

GUILTY, YET NOT FORSAKEN

1 SAMUEL 12:16-25

CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE - JUNE 28, 2026

SCRIPTURE READING

1 Samuel 12:16-25 (ESV)

REACH ONE

REACH ONE - Getting to know people and helping people get to know Jesus.

As we continue growing in the habit of intentionally going out of our way to see people, carve out some discussion time to let group members share how they took a step toward others during the past week. It does not matter if it was small (e.g., learning their barista's name) or large (e.g., getting to share Jesus with someone), celebrating wins like these can go a long way into making this part of our daily rhythms and lifestyle.

ICE BREAKER QUESTION

Share with the group a time when you felt completely prepared and confident for a task; or a time when you felt completely overwhelmed and in over your head.

SERMON RECAP

Pastor Eric's sermon outlined:

How Israel is declared guilty before God, yet their guilt is not the end of their story.

- Samuel puts Israel on trial and calls on God to render His verdict
- The evidence: Israel's history.
 - Every time Israel sinned, God saved.
 - Every time God saved, Israel forgot.
- God's Verdict: Israel is guilty — but their story doesn't end.
- God's Grace is available for the guilty — God won't forsake His people for "His great name's sake"

How do you know you have received God's grace?

- No one can experience God's saving grace and walk away unchanged — You will never be the same

How does Grace change us?

1. God's grace changes who we serve
 - God's grace gives us another opportunity to serve the Lord.
 - If we don't serve God, we will serve something else. Serving anything other than the Lord results in loss — not gain, slavery — not deliverance, and emptiness — not satisfaction.
 - Living your life for God's glory alone is the only way to joy, peace, and purpose
2. God's grace changes how we fear
 - Israel command to move from fear of dread to fear of awe
 - Grace makes awe possible because grace removes condemnation.
 - You serve whatever produces the most awe in you.
3. God's grace changes what we consider
 - Israel allowed comparison to lead them to forget all of the great things God had done
 - To walk in enduring faith, watch out for comparison
 - Comparison will cause us to use other people's lives as evidence that God forgot about us
 - Comparison puts God on trial.

- Lament expresses disappointment with honesty without accusing God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Observation: What does this passage say?

1. Read 1 Samuel 12:16-25 as a group. Let group members share observations. Try not to move into interpretation of the passage or application of what you read quite yet. Simply share what you observe.
2. What does Samuel call the people to do and observe in verses 16-17?
3. What charge does Samuel make against Israel? vv.17
4. What does Samuel do and how does God respond? vv.18 How did Israel respond? vv.18-19
5. What specific commands does Samuel give to Israel? vv. 20-21
6. What does Samuel declare about God in verse 22?
7. What commitments does Samuel make and urge the people to consider? vv. 23-24
8. What was Samuel's final warning to the people of Israel? vv. 25
9. How would you summarize 1 Samuel 12:16-25.

Interpretation: What does the passage mean?

1. Why does Samuel call for the Lord to “send thunder and rain”? Job 37:5-13; James 5:17-18
2. Why does Samuel connect grace with service? What does it mean that grace gives Israel and us “another opportunity” to serve the Lord? 1 Corinthians 15:10; 2 Corinthians 9:8; Titus 2:11-12
3. What does this passage teach about the enslaving nature of idols — that serving them leads to loss, slavery, and emptiness? Jeremiah 2:13, Psalm 115:4-5
4. Why does Samuel tell Israel not to fear with dread (v. 20) but to fear with awe (v. 24)? Exodus 20:20; Psalm 130:3-4 Why do we end up serving whatever produces the most awe in us? Psalm 96:4-8; 2 Corinthians 3:18
5. Why does Samuel command Israel to “consider” God's great works rather than compare themselves to other nations? Psalm 103:1-5; Deuteronomy 8:2-4
6. How does comparison function as a spiritual accusation against God? 1 Samuel 8:19-20; Numbers 14:2-4;
7. What is the difference between lamenting your disappointment before God and bringing charges against God? Job 1:22; Psalm 13:1-6

Application: How can we apply this passage to our lives?

1. Has God's grace changed your life? If so, how? If not, what is holding you back from experiencing His grace?
2. Who are you serving?
 - What “kings” are competing for your heart's affection— approval, money, comfort, success? What is God calling for you to do?
 - Where do you see the temptation to “turn aside” in your own life — toward empty things that “cannot profit or deliver”?
 - What is preventing you from walking in the freedom that God's grace provides?
 - What would serving God “faithfully with all your heart” look like this week? How can your Church Group specifically pray for you?
3. What produces awe in you?
 - What currently amazes you more than God — success, relationships, comfort? How is that shaping your choices, habits, and emotional life?
 - How does remembering grace free you to fear God with awe instead of dread?
 - What is one step you can take this coming week to cultivate the fear of awe for the Lord?
4. What are you considering?
 - Where are you tempted to compare your life to others and conclude God has forgotten you?



- What disappointments are causing you to forget the great things God has done for you?
- How can remembering all that God has done for you reshape any present disappointments?
- How can your Church Group encourage you to remember God's faithfulness amid your disappointments?