

FLORENCE BOULEVARD CHURCH OF CHRIST

Elders Steve Clark Jake VanDyke Ken Vanhorn Mark Willingham

Deacons Greg Allen Justin Beckman Kevin Clemons Jeffrey Cox Mike Davidson **Kyle Dickson Gregg Elrod Nate Fulmer** AJ Gooch **David Gooch** Lee Handley Will Hodge **Brian McManus** Jamey Medley **Ronnie Putnam Dave Schmidt** Mark Vanhorn **Don Williams**

<u>Minister</u> Austin <mark>Joh</mark>nson

Youth Minister
John Birdwell

Secretary Sonya Cox

To Obey Is Better Than Sacrifice

In 1 Samuel, the people wanted an earthly King even though they already had the best King, Jehovah God. God gives them Saul as King and everything seems good at first. In 1 Samuel 15, God gives the order for Saul to attack and "utterly destroy" the Amalekites including man, woman, infant, nursing child, ox, sheep, camel, and donkey. In Exodus 17:8-16, the Amalekites were the first people to attack Israel after their exodus from Egypt when they were at their weakest and Joshua defeated the Amalekites that day and God swore, he would "utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven". Later on during their wilderness journey, God even told the children of Israel to remember what Amalek did to them as they were on their way out of Egypt in Deuteronomy 25:17-19. By 1 Samuel 15 it has been more than 400 years, but God has not forgotten what he promised to do. Time does not erase sin for God, only the blood of Jesus.

In 1 Samuel 15:7, Saul attacks the Amalekites and is obedient to the Lord's command but was it a selective, incomplete obedience? Why did Saul take King Agag alive? Maybe he had pity for the king. Maybe he respected him as an adversary. Maybe he planned to use him to gloat and glory in his triumph. Not only do they keep King Agag alive but also the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good. Are we like this today? Do we keep around some favorite indulgence or sin that we believe is harmless even though we clearly know God has said to remove from our lives?

In 1 Samuel 15:11, God says "I greatly regret that I have set up Saul as king". This shows us a little of God's heart. From the beginning He knows Saul's heart, his ways, and his destiny. But even as all of this unfolds, God's heart was not emotionless. I do not believe God just sat there in heaven with a clipboard "checking off boxes", coldly saying "all according to plan." Saul's disobedience hurt God and it grieved Samuel. Samuel had God's heart. It hurt God to reject Saul and it hurt God's prophet to see him rejected. How do we know when we are close to God's heart? Maybe when the things that grieve God, grieve us, and when the things that please God, please us.

In 1 Samuel 15:12, Saul sets up a monument for himself after the victory. He was not grieved over his sin, there is no shame or guilt, he is quite pleased with himself! So later God raises up David, a man after his own heart, who also disobeys God. What is the difference? David would feel the guilt and shame one should feel when they sin. Saul did not feel this because his conscience was dead to shame and his heart was dead to God. Saul even says "I have performed the commandment of the Lord" and is prideful in his behavior. Pride always leads us into self-deception. Samuel even says to Saul, "What then is the bleating of the sheep in my ears ...". Saul even makes excuses and blames the people for sparing the best of the livestock and says to Samuel they did this "to sacrifice to the Lord <u>your</u> God", he doesn't say "<u>my</u> God". When we don't obey God completely, the left-over portion will surely come back and trouble us, if not kill us.

(continued on back page)

2502 FLORENCE BOULEVARD
www.florenceblvd.org
email: office@florenceblvd.org

LOUIS CONTRACTOR IN

PHONE (256) 766-3617 email: office@florenceblvd.org FAX (256) 766-3546
Worship: Sunday 9:00 am & 5:00 pm; Bible Class 10:15 am; Wednesday: 6:30 pm

FOR THE RECORD

Sunday AM: 262 / On Line Views: 117 Sunday School: 202 / On Line Views: N/A Sunday PM: 163/ On Line Views: 126 Wednesday: 181 / On Line Views: 102 Budget: \$14,620

Budget: \$14,620 Contribution: \$ 11,620

APRIL MISSIONARY OF THE MONTH

K.B.B Chandrapaul Jack Nelle Institute Nidamanuru-521104 Vijayawada, A.P. India

lovefaithhope@yahoo.com

LAUDERDALE CHRISTIAN NURSING HOME

We are in charge of the services TODAY at Lauderdale Christian Nursing Home, at 2 pm. If you can help with this, please see AJ Gooch or Jake VanDyke.

THANK YOU

Dear Church Family,

Thank you for all the food, cards, phone calls, prayers, and visits, over the past 3 years while Paul was sick. Paul loved his church family and all your kindness and encouragement has been a blessing to him and our family. We are very grateful and thank God for you all.

The Richardson Family, Drucilla, David, Shirley, and Brenda

Continuation... Samuel has heard enough and in 1 Samuel 15:16 he tells Saul "Be quiet!" and in verse 22, he says to Saul that it is better to obey God than to perform sacrifices. What does this mean? One could make 1,000 sacrifices to God, work 1,000 hours for God's service, or give one million dollars to God's work, but all these sacrifices mean little if there is not a surrendered heart to God, shown through obedience. "Offering sacrifices" is ceremonial and supposes sin has been committed for which the sacrifice is offered. "Obedience" is moral and compliance with the will of God and therefore not in the need of sacrifice. In verse 23 Samuel says, "and stubbornness (presumption) is as iniquity and idolatry". What does stubbornness or presumption mean here? It is an idea that is taken to be true, and often used as the basis for other ideas, although it is not known for certain. It is also a behavior perceived as arrogant, disrespectful, and transgressing the limits of what is permitted or appropriate. This is a good reminder to us that we need to be careful when we think we know what is best for our lives, or that we think we know what God would have us do in any situation, instead of studying God's word to know what he wants us to do and how he wants us to live our lives and approaching him in prayer for guidance. God desires and demands our complete obedience!

ANNIVERSARY WISHES

On April 5th, seventy years ago, Don Deaton married his high school sweetheart, Ruth Edwards.

They have been blessed with a loving family, special Christian friends, and many years of good health and happiness. Don & Ruth are homebound now; cards or calls would be appreciated.

Also, on the church birthday and anniversary calendar, Bill and Geraldine Morrison anniversary is on there twice on different days. The correct day should be April 30th.

MEN OF THE CONGREGATION

You will be going to see the Trash Pandas Baseball Game on Friday, June 23rd. Tickets are \$17.44 per person. A sign up sheet is located on the table, outside of the Sound Room. **Last day to sign up is March 29th and money is due by April 12th**. If you have any questions, please see Duane Alexander.

SENIOR NIGHT

Senior Night will be on Sunday, May 7th, following evening services, in the Fellowship Hall. There will be tables set up to leave gifts for our seniors. Our graduating seniors include: Kaden Agee, Ella Embry, Garret Gean, Remington Medley, Katelin Risner, Elijah Sampson, and Ellie South.

AREA EVENT

UNA Christian Student Center 18th Annual Golf Tournament; RTJ of the Shoals, Monday, April 24, 2023 11:30 Lunch/1 pm Tee time; \$100 dollars per player-4 Man Scramble Teams; Mulligans available for purchase; Hole Sponsorships available; Email: unacsf@comcast.net Or call 256-764-9439; Register by April 17th.