

Hiding Among The Stuff

1 Samuel 10:17-22

17 And Samuel called the people together unto the LORD to Mizpeh; 18 And said unto the children of Israel, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all kingdoms, *and* of them that oppressed you: 19 And ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and ye have said unto him, *Nay*, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes, and by your thousands. 20 And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken. 21 When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: and when they sought him, he could not be found. 22 Therefore they enquired of the LORD further, if the man should yet come thither. And the LORD answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff. i

This passage of scripture intrigues me.

It is, of course, the time in Israel's history that God is going to acquiesce to their desire for an earthly king, and He has chosen Saul.

And, what intrigues me is this: God chose Saul, anointed Saul, had a work for Saul to do, but when the time came for Saul to step forward and accept the calling of God on his life, he was hiding among the stuff!

Now, this word 'stuff' is a catch-all phrase in our vernacular. It encompasses many things.

It's become one of those terms that we use when we can't find a more specific word to describe an object.

When people can't find the proper term for describing activities, inventory, etc., they'll just say:

- You know, a bunch of stuff!
- Or, we did a lot of stuff.
- Or, I have so much stuff to do today.

And, I think it's interesting that this term is used in the scripture to describe Saul's position when God called him to be king over Israel.

The Bible doesn't say that he was hiding among his herd, or his crops, or in his house, or in between his fellow soldiers.

It just implies that there was a lot of nameless, unimportant clutter among which this man who would be king had hidden himself, or busied himself, or surrounded himself with.

- The Hebrew word here is (Kelee), which means: vessel 166, instrument 39, weapon 21, jewel 21, 18, stuff 14, thing 11, armour 10, furniture 7, carriage 3, bag 2, misc 13; 325ii

In other words, there is no definitive term for the word stuff, it means many different things.

- Webster's defines stuff as: 2. (n.) A person's portable property: effects, baggage, belongings, chattels, gear (colloquial), impedimenta, junk (US, colloquial), luggage, movables, paraphernalia, things

It's an ambiguous term used in many different ways, but in most cases, it describes the things with which we busy ourselves on a daily basis.

It's used 16 times in the scripture, and in every case, it describes material possessions. It describes the things with which a person can become encumbered easily.

Stuff, in and of itself, is not inherently good or bad. We all have stuff.

Where stuff becomes a problem is when it hides us from God, and keeps us from fulfilling our purpose in Him.

I.) **LET'S LOOK AT THE STUFF IN THE SCRIPTURE THAT KEPT PEOPLE FROM FULFILLING THEIR CALLING.**

a.) **For Gehazi, it was Naaman's gold**

2 Kings 5:26

26 And he said unto him, Went not mine heart *with thee*, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? *Is it* a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants? iii

b.) **For the rich young ruler, it was his riches**

Luke 18:18-23

18 And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? 19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none *is* good, save one, *that is*, God. 20 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother. 21 And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up. 22 Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me. 23 And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich. iv

Stuff kept him from following Jesus, and possibly becoming one of the Apostles!

c.) For Agrippa, it was his position

Acts 26:28

28 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. v

I'd like to follow this Jesus, but there's some stuff in my way! I'd have to give up my position, and it might be me standing before the authorities instead of you, Paul! So, I just can't right now.

d.) For Felix, it was his busyness

Acts 24:24-25

24 And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. 25 And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee. vi

I'd like to serve God, but I'm too busy right now, and it's not convenient.....maybe some other time!

e.) For Demas, it was this present world

Whatever the reason, it was just stuff that kept people from following Jesus.....ambiguous, nameless, unimportant, non-eternal stuff.....

II.) NOW, LET'S LOOK AT PEOPLE WHO RID THEMSELVES OF STUFF TO FOLLOW GOD'S PURPOSE

a.) Elisha

1 Kings 19:19-21

19 So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who *was* plowing *with* twelve yoke *of oxen* before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him. 20 And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and *then* I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again: for what have I done to thee? 21 And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.

vii

When the call of God came upon Elisha, he was working. But, he destroyed the stuff that would take his time and attention away from his calling!

b.) Peter

John 21:15

15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. viii

And, Peter walked away from the nets that had provided his income for so many years to follow the purpose of Christ in his life.

c.) Abraham – left his country, never to look back

Hebrews 11:8,15

8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. 15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that *country* from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. ix

d.) Moses – the riches of Egypt

Hebrews 11:24-26

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; 26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. x

III.) WHAT IS THE STUFF IN YOUR LIFE THAT'S KEEPING YOU FROM FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE?

a.) *Social status, career advancement?*

Mark 8:36

36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?
xi

b.) *Work?*

Haggai 1:5-6

5 Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. 6 Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages *to put it* into a bag with holes. xii

c.) *Embarrassment? (Peer pressure?)*

Mark 8:38

38 Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.
xiii

d.) *Is it bitterness, or unforgiveness that's cluttering up your life and keeping you from fulfilling the will of God?*

Mark 11:25-26

25 And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. 26 But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.
xiv

IV.) WHEN JOSEPH BROUGHT HIS BROTHERS AND FATHER INTO EGYPT, THIS IS WHAT HE TOLD THEM:

Genesis 45:19-20

19 Now thou art commanded, this do ye; take you wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. 20 Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt *is* yours. xv

Joseph said, in essence, ***“Your stuff is not worth bringing into this land, just leave it at home, because what’s here is so much better than what you can ever imagine!”***

And, God is saying to us, ***“The stuff that you think is so important, you can’t bring into the Promised land anyway.....but, on top of that, you can’t even imagine what is yours in heaven if you won’t get bogged down with your stuff here!”***

We talked this morning about why some people will be lost.

Let me follow that up with this:

- ***There is nothing that is worth my losing my soul over.***
- ***There is no stuff on earth that is valuable enough to cause me to miss heaven!***

And, let me take it a step further:

There are some people in this congregation that God is calling to ministry, to a greater anointing, a greater ministry.....but, we’re distracted by stuff.

We’re hiding among stuff that’s keeping us from fulfilling our purpose in Christ.

Does anyone want to come to this altar tonight and get rid of some stuff?

iThe King James Version, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.

iiEnhanced Strong’s Lexicon, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1995.

iiiThe King James Version, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.

ivThe King James Version, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.

vThe King James Version, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.

viThe King James Version, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.

viiThe King James Version, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.

viiiThe King James Version, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.

ixThe King James Version, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.

xThe King James Version, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.

xi *The King James Version*, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.
xii *The King James Version*, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.
xiii *The King James Version*, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.
xiv *The King James Version*, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.
xv *The King James Version*, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.