

The 3P's – People, Place and Power
The Old Testament
Seizing God's Opportunities – 1 Samuel 14:1-15

Introduction:

1. Story of John Wycliffe – 200 years before the Protestant Reformation – stood up to the Pope *"I am ready to defend my convictions even unto death – I have followed the sacred scriptures"*
2. He helped translate the Bible – the gospels, and maybe the whole New Testament
3. When he was placed under house arrest he used that time wisely
4. "Dead Poets Society" – Carpe Diem
5. Carpe Diem means to not to waste a single day, because once that day is gone, it can never be retrieved.
6. Every one of us has a divine mission in life

Missed Opportunity:

1. Today we are looking at King Saul's son, Jonathan and his faith journey
2. Saul did make use of the opportunity but rather sat under a pomegranate tree
3. Jonathan saw things differently
4. We read their stories, stories like Wycliffe and others, and that's what we want, but at the same time we don't want to pay the cost that such faith demands.
5. Instead, we end up settling for knock off copies of the original.
6. We settle for a faith that makes us look good, but it doesn't do anything for the Kingdom of God.
7. When we look at the Bible and church history we find ordinary people who step into God's activity and experience God's power in a way that can be described as miraculous.
8. These people had the same opportunity we have; they just engaged and seized the day differently.
9. ***James 5:17-18 "Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit".***

Maybe:

1. ***1 Samuel 14:6 "...it may be that the Lord will work for us ...:"***
2. The phrase, ***"It may be,"*** goes against most everything we've been taught about how God works.
3. Maybe is actually the first step in seizing God's opportunities
4. The first step is the fact that we don't know everything
5. ***"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,' says the Lord. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.'" (Isaiah 55:8-9 NKJV)***
6. Us staying in the USA - ***Ezekiel 3:4-8 "And he said to me, "Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with my words to them. For you are not sent to a people of foreign speech and a hard language, but to the house of Israel -not too many peoples of foreign speech and a hard language, whose words you cannot understand. Surely, if I***

sent you to such, they would listen to you. But the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, for they are not willing to listen to me: because all the house of Israel have a hard forehead and a stubborn heart. Behold, I have made your face as hard as their faces, and your forehead as hard as their foreheads.”

7. Jonathan moved forward in faith
8. The safest place is not always in the center of God’s will, but it is the best place.
9. ***2 Cor 11:23-28“Are they ministers of Christ? ... I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fasting often, in cold and nakedness-- besides the other things, what comes upon me daily.”***
10. Can you imagine what the church can accomplish if we move forward together?
11. The second step – we must be willing to risk everything
12. ***“Very well, let us cross over to these men, and we will show ourselves to them.” (1 Samuel 14:8 NKJV)***
13. It’s only when we stop hiding who we are, and in whom we believe, that God can use us in a mighty way to seize the day for Him.
14. Jonathan did not have a definitive word from God but He knew the God of his forefathers who had delivered the people on many occasions before
15. Maybe Jonathan remembered what Joshua said to the children of Israel ***“For the Lord has driven out from before you great and strong nations; but as for you, no one has been able to stand against you to this day. One man of you shall chase a thousand, for the Lord your God is He who fights for you, as He promised you.” (Joshua 23:9-10 NKJV)***
16. Moses ***“Don’t be afraid. Just stand still and watch the LORD rescue you today. The Egyptians you see today will never be seen again. The LORD himself will fight for you. Just stay calm” (Exodus 14:13-14 NLT)***
17. Thirdly, we need to go until God says stop ***“Then the men of the garrison called to Jonathan and his armor bearer, and said, ‘Come up to us, and we will show you something.’ Jonathan said to his armor bearer, ‘Come up after me, for the Lord has delivered them into the hand of Israel.’” (1 Samuel 14:12 NKJV)***
18. Has He said go, but just as important, did He say to stop?
19. God acted upon the action taken by Jonathan, as Jonathan moved forward in God’s will.

Conclusion

1. Divine destinies are before us
2. Those who never see God work are usually the ones who content themselves with sitting under the pomegranate tree, sipping pomegranate juice waiting for what God has already revealed.
3. If we follow God’ word and will then we will experience the Presence and Power of God

