



GOD'S WORD



FOR LIFE

ADULT LESSON GUIDE

VOLUME 3

2023-2024

GOD'S WORD



FOR LIFE

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God's Word for Life



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LESSON GUIDE

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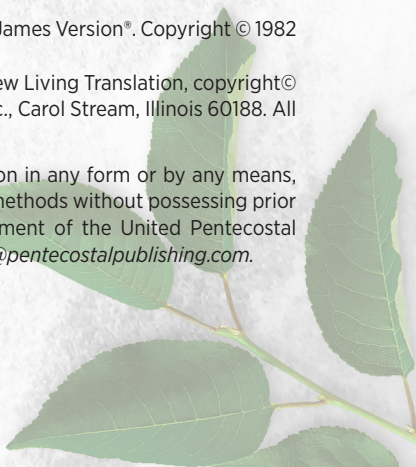
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**THIS BOOK
BELONGS TO**

**GOD'S
WORD**
FOR LIFE



FALL 2023 CONTENTS

Series 1:

David and Solomon

1.1	September 3	The Unexpected and Overlooked	8
1.2	September 10	David and Goliath	16
1.3	September 17	Building the Temple	24
1.4	September 24	Solomon Asks for Wisdom	32

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3.2	November 12	The Mighty God in Christ	88
3.3	November 19	Living Water	96
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*AN indicates All Nations Sunday.

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***CS** indicates Christmas Sunday.

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***ES** indicates Easter Sunday.

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HOW TO USE THIS LESSON GUIDE

GETTING STARTED

The first page of each lesson gives pertinent information that will be foundational for teaching the lesson. Here you will find the Lesson Title, the Truth about God, the Truth for My Life, and both the Focus Verses and Lesson Text. In addition, a callout box will either give an overview of the series (the first lesson of each series contains this information) or will connect students with their daily devotional activity from the previous week.

SEPTEMBER 3, 2023

SERIES 1: DAVID AND SOLOMON

1.1

THE UNEXPECTED AND OVERLOOKED

FOCUS VERSE
I Samuel 16:7
But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.

LESSON TEXT
I Samuel 16:1-13

TRUTH ABOUT GOD
God sees those the world overlooks.

TRUTH FOR MY LIFE
I will trust God when He works in unexpected ways.



Series Overview:
This series follows Israel's second and third kings from the day David was anointed until the day Solomon reared for wisdom to lead God's people. As we explore how God worked through their lives, we will embrace how to answer God's call in our own lives to serve His kingdom.

LESSON 1.1

SG TEACHING OUTLINE

Icebreaker: Why does it hurt so much to be picked last for a team or group?

Lesson Connection: Share the Lesson Connection. [1]

I. SAUL'S REJECTION AND SAMUEL'S MOURNING

- A. Saul's Disobedience and Rejection
• Why do you think Saul went from humility to overt rebellion in the twenty years of his reign?
- B. Samuel's Mourning
• Have you ever felt rebuked by a spiritual leader? How did you respond? How could you have responded better?
- C. I Will Accept Life Can Be Difficult

II. SAMUEL'S SEARCH FOR A NEW KING

- A. Samuel's Risk [2]
• Think of a time when you did what was right knowing there would be adverse consequences. What lessons did you learn from that experience?
- B. Eliah: Samuel's Choice
• What do you believe God looks for in the heart that qualifies a person to do something for God?
- D. I Will Learn to Value and Accept What God Values

III. GOD REVEALED HIS CHOICE

- A. Jesse's Forgotten Son
• Have you ever been in a position where someone discounted you because of your past? How should a child of God respond?
- B. God's Chosen King
C. I Will Acknowledge God's Freedom to Do the Unexpected

Internalizing the Message [1]

Prayer Focus

Lead the group in prayer and consider the following topics of focus:

- For God to help us keep our hearts since that is what He sees first.
- For God to give us vision and courage to fulfill our destiny in Him.

SG TEACHING OUTLINE

The SG (Small Group) Teaching Outline is the lesson content in outline form. Each lesson main point is listed along with suggested discussion questions. Although the outline can be used to teach the lesson in a large group setting, the "SG" indicates the content is also designed to be used in a Small Group. Because of this, an icebreaker question has been provided to help jump-start interaction in the Small Group meeting.

FALL LESSON 1.1

LESSON CONNECTION

A supplemental image is available in the Resource Kit. [1]

"I felt like Sojourner Truth was pushing down on one shoulder and Harriet Tubman was pushing down on the other—saying, 'sit down girl!' I was glued to my seat." These words were offered to *American* magazine in an article by a profoundly courageous African-American lady in Montgomery, Alabama, who had to give up her bus seat to a white person in 1955. Though subsequently arrested, the aftermath of her act of self-dignity ultimately resulted in the court case that ended bus segregation in Montgomery and across the state. She will forever be a heroine in the civil rights movement.

You may think this historical account is about the late and honorable Rosa Parks, but it is not. Some nine months before she took her stand against the racially prejudiced laws of her day, fifteen-year-old Claudette Colvin had done the exact same thing. Having just completed a unit of study on great African-American leaders in America, Claudette asserted her constitutional right to retain the seat for which she had paid. Two police officers forcibly removed her from the bus and a torrent of verbal abuse and insults. She did not retaliate. She did not swear in fact, she quoted the twenty-third Psalm and the Lord's Prayer. This teen girl's act of courage helped, at least in part, to embolden Mrs. Parks' actions months later.

For various reasons, the NAACP chose the Parks' case to be the face of the challenge to this unjust system. She was the behind-the-scenes influence that helped right a moral blot in America's story.

Often the unknown, the unheralded, and the overlooked have played significant roles throughout history, and certainly in God's kingdom. Our King looks beyond what humanity sees to see the potential for our lives to make an impact. While we often present excuses for why our background, family, or challenges make it impossible for us to do anything great for God, He looks beyond those obstacles to call us to what His grace can accomplish in and through us.

David was overlooked by everyone around him. When the second king of Israel was to be anointed from Jesse's household, no one in his family thought David would be the one to experience the anointing oil. Even the man of God had a hard time believing God's mantle would not fall on one of the more naturally obvious choices. But God chose David. And now He chooses you.

LESSON CONNECTION

Most often the Lesson Connection will be a story or illustration designed to give students a glimpse of the overall theme of the lesson. Since stories often appeal to the heart and emotions, this portion of the lesson seeks to engage the heart to receive the truth that will be taught. You are encouraged to personalize this section and include your own testimony to help students connect to the lesson.

BIBLE LESSON

1. SAUL'S REJECTION AND SAMUEL'S MOURNING

God's design was not for Israel to have a mortal king. The only Sovereign to whom they were to bow was God Himself. Israel's King intended to direct Israel's affairs through the voices of prophets and priests, not through the dictates of a crowned ruler.

But Israel was distracted by the governmental patterns of the surrounding nations. They began to demand they too be allowed a man sitting on a natural throne. Despite all the warnings to the contrary, Israel measured their success by natural metrics rather than in their obedience to God, who had delivered them from bondage.

In response to their insistence, God acquiesced and provided them a king, though that choice would in time prove to bring great heartache to Israel. At times God will give us what we ask for, even to our own hurt. That's why it is imperative we carefully consider those things for which our hearts may yearn.

When God gave Israel a king, He did not set them up for failure by selecting someone who was inclined to fail. At the outset, Saul was a good man with a humble spirit. As we trace the journey of his selection, we find a young man who accepted counsel from God's man, who worshipped and prophesied, and who hid himself from public acclaim. Sadly, that is not the end of his story.

A. Saul's Disobedience and Rejection

Saul's failures were manifold, but ultimately his direct rejection of God's instructions brought about his downfall. The Amalekites, avowed enemies of Israel, had filled the cup of God's wrath to overflowing. God sent word to Saul by the prophet Samuel that Saul was to utterly destroy Amalek, including all its possessions. Nothing was to be spared, not even the women and children. While the fierceness of God's judgment may seem shocking to us, it speaks to His profound hatred of sin. And it should have convinced Saul that God was quite serious about this matter.

Instead, Saul chose to evaluate the Amalekites from his limited, human perspective rather than through the lens of God's righteousness. Saul spared all the parts of Amalek that he did not consider "too bad." This overt rebellion against God's clear commandment marked the tipping point. Saul could no longer sit on Israel's throne with God's favor. Samuel delivered the fatal message directly to him: "For rebellion is the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king!" (1 Samuel 15:23).

Why do you think Saul went from humility to overt rebellion in the twenty years of his reign?

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BIBLE LESSON

The Bible Lesson is a manuscript of the entire lesson. The lessons are written by various Apostolic authors who not only skillfully explain the truths of Scripture but also share ways we can apply these truths to our lives. The lesson contains discussion questions to stimulate thought and media callouts (videos and images available in the Adult Resource Kit) to connect with students of all learning styles.

THE UNEXPECTED AND OVERLOOKED

INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE

A supplemental image is available in the Resource Kit. 

We don't know his name. We don't know what became of him. We don't even know if he is still alive. Most just call him "Tank Man." What we do know is that he was an individual of profound courage who could not even know that his actions were being observed on that infamous morning.

In the spring of 1989, a hunger grew among many in China for political and economic reform. The fiscal growth in the nation over the previous decade had exposed many in that oppressed country to foreign ideas and lifestyles. For just over six weeks, student-led protests had erupted in Tiananmen Square in Beijing demanding significant changes in the social construct controlled by Communism. Some felt it would be best to negotiate with the protesters and to make some concessions, but the hardliners held sway. The protests would be stopped by whatever martial means necessary.

The crackdown was to begin on June 3 with columns of tanks advancing among the protesters and crushing many. After two days of brutal conflicts and terror, the world witnessed "tank man" do the unthinkable. He placed himself in the path of an advancing column of tanks and even continued to maneuver in front of them when they attempted to go around him. He brought the power of that military might to a stop while holding two grocery bags in his hands, suggesting he had not planned to be there, but merely found himself in a historic moment by chance.

He did not look physically imposing. We will likely never know if he was an intellectual master or a financial genius. Was he a white-collar executive or a blue-collar laborer? History has hidden these details from us. The authorities soon removed him from that place where he took a stand, but the worldwide attention he received brought criticism and economic sanctions against China from numerous countries.

It is truly amazing what an "ordinary" individual can do when guided by principles. God can take a common person and change the course of a family, a church, or a nation. The accounts would be more numerous than we could recount of how an ordinary man or woman answering God's call to a city or a country brought profound reveal to thousands of broken lives. One who was otherwise on the far side of some hill tending sheep and fighting off lions and bears in unseen battles suddenly felt the oil of God's anointing running off his head.

God has big plans for you. He has not designed you for ordinary. He has created you and saved you for something more. Others may not see it. At times you may doubt it yourself. Still, you have a bright destiny. Go ahead, David. Keep your heart right so God may see it and exalt you in due time.

Prayer Focus

Lead the group in prayer and consider the following topics of focus:

- For God to help us keep our hearts since that is what He sees first.
- For God to give us vision and courage to fulfill our destiny in Him.

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INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE

The end of each lesson will offer a final call to action to apply the lesson's content. The goal of each lesson is not just to share biblical information, but also to show what must be done with the information, challenging students to apply God's Word to their lives. You are encouraged to use the Prayer Focus to end the lesson with a time of consecration.

LEGEND

The following icons and boxes are used to aid leaders in navigating the content.

Contains a suggested discussion question

Gives direction regarding an available media callout



Signals the information can be used in a Small Group setting.

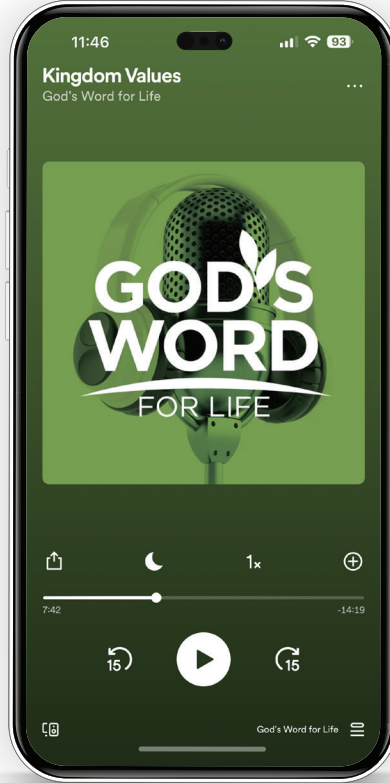


Shows a video component is available to help illustrate the lesson information.



Indicates an image is available to help illustrate the lesson information.

LEARNING AND LIVING OUT GOD'S WORD FOR LIFE



Join podcast host LJ Harry on the God's Word for Life companion podcast every week. Each episode complements the God's Word for Life Lesson Guide, Daily Devotional Guide, and the Small Group Guide as we think deeply about how God's Word impacts our lives. The podcast is a great tool for families and groups to listen to and discuss what we are learning from God's Word. The podcast shares stories and passages in Scripture with fresh insights to encourage followers of Jesus. Like the guides, each episode features discussion questions to help us apply what we are hearing and start conversations about God's Word.

Enjoy the God's Word for Life companion podcast as we learn and live out God's Word for Life.

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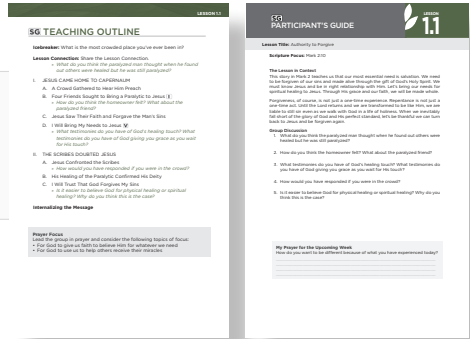
DIGITAL RESOURCE KIT

The Adult Resource Kit offers a wide array of materials to help expand the impact of each lesson. From videos that inspire discussion to social media tools to help encourage adults to join your group or class, this kit provides tools to help leaders grow their group and make teaching time more effective. Some resources include:



A Video to Accompany Each Lesson to Prompt Discussion or Further Thought

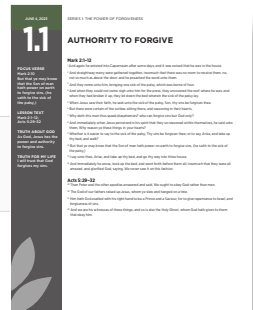
Small Group Teaching Outlines and Participant Guides



A Powerpoint to Accompany Each Lesson

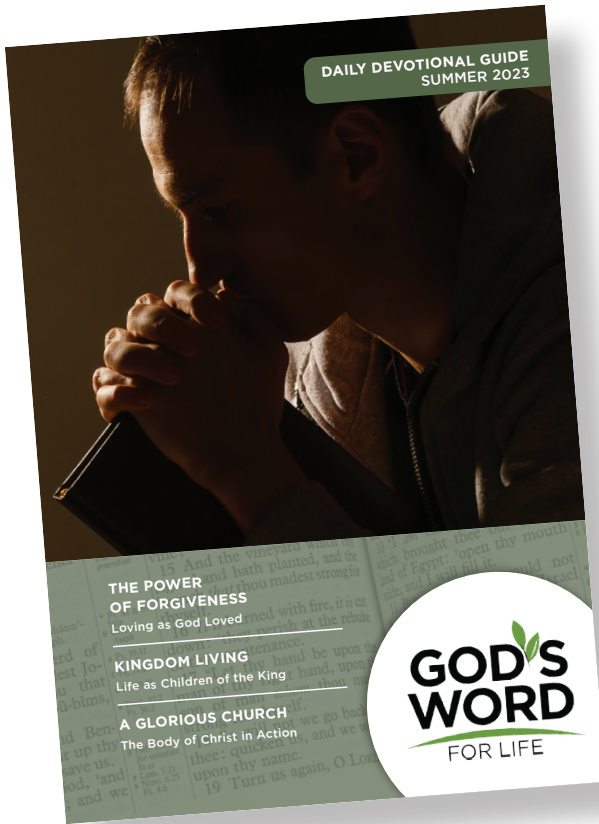


Lesson Leaves and a Printable Version of the Scripture Text



Social Media Graphics, Tips, and Sample Posting Calendar

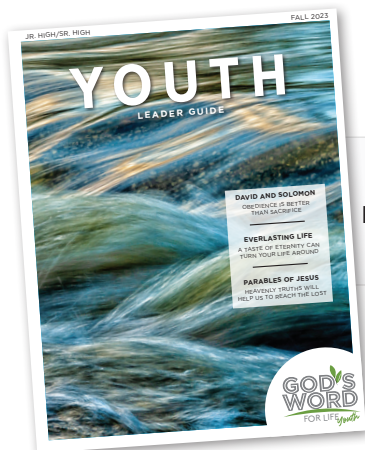
DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE



Becoming lifelong Apostolic disciples takes more investment than just an hour on Sunday or Wednesday. Now you can dig into God's Word every day. This guide gives an overview of the biblical text presented in the Lesson Guide each week and is then divided into smaller portions for daily study. Each day offers brief insight about the Bible passage, a devotion that challenges readers to apply Scripture, and then space to reflect and pray over the principles presented.

ENGAGE YOUR YOUTH WITH GOD'S WORD

Your investment in an Apostolic resource like this book reflects your commitment to spiritual growth. You can expand that investment to also empower youth and young adults to become lifelong Apostolic disciples.

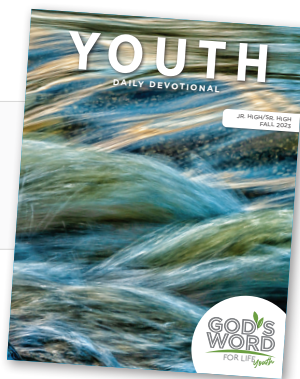


Leader Guide

Everything a teacher needs to lead students in an engaging class

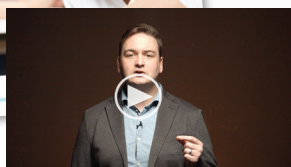
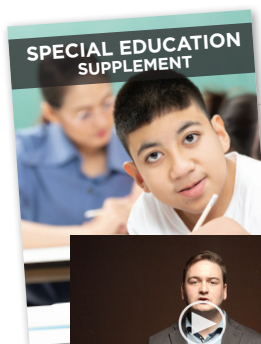
Daily Devotional Guide

A game-changing tool to lead students into Scripture each day of the week



Resource Kit

Special features including social media aids and a supplement for ministering to students with special needs





DISCIPLES COME IN ALL AGES

God's Word for Life is more than just a resource for seasoned saints like you; it is a discipleship program to help every member of the church, no matter how young or old, become a lifelong follower of Jesus Christ. With the teaching materials for children aligned to follow the same Bible passage as the adults each week, everyone in the church can grow together in united focus on God's Word.

**I WILL ALLOW THE HOLY GHOST
TO EMPOWER ME TO LIVE THE
WAY GOD WANTS ME TO LIVE.**

(ADULTS)

**I WILL INVITE GOD TO WRITE
HIS LAW ON MY HEART
THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

(YOUTH)

**I WILL BE FILLED WITH
GOD'S SPIRIT AND POWER.**

(LATE ELEMENTARY—GRADES 4-6)

**I MUST FOLLOW GOD'S PLAN AND
BE BORN AGAIN.**

(EARLY ELEMENTARY—GRADES 1-3)

**I WILL LIVE MY LIFE GUIDED
BY GOD'S SPIRIT.**

(KINDERGARTEN—AGES 4-5)

**I WILL BELIEVE
GOD'S PROMISES.**

(LITTLE LEARNERS—AGES 2-3)



ENGAGE KIDS WITH GOD'S WORD



Leader Guide

Everything a teacher needs to lead students in an engaging class

Devotional and Activity Pages

For activities for students to complete in class and daily devotionals for parents to lead at home.



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Special features including videos, posters, and for ministering to students with special needs.





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FALL 2023

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Icebreaker: Why does it hurt so much to be picked last for a team or group?

Lesson Connection: Share the Lesson Connection. **I**

I. SAUL'S REJECTION AND SAMUEL'S MOURNING

A. Saul's Disobedience and Rejection

» *Why do you think Saul went from humility to overt rebellion in the twenty years of his reign?*

B. Samuel's Mourning

» *Have you ever felt rebuked by a spiritual leader? How did you respond? How could you have responded better?*

C. I Will Accept Life Can Be Difficult

II. SAMUEL'S SEARCH FOR A NEW KING

A. Samuel's Risk **V**

» *Think of a time when you did what was right knowing there would be adverse consequences. What lessons did you learn from that experience?*

B. Eliab: Samuel's Choice

C. God Revealed His Criteria

» *What do you believe God looks for in the heart that qualifies a person to do something for God?*

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A. Jesse's Forgotten Son

» *Have you ever been in a position where someone discounted you because of your past? How should a child of God respond?*

B. God's Chosen King

C. I Will Acknowledge God's Freedom to Do the Unexpected

Internalizing the Message **I**

Prayer Focus

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But Israel was distracted by the governmental patterns of the surrounding nations. They began to demand they too be allowed a man sitting on a natural throne. Despite all the warnings to the contrary, Israel measured their success by natural metrics rather than in their obedience to God, who had delivered them from bondage.

In response to their insistence, God acquiesced and provided them a king, though that choice would in time prove to bring great heartache to Israel. At times God will give us what we ask for, even to our own hurt. That's why it is imperative we carefully consider those things for which our hearts may yearn.

When God gave Israel a king, He did not set them up for failure by selecting someone who was inclined to fall. At the outset, Saul was a good man with a humble spirit. As we trace the journey of his selection, we find a young man who accepted counsel from God's man, who worshiped and prophesied, and who hid himself from public acclaim. Sadly, that is not the end of his story.

A. Saul's Disobedience and Rejection

Saul's failures were manifold, but ultimately his direct rejection of godly instructions brought about his downfall. The Amalekites, avowed enemies of Israel, had filled the cup of God's wrath to overflowing. God sent word to Saul by the prophet Samuel that Saul was to utterly destroy Amalek, including all its possessions. Nothing was to be spared, not even the women and children. While the fierceness of God's judgment may seem shocking to us, it speaks to His profound hatred of sin. And it should have convinced Saul that God was quite serious about this matter.

Instead, Saul chose to evaluate the Amalekites from his limited, human perspective rather than through the lens of God's righteousness. Saul spared all the parts of Amalek that he did not consider "too bad." This overt rebellion against God's clear commandment marked the tipping point. Saul could no longer sit on Israel's throne with God's favor. Samuel delivered the fatal message directly to him: "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king" (1 Samuel 15:23).

Why do you think Saul went from humility to overt rebellion in the twenty years of his reign?

B. Samuel's Mourning

It might be easy for the ill-informed to assume pastors take lightly the responsibility to rebuke wrongdoing or find some perverse validation when the dire consequences about which they have warned come to pass. Nothing could be further from the truth for one with a true heart of a shepherd. Only the shepherd's love for the sheep and concern for their welfare compels the difficult task of confronting wrongdoing. And that same love breaks the shepherd's heart when observing sheep ignoring counsel and continuing the path toward destruction.

Samuel was no different. Though many of Saul's actions grieved and likely even angered him, still Samuel loved Saul and his role in Israel. Though Samuel was faithful to give Saul the appropriate rebuke and sentence of God, still Samuel's heart trembled for the consequences. Though he never went to see Saul again in this life, the Bible's testimony of how Samuel felt is clear: "Nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul" (1 Samuel 15:35).

Have you ever felt rebuked by a spiritual leader? How did you respond? How could you have responded better?

C. I Will Accept Life Can Be Difficult

Samuel's obedience to the voice of God caused him profound grief as noted by the significant use of the word *mourned*. This word indicates his emotions were like those of one who has been touched by the death of a loved one. Doing the will of God did not exempt Samuel from a bitter taste in his mouth.

Life can be difficult. Sometimes the challenges are the result of Hell's direct attack on us, sometimes they are the result of our own poor choices, and sometimes they are simply the result of living in a world after the Fall, but it is a simple and undeniable fact that hardships and pain will come. One need only witness enough sunrises to endure days of difficulty and challenge. This fact is true of those who do not serve God, but it is equally true for those of us who do. Redemption does not mean every day will be "kittens and pink lemonade." Instead, we will know as Samuel found that doing the will of God can mingle many tears with our days.

II. SAMUEL'S SEARCH FOR A NEW KING

With the end of Saul's reign having been pronounced on him, the task of discerning God's will for his successor became paramount for Samuel. This decision had to be guided by God, as human perspective on this matter had already proven a failure. Saul had appeared to have every natural advantage, yet his leadership ended in such ruin that we routinely look to it today as an example of the pitfalls confronting a leader. Who would God select to step into the newly formed leadership vacuum? How should Samuel proceed?

A. Samuel's Risk

We cannot ignore the fact that not everyone would know of God's rejection of Saul. It is likely few heard these fateful words

from Samuel to Saul: “The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou” (1 Samuel 15:28). Those who did hear likely could not imagine it so. Their very first king, hand selected by God, was now summarily rejected by Him? How could this be?

For Samuel to proceed with anointing a new king could prove to be personally dangerous to him, as the backslidden Saul was likely to be willing to fight to keep his crown. It was not at all unreasonable to think the king would have Samuel arrested and executed for treason should he dare to name a new ruler. Yet God gave him clear instructions: “And the LORD said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons” (1 Samuel 16:1).

Doing the will of God in the face of opposition can be rather intimidating. But when we have clear instructions, we must obey lest we risk the same rejection Saul received. Our reverence for God’s opinion of us should always overshadow our fear of what others might say.

B. Eliab: Samuel’s Choice

One can only imagine the tumult that ensued upon Samuel’s arrival at Jesse’s house and his explanation of his purpose for being there. “One of us boys is going to be the next king? I wonder who it will be? Might it be me?” Sibling rivalries took on a whole new complexion as they found out one among them would soon be rich and powerful.


When Samuel saw the oldest son, Eliab, he immediately assumed, based on nothing more than the man’s stature and appearance, that this one must be God’s choice. Samuel could envision this man standing tall while draped in the regal robes of his office. What a striking king he would make! But God quickly put that thought from the prophet’s mind when He said, “I have refused him” (1 Samuel 16:7).

C. God Revealed His Criteria

It is likely Samuel was somewhat confused by God’s concise disqualification of Eliab and perhaps even more so as each successive son of Jesse was rejected. The explanation can be found, however, in the further words of God to Samuel in the same verse: “The LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7).

God’s criteria for Kingdom service and particularly for Kingdom leadership is not visible to the casual, human observer. It is found instead in those characteristics that speak of character, integrity, and passion for the things of God. Peter called it the “hidden

Teacher Option:

A supplemental video is available in the Resource Kit. 

Think of a time when you did what was right knowing there would be adverse consequences. What lessons did you learn from that experience?

What do you believe God looks for in the heart that qualifies a person to do something for God?

man of the heart” in I Peter 3:4, but it is not hidden in the least from God. “All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do” (Hebrews 4:13). Those attributes that are only discernable in the hearts of humans are what qualify someone for or disqualify someone from being used by God. Nothing more. Nothing less.

D. I Will Learn to Value and Accept What God Values

It is imperative that all our life choices be made using the same set of values God does. Giving favoritism because of connections, talents, or appearance in lieu of the condition of a holy heart is not pleasing to God. If He values the intangible aspects of an individual, so must we. If He places worth on motives and attitudes, so must we. The “Eliabs” of this world are plentiful, but they are refused by God.

III. GOD REVEALED HIS CHOICE

A. Jesse’s Forgotten Son

Jesse’s youngest son seems almost an afterthought in this drama. All the sons were rejected, and no one even mentioned David until Samuel specifically asked Jesse if there was another boy somewhere. Even then, the tone was almost dismissive: “And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep” (I Samuel 16:11). While we make “keeping sheep” a noble pursuit, that was not the perception during much of the time of the Bible. Shepherds were generally considered unclean and disreputable.

For some reason he was seemingly not favored as were the other brothers. Perhaps they merely deemed him too young for consideration. Whatever the cause, no one picked David . . . except the only one who matters.

B. God’s Chosen King

“And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he. Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward” (I Samuel 16:12-13). There was no ambiguity in God’s next instruction, nor any question left in Samuel’s heart. The one others forgot and discounted was elevated by God to the ultimate prominence in Israel.

C. I Will Acknowledge God’s Freedom to Do the Unexpected

We serve in God’s kingdom and for His pleasure, not for ours. Our ideas, will, comfort, and pleasure are not at all significant. While we might have our own conceptions of how God’s work should unfold, those hardly matter at all. God alone decides, and He can and will do as He pleases. We must recognize and accept the truth of Psalm 75:7: “But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.”

Have you ever been in a position where someone discounted you because of your past? How should a child of God respond?

INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE

A supplemental image is available in the Resource Kit. 

We don't know his name. We don't know what became of him. We don't even know if he is still alive. Most just call him "Tank Man." What we do know is that he was an individual of profound courage who could not even know that his actions were being observed on that infamous morning.

In the spring of 1989, a hunger grew among many in China for political and economic reform. The fiscal growth in the nation over the previous decade had exposed many in that oppressed country to foreign ideas and lifestyles. For just over six weeks, student-led protests had erupted in Tiananmen Square in Beijing demanding significant changes in the social construct controlled by Communism. Some felt it would be best to negotiate with the protesters and to make some concessions, but the hardliners held sway. The protests would be stopped by whatever martial means necessary.

The crackdown was to begin on June 3 with columns of tanks advancing among the protesters and crushing many. After two days of brutal conflicts and terror, the world witnessed "tank man" do the unthinkable. He placed himself in the path of an advancing column of tanks and even continued to maneuver in front of them when they tried going around him. He brought that military might to a stop while holding two grocery bags in his hands, suggesting he had not planned to be there, but found himself in a historic moment.

He did not look physically imposing. We will likely never know if he was an intellectual master or a financial genius. Was he a white-collar executive or a blue-collar laborer? History has hidden these details from us. The authorities soon removed him from that place where he took a stand, but the worldwide attention he received brought criticism and economic sanctions against China from numerous countries.

It is truly amazing what an "ordinary" individual can do when guided by principles. God can take a common person and change the course of a family, a church, or a nation. The accounts would be more numerous than we could recount of how an ordinary man or woman answering God's call to a city or a country brought profound revival to thousands of broken lives. One who was otherwise on the far side of some hill tending sheep and fighting off lions and bears in unseen battles suddenly felt the oil of God's anointing running off his head.

God has big plans for you. He has not designed you for ordinary. He has created you and saved you for something more. Others may not see it. At times you may doubt it yourself. Still, you have a bright destiny. Go ahead, David. Keep your heart right so God may see it and exalt you in due time.

Prayer Focus

Lead the group in prayer and consider the following topics of focus:

- For God to help us keep our hearts since that is what He sees first.
- For God to give us vision and courage to fulfill our destiny in Him.