



**Individual Responsibility
Regarding Civil Rights**
1 of 2 Equality Under the Law
Living in the Image of God
Module 04 Session 05

Banking Blessings Ministry
San Antonio, Texas
USA



Living in the Image of God

- God creates every person to represent him in interactions with others
- Be for others what God would be for them if he lived with us in human form
- He provides resources for people to perform the responsibilities
- He blesses those that do

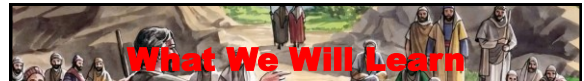
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Living in the Image of God

- Program seeks to understand
- Meaning of *Living in the Image of God*
- Resources God has provided to guide us
- Human responsibilities
- Benefits of *Living in the Image of God*


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What We Will Learn

- First of a two-part study to understand the individual responsibility regarding civil rights
- Discuss two events from the bible to understand basic principles of relationships between individuals and society
- First event: principle of “Equality Under the Law” based on punishment of King Saul for discriminatory execution of judgment against the Amalekites


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What We Will Learn cont'd

- God asked Saul to execute a judgment against the Amalekites
- Saul applied a discriminatory criterion in executing the judgment
- Instead of destroying Amalek totally as God commanded Saul spared the “good” and destroyed the “despised and weak”
- He violated “Equality Under the Law”
- God terminated him as king of Israel

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What We Will Learn cont'd

- Second study will discuss a ruling by David regarding the distribution of battle proceeds among his followers
- Focus on first study today
- Discussion of “Equality Under the Law”
- 1 Samuel 15

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Equality Under the Law

- The Law of a people applies equally to all, irrespective of differences or classification
- God terminated Saul as king of Israel
- Because of Saul's discriminatory application of the law
- Regarding God's judgment against the Amalekites
- *Equality under the law* is important to God

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Command Against Amalekites

- God judged Amalek for complete destruction
- Commanded Saul to execute the judgment
- No exemption for any Amalekite
- Equal application of the law to all
- Means destruction of every Amalekite
- Irrespective of differences or similarities among them
- 1 Samuel 15:1–3

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1 Samuel 15 (NIV)

1 Samuel said to Saul, "I am the one the Lord sent to anoint you king over his people Israel; so listen now to the message from the Lord.

2 This is what the Lord Almighty says: 'I will punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they waylaid them as they came up from Egypt.

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1 Samuel 15 (NIV)

3 Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy all that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys."

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Discrimination by Saul

- Saul devised discriminatory criteria
- To separate Amalekites into two classes
- For unequal treatment under the law
- Selected the *good* for special treatment
- Destroyed the *despised and worthless*
- 1 Samuel 15:7–9

1 Samuel 15:7 Then Saul attacked the Amalekites all the way from Havilah to Shur, near the eastern border of Egypt.

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1 Samuel 15 (NIV)

8 He took Agag king of the Amalekites alive, and all his people he totally destroyed with the sword.

9 But Saul and the army spared Agag and the best of the sheep and cattle, the fat calves and lambs—everything that was good. These they were unwilling to destroy completely, but everything that was despised and weak they totally destroyed.

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What God Commanded

- Totally destroy Amalekites and their property
- Put to death everyone
- Men and women
- Children and infants
- Cattle and sheep
- Camels and donkeys
- Execute judgment to all equally irrespective of who or what—*Equality under the Law*

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What Saul Did

- Spared Agag the king and the best of the sheep and cattle, the fat calves and lambs— everything that was *good*
- These they were unwilling to destroy completely
- But everything that was *despised and worthless* they totally destroyed
- Divided Amalekites into two classes— *Discriminatory application of the Law*

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Punishment for Saul

- Swift punishment for Saul
- God regretted making Saul king
- Terminated his position as king of Israel
- Saul violated principle of *equality under the law* in executing God’s command against Amalek
- 1 Samuel 15:10–13 and 21–23

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1 Samuel 15 (NIV)

10 Then the word of the Lord came to Samuel:

11 “I regret that I have made Saul king, because he has turned away from me and has not carried out my instructions.” Samuel was angry, and he cried out to the Lord all that night.

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1 Samuel 15 (NIV)

12 Early in the morning Samuel got up and went to meet Saul, but he was told, “Saul has gone to Carmel. There he has set up a monument in his own honor and has turned and gone on down to Gilgal.”

13 When Samuel reached him, Saul said, “The Lord bless you! I have carried out the Lord’s instructions.”

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1 Samuel 15 (NIV)

21 The soldiers took sheep and cattle from the plunder, the best of what was devoted to God, in order to sacrifice them to the Lord your God at Gilgal.”

22 But Samuel replied: “Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams.

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23 For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has rejected you as king.”

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- The Law of a people must apply equally to all, irrespective of differences or classification
- Features or conditions that hinder equality under the law must be modified
- Laws that don't apply equally to all must be modified to apply equally

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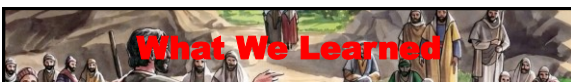
- Punishment of Saul conveys message
- *Equality under the law* is important to God
- God calls every person
- Understand the principle and biblical basis
- Understand potential applications to civil interactions and relationships
- Use the understanding to guide your participation in society

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- Through the punishment of Saul
- For his discriminatory execution of judgment against the Amalekites
- We learn that *Equality Under the Law* is important to God
- God terminated Saul as king of Israel because he did not execute judgment equally against the Amalekites as God directed him

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- Instead, he spared those he considered “good” but destroyed those he considered “despised and weak”
- His discriminatory execution of judgment violated *Equality Under the Law*
- God punished him swiftly for the violation
- Individual responsibility of every person to use *Equality Under the Law* to guide their participation in society

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Individual Responsibility Regarding Civil Rights: Equality Under the Law

Living in the Image of God M04S05

Through the punishment of King Saul for discriminatory execution of judgment against the Amalekites, we learn that *Equality Under the Law* is important to God for human interactions and relationships. God terminated Saul as king of Israel because he did not execute judgment equally against the Amalekites as God directed him. Instead, Saul captured alive those he considered *good* but destroyed at sight those he considered *despised and weak*, in violation of his instructions and the principle of *Equality Under the Law*. God punished him swiftly for the violation, thereby providing a message of individual responsibility for *Equality Under the Law* as guiding principle for participation in society.

This bible study is the first of a two-part miniseries to understand the biblical basis for individual responsibility regarding civil rights. We discuss two events from the bible to understand their significance regarding relationships between individuals and society. The first event provides a message regarding the principle of *Equality Under the Law*, based on the punishment of first king of Israel Saul for discriminatory execution of judgment against the Amalekites. God had instructed Saul to destroy the Amalekites to implement his judgment against them but Saul applied a discriminatory criterion in executing the instruction.

Instead of destroying Amalek totally as God commanded, Saul captured alive whatever he considered good and destroyed at sight whatever he considered despised and worthless. Thus, he violated the principle of *Equality Under the Law* and disobeyed God's instruction as a result. God terminated him swiftly as king of Israel, thereby conveying a message of individual responsibility regarding *Equality Under the Law*.

The second study will be based on a ruling by David, long before he became the second king of Israel, regarding the distribution of battle proceeds among his followers. The current study focuses on *Equality Under the Law*, based on 1 Samuel 15.

Command to King Saul Regarding Amalek

God judged Amalek for complete destruction and sent Prophet Samuel to command the king of Israel Saul to execute the judgment: "Samuel said to Saul, 'I am the one the Lord sent to anoint you king over his people Israel; so listen now to the message from the Lord'" [1 Samuel 15:1]. God commanded Saul to kill all the people of Amalek and destroy everything that belonged to them [1 Samuel 15:2–3]: "This is what the Lord Almighty says: 'I will punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they waylaid them as they came up from Egypt. Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy all that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys.'"

Equal application of the law regarding execution of the judgment means destruction of every Amalekite and their possession, irrespective of differences or classifications among them.

Discrimination and Violation by King Saul

In executing the judgment, Saul devised discriminatory criteria to separate the Amalekites and their possessions into two classes. He used the classification as a basis for discriminatory execution of God's judgment. Everything he considered *good* he spared for special treatment later. In contrast, he destroyed at sight people or things he considered *despised and weak*.

That is, King Saul did not apply the law equally to all in executing God's judgment against the Amalekites [1 Samuel 15:9]: "But Saul and the army spared Agag and the best of the sheep and cattle, the fat calves and lambs—everything that was good. These they were unwilling to destroy completely, but everything that was despised and weak they totally destroyed."

God had commanded Saul to totally destroy the Amalekites and all that belonged to them. He was to put to death everyone: men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys, and all that belonged to the Amalekites. The command meant that Saul was to execute the judgment to all equally, irrespective of who or what. That is the underlying principle of *Equality Under the Law*.

In contrast, Saul spared Agag the king. Also, he spared the best of the sheep and cattle, the fat calves and lambs: he captured alive everything that he considered *good*. He led his army to preserve whatever they considered good for a different treatment later. But they totally destroyed everything that they classified as *despised and weak*. That is, Saul divided the Amalekites into two classes according to his criteria and used the classification for a discriminatory application of the law. Thus, King Saul violated the principle of *Equality Under the Law* and disobeyed God's command as a result.

Punishment for Saul

God was swift in punishing Saul for the violation. He announced the punishment through Prophet Samuel. He informed Samuel that he regretted making Saul king [1 Samuel 15:10]: "Then the word of the Lord came to Samuel: 'I regret that I have made Saul king, because he has turned away from me and has not carried out my instructions.'"

Samuel confronted Saul regarding his mission against the Amalekites. Saul responded that the best of what he captured alive will be sacrificed to God: "The soldiers took sheep and cattle from the plunder, the best of what was devoted to God, in order to sacrifice them to the Lord your God at Gilgal" [1 Samuel 15:21].

But Samuel scolded Saul that God does not tolerate disobedience and announced Saul's termination as king [1 Samuel 15: 22–23]: "Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has rejected you as king."

God terminated Saul's position as king of Israel because he disobeyed instructions regarding execution of judgment against the Amalekites. Saul disobeyed the instructions by violating the principle of *Equality Under the Law*.

Individual Responsibility

The punishment of Saul for discriminatory execution of judgment against the Amalekites conveys a message that *Equality Under the Law* is important to God. *Equality Under the Law* means that every law of a people must apply equally to every person, irrespective of differences or classifications. Any features or conditions that tend to hinder equality under the law must be modified. Also, any law that in its ramification does not apply equally to every person must be modified to apply equally.

Every person is individually responsible to understand the principle and biblical basis of *Equality Under the Law*; understand potential applications of the principle in human interactions and relationships; and use the understanding to guide individual participation in society.

Summary of What We Learned

Through the punishment of King Saul for discriminatory execution of judgment against the Amalekites, we learn that *Equality Under the Law* is important to God for human interactions and relationships.

God terminated Saul as king of Israel because he did not execute judgment equally against the Amalekites as God directed him. Instead, Saul captured alive those he considered good but destroyed at sight those he considered despised and weak, in violation of his instructions and the principle of *Equality Under the Law*.

God punished him swiftly for the violation, thereby providing a message of individual responsibility for *Equality Under the Law* as guiding principle for participation in society.

Key Words: Amalekite, Civil Rights, Discrimination, Equality Under the Law, Individual Responsibility, Samuel, Saul,