

the Venues

Go Deep

Putting Women in Their Place

“A Halloween Ghost Story – From The Bible!”

1 Samuel 28:3-25

October 30, 2016

How do you spend Halloween? What is your childhood memory of Halloween?

1. Why haven't we heard this story?

What makes this story a bit uncomfortable to teach or discuss?

2. What do we know about witches?

Care to answer?

According to the Idiot's Guide to Witchcraft, witches believe in God, do not worship the Devil, and practice a version of the Golden Rule - “Do what you will, so long as it harms none.”

Does that surprise you?

Why did the Old Testament have such a harsh view of witches and mediums (Lev.19:31; 20:6.27)?

3. How does God communicate?

What ways of communication did Saul try?

Exodus 28:30 describes God's plan for “Urim and Thummim” - a kind of spiritual flipping of the coin.

What do you think of this method of hearing from God? When have you used something similar?

Dallas Willard, in his book Hearing God, writes, “*God addresses us in various ways: in dreams, visions and voices; through the Bible and extraordinary events...Each way God communicates with us has its own special uses, but all the ways are not equally significant for our life with him. In terms of overall importance, the written Word and Jesus the living Word, are not even to be compared to a voice or vision used by God to speak to an individual. And from among the individual's experiences of hearing God, the 'still small voice' has a vastly greater role than anything else.*”

How do you hear God speaking to you?

4. Why did God give Saul the silent treatment? Take another look at 1 Samuel 28:6

Have you ever felt like Saul?

The Bible attributes God's silence to Saul's disobedience (1 Samuel 15:1-3, 9-11,23-28). Saul confessed his sin but the record says God still gave him the silent treatment. *What's up with that?*

Do you ever feel that God won't forgive you? How does the God presented in this story fit with Jesus?

5. So, God spoke through a dead man brought back by a witch?

Does this passage indicate the dead are accessible to us?

If this happened once, might it happen again, in our modern times?

Was this a gift of God?

What is our take-away from this story?