



Material for lifegroup and personal reflection
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Quoteable quotes

“David learned essential lessons in the shepherding years. Two of these lessons, which would prove invaluable later in his life, were: trusting God completely in all circumstances and worshiping God ensures victory. Had he not been a lowly shepherd, he would not have been an anointed king” Paddick Van Zyl

David said to Saul, ‘Let no one be discouraged on his account; your servant will go and fight this Philistine.’ 1 Samuel 17:32

“Courage is what you earn when you’ve been through the tough times and you discover they aren’t so tough after all.” Malcolm Gladwell

“David cuts through all the many needs, wants, and desires that may have been bouncing around inside him and essentially says, "If I could have only one thing, I want to be with God, to be in His presence, to know that he is always with me." Craig Groeschel

Whether in good times or bad times, David knew the thing he needed most: to feel God's presence close by, intimately, through word and worship.” John Stott

“David reigned over all Israel, doing what was just and right for all his people.” 1 Chronicles 18:14



Why was David described as a person 'after God's own heart?'

1 Samuel 13:14

1. David's heart. 1 Samuel 16: 1-13
 - Anointing of David, because God looks not at the outward appearance but at the heart.
2. David's faith. 1 Samuel 17: 28-58
 - By faith he defeated Goliath.
3. David's loyalty. 1 Samuel 24:1-22
 - He was loyal to Saul, God's chosen king, and trusted God to remove him.
4. David's true friendship. 1 Samuel 18:1-4, 2 Samuel :23-27
 - Long life love for Jonathan.
5. David's humility. 2 Samuel 7:18
 - David showed his humility despite his success and power.
6. David's leadership. 1 Samuel :1-29
 - Because he was led by God he knew how to lead.
7. David's true remorse. Psalm 51
 - After Bathsheba.
8. David's worship in spite of circumstances. Psalm 33
 - His intimate relationship with God.

Introduction...

It has been said that no other character in the Bible resonates with most people like that of David. He is a man of great contrast, who shows moments of greatness mixed with moments of the ordinary, of courage and valour but also fear, who walked in fellowship with God, but also at the mercy of the devil. He was an ordinary man but also an extraordinary saint. In David we have the distillation of what it is to be a mere mortal striving to love and serve God.

Over the next eight weeks we will explore David's journey from shepherd boy to king, with all its trials and triumphs, and seek to find the encouragement and lessons that this brings us in our own walk with God.



Session 1. David's heart

1 Samuel 16: 1-13
Anointing of David.

David was considered foolish to his older brothers and perhaps even to his father. In 1 Samuel 16:11 the word “youngest” means that he was the least in importance. Here was David, the least significant member of his family, the most unlikely to fit the bill of being a king.

But God was looking at his heart.

The Bible is full of examples of God choosing unlikely or seemingly insignificant characters to work His purposes. It is the humble, and those willing to trust and serve, who are the catalysts for great change and bring His plans to fruition. God sees the possibilities, the potential that we overlook, and will use that mightily for His kingdom, but we need to demonstrate our trust and faithfulness in His design. God's select are always given the small tasks before they get the big jobs. If you yearn to serve the Kingdom then be faithful in the small things. We see the works, but God sees the heart behind them.

1. David's story starts with the obedience of Samuel, despite his fear for his own life. What lessons of trust can we learn from this passage?
2. In v4 we are told that the elders trembled before Samuel because they feared His purpose in coming to Bethlehem. What does this tell us about Saul?
3. Look at 1 Corinthians 1:27-29. What other examples can you think of when God chose the 'least' to become the greatest amongst His people?
4. V12 says that David was 'glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features', but the Hebrew word used by his father and brothers to describe him is 'koot' which means 'cut off, detest or loathe'. Why is there such a contrast?
5. Can you think of any examples in your own life when seemingly insignificant events have led to great consequence or blessing?
6. Who are the 'little people' who have had the greatest influence on your life?
7. Read The Message version of 1 Sam 16: 1-13. Which do you prefer?
8. How can we achieve 'Godly vision' so that we don't judge by outward appearance?



Session 2. David's faith.

1 Samuel 17: 28-58

This is probably one of the most well-known stories in the OT with the underdog David defeating the giant Goliath. But alongside the physical battle between the main protagonists we are shown glimpses of the battle David fought against other giants in his life. Our reading starts with the giants of jealousy and condemnation by his older brother in v 28, the giants of belittlement and doubt are shown by Saul in v33, and the giant of scorn is shown by Goliath in v43 & 44. Through all these battles David relies on his faith and trust in God to give him the strength to overcome. More than just physical strength and agility, David trusts God to give him wisdom, perseverance and courage.

1. What did you take home from the talk on Sunday? What are your 'Sunday lunch bullet points?'
2. Many of our giants are mental and psychological rather than physical. What giants do you face in your life? How can you overcome them?
3. How does David's experience in looking after sheep prepare him for the battle?
4. Have there been times in your life when you've felt that you were 'coasting' but they actually prepared you for what was ahead?
5. Does trust in God mean we are invincible?
6. What does David's speech in V45-47 tell us about his character?
7. Goliath judges David by outward appearance. Can you think of times when this has happened to you, or when you've been guilty of it?
8. Compare the opening of Ps 144 with v45-47. How do they differ? How are they similar?



Session 3. David's loyalty.

1 Samuel 24:1-22

David is a hunted man. He has defeated Goliath and has become a much-loved member of the royal household, married to the daughter of the king and with the king's son as his best friend. But rather than taking the opportunity to nurture and mentor the young man who will take over the throne, Saul is consumed with jealousy and tries to kill him, first by pinning him to a wall with spear and then pursuing him into the wilderness. Despite what looks like the perfect opportunity to remove the threat to his life, David trusts God's promises rather than taking the matter, and Saul's life, into his own hands. He steps out and faces Saul with the same courage that he stepped out and faced Goliath, trusting God to deliver the victory.

1. What are the things that stayed with you from this week's talk?
2. The conflict between Saul and David lasted for years. What was God's purpose in this?
3. Have there been extended times of difficulty in your own life? What was God teaching you in those times?
4. Why did David feel guilt and shame about cutting off a piece of Saul's robe?
5. Why was it important for Saul's confession to David to be done in the open, before his men?
6. Despite his apparent remorse Saul continues to pursue David for 13 years. What does this tell us about his character?
7. David's men thought he was wrong not to kill Saul when he had the opportunity. How do we cope with judgement from our peers when we don't do what they expect?
8. How can we practice restraint in our own lives? Can you think of a situation where you had to 'hold back and trust God'?



Session 4. David's true friendship.

I Samuel 18:1-4, 2 Samuel 1:23-27

The story of Jonathan and David begins in I Samuel 18, continues with what would be the final contact between them in chapter 23, and tragically ends with Jonathan's death on the battlefield in chapter 31 and David's anguish at losing his soul mate.

It is a story that covers perhaps 10 years or so. Jonathan and David's relationship was one that remained until death.

Right from the start Jonathan made a covenant with David, he demonstrated his commitment to friendship with David by giving him things which were very personal to him and symbolise that nothing would get in the way of their friendship including his status as prince, his reputation, or even his family.

Many of us have friends, but do we have the kind of friends which God desires for us to have?
Do we have a Jonathan in our life?

NIV Proverbs 18:24 A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

1. Why is it significant that Jonathan, the son of Saul, is chosen by God to be David's closest friend?
2. Have you ever 'clicked' with someone straight away? Has that friendship stood the test of time?
3. How does Jonathan's trust in God help David to grow?
4. Are our friends better because they've been our friends?
5. Do you have any close friends who are non-Christians? How does this affect your relationship with them?
6. Who are the people that you think God has placed close to you for a specific purpose?
7. Are you one of those people for someone else? How does that make you feel?
8. What are your 'take aways' from the story of David and Jonathan?



Session 5. David's humility.

2 Samuel 7:1

David sat before the Lord with a humble heart

David was not a perfect man, he has made his share of mistakes and there have been times when he has really messed up. But whatever he does and whatever successes or failures he faces, he always knows his place. He knows that it is God who has delivered his victories, and his own failings that have led to his defeats.

Whereas Saul became proud because of his position as king, David never suffered from the same false illusions of grandeur. He never forgot that it was the Lord who had raised him up for His purposes, and he kept a humble heart.

Many men on hearing of God's promises of greatness for them, may become proud and conceited, But not David. "Who am I", he says.

David Morgan – "God would do great things for us - if only he could trust us not to take the glory for ourselves!"

1. Why do we tend to cry out to God when things go badly, but congratulate ourselves when things go well?
2. Read Matthew 19:24. Discuss!
3. What situations have you faced when you have been reminded by God where the power lies...?
4. David started life as a shepherd boy. Do you think it's easier to remain humble if you come from humble origins?
5. James 4:10 says Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you. Why does God want our humility?
6. How do we avoid false humility so that we look good to our peers?
7. It has been said that Pride will kill Revival. Discuss.
8. David submits to God's will even when it goes against his plans. What situations have you faced where God's will was in opposition to your own? How did you handle it?



Session 6. David's leadership.

1 Samuel 29 & 30

“And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them.”
Psalm 78:72

Chapter 29 shows us David between a rock and a hard place. He's joined the Philistine army to fight against Saul, but this means that he is about to go into battle against God's people, the Israelites. It takes the mistrust of the Philistine princes to turn David and his men away from the battle and send them back home to Ziklag where they discover that their homes have been raided and their families kidnapped. In chapter 30 David returns to being led by God rather than following the instructions of earthly rulers; he asks God for instructions, leads his men into battle and recovers what is lost. In doing so he trusts God and delivers the victory, sharing the spoils equally and healing relationships that had been broken, doing it all in God's name.

1. What was God teaching David in Chapter 29?
2. Have there been times when you have found yourself 'fighting on the wrong side'? How did God help you get out of that situation?
3. In Ch 29 v8 David is indignant and affronted by Achish's accusations. Have there been times when you have felt falsely accused? How did God turn the situation for His purposes?
4. David returned home to find that he had lost everything, and his men are threatening to turn against him. What is God teaching David here?
5. How do we trust God when we reach rock bottom? What do we hold on to?
6. When David goes into battle to recover what is lost, God reduces his men by 1/3. Why?
7. Why does David insist on dividing the spoil equally and send some on to the elders of Judah? What message is he sending?
8. What will you take away with you from the talk on Sunday?



Session 7. David's true remorse.

Psalm 51

2 Samuel 11 & 12 tell us the story of Bathsheba and David's sin, remorse and forgiveness by God. David allowed his desire for Bathsheba to overpower his reason and trust in God, resulting in one sin piled on top of another in order to cover up the first. The more he struggles the deeper David is pulled into the swamp of sin. Only when he comes to his senses and sees what he has done does David realise what a mess he's made, and his contrition is heartfelt and impassioned as he comes to God to confess. Psalm 51 traces the path from the confession (1-6) and cleansing (7-11) to celebration of salvation (12-19). Despite the fact that he has messed up so badly, we read in 2 Samuel 12:24-25 that God loved David so much that He forgave him, He forgot about the sin, and He blessed him with another son, Solomon. His heartfelt and genuine repentance earned his forgiveness.

1. Imagine feeling that your sin was too great to be forgiven? How would God's promise of forgiveness become a reality in that situation?
2. Does God's forgiveness of David mean that there is no consequence for sin?
3. Sin is like quicksand, the more we struggle the deeper we sink. Discuss.
4. How much of David's sin is the result of his position of power?
5. Can you think of a time when you have strayed from God's path and had to ask His forgiveness before you can come back to the ways He has planned for your life? How did that make you feel?
6. Why does God bless David so richly when he sinned so badly?
7. David's Psalm is a public declaration of his sin and repentance. Why do you think he felt the need to write a psalm about it and so make it public, rather than keeping it between him and God?
8. Modern church services tend to focus on love and forgiveness rather than sin and retribution. Do you think we are guilty of sweeping sin under the carpet, or minimizing it's consequence?



Session 8. David's worship in spite of circumstances.

Psalm 33

Praise is the honey of life which a devout heart extracts from every bloom of providence and grace. -- Charles H. Spurgeon

Whatever David has faced, from his days as a shepherd boy to becoming the king of a nation, he has given the honour and glory to God. David knows his place and recognises that he is transient, that his time on earth is finite, but that God is infinite and sovereign over all. Psalm 33 encourages us to sing and dance to the praise of God, through whatever circumstances we face. It reminds us of 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 which also encourages us to not focus on the trials or difficulties we face, but to rejoice and praise God through all things. Psalm 33 has an intimacy; we feel David's true relationship and friendship with God, his trust in God's ways and promises.

1. What struck you about the talk on Sunday? What do you remember most clearly?
2. What language does David use in Psalm 33 that makes it more of a 'love song' than a 'marching song'?
3. Have you faced situations that have made praise and worship difficult? How did praising God help you get through?
4. V10-12 talk of a nation chosen by God. Do you think that can apply to us?
5. The world's poorest people are often the most spiritual. Why do you think this is?
6. Do you find it easier to remember to praise God in good times or difficult times?
7. David has an intimate relationship with God. How did he achieve this? How can we?
8. Do you think David deserves his title of 'a man of God's heart'?