

Church worship, prayer, and discipleship is critical to every believer... Can't fail to see its importance! Just as many of God's servants in our day have stumbled and even shipwrecked their ministries, we'll see in this study how God's anointed servants, kings Saul and David, both failed to varying degrees.

We're engaged in a fierce spiritual battle:

The Bible describes us as warring soldiers ([2 Timothy 2:3-4](#)) who must guard our faith ([1 Timothy 1:9](#)). The cause of spiritual failure is not always due to not being truly saved, nor for being false ministers. Often failure by believers & ministers occurs when in life we set aside *“faith and a good conscience.”* Life's lessons come from both 'good' and 'bad' experiences. Failure comes when we apply learned 'bad' behaviors to various situations and temptations, where learned 'good' behaviors were called for. The Church is the place where we're taught and trained to *“fight the good fight”* ([1 Timothy 6:11-12](#)).

Discussion: 1) According to [Ephesians 6:10-18](#), are our adversaries people, or demonic forces?
2) What does it mean to *“hold on to faith”* and *“good conscience”* when challenged?

Battle Preparation:

God raised David to be the greatest king, the 'standard' by whom all other kings were measured by. David was pre-anointed to be king in his youth by the prophet Samuel ([1 Samuel 16:1-13](#)). Then God put him in training, to learn how to use his anointing with applied faith and good conscience. David, as a young man, was hugely successful as seen in his killing Goliath the giant by faith ([1 Sam. ch.17](#)). David's learning came from being exposed to good and bad. David experienced the results of 'good' when he developed a reputation of wisdom, success, & honor, and becoming king Saul's son-in-law. He also experienced the evils of 'bad' behaviors when he became the victim of Saul's jealousy and plots against his life ([1 Sam. ch.18-19](#)). David championed 'good' behavior as displayed to Saul when, twice given the opportunity, David refused to harm Saul in self-defense ([1 Sam. ch.24 & 26](#)). Then as King Saul's successor to the throne, David continued doing 'good' with great success ([2 Samuel 8:15](#)). David kept himself prepared and regularly inquired of the Lord ([1 Sam 23:2,4, 30:7](#); [2 Sam 2:1, 5:19, 5:23](#)), but Saul did not ([1 Chronicles 10:14](#)). When Saul did inquire, the Lord did not respond ([1 Samuel 28:6](#)). The Church is not to be neglected because it's the place God uses to train us up to be overcomers.

Discussion: 1) How did we discover the nature of Saul's inquiry of [1 Sam. 28:6](#), as not being worthy of God's response, by not meeting the type of inquiry God expects: [1 Chron. 10:14](#)?

Battle fatigue:

Despite all his many successes, even David faltered when he neglected *“faith & a good conscience.”* Success became routine for David, and he began to neglect his disciplines & duties. Like a typical New Testament Christian 'soldier' neglecting to prioritize the importance of regular Church disciplines, in [2 Samuel 10:7](#) he stayed home from the battle, and only went when things got bad ([vs.17](#)). Then, in [2 Samuel 11:1](#) King David, *even more lax*, sent General Joab, and again stayed home from the battle. This resulted in weakness, & a series of tragic events that led to severe consequences ([2 Sam ch.12](#)). David's failure to *“hold faith and a good conscience”* brought about a colossal *“shipwreck”!* Not only did David commit adultery with the wife of one of his commanders in the battlefield, but then (*like Saul*) made several efforts to conceal the sin, and murder! The consequences of these grave sins were catastrophic for David personally ([2 Sam. 12:10-11](#)), but also his nation, and the testimony of the Lord!

Discussion: 1) How does regular Church attendance help us avoid falling into devastating sin?

Make Church important again!

We must recognize the critical importance of proper Church worship, prayer, and discipleship: We attend Church for His glory, for our relational wellbeing, and to be better prepared for life's battles.

Discussion: 1) What are typical excuses we frequently use to de-prioritize & stay home from Church?