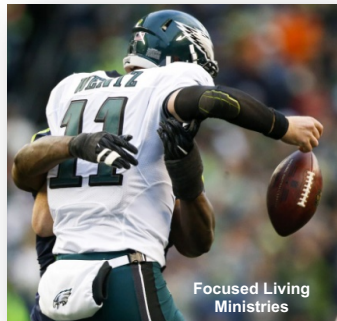


THE MAKING OF A MAN #10 Saul



Focused Living Ministries

“Guard your heart with all diligence for from it flow the springs of life.”

Prov 4:23

At the beginning of his 2016 season Carson Wentz had all the skills, experience, team talent and coaching staff needed as starting QB to lead his Philadelphia Eagles to the Super Bowl. But by the end of the season,

this committed Christ-follower posted the most number of **FUMBLES** of any player in the NFL which cost his team a winning season. His 2017 season also started with great promise until he averaged at least one fumble in every game again missing a chance at the coveted ring. It was not until 2018 that Wentz “committed to protecting the ball by DRAWING IT CLOSER to his chest” that he drastically minimized his fumbles and led the Eagles to a Superbowl championship.

All men fumble in life. But we can greatly reduce our fumbles in all areas by **drawing the truth of God’s word close** to our hearts. Like Wentz, King Saul had great promise but fumbled often and finished in defeat while leading Israel because he never committed to drawing God’s promises and principles close to his heart thereby protecting his relationship with God. **Where have you fumbled lately experiencing defeat? Are you protecting your heart by drawing His truth close?**

GQ OF THE OT (Old Testament) At 30 years old Saul’s season as king started well. He was born to a great family from the tribe of Benjamin known for their mighty valor (I Sam 9:1); physically excelled as the tallest man in the nation being a *“choice and handsome”* stud (9:2); became God’s first round draft pick as the first king of Israel (9:17; 16:2); had an attractively humble personality (9:22; 10:20-23; 11:5); sought the Lord’s help (9:3-19; 11:6; 14:35); did not become petty when wronged nor vengeful when hurt (10:27; 11:12-13); showed courage leading his army to victory while facing a superior enemy (11:1-12); was a team builder unifying the nation under God (11:12-15); was a winsome and skilled orator knowing how to rally the troops to victory during half time when losing (11:2-10); intelligently designed the right strategic plans for military victory (11:11); gave God the glory on national television during after victory (11:13); and was surrendered to and filled mightily with God’s Spirit (11:6). **What skills, resources, relationships, lineage, finances, etc. has the Lord given you to start out well? How are you using them for His glory?**

UNHEEDED WARNINGS (I Sam 12:1-25) Like all good coaches, the prophet Samuel warned God’s people (and king Saul) to watch out for situations that would cause them to fumble badly. Sadly they would not listen because they did not *“keep God close to their heart”*. List the various pregame warnings that ‘coach’ Samuel gave to the people. How does God use His warnings to chisel our lives to make us more like Jesus? Has God given you a ‘coach Samuel’? What warning has he given to draw God’s truth close so you don’t fumble? Are you listening? Who do you need to warn?



(I Sam 12:6-14; Duet 8:2, 11, 14, 18-20; Rev 2:4-5) How do fumbles occur when God’s men forget His **faithfulness**?

(I Sam 12:14-15) Where have you **not listened to the Lord** and His Word? How did that go for you and your family?

(I Sam 12:12, 16-18; 8:4-20) What other ‘kings’ (authorities) rather than “the King of Kings” have you allowed to rule over your life, priorities, thinking, schedule?

SAUL’S MOST FAMOUS FUMBLES All spiritual fumbles are bad. We can lose the ‘ball’ (fellowship w/ God not salvation) allowing our enemy to score a victory. But God graciously allows us to recover the ‘ball’ by humble heartfelt **repentance** (Ps 32; 51; Rev 2:4-5; 3:19-20) as He walks us thru the consequences as we learn to draw Him close to His heart. Check out these fabulously funny famous foolish football fumbles! (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xBIP3MULGZM>)

IMPATIENCE (I Sam 10:8; 13:1-14) Saul foolishly fumbled by being impatient instead of waiting for God’s timing. As king, Saul knew that only a prophet like Samuel could administer an offering before the Lord. How does God use patience as a great chisel to make us more like Jesus? What are we basically saying to God when we impatiently run ahead of Him?



How did Abraham (Gen 16:16) and Moses (Ex 2:11-15) both fumble in the same sinful way? Where have you been impatient?

(I Sam 13:8-9) How does impatience and prayerlessness cause us to often cave to peer pressure? Where is peer pressure testing you?

(I Sam 13:10-12) What blame shifting dance did Saul give when Samuel held him accountable? Are you doing the shag, tango or waltz?

(I Sam 13:13) What is at the heart of impatience and impulsiveness?

(I Sam 13:14) What devastating consequences did Saul experience?

(Psalm 27:14; Isaiah 40:31; Rom 2:4; Gal 5:22; Col 3:12; 1 Tim 1:16; 1 Pet 2:20; 1 Cor 13:4-5; Eph 4:2; Rom 12:12; Gal 6:9) What do these verses teach about the importance of patience?

DISOBEDIENCE (I Sam 15:1-35) Saul once again fumbled badly because he failed to understand that partial obedience is really full disobedience to the Lord. Saul was not a quick learner as he once again did not listen to the clear voice and command of the Lord!

(I Sam 15:1-3; 8-9) What did God ask Saul to do? Did he do it?



(I Sam 15:1-3, 8-9; Esther 3:1, 9, 13) Though politically incorrect, why was it vital for Saul to carry out God's command completely in killing Agag and the people (I Sam 15:3, 9)? Because Saul did not obey God completely what did a later leader Agag (Haman) determine to do to God's people? Why is it important to obey the Lord fully even when you don't understand or see the big picture?

(I Sam 15:10-11, 26, 35; 16:1, 14-16) How did the Lord's respond to disobedience and what were the consequences?

(I Sam 15:10-19) Who did God send to hold Saul accountable? Who in your life is asking the hard questions with faithful challenges?

(I Sam 15:24) How does peer pressure affect you? Who is to be your real and only audience? (Be careful when you blindly follow the masses as the 'M' is most often silent!)



(Psalm 81:7-13; James 4:6-10) What is the cry of God's heart for us as men?

(Luke 10:35-42) What was the secret of Mary listening to God?

JEALOUSY (I Sam 16:1-14; 17:1-12; 18:5-15) Sin in one area of life (impatience in 13:1-14; disobedience in 15:1-35) greatly affects and compounds our sin in other areas. So Saul fumbled yet again as he struggled with envy brought about by comparison. Jealousy starts when an insecure man's identity is not in Christ but other things like productivity, possessions, position, pleasure or reputation. He then starts to care more of what others think of him than what God says about him. How secure is your identity in Christ?

(Mark 7:21-22; Ex 20:17; James 3:14-16; Prov 14:30; 24:19-20; 27:4; 1 Cor 13:4; 1 Pet 2:1-2) Where do you struggle with envy or jealousy? What do these verses teach about victory in these areas? Why is anger extremely debilitating for a man of God as the ugly step sister of envy?

DISCUSS What is your most recent fumble in life and what is your plan to get the ball back? How will a sincere heart of repentance, a humble heart of dependence on God's grace and a focused heart on obedience help to recover your fumbles in life?