

# A Contrast of Faith

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1 Samuel 14:1-23

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## Remember the Background

- Chps 13&14 are the story of Saul's failures
- Chp 14 shows us the difference in faith between Jonathan & Saul

## Saul

- Sitting in cave or under pomegranate tree
- Religious advisor: Ahijah, (not Samuel) of disgrace line of Eli

## Jonathan

- Not content to sit with enemy across the valley
- Boldly goes to the enemy
- Expresses trust in God's hand: *nothing can hinder the LORD from saving by many or by few*

## Powerful Faith

- We don't know why Jonathan went, but he went in trust
- Armies separated by steep valley
- Jonathan went & determined path by enemy's actions
- Faith in God's covenant faithfulness: Judges>Samuel
- Both Saul & Jonathan knew these truths
- Jonathan lived like Joseph<sup>Gen50:20</sup> who lived by faith in God
- Jonathan's faith caused him to make himself available
- Didn't look at circumstances, but looked to God to help
- Likewise we trust God's means of grace: Word, sacraments, worship & prayer

## Faith in Action

- Jonathan made himself available: *it may be that the Lord will work for us*
- Went to the valley, responded wisely to situation
- Philistines invited up very steep cliff<sup>14:13</sup>
- Jonathan climbs by hands and feet; did enemy get bored?
- Jonathan then slaughters 20 men quickly
- The Lord was with Jonathan - God panic<sup>15</sup> ensued

## A Poor Response to Faith

- Watchmen saw multitude dispersing and fleeing<sup>16</sup>
- Saul calls for a roll-call to see who was missing<sup>17</sup>
- Jonathan: active living faith. Saul: religious faith<sup>Dt20:2-4</sup>
- Saul called the priest, got impatient with ritual

## A Gracious God

- God cared for His covenant people despite Saul<sup>23</sup>
- Jonathan's faith rallied the Israelites & they fought boldly
- Do we believe, as Jonathan, that circumstances do not determine the outcomes when God is involved?
- Do we live in faith, looking constantly to God for His hand and providence? Pray continually for Gospel doors...
- Imagine how God might use YOU if you actively thought and lived in constant faith in your gracious God