

1. We talked last week about our identity in Christ.
2. One of the reasons why our enemy, the devil, lies to us about who we are in Jesus is because he knows that if we every fully accept who God says we are, that the forces of hell will be defeated.
3. On the flip side of that coin there is another area where we are under attack.
4. Not only does the enemy lies to us and tell us we are worthless and unlovely, but he will also lie to us and tell us that what we do doesn't matter.
5. That what we do for him out of obedience will never amount to anything.
6. That what we do is insignificant.
7. And when we start to believe that lie a couple of things can happen.
8. We may still attempt to do things for the lord, to serve and to give, and yet feel unfulfilled by our obedience because who wants to give and serve and feel like there is no point.
9. And if we believe that what we do doesn't matter, we will become discouraged.
10. And if we suffer enough discouragement it can lead to another behavior.
11. We just give up and do nothing. Because after all. What's the point?
12. But I want to declare to you today that what you do does matter.
13. That what you do is not insignificant.
14. And it is not the amount of what you do that determines significance, it is obedience to the Lord that makes what you do significant.
15. As we talk about missions the next couple of weeks, I specifically want to tie that truth to our partnership with missions and missionaries.
16. There is a story in the book of 1 Samuel that really illustrates how the Lord sees what we do in obedience to him as significant.

TEXT: 1 Samuel 30:9-10, 21-24 David and the six hundred men with him came to the Besor Ravine, where some stayed behind, 10 for two hundred men were too exhausted to cross the ravine. But David and four hundred men continued the pursuit.

21 Then David came to the two hundred men who had been too exhausted to follow him and who were left behind at the Besor Ravine. They came out to meet David and the people with him. As David and his men approached, he greeted them. 22 But all the evil men and troublemakers among David's followers said, "Because they did not go out with us, we will not share with them the plunder we recovered. However, each man may take his wife and children and go." 23 David replied, "No, my brothers, you must not do that with what the LORD has given us. He has protected us and handed over to us the forces that came against us. 24 Who will listen to what you say? The share of the man who stayed with the supplies is to be the same as that of him who went down to the battle. All will share alike."

TITLE: Our part to play.

INTRO:

1. We are going to focus on missions the next couple of weeks because I believe missions is the heartbeat of God.
2. One of the purposes for missions is to change the lives of those who don't know Jesus. I can assure you that God has no greater motive or agenda than changing the lives of people.
3. I love missions because I learned as a young boy if I wanted to have the blessing of God on my life then I better be concerned about the same things God is concerned about. And I believe God is concerned about missions. To take it a step further God loves missions.
4. I want to focus on the partnership that takes place between those who go and those who stay.
5. Then I want us to consider how God views those who stay verses those who go.
6. I remember as a boy and then as a teenager being exposed to missionaries and mission's stories. I remember back when the missionaries would bring a slide projector and a screen and show slides of their travels.
7. I remember stories being told of native people in remote villages and riding in boats and canoes up a snake infested river to get to a group of people who had never heard of Jesus.
8. I used to wonder how there could be anybody who had never heard of Jesus. Growing up in a Christian home I heard about Jesus almost every day. Surely everybody in the world has heard of Jesus. But do you know they haven't? Every person in the world has not had the opportunity to hear about Jesus.
9. Living and serving in Africa in the early 2000's allowed us to witness firsthand the reality that not everybody has heard the name of Jesus.

10. And it was while living there that we learned how vitally important those who stayed in the US were to the work of missions.
11. I believe missionaries like the ones we have today, they are special people. I am grateful for people who will leave everything behind to obey the Lord.
12. But I also believe the people who send them are special. Because without those who send, those who go can't go.
13. God has called some to go. He has called some to go and live in places that most would never live in. He has called some to go and endure things most Christians would not be willing to endure, but he has also called others to stay. And the ones he has called to go can't go unless they have the support and partnership of those who have been called to stay.
14. You see **God loves and rewards the ones who stay just as much as those who go.**
15. Nowhere is that principle more clearly evident than in the book of First Samuel. David was a great man of God who had been surrounded by an army of about 600 men. While David and his men had been out conquering the land a group of Amalekites attacked their campsite and carried off all the wives and families of the men.
16. 1 Samuel 30:4 says that David and his men wept so long that they didn't have any strength left. They thought that all their families had been wiped out in a bloody massacre.
17. Finally, however, David and the 600 men gather up their strength and pursue the Amalekites to attack them and get back their families, but verse 9 & 10 of 1 Samuel chapter 30 says that when they arrived at the Besor Ravine that 200 of the men were too exhausted to go on. They were too tired to continue the pursuit, so the 200 men who were too tired stayed there in that place with the supplies while David and the other 400 men went after the Amalekites.
18. David and the 400 catch up to the Amalekite army and defeat them and recover everything that had been captured. The men and their families celebrate and rejoice and then they begin their way back to the 200 men who were too exhausted to travel on.

19. They arrive back at the Besor Ravine, and we quickly see two things occur. **1 Samuel 30:21** Then David came to the two hundred men who had been too exhausted to follow him and who were left behind at the Besor Ravine. They came out to meet David and the people with him. As David and his men approached, he (David) greeted them.
20. The KJV says that David saluted the men who had stayed behind. That word **salute**: to address with expressions of goodwill, respect, to express respect or praise for; honor; commend.
21. When David saw the men who had stayed behind with the supplies the bible says that David respected them, he saluted them, he honored them and commended them.
22. However, another group of men from the 400 who the bible calls troublemakers began to complain and argue that these 200 men didn't deserve to have any of the spoils or bounty or rewards of the victory. The evil men spoke up and said, those 200 who stayed behind can take their wife and children, but they aren't going to gain any of the riches from the battle.
23. In the minds of these evil men the 400 who had gone and fought deserved better treatment and greater reward than the 200 who had guarded the supplies. But David quickly spoke up and said no way. We don't operate that way.
24. Listen to what David says in **1 Samuel 30:23-24** David replied, "No, my brothers, you must not do that with what the LORD has given us. He has protected us and handed over to us the forces that came against us. **24** Who will listen to what you say? The share of the man who stayed with the supplies is to be the same as that of him who went down to the battle. All will share alike."
25. David uses the word "us" four times in these two verses of scripture. He keeps repeating the word "us" over and over again. Why? Because he was trying to drive the point home that in the kingdom of God there is no we and they, only us.
26. Now I believe it's important to understand that David didn't set the precedent for this decision. David was actually following what God commanded Moses in **Numbers 31:25-27** The LORD said to Moses, **26** "You and Eleazar the priest and the family heads of the community are to count all the people and animals that were captured. **27** Divide the spoils between the soldiers who took part in the battle and the rest of the community.
27. In other words, divide the spoils between those who went and fought and those who stayed back in the camp. As I read this, I wondered why God would give equal reward for those who went as he did for those who stayed. I want to point out two reasons this morning.

Those who went were more free to fight because of those who stayed.

1. We have to keep in mind that the people of this day were nomadic people. They lived in tents and every time they moved, they carried all they had with them.
2. If they would have had to fight and carry all their belongings at the same time they wouldn't have been as free to fight and win the battle.
3. Because they didn't have to haul around the tent, and kitchen table and everything else they were more free to fight the battle and be victorious.

Those who went felt protected by those who stayed.

1. So, you can't fight while you are dragging around your tent so what do you do? You leave it some place. But if you leave all the belongings in one place and everybody goes out to battle, the enemy can sneak in behind you and steal all of the stuff in the camp. I imagine it would be hard to fight knowing someone might be sacking your camp.
2. Those who stayed behind provided protection for the stuff and allowed the warriors to be more effective at their job.
3. That is why God gave equal reward in Numbers 31, and that is also why David saluted and honored and respected those 200 men who stayed behind and guarded the supplies. Those who stayed behind had just as vital a role to play as those who went.
1. I believe the same is true in this battle for the souls of mankind all over the world. There is no we and they, only us. God doesn't look with more favor on those missionaries who go than he does on those of us who stay back with the supplies. In the eyes of the Lord, we are all the same. One is not more important than the other.
2. Those of us who give and support and pray for our missionaries are going to share the reward in heaven with those missionaries who actually go because we have played an important role just like those missionaries.
3. What is our role? Our role is to free up missionaries to do the work God had called them to do. Our role is to provide protection for them from this side of the ocean so that they don't have to worry about what has been left behind.
4. I remember being in the oppressive heat of Africa. 100 miles north of the equator. I was teaching in the bible school, physically building churches, and then working with a team of students planting two churches. I was worn out and one day I came home, and the mail had come (which was a bid deal). In

the mail that day was our financial statement and a card from a church back in Missouri.

5. I opened up the financial statement and was overjoyed that the churches in the US had been faithful to send the financial support they had promised. I opened up that card and all it said was we want you to know we have been praying for you. Keep up the good work.
6. I broke and cried that day because I knew I couldn't be affective at what God had called me to do if those at home were not faithful to do what God had called them to do.
7. Friend, **we have been called by God to be involved in missions.** Do you know that every person here is called to missions? Some are just called to stay and give and pray while others are called to go.

Conclusion:

1. This morning I want to salute you. I want to praise you and honor and commend you for the part you play in spreading the message of Jesus around the world.
2. Your part is not less significant than those who live overseas. Your part is vital. Your part is making a difference. One day the great and awesome king of all the earth will reward you for your part.
3. I salute you for staying with the stuff.
4. And along with saying thank you, this next week I am going to ask you to **consider, and pray, and ask the lord what your part will be going forward.**
5. What will be your roll in helping to share the love of Jesus with this entire world.
6. Maybe someone this week will feel called to go and serve as a missionary.
7. If so, I say praise the Lord. Respond to the Holy Spirit and commit to be obedient to what the lord shows you next.
8. But if you don't feel called to go, there is still a part for you to play.
9. Those of us who stay can give and pray.
10. I'm asking you to seek the Lord this week and listen for his voice.
11. I believe if we listen to his voice he will speak, and he will tell us what he wants our roll to be going forward.
12. Would you pray with me right now that the Lord will speak to us?

13. As we get ready to close this morning, I am going to ask us to physically respond today, and to give and pray.
14. We are going to receive an offering for our missionary guests, and then in just a moment we are going to pray for them.
15. Take the offering.
16. Michael Dale lead in prayer.
17. Baptism.