

## Spiraling: Escaping the Downward Spiral

### Part 3 - Disobedience

July 24, 2022

*[Saul] fought against his enemies in every direction. . . . Wherever he turned, he was victorious.* (1 Samuel 14:47, New Living Translation)

*This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies has declared: I have decided to settle accounts with the nation of Amalek for opposing Israel when they came from Egypt. Now go and completely destroy the entire Amalekite nation—men, women, children, babies, cattle, sheep, goats, camels, and donkeys.* (1 Samuel 15:2–3, NLT)

*I will erase the memory of Amalek from under heaven.* (Exodus 17:14, NLT)

## HOW DO YOU ESCAPE A DEADLY FLAT SPIN?

### 1. Get extreme about cutting out sin.

*If your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out. It's better to enter the Kingdom of God with only one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell.* (Mark 9:47, NLT)

*[Saul] captured Agag, the Amalekite king, but completely destroyed everyone else. Saul and his men spared Agag's life and kept the best of the sheep and goats, the cattle, the fat calves, and the lambs—everything, in fact, that appealed to them. They destroyed only what was worthless or of poor quality.* (1 Samuel 15:8–9, NLT)

### 2. Remember: partial obedience = disobedience.

*Then the Lord said to Samuel, "I am sorry that I ever made Saul king, for he has not been loyal to me and has refused to obey my command." Samuel was so deeply moved when he heard this that he cried out to the Lord all night.* (1 Samuel 15:10–11, NLT)

*Saul went to the town of Carmel to set up a monument to himself; then he went on to Gilgal.* (1 Samuel 15:12, NLT)

*When Samuel finally found him, Saul greeted him cheerfully. "May the Lord bless you," he said. "I have carried out the Lord's command!"* (1 Samuel 15:13, NLT)

*"It's true that the army spared the best of the sheep, goats, and cattle," Saul admitted. "But they are going to sacrifice them to the Lord your God. We have destroyed everything else."* (1 Samuel 15:15, NLT)

*Although you may think little of yourself, are you not the leader of the tribes of Israel? The Lord has anointed you king of Israel.* (1 Samuel 15:17, NLT)

### 3. Choose to believe what God says about you.

*For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son . . . And having chosen them, he called them to come to him. And having called them, he gave them right standing with himself. And having given them right standing, he gave them his glory.* (Romans 8:29–30, NLT)

*"But I did obey the Lord," Saul insisted. "I carried out the mission he gave me. I brought back King Agag, but I destroyed everyone else. Then my troops brought in the best of the sheep, goats, cattle, and plunder to sacrifice to the Lord your God in Gilgal."* (1 Samuel 15:20–21, NLT)

*Obedience is better than sacrifice, and submission is better than offering the fat of rams. Rebellion is as sinful as witchcraft, and stubbornness as bad as worshiping idols. So because you have rejected the command of the Lord, he has rejected you as king.* (1 Samuel 15:22–23, NLT)

### 4. When confronted with sin, demonstrate true repentance.

*Then Saul admitted to Samuel, "Yes, I have sinned. I have disobeyed your instructions and the Lord's command, for I was afraid of the people and did what they demanded. But now, please forgive my sin and come back with me so that I may worship the Lord."* (1 Samuel 15:24-25, NLT)

*Just see what this godly sorrow produced in you! Such earnestness such concern to clear yourselves such indignation, such alarm, such longing to see me such zeal, and such a readiness to punish wrong. You showed that you have done everything necessary to make things right.* (2 Corinthians 7:11, NLT)

*Then Saul pleaded again, "I know I have sinned. But please, at least honor me before the elders of my people and before Israel by coming back with me so that I may worship the Lord your God."* (1 Samuel 15:30, NLT)

### 5. Obey God for the next step even when it hurts.

*And Samuel cut Agag to pieces before the Lord at Gilgal.* (1 Samuel 15:33, NLT)

*Samuel never went to meet with Saul again, but he mourned constantly for him. And the Lord was sorry he had ever made Saul king of Israel.* (1 Samuel 15:35, NLT)

*You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book.* (Psalm 56:8, NLT)

*If we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.* (1 John 1:9, NLT)