

The Rise & Fall of King Saul Walter Beuttler

[Comments: 1) All scriptures are from the KJV except where noted. 2) This message has been transcribed word for word (from Beuttler's own teachings) as accurately as possible (due to the quality of the recording). 3) Beuttler had his own dictionary of favorite words he used throughout his messages, and they have been transcribed and spelled out accordingly. 4) Spelling on certain proper names, airports, hotels, locations, etc. may not be exact. 5) Messages were spoken late 1960's, early 1970's. 6) Beuttler was a Bible teacher at NBI (a.k.a. EBI, Eastern Bible Institute) for 32 years traveling worldwide since early 1950's until a year before he went to be with the Lord in 1974.]

I have on my heart to chat with you this morning about King Saul, particularly Saul's rise and Saul's fall. I always have a distressed feeling for these men who have begun so well and ended so miserably. I like to look into the cause for these things.

Take Solomon for example. In Italy there is a painting of Solomon in the day of the resurrection. God is sitting on His throne, the saved stand to His right, the unsaved to His left. Up comes Solomon from the grave and there is a perplexed look on his face. You can read his thoughts from his face. He did not know whether he belonged to one group or another. That's precisely how the Bible leaves us. There is no clear statement as to Solomon's eternal destiny. We do not know whether he's among the saved or the unsaved. I have a very faint glimmer of hope that he's among the saved because God said to David, his father, "*My mercy shall not depart from him.*"

But as far as the Bible record goes, we do not know what became of Solomon, and he had such tremendous fellowship with God. I think that Solomon was closer to God than any other man recorded in the Bible. I have reasons for thinking that, but we're dealing with Saul this morning.

Saul was another man who had a remarkable beginning and yet met a very tragic end. I would like to cover quite a few points, yet not use an undue amount of time, so I'm going to be short on reading scriptures. I'll give you some references for those of you that like to know them.

We're dealing here with a man who enjoyed a great privilege. As you know, he was Israel's first king. God had warned Israel against it, but they insisted. So God gave them a king contrary to His will.

You might have heard it said that God never answers prayer against His will. That is just not so. God will usually not do that, but God does make exceptions. There are exceptions in the Bible and Saul is one of them. God said "*No.*" The people said, "*Yes.*" They insisted; they persisted so God acquiesced to their desires, their demands and gave them the best man He could. Still it was contrary with His will.

You have the same with Israel. He gave them the desires of their heart, but sent leanness into their souls. It is possible to so clobber God (if that's the right word to use), to so persist that finally He says, *"Very well, have it your way. Agreed."* The consequence of our persistence becomes the price we have to pay for our audacity. So it is with Israel and Saul.

In Saul we're told, is a man that evidently was a good-looking chap, tall and impressive - the kind of a man that looked like a king, yet in his heart there were the seeds of failure. Of course they are in every one of us. Every one of us has the seeds of failure in us. It only calls for the right circumstances to bring them into manifestation. They do not have to, by the grace and power of God. There is no human being that does not have the potentiality of failure within them. Often given the right circumstances brings the failure into manifestation apart from the keeping power of God.

Some years ago archeologists were digging in Egypt and found 2,000-year old lotus seeds. They wondered whether these seeds would ever grow again, so they took them to a climate congenial to the growth of the lotus. Lo and behold! They had lotus growing.

Now in Saul there was, I would say as with all of us, a potential of self-will, self-assertion that can manifest itself into outright rebellion against God. It's in every one of us. It's only a question of whether by our walking with God, the thing is neutralized. It's there and you know it is.

This man Saul was a man who had trouble bending his will to God. Here is the contrast to David. David was a man who bent. When he erred, he bent. He allowed God to deal with him and God restored him. But with Saul, he refused to bend. He hardened his neck and God had to ultimately destroy him.

I would like to mention briefly Saul's good points. I'll give you the reference without reading much. For instance in I Samuel 9:21, we find that in the beginning Saul was humble. Here he had his good points. Later on the man changed and God eventually had to remove him from the kingdom. When Saul had learned of his choice, he began to hide himself.

"And Saul answered and said, Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? And my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Wherefore then speakest thou so to me?" I Samuel 9:21

The man didn't feel that he was great. He was surprised that he was chosen because he was a nobody. You know that God loves to choose nobodies. The trouble is that the nobodies become the somebodies. That's where the trouble comes in.

We had a student in school. He went to the credential's committee to get his preacher's license. He came back and his roommate met him. His roommate said to him, *"Well brother, did you get your papers?"*

He said, “*Roommate, it’s no longer brother, it’s Reverend from now on. I got my papers.*” That’s most unfortunate. They don’t learn that from us. That’s one of the seeds of pride that is inherent in human nature.

Saul here was humble. He knew he was a nobody and was surprised that God would choose a nobody to be king. It’s surprising what God can do with the nobodies. If we can only stay a nobody, we’re all right, but that’s difficult.

In I Samuel 10:7, we’re told that God was with him. You would think that if a man has God with him, he wouldn’t fail, but that’s what you have in verse 7, “*For God is with thee.*” In the beginning God was with him. In the end, God forsook him. In the beginning God was for him. In the end, God was against him, not because God had changed, but because Saul had changed in his relationship to God. In fact, in I Samuel 10:6, 9, we are told that he was changed, transformed. In verse 9, God gave him another heart.

“And the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man. And it was so, that when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart; and all those signs came to pass that day.” I Samuel 10:6, 9

God performed a surgical operation. He gave him another heart. That, of course, doesn’t mean that God put in another blood pumping station. The heart mentioned here is no reference to the heart, the blood pumping station. It’s a reference to the seat of our personality.

You would think that if God changes a man’s heart, gives him a good heart - and He did - that a man with a heart changed by God would not fail, but the man failed. It’s surprising how notwithstanding what God has done for us, failure is still a potential, not a necessary thing, but it is a potential nevertheless. God was with him; God changed him.

“And when they came thither to the hill, behold, a company of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them.” I Samuel 10:10

The Spirit of God came upon Saul and he prophesied. You would think that if the Spirit of God comes and speaks through a man, that such a man would not likely fail, but it’s no guarantee against failure. Sometimes when people are used by God in prophesying, tongues and interpretation and what have you, they begin to feel that they are somebody. But when you look at the subject in its entirety, it isn’t that at all.

Do you remember Balaam’s ass? Well, God spoke through the mouth of an ass. So the next time God speaks through us, let’s think about the ass. I’m not calling anybody an ass, but I’m saying that just because God speaks through us is not necessarily divine approval.

For example, take the high priest Caiaphas in the New Testament. They were gathered together to condemn the Lord to death. They had murder in their hearts, every one including Caiaphas. He was the high priest. He was the chairman of the committee that put Jesus to death. While they planned His death the Spirit of God came upon Caiaphas and he prophesied. It says, *“This spake he not of himself, but by the Spirit.”* God, in His sovereignty, can make exceptions to the rules and even use a man hostile with murder in his heart to speak through him. So just because we’re used by God is no absolute guarantee that all is well.

Back to the ass. I know there are no asses around Washington. Well in the light of Watergate, maybe there are some. The Lord spoke through the ass and he rebuked the prophet. The ass saw the angel the prophet didn’t see. So just because you have visions doesn’t mean we are necessarily super saints. The ass wasn’t a super saint, but could see things the prophet couldn’t see. So all these things do not necessarily prove what we think they normally would prove. Here the Spirit spoke through Saul. He came upon him, but the man failed just the same.

In I Samuel 10:27 we see Saul was a man who had character. I would say *“character”* could be used here. There were some enemies who didn’t like Saul. And they despised him and brought him no presents. But he held his peace. That was an insult, especially in those countries in the East, and even to a great extent in Europe. You don’t visit people without bringing a present, whether it’s a bar of chocolate or whatever. I can’t do it because I’d get myself poor giving presents.

Even in Germany where I come from, you really don’t visit without bringing something. You can bring some flowers to the lady of the house, chocolate, anything. If you don’t bring anything they say, *“Just think! He came empty-handed? Don’t tell me he would do a thing like that. You mean he came without a present?”* Even in Europe to a great extent, a present is expected, but I think that is subsiding. But in the Orient, and here, bringing no present in those days was the height of insult.

So they insulted him; they despised him. Their failure to bring a present was tantamount to their expression of their rejection. Now Saul was king, and we are told, he held his peace. He could have said, *“You fellows of Belial! Hand me a sword, I’ll relieve you of your head.”* Or he could have said to a soldier, *“Kill him dead.”* But he held his peace. Under provocation, Saul held his peace. You know that means something, such self-control that people who insult us get no retaliation.

I was a pastor and walked along the sidewalk, and a little girl, just a tiny thing. She couldn’t have gone to school yet, I’d say she was maybe 3 or 4 years old. She stopped and looked at me and said, *“You are a faker.”* A sweet little girl whom I knew nothing about stopped and said, *“You are a faker.”* Where did she get that? Doubtless it was from her parents. I could have taken my shoe and kicked her clear across the street. That’d be silly! I just giggled and walked on. What if I had said, *“You little rascal.”* That’d be weakness, wouldn’t it? Saul held his peace.

I went to South America one year. I say this purposefully to show you something about the presence of God while we're on this area. I walked in what was then Idlewild Airport and got into the International Hall, and a strong presence suddenly enveloped me. It was an unusually strong presence. I stood still and put my cases down right in front of me touching them with my legs on each side so you can feel if somebody walks up and tries to take them.

I shut my eyes and said, "*Father, what is it?*" I got no answer, but I had a strong inner presence. That meant something, but I didn't know what. Very slowly it subsided. I stood there 5-10 minutes making sure my toes kept touching my suitcases. Slowly it left. I remember saying within myself, "*If ever I traveled in the will of God, this trip is the will of God.*" As I look back now, it was an assurance from the Spirit that I was in His will. I have observed something through experience. When God gives an unusually strong assurance, there will be an unusual need that calls for the strength of that assurance to meet the need. You'll understand as I go along.

I was on an Argentine Airlines flight to Buenos Aires. We made a stop in Havana. I had never been there so I left the airport and went out and walked around a bit just to look. Those were the days of Castro's revolution. I came back and heard a great commotion, lots of people, soldiers - If you want to call them soldiers. They were a riff-raff bunch with their rifles, uncouth, cocky, all over the place. I recognized a fellow passenger and said, "*Tell me sir, what's going on around here?*"

He said, "*Haven't you heard?*"

I said, "*No, what?*"

He said, "*They're taking our plane away.*"

I said, "*What!*"

He said, "*The Cuban soldiers are taking our plane away. We've got no plane.*" That's an Argentine Airlines plane, but they took it. I was concerned because those were the days when Castro put Americans in jail for no reason at all except it was an anti-American sort of thing.

We both walked over to the place and got there just in time. Castro's soldiers were lined up in two rows facing each other. Most had submachine guns under their arms. Some had rifles slung over their shoulders. Most were long-bearded, unshaven, an uncouth kind of a crowd, unkempt and what have you - a sloppy bunch of soldiers.

Then we discovered they were lining up the passengers. We came along and had to follow in line. They made us walk between those soldiers. There was an officer of some kind at the end of the two rows. The soldiers looked us over as we went along. I was worried. I thought we were going to go to jail. When I got to that fellow at the end, who

had his submachine gun like that, he looked me over. Later I learned they were looking for two fellows among the passengers they wanted to get.

He had the gun at an angle and I could look right into the barrel. I noticed his finger on the trigger and he looked me over like he did the rest. I got scared and remembered the presence at the airport in New York and said to myself, "*Beuttler, you said, 'If I ever traveled in the will of God, this is it.'*" That gave me quite a bit of reassurance, but frankly I was scared. My worry was Wife because Castro put Americans in jail and nobody knew what happened to them. They wouldn't allow them to contact the consulate or anyone. I knew some were there at the time.

Finally they let us get on the plane. My seat was beside the left wing. I was glad to be back on the plane. They hadn't found anybody. Later on we learned there were three fellows there that Castro was looking for, but they didn't recognize them. I was sitting there by the wing and these Cubans crawled all over that plane. Now you know when a plane refuels, nobody fools around with the plane or goes on the wings, but they did. They came up this ladder. They were all over. A fellow came right next to my window with his submachine gun. I was afraid of them.

He looked at me. I didn't know how to look. I didn't want to smile lest he think I'm ridiculing him. I didn't want to look scared lest he react from that. I tried to look neutral - whatever that is. This is what he did to me. (Demonstrated cutting throat) In other words, I can take you by the hair, cut off your head and throw it away. I didn't know how to react. I decided to keep my mouth shut and just look calm and peaceful. They finally let us go. Five minutes later, they banked sharply and we got an announcement that they were calling us back to the field. Oh Brother!

It turned out that in the excitement, they forgot to put oil in the engines. We picked up the oil and went. What a relief! While that fellow eyed me up outside the window with this thing, within me it took quite a bit of self-control. I felt like talking to the passengers. I felt like getting out of my seat. I thought any abnormal action would likely get the fellow stirred up. For me at least, if it ever took self-control just to sit there nonchalant without smiling too much, without looking angry, without looking scared, the Lord must have helped me.

As you know well, self-control is a tremendous quality in the service of the Lord. Last night when I got done speaking, I had just about used up everything I had and walked outside to get some relief. Wherever I trotted, I had people following me up with questions. It took self-control on my part not to say, "*Won't you please leave me alone?*" When I'm done speaking I've had it and can't go on to individual counseling. People don't realize it. They mean well, but then to keep still and not say what you feel like saying, that too takes a good amount of self-control. People come along with questions that take time. There are limits.

So this Saul came to the place where he was under duress, he was under pressure. In this case, it was hostility. He held his peace. He was silent in opposition. In I Samuel 15:17,

he was little in his own sight. I'll read this one because it is so pertinent to our relationship with God.

“When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel.” I Samuel 15:17

Do you notice the implication, “*When thou wast little*”? In other words, he began little and God made him king. He ended big and God deposed him. “*When thou wast little*” - past tense. In the beginning he was little in his own sight. That's why he was big in God's sight. Later he became big in his own sight and little in God's sight. It's surprising how easily people, when they are used by God, begin to swell up. The unfortunate part is that they don't know the difference between swelling and growing. There is a difference, as you recognize, between growing and swelling. They swell up into self-importance. It's latent in every one of us. Whether it comes into manifestation depends on a number of factors.

After Bible school I had some meetings on Long Island. The Lord blessed. Wife was in the congregation. We had good meetings. They asked me to stay a second week and I stayed. I heard people talk, “*My that Brother Beuttler, he gives you food. Isn't he good,*” and other remarks like that. Being young and immature and susceptible, I heard it. I heard it more often than I should have and it had its effect.

I began to think, “*Man, you must be good.*” Well, the Lord blessed all right. I used little outlines. I used them and thought, “*You know Beuttler, if the people find out you're using an outline, they won't think you're so great after all.*” So I was careful to hide my outline right below my Bible so they would think I was saying these things extemporaneously. They would think I'm really good. I had my outline carefully hidden so they wouldn't catch me with my weakness to rely on notes. Now I have my printed notes, but in those days I had an outline.

We had a very hot afternoon. The people had a big fan for me on the platform. You're already guessing it. (Laughter) In those days, I talked, walking up and down like a caged lion. I was over on the side really letting them have it. I turned around and saw my little outline fall over the pulpit fluttering like this down to the floor. The fan had picked it up. I had to go over to the other end of the platform, down three steps, bend over before the whole congregation, come right back again. I never hid another outline. The Lord evidently saw, “*Beuttler, there's something sprouting in there, a self-importance.*” And the Lord got it in the nick of time. “*When thou wast little in thine own eyes.*” That's when God picks us up, and the secret is to stay little no matter how God uses us. That's when God can work on our behalf.

I had a little pastorate and after a couple of years the Lord brought to my heart that it was time for me to leave. Presumably He thought people had enough of Beuttler. I don't know what His reasons were, but He let me know it was time to leave. I didn't know what to do.

So we went to a city and rented a furnished room. We had little money, next to nothing really. The room was \$7.00/week, unheated in the wintertime and we were cold, but wanted the Lord's will. We decided we would spend a week in prayer there. Because the room was so cold, we put the blankets from the bed over the kitchen table right down to the floor. Wife and I sat under the kitchen table to do our praying. That way we had a little heat. The Bible says, two shall make heat. Down there it got to be a little warmer. We prayed there for several days, not that we never came up, but this was our main prayer place, waiting on the Lord for an opening.

While we were under the table there was a knock on the door. I came up from under the table and there was a deacon from a church at the door. He said, "*Are you Brother Beuttler?*"

I answered, "Yes."

He asked, "*Are you living here?*"

I said, "*Yes, temporarily.*"

He represented himself as a deacon from a church and they needed a speaker. Their pastor had left. They had one ordered, but he was in British Columbia. He said, "*Can you take our service Thursday night?*"

I said, "Yes." Well, it wound up they asked us to move into the parsonage and finally we got the pastorate. There's quite a story to it, but I don't want to take the time. The thing I'm getting at is this. There were 21 candidates that wanted that church. It was a good church. Some of them had been officials in the Assemblies, men of experience. I didn't know the church existed, nor did I know they needed a pastor. And yet it turned out that I became the pastor. These men had all candidated. Mrs. Beuttler and I were sitting under the kitchen table. These fellows brought their credentials and their recommendations from high places. We were sitting under the kitchen table waiting on God, and I got the church.

It's quite something, but just one remark about it. A pastor came to me after we were there a few weeks. He said, "*Brother Beuttler, I have one question to ask. How did you get this church? Where is your pull? Here we were all candidates. You're a young fellow. We're men of experience. We wanted a church, but you got it. I understand you didn't even know the church existed. Here we candidated, preached our best sermons, and you didn't even know the church existed. Where is your pull?*" I guess they all felt they were led of God to take it.

My only answer was, "*You want to know where is my pull?*" He points up to God and asks, "*Do you understand?*"

He said, "*Yes, I understand,*" and turned around and left.

Now then here was somebody under the kitchen table. God brought me up from under the kitchen table to give me that church. These men tried and worked to get the church. I was down there with Wife waiting on the Lord. You know what the Book says; God lifts up the beggar from the dunghill. If we're going to do anything in our work for God, we need to stay little in our own sight. When thou wast little in thine own sight. When he was made big, God removed him.

Coming a bit to the other side. In I Samuel 13:9-14 you find that Saul could not wait for God. He was told to wait, but Saul took things into his own hands. He moved without authorization from God and intruded into the priest's office under the time of stress and distress. He said, "*The Philistines were gathered against me. My men were forsaking me. I had to do something.*" The only thing he had to do was to wait for God. The man could not wait. That's the trouble with many. They cannot or will not wait for God. If God doesn't speak, they can't be bothered waiting. They must move ahead. They move ahead on their own and they move toward disaster. Here is where many a pastor makes his mistake. When he's under stress, distress, opposition, they look to the Lord. They get nothing from the Lord about making a change. They move on their own and lo and behold, they jump from the frying pan into the fire.

I've said many times to students and ministers the world over, "*If God has consciously led you to a place for ministry, you must not leave until you are led consciously, at least in equal strength, from the place, or else we are on our own. If we are led to a place, we must be led from the place, or we are simply moving ourselves from the will of God. Then we are in trouble. I would have left our school years ago if it hadn't been for this principle. The Lord led me there and I had been under great pressure and distress with this educational business that is moving. I had opposition and what have you. One morning I was writing out my resignation a few years ago. While I was writing it, I suddenly had such an awareness of the Lord standing to my right that I could discern His face. I couldn't see Him, but I was aware of His look without seeing Him. His face looked as though He were saying, 'And what do you think you're doing?'*" So I tore it up.

I think I stayed about 2 more years. Then I wrote another letter of resignation, but I thought, "*I'm going to write it and before I submit it, I'll lay it before the Lord and ask something from God either by way of affirmation or negation.*" While I was writing I got a signal in my spirit, "*All right.*" So that was it. I could have left, and would have left years ago for a variety of reasons, because of the unbearable pressures. Be careful to wait for God.

I don't really know who you people are. If we think God wants us to engage in a certain type of ministry, a certain position or certain activity, if we don't wait for God to open the door, or for God to confirm it, or for God to give the signal, we move on our own and then we are out of the will of God. This is one of the things of King Saul. He could not wait for God.

In I Samuel 14:35 we come to a key. I don't know if you ever observed this passage. There is pathos in this passage. Take note of that.

“And Saul built an altar unto the Lord; the same was the first altar that he built unto the Lord.” I Samuel 14:35

Notice that Saul built an altar unto the Lord. Do you notice the pathos, the sadness? There is a tone of reproach, even of reproof, “*the same was the first altar that he built unto the Lord.*” Why was this the first altar? It was the first altar because Saul did not begin (we'll call it) his ministry with God. Saul began his career with Saul. He did not put God first. This is a common fault in the ministry. We do not put God first. Either we put things first, the work of God first, but not God. God and the work of God are not synonymous. God takes priority over the work.

Saul did not begin his career with God. As time went by, the man fell, was defeated, and came into conflict with the sovereignty of God. His fortunes began to change into misfortunes. The man got more and more into trouble. Finally he bethought himself and built an altar unto the Lord, but his altar came too late. The man had already failed. The kingdom was already lost. The issues were already decided. The consequences of his failure could no longer be avoided. His eternal destiny was already determined. God had already cast him off, and had already deprived him of the kingdom. Now in his trouble he prayed, but his prayer came too late. He had already failed. The kingdom was already lost. God had already rejected him. Yes, he built an altar all right, but his altar came too late.

We can turn to God in prayer where the issues are already decided and the consequences of our failure can no longer be reversed. We can get forgiveness, but certain consequences can no longer be changed. This altar came too late. Whatever work we do for God, it is possible to start with ourselves, ignore God more or less, and build our altar only when it is too late. I think we have the key to Saul's failure - that at long last he built his altar. He did not build his altar in the beginning. He did not begin his reign with God. He built an altar when he wanted God to extricate him from the consequences of his failures, but God had already decided otherwise. God had already looked out for another man, a man after His own heart.

In I Samuel 15:11, you find that Saul turned his back on God. In I Samuel 15:15, he shifted responsibility for his actions. He blamed the people for his own failings. The people sacrificed the sheep, they did this, they did that. He shifted responsibility. In I Samuel 15:17, he became self-important. I've touched on that before. In I Samuel 15:18-23, he rejected God's throne rights. That's a terrible thing. It's disobedience.

One time the Lord gave me two definitions: 1) Pride and 2) Disobedience. You don't find these in the dictionary, but you find it in God's dictionary. Pride is the deification of self. Think it over and you see the rationality of it. Pride is the deification of self. It's a terrible thing in the sight of God.

We had a revival in our school. The revival was going on for about ten days. I had left chapel for a while and came back and sat down over on the girls' side. To my right was one of the girls singing in other tongues. She was one of our greatest singers that we ever had. She could go way up to K or someplace. She sang in other tongues and everybody was listening. It was beautiful.

The Lord spoke to me. I won't mention her name. I'll use another name. The Lord said, *"Go over to Suzy and tell her that her singing is an abomination in my sight."*

I said, *"Lord, that's a terrible thing for a teacher to do to a student. That's awful. Isn't she singing in tongues?"* The Lord spoke a second time. I wouldn't do it. The Lord spoke a third time. I wouldn't do it. I said, *"Lord, she's a Beuttlerite. She's never done anything to me. She's always been nice to me."* I battled, and finally agreed. But when I had finally agreed, she had left the chapel. I felt terrible. I repented. Oh! I felt bad. I said, *"Lord, I'm going up to my office and if You will bring her my way, I'll obey."*

I went up and as I approached the hall where the door was to the office, this girl had come down the other way apparently to go back to the chapel. We met in the hall outside my office door.

I said, *"Suzy, would you mind stepping inside a bit. I have something to tell you."*

She said so nicely, *"Certainly Brother Beuttler."* Then I felt worse. If she only hadn't been so nice, but she was.

She stepped in and I stood in front of her. Oh Brother! I looked her in the eyes and said, *"Suzy, I have something to tell you from the Lord. He wants me to tell you that your singing is an abomination in His sight."*

You should have seen that girl. She looked stunned as though she had been hit with a sledgehammer. I knew I mustn't say anymore. Her head slowly went down. Then she burst out in great sobbing, almost hysterical. Did that girl cry! I felt like putting my arm around her shoulders and say, *"I'm so sorry, I apologize,"* but I knew I mustn't do that. I let her sob. She sobbed her heart out. Her nose ran. I knew I had a clean handkerchief with me. You do that in school because you need one to wipe tears. Finally she made her way toward the door sobbing. Oh did that girl cry all the way down the hall. That was it.

She didn't sing for months. Nobody could get her to sing. I'll say to her credit, the school never found out what happened. She didn't talk, neither did I. When asked to sing a solo, she would answer, *"No."* She wouldn't sing in the choir, she wouldn't sing in a quartet, or a sextet or whatever there is. She just wouldn't sing. People wondered why she wouldn't sing. She was the favorite singer. She wouldn't tell.

After some months, I had chapel and the Lord put on my heart to ask her to sing a solo. So I went to see her or met her somehow. I said, “*Suzy, I have chapel tomorrow morning. I would like you to sing a solo.*”

I will never forget her look. She looked at me as though saying, “*Me? After what you told me, you’re asking me to sing?*”

I said, “*Yes, you.*”

She paused a bit and then said, “*I’ll sing.*” That was it.

School was out. After a few weeks I received a letter from her something like this:

Dear Brother Beuttler, I want to thank you for your faithfulness to God and to me for telling me that my singing was an abomination in His sight. When I sang in chapel, I was not singing for the glory of God. I was singing to have others admire my voice. I knew everybody was listening to my voice. I was singing for my own glory. Through the incident, God has humbled me. I’ve found a place of new consecration, and now God is using me again in my ministry of song. The pride of voice is gone. Out of thankfulness for your help, I went to a radio station and asked them to cut a 12-inch record on which I’m singing for you, your favorite hymns. Signed, Your grateful student, Suzy.

That pride God could not stand. It’s the deification of self. Whether it’s the piano, preaching or whatever, it’s the deification of self.

Disobedience is the rejection of the sovereignty, the throne rights of God. That’s very serious. That’s what Saul did. He rejected God’s throne rights. He feared man more than God and then we read those fateful words, “*And the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him.*”

People wondered here what is meant by an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him. There are two explanations: 1) That the Lord sent the evil spirit to Saul to trouble him as punishment, or 2) That the evil spirit right along tried to get at Saul but couldn’t because of the protective anointing of the Spirit of God. Now with the Spirit removed, the hedge was removed and the evil spirit had access to Saul without hindrance from God. I myself take the second view, but we won’t quarrel over that. The fact is where a man in the beginning had the Spirit of the Lord come upon him when he was little in his own sight. Eventually God removed His Spirit and made Saul a prey to the hostility of evil spirits.

Here is a man who began well and ended miserably. I think we have the key in that one verse that said, “*The same was the first altar that he built unto the Lord.*” I think if the man had attended to his devotional life, if he had taken God into his work, if he had put God first in the beginning and kept God first, this fate would never have occurred. In whatever work we are doing for the Lord, it is of supreme necessity that we build our altar and keep God first in our lives and in our work.