

Embrace
Holy
Living

RE- FLECTING GOD

07/09/12 - Hiding In The Church

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1 Samuel 15:12-23

When I was growing up, my brothers and I would sometimes go exploring in my grandmother's old Methodist church. We discovered some great hiding places! Now that I'm a pastor, I've learned that some people actually try to hide in church . . . from God.

When the prophet Samuel came to confront Saul about his disobedience, the king tried to hide his sin behind a mask of religious devotion. "The reason we didn't destroy all of the Amalekite flocks," he rationalized, "was because we decided to offer the best of the animals to God." Whether that was really Saul's intention or not, he failed to give God what he really commanded: full obedience. "To obey is better than sacrifice" (v. 22*b*).

Samuel's words apply to worshipers in every time and place. No acts of religious observance? singing, giving, or preaching? can make up for a disobedient heart. Present to God the sacrificial offering that truly pleases him: the gift of your surrendered self.