

1 Samuel 13:1-15, Saul Rejected as King

Introduction

- The methods we use to achieve our goals are as important as the goals themselves. Do you agree? Why or why not?

Study

Key Places in 1 Samuel

First Samuel is a book of great beginnings . . . and tragic endings. Saul started well. This handsome and humble man was God's choice as Israel's first king. His early reign was marked by leadership and bravery. But he disobeyed God, and had his kingship revoked by God.

The Israelites disperse

- Read 1 Samuel 13:1-7
- Who received the credit for Jonathan's attack on the Philistines?
- What were the results of Jonathan's actions?
- How did Saul's army compare to that of the Philistines?
- What actions did Saul take? How did his men respond to the situation?
- What emotions were controlling Saul's troops? Where was their focus?

Saul disobeys

- Saul's sin
 - Read 1 Samuel 10:8 and 1 Samuel 13:8-10
 - What key event didn't happen as planned?
 - How did Saul take matters into his own hands?
 - How were Saul's actions in 1 Samuel 13 and 1 Samuel 15 similar? (1 Samuel 15:3,7-9,13-15,19-21)
- Saul's excuses
 - Read 1 Samuel 13:11-12
 - What reasons did Saul give for his actions? Were they good reasons?
 - What really compelled Saul to do what he did? Where was his focus?
- When you know what God wants, follow his plan regardless of the consequences. God often uses delays to test our obedience and patience.

Saul's rejection

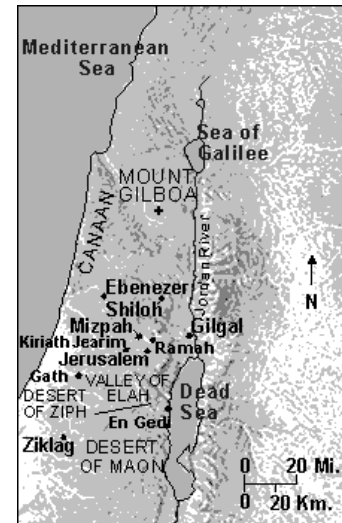
- Read 1 Samuel 13:13-15 and Deuteronomy 12:13-14
- What command did Saul disobey?
- Read 1 Samuel 15:22-23 and Acts 13:22
- What penalty did Saul pay for his disobedience?
- What quality does God desire that Saul did not possess?

Application

- Like Saul, your true spiritual character is revealed under pressure.
- What should you do when you notice pride taking a foothold in your life?
- When are you most likely to trust your own resources rather than God's?
- When is it especially difficult for you to wait on God's timing?
- What happens when you ignore God's instruction and take matters into your own hands?
- How do you rationalize your actions when trusting God gets difficult?
- What can you do to keep increasing your faith in God?
- What does God desire from you most of all?
- Saul showed great promise, but he deliberately disobeyed God. You must obey God in all areas of life. God values your obedience, not your potential.

Assignment

- Study 1 Samuel 16:1-13, Samuel Anoints David.



1 Samuel 16:1-13, Samuel Anoints David

Introduction

- What makes a person great? How would you define greatness?
- Like us, David was a man who often failed, who was subject to temptation and to sin. Like us, David knew despair and fear, doubt and loneliness. David also had a personal relationship with the Lord-and found in that relationship the secret of living above and beyond his potential. As we explore David's life, we'll study those qualities which can lift us to whatever greatness God calls us to in our own roles in life. Hopefully, we will come to better understand the process through which God is now at work to make us great.

Study

The Lord's instructions to Samuel

- Read 1 Samuel 15:35, 1 Samuel 16:1-3 and 1 Samuel 13:9
- Did God tell Samuel to lie about the reason for his trip to Bethlehem? Compare Samuel's instructions, actions and motives to those of Saul in 1 Samuel 13:9.
- How much of his plan did God reveal to Samuel?

Samuel's selection of David

- Read 1 Samuel 16:4-13
- What is notable about Bethlehem?
- Why do you think the town elders in Bethlehem were afraid when Samuel arrived?
- Samuel consecrated Jesse and his sons to prepare them to come before God. A consecration (purification) ceremony was often done before making a sacrifice or before witnessing a great act of God. God's law stated that a person could become unclean for many reasons. God used various outward signs of uncleanness to illustrate man's inward uncleanness that comes as a result of sin. The consecration ceremony pictured the importance of approaching God with a pure heart.
- What qualifications was Samuel looking for? What was God looking for?
- What does it mean to "look at the heart"? (verse 7)

- Read Psalm 78:70-72
- What sort of shepherd was David?

- David was anointed king, but it was done in secret; he was not publicly anointed until much later (2 Samuel 2:4; 5:3). Saul was still legally the king, but God was preparing David for his future responsibilities. The anointing oil poured over David's head stood for holiness. It was used to set people or objects apart for God's service. Each king and high priest of Israel was anointed with oil. This commissioned him as God's representative to the nation.
- How do you think Jesse and his sons reacted as each son was rejected? When David was chosen and anointed?
- What significant event occurred when Samuel anointed David?

Application

- What happens when you judge others by outward appearances?
- What qualities should we look for in our leaders, particularly in the church?
- How does God judge you? How should you judge others?
- Why do you think that God is so concerned with what is in your heart?
- What steps should you be taking to improve your heart's attitude?

Assignment

- Study Psalm 23.

Psalm 23:1-6

Introduction

- When do you really want peace and quiet?

Study

- The book of Psalms is a collection of songs and prayers that expresses the whole range of human experiences. In his psalms David honestly pours out his true feelings, reflecting a dynamic, powerful, and life-changing friendship with God. The psalmist confesses his sins, expresses his doubts and fears, asks God for help in times of trouble, and praises and worships him.
- Read Psalm 23:1-3
- In describing the Lord as a shepherd, David wrote out of his own experience because he had spent his early years caring for sheep. Sheep are completely dependent on the shepherd for provision, guidance, and protection.
- What is the focus of this psalm, the shepherd or the sheep?
- How is our Lord like a shepherd?
- What shepherdlike attributes and actions does David describe?
- How does the Lord lead us? Where does he lead us?
- What does "restores my soul" mean to you?
- The New Testament calls Jesus the good shepherd (John 10:11-15); the great Shepherd (Hebrews 13:20); and the Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4). When we allow God our shepherd to guide us, we have contentment.
- Read Psalm 23:4
- What is frightening about death?
- Why is David unafraid of death?
- We can struggle with other enemies--pain, suffering, disease, injury--but strength and courage cannot overcome death. Only the God of life, our shepherd, can walk with us through death's dark canyon and bring us safely to the other side. Life is uncertain; we should follow the shepherd who offers us eternal comfort.
- How are a shepherd's rod and staff comforting?
- Read Psalm 23:5
- How adequate is God's provision for his children?
- Read Psalm 23:6
- How is God treating David? What is David's response?
- What is the atmosphere, or mood, of this psalm?
- Which of these themes are found in Psalm 23: praise, God's power, forgiveness, thankfulness and trust. What is the main theme of this psalm?
- What does this psalm tell us about David? About his relationship with the Lord?

Application

- Do your prayers usually focus on God's provision or your problems?
- What sheeplike qualities should you be developing?
- When is it difficult for you to follow the Lord's guidance?
- Describe the last time that you really felt spiritually renewed.
- What is it like to be really close to God?
- Have you ever experienced a life-or-death situation? What emotions did you feel?
- What forms do God's "rod and staff" take today? Do they comfort you?
- Are you setting well-defined boundaries for your children? Why is this important?
- Are you finding satisfaction in God's provision for you?
- How should you respond to God's goodness and provision?

Assignment

- Study 1 Samuel 16:14-23, David in Saul's Service.

1 Samuel 16:14-23, David in Saul's Service

Introduction

- Describe a time when you really wondered what God was trying to accomplish in your life.

Study

An evil spirit torments Saul

- Read 1 Samuel 16:14-16
- What two events took place in Saul's spiritual life after his disobedience?
- Read 2 Corinthians 1:21-22
- Read Ephesians 1:13-14
- Is the Holy Spirit's presence in a believer permanent?
- The presence or absence of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament says nothing about salvation. Before Pentecost, the Holy Spirit's presence was rarely permanent, usually coming only for special circumstances and needs. However, since Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4) the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in believers is permanent.
- Who sent the spirit that tormented Saul? What do you think was the purpose for this? (1 Samuel 16:14-16, 23)
- Read 1 Samuel 18:10-11 and 1 Samuel 19:9-10
- What else did this spirit do?
- Read 1 Kings 22:19-23
- Are evil spirits subject to God's control? Do you think that this spirit was a satanic demon? Why or why not?
- Who recognized Saul's dilemma? Who proposed a solution?

Saul sends for David

- Read 1 Samuel 16:17-20
- How would you explain the fact that one of Saul's servants knew that David played the harp?
- What else did the servant tell Saul about David? What does this tell us about David?
- How did Jesse respond to Saul's message?

David enters Saul's service

- Read 1 Samuel 16:21-23
- How did David do in service to Saul? How did Saul respond?
- What was awkward or unusual about David's situation?
- What results, both expected and unexpected, occurred when David played his harp for Saul?
- Who do you think directed the events described in these verses? What makes you think so?
- What methods did God use to accomplish his purposes in this passage?

Application

- Can you identify the point in time when the Holy Spirit took residence in your heart? If you can, describe that event.
- What truths about the spirit world does this passage teach?
- Why is it often difficult to analyze your own difficulties? What does this suggest that you should do?
- What circumstances has God used to bring about his intentions for your life? How has God affected your life through other people?
- List five things about yourself that others would probably use to describe you. List five things that you would want others to say about you.
- According to David's example, what should you do if your employer is not a believer?
- How can you allow God to direct the events of your life?

Assignment

- Study 1 Samuel 17:1-58, David and Goliath.

1 Samuel 17:1-58, David and Goliath

Introduction

- When was the last time you faced a seemingly impossible situation?

Study

David and Goliath

The Israelites and Philistines faced each other across the Valley of Elah. After David defeated Goliath, the Israelites chased the Philistines to Ekron and Gath.

Goliath's challenge

- Read 1 Samuel 17:1-11
- In the days of the exodus, there were giants living in the promised land (Numbers 13:28,32-33). The Anakites were enormous people, some seven to nine feet tall. Goliath was probably a descendant of this race.
- What plan did Goliath propose?
- Why were Saul and the Israelites so terrified of Goliath?

David's arrival

- Read 1 Samuel 17:12-30
- What had David been doing up until this time?
- How did Saul's men see Goliath? How did David view him?
- Why do you think Eliab became so angry with David? How well did Eliab know David's heart?

David's offer

- Read 1 Samuel 17:31-40
- Why did David want to fight Goliath?
- Why do you think Saul finally permitted David to face Goliath?
- What qualified David for combat with Goliath?
- David had a staff, five stones and a sling. Anything and everything is a possible "instrument" for God to use. Do you agree or disagree?

Goliath's defeat

- Read 1 Samuel 17:41-50
- Why was Goliath overconfident? Why was David so confident?
- Would you describe David's words as boastful? Why or why not?

The Philistines' defeat

- Read 1 Samuel 17:51-54
- How did both armies respond to Goliath's death?
- How were David's promises (17:46-47) fulfilled?

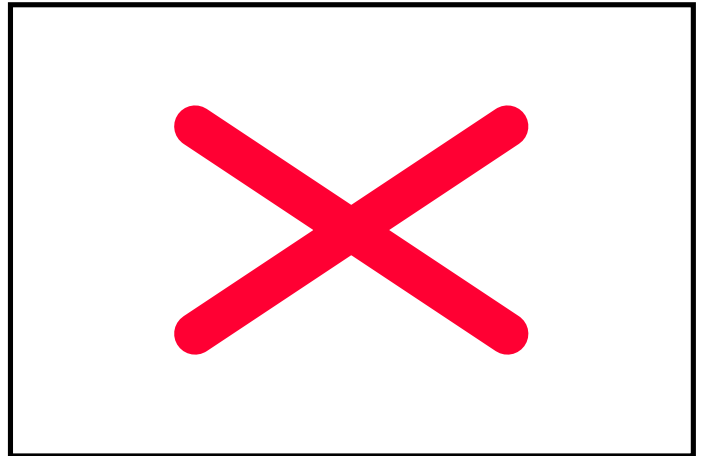
Saul's inquiry

- Read 1 Samuel 17:55-58
- How well should Saul have known David? (1 Samuel 16:14,18)
- Why do you think Saul asked about David's father?

Application

- What situations make you feel overwhelmed? Afraid? Discouraged?
- How can you face impossible situations with confidence like David's?
- How does pride affect your ability to view things from God's perspective?
- Whose reputation are you more concerned about, yours or God's? Do you take the credit for your successes, or do you give it to God?
- What do you have that God can use?

Assignment: Study 1 Samuel 18:1-30, Saul's Jealousy of David.



1 Samuel 18:1-30, Saul's Jealousy of David

Introduction

- How do you respond to someone who succeeds in everything they do?

Study

Jonathan's love for David; Read 1 Samuel 18:1-5

- What impression did David make with Jonathan? With Saul?
- How did Jonathan demonstrate his regard for David? What did Saul do?
- When David and Jonathan met, they became close friends at once. Their friendship is one of the deepest and closest recorded in the Bible: (1) they based their friendship on commitment to God, not just each other; (2) they let nothing come between them, not even career or family problems; (3) they drew closer together when their friendship was tested; (4) they remained friends to the end.
- Read Joshua 1:7-8
- What was David's secret for making friends and influencing people?

Saul's jealousy of David; Read 1 Samuel 18:6-9

- What impression did David make with the women of Israel?
- How did Saul respond to this situation?
- Do you think that Saul's response was appropriate?
- Jealousy may not seem to be a major sin, but in reality, it is one step short of murder. Jealousy starts as you resent a rival; it leads to your wishing he or she were removed; then it manifests itself in your seeking ways to harm that person in word or action. Beware of letting jealousy get a foothold in your life.

Saul's attempts to kill David

- With a spear; Read 1 Samuel 18:10-16
 - What effect did the evil spirit have on Saul?
 - For what reasons was Saul afraid of David?
 - Saul tried to kill David because he was jealous of David's popularity, yet David continued to protect and comfort Saul. Perhaps people have been jealous of you and have even attacked you in some way. They may be intimidated by your strengths, which make them conscious of their own shortcomings. It would be natural to strike back or to avoid them. A better response is to befriend them (Matthew 5:43, 44) and to ask God for the strength to continue to love them.
- By the Philistines; Read 1 Samuel 18:17-30
 - What plans did Saul devise to kill David?
 - Read 1 Samuel 17:25
 - Why was Merab already promised to David?
 - What is ironic about the phrase "to take revenge on his enemies" in verse 25?
 - What do we learn about David from his responses to Saul's offers?
 - While Saul's popularity made him proud and arrogant, David remained humble, even when the entire nation praised him. Although David succeeded in almost everything he tried and became famous, he refused to use his popular support to his advantage against Saul. Don't allow popularity to twist your perception of your own importance. It's comparatively easy to be humble when you're not on center stage, but how will you react to praise and honor?
 - How were each of Saul's plans foiled?
 - What made Saul even more afraid of David?

Application

- What qualities in other Christians do you admire?
- What qualities do you want others to see in you?
- How do you express your friendship?
- What tends to make you jealous of others?
- What can happen when you allow yourself to become jealous?
- How do you respond to Christians who have their acts together?
- What do you admire most about David in this passage? How could you be more like that yourself?

Assignment: Study 1 Samuel 19:1-24, Saul Tries to Kill David.

1 Samuel 19:1-24, Saul Tries to Kill David

Introduction

- How well do you take advice from others?

Study

David's Escape: David learned of Saul's plans to kill him and fled to Samuel at Ramah.

Saul's promise of safety

- Read 1 Samuel 19:1-7
- Why did Saul want David killed?
- How did Jonathan demonstrate his friendship for David?
- What did Jonathan stand to gain or lose in this situation?
- Read Ephesians 6:1-3
- Was it right for Jonathan to disobey his father?
- How effective were Jonathan's actions?

Saul's attempt to spear David again

- Read 1 Samuel 19:8-10
- What prompted Saul's attempts on David's life? (1 Samuel 18:8-11)

Saul's pursuit of David

- Read 1 Samuel 19:11-17
- How did Michal describe David's escape (verse 17)? What really happened (verses 11-12)?
- Compare Michal's actions to those of her brother Jonathan. Compare the results.
- How did David respond to Jonathan's plan? To Michal's plan?

David's flight to Samuel at Ramah

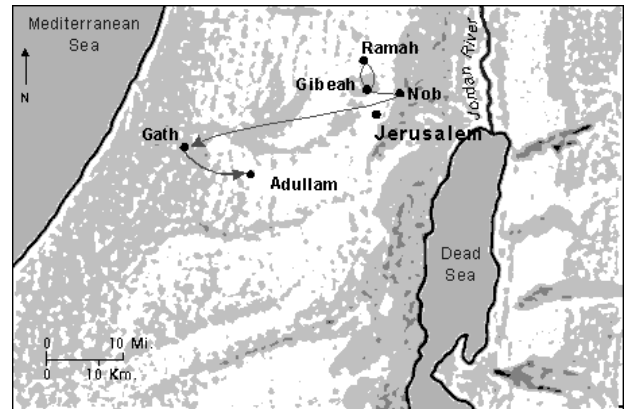
- Read 1 Samuel 15:26 and 1 Samuel 15:34
- When had Saul last seen Samuel?
- Read 1 Samuel 16:13
- When had David last seen Samuel?
- Why do you think that David went to Samuel? Where else might he have gone?
- What happened to Saul and his men when they followed David to Ramah?
- Saul was consumed with jealousy over David's growing popularity, but the Spirit of God immobilized him so he was unable to harm David. Saul spoke God's words (he "prophesied"), but he was far from thinking God's thoughts.

Application

- When was the last time that you stood up for a friend or fellow employee?
- Are you willing to defend another even when their gain will be your loss?
- What are the qualities of a peacemaker? How well do these qualities describe you?
- How does jealousy manifest itself in your words and actions?
- Is it okay to lie to protect a family member or friend?
- What qualities promote cooperation? How well do you usually respond to others' ideas?
- Who do you usually go to in times of trouble? Who should you go to?

Assignment

- Study Psalm 59.



Psalm 59:1-17

Introduction

- How does it feel to be an innocent victim of a crime?

Study

- Place each verse into one or more of these categories: requests for God's help, descriptions of the situation, or praises to God.
- Read Psalm 59:1-7
- What was the situation when David wrote this Psalm? (1 Samuel 19:11)
- What does David ask God to do? Are these selfish requests?
- What does David tell God about his situation?
- Why do you think that David describes his situation to God?
- Read Psalm 59:8-15
- What human attitudes and actions merit God's derisive laughter?
- Evil people live as if God cannot see and will not punish. But God watches patiently until that day when their deeds will rise up to accuse them. As believers we must remember that God hears and sees all we do.
- How do David's words of praise relate to his circumstances?
- What does David want Israel to remember? What does he want the world to understand?
- How does David's attitude contrast with his situation?
- Read Psalm 59:16-17
- Despite his predicament, where is David's focus?
- How is David's prayer divided between requests, descriptions and praise? What does this tell us about David? About prayer?
- How did David's actions correspond to his words? (1 Samuel 19:18)

Application

- David was hunted by those whose love had turned to jealousy, and this was driving them to try to murder him. But David knew that God's love for him was changeless. God's mercy to all who trust him is just as permanent as his mercy to David. When the love of others fails or disappoints us, we can rest in God's enduring love.
- What would you have been doing in David's situation? How would your prayer have been similar? How would it have been different?
- When do you talk to God in prayer? How large is the role of praise in your prayer life?
- What makes it difficult for you to trust God in troublesome situations?
- Has your faith ever been a witness to others around you?
- What characteristics of David, his enemies and God made David confident of God's loving protection?
- Where should your focus be, especially when life seems unfair?
- What do you need to do so that you can rest in God's loving protection?

Assignment

- Study 1 Samuel 20:1-42, David and Jonathan.

1 Samuel 20:1-42, David and Jonathan

Introduction

- What can happen when a friendship is tested?

Study

The plan is made

- Read 1 Samuel 20:1-23
- What was Jonathan's understanding of the situation between Saul and David? (1 Samuel 19:1,6-7)
- What plan did David devise to test Saul's intentions?
- At the beginning of each month, the Israelites gathered to celebrate the New Moon festival. While this was mainly a time to be enjoyed, it was also a way to dedicate the next month to God. Other nations had celebrations during the full moon and worshiped the moon itself. The Israelites, however, celebrated their festival at the time of the new moon, when the moon was not visible in the sky. This was an added precaution against false worship. Nothing in the creation is to be worshiped--only the Creator.
- What covenant had Jonathan and David made? (1 Samuel 18:3)
- How did Jonathan ask David to extend this promise in verse 15?
- Why do you think that Jonathan had David reaffirm his oath in verse 17?
- How did Jonathan plan to signal David regarding his safety?

Saul reveals his intentions

- Read 1 Samuel 20:24-34
- How did Saul respond to Jonathan's explanation for David's absence?
- What did Jonathan learn regarding his position as heir to the throne?
- Saul was still trying to secure his throne for future generations even though he had already been told his dynasty would end with him (1 Samuel 13:13-14). Even worse, he was trying to do this by sinful human means, because he knew he would get no help from God.
- How did Saul's actions make Jonathan feel?

Jonathan warns David

- Read 1 Samuel 20:35-42
- How did Jonathan carry out his part of the plan?
- How did David and Jonathan demonstrate their friendship before they parted?

Application

- How well do you make friends? How well do you develop those friendships?
- What makes for strong, lasting friendships? What role does God play?
- How loyal are your friends? How loyal are you to your friends?
- Should your loyalty to friends ever surpass your loyalty to your family? Why or why not?
- How do your actions reveal your heart? How does this relate to witnessing? To parenting?
- When you have to choose between your personal goals and God's will, which do you choose?
- What could you do this week to demonstrate your friendship?

Assignment

- Study 1 Samuel 21:1-15, David at Nob and Gath.

1 Samuel 21:1-15, David at Nob and Gath

Introduction

- Is it okay to lie to protect yourself? To protect someone else?

Study

David's flight to Ahimelech at Nob

- His request for food
 - Read 1 Samuel 21:1-7
 - Why do you think that David lied to Ahimelech? Did this make it excusable? What were the consequences? (1 Samuel 22:18-19)
 - Nowhere is David's lie condoned. The Bible makes it very clear that lying is wrong (Exodus 20:15-16; Leviticus 19:11). Lying, like every other sin, is serious in God's sight and may lead to all sorts of harmful consequences. Don't minimize or categorize sins. All sins must be avoided whether or not we can foresee their potential consequences.
 - How might the story have turned out differently if David had told Ahimelech that he was fleeing from Saul?
 - Once a week on the Sabbath, a priest entered the Holy Place in the tabernacle and placed 12 freshly baked loaves of bread on a small table. This bread, called the bread of the Presence, symbolized God's presence among his people as well as his loving care that met their physical needs. The bread that was replaced was to be eaten only by the priests on duty (Leviticus 24:5-9).
 - Was it lawful for David to eat the consecrated bread? Was it wrong? (Leviticus 24:9; Matthew 12:1-8) On what condition would Ahimelech give the consecrated bread to David? Why do you think he made this requirement?
 - (Leviticus 15:18)
 - Who saw David with Ahimelech? (1 Samuel 22:9-10)
- His request for a weapon
 - Read 1 Samuel 21:8-9
 - How do you think Goliath's sword came to be in Ahimelech's custody?

David's flight to Achish, king of Gath

- Read 1 Samuel 21:10-15
- Why do you think David went to a Philistine king? Why do you think the Philistines accepted David into their camp?
- Was seeking protection in Gath (Goliath's home town) a good idea? What was the result?
- Soon the Philistines became nervous about David's presence. David then protected himself by acting insane because it was the custom not to harm mentally unstable people.

Application

- God made it abundantly clear to his people that lying, cheating and stealing were wrong. His negative commands against these things reflect a positive principle: the principle of honesty. Honesty is right (and dishonesty wrong) because God is true. Truth is not something God does, nor is it something he possesses; it is a part of who he is.
- Name some situations when you have made excuses for lying. What should you have done instead?
- What are the effects of your lies on those around you?
- Read Hosea 6:6
- How should you acknowledge God?
- Should your behavior in church be different from anywhere else? Why or why not?
- Is the spirit of God's Law more important than the letter of his Law? Why or why not?
- Have you ever compromised your convictions to accomplish something? What was the outcome?

Assignment

Study Psalm 56.

Psalm 56:1-13

Introduction

- Have you ever felt like everyone else was out to get you?
- How do you decide whether or not someone else can be trusted?

Study

I will trust in you, God

- Read Psalm 56:1-4
- What was David's situation when he wrote this psalm?
- Who was out to get David?
- How had David demonstrated his trust in God?
- How are fear and trust related?

Others are against me

- Read Psalm 56:5-8
- What were David's enemies doing?
- How did David make his appeal to God?
- What emotions do you think David was feeling?
- Even in our deepest sorrow, God cares! Jesus reminded us further of how much God understands us—he knows even the number of hairs on our heads (Matthew 10:30). Often we waver between faith and fear. When you feel so discouraged that you are sure no one understands, remember that God knows every problem and sees every tear.

God is for me

- Read Psalm 56:9-11
- What role did God's actions play in David's faith?
- What role did God's word play in David's faith?
- How are God's actions related to his word?

I will give you thanks, God

- Read Psalm 56:12-13
- What promise had David made to God?
- What is significant about the tense of the verb in verse 13?
- What does it mean to "walk in the light of life"? What makes this possible?

Application

- What have you done that demonstrated your faith in God?
- How do you respond when the situation gets tough? How should you respond?
- How do you feel when someone twists your words?
- When is it difficult for you to be candid with God?
- How can you grow in your ability to trust God in difficult situations?
- How much harm can others do to you? How much harm can you do to yourself? Whom should you fear?
- In what areas of your life are you failing to "walk in the light of life"? What does God want you to do differently?

Assignment

- Study Psalm 34.

Psalm 34:1-22

Introduction

- What brings you the most happiness in life?

Study

- List the blessings that God promises to his people in this psalm.
- List the steps that we must take in order to receive these blessings.

I will praise the Lord

- Read Psalm 34:1-3
- What circumstances prompted David to write this psalm?
- What emotions does David express in these verses?

The Lord rescued me

- Read Psalm 34:4-7
- What did David do? How did God respond?
- What contrast is described in verse 5? What actions lead to each result?
- What does it mean to seek the Lord? To fear the Lord? How are the two related?
- The Bible often connects the fear of the Lord with obedience. David said that a person who fears the Lord doesn't lie, turns from evil, does good, and promotes peace. Reverence is much more than sitting quietly in church. It includes obeying God in the way we speak and the way we treat others.

The Lord is good

- Read Psalm 34:8-14
- List the actions that David encourages in these verses.
- List the benefits that result from these actions.
- To have God is to have all you really need. God is enough. If you feel you don't have everything you need, ask: (1) Is this really a need? (2) Is this really good for me? (3) Is this the best time for me to have what I desire? Even if you answer yes to all three questions, God may allow you to go without to help you grow more dependent on him. He may want you to learn that you need him more than you need to achieve your immediate desires.
- How well is David practising what he preaches in verses 12-14?

The Lord heeds the righteous

- Read Psalm 34:15-18
- What secrets for an effective prayer life does David name?
- What does it mean to be righteous?

The Lord preserves the righteous

- Read Psalm 34:19-22
- What else will God do for those who are righteous? What will happen to those who hate them?
- Verse 20 contains a prophecy about Christ when he was crucified. Although it was the Roman custom to break the legs of the victim to speed death, not one of Jesus' bones was broken (John 19:32-37).
- What is the balance of personal statements to universal truths in verses 1-7? In verses 8-22?
- What is the atmosphere of this psalm? Compare this to the mood of Psalm 56.

Application

When was the last time you were excited about something God did for you? Did you express your excitement to anyone else?

What situations are you currently facing in which you should be seeking the Lord?

How do you demonstrate the fear of the Lord in your life?

How well do you control your tongue? What does God expect from you in this area?

When is it most difficult for you to be honest?

What are you doing to actively pursue peace in a difficult relationship?

Has your spirit ever been crushed? What effect did it have on your relationship with Christ?

Where is God when you are experiencing trouble and affliction?

Assignments: Study 1 Samuel 22:1-23, Saul Kills the Priests of Nob.

1 Samuel 22:1-23, Saul Kills the Priests of Nob

Introduction

- How does it feel to be caught between two former friends who have become enemies?

Study

David's flight to the cave of Adullam

- Read 1 Samuel 22:1-2
- Who gathered around David? Why would they have sided with David?

David's flight to Mizpah in Moab

- Read 1 Samuel 22:3-5
- What actions did David take that reflected obedience to God's Word?

Saul's vengeance on Ahimelech

- The discovery of Ahimelech's aid to David
 - Read 1 Samuel 22:6-10
 - How did Saul respond when he heard about David? Why do you think he reacted this way?
 - Apparently Saul's key officers were from the tribe of Benjamin, just as he was. David was from the neighboring tribe of Judah. Saul was appealing to tribal loyalty to maintain his hold on the throne.
 - What might have motivated Doeg to speak up when he did?
- The massacre of Ahimelech, the priests and Nob
 - Read 1 Samuel 22:11-19
 - Why did Ahimelech not suspect that David was fleeing from Saul?
 - By destroying everything in Nob, Saul was placing the city under the ban (declaring it to be utterly destroyed) described in Deuteronomy 13:12-17, which was supposed to be used only in cases of idolatry and rebellion against God. But it was Saul, not the priests, who had rebelled against God.
 - What do we learn about Saul from his actions?
 - Contrast Saul's leadership abilities with David's.
 - Why do you think God allowed 85 innocent priests to be killed?

The escape of Abiathar

- Read 1 Samuel 22:20-23
- How did David learn of the priests' deaths?
- What emotions do you think David felt when he heard this news?

Application

- How willing are you to associate with society's outcasts?
- When are you most likely to seek God's will? When are you least likely?
- When do you struggle with jealousy? What is the result when you allow jealousy to influence you?
- What should you do when two of your friends are at odds with each other?
- What are some of the qualities of a Godly leader? How well do these qualities describe you? What do you do when you realize that your actions have caused someone else to suffer? What should you do?

Assignments

- Study Psalms 142 & 52.

Psalm 142:1-7; Psalm 52:1-9

Introduction

- Have you ever felt overwhelmed by life's problems? How did you deal with the situation?

Study

Psalm 142

- No one cares about me
 - Read Psalm 142:1-4
 - What was David's predicament when he wrote this psalm?
 - Why did David go to the Lord in prayer?
 - What did David say to God?
 - Have you ever felt that no one cared what happened to you? Through prayer we can pull out of our tailspin and be reminded that God cares for us deeply.
- Lord, rescue me
 - Read Psalm 142:5-7
 - What petitions did David bring to God?
 - How did David state these petitions?
 - What reasons did David give to support his petitions?
 - Was David making a deal with God? Why or why not?
 - How did God respond to David's prayer? (1 Samuel 22:1-5)

Psalm 52

- You love evil
 - Read Psalm 52:1-4
 - What events prompted David to write this psalm?
 - To whom was David speaking in verses 1-7?
 - What behaviors does David describe?
 - It is easy to confuse "accomplishment" with goodness. Just because something is done well or thoroughly doesn't mean it is good (for example, someone may be a great gambler or a skillful liar). Measure all you do by the rule of God's Word, not by how proficiently you do it.
- God will punish you
 - Read Psalm 52:5-7
 - What are the underlying attitudes that lead to these behaviors? What are their consequences?
 - How will a righteous person respond to these events? To whom are these responses directed?
- I trust in God's love
 - Read Psalm 52:8-9
 - What contrasts between the wicked and the faithful does David illustrate?
 - What were David's responses to God's lovingkindness?

Application

- When are you most likely to go to God in prayer?
- Do you come before God as boldly as David did? Why or why not?
- What are your motives when you pray? How do they compare to David's?
- Do you make deals with God when you pray? Should you?
- How are attitudes, behaviors and consequences related?
- When is it difficult for you to trust God? Why?
- Where do you tend to place your trust? What sinful behaviors do you fall into when your trust is misplaced?
- What is the only effective way to change your sinful behavior and avoid God's punishment? Why?
- How do you respond when you see someone suffer the consequences of their sin? How should you respond?
- Is praise a regular part of your prayers to God?

Assignment

- Study 1 Samuel 23:1-29, David Saves Keilah and Flees Saul.

1 Samuel 23:1-29, David Saves Keilah and Flees Saul

Introduction

- Has someone ever betrayed you after you helped them?

Study

David Flees from Saul: David and his men attacked the Philistines at Keilah. Saul came to attack David, but David escaped into the Desert of Ziph. At Horesh he met Jonathan, who encouraged him. Then he fled into the Desert of Maon and into En Gedi.

David Saves Keilah

- Read 1 Samuel 23:1-6
- Threshing floors were open, circular areas where the grain kernels were separated from their husks. By looting the threshing floors, the Philistines were robbing Keilah's citizens of all their food supplies.
- How did David respond when he was told about the Philistine attack?
- On what did David base his understanding of God's will?
- Why were David's men already afraid in Judah?
- What was Abiathar's relationship to David? Why did he side with David?
- An ephod was a sleeveless linen vest worn by priests. A pouch on the ephod held the Urim and the Thummim. Some scholars think the Urim may have been the 'no' answer and the Thummim the 'yes' answer. Another view is that the Urim and Thummim were small flat objects, each with a 'yes' side and a 'no' side. God had a specific purpose for using this method of guidance--he was teaching a nation the principles of following him. Our situation is not the same, however, so we must not invent ways like this for God to guide us.

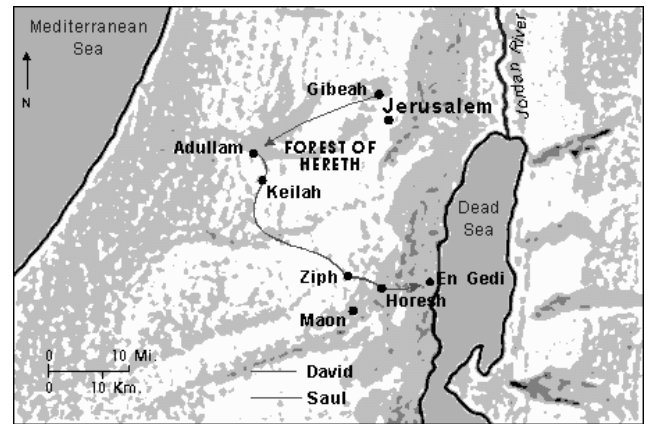
Saul Pursues David

- Saul's pursuit
 - Read 1 Samuel 23:7-13
 - How did Saul respond when he was told about David's location?
 - On what did Saul base his understanding of God's will?
- David's flight in the Desert of Ziph
 - Read 1 Samuel 23:14-23
 - What was Jonathan's relationship to David? Why did he side with David?
 - Why would Jonathan's words have been especially meaningful to David?
 - Why do you think the Ziphites aided Saul?
- David's flight in the Desert of Maon
 - Read 1 Samuel 23:24-29
 - How did God protect David and his men in the Desert of Maon?
 - When did God's protection become evident?

Application

- How should you respond to important events that could affect your life?
- How (and when) should you seek God's will for situations in your life?
- What part should circumstances play in determining God's will?
- When you have to side with one person or another, how do you decide?
- Why does God allow you to have difficult and trying times in your life?
- Why do you think that God often reveals his plans at the last minute?

Assignments: Study Psalms 63 & 54.



Psalm 63:1-11; Psalm 54:1-7

Introduction

- Describe a time in your life when you really, really wanted something.

Study

Psalm 63

I long for you, God; Psalm 63:1

- What was David's situation? His location? (1 Samuel 23:1-14)
- How does David describe his desire for God?
- If you are lonely or thirsty for something lasting in your life, remember David's prayer. God alone can satisfy our deepest longings!

I will praise you; Psalm 63:2-5

- What attributes of God had David witnessed?
- What outward responses did this evoke? What inward response?

I remember you; Psalm 63:6-8

- A cure for sleepless nights is to turn our thoughts to God. There are many reasons we can't sleep--illness, stress, worry—but sleepless nights can be turned into quiet times of reflection and worship. Use them to review how God has guided and helped you.
- What metaphors does David use to describe his dependence on God?

My enemies are bound for hell; Psalm 63:9-11

- Who is responsible for the consequences described in these verses?
- What is the general mood of this psalm? Relate this to David's circumstances.

Psalm 54

Rescue me, God; Psalm 54:1-3

- What were David's circumstances? (1 Samuel 23:19-25)
- What adjectives would you use to describe David's prayer?

God is my help; Psalm 54:4-5

- Many of David's psalms follow the pattern found in these verses--a transition from prayer to praise. David was not afraid to come to God and express his true feelings and needs. Thus his spirit was lifted, and he praised God, his helper, protector, and friend.
- In what different ways does God's faithfulness manifest itself to different individuals?
- David said that God repays evil to his enemies. What we have intended for others may blow up in our own faces. To be honest and straightforward before God and others is simpler, easier, and safer in the long run.

I will praise your name, Lord; Psalm 54:6-7

- How (and when) does David respond to God?
- Make a list of similarities and differences between these two psalms.
- Create a chart for each of these psalms, including David's situation, God's character, God's action, and David's response.

Application

- How would you describe your desire for the Lord?
- How is a longing for God different from a longing for anything (or anyone) else?
- What attributes of God have you witnessed first-hand? What was your response?
- When are your thoughts drawn toward God? When do you take time to meditate on him?
- What are the consequences of choosing for or against God?
- What do you do when you want to get even with someone? What should you do?

Assignment

- Study 1 Samuel 24:1-22, David Spares Saul's Life.

1 Samuel 24:1-22, David Spares Saul's Life

Introduction

- How does it feel when you find a rival or enemy suddenly at your mercy?

Study

David cuts Saul's robe

- Read 1 Samuel 24:1-7
- This is the day the Lord spoke of . . . Scripture does not record that God made any such statement to David or his men. The men were probably offering their own interpretation of some previous event such as David's anointing (1 Samuel 16:13) or Jonathan's prediction that David would become king (1 Samuel 23:17). When David's men saw Saul entering their cave, they wrongly assumed that this was an indication from God that they should act.
- Compare David's response to his circumstances with Saul's in 1 Samuel 23:7.
- Why do you think that David cut off a corner of Saul's robe? What might have motivated this action?
- Why did David regret what he had done?
- Saul had been anointed by God (1 Samuel 10:1). God rejected Saul as king when Saul rejected God's word (1 Samuel 15:23). David was anointed, and the Spirit of God, having left Saul, came upon David (1 Samuel 16:13-14).
- Why do you think that David continued to regard Saul as "the Lord's anointed"?
- List the principles found in Romans 12:14-13:2 that David demonstrated.

David calls to Saul

- Read 1 Samuel 24:8-15
- Why do you think that God delivered Saul into David's hands?
- Why did David refuse to kill Saul when he had the opportunity?
- Why do you think David was able to see God's will in this situation when his men were not?
- How did David plan to settle the score with Saul?

Saul replies to David

- Read 1 Samuel 24:16-22
- The means we use to accomplish a goal are just as important as the goal we are trying to accomplish. David's goal was to become king, so his men urged him to kill Saul when he had the chance. David's refusal was not an example of cowardice but of courage--the courage to stand against the group and do what he knew was right.
- How did Saul respond to David's actions and words?
- What emotions do Saul's words imply?
- What would Saul have done if the situation had been reversed?
- Compare Saul's statement in verse 20 with that in 1 Samuel 20:31.
- What request did Saul make of David? What promise did David make to Saul? What promise did Saul make to David?

Application

- How willing are you to admit your mistakes to those under your authority (your children, students, employees, etc.)?
- How well do you show respect for those in position of authority over you? When is it most difficult?
- When are you tempted to get even with others?
- What happens when you take judgment and vengeance into your own hands?
- When does restraint speak more loudly than action?
- How can your righteousness show others their unrighteousness?
- What situation are you facing where you should let your actions speak rather than your words?

Assignment

- Study Psalm 57.

Psalm 57:1-11

Introduction

- How do people often pray when their lives are threatened?

Study

I will take refuge in you, God

- Read Psalm 57:1-3
- What does David ask God to do for him?
- What is mercy?
- What does David say that God does?
- How does God fulfill his purpose for those who trust him?
- What words does David use to describe God?

I am in the midst of danger

- Read Psalm 57:4-6
- What imagery does David use to describe his circumstances?
- At times, we may be surrounded by people who gossip about us or criticize us. Verbal cruelty can damage us as badly as physical abuse. Rather than answering with hateful words, we, like David, can talk with God about the problem.
- How does he describe his emotional state?
- Why do you think that David praises God in the midst of his troubles? What enables David to do this?
- What trap did Saul set for David and then fall into himself? (1 Samuel 24:3-4)

I will praise you, Lord

- Read Psalm 57:7-11
- What is the mood of verses 1-4? What is the mood of verses 7-10?
- What is David's focus in verses 1-6? In verses 9-11?
- How are verses 3 and 10 similar? How are they different?

Application

- When confronted with verbal attacks, the best defense is simply to be quiet and praise God, realizing that our confidence is in his love and faithfulness (57:10). In times of great suffering, don't turn inward to self-pity or outward to revenge, but upward to God.
- God often takes you through your problems rather than around them. Is this better? Why or why not?
- How do you see God fulfilling his purpose for your life? How well are you cooperating with him?
- What does this psalm teach you about prayer?
- When was the last time that you asked God to show you mercy?
- When you pray, do you play Let's Make a Deal with God? How should you pray instead?
- What do you tend to focus on when life is difficult? What (or whom) should you focus on?
- What should you do while you are waiting for God to respond to your prayers?

Assignment

- Study 1 Samuel 25:1-44, David, Nabal and Abigail.

1 Samuel 25:1-44, David, Nabal and Abigail

Introduction

- How do you respond when someone fails to return a favor?

Study

Samuel's death, 1 Samuel 25:1

- Saul was king, but Samuel had been the nation's spiritual leader. With Samuel gone, Israel would be without this spiritual leadership until David became king.

Abigail's plea

- Nabal's refusal, 1 Samuel 25:2-13
 - What words are used to describe Nabal? How is Abigail described?
 - What was David's request of Nabal? Was it reasonable?
 - How did Nabal respond to David's request? Was his response fair? What did his words imply?
 - How did David react to Nabal's answer? Was his reaction appropriate? Why or why not? What was David's motive?
- Abigail's intercession, 1 Samuel 25:14-19 and 1 Samuel 25:23-31
 - What did the servant report to Abigail? What did he request?
 - What did Abigail do without telling Nabal? Was this appropriate?
 - How large was Abigail's gift in relation to Nabal's wealth?
 - How did Abigail's words demonstrate her wisdom?
- Although Abigail's culture and her husband placed a low value on her, she made the most of her skills and opportunities.

David's acceptance, 1 Samuel 25:32-35

- What persuaded David to grant Abigail's request?

Nabal's death, 1 Samuel 25:37-38

- What happened when Abigail told Nabal what she had done?

David's wives

- Although many great Old Testament leaders (such as Abraham, Jacob, and David) had more than one wife, this was not God's original intention for marriage. Genesis 2:24 states that in marriage, two people become one flesh. Why then did polygamy exist among God's people? First, it was to produce more offspring to help in the man's work and to assure the continuation of the man's family line. Numerous children were a symbol of status and wealth. Second, in societies where many young men were killed in battle, polygamy became an accepted way of supporting women who otherwise would have remained unmarried and, very likely, destitute. Nevertheless, polygamy often caused serious family problems.

Abigail's marriage to David

- Read 1 Samuel 25:39, 42
- How did David respond to the news of Nabal's death?

Ahinoam's marriage to David

- Read 1 Samuel 25:43

Michal's marriage to Paltiel

- Read 1 Samuel 25:44

Application

- How should you respond when someone fails to return a favor?
- Are wealth and generosity related? If so, how?
- How can examining your motives help you evaluate your intentions?
- Do you look beyond the present crisis to the big picture?
- How can you be loyal to someone without being blind?
- How well do you listen to others when you know that you are right?
- How willing are you to publicly admit when you are wrong?

Assignment: Study 1 Samuel 26:1-25, David Again Spares Saul's Life.

1 Samuel 26:1-25, David Again Spares Saul's Life

Introduction

- How do you feel when you win an argument?

Study

Saul Chases David

The men of Ziph again betrayed David to Saul, who was in his palace in Gibeah. Saul took 3000 troops to the area around Horesh in order to find David. David could have killed Saul, but he refused. Saul, feeling foolish at David's kindness, returned to Gibeah, and David went to Gath.

The Ziphites again inform on David

- Read 1 Samuel 26:1-5 and 1 Samuel 14:50
- What was Abner's relationship to Saul?
- What previous events in David's life had Abner witnessed? (1 Samuel 17:55; 20:25)
- Whom was Saul trusting for his protection?

David again spares Saul

- Read 1 Samuel 26:6-12
- What examples of respect for authority are found in these verses?
- What else did David's restraint demonstrate?
- Why was Saul's spear significant? (1 Samuel 18:11; 19:10; 20:33)

David's words to Abner

- Read 1 Samuel 26:13-16
- What was David's message to Abner?

David's words to Saul

- Read 1 Samuel 26:17-20
- What was David's message to Saul?
- What offer did David imply?
- What precious right had David lost as a result of Saul's pursuit?

Saul's reply

- Read 1 Samuel 26:21-25
- What was Saul's reply to David?
- How did David view this second opportunity to take Saul's life?
- List the similarities and differences between 1 Samuel 24 and this chapter.

Application

- Whom would you have been like in Saul's camp, David or Abishai?
- The strongest moral decisions are made before temptation strikes. Do you agree or disagree?
- When is it most difficult for you to wait on God?
- Is it wise to take every opportunity you receive for personal advancement? Why or why not?
- What should you do when a church leader proves to be unfaithful or incompetent?
- How should you treat someone who unfairly mistreats you?
- How could you let God vindicate you in a conflict at work or at home?

Assignment

- Study 1 Samuel 27:1-12, David Among the Philistines.

1 Samuel 27:1-12, David Among the Philistines

Introduction

- How strong is the bond that comes from having a common enemy?

Study

David settles in Gath

- Read 1 Samuel 27:1-4
- The once-great conqueror of Philistines now had permission to live under the protection of King Achish of Gath. Achish certainly would have known about the split between Saul and David and would have been glad to shelter this Israelite traitor. In return, Achish would have expected military support from David and his 600 warriors.
- Why did David decide to return to Gath?
- Do you think this demonstrated a lack of faith on David's part? Why or why not?
- Compare this trip to Gath with David's previous stay there. (1 Samuel 21:10-15)
- Was settling in Gath a sign of David's bravery or cowardice?

David moves to Ziklag

- Read 1 Samuel 27:5-7
- Gath was one of five principal cities in Philistia, and Achish was one of five co-rulers.
- What did David request of Achish? What did Achish do in response?
- What was David's implied reason? What was his real reason?

David lies to Achish

- Read 1 Samuel 27:8-12
- Whom did David and his men raid?
- What was significant about the Amalekites? (1 Samuel 15:1-9)
- Whom did David tell Achish that he had raided?
- What did David do to hide his deceit?
- Do you think David was wrong in lying to Achish?

Application

- Is it right for you as a believer to use strategy and cunning? Why or why not?
- Do wartime circumstances affect what is right and wrong in God's sight? If so, how?
- Is it okay for you to imply something that is not true without actually saying it? Why or why not?
- How should you use your God-given intelligence to solve the dilemmas you are facing?
- What could you do to remind yourself that your loyalty to God surpasses all other loyalties?

Assignment

- Study 1 Samuel 28:1-25, Saul and the Witch of Endor.

1 Samuel 28:1-25, Saul and the Witch of Endor

Introduction

- Do you believe in witches and ghosts?

Study

Saul searches for spiritual guidance

- Read 1 Samuel 28:1-7
- Achish's request put David in a difficult position. To refuse to help Achish fight the Israelites would give away David's loyalty to Israel and endanger the lives of his soldiers and family. But to fight his own people would hurt the very people he loved and would soon lead.
- What did David promise in reply to Achish's demand?
- Read Exodus 22:18, Leviticus 19:31, Leviticus 20:6, Leviticus 20:27, Deuteronomy 18:9-14, and Galatians 5:19-21
- What does God's word teach about mediums, spiritists and witchcraft?
- The Urim, along with the Thummim, was used by the high priest to determine God's guidance in certain matters.
- Discuss Saul's actions and attitudes toward mediums and spiritists. Why did Saul turn to the occult?
- Let life's difficulties and obstacles push you in God's direction and make you depend upon him. As we see from Saul's story, turning to anything or anyone else leads only to disaster.

Saul visits the woman of Endor

- Read 1 Samuel 28:8-14
- Practitioners of the occult have Satan and demons as the source of their information; God does not reveal his will to them.
- How did the woman of Endor respond to Saul's demand? Why?
- Why do you think the woman shrieked when she saw Samuel?
- Did Samuel really come back from dead? (What does the passage indicate?)

Samuel talks to Saul

- Read 1 Samuel 28:15-19
- What had the Lord predicted through Samuel? (1 Samuel 13:13-14; 1 Samuel 15:26-29)
- Why had God turned away from Saul and become his enemy?
- Sometimes you may wonder why your prayers are not answered. But if you don't fulfill the responsibilities God has already given you, you should not be surprised when he does not give further guidance.
- What prediction did Samuel give Saul?

Saul is terrified

- Read 1 Samuel 28:20-25
- What effect did Samuel's words have on Saul?
- Why do you think Samuel's words made such an impression on Saul?

Application

- What forms of the occult are common in our culture today?
- How should you respond to these practices?
- You may make a great show of denouncing sin, but if your heart does not change, the sins will return. Knowing what is right and condemning what is wrong does not take the place of doing what is right.
- When are you tempted to exempt yourself from your own rules?
- Are there any areas in your life where your heart needs to change?
- Is it wrong to consult mediums and psychics? Why or why not?
- How does God reveal his will to believers?
- How does your awareness of the spiritual realm affect the way you live?
- In what areas are you having difficulty discerning God's will?
- In what areas are you struggling with obedience to God?

Assignment

- Study 1 Samuel 29:1-11, Achish Sends David Back to Ziklag.

1 Samuel 29:1-11, Achish Sends David Back to Ziklag

Introduction

- How do you determine whether or not you should trust someone?

Study

The Battle at Gilboa

David pretended loyalty to Achish, but when war broke out with Israel, he was sent to Ziklag from Aphek. The Philistines defeated the Israelites at Mount Gilboa. David returned to Ziklag to find that the Amalekites had destroyed Ziklag. So David and his men pursued the Amalekite raiders and slaughtered them, recovering all that was taken.

The Philistine rulers react

- Read 1 Samuel 29:1-5
- What was significant about Jezreel? (1 Samuel 25:43)
- How large was David's army in comparison to the Philistine army?
- Gath was one of five principal cities in Philistia, and Achish was one of five co-rulers.
- Why didn't the other Philistine commanders want David and his men to accompany them into battle? (1 Samuel 17:32-54; 18:27; 21:11)
- What did Achish say on David's behalf?
- What did the other Philistine commanders fear that David would do in battle?
- How did God use the suspicion of the other Philistine commanders?
- What do you think David intended to do in battle?

Achish dismisses David

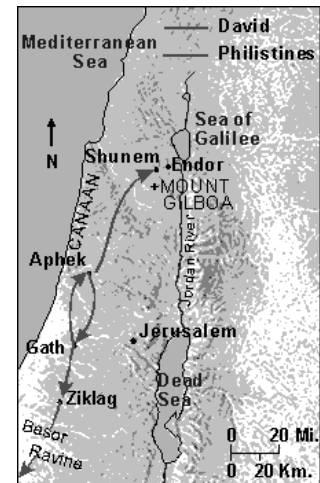
- Read 1 Samuel 29:6-11
- What did Achish say to David?
- What did David say to Achish in his own defense? What did David imply?
- What did David do in response to Achish's command?

Application

- How should you judge another person's character?
- Is it lying to ask misleading questions?
- What have you said or done that would cause others to trust you? To mistrust you?
- When have you seen God work in your life through the decisions of non-believers around you?

Assignment

- Study 1 Samuel 30:1-31, David Destroys the Amalekites.



1 Samuel 30:1-31, David Destroys the Amalekites

Introduction

- When do you find sharing to be the most difficult?

Study

The Amalekites raid Ziklag, 1 Samuel 30:1-6

- How do you think David and his men felt when they discovered that their families had been captured?
- Do you think that David's men were justified in doubting his leadership?
- When was the last time that David had sought or acknowledged God's provision?
- What brought David back to God?
- Faced with the tragedy of losing their families, David's soldiers began to turn against him and even talked about killing him. Instead of planning a rescue, they looked for someone to blame. But David found his strength in God and began looking for a solution instead of a scapegoat.

David inquires of the Lord, 1 Samuel 30:7-10

- David couldn't go to the tabernacle to ask the Lord for guidance because it was in Saul's territory. Therefore he called for the ephod, the only tabernacle-related object he possessed. When David called for the ephod, he was really
- asking the priest to bring him the Urim and Thummim, which were kept in a pouch attached to the ephod.
- What did the Lord tell David to do? What did the Lord promise?
- Why were two hundred of David's men too exhausted to cross the Besor Ravine? (Hint: What had they done in the last six days?)

David's men find an Egyptian, 1 Samuel 30:11-15

- What was significant about the Egyptian David's men found?
- Why do you think the Egyptian agreed to help David?
- What evidence of God's provision do you find in these verses?

David defeats the Amalekites, 1 Samuel 30:16-20

- How successful was David against the Amalekites?
- Did God fulfill his promise?
- How did the attitude of David's men toward him change? Why?

David shares the plunder, 1 Samuel 30:21-31

- Why didn't some of David's men want to share the plunder?
- What reason did David give them for sharing the plunder?
- What might have prompted David to share the plunder with Judah? With the Jerahmeelites and the Kenites? (1 Samuel 27:10; 30:14,16)

Application

- How have you responded to the most devastating events in your life?
- When you face problems, do you look for someone to blame or criticize, or do you look for a solution?
- How consistently do seek God's guidance? By what means can God communicate his reply to you?
- What areas of your life are you most likely to bring before the Lord? What areas do you usually try to handle on your own?
- How willing are you to trust God before you understand his plan?
- Does the way you treat other people depend on their significance?
- Who gets the glory for your successes? How openly do you praise God for the successes he gives you?
- Should your support of those you have placed your confidence in vary with the circumstances?
- When you receive recognition, do you acknowledge your support group?
- How do you respond when others receive credit but your efforts go unrecognized?
- How can you tell when a concern for fairness is really greed in disguise?

Assignment: Study 1 Samuel 31:1-13, Saul Takes His Life.

1 Samuel 31:1-13, Saul Takes His Life

Introduction

- What emotions do you feel when someone close to you is terminally ill?

Study

Saul falls on his sword

- Read 1 Samuel 31:1-6
- Saul had four sons, Jonathan, Malki-Shua, Abinadab and Esh-Baal, later called Ish-Bosheth (1 Chronicles 9:39). Abner made Ish-Bosheth king over Israel (2 Samuel 2:8-9).
- Why did Saul order his armor-bearer to kill him with his sword?
- The Philistines had a well-deserved reputation for torturing their captives. Saul no doubt knew about Samson's fate (Judges 16:18-31).
- Do you think Saul's armor-bearer should have obeyed Saul's order? Why or why not?
- Saul faced death the same way he faced life; he took matters into his own hands without asking God for his guidance. Coming face to face with death shows what we are really like.
- Do you think Saul's armor-bearer regained his honor by taking his own life? Why or why not?
- What was the outcome of the battle at Mount Gilboa?

The Philistines display Saul's body

- Read 1 Samuel 31:7-10
- How did the Israelites in the nearby towns respond to the news of the battle?
- What did the Philistines do with Saul's body when they found him? What did they do with his armor?
- Ashtoreth was the goddess of fertility and sex, a mistress of the god Baal.
- What did David do when he defeated Goliath?
- (1 Samuel 17:51-57) Where was Goliath's sword placed? (1 Samuel 21:9)

The Israelites recover Saul's body

- Read 1 Samuel 31:11-13
- How did the men of Jabesh Gilead respond to the Philistines' actions?
- Israel could no longer believe that having a king like the other nations would solve all their troubles. The real problem was not the form of government, but the sinful king.

Application

- Saul was tall, handsome, strong, rich, and powerful, but all of this was not enough to make him someone we should emulate. He was tall physically, but he was small in God's eyes. He was handsome, but his sin made him ugly. He was strong, but his lack of faith made him weak. He was rich, but he was spiritually bankrupt. He could give orders to many, but he couldn't command their respect or allegiance. Saul looked good on the outside, but he was decaying on the inside. A right relationship with God and a strong character are much more valuable than a good-looking exterior.
- Do you think that assisted suicide is wrong? Why or why not?
- What do you think is the ethical thing to do for someone who is terminally ill?
- When should you refuse to obey someone in authority over you?
- When do you have difficulty obeying, even though you should?
- Another disciple said to him, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead." Matthew 8:21-22, NIV
- How important should "respect for the dead" be to a believer? Why?
- What value do funerals have?
- Saul tried to please God by spurts of religiosity, but real spirituality takes a lifetime of consistent obedience. Heroic spiritual lives are built by stacking days of obedience one on top of the other.
- What should you do to be obedient to God today?

Assignment:

- Study 2 Samuel 1:1-27, David's Lament for Saul and Jonathan.

2 Samuel 1:1-27, David's Lament for Saul and Jonathan

Introduction

- "If you can't say something nice about someone, don't say anything at all." Do you agree with this advice? Why or why not?

Study

Key Places in 2 Samuel

After Saul's death, David moved from the Philistine city of Ziklag to Hebron, where the tribe of Judah crowned him king at Mahanaim. As a result, there was war between Judah and the rest of the tribes of Israel until Ish-Bosheth was assassinated. Then all of Israel pledged loyalty to David as their king.

An Amalekite announces their deaths

- Read 2 Samuel 1:1-10
- What portions of the Amalekite's story agree with the description in 1 Samuel 31:1-6? What portions contradict 1 Samuel 31:1-6?
- How are the two presentations different? Which version describes the actual events?
- What do you think really happened?
- What might have motivated the Amalekite to do and say what he did?

David grieves

- Read 2 Samuel 1:11-12
- How did David and his men express their grief?
- What were the causes for their grief?

The Amalekite is killed

- Read 2 Samuel 1:13-16
- What was the Amalekite evidently unaware of?
- Why did David consider it a crime to kill Saul?
- Was David justified in having the Amalekite killed?
- Why or why not?

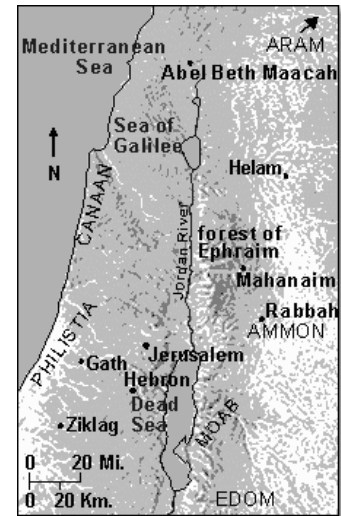
David's lament song

- Read 2 Samuel 1:17-27
- List the words that David used to describe Saul and Jonathan in these verses.
- Why do you think David ordered that the men of Judah be taught this lament?
- What else could David have written about Saul?
- What do these verses tell us about David?
- By saying that Jonathan's love was "more wonderful than that of women," David was not implying that he had a sexual relationship with Jonathan. Homosexual acts were absolutely forbidden in Israel. David was simply restating
- the deep brotherhood and faithful friendship he had with Jonathan.

Application

- How do you determine whether or not to believe someone?
- What can happen when you lie to advance your own position?
- What are the benefits of expressing your grief?
- Is expressing emotions a sign of weakness? Why or why not?
- Why should you always leave vengeance to God?
- How well do you show honor and respect for those in authority over you?
- How does what you say about others reflect on you?

Assignment: Study 2 Samuel 2:1-17, David Anointed King over Judah.



2 Samuel 2:1-17, David Anointed King Over Judah

Introduction

- How do you distinguish between use and abuse of authority?

Study

Joab Versus Abner

David was crowned king of Judah in Hebron; Ish-Bosheth was crowned king of Israel in Mahanaim. The opposing armies of Judah and Israel met at Gibeon for battle—Judah under Joab, Israel under Abner.

Judah anoints David as king

- Read 2 Samuel 2:1-7
- What indications of David's relationship with the Lord are found in these verses?
- Who wanted David to be king over Judah?
- Compare this anointing with the one in 1 Samuel 16:12-13. Make a list of similarities and differences.
- Why did David send messengers to Jabesh Gilead?
- What messages (both stated and implied) did David send to the men of Jabesh Gilead?

Abner makes Ish-Bosheth king over Israel

- Read 2 Samuel 2:8-11
- Compare Abner's honor and respect for Saul with David's.
- Who wanted Ish-Bosheth to be king over Israel?
- Do you think Abner's actions were selfless or selfish?
- David ruled over Judah for seven-and-a-half years, while Ish-Bosheth reigned in Israel for only two years. Ish-Bosheth may not have been recognized as successor to the throne immediately after Saul's death.

Joab defeats Abner

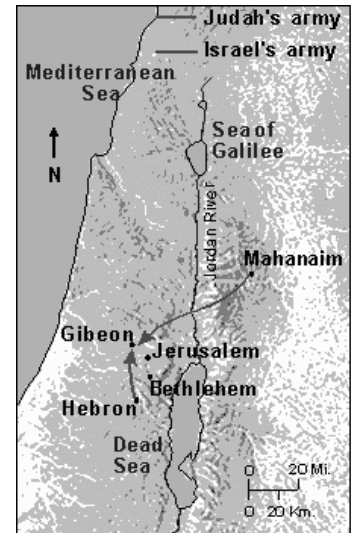
- Read 2 Samuel 2:12-17
- Who assumed the real leadership of the northern tribes?
- What change in military leadership occurred in David's kingdom?
- What did Abner suggest? What was the outcome?

Application

- What measures can you use to gauge your Christian walk?
- When should you test your motives? How can you test them?
- Why should you seek God's guidance even when the answer seems obvious?
- What are some of the qualities of a godly leader?
- What leadership roles do you have? Would others describe your leadership as godly? Why or why not?
- How do you determine when to stick with a plan and when to change plans?
- How are you seeking God's guidance in the issues you are currently facing?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 2:18-3:5, War between the Houses of David and Saul.



2 Samuel 2:18-3:5, War Between the Houses of David and Saul

Introduction

- Have you ever desired to make a name for yourself? Do you think God honors such desires?

Study

Abner kills Asahel

- Read 2 Samuel 2:18-23
- Why do you think Asahel pursued Abner? (1 Samuel 26:6-7; 2 Samuel 2:13,17)
- What evidence suggests that Asahel was younger than Abner?
- Why was Abner so reluctant to fight Asahel?
- What evidence suggests that Abner did not intend to kill Asahel?
- Asahel's stubbornness not only cost his life, but it also spurred unfortunate disunity in David's army for years to come. Before you decide to pursue a goal, make sure it is worthy of your devotion.

Abner retreats to Mahanaim

- Read 2 Samuel 2:24-29
- In what sense were David's men and Abner's men brothers?
- What decision did Joab have to make? What conflicting motives did he have to weigh?

Joab returns to Hebron

- Read 2 Samuel 2:30-3:1
- How many of David's men were lost? How many of Abner's?
- What mixed emotions do you think Joab and his men were feeling as they returned to Hebron?

David's sons

- Read 2 Samuel 3:2-5
- Did the civil war between Israel and Judah agree with God's vision and purpose? (Genesis 12:7; Deuteronomy 7:1-4; 8:1)
- Did David's polygamy conform to God's commands? (Deuteronomy 17:14-17)
- David suffered much heartache because of his many wives. Polygamy was a socially acceptable practice for kings at this time, although God specifically warned against it.

Application

- How do you evaluate a desire to do something that will be remembered?
- When does your persistence become nothing more than stubbornness?
- How well do you distinguish between what you want and what is good for others?
- What should you do when you and an enemy have common goals that are bigger than your differences?
- How well are you following God's commands in your life?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 3:6-21, Abner Goes Over to David.

2 Samuel 3:6-21, Abner Goes Over to David

Introduction

- What would cause you to lose your loyalty to someone?

Study

Abner decides to defect

- Read 2 Samuel 3:6-11
- Describe the relationship between Ish-Bosheth and Abner.
- To sleep with any of the king's wives or concubines was to make a claim to the throne, and it was considered treason. By saying, "Am I a dog's head?" Abner meant, "Am I a traitor for Judah?"
- What might have motivated Ish-Bosheth to ask Abner about Rizpah?
- Ish-Bosheth may have been right to speak out against Abner's behavior, but he didn't have the moral strength to maintain his authority.
- What considerations affected Abner's decision to turn over the kingdom of Israel to David?
- Which issue was primarily responsible for Abner's decision?

David demands Michal's return

- Read 2 Samuel 3:12-16
- Michal had been married to David (1 Samuel 18:27). Later, Saul had given Michal to Paltiel (1 Samuel 25:44). Now David wanted his wife back before he would begin to negotiate peace with the northern tribes.
- Do you think David's demand for Michal's return was selfish? Why or why not?
- Why do you think David reminded Ish-Bosheth of Michal's purchase price?
- What do you think motivated Ish-Bosheth to return Michal to David?

Abner and David negotiate

- Read 2 Samuel 3:17-21
- Was Abner's decision to bring Israel over to David based on God's promise? Why do you think he mentioned it to the elders?
- Because Saul, Ish-Bosheth, and Abner were all from the tribe of Benjamin, the support of the elders of that tribe meant that Abner was serious about his offer.
- How consistent was David's respectful treatment of Abner with past dealings? (1 Samuel 26:14-16)

Application

- When you believe something is wrong, how well do you hold to your convictions in the face of opposition?
- What choices do you make that affect the advancement of your career?
- What factors do you consider when making those decisions? How do you prioritize those factors?
- How well do you put the desires of others before your own wants?
- Do you administer authority with humility, or do you use your influence to get what you want?
- Do you use God's Word to direct your steps or to justify your actions?
- Do you show others the same respect behind their backs that you do to their faces?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 3:22-39, Joab Murders Abner.

2 Samuel 3:22-39, Joab Murders Abner

Introduction

- Why are we so quick to recognize our own weaknesses in others?

Study

The death of Abner by Joab

- Read 2 Samuel 3:22-30
- Describe the relationship between David and Joab.
- Whom had Joab and David's men been raiding and plundering?
- What events prompted Joab to murder Abner?
- Whom did Joab accuse of deception? Whom did Joab deceive?
- What reasons did David have to be upset over Abner's death?
- How did David respond to the news of Abner's murder? Why do you think David allowed Joab to remain unpunished?

The lament of David for Abner

- Read 2 Samuel 3:31-39
- What did David do and say that demonstrated his desire for Judah and Israel to reunite?
- How did the people of Judah respond to David's sympathy for Abner?
- How else might they have responded? Why do you think they responded as they did?
- How do you think Joab and Abishai fared in the public's mind as a result of their deed?
- Do you think it was wise for David to publicly admit that Joab and Abishai were too strong for him? Why or why not?
- David had an especially hard time controlling Joab because, although he was intensely loyal, he was strong willed, preferring to do things his own way. In exchange for his loyalty, however, David was willing to give him the flexibility he craved. Joab's murder of Abner is an example of his fierce independence.

Application

- What is your relationship with your employer (or employees) like? Are you valued? Are you trusted? Are you trustworthy?
- What should you do when you do not agree with the decisions of those in authority over you?
- Which of your own faults are you quick to see in others?
- What does seeking revenge do for your own peace of mind?
- How well do you carry out the wishes of those in authority over you?
- How well do you keep your actions in line with God's guidance? In which areas of your life is this a real struggle?
- What happens when you do things based on your own desires rather than God's direction?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 4:1-5:5, Ish-Bosheth Murdered.

2 Samuel 4:1-5:5, Ish-Bosheth Murdered

Introduction

- How do people sometimes try to gain favor with powerful people?

Study

Baanah and Recab murder Ish-Bosheth

- Read 2 Samuel 4:1-8
- Why was the news of Abner's death so alarming to Israel?
- Where had Baanah and Recab probably grown up?
- How might this have influenced their personalities?
- How is Mephibosheth relevant to this story?
- How did Baanah and Recab operate? How would you describe them?
- Whom did Baanah and Recab claim they were serving? Whom were they really serving?

Baanah and Recab are killed

- Read 2 Samuel 4:9-12
- How did David reward Baanah and Recab? Why?
- Do you agree with David's assessment of Ish-Bosheth as an innocent man? Why or why not?
- List the similarities and differences between this situation and the one described in 2 Samuel 1:1-16.

Israel anoints David as king

- Read 2 Samuel 5:1-5
- What three reasons did the tribes of Israel give for wanting David as their king? Which was the most important?
- Who made David king over Israel, God or men?

Application

- What types of events would disturb you? What does this tell you about where you are placing your faith?
- What effects (both positive and negative) has your childhood had on your personality?
- Do people control their own destinies, or do genetics and environment determine the outcome of a person's life? What part does God play?
- Do you ever try to include God in your plans after they are made? Do you think this honors God? Why or why not?
- By what actions are others judging you? What do those actions say about you?
- Are you making plans to advance your career or improve yourself? How are you including God in those plans?
- What factors do you consider when you vote in an election? Should a candidate's relationship with God be a factor? Why or why not?
- Are there areas of your life in which you feel pressured to achieve instant results? How might you benefit from waiting patiently?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 5:6-25, David Conquers Jerusalem.

2 Samuel 5:6-25, David Conquers Jerusalem

Introduction

- Do you feel like God is on your side?

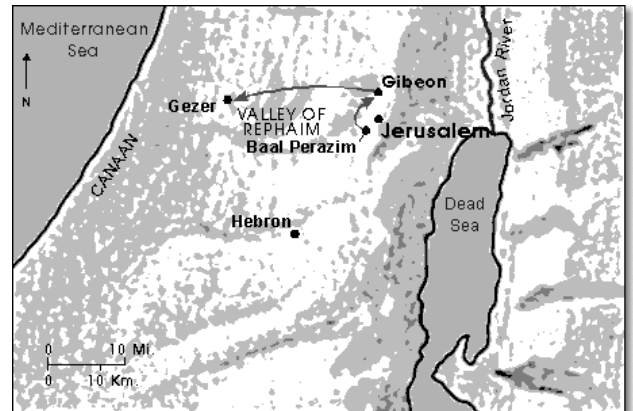
Study

David Defeats the Philistines

The Philistines camped in the Valley of Rephaim. David defeated them at Baal Perazim, but they remained in the valley. He attacked again, and chased them from Gibeon to Gezer.

David captures Zion

- Read 2 Samuel 5:6-10
- The fortress city of Jerusalem was located on a high ridge near the center of the united Israelite kingdom. It was considered neutral territory because it stood on the border of the territory of the tribes of Benjamin and Judah and it was still occupied by the Jebusites, a Canaanite tribe that had never been expelled from the land (Judges 1:21). David made Jerusalem his capital.
- What factors made Jerusalem an ideal site for David's capital?
- What is the significance of "the blind and the lame" in these verses? Leviticus 21:16-18; 2 Samuel 5:8; Matthew 11:5-6; 21:14; Luke 14:21.
- How did David capture Jerusalem? Why was David successful?



King Hiram builds a palace for David

- What two facts was David aware of? What does this indicate about David's estimation of himself?
- Read 2 Samuel 5:11-12

David's family grows

- Read 2 Samuel 5:13-16
- Why do you think David continued to take more concubines and wives in spite of his devotion to God?
- Why do you think God continued to bless David in spite of his polygamy?

David defeats the Philistines

- At Baal Perazim
 - Read 2 Samuel 5:17-21
 - Why do you think the Philistines came after David in full force?
 - In what three ways did David honor God?
- From Gibeon to Gezer
 - Read 2 Samuel 5:22-25
 - Where did God position himself in both of these battles?
 - What do you think "the sound of marching in the trees" signified?

Application

- In what ways are you "blind and lame" before God?
- What does it mean to be a great person? Do you seek greatness from God? From people?
- In what ways are you defying God in spite of his blessings on you?
- How is God using you in spite of your weaknesses?
- How much importance do you give God's instructions in your decisions?
- What can you do to give God the glory for his successes in your life?
- In what ways would you like God to "go before" you this week?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 6:1-23, The Ark Brought to Jerusalem.

2 Samuel 6:1-23 , The Ark Brought to Jerusalem

Introduction

- Does God honor sincerity and enthusiasm?

Study

David retrieves the ark

- Read 2 Samuel 6:1-5
- Why was the ark so important to the Israelites? (Deuteronomy 10:3-5; Hebrews 9:4)
- How were the Israelites transporting the ark? Who else had moved the ark in this way? (1 Samuel 6:7, 8)
- How had God commanded them to transport the ark? (Exodus 25:12-14; Numbers 4:5-15)
- What was the mood of David and the Israelites as they moved the ark?

God strikes Uzziah dead

- Read 2 Samuel 6:6-11
- Why did Uzzah touch the ark? Why did God punish him?
- What did God desire more than David's enthusiasm or Uzzah's sincerity?
- How did David respond to God's action? What does this indicate about David's relationship with God at this time?
- When they came to the threshing floor of

David brings the ark into Jerusalem

- Read 2 Samuel 6:12-19
- What did David do differently when he transported the ark this time? (2 Samuel 6:13; 1 Chronicles 15:12-15)
- What triggered Michal's contempt for David?
- What was David's relationship with God like now?

Michal criticizes David

- Read 2 Samuel 6:20-23
- What was Michal's criticism? What was David's defense for his actions?
- Do you think David's actions and words were appropriate? Why or why not?
- What consequences did Michal suffer?
- List other Biblical instances in which God's leaders were criticized. What were the consequences?

Application

- Describe the relationship between sincerity, enthusiasm and obedience to God.
- Rate your Christian walk on a scale of 1 to 10 in the areas of sincerity, enthusiasm and obedience. Which area is the most difficult for you? Which is the most important to God? What should you do to improve in these areas?
- When do you tend to become careless in your relationship with God? What events has God used to bring you back into a closer relationship with him?
- What makes your worship and service acceptable to God?
- What are the results when parents do not discipline their children? What would be the result if God never disciplined you?
- Is it wrong for you to criticize God's leaders? Why or why not?

Assignment

- Study Psalm 105.

Psalm 105:1-45

Introduction

- How has God provided for you during your life?

Study

Worship the Lord

- Read Psalm 105:1-7
- List the acts of worship that are included in this exhortation.
- What does it mean to "look to the Lord" and "seek his face"?

The Lord gave Canaan to Israel

- Read Psalm 105:8-15
- What promises had God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? (Genesis 13:14-17; 26:2-5; 28:10-15)
- How were these promises relevant to David's present situation?

The Lord sent Joseph into Egypt

- Read Psalm 105:16-22
- How did God use Joseph? (Genesis 45:4-7)
- How did "the word of the Lord prove him true"? (Genesis 41:15-30)
- What was the cost of God's plan for Joseph? What was the gain?

The Lord sent Moses and Aaron

- Read Psalm 105:23-27
- How willing was Moses when God called his "servant"? (Exodus 3:14,9-14; 4:10-16)
- What unique circumstances had God arranged in Moses' life?

The Lord sent plagues against Egypt

- Read Psalm 105:28-36
- Why did the Lord send plagues against Egypt?

The Lord brought Israel out of Egypt

- Read Psalm 105:37-45
- How did God care for Israel in the wilderness? (Exodus 16:11-15)
- Why did God do all these things to preserve Israel? (Psalm 105:45)
- Why do you think David chose to remind Israel of these historical events at this time?

Application

- Which of the actions listed in verses 1-5 are a struggle for you? What should you do to grow in these areas?
- How are you searching for God? How does studying the Bible help you discover God?
- How are God's fulfilled promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob relevant to you?
- How available are you for God's use? What if being used by God involves personal sacrifice?
- How willing are you to be used by God? What talents or unique circumstances could God use in your service to him?
- How do you respond to God when he demonstrates his faithfulness and forgiveness?
- How well are you honoring God by "keeping his precepts and observing his laws"?

Assignment

- Study Psalm 96.

Psalm 96:1-13

Introduction

- What does the word worship mean to you?
- This psalm is also found in 1 Chronicles 16:23-33, where it was sung as part of the celebration when David brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem.

Study

Sing to the Lord

- Read Psalm 96:1-3
- List reasons why singing is such an appropriate form of praise.
- How do praising God and telling others about him go hand in hand?

The Lord is great

- Read Psalm 96:4-6
- Why should we fear God?
- Describe the portrait of God that David paints with these words.

Worship the Lord

- Read Psalm 96:7-10
- Which of God's attributes does David describe in these verses?
- What actions and emotions should God's holiness incite in us?
- Why is it important for the world to know that God rules with fairness?

Let creation rejoice

- Read Psalm 96:11-13
- How will the different parts of God's creation rejoice?
- What message do you think David is trying to express in these verses?

Application

- What has God done for you personally?
- Is your heart full of appreciation for what God has done?
- How well are you doing at telling others about God's greatness?
- How does fearing God affect your relationship with him?
- What makes you think of God's grandeur and magnificence?
- What elements of worship in your church do you enjoy most? When does worship seem boring? Are any elements of worship missing?
- How does God's holiness make you feel?
- What kind of worship does God desire from you?
- How could you make your worship of God more meaningful?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 7:1-17, God's Promise to David.

2 Samuel 7:1-17, God's Promise to David

Introduction

- When is it difficult to trust the decisions of another person? When is it easy?

Study

David's plan

- Read 2 Samuel 7:1-3
- This is the first time Nathan the prophet is mentioned. God made certain that a prophet was living during the reign of each of the kings of Israel. The prophet's main tasks were to urge the people to follow God and to communicate God's laws and plans to the king.
- What did David have in mind? (1 Chronicles 28:2)
- Do you think David's motives and intentions were reasonable? Why or why not?
- What did David do to determine whether his plan was in accordance with God's will?

God's plan

- Read 2 Samuel 7:4-7
- David accepted his part in God's plan and did not try to go beyond it. Sometimes God says no to our plans.
- Why do you think God spoke to Nathan rather than directly to David?
- How did God feel about the fact that the ark was in a tent?
- Why didn't God want David to build the temple? (1 Chronicles 28:3)

God's promise

- Read 2 Samuel 7:8-17
- This passage records the covenant God made with David, promising to carry on David's line forever (Psalm 89:3-4).
- What is implied by God's description of David as his servant?
- What had God done for David? Why do you think God reminded David about these events?
- What did God promise to do for David? For Israel? For David's descendant?
- Which of these promises point to David's son Solomon? To Jesus Christ? (Matthew 3:17; Luke 1:32-33)
- List the verses where the word palace or house is used. What meanings does this word have in these verses?
- In view of David's plan, what was ironic about God's promise to David?

Application

- What often seems very reasonable to us may be contrary to the will of God.
- What can you do to determine whether your plans are in accordance with God's will?
- What should you do when God says no to your prayers or plans?
- Why is it sometimes difficult for you to trust God's decisions? What can you do to make it easier?
- How can you determine what God wants you to do for him?
- What does God's unfailing love mean to you? What difference does it make in your life?
- How could you bless others by using God's blessings to you?
- How have you offered to serve God recently?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 7:18-29, David's Prayer.

2 Samuel 7:18-29, David's Prayer

Introduction

- How do you respond when God says, "No," and you don't get your way?

Study

I am unworthy

- Read 2 Samuel 7:18-21
- How might David have responded when he learned that God did not want him to build a temple?
- What did David do after hearing Nathan's revelation from God?
- How would you describe David's emotions and attitude before God?
- Why had God done so much for David? What indicates that David realized God's purpose? (Genesis 12:1-3)

You are great

- Read 2 Samuel 7:22-26
- What had given David reason to praise God?
- How does David describe the relationship between God and Israel?
- What promise had God made to David and his house? (2 Samuel 7:9-16)
- What did David understand the result of God's fulfilled promise would be?

You have spoken

- Read 2 Samuel 7:27-29
- What gave David the courage to approach God in prayer? Why did this require courage?
- Why are God's words trustworthy?
- How does David close his prayer to God?

Application

- How well do you handle it when God blesses you? When he works through you?
- Have you ever represented a group of people before God? How did you feel?
- What promises has God made to you through his Word?
- How can you learn to place God's will before your personal wants?
- Have you ever been afraid to go to God in prayer? What made you afraid?
- Should you approach God casually? Why or why not?
- When is it most difficult for you to trust God? Why can you trust him even then?
- How can you keep your desires and plans in step with God's will?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 8:1-18, David's Victories.

2 Samuel 8:1-18, David's Victories

Introduction

- What are the characteristics of a successful leader?

Study

David's Enemies

David wanted to complete the conquest of Canaan begun by Joshua. He defeated the Jebusites at Jerusalem and the Philistines in the vicinity of Gath. The Ammonites, Arameans, and Moabites became his subjects. He put garrisons in Edom and levied a tax upon them.

David defeats the Philistines and the Moabites

- Read 2 Samuel 8:1-2
- Compare these victories with God's covenant to David. (2 Samuel 7:10,11)
- The Moabites were descendants of Lot (Genesis 19:30-38) who lived east of the Dead Sea. They posed a constant military and religious threat to Israel.
- Do you think David's treatment of the Moabites was too cruel? Too kind? Explain your answers.

David defeats the Arameans

- Read 2 Samuel 8:3-8
- Compare these victories with God's covenant to Abraham. (Genesis 15:18)
- Why was David victorious over his enemies?
- How was the bronze that David took from Hadadezer used? (1 Chronicles 18:8)

The king of Hamath seeks peace

- Read 2 Samuel 8:9-12
- The Edomites were descendants of Esau (Genesis 36:1) who lived south and east of the Dead Sea. They were also bitter enemies of Israel. The Ammonites were descendants of Lot (Genesis 19:30-38) who lived east of the Jordan River.
- What reasons did the king of Hamath have for sending gifts to David?
- What did David do with the silver and gold he captured?
- What does this tell us about him?
- Where were David's enemies located with respect to Jerusalem?

David defeats the Edomites

- Read 2 Samuel 8:13-14
- Compare David's fame with God's covenant to him. (2 Samuel 7:9)

David reigns over Israel

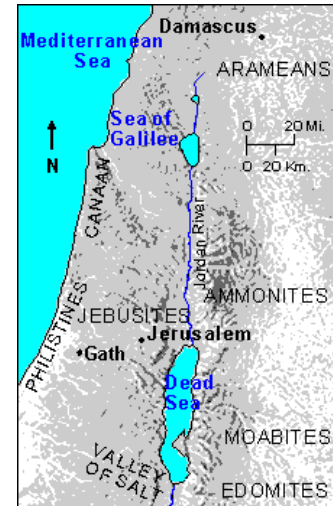
- Read 2 Samuel 8:15-18
- How would you describe David's reign over Israel?
- What would you say was David's first priority as King of Israel?

Application

- How well do you balance firmness and compassion in leadership roles?
- Whom do you credit when you are successful? When you fail?
- What is your attitude toward the material goods God has given you?
- How do you distinguish between kindness and flattery? Between generosity and bribery?
- What should be the first priority in your life? Whom should you be trying to please?
- How would you define justice? Are you fair and just in the way you relate to people?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 9:1-13, David and Mephibosheth.



2 Samuel 9:1-13, David and Mephibosheth

Introduction

- What is the nicest thing that anyone has ever done for you?

Study

David sends for Mephibosheth

- Read 2 Samuel 9:1-6
- What reasons did David have for wanting to show kindness to anyone left of Saul's house?
- What promise had David made to Jonathan? (1 Samuel 20:14-17,42)
- How did most rulers in David's day deal with their rivals' heirs?
- Compare David's covenant with Jonathan in 1 Samuel 20:14 to David's desire in 2 Samuel 9:3.
- What was David's attitude toward fulfilling the covenant he had made with Jonathan?
- Compare the conditions of David's covenant in 1 Samuel 20:15 with God's words to David in 2 Samuel 7:9.
- Mephibosheth was five years old when Saul and Jonathan died.
- How had Mephibosheth become crippled? (2 Samuel 4:4)

David shows kindness to Mephibosheth

- Read 2 Samuel 9:7-13
- What emotions do you think Ziba and Mephibosheth felt when they were brought to appear before David?
- What sort of treatment did Mephibosheth receive from David?
- Did Mephibosheth think that he deserved David's gifts? Was it wrong for him to accept them?
- When God graciously offers us forgiveness of sins and a place in heaven, we may feel unworthy, but we will receive these gifts if we accept them. A reception even warmer than the one David gave Mephibosheth waits for everyone who receives God's gifts through trusting Jesus Christ.
- How did Mephibosheth and Ziba respond to David's actions?
- How well did David uphold his promise to Jonathan?
- What do David's actions say about his attitude toward Jonathan? Toward Saul?

Application

- How well do you keep your promises to others? To God?
- How easily do you forgive those who have wronged you?
- Are you holding a grudge against anyone? What should you do? Why?
- How generous are you toward others?
- How would others rate your level of compassion?
- How should you treat someone with a disability?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 10:1-19, David Defeats the Ammonites.

2 Samuel 10:1-19, David Defeats the Ammonites

Introduction

- When have others misinterpreted an act of kindness on your part?

Study

David and the Ammonites

- Read 2 Samuel 10:1-5
- Ammon gathered together its troops from the north; Joab brought the Israelite army to attack them near Rabbah. Joab returned to Jerusalem victorious, but the enemy recruited additional forces and regrouped at Helam. David himself led the next victorious attack. Hanun offends David
- What were David's reasons for sending men to Hanun?
- What was Hanun's first mistake?
- In Israelite culture, shaving a man's beard was considered an insult of the most serious kind. Cutting off garments in this way was used to humiliate prisoners of war (Isaiah 20:4).
- What emotions do you think David felt when he heard about this?

Hanun hires Aramean mercenaries

- Read 2 Samuel 10:6-8
- What was Hanun's second mistake? What resulted from his mistakes?
- What prompted David to send troops into Ammon?

Joab and Abishai are victorious

- Read 2 Samuel 10:9-14
- What did Joab do in preparation for the battle?
- Where was Joab placing his faith?
- Where were the Ammonites placing their faith?

David defeats the Arameans

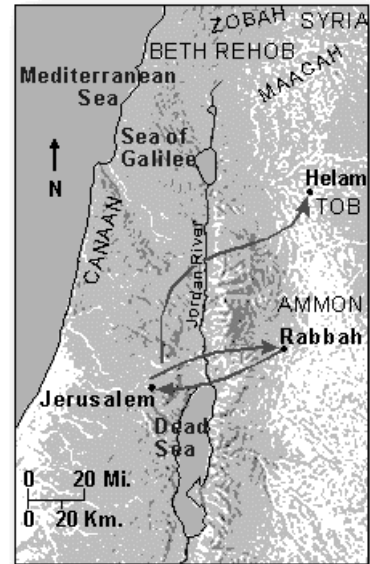
- Read 2 Samuel 10:15-19
- How did Hadadezer respond to the defeat in Ammon?
- What prompted David to lead the troops to Helam?
- What lessons did the Arameans learn the hard way?

Application

- How do you feel when others misunderstand your good intentions? How do you respond? How should you respond?
- How should you respond when others try to disgrace you?
- How should you evaluate the advice of others?
- When should you be suspicious of others' motives?
- Do you become angry and defensive after making a mistake?
- How readily do you admit your mistakes and apologize for them?
- How should you balance your actions and your faith? How should you balance doing and trusting?
- When should you expect God to be on your side?

Assignment

- Study Psalm 60.



Psalm 60:1-12

Introduction

- Have you ever had the rug pulled out from under you? How did you feel?

Study

Our knowledge of the events surrounding this psalm is incomplete. Edom may have succeeded in overrunning the garrisons that guarded Judah's southern borders while Israel was preoccupied with northern battles.

You have rejected us

- Read Psalm 60:1-5
- What illustrations does David use in verses 2 and 3? What idea is he expressing?
- What emotions do you think David is feeling?
- What purposes did a banner serve in the battles of David's time?
- How does David describe Israel's relationship to God? God's relationship to Israel?
- How would you describe David's words to God in verses 4 and 5?

God will triumph

- Read Psalm 60:6-8
- Where are these places located in respect to Jerusalem?
- What words does David use to describe God's treatment of Israel's tribes? Israel's enemies?
- The Hebrew words for triumph in verses 6 and 8 mean "jump for joy" and "shout for joy."
- Why do you think David describes God as jumping and shouting for joy?

Give us help

- Read Psalm 60:9-12
- Paraphrase David's questions in verses 9 and 10.
- Compare the closing verses of this psalm with the opening verses?
- What do you think David wanted this psalm to teach (verse 1)?

Application

- What spiritual condition do enemy attacks often indicate?
- Should you remind God to take care of you? Why or why not?
- Is God still in control when things seem out of control? Explain.
- Why does God allow you to experience setbacks and failures?
- What should you do when you feel defeated and discouraged?
- Do you wait until you are overwhelmed before going to God? When should you take your situation to God?
- What was the basis for David's faith in God? What is the basis for your faith?
- What can you do to remind yourself of God's ability and desire to take care of you?
- Whose attitude and outlook does prayer change, yours or God's?
- What situation in your life seems out of control? What should you do?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 11:1-27, David and Bathsheba.

2 Samuel 11:1-27, David and Bathsheba

Introduction

- What usually happens when you try to cover up your sin?

Study

David commits adultery with Bathsheba

- Read 2 Samuel 11:1-5
- List the stages of David's entanglement in sin.
- List the sorrowful chain of events in Bathsheba's life.
- Where should David have been?
- Where should Bathsheba have been?
- What should David have done?
- The phrase "she had purified herself from her uncleanness" means that Bathsheba had just completed the purification rites following menstruation. Thus she could not have already been pregnant by her own husband when
- David slept with her.

David attempts to hide his sin

- Read 2 Samuel 11:6-13
- How did David attempt to cover up his sin?
- Why did these attempts fail?
- Compare Uriah's integrity to David's.

David has Uriah killed

- Read 2 Samuel 11:14-25
- David put both _____ and _____ in difficult situations. Describe their situations.
- Compare David's response to Uriah's death with his grief for Saul and Abner. (2 Samuel 3:31-38)
- What effect did David's sin have on himself?

David marries Bathsheba

- Read 2 Samuel 11:26-27
- Did David's marriage to Bathsheba lessen his sin?

Application

- David and Bathsheba's story shows that little wrong decisions often lead to big mistakes. The little, day-to-day choices we make are very important. They prepare us to make the right choices when the big decisions come.
- What are your weaknesses? What mistakes could they lead to?
- What can you do to flee temptation? What can you do in preparation?
- How can you obtain the wisdom to make right choices in small and large matters?
- What should you do in situations with only two apparent choices, and both seem wrong?
- How reliable are your feelings for determining right and wrong?
- How can you prevent becoming hardened to sin?
- When is it easiest to admit your sin? When is it most difficult?
- What is the best way to prevent falling deeper and deeper into sin?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 12:1-31, Nathan Rebukes David.

2 Samuel 12:1-31, Nathan Rebukes David

Introduction

- What is the difference between a punishment and a consequence?

Study

Nathan confronts David

- Read 2 Samuel 12:1-7,10-14
- Why do you think Nathan chose to rebuke David with a parable?
- What aspects of David's sin did Nathan's parable emphasize?
- How did David respond to Nathan's parable?
- What aspects of David's sin did the God's words emphasize?
- What consequences of David's sin did Nathan predict? How did these consequences fit David's sins?
- How did David respond to God's words?
- Did God forgive David?
- Did God erase the consequences of David's sin? What does this reveal about the nature of God?

David's son dies

- Read 2 Samuel 12:15-23
- How did David respond to his son's illness?
- Why did David's son have to die? What does this reveal about the nature of God?
- How did David respond to the news of his son's death?
- What was David's explanation for his actions?
- What does "I will go to him, but he will not return to me" mean?
- How many times do the words "punish" or "punishment" occur in this chapter?

Solomon is born

- Read 2 Samuel 12:24
- Do the consequences of sin indicate the withdrawal of God's love? Why or why not?

David captures Rabbah

- Read 2 Samuel 12:26-29
- What motives do Joab's actions demonstrate?
- Compare 2 Samuel 12:29 with 2 Samuel 11:1.

Application

- What should you do before confronting someone with unpleasant news?
- What qualities in others do you find easy to criticize and hard to accept? Are these a reflection of your own flaws?
- Why should you consider the possible consequences of your sin beforehand?
- When you have sinned, how can you obtain God's forgiveness?
- Why do you still suffer the consequences of sin after receiving God's forgiveness?
- After accepting God's forgiveness, should you continue to dwell on your sin? Why or why not?
- Where does God want you to place your focus?

Assignment

- Study Psalm 51.

Psalm 51:1-19

Introduction

- Do you ever feel stagnant in your faith? What can prevent you from experiencing joy in your relationship with God?

Study

Forgive me

- Read Psalm 51:1-2
- Why was it appropriate for David to appeal to God's mercy?
- Because David repented of his sins, God mercifully forgave him. But God did not erase the natural consequences of his sin--David's life and family were never the same as a result of what he had done.

I have sinned

- Read Psalm 51:3-6
- According to the world's standards, extramarital sex between two consenting adults is acceptable if nobody gets hurt. But people do get hurt. All sin hurts us and others, and ultimately it offends God because sin in any form is a rebellion against God.
- Many suffered as a result of David's sin. How was his sin only against God?
- Is a newborn baby innocent or sinful?

Restore my joy

- Read Psalm 51:7-12
- Hyssop branches were used by the Israelites in Egypt to place the blood of a lamb on the doorframes of their homes (Exodus 12:22). This would keep them safe from death.
- What emotions was David feeling? What was missing in his life?
- What did David ask God to do for him?
- What did David ask God not to do?

I will praise you

- Read Psalm 51:13-17
- How did David respond to God's forgiveness?
- What did David promise to do?
- What attitude does God desire for us to have? Why?

Make Jerusalem prosper

- Read Psalm 51:18-19
- How is David's prayer for Jerusalem a fitting conclusion to this psalm?

Application

- Is any sin too great for God to forgive? Why or why not?
- When should you ask for forgiveness from others? When should you ask for forgiveness from God?
- Why does God desire you to change from the inside out?
- What emotions do you feel after you have sinned?
- When you have sinned, how near does God seem?
- After you have sinned, what has to happen before your relationship with God can be restored?
- When have you really felt God's forgiveness? What did it make you want to do?
- Why can't you please God with outward actions when your inward heart attitude is not right?
- How do you need to change your attitude toward sin?
- How can you cultivate a broken and contrite heart?

Assignment: Study 2 Samuel 13:1-22, Amnon and Tamar.

2 Samuel 13:1-22, Amnon and Tamar

Introduction

- Why are we often disappointed when we finally get what we want?

Study

Jonadab advises Amnon

- Read 2 Samuel 13:1-5
- How was Amnon related to Tamar, Absalom and Jonadab? (2 Samuel 3:2-3)
- How would you describe Amnon's attraction to Tamar?
- What adjectives would you use to describe Jonadab's advice?

Amnon rapes Tamar

- Read 2 Samuel 13:6-14
- Why do you think David and Tamar were duped by Amnon's plan?
- What arguments did Tamar present to Amnon?
- What was sinful about Amnon's actions? (Leviticus 18:9,11)

Amnon rejects Tamar

- Read 2 Samuel 13:15-19
- Love and lust are very different. If you just can't wait, what you feel is not true love.
- What did Amnon's actions reveal about his true feelings for Tamar?
- How was sending Tamar away an even greater crime?
- What emotions did Tamar's actions demonstrate?
- Did Tamar have any cause for shame before others? Before God?

Absalom and David find out

- Read 2 Samuel 13:20-22
- God's standards for moral conduct are not suspended when we deal with family matters.
- How did Absalom try to deal with the situation?
- What was David's response to Amnon's actions? What did David do about the situation?
- Compare the events of this passage with the words of Nathan the prophet in 2 Samuel 12:10-12.

Application

- David's many wives caused him much grief. The consequences of sin affect not only us, but those we know and love. Remember that the next time you are tempted to sin.
- How should you deal with desires that you know are wrong?
- How should you evaluate the advice of friends and relatives?
- How do you determine when to trust others and when to be suspicious?
- What should you do when someone tries to involve you in their sin?
- How do love and lust express themselves differently?
- How do you express your love for your spouse?
- How can your actions hurt and shame others?
- What should you do when someone disgraces you? What should you not do?
- Are past sins in your life hindering your service for God? If so, what should you do?
- What distinguishes righteous anger from sinful hatred?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 13:23-39, Absalom Kills Amnon.

2 Samuel 13:23-39, Absalom Kills Amnon

Introduction

- "Children heed their parents' actions more than their words." Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Study

Absalom invites his brothers to Baal Hazor

- Read 2 Samuel 13:23-27
- What had been happening inside Absalom for two years?
- What request did Absalom bring to David?
- Why do you think David sent all his other sons with Absalom?

Absalom murders Amnon

- Read 2 Samuel 13:28-29
- Compare this event with Nathan's prophecy in 2 Samuel 12:10-11.
- How was Absalom's sin similar to David's sin in 2 Samuel 11:14-17?

David mourns Amnon's death

- Read 2 Samuel 13:30-36
- How do you think Jonadab knew what had actually happened?
- Why did Absalom murder Amnon?
- How did David respond to the news of Amnon's death? What did David do about the situation?
- Compare David's response to Absalom's sin with his response to Amnon's sin (2 Samuel 13:21).
- What made David's grief especially bitter?

Absalom flees to Geshur

- Read 2 Samuel 13:37-39
- Why did Absalom flee to Talmi, the king of Geshur? (2 Samuel 3:2-3)
- After his grief subsided, what desire consumed David's spirit?

Application

- What can happen when you harbor hatred in your heart?
- Which of your weaknesses have you seen reflected in your children? How does it make you feel? What should you do about it?
- What can you do to promote peace among your children?
- Who is responsible for your children's actions, you or them? How should this affect your parenting?
- When do your sins affect your children? What personal losses can you suffer as a result of your sins? What losses can your children suffer?
- How should you respond when your son or daughter commits a horrible sin?
- How can you develop and maintain a close relationship with your children?
- What personal relationships in your life need healing?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 14:1-33, Absalom Returns to Jerusalem.

2 Samuel 14:1-33, Absalom Returns to Jerusalem

Introduction

- Should anyone ever be spared the full punishment for a crime they have committed? If so, under what circumstances?

Study

Joab devises a scheme

- Read 2 Samuel 14:1-3
- What motivated Joab's scheme?

The woman goes to David

- The woman tells her story
 - Read 2 Samuel 14:4-11
 - How should the woman's fictitious son have been dealt with under Israelite law? (Numbers 35:9-21)
 - What request did the woman bring to David?
 - What did David promise to do for the woman?
- The woman makes her point
 - Read 2 Samuel 14:12-17
 - How did the woman's story relate to David's situation?
 - What did the woman say about God's justice and mercy in verse 14?

David detects Joab's scheme

- Read 2 Samuel 14:18-20
- Why do you think David suspected Joab's involvement?

Joab brings Absalom to Jerusalem

- Read 2 Samuel 14:21-27
- What did David allow Joab to do? What conditions did he specify?
- What was significant about the name Absalom gave his daughter?

David restores Absalom

- Read 2 Samuel 14:28-33
- How long had it been since David and Absalom had seen each other? (2 Samuel 13:38;14:28)
- How was Absalom restored into David's presence? Who initiated the encounter?

Application

- Do your good intentions justify dishonest schemes?
- In what ways do you give preferential treatment to attractive people?
- How can God be both just and merciful?
- Do you approve of capital punishment? Why or why not?
- How do children who are not disciplined behave when they grow up?
- What are the consequences of ignoring sin in your life?
- When do you feel like someone else has really forgiven you?
- When have you asked God to restore you to him?
- What way has God devised to restore your relationship with him?
- How should you approach God to restore your relationship with him?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 15:1-12, Absalom's Conspiracy.

2 Samuel 15:1-12, Absalom's Conspiracy

Introduction

- How is winning someone's heart different from stealing it?

Study

Absalom deceives Israel

- Read 2 Samuel 15:1-6
- Why were people from the tribes of Israel coming to David?
- Where did Absalom greet these Israelites? Why do you think he chose this location?
- What did Absalom tell those he intercepted?
- How did people begin to treat Absalom? How did he treat them in return?
- What was Absalom's purpose for saying and doing these things?
- What do you think was going on in Absalom's mind and heart?
- What was the result of Absalom's words and actions?
- What else may have attracted people to Absalom? (2 Samuel 14:25-26)

Absalom conspires against David

- Read 2 Samuel 15:7-12
- How many years had passed since Amnon raped Tamar? (2 Samuel 13:23,38; 14:28; 15:7)
- How did Absalom get David's permission to go to Hebron?
- What was significant about Hebron? (2 Samuel 3:2-3; 5:4-5)
- Why do you think Absalom invited two hundred men to accompany him to Hebron?
- What else did Absalom do to strengthen his rebellion against David?
- When do you think Absalom lost his respect for David?

Application

- How do you go about winning people over to your side?
- Do you manipulate the truth to your advantage?
- Do you treat people differently when you hope to get something from them in return?
- How do you demonstrate your devotion to your parents?
- How loyal should you be to your employer?
- What qualities should you look for in a leader? How important are charisma and style?
- How do you feel when you deceive someone?
- How do you feel when someone deceives or betrays you?
- How do you respond?
- What have you done to earn the respect of those around you, especially your children? What have you done to diminish their respect for you?
- How can you reconcile your personal ambitions with your devotion to God?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 15:13-37, David Flees.

2 Samuel 15:13-37, David Flees

Introduction

- Have you ever had to evacuate your home? What thoughts and emotions did you have?

Study

Absalom's Rebellion

Absalom crowned himself king in Hebron. David and his men fled from Jerusalem, crossed the Jordan, and went to Mahanaim. Absalom and his army followed, only to be defeated in the forest of Ephraim, where Absalom was killed.

David evacuates Jerusalem

- Read 2 Samuel 15:13-18
- Why did David decide to flee? Why didn't he crush Absalom's rebellion instead?
- David left ten concubines to watch the palace. What do you think this indicates?
- Who left Jerusalem with David?

Ittai stays with David

- Read 2 Samuel 15:19-23
- In which direction did David travel?
- Why did David try to persuade Ittai to return to Jerusalem? Why did he permit him to follow?
- How did David refer to Absalom?

Zadok returns the ark to Jerusalem

- Read 2 Samuel 15:24-29
- Why did David want Zadok to return the ark to Jerusalem?
- What was David's attitude toward his situation?
- How would you describe David's relationship with God at this time?
- What else did David ask Zadok to do?

David sends Hushai to Jerusalem

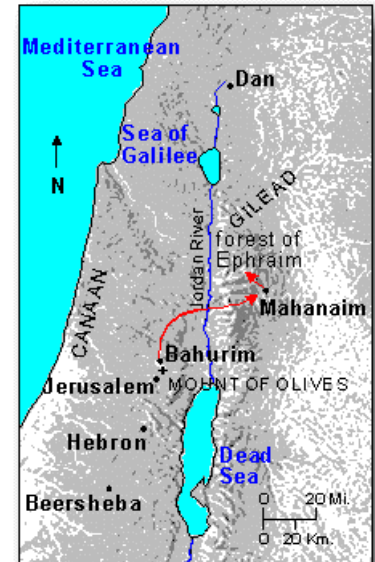
- Read 2 Samuel 15:30-37
- What was the mood of the people as they left Jerusalem?
- What did David ask Hushai to do?
- How did everyone around David respond to him?

Application

- When should you stand and fight? When should you back down? Which takes more courage?
- What would you take with you if you had to evacuate your home?
- Whom would you be willing to follow regardless of where they went?
- How well do you accept people of different ethnic backgrounds?
- When does your faith in God grow more, during prosperous times or desperate times? Why?
- When should you ask God to put roadblocks in someone's path?
- When is spying on someone acceptable? When is it not allowed?
- How should you respond when you suffer as a result of your own sins? As a result of others' sins?
- How can you trust God when you suffer setbacks?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 16:1-14, David, Ziba and Shimei.



2 Samuel 16:1-14, David, Ziba and Shimei

Introduction

- What can happen when you accept one person's story before hearing the other side?

Study

David speaks with Ziba

- Read 2 Samuel 16:1-4
- What had transpired between David and Ziba previously? (2 Samuel 9:2-3,9-10)
- What did Ziba report to David?
- What did David do for Ziba?
- Do you think David believed Ziba? Why or why not?
- Do you think Ziba's story was true? Why or why not?
- Don't be hasty to accept someone's condemnation of another, especially when the accuser may profit from the other's downfall.

Shimei curses David

- Read 2 Samuel 16:5-8
- What did Shimei do and say to David?
- Did David deserve Shimei's abuse?
- What do you think motivated Shimei's behavior toward David?
- How did Shimei explain Absalom's rebellion against David?

David refuses Abishai's request

- Read 2 Samuel 16:9-14
- Describe David's relationship with Abishai. (1 Samuel 26:6-8; 2 Samuel 3:30,39; 1 Chronicles 2:13-16)
- Was Abishai's request in keeping with his character? Why or why not?
- Why did David refuse Abishai's request?
- What do David's responses to Ziba and Shimei indicate about his relationship with the Lord?

Application

- When should you feel obligated to return the favors of others?
- When should you be trusting? When should you be skeptical?
- How do you determine when to believe someone else?
- How should you respond when others criticize you unjustly?
- How can you be sensitive to the Lord's leading in the lives others?
- How do you deal with the difficult people in your life?
- Do you usually solve problems with force or finesse?
- Do you tend to be trusting or suspicious of others? Why?
- How can you be trusting without being gullible?

Assignment

- Study Psalm 3.

Psalm 3:1-8

Introduction

- Complete this bedtime prayer: Now I lay me down to sleep . . .

Study

Many are against me

- Read Psalm 3:1-2
- What were David's circumstances when he wrote this psalm?
- How did David describe his predicament to God?
- Who is the focus of these verses?

God protects me

- Read Psalm 3:3-6
- What aspects of God's care does David describe?
- Why was David able to sleep peacefully?
- Were things really as bad as David had thought at first?
- What changed David's outlook on his situation?
- Who is the focus of these verses?

God, rescue me

- Read Psalm 3:7-8
- What did David tell God to do? What was David's motive?
- What did David expect God to do? Why was David so confident?
- How is this psalm similar in structure to many of David's other psalms?

Application

- Do you think there is any benefit in describing your troubles to God? Why or why not?
- Where do you turn your focus in times of trouble?
- Where is God when you feel surrounded and outnumbered?
- How can you overcome fear?
- When has God's provision been most evident to you, when things were going smoothly or in times of trouble?
- How has God demonstrated his care for you recently?
- Sometimes Christians suffer physical harm. How is God your protector?
- In what ways is God's care for you better than your care for yourself?
- How can you acquire God's perspective on your problems?
- How bold are you when pray? How confident are you that God will answer your prayers?
- What struggles are you currently experiencing? Have you taken them to God?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 16:15-17:29, The Advice of Hushai and Ahithophel.

2 Samuel 16:15-17:14, The Advice of Hushai and Ahithophel

Introduction

- Is it ever acceptable to intentionally mislead someone?

Study

Hushai feigns loyalty to Absalom

- Read 2 Samuel 16:15-19
- Why did Ahithophel go to Jerusalem? (2 Samuel 15:12)
- Why did Hushai go to Jerusalem? (2 Samuel 15:34)
- How do Hushai's words demonstrate his cleverness?

Absalom lays with David's concubines

- Read 2 Samuel 16:20-23
- To sleep with any of the king's wives or concubines was to make a claim to the throne, and it was considered treason.
- What reasons did Ahithophel give to support his advice to Absalom?
- Compare Absalom's act with Nathan's prophecy in 2 Samuel 12:11-12.
- How was Ahithophel's advice regarded by both David and Absalom?
- Was his advice to Absalom "like that of one who inquires of God"? Why or why not?
- Reconcile Ahithophel's reputation and his advice to Absalom in light of Nathan's prophecy.

Ahithophel's advice

- Read 2 Samuel 17:1-4
- What plan of attack did Ahithophel recommend to Absalom?

Hushai's advice

- Read 2 Samuel 17:5-14
- What was Hushai's advice to Absalom? How did it differ from Ahithophel's?
- On what assumptions was Hushai's advice based? Which of these were false?
- Why did Absalom and his followers select Hushai's advice over Ahithophel's?
- How were David's prayer (2 Samuel 15:31), David's action (2 Samuel 15:34) and God's will (2 Samuel 17:14) related?

Application

- Have you ever presented yourself as something or someone that you were not? Would God have approved?
- When are you tempted to only tell part of the truth? What would God have you do in those situations?
- How do you choose those you turn to for advice? How do you weigh their advice?
- How often do others come to you for advice? What kind of advice do they usually want? What is the basis for your advice to them?
- What would you expect a person "who inquires of God" to be like? How well does that description apply to you?
- How does a change in a person's relationship with God (for better or worse) demonstrate itself in their life?
- What visible changes have occurred in your life as a result of your relationship with Jesus Christ?
- How do you distinguish between respect and flattery toward those in authority over you? Which do you show?
- When was the last time that you sensed God working through you? How did it make you feel?
- Do you ask God to change his will according to your desires, or do you ask him to change your desires according to his will?

Assignment: Study 2 Samuel 17:15-29, Preparations for Battle.

2 Samuel 17:15-29, Preparations for Battle

Introduction

- When does depending on God mean depending on others?

Study

Hushai warns David

- Read 2 Samuel 17:15-23
- Who were Hushai, Ahithophel, Zadok, Abiathar, Ahimaaz and Jonathan? (2 Samuel 15:27-28, 31-36)
- What was Hushai's message to David? How did it relate to the advice Absalom had received?
- How was Hushai supposed to get word to David? How had the plan been augmented?
- How did the plan almost fail?
- How did Jonathan and Ahimaaz escape?
- Do you think that the woman's misleading words were justified?
- Why did Ahithophel hang himself?

Absalom closes in on David

- Read 2 Samuel 17:24-26
- What was significant about Mahanaim? (2 Samuel 2:8-9)
- How was Amasa related to Joab, Absalom and David? (1 Chronicles 2:13-17)

David receives food and rest

- Read 2 Samuel 17:27-29
- What was significant about Shobi? About Makir? (2 Samuel 9:3-5)
- What did these men of Gilead do for David?

Application

- Do people turn to you in a crisis? Why or why not?
- How many friends do you have that you could count on in a pinch?
- Have you ever put yourself at risk for someone else?
- When have you attempted to "improve" on God's plans? What were the results?
- How readily do you accept help from others? How quick are you to give help to others?
- Is lying to protect someone else ever acceptable to God?
- How do you feel when your opinion is ignored? How should you respond?
- How has God demonstrated his care for you during tough times?
- How could you help someone who is going through difficult times this week?
- What area of your life do you need to entrust to God this week?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 18:1-18, Absalom's Death.

2 Samuel 18:1-18, Absalom's Death

Introduction

- What do you want others to say about you after you die?

Study

David prepares his troops

- Read 2 Samuel 18:1-5
- Who was Ittai the Gittite? What made him an unlikely candidate for commander? Why do you think David gave him that position? (2 Samuel 15:18-22)
- What had David intended to do? Why did he change his plans?
- What specific orders did David give to his commanders?

David's troops are victorious

- Read 2 Samuel 18:6-8
- Why do you think David's men defeated Absalom's army?
- How many men died? What caused most of the deaths?

Joab disobeys David

- Read 2 Samuel 18:9-15
- What happened to Absalom in the forest?
- Why do you think the man who found Absalom forfeited Joab's reward and obeyed David?
- How would you describe this man's attitude toward Joab? Toward David?
- Why do you think Joab disobeyed David's command and killed Absalom?

Joab buries Absalom

- Read 2 Samuel 18:16-18
- Would you describe Absalom's burial as proper? Why or why not?
- How are Absalom's words in verse 18 ironic?

Application

- How much does someone's ethnic background affect your opinion of them?
- What are the pros and cons of following the advice of those with less authority than you?
- How can you maintain an objective attitude toward your children's actions?
- How should you love your children when they are suffering the consequences of their sinful actions?
- Is success a good indicator of obedience to God's will? Why or why not? (Joshua 1:8)
- Do you tend to speak or act without thinking, or do you consider whether what you are about to do is right or wrong?
- How well do you follow the instructions of those in authority over you?
- What are you doing to earn and maintain the respect of others? What are you doing that might cause others to lose their respect for you?
- What do you want others to say about you after you die?
- What should you be doing about that now?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 18:19-19:8, David Mourns.

2 Samuel 18:19-19:8, David Mourns

Introduction

- Can someone be both tactful and honest? How tactful are you?

Study

Messengers run to David

- Read 2 Samuel 18:19-27,
- Who was Ahimaaz? What did he want to do? Why? (2 Samuel 15:35-36; 17:17-18)
- Why did Joab select a Cushite for the task?
- What was David doing back in the city?
- Why did David expect to hear good news from the messengers?

David learns of Absalom's death

- Read 2 Samuel 18:28-33
- How were the reports similar? How did they differ?
- What was David's primary concern?
- How did David respond to the news of Absalom's death? What thoughts do you suppose went through his mind?

Joab confronts David

- Read 2 Samuel 19:1-8
- How did David's actions affect the army's morale?
- What did Joab say to David? Do you think his words were appropriate? Why or why not?
- How did the men respond when David returned to the gateway?

Application

- Do you look for ways to help others, or are you more interested in helping yourself?
- Do you try to get others to do your dirty work for you?
- What should you do when a situation is beyond your control?
- What is the difference between wishing and trusting? How do you learn to trust God?
- Do you tell others what they want to hear? Do you like to stir up trouble?
- Do your actions reflect your love for others? Is there evidence, or just feelings?
- What effect do your words and actions have on those around you? How are you doing as God's representative?
- How well do you handle confrontations? Are you willing to tell others what they may not want to hear?
- What people in your life value your approval? When was the last time you encouraged them?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 19:9-43, David Returns to Jerusalem.

2 Samuel 19:9-43, David Returns to Jerusalem

Introduction

- Define mercy, generosity and justice.
- Which do you think is most important in a good leader? Why?

Study

Israel solicits David

- Read 2 Samuel 19:9-10
- What swayed the popular opinion in Israel back toward David?

Judah supports David

- Read 2 Samuel 19:11-15
- What punishment did Amasa deserve?
- Why do you think David made him commander of his army?

David spares Shimei

- Read 2 Samuel 19:16-23
- How had Shimei and Ziba treated David when he fled from Absalom? (2 Samuel 9:9-10; 16:1-9,13)
- Why do you think David pardoned Shimei?
- Why did David discharge Joab and Abishai?

David restores Mephibosheth

- Read 2 Samuel 19:24-29
- Who was Mephibosheth? (2 Samuel 4:4)
- Compare Ziba's testimony (2 Samuel 16:3-4) with that of Mephibosheth (19:26-27). Which do you believe?
- What was Mephibosheth's implied request?
- Do you think David dealt fairly with Ziba and Mephibosheth? Why or why not?

David rewards Barzillai

- Read 2 Samuel 19:31-38
- How had Barzillai treated David when he fled from Absalom? (2 Samuel 17:27-29)
- What did David offer Barzillai? Why did Barzillai decline?
- What did Barzillai request instead? How did David respond? (1 Kings 2:7).

Israel antagonizes Judah

- Read 2 Samuel 19:41-43
- What claim did Israel make against Judah? How did Judah respond?
- Why was this disagreement foolish?

Application

- Do you take revenge on your enemies when you get the chance?
- Do you show favoritism to your friends when you have the opportunity?
- Is it more difficult for you to deal fairly with friends or enemies? Why?
- How do you feel when someone forgives you?
- How can you allow God to enable you to forgive your enemies?
- When would God want you to disassociate yourself from someone?
- How do you feel when someone expresses their appreciation to you?
- When was the last time you showed someone how much you appreciate what they have done for you?
- Do you often become involved in foolish arguments? If so, why? How could God help you overcome this?
- How can you balance fairness and forgiveness?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 20:1-26, Sheba Rebels Against David.

2 Samuel 20:1-26, Sheba Rebels Against David

Introduction

- "Competition brings out the best in people." Do you agree or disagree?

Study

Sheba's Rebellion

After defeating Absalom, David returned to Jerusalem from Mahanaim. But Sheba incited a rebellion against David, so David sent Joab, Abishai, and a small army after him. Joab and his troops besieged Abel Maacah, Sheba's hideout, until the people of Abel Beth Maacah killed Sheba themselves.

Sheba sways Israel against David

- Read 2 Samuel 20:1-3
- The 12 tribes of Israel often had difficulty agreeing on the goals of the nation.
- Compare 2 Samuel 20:1 with 2 Samuel 19:43.
- How did Sheba persuade Israel to desert David?

Amasa summons Judah

- Read 2 Samuel 20:4-5
- Why was Amasa's failure to complete this task on time significant?

Joab murders Amasa

- Read 2 Samuel 20:6-13
- Compare 2 Samuel 20:6-7 with 2 Samuel 19:13,22.
- Why do you think Joab murdered Amasa?
- What similar acts had Joab committed? (2 Samuel 3:27; 18:14)
- Why do you think David's men followed Joab after he murdered Amasa?

Sheba is beheaded

- Read 2 Samuel 20:14-22
- This woman stopped Joab's attack with wise words and a plan of action. Often the courage to speak a few sensible words can prevent great disaster.
- What did Joab do when he caught up with Sheba?
- How did the woman's words to Joab demonstrate her wisdom?
- Why did the people of Abel Beth Maacah turn against Sheba?

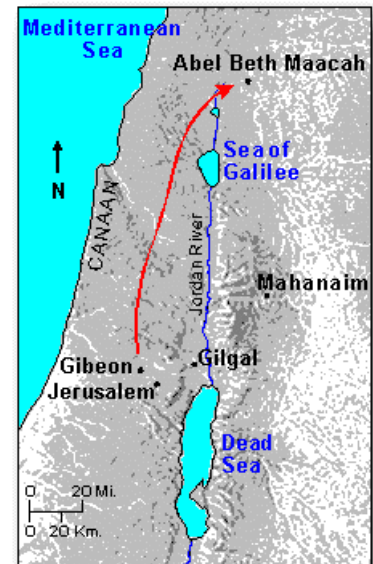
David's administration

- Read 2 Samuel 20:23-26
- Compare 2 Samuel 20:23-26 with 2 Samuel 8:16-18.

Application

- What can turn companions against one another? What can happen as a result?
- How well do you get along with your peers? Do others consider you a good team player?
- How well do you carry out your responsibilities? When have others expressed their disappointment in you?
- How can you prevent your personal desires from interfering with your responsibilities?
- If someone were to say about you, "That's the way he (or she) is," what would they be describing?
- What sins in your life have gone unpunished? Is God's justice limited to this life's rewards?
- How do you respond when someone attacks you? How would a wise person respond?
- What should you do to resolve the conflicts around you?

Assignment: Study 2 Samuel 21:1-22, The Gibeonites Avenged.



2 Samuel 21:1-22, The Gibeonites Avenged

Introduction

- What are the character traits of an honorable man or woman?

Study

Chapters 21-24 are an appendix to 1,2 Samuel. The events described are not presented in chronological order. They tell of David's exploits at various times during his reign. This famine appears to have occurred after David extended kindness to Mephibosheth and before Absalom rebelled against his father.

David speaks to the Gibeonites

- Read 2 Samuel 21:1-6
- The Gibeonites occupied territory partly assigned to Benjamin. Although the Bible does not record Saul's act of vengeance against the Gibeonites, it was apparently a serious crime making him guilty of their blood.
- What vow had Joshua made to the Gibeonites? (Joshua 9:15-20)
- What was Saul guilty of? What were the consequences of his sin?
- Why were Saul's sons to be killed for the murders their father committed?

David satisfies the Gibeonites' request

- Read 2 Samuel 21:7-9
- Who were Rizpah (2 Samuel 3:7), Merab (1 Samuel 14:49; 18:17) and Adriel (1 Samuel 18:19)?
- How were Merab's sons related to David?
- Why did David atone for Saul's sin?

Rizpah protects the bodies

- Read 2 Samuel 21:10
- The barley harvest was in late April and early May. Rizpah guarded the men's bodies during the entire harvest season, which lasted from April to October.
- Why was this rainfall significant?

David buries Saul and Jonathan

- Read 2 Samuel 21:11-14
- What motives did David's actions demonstrate?

The Israelites kill four Philistine giants

- Read 2 Samuel 21:15-22
- By calling these men "descendants of Rapha," the writer was saying that they were giants.
- Why do you think the author included these four episodes?
- What do they have in common?

Application

- How well do you keep your promises?
- Do your children suffer as a result of your sins?
- Does our society hold you accountable for the actions of your parents? Of your children?
- Does your love for the Lord outweigh your love for your family?
- Are you concerned about God's displeasure with your sin, or are you only concerned about the consequences of your sin?
- How do you actively demonstrate love and respect for God? For others?
- What tasks are you facing that seem overwhelming? How could you let God help you?

Assignment

Study Psalm 18:1-50, David's Song of Praise.

Psalm 18:1-50, David's Song of Praise

Introduction

- Does God give people what they deserve?

Study

The Lord is my rock

- Read Psalm 18:1-3
- What does "The Lord is my rock" mean?
- What one word is repeated over and over in verses 1 and 2? What does this indicate about God? About David's relationship with God?

The Lord heard my cry for help

- Read Psalm 18:4-6
- Why did David call on God in times of distress?

The Lord rescued me

- Read Psalm 18:7-19
- What rouses God's anger?
- Is the language in this passage literal or figurative? How does David describe God's anger?
- What did God do for David? Why?

The Lord has rewarded me

- Read Psalm 18:20-24
- Why did the Lord reward David?
- Can anyone claim to be righteous before God? Why or why not? (2 Corinthians 5:21)

You gave me victory

- Read Psalm 18:25-42
- Make a list of verbs that describe all that God did for David.
- What was God's part in the defeat of David's enemies? What was David's part?
- Why does God answer some cries for help (verse 6) but not others (verse 41)?

You exalted me

- Read Psalm 18:43-50
- Why did people from other nations follow David?
- How did David respond to all that God had done for him?

Application

- How personal is God to you? Describe your relationship with him.
- What do you do when life gets stressful? What should you do?
- What makes you angry? When is your anger acceptable to God? When is it not acceptable?
- Has God ever come to your rescue? How did you respond after your troubles were over?
- How has God rewarded you? Why has he rewarded you?
- How clean are your hands in God's sight?
- How much do you depend on God rather than on yourself?
- Identify a struggle in your life that God could help you win.
- How willing are you to cooperate with God's plan for you?
- How well do you acknowledge God for all that he has done for you?

Assignment

Study 2 Samuel 23:8-39, David's Mighty Men.

2 Samuel 23:8-39, David's Mighty Men

Introduction

- What can you tell about a leader by the assistants they select?

Study

The Three

- Read 2 Samuel 23:8-12
- What had each of these men achieved?
- What strengths did they have in common?
- How were the Lord's accomplishments related to their behavior?

Three of the Thirty

- Read 2 Samuel 23:13-17
- What was David's situation (1 Samuel 22:1-5), and what did he long for?
- What did these three men accomplish?
- Why did David refuse to drink the water? What does this reveal about David?

Abishai

- Read 2 Samuel 23:18-19
- What was Abishai's claim to fame?
- What authority did he receive as a result?

Benaiah

- Read 2 Samuel 23:20-23
- How did Benaiah become famous? (2 Samuel 20:23)
- How did David reward his accomplishments?

The Thirty

- Read 2 Samuel 23:24,34,39
- Who were Asahel (2 Samuel 2:18,23), Elhanan (2 Samuel 21:19), and Eliam and Uriah (2 Samuel 11:3)?

Application

- What kind of people follow you?
- Do others recognize God's leading in your life?
- What qualities do you look for in an assistant (employee, recruit, etc.)? What does this say about you?
- What leaders do you follow? To what causes have you committed yourself?
- What battles that test your faith do you face? How should you deal with them?
- What has the Lord accomplished through you? Do you give him the credit, or do you take the credit for yourself?
- Have you ever endangered others unintentionally? How did it make you feel? What did you do?
- What rewards and recognition have you received for your achievements? For demonstrations of your faith?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 24:1-25, David Counts the Fighting Men.

2 Samuel 24:1-25, David Counts the Fighting Men

Introduction

- In what areas of your life do you most often compare yourself to others?

Study

David takes a census

- Read 2 Samuel 24:1-9
- With whom was God angry? Why do you think God was angry? (2 Samuel 15-20)
- Did God cause David to sin? (1 Chronicles 21:1; James 1:13-15)
- Hebrew writers do not always distinguish between primary and secondary causes. So if God allowed Satan to tempt David, to them it is as if God did it.
- What was wrong with taking a census?
- What motivated David's action? What was David's sin?
- Why do you think Joab challenged David's action? What was David's response to Joab?

David confesses his sin

- Read 2 Samuel 24:10-14
- What did David do when his conscience bothered him?
- How did God respond? (Deuteronomy 28:20-26)
- Which option did David choose? Why?
- When you sin, turn back to God. Being punished by him is far better than taking your chances without him.

God sends a plague

- Read 2 Samuel 24:15-17
- What was significant about the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite? (1 Chronicles 21:28; 22:1; 2 Chronicles 3:1; Genesis 22:2)
- Was it fair for God to punish Israel?
- What does David's request in verse 17 reveal about his character?

David builds an altar

- Read 2 Samuel 24:18-25
- Why did David want to build an altar on Araunah's threshing floor?
- How did Araunah respond when David stated his intent?
- Why did David insist on paying Araunah?
- Why did God end the plague on Israel?

Application

- Despite his sins, the Bible calls David a man after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22) because when he sinned, he recognized it and confessed his sins to God.
- Does God cause anyone to sin? Does he allow you to sin?
- What sinful desires of your heart do your words and actions reveal?
- When you examine yourself, do you weigh your actions or your motives?
- Which does God judge, your actions or your motives?
- What should you do when you have a guilty conscience?
- Why should you confess your sins to God? Is it to avoid his punishment?
- Do you take responsibility for your sins, or do you look for someone else to blame?
- How do you respond when you are asked to do something for God?
- What sacrifices from you does God find acceptable?
- Do you expect God to answer when you pray?

Assignment: Study 1 Chronicles 22:1-19, Preparations for the Temple.

1 Chronicles 22:1-19, Preparations for the Temple

Introduction

- What is the most important thing a parent can pass on to a child?

Study

David makes preparations

- Read 1 Chronicles 22:1-5
- What would the temple provide for God? For Israel? For other nations?
- What did David provide for the house of the Lord? Where did these provisions originate?
- Do you think it was good for David to make these preparations? Why or why not?

David instructs Solomon

- Read 1 Chronicles 22:6-16
- Why did God forbid David to build his temple? (2 Samuel 7:1-7,12-13)
- Why did God select Solomon to build his temple?
- What blessings did David give to his son?
- What advice did David give to Solomon? (Joshua 1:8)
- What charge did David give to Solomon?
- How had David's parenting skills changed?
- Do you think David was forcing his dream on his son? Why or why not?

David orders the leaders

- Read 1 Chronicles 22:17-19
- What did David order the leaders to do?
- What reasons did he give them?

Application

- How graciously do you accept the answer "no" from God?
- Are you jealous when others get to do something that you do not?
- How are you helping your children find and fulfill God's purpose?
- How can you help your children learn to make their own decisions?
- How do you determine how much assistance to give to your children?
- As a parent, how do you distinguish between healthy encouragement and unhealthy pressure?
- When should you encourage your children to follow in your footsteps? To find their own way?
- How often do you pray for your children? With your children?
- What does "seeking the Lord with your heart and soul" mean? How are you going about it?

Assignment

- Study Psalm 30.

Psalm 30:1-12

Introduction

- I have grown closest to God during times of _____.

Study

You lifted me up, O Lord

- Read Psalm 30:1-5
- David may have written this psalm when he dedicated Araunah's threshing floor (which became the future site of the temple) and after God stopped the great plague he had used to discipline David (2 Samuel 24:1-25).
- What had God done for David? How does David describe it?
- Compare God's rescue of David (verse 3) to salvation.
- How does David respond to what God has done for him?
- Why does a loving God become angry with those he loves? What terminates his anger? What replaces it?

I cried to the Lord for mercy

- Read Psalm 30:6-10
- What two types of situations do these verses describe?
- How did David feel when things were going well? How did he respond?
- What does it mean for God to "hide his face"? How did it make David feel?
- List the three ways David prayed in verses 8-10.

You gave me joy

- Read Psalm 30:11-12
- Name some examples from David's life when God replaced his despair with joy. Did David's situation change, or something else?
- How did David respond?
- What does this psalm teach us about David? About God?

Application

- What has God done for you? How often do you give him credit?
- From what has God rescued you? Where has he placed you instead?
- How does God want you to thank him for what he has done in your life?
- When have you felt that God was angry with you? How was the relationship restored?
- Does prosperity make you feel self-reliant, self-secure and independent of God? How can you avoid the false security of prosperity?
- How can you become more dependent on God and less dependent on your own resources?
- When have you felt like God was not there? What should you do when God seems distant?
- What form do your prayers tend to take? How boldly do you pray?
- When has God restored your joy? What did he do?
- How should you respond to prosperous times? To difficult times?

Assignment

- Study 1 Chronicles 28:1-21, David's Plans for the Temple.

1 Chronicles 28:1-21, David Plans for the Temple

Introduction

- What is the most difficult aspect of a large project?

Study

David addresses Israel

- Read 1 Chronicles 28:1-8
- The last two chapters of 1 Chronicles present the transition from David to Solomon as king of Israel. The writer focuses on God's plans for Israel and his promise to David's descendants.
- As king of Israel, was David free to do anything he desired? Why or why not?
- How had David become king? Why was Solomon next in line for the throne?
- The kingdom of Israel belonged to the Lord. Thus God could choose the person he wanted as king without following customary lines of succession. David was not Saul's heir, and Solomon was not David's oldest son.
- Was it fair for God to place a condition on his promise to Solomon? Was this conditional love? Why or why not?
- What was David's charge to the officials of Israel? Why was this important?

David addresses Solomon

- Read 1 Chronicles 28:9-10
- What guiding principles did David give to his son Solomon?

David gives the plans to Solomon

- How did David draw up the plans?
- How would you describe David's plans for the temple?
- Read 1 Chronicles 28:11-19

David encourages Solomon

- Read 1 Chronicles 28:20-21
- What words of encouragement did David give to Solomon?
- Fear can immobilize us. The size of a job, its risks, or the pressure of the situation can cause us to freeze and do nothing. So don't focus on the fear; instead, get to work.

Application

- As a Christian, are you free to do anything you desire? Why or why not?
- How did you become a Christian? What did God do? What did you do?
- Why is it important for you to obey God's Word? What are the benefits of obedience? What are the consequences of disobedience?
- What are you doing to grow in your understanding of God's Word?
- How is your Christian walk affected by your heart? By your attitude?
- How does the fact that God knows all your thoughts make you feel? How should it affect what you do?
- What principles are you passing on to your children? How are you doing it?
- How do you receive your directions from God?
- When have you made detailed plans for something? How important were those plans to you? To God?
- When do you feel discouraged? Encouraged? Which effect do you have on others?

Assignment

- Study 1 Chronicles 29:1-20, David's Reign Ends.

1 Chronicles 29:1-20, David's Reign Ends

Introduction

- What aspect of your giving is important to God?

Study

David's exhortation to Israel

- Read 1 Chronicles 29:1-5
- How did David affirm Solomon? Why was this important?
- How did David encourage Israel to contribute to the building of God's temple?
- How was this different from David's provision for the Lord's temple in 1 Chronicles 22:14?

Israel's response

- Read 1 Chronicles 29:6-9
- Who responded to David's appeal? (1 Chronicles 28:1)
- What was the attitude of those who gave to the temple treasury? (2 Corinthians 9:7)

David's prayer

- Read 1 Chronicles 29:10-20
- How did David praise God? Why did he thank God?
- How did David describe the relationship between God and Israel?
- What was David's attitude toward material possessions?
- What had David learned about pleasing God?
- What was David's prayer for Israel? For Solomon?
- David contrasts God's everlasting nature with the fleeting lives of his people. Nothing lasts unless it is rooted in God's unchanging character. If our most impressive deeds fade as dust before God, where should we place our confidence? Only in a relationship with God can we find anything permanent. His love never fades and nothing can take it away.

Application

- How well do you affirm your spouse? Your children? Why is it important?
- How consistently do you "practice what you preach"? How do your actions affect the impact of your words?
- What personal sacrifices have you made for God recently?
- How willingly do you give to God?
- Why is your attitude so important to God?
- How often do you praise God for who he is? How often do you thank him for all he has done for you?
- How can you evaluate your attitude toward your possessions?
- How do you try to please God? What really pleases him? What can you do to grow in that area?
- How should you be praying for your nation?
- How often do you pray for your children? What requests do you bring to God for them?

Assignment

- Study 2 Samuel 23:1-7, The Last Words of David.

2 Samuel 23:1-7, The Last Words of David

Introduction

- A righteous person is like _____.

Study

The oracle of David

- Read 2 Samuel 23:1
- Who was David in the eyes of men? In the eyes of God?

The righteous ruler

- Read 2 Samuel 23:2-4
- How did the Holy Spirit communicate with Israel? (1 Chronicles 28:4-6,19)
- How are righteousness and the fear of God related?
- How is the righteous ruler described?
- Explain the simile of verse 4.

The unrighteous man

- Read 2 Samuel 23:5-7
- How does David respond to God's description of the righteous ruler?
- What covenant had God made with David? (2 Samuel 7:14-16)
- How will God deal with the unrighteous?
- Compare the description of unrighteous men with the description of the righteous ruler.

Application

- What phrases would others use to describe you? How would God describe you?
- How does God communicate with you?
- When are you most aware of the Holy Spirit's presence?
- What does it mean to "fear the Lord"? How well do you fit that description?
- What effect do you have on the people around you?
- If God gave you a description of a righteous person in your position, how would you respond? Would you be encouraged? Convicted?
- What promises has God made to you? How has he secured these promises?
- How is God going to deal with those around you who do not fear him?
- What are you doing to help them? What should you be doing?

Assignment

- Study 1 Kings 2:1-12, David's Charge to Solomon.

1 Kings 2:1-12, David's Charge to Solomon

Introduction

- When is it good to want your children to walk in your footsteps?

Study

Observe God's requirements

- Read 1 Kings 2:1-4
- How was Solomon to observe God's requirements?
- Why was Solomon to observe God's requirements?
- What was God's promise to David? (2 Samuel 7:8-16) What did it require of Solomon?

Punish Joab

How had Joab killed Abner and Amasa? (2 Samuel 3:27; 20:10)

Why do you think David told Solomon to punish Joab rather than doing it himself?

Read 1 Kings 2:5-6

Be kind to Barzillai's sons

- Read 1 Kings 2:7
- Why was David's son to show kindness to Barzillai's sons? (2 Samuel 17:27-29; 19:31-40)

Punish Shimei

- Read 1 Kings 2:8-9
- How had Shimei treated David? (2 Samuel 16:5-13; 19:16-23)
- Was it just for Solomon to kill Shimei in view of David's promise?
- What words did David repeat to show his confidence in Solomon?

David's death

- Read 1 Kings 2:10-12
- What was the City of David? (2 Samuel 5:7; Acts 2:29) What was the town of David? (Luke 2:4)
- How old was David when he died? (2 Samuel 5:4-5)

Application

- What does God require from you?
- Is observing God's requirements appropriate for a "real man"? Why or why not?
- Why should you work to satisfy God's expectations of you?
- What are the results of obedience to God? What are the results of disobedience?
- As you have advanced in your career, have you made friends or enemies?
- Have you given those in authority over you reasons to reward you or punish you?
- How well do you demonstrate your gratitude for the kindness of others?
- Should a guilty person ever be forgiven? If so, when?
- Can a fair person punish some offenses and forgive others? Why or why not?
- According to David, what is the secret of success?
- What are you doing to pass your values on to your children?

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| 1. | 1 Samuel 13:1-15 | Samuel Rebukes Saul |
| 2. | 1 Samuel 16:1-13 | Samuel Anoints David |
| 3. | Psalms 23:1-6 | Psalms 23 |
| 4. | 1 Samuel 16:14-23 | David in Saul's Service |
| 5. | 1 Samuel 17:1-58 | David and Goliath |
| 6. | 1 Samuel 18:1-30 | Saul's Jealousy of David |
| 7. | 1 Samuel 19:1-24 | Saul Tries to Kill David |
| 8. | Psalms 59:1-17 | Psalms 59 |
| 9. | 1 Samuel 20:1-42 | David and Jonathan |
| 10. | 1 Samuel 21:1-15 | David at Nob and Gath |
| 11. | Psalms 56:1-13 | Psalms 56 |
| 12. | Psalms 34:1-22 | Psalms 34 |
| 13. | 1 Samuel 22:1-23 | Saul Kills the Priests of Nob |
| 14. | Psalms 142:1-7; 52:1-9 | Psalms 142 & 52 |
| 15. | 1 Samuel 23:1-29 | David Saves Keilah and Flees Saul |
| 16. | Psalms 63:1-11; 54:1-7 | Psalms 63 & 54 |
| 17. | 1 Samuel 24:1-22 | David Spares Saul's Life |
| 18. | Psalms 57:1-11 | Psalms 57 |
| 19. | 1 Samuel 25:1-44 | David, Nabal, and Abigail |
| 20. | 1 Samuel 26:1-25 | David Again Spares Saul's Life |
| 21. | 1 Samuel 27:1-12 | David Among the Philistines |
| 22. | 1 Samuel 28:1-25 | Saul and the Witch of Endor |
| 23. | 1 Samuel 29:1-11 | Achish Sends David Back to Ziklag |
| 24. | 1 Samuel 30:1-31 | David Destroys the Amalekites |
| 25. | 1 Samuel 31:1-13 | Saul Takes His Life |
| 26. | 2 Samuel 1:1-27 | David's Lament for Saul and Jonathan |
| 27. | 2 Samuel 2:1-17 | David Anointed King over Judah |
| 28. | 2 Samuel 2:18-3:5 | War Between the Houses of David and Saul |
| 29. | 2 Samuel 3:6-21 | Abner Goes Over to David |
| 30. | 2 Samuel 3:22-39 | Joab Murders Abner |
| 31. | 2 Samuel 4:1-5:5 | Ish-Bosheth Murdered |
| 32. | 2 Samuel 5:6-25 | David Conquers Jerusalem |
| 33. | 2 Samuel 6:1-23 | The Ark Brought to Jerusalem |
| 34. | Psalms 105:1-45 | Psalms 105 |
| 35. | Psalms 96:1-13 | Psalms 96 |
| 36. | 2 Samuel 7:1-17 | God's Promise to David |
| 37. | 2 Samuel 7:18-29 | David's Prayer |
| 38. | 2 Samuel 8:1-18 | David's Victories |
| 39. | 2 Samuel 9:1-13 | David and Mephibosheth |
| 40. | 2 Samuel 10:1-19 | David Defeats the Ammonites |
| 41. | Psalms 60:1-12 | Psalms 60 |
| 42. | 2 Samuel 11:1-27 | David and Bathsheba |
| 43. | 2 Samuel 12:1-31 | Nathan Rebukes David |
| 44. | Psalms 51:1-19 | Psalms 51 |
| 45. | 2 Samuel 13:1-22 | Amnon and Tamar |
| 46. | 2 Samuel 13:23-39 | Absalom Kills Amnon |
| 47. | 2 Samuel 14:1-33 | Absalom Returns to Jerusalem |
| 48. | 2 Samuel 15:1-12 | Absalom's Conspiracy |
| 49. | 2 Samuel 15:13-37 | David Flees |
| 50. | 2 Samuel 16:1-14 | David, Ziba and Shimei |
| 51. | Psalms 3:1-8 | Psalms 3 |
| 52. | 2 Samuel 16:15-17:14 | The Advice of Hushai and Ahithophel |
| 53. | 2 Samuel 17:15-29 | Preparations for Battle |
| 54. | 2 Samuel 18:1-18 | Absalom's Death |
| 55. | 2 Samuel 18:19-19:8 | David Mourns |
| 56. | 2 Samuel 19:9-43 | David Returns to Jerusalem |
| 57. | 2 Samuel 20:1-26 | Sheba Rebels Against David |
| 58. | 2 Samuel 21:1-22 | The Gibeonites Avenged |
| 59. | Psalms 18:1-50 | David's Song of Praise |
| 60. | 2 Samuel 23:8-39 | David's Mighty Men |
| 61. | 2 Samuel 24:1-25 | David Counts the Fighting Men |
| 62. | 1 Chronicles 22:1-19 | Preparations for the Temple |
| 63. | Psalms 30:1-12 | Psalms 30 |
| 64. | 1 Chronicles 28:1-21 | David's Plans for the Temple |
| 65. | 1 Chronicles 29:1-20 | David's Reign Ends |
| 66. | 2 Samuel 23:1-7 | The Last Words of David |
| 67. | 1 Kings 2:1-12 | David's Charge to Solomon |