

of righteous judgment on the part of the Lord and through the years Amalek had done nothing to make matters better but had, in fact, made matters worse. With the forces God had given him and the military advantage that was his, this was a war to be won! And Saul did win it. But he did not follow the instruction of the Lord and his victory was not what it should have been and was the harbinger of his rejection by the Lord. He can say to Samuel in verse 20 "I have performed the commandment of the Lord" which he had not done at all and the indication is that he either did not know it or was not aware of how poor his achievement had been. His inattentiveness to the Word of God was a condemning factor in his program.

II. Discussion: The items that entered into this inattentiveness are given in summary form with a consideration of the events of the chapter.

A. He was more interested in personal success than the plan of God.

Consequently he spared the life of the wicked king...it would be a great personal triumph for himself. Also he allowed the people to take of the spoil in ways they should not. He was popularizing himself like a man running for office!

B. He was deluded about his own performance.

He thought he had followed the commandment of God although he had spared the king and had allowed others to escape the anger of God--as is witnessed in the last chapter of 1 Samuel. He first credits himself for wanting to honor the Lord and then blames the people in suggesting that it was for the fear of them that he allowed them to have the sheep and spoil. Humility was not one of his strong points in the first place and it is surely not seen in this account. Notice the nature of his plea and his chief concern in vss 30-31

C. He despaired of achievement as noted, I think, in his mock confession in vss 24-25. Had he been attentive to the Word of God and committed to its execution, the whole scene would have been vastly different.

III. Conclusion: Vss 22-23 in this chapter are key verses in the whole matter of the Lord and His dealing with His people. He is not so concerned with what we think we are doing for Him and He is with our being obedient to Him. Easier preached than lived out, I think but we must still preach it and live it in order to be spiritually effective.