



The Life of David

In this series, we look at a man on whom the hinges of history hang, but who also lived a deeply human life. He was a man of victories and failures, and yet was called a man after God's own heart. We also will see how his vertical relationship with God impacted his horizontal relationship with others: when David and God were in a good place, David handled his relationships well, and when he wasn't, well, we will see how that goes. May we lean into this man's life and ask the Spirit for help to see how we can apply these lessons in our own lives.

Read the Scripture:

Individual: Read the passage from two or three different translations.

Group: Have two different group members read the passage using different Bible translations.

Speak the Scripture:

Individual: Recite the story aloud from memory (as best you can) or tell it to a friend or family member. The goal here is to get the essence of the passage in your heart.

Group: Have someone volunteer to recite the passage aloud in their own words, as best they can.

Understand the Scripture:

Individual or Group: Use the Discovery Questions to help ensure you understand the passage.

Dig Deeper into the Scripture:

Individual: Work through the Digging Deeper questions and pray about what God reveals to you through His word. Discuss with a Christian friend or family member, if you choose.

Group: Work through the Digging Deeper questions as a group, celebrating the work God is already doing in each person's life, and encouraging each other to trust Him in the places that need growth.

Small Group Guidelines

This is a Safe Group

Confidentiality is key—what is said in the group stays in the group. Be aware how you are affecting the environment with your words, actions, and non-verbal communication. This needs to be a place where people feel comfortable opening up and sharing.

No Crosstalk

Be considerate of others as they are sharing. No side conversations, phone time, texting etc.

Listen

Let's value one another by listening to what is being shared. Allow a pause after someone shares to allow them to finish and others to consider what was said. Eye contact and body posture play key roles in creating a positive or negative group environment.

No Rescuing or Fixing

We are not here to fix each other; Jesus does that part. Avoid the tendency to rescue when someone is struggling to get the words out or shares a struggle or conviction.

Use "I" Statements

It's easy to talk about the issues of others, or respond with "we," "us," or "the church," but for us to grow as disciples and build relationships, we want to use "I" statements.

Don't Over-talk

We want to create time for all members of the group to participate in the discussion. Be careful not to always be the first responder or regularly give long responses.

Fight for Relationship

It's not if conflict or hurt feelings will happen, but when. We commit to fight for relationship with each other. Go to the person and share your struggle or seek wise advice if you are not sure how to handle the conflict.

Week 1: David and God

Background: The Philistines had drawn battle lines against King Saul and the Israelites. For 40 days, a giant named Goliath dared someone to fight him. But instead of fighting, the Israelites ran from him in great fear...until a shepherd boy dared to trust the God of Israel for the victory.

Read: 1 Samuel 17

Discovery Questions:

What do we learn about God in this passage?

What can we learn about trusting God from this passage?

What do you think God might be teaching you personally through this passage?

What action do you think the Holy Spirit may be leading you to take with what you've learned this week?

Digging Deeper:

What was David's biggest concern in this passage?

Think of a time when you watched someone go through difficult circumstances. Did their response to the circumstances encourage or discourage you? Explain.

Describe a giant in your life. What principles from David's example can help you persevere?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, I am sorry for looking at the obstacles in my life instead of looking at your power. Help me to trust you with every detail of my life and my circumstances. Help me to trust that you are working ALL things together for good in my life, even the things that are hard and seem like they will never change. Help me to follow you, no matter what. May my response to any difficult circumstances you have allowed in my life encourage others to put their faith and hope and trust in you. Amen.

Week 2: David and Goliath

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Week 3: David and Jonathan

Background: David became a successful warrior in King Saul's army. But as David's success grew, so did the King's jealousy. In fact, he became so jealous all he could think about was killing David. But God provided a friend, confidant, and protector for David in Saul's son Jonathan. Jonathan went against his own father to protect his innocent friend from death in this beautiful story of friendship and brotherly love.

Read: 1 Samuel 18:1-15, 19:1-10, 20:18-23, 30-42

Discovery Questions:

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What can we learn about trusting God from this passage?

What do you think God might be teaching you personally through this passage?

What action do you think the Holy Spirit may be leading you to take with what you've learned this week?

Digging Deeper:

Describe a time when God provided a friend or protection for you through an unlikely source.

Jonathan could have been jealous of David too. Why do you think Jonathan chose friendship over jealousy?

What does Jonathan's response to David tell you about his character and his relationship with God?

What does this story tell you about David's character and relationship to God?

Prayer:

Lord, please help me to be someone who finds my identity in You, rather than in my accomplishments. Help me to rejoice with people when they receive the things that I wanted for myself. Help me to get rid of jealousy and envy and become someone who is able to love well. Please focus my eyes on those around me who need encouragement and protection and help me to give of myself when it's hard and I don't feel like it. Amen.

Week 4: David and Saul

Background: As David's success increased, so did Saul's jealousy. Saul became so jealous and so afraid of David he tried to kill him, and David fled for his life. While David was in hiding, he had the opportunity to kill Saul, but he spared him. Let's read the story from God's Word...

Read: 1 Samuel 18:5-16, 18:30 – 19:16; 24:1-19; 25:14-39

Discovery Questions:

What do we learn about God in this passage?

What can we learn about trusting God from this passage?

What do you think God might be teaching you personally through this passage?

What action do you think the Holy Spirit may be leading you to take with what you've learned this week?

Digging Deeper:

Why was Saul jealous of David? Who are you jealous of? What do they have/do that causes your jealousy? What are some Biblical truths that can help you refocus your thoughts?

Why did David spare Saul's life? Are there relationships or circumstances in your life you need to release to God's keeping? What would that look like for you?

How did Abigail handle her difficult husband and the poor choices he made? What principles from her example could help you deal with a difficult family member or supervisor?

What are some of Abigail's qualities and behaviors that are praiseworthy?

Prayer:

Lord, how often I try to take matters into my own hands! Help me trust that You see and hear and know all the things going on in my life. Help me to be like David and Abigail and not take matters into my own hands and try to force people or solutions. Help me trust that You are with me, and that nothing can happen to me unless You allow it. Please help me remember that You are using these difficult people and circumstances to make me more like Jesus. Please help me cooperate with that You are doing in my life. May you be praised. Amen.

Week 5: David & Mephibosheth

Background: David had promised his best friend Jonathan that he would never cut off his kindness from Jonathan's family. The story of Mephibosheth takes place after King Saul and his son Jonathan have died and David is looking for a way to honor his promise to Jonathan. Let's read the story from God's Word...

Read: 2 Samuel 4:4 and 2 Samuel 9

Discovery Questions:

What do we learn about God in this passage?

What can we learn about trusting God from this passage?

What do you think God might be teaching you personally through this passage?

What action do you think the Holy Spirit may be leading you to take with what you've learned this week?

Digging Deeper:

What are some emotions that Ziba might have experienced?

What are some emotions that Mephibosheth might have experienced?

Can you identify similarities between the kindness Mephibosheth received from David, and the kindness you have received from God?

Is there someone the Lord is bringing to mind that He would like you to show undeserved kindness to?

Prayer:

Lord, we don't know what Mephibosheth felt like before he was brought to David's house. He could have been angry and resentful at You for his disability. When we are angered or confused by things we don't understand, help us to trust You and love You and serve You anyway. Put people in our lives who can help us refocus on Your goodness and please help us to honor You as our God and our loving Father in all of our responses to life. Amen.

Week 6: David and Bathsheba

Background: David has become King of Israel and has found success beyond his wildest dreams. But on one particular occasion, he stayed home while his soldiers went to war. And while he was home, he committed a sin that had consequences that affected his life forever. Here is the story from God's Word...

Read: 2 Samuel 11:1-17, 26-27, 12: 1-20

Discovery Questions:

What do we learn about God in this passage?

What can we learn about trusting God from this passage?

What do you think God might be teaching you personally through this passage?

What action do you think the Holy Spirit may be leading you to take with what you've learned this week?

Digging Deeper:

Read James 1:13-15. How do these verses apply to King David's behavior?

How does Uriah's attitude and behavior reflect his relationship with the Lord? When people observe your attitude and behavior what does it reflect about your relationship with the Lord?

In Week 4 we learned that David had the opportunity to kill his enemy (King Saul) yet he refrained. Why then did he not refrain from killing an innocent man? What changed to make him capable of such an act?

Read Psalm 51. What can we learn from David that we can apply to our mistakes?

Prayer:

Dear Lord, I am sinful, and I sin against people all the time with my thoughts, my words and my actions. Please deal with my heart before my thoughts lead to harmful behaviors. If I ever ignore You to continue in my sin, I beg You to put people in my life to show me what I'm doing so I can repent and follow You again. Please help me follow You closely...always. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

Week 7: David and Absalom

Background: King David's son Amnon raped his half-sister, Tamar. Her brother, Absalom, killed Amnon for what he had done. As a result, Absalom fled and his father King David mourned for him the whole time he was gone. When Absalom finally returned, he turned on his father and tried to overtake his kingdom. Here is the sad story of a father and son who were never able to reconcile.

Read: 2 Samuel 15:1-14, 18:4-15, 31-33

Discovery Questions:

What do we learn about God in this passage?

What can we learn about trusting God from this passage?

What do you think God might be teaching you personally through this passage?

What action do you think the Holy Spirit may be leading you to take with what you've learned this week?

Digging Deeper:

What was Absalom's attitude toward his father? Why do you think he felt this way?

Why do you think King David mourned for his son, when his son treated him with such contempt?

How did King David think about and behave toward his son throughout the story? Do you see any parallels in your relationship with God?

Prayer:

Lord, all I have is a gift from you. Please prevent my ambition from ever coming between me and You, or between me and those I love. Help me to value what is important to you and never to put things or positions above Your plans for me. Please guide and direct my path. In Jesus' name. Amen.