

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

“FROMTO Book of 1 Samuel”
(1 Samuel 13-15)

Reject June 15, 2008

Questions written by Mark Collins



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Small Group leaders are there any members in your who's ready to step out into leadership? Maybe there's someone who wants to take a greater role within your group? Or could there be people willing to learn and implement leadership principles in their everyday lives. If this is the case we have an amazing opportunity for them. Encourage your members to attend our Foundations in Leadership training Saturday June 21st and June 28th from 9AM to 2PM, Light continental breakfast and lunch are provided. During these two Saturday seminars we'll be unpacking the principles leadership, while interactively allowing you to try on some of the skills as we go. I promise that these seminars are not tired, clichéd and boring classroom lectures. You'll have fun, meet new people and maybe, just maybe you'll discover a greater calling and purpose for your life. All you have to do to register is email Danah Davis at danah.davis@therocksandiego.org to sign up. Lets us know if you need childcare and the ages of your children.

Small Group leaders are you encouraging your group members to join the Rock Army? Your group can catch the vision of becoming a part of a movement that encourages people to become World-Class Christians. To join, check out the ARMY requirements at www.therocksandiego.org/army/

MINISTRY PRAYER REQUESTS

As "small groupies," you are the heart and soul of this ministry--who better than you to lift up the Small Group Ministry in prayer? So, it's up to you, you can spend time in your small group praying for these things (weekly or occasionally), or you can pray during the week on your own time. May God work through your prayers mightily!

Reaching the Lost: Pray that all the small groups continue to develop relationships with those who are far from God, and invite them to their small groups.

Current Small Group Leaders/Small Groups: Pray that all of our Small Groups take time to follow up on all the new people trying to get into small groups.

Potential Small Group Leaders: Pray that our current leaders continue to give their ministry away and develop future leaders to reach their full potential in Jesus.

The Rock Body: Pray that the Rock Army grows deeper and deeper in accountability to one another.

MEMORY VERSE

And the Lord told him: “listen to all the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king.” (1 Samuel 8:7)

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS – REJECT

I just new from the start that it was going to be an amazing day! I just had a feeling right from the very beginning that I was going to experience something I had never experienced before. The truth is, I *never* win anything, I mean *never*. Well, I take that back one time I won a blow-up beach ball jack-o-lantern in the 5th grade at boy scouts. Since then, nada, nothing; so when they announced that I had won tickets to the U.S. Open semi-final round (on Saturday) I had this feeling deep within my gut that I was in for one of those special times in my life. I don't know if you follow golf, or if you been to a USGA event but I can certainly recommend it. Everything was first class from the entire city they erected around the course at Torrey Pines, to the meticulous attention to detail paid to every blade of grass, all set against the backdrop of one of the most beautiful shorelines in God's creation. We started our journey at the crack of dawn arriving by bus (they don't let you park near the course you have to park at Qualcomm and shuttle to the event), and arrived just in time to see the golfers who were scheduled to tee off first, practicing on the driving range. I was astonished by the fact how everyone, I mean everyone made a 300 yard drive look easy. Frankly, I thought only a chosen few (like Tiger) could hit it that far, so it confused me why only a hand full of people dominate the sport. From my vantage point at the driving range it looked as if the field was wide open and anyone could win the tournament. That's until we watched those same golfers on the first tee.

From the driving range we scurried over to the first tee, and that's when I noticed it, what I'll call for argument sake the *big difference*. When the first grouping approached the first tee, they were no longer joking with their caddies or showing off for the crowd. This drive was for real, and there were no longer a bucket of range balls beside them if they failed to strike the ball well. I could literally see the intensity and fear in their eyes as the golf course, and especially the fairways seemed to sadistically narrow from the first tee box. The *big difference* is a really simple concept. When the golfers were out on the range I couldn't tell what they were aiming at so every shot looked amazing; now on the course, good shots were easy to separate from the bad. What makes the game so difficult is not just the physical toll it takes on the players, but the mental aspects of the game. Finally, in the afternoon the leaders began to make their way around the course. Tiger was Tiger, again. He did his normal heroics to take the lead on the final hole. No matter what outcome, whether he wins or loses the tournament it will be one for the record books, because he made miracles happen despite great pain in his left knee (this is his first tournament back after major knee surgery).

When you're there live, because of the crowds following Tiger, the only way to see him play is to get a couple of holes ahead of him and let him play to you staking out your spot ahead of time. We used that strategy all day long and it worked surprisingly well. Yet, when we ran ahead of Tiger it became obvious what affect he had on the other golfers. Despite the fact that there were 54,000 people in attendance the course was amazing quiet. Every time Tiger would make an amazing shot the crowd would go wild and everyone knew the Tiger was coming, ready and willing to devour his prey. The pressure and fear was palpable among the other golfers who found themselves either before and behind the Tiger. That's when I experienced the *biggest difference* between Tiger and the others on the course, Tiger seemed to relish and make great shots under pressure, while the others seemed to slowly wilt, plagued by their bad decision making trying to pull off things that they couldn't do.

In the 13th chapter of 1st Samuel we find King Saul in a very similar situation as Tiger's opponents on Saturday. Saul faced a superior Philistine fighting machine who wielded chariots, and a far more

powerful infantry. Fear gripped Israel's warriors and they began to desert and hide in caves. What made matter's even worse was the fact that Samuel was nowhere to be found. Israel had great victories in the past even with these kinds of odds, but not without supernatural help. Before Israel could go to battle they had to have the blessing of God's prophet. Saul waited for seven days, and when Samuel didn't show, the king, gripped with fear, made up to this point in his leadership, one of the worst decisions of his life. He offered the burnt offering, something that a prophet and priest could only do. From this point on, Saul's catastrophic decision set in motion a series poor leadership moves all driven by distrust and fear, and eventually moved Saul from being God's anointed to being in God's hot seat. While you read the stories of chapters 13-15 try to put yourself in the place of the characters. One way to ascertain how we'll act under pressure in future is to analyze what we've done in the past. It's easy to be an arm-chair quarterback (sorry that I mixed my metaphors) judging the way Saul acted in an incredibly difficult time; it's quite another to act heroically in the face of danger even death.

Getting Started

When was the first time you can remember that you made a bad decision because of overwhelming fear?

What was the result? Did you overcome the decision? If so, how?

Digging Deeper:

Read 1 Samuel 13: 1-15

1. What do you do when you are faced with a tough decision that may have an effect on other people's lives?
2. In the past, when it come to making decisions are you more likely to act impulsively and risk making a bad choice, or hold back and miss an opportunity? What circumstances have helped to shape your decision making process?
3. Take a look at Saul's excuses for his actions in V. 11. When you sin who are you most likely to blame and why (circumstances, bad timing, others, past, sin nature, yourself, God)?
4. V. 13 depicts a stern rebuke directly from the Lord through the prophet Samuel aimed towards King Saul (Who probably had the fleshly power to retaliate). In both the past and present, how have you responded to authority figures: Parents, school authorities, governmental authorities, bosses, spiritual leaders, and God?
5. Read 1 Samuel 15:10-28. What heroes in life have left you disappointed when you found out they had "fleet of clay?" Can you think of a time when you disappointed someone who looked up to you? What happened?
6. How do feel about God's command to totally destroy the Amalekites (for help see: Deut. 25:17-19)? How do reconcile this command with God's amazing grace?

Bringing it Home

One of the saddest verses in all of Scripture is found in 1 Samuel 15:27. Even after Saul's tearful confession of his sin, the prophet could only report the Lord's decision to rip away the kingdom from Saul and give to someone better than him. In fact, the news was so painful for Samuel to deliver that he never saw Saul again. It seems that Saul's whole rule was summed up by one verse: "And the Lord was grieved that He made Saul king over Israel" (15:35b).

End this session by asking the following question of the Lord: When was the last time that you grieved over sin (either yours or someone else's) to the point of mourning?