to know Him, to confess sin, make requests before Him and to find direction for my daily life. (from Psalm 66:16-20)

Today's Action: Would you say you are more reliant upon God or upon self? What steps can you begin to take today that would move you to greater reliance upon God?

hand in
hand
verse by
verse

Deeper Connection Study

Though Saul's career was not at its end, the author inserts an appendix to describe Saul's reign. It is a simplistic summary of exploits but also adds some information that is pertinent to the narrative which follows. The reader already knows that Saul's reign will not last so the author provides this appendix before describing the decline in Saul's approval rating.

Today's Core Belief discussed: Faith.

Read 1 Samuel 14:47-52

1. At first glance, what does the appendix section state about Saul's reign?
2. Who were Saul's enemies on the list? Why does the author mention that Saul fought them on all sides?
3. What did the people expect from Saul when he became their leader? How did Saul become the king Israel deserved?
4. Though Saul was king, did he truly reign? How was his life marked by conflict? Why do you think this was so?
5. How is it easy for you to live as a self-reliant Christian? Sadly, what does self-reliance produce? How does it impact your faith and trust in God?
6. In what situations do you rely more on your own plans and abilities than relying on God? How can you become more dependent upon God?

PRAYER TO THE POINT: Praise God for his direction and guidance. Pray for a deeper trust in God as you follow him. Ask God to increase your faith and help you to live each day in reliance upon him.



One trait humans possess that doesn't need nurturing is the trait of independence. If you have been around children, it generally reveals itself around 18-24 months. This trait is so evident that our culture coined a phrase for this season of independent expression, which we call "The Terrible Twos." The sad irony of this trait is that it doesn't go away once the individual reaches three. In fact, unless radically addressed it will abide with a person for their entire life. King Saul's life was a satire of this unfortunate truth. Early on in his reign he began to act independently of God even though he was confronted about this propensity on a number of occasions. His self-reliance produced conflict of every kind. The disturbing factor of this extended narrative is that it confronts our inclinations of independence. Like Saul, we are being called out on our own self-reliance.