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The Naz Prayer Ministry

## **Christ at the Center of it All His Hand at Work in Your Story**

My wife is one of those people who reads stories backwards. Well, not literally. But she has been known to cut to the chase and jump to the end to find out “whodunit.”

So, just this once, I’ll do it her way.

The story of the prophet Samuel ends with a powerful appeal to the nation of Israel who once again have fallen away from God. In fear of hostile nations around them, they cried out to the prophet for a king. The only problem was that they already had one. The King Eternal had led them through their entire history, yet their earthy eyes saw the political arrangements of the other nations, and in unbelief they turned to the false security of a warrior-king like other nations.

Under God’s instructions Samuel anointed Saul, the tallest man in all of Israel from the tiny tribe of Benjamin. Coming to the end of his life, the prophet calls the people together, reminds them that they have to live with their decision, and calls them to recognize once again that ultimately their hope must rest with their eternal King.

And in 1Samuel 12:24, his timeless declaration reaches far beyond Israel’s history.

Fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things he has done for you” (1 Samuel 12:24 NIV).

Understanding this cure for spiritual waywardness requires us to follow my wife’s formula: start at the end. “Consider what great things he has done for you.” This generates a sense of awe for who God is and calls us to faithfulness.

What is remarkable about his advice is that it was being lived out from the beginning of his story. His mother Hannah had prayed for years to have a child, even reaching the point of promising God that if He would answer her prayer, she would give the child back to God. As difficult as it must have been, when Samuel was still only a child, she took him to Eli the priest and placed her child in his care. Samuel literally grew up at the feet of Eli.

In the light of all God had done for her, Hannah gave Him the center place in her life.

The pathway to renewal had often been born from a fresh awareness of God’s hand of power and grace in their history. It still is today.

### **Take Your Next Step**

To safeguard Christ’s rightful place at the center of your life, purpose to fill your mind and heart with the wonders of God’s hand in your story. Document His acts of grace in your life.

But be warned. As you review God’s faithfulness, you may be cynically reminded by the enemy of your unfaithfulness. Grace, however, transforms each accusation into a reminder that regardless of how undeserving you are, your story is being redefined by the God who is at “the center of it all” into His story.