

LIFE OF DAVID 6

Ut Prosim

“David said to Saul, ‘Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him.’”¹

Of all the Bible stories, David and Goliath may be one of the most told and loved. Rather than re-telling the story here, we want to focus on three key pieces of David's decision that led to an attitude of *Ut Prosim* – “That I May Serve.”

First, it is evident that David possessed “divinely guided insight that others lacked” that allowed him to see both the problem and the solution.² “Now the Israelites had been saying, ‘Do you see how this man keeps coming out? He comes out to defy Israel.’”³ The Israelite army was terrified by Goliath as he came out day after day, morning and evening, to issue his challenge. They saw him as “this man,” but David calls him what he really is, asking, “Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?” The petrified warriors only saw an insurmountable obstacle to victory. David saw an arrogant man who couldn't help but fall before the majesty and power of the living God. Goliath was the problem, God's power and sovereignty was the solution.

David was motivated to serve by his faith in God's character and His power. When Saul rebuts his offer to fight Goliath, saying he is too young and too weak, David is prepared with an answer: “The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.”⁴ David has personal experience with the goodness and faithfulness of God and a sharp memory. Too often we allow ourselves to remember our failures rather than God's successes. It is important to train our minds in such a way that our faith is made stronger through calling to remembrance the authority and reliability of our Father in past circumstances.

Last, but perhaps most importantly, “David was aware of the means by which the victory would be accomplished. He understood that faith in Yahweh was the determining factor.”⁵ His declaration to Goliath makes the source of his confidence unmistakable: You have come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will hand you over to me... and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. ...the battle is the Lord's... David's weakness wasn't his focus, he knew where his power came from and that victory didn't depend on him.

In Saul we see a stark contrast to David's perspective, faith, and confidence. The writer of 1 Samuel makes it very clear that “on hearing the Philistine's [challenge], Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.”⁶ The king of Israel, who we know stood “a head taller than any of the others,” is the natural choice for the champion of his people. But instead, we find him cowering in his tent, more than willing to hand over his armor to David so he might fight the battle. Rather than seeing Goliath for what he was, a man defying

Pre-Article Questions:

1. How would you describe one the greatest acts of service someone has done for you?
2. What do you think it takes to serve a family member, friend, or God well?

1.1 Samuel 17:32

2. The NIV Application Commentary: 1 & 2 Samuel. p. 267

3.1 Samuel 17:25

4.1 Samuel 17:37

5. The NIV Application Commentary: 1 & 2 Samuel. p. 267 1

6.1 Samuel 17:11

the Lord; rather than remembering the salvation God worked for His people, especially through the weak things of the world; rather than depending on God to defend His honor and protect His people; Saul has turned from the Lord, even as He turned from him. Saul was right, he could not have won the battle, but neither could David, unless the Lord gave it into his hand.

Do you look at situations through God-tinted glasses, asking for His perspective? Or do you allow the perceptions of those around you, or your own vision, to justify cowardice? Remembering, not only the promises of God, but also His past successes, is key to becoming a man who shows up when he is needed that he may serve. Approach the battle in light of God's strength and character. When God calls you into something He will give you the will and the ability to do it.⁷ So fear not and walk boldly into difficult and impossible situations that you may serve God, for His glory and for the good of His people.

1 Samuel 17:2-4, 8-16, 20-51, NIV

2 Saul and the Israelites assembled and camped in the Valley of Elah and drew up their battle line to meet the Philistines. 3 The Philistines occupied one hill and the Israelites another, with the valley between them. 4 A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. His height was six cubits and a span. 8 Goliath stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose a man and have him come down to me. 9 If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects; but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us." 10 Then the Philistine said, "This day I defy the armies of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other." 11 On hearing the Philistine's words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified. 12 Now David was the son of an Ephrathite named Jesse, who was from Bethlehem in Judah. Jesse had eight sons, and in Saul's time he was very old. 13 Jesse's three oldest sons had followed Saul to the war: The firstborn was Eliab; the second, Abinadab; and the third, Shammah. 14 David was the youngest. The three oldest followed Saul, 15 but David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father's sheep at Bethlehem. 16 For forty days the Philistine came forward every morning and evening and took his stand.

20 Early in the morning David left the flock in the care of a shepherd, loaded up and set out, as Jesse had directed. He reached the camp as the army was going out to its battle positions, shouting the war cry. 21 Israel and the Philistines were drawing up their lines facing each other. 22 David left his things with the keeper of supplies, ran to the battle lines and asked his brothers how they were. 23 As he was talking with them, Goliath, the Philistine champion from Gath, stepped out from his lines and shouted his usual defiance, and David heard it. 24 Whenever the Israelites saw the man, they all fled from him in great fear. 25 Now the Israelites had been saying, "Do you see how this man keeps coming out? He comes out to defy Israel. The king will give great wealth to the man who kills him. He will also give him his daughter in marriage and will exempt his family from taxes in Israel." 26 David asked the men standing near him, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?" 27 They repeated to him what they had been saying and told him, "This is what will be done for the man who kills him." 28 When Eliab, David's oldest brother, heard him speaking with the men, he burned with anger at him and asked, "Why have you come down here? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness? I know how conceited you are and how wicked your

heart is; you came down only to watch the battle." 29 "Now what have I done?" said David. "Can't I even speak?" 30 He then turned away to someone else and brought up the same matter, and the men answered him as before. 31 What David said was overheard and reported to Saul, and Saul sent for him. 32 David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him." 33 Saul replied, "You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a young man, and he has been a warrior from his youth." 34 But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, 35 I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. 36 Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. 37 The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine." Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you." 38 Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. 39 David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walking around, because he was not used to them. "I cannot go in these," he said to Saul, "because I am not used to them." So he took them off. 40 Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine. 41 Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David. 42 He looked David over and saw that he was little more than a boy, glowing with health and handsome, and he despised him. 43 He said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 44 "Come here," he said, "and I'll give your flesh to the birds and the wild animals!" 45 David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. 46 This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. 47 All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands." 48 As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. 49 Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground. 50 So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him. 51 David ran and stood over him. He took hold of the Philistine's sword and drew it from the sheath. After he killed him, he cut off his head with the sword.

Scripture Questions:

1. Compare Goliath and David's armor and weapons. What pieces are listed? What were their purposes?
2. What were the terms of Goliath's challenge?
3. Why did David call Goliath an "uncircumcised Philistine?" What did this title signify?
4. Look at all the times David speaks in this chapter. How many times does he mention God and what does he say about Him?

Application Questions:

1. The first quality we discussed that enabled David to volunteer in the Lord's service was divine perception, that is, God gave him insight into the situation. Is there a situation in your life that seems overwhelming in which you need divine insight? If you are comfortable, share with the group so that we can look at God's perspective from the Word together.
2. The second quality we talked about was zeal for God and David's assurance of God's goodness and faithfulness. He had a good memory for God's successes. Do you? Talk about a time when the Lord worked on your behalf to help you with an impossible obstacle.
3. Do you get upset when someone defames the name of Jesus? Or do you let it pass and stay silent like Saul? Are you willing to stand up for the honor of your God? How can you speak truth in love in this kind of situation? When are you called to act?
4. The third quality David possessed was confidence that his God was the key to the victory. Do you believe that God is for you and not against you? What effect would this kind of confidence have in your daily interaction with friends, classmates, professors, etc? What effect would it have in situations that seem insurmountable?
5. Are you willing to serve even when the odds are not in your favor? Do you go out of your way to serve? Why or why not? How can we support you, as a small group, as you grow in seeing things from God's perspective, faith in God's goodness and faithfulness, and confidence that the battle is the Lord's?

Prayer Partner Assignment:

Memory Verse: 1 Samuel 17:47, "All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands."

Read 1 Samuel 17 and 1 Samuel 18.

Please meet with your prayer partner from this week to discuss the following questions on the chapters assigned for this week:

1. What were some of the external obstacles David faced when he hinted at and then declared his intentions to face Goliath?
2. What are some of the internal obstacles he might have faced?
3. Chapter 18 is all about the aftermath of David's willingness to serve, what are some of the triumphs and some of the (probably unexpected) anguishes that David dealt with after the Lord gave Goliath into his hand?

LIFE OF DAVID 7

Duty

"He said to his men, 'The Lord forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, or lift my hand against him; for he is the anointed of the Lord.'"¹

Duty, outside of a military context, seems to be a word of the past. We should not be surprised by the decline of a sense of duty when tolerance and the ideas of moral relativism prevail in our society. Duty is one's sense of moral obligation or responsibility. If there are no absolute standards being observed by the culture, then a sense of duty is, at best, individualized, and, at worst, considered entirely unnecessary and outmoded.

For godly men, however, duty is not optional, but rather flows out of respect and reverence for our highest authority, God Himself. David admirably demonstrates the heart behind fulfilling one's duty when he is faced, not once, but twice, with the opportunity to revenge himself by taking Saul's life. Revenge is a subtle temptation, seemingly appealing to one's sense of justice. In reality, though, it is a temptation to usurp God's authority by taking matters into one's own hands. God makes it very clear how He feels about revenge in Deuteronomy and then later in Paul's letter to the Romans: "Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written, 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord."²

David is hiding in the wilderness with his 600 men and Saul is pursuing him with "three thousand able young men," when Saul is required to stop to answer the call of nature.³ As the Lord would have it, Saul stops off in the very cave where David and his men are hiding. It seems like the perfect opportunity for David to take control and realize his God-given destiny. His men encourage him to act quickly and decisively, saying, "This is the day the Lord spoke of when he said to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.'"⁴ Interestingly, we do not find evidence of that word ever being given by the Lord elsewhere in the accounts of David's life.⁵ The men are giving David every reason to justify what he probably wants to do: finally get back at the man who has made his life nearly unlivable.

David's response in the moment is surprising. He does sneak up on Saul, but rather than killing or even wounding him, he cuts off the corner of his robe. In our modern perspective, this action doesn't seem like a big deal, so we are confused when the word says David was conscience-stricken because of his action. When we dig a little deeper, we learn that: this act was far from meaningless because David's confiscation of a portion of the royal robe signified the transfer of power from the house of Saul to the house of David. ...By voiding Saul's claim to kingship, he was at some level lifting his hand against 'the anointed of the Lord.' This was more than an act against the king; it was rebellion against the Lord... who had previously punished Israelites who had expressed a rebellious attitude against constituted authority.⁶

Pre-Article Questions:

1. What areas of life do you have the greatest sense of responsibility or duty?
2. What character qualities does it take to fulfill our responsibilities and not leave things left undone?

1.1 Samuel 24:6

2. Deuteronomy 32:35, Romans 12:19

3.1 Samuel 24:2

4.1 Samuel 24:4

5. The New American Commentary: 1 & 2 Samuel. p. 238

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6. Ibid p. 239

Although David recognizes that it is his moral obligation, his duty, not to kill Saul, his king, he has succumbed to temptation by symbolically taking matters into his own hands. He repents and persuades his men not to sin against Saul themselves and ends with an eloquent acknowledgement of Saul's position, renewed respect, and a passionate plea for reconciliation. Saul also acknowledges his own guilt, but true reconciliation is no longer feasible because of Saul's unpredictable favor and lack of commitment to God.

Only two chapters later, in 1 Samuel 26, we see David placed in a very similar situation. He is able to enter the camp of Saul undetected with the help of the Lord who put Saul and his men into a "deep sleep."⁷ Again, the companion David brought with him makes a convincing case for justifying any vengeful motives David might have. Abishai says, "Today God has delivered your enemy into your hands" and even offers to kill Saul himself.⁸ But David refuses to allow his emotions and his desire for revenge to conquer his reverence for God and his desire to walk righteously before Him. He rebukes Abishai and only allows him to take Saul's spear and water jug as a token of their presence (and restraint). David's actions corroborate his belief that "only God Himself has the right to take the life of ...a divinely sanctioned leader."⁹

In a world of relative morals and situational ethics, the idea of moral obligation or responsibility, particularly toward and unrighteous and unjust authority, seems laughable. However, God clearly commands his people to "be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which [He] has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God."¹⁰ Therefore, we have the moral obligation, the responsibility, the duty, as men, to respect authority, whether it be on a state, national, local, or pastoral level. This respect does not mean passivity. David did not simply allow Saul to kill him, nor did he give up on God's promises. He spent time with the Lord, actively waiting and seeking His guidance, he trained his men both in warfare and in godly character, he prepared to fill the office for which God had appointed him, but he refused to take matters into his own hands, give in to the temptation to take revenge, and violate God's law. He was a man who did his duty and, in the end, God rewarded him for his faithfulness.

1 Samuel 24, NIV

After Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he was told, "David is in the Desert of En Gedi." 2 So Saul took three thousand able young men from all Israel and set out to look for David and his men near the Crags of the Wild Goats. 3 He came to the sheep pens along the way; a cave was there, and Saul went in to relieve himself. David and his men were far back in the cave. 4 The men said, "This is the day the Lord spoke of when he said to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.'" Then David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul's robe. 5 Afterward, David was conscience-stricken for having cut off a corner of his robe. 6 He said to his men, "The Lord forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, or lay my hand on him; for he is the anointed of the Lord." 7 With these words David sharply rebuked his men and did not allow them to attack Saul. And Saul left the cave and went his way. 8 Then David went out of the cave and called out to Saul, "My lord the king!" When Saul looked behind him, David bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground. 9 He said to Saul, "Why do you listen when men say, 'David is bent on harming you?' 10 This day you have seen with your own eyes how the Lord delivered you into my hands in the cave. Some urged me to kill you, but I spared you; I said, 'I will not lay my hand on my

7. 1 Samuel 26:12

8. 1 Samuel 26:8

9. The NIV Application Commentary: 1 & 2 Samuel. p. 353

10. Romans 13:1

lord, because he is the Lord's anointed.' 11 See, my father, look at this piece of your robe in my hand! I cut off the corner of your robe but did not kill you. See that there is nothing in my hand to indicate that I am guilty of wrongdoing or rebellion. I have not wronged you, but you are hunting me down to take my life. 12 May the Lord judge between you and me. And may the Lord avenge the wrongs you have done to me, but my hand will not touch you. 13 As the old saying goes, 'From evildoers come evil deeds,' so my hand will not touch you.

14 "Against whom has the king of Israel come out? Who are you pursuing? A dead dog? A flea? 15 May the Lord be our judge and decide between us. May he consider my cause and uphold it; may he vindicate me by delivering me from your hand." 16 When David finished saying this, Saul asked, "Is that your voice, David my son?" And he wept aloud. 17 "You are more righteous than I," he said. "You have treated me well, but I have treated you badly. 18 You have just now told me about the good you did to me; the Lord delivered me into your hands, but you did not kill me. 19 When a man finds his enemy, does he let him get away unharmed? May the Lord reward you well for the way you treated me today. 20 I know that you will surely be king and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hands. 21 Now swear to me by the Lord that you will not kill off my descendants or wipe out my name from my father's family." 22 So David gave his oath to Saul. Then Saul returned home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

1 Samuel 26, NIV

The Ziphites went to Saul at Gibeah and said, "Is not David hiding on the hill of Hakilah, which faces Jeshimon?" 2 So Saul went down to the Desert of Ziph, with his three thousand select Israelite troops, to search there for David. 3 Saul made his camp beside the road on the hill of Hakilah facing Jeshimon, but David stayed in the wilderness. When he saw that Saul had followed him there, 4 he sent out scouts and learned that Saul had definitely arrived. 5 Then David set out and went to the place where Saul had camped. He saw where Saul and Abner son of Ner, the commander of the army, had lain down. Saul was lying inside the camp, with the army encamped around him. 6 David then asked Ahimelek the Hittite and Abishai son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, "Who will go down into the camp with me to Saul?" "I'll go with you," said Abishai. 7 So David and Abishai went to the army by night, and there was Saul, lying asleep inside the camp with his spear stuck in the ground near his head. Abner and the soldiers were lying around him. 8 Abishai said to David, "Today God has delivered your enemy into your hands. Now let me pin him to the ground with one thrust of the spear; I won't strike him twice." 9 But David said to Abishai, "Don't destroy him! Who can lay a hand on the Lord's anointed and be guiltless? 10 As surely as the Lord lives," he said, "the Lord himself will strike him, or his time will come and he will die, or he will go into battle and perish. 11 But the Lord forbid that I should lay a hand on the Lord's anointed. Now get the spear and water jug that are near his head, and let's go." 12 So David took the spear and water jug near Saul's head, and they left. No one saw or knew about it, nor did anyone wake up. They were all sleeping, because the Lord had put them into a deep sleep. 13 Then David crossed over to the other side and stood on top of the hill some distance away; there was a wide space between them. 14 He called out to the army and to Abner son of Ner, "Aren't you going to answer me, Abner?" Abner replied, "Who are you who calls to the king?" 15 David said, "You're a man, aren't you? And who is like you in Israel? Why didn't you guard your lord the king? Someone came to destroy your lord the king. 16 What you have done is not good. As surely as the Lord lives, you and your men must die, because you

did not guard your master, the Lord's anointed. Look around you. Where are the king's spear and water jug that were near his head?" 17 Saul recognized David's voice and said, "Is that your voice, David my son?" David replied, "Yes it is, my lord the king." 18 And he added, "Why is my lord pursuing his servant? What have I done, and what wrong am I guilty of? 19 Now let my lord the king listen to his servant's words. If the Lord has incited you against me, then may he accept an offering. If, however, people have done it, may they be cursed before the Lord! They have driven me today from my share in the Lord's inheritance and have said, 'Go, serve other gods.' 20 Now do not let my blood fall to the ground far from the presence of the Lord. The king of Israel has come out to look for a flea—as one hunts a partridge in the mountains." 21 Then Saul said, "I have sinned. Come back, David my son. Because you considered my life precious today, I will not try to harm you again. Surely I have acted like a fool and have been terribly wrong." 22 "Here is the king's spear," David answered. "Let one of your young men come over and get it. 23 The Lord rewards everyone for their righteousness and faithfulness. The Lord delivered you into my hands today, but I would not lay a hand on the Lord's anointed. 24 As surely as I valued your life today, so may the Lord value my life and deliver me from all trouble." 25 Then Saul said to David, "May you be blessed, David my son; you will do great things and surely triumph." So David went on his way, and Saul returned home.

Scripture Questions:

1. Look at David's companions in 1 Samuel 24 and 26. What was their approach to God's command to respect and be subject to authority?
2. What was David's response immediately after cutting a corner from Saul's robe? Why do you think he reacted this way? How does this demonstrate his relationship with the Holy Spirit (John 16:8)?
3. In both chapters, Saul recognizes his own sin. What is the difference between Saul's response to his sin and David's response to his own sin?
4. What does Saul prophesy about David?

Application Questions:

1. When do you find it most challenging to respect authority? Read Romans 13:1-2. Does this change your perspective on those you find difficult to respect? How will knowing that God institutes every authority change your response?
2. In what areas in your life is God calling you to take responsibility or fulfill a moral obligation? How would that situation be affected if doing your duty was motivated by your respect and love for God?
3. Do you have friends that help you justify actions that satisfy your fleshly desires? What does this passage imply about the need to withstand peer pressure? How could David have justified taking action against Saul? Does God view sin comparatively? Why or why not? Thought: David was still conscience-stricken when he only cut off the corner of Saul's robe. He realized that that symbolic act was no less an act of rebellion against God than if he had actually struck Saul down. He also could have justified his actions by considering how much suffering Saul had caused him, but he refused to compare offenses.
4. How did David refuse to justify sinful impulses? In what ways can you take a stand and refuse to give into temptation? How can we help you to take that stand?
5. What is your absolute standard for right and wrong? How can you guard against letting moral relativism influence your response to your circumstances?

Prayer Partner Assignment:

Memory Verse: Romans 13:1, "Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God."

Read 1 Samuel 24-26.

Please meet with your prayer partner from this week to discuss the following questions on the chapters assigned for this week:

1. What kind of justification did David's men give him for acting vengefully in chapter 24? Why is it significant that we never find this prophecy (at least applied to Saul) in Scripture?
2. How might the situation in chapter 25 have increased David's confidence in God's vindication and perfect timing?
3. What was the result of David's confidence in the Lord in chapter 26 as compared with the events of chapter 24?

LIFE OF DAVID 8

Loyalty

"Now, Therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own."¹

Even though David repented of the sin he committed with Bathsheba against the Lord, as we studied in Week Four, and was forgiven in the eyes of God and man, the consequences of his choice continued to surface in his life. We see the repercussions most clearly in 2 Samuel 13 through 19: the loss of loyalty and eventual death of his beloved, son Absalom.

David had many sons. Sons were born to David in Hebron: His firstborn was Amnon the son of Ahinoam of Jezreel; his second, Kileab the son of Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel; the third, Absalom the son of Maakah daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith; the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital; and the sixth, Ithream the son of David's wife Eglah. These were born to David in Hebron.²

Over time, his first son Amnon, fell in love with his sister Tamar whose brother was Absalom. He raped Tamar and hence, ruined her life and future. David responds emotionally, with fury but with a marked lack of action. After two years of waiting to see if David would punish Amnon for what he did to his sister Tamar, Absalom takes matters into his own hands and devises a plan to murder Amnon. His plan moves forward with success and he and his friends kill his brother. David grieves deeply over the loss of Amnon and Absalom flees to Geshur for three years until he is summoned by David to come back to Jerusalem. At this point, Absalom's heart was cold, he bowed before David and David kissed him, but it is obvious from the lack of relationship that followed that it was just a formal gesture, signifying nothing.

David had lost Absalom's heart and loyalty through his lack of action and refusal to execute justice or actively extend mercy. As the chapters proceed, Absalom spends day after day winning the hearts of the people of Israel and setting himself up to overthrow his own father's throne. He is successful and is declared king in Hebron, collects an army, and marches straight to Jerusalem to kill his father and usurp his position. David flees for his life and despite his son's betrayal, we see great loyalty from David's closest friends and his warriors. Person after person took steps to protect David, provide for him, and save his life from Absalom. Absalom enters a war with his father's army and is killed. David is left with another dead son and more grief and heartache.

So what happened here? How could Absalom believe it was right to kill his father and take the throne way before his time? How could Absalom think he could conquer David's army? "David had never asked for forgiveness. He had never taken his rightful place of authority over family events. David made plenty of mistakes, but Absalom did not have to follow suit. He could have called on the mercy of God and forgiven

Pre-Article Questions:

1. How would you define loyalty? Can you describe a situation in your life, or a friend's life, where loyalty really blessed you?
2. How does loyalty play out in our relationship with Christ?

1. NIV, 2 Samuel 12:10

2. NIV, 2 Samuel 3:2-5

David for failing him, even if his father never admitted how wrongly he handled his family. God would have held David responsible, and Absalom would have been free. Instead, he locked himself in the prison of bitterness where character eroded in the darkness of his soul.”³ God is faithful, he would have called David out again for not dealing with Amnon through his Prophets. Absalom was impatient, prideful, and angry; a bad combination that ultimately compromised his loyalty to God and his father.

2 Chronicles 16:9 states, “For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.” ‘Fully committed’ and ‘loyal’ are used interchangeably here in this scripture. “God is looking for loyalty-because it is a God-quality. It’s a divine attribute that pulsates at the very core of the everlasting Trinity; defining the very personality of God...loyalty means...I reserve my affections for Him only. Second, it means that I look to Him alone as the source of my salvation and deliverance and help.”⁴ God is looking for people on the earth who are fully committed and loyal to Him. Absalom was committed neither to David nor God. Instead, he chose his own agenda, on his own time, and did not go to God for his help and source of salvation.

Our loyalty will be tested in this life, both our commitment to God and to the leaders God has put in our life. King Saul and David were not perfect, but David had a loyal heart both toward God and toward Saul. David was anointed king, but he waited on God’s timing to make it happen. He did not try to purposefully win hearts and steal Saul’s throne. God gave him favor and the hearts of the people in His perfect timing. As a result, David was seasoned by character building trials and tests. When God gave him the throne, he was so fruitful, God chose to birth his own Son, Jesus Christ, from his family line. “Absalom had a cynical view of his father’s agenda. He never believed that his father loved him enough to do right by him. So he concluded that if he was going to get his rightful due, he would have to wrest for it himself from his father’s hand.”⁵ As men, we often question God’s love for us when he is building our character and forming us into “kings.” We must believe we are loved and that God disciplines and tests those he loves to make them the best they can be.

Every leader has to be led. As leaders we are led by God and others. As men, it is often hard to submit to the authority God has placed in our life, especially if that authority has failed or hurt us. We must recognize that just because our leader is not perfect, our calling to serve under them or wait on God for their removal is not negated. It is important to link yourself as a man of God with Davids: men and women whose hearts are fully loyal to God and totally committed to seeking to glorify Him. These Davids will be used to strengthen your character and your own loyalty to God and others. Do not link yourself with Absaloms: men and women who do not want to wait on God for his timing and testing to bring forth their destiny and calling. Perhaps even more importantly, don’t become an Absalom, allowing your anger, hurt, or bitterness from the past erode your loyalty. God will vindicate you as He did David. Wait for it.

2 Samuel 13:23-39, NIV

Two years later, when Absalom’s sheepshearers were at Baal Hazor near the border of Ephraim, he invited all the king’s sons to come there. 24 Absalom went to the king and said, “Your servant has had shearers come. Will the king and his attendants please join me?” 25 “No, my son,” the king replied. “All of us should not go; we would only be a burden to you.” Although Absalom urged him, he still refused to go but gave him his

3. Moore, Beth. 181

4. Sorge, Bob. Loyalty the Reach of the Noble Heart. Oasis House: Grandview, 2004.

5. Sorge, Bob. Loyalty the Reach of the Noble Heart. Oasis House: Grandview, 2004.

blessing. 26 Then Absalom said, "If not, please let my brother Amnon come with us." The king asked him, "Why should he go with you?" 27 But Absalom urged him, so he sent with him Amnon and the rest of the king's sons. 28 Absalom ordered his men, "Listen! When Amnon is in high spirits from drinking wine and I say to you, 'Strike Amnon down,' then kill him. Don't be afraid. Haven't I given you this order? Be strong and brave." 29 So Absalom's men did to Amnon what Absalom had ordered. Then all the king's sons got up, mounted their mules and fled. 30 While they were on their way, the report came to David: "Absalom has struck down all the king's sons; not one of them is left." 31 The king stood up, tore his clothes and lay down on the ground; and all his attendants stood by with their clothes torn. 32 But Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother, said, "My lord should not think that they killed all the princes; only Amnon is dead. This has been Absalom's express intention ever since the day Amnon raped his sister Tamar. 33 My lord the king should not be concerned about the report that all the king's sons are dead. Only Amnon is dead." 34 Meanwhile, Absalom had fled. Now the man standing watch looked up and saw many people on the road west of him, coming down the side of the hill. The watchman went and told the king, "I see men in the direction of Horonaim, on the side of the hill." 35 Jonadab said to the king, "See, the king's sons have come; it has happened just as your servant said." 36 As he finished speaking, the king's sons came in, wailing loudly. The king, too, and all his attendants wept very bitterly. 37 Absalom fled and went to Talmai son of Ammihud, the king of Geshur. But King David mourned many days for his son. 38 After Absalom fled and went to Geshur, he stayed there three years. 39 And King David longed to go to Absalom, for he was consoled concerning Amnon's death.

2 Samuel 14:21-33, NIV

The king said to Joab, "Very well, I will do it. Go, bring back the young man Absalom." 22 Joab fell with his face to the ground to pay him honor, and he blessed the king. Joab said, "Today your servant knows that he has found favor in your eyes, my lord the king, because the king has granted his servant's request." 23 Then Joab went to Geshur and brought Absalom back to Jerusalem. 24 But the king said, "He must go to his own house; he must not see my face." So Absalom went to his own house and did not see the face of the king. 25 In all Israel there was not a man so highly praised for his handsome appearance as Absalom. From the top of his head to the sole of his foot there was no blemish in him. 26 Whenever he cut the hair of his head—he used to cut his hair once a year because it became too heavy for him—he would weigh it, and its weight was two hundred shekels by the royal standard. 27 Three sons and a daughter were born to Absalom. His daughter's name was Tamar, and she became a beautiful woman. 28 Absalom lived two years in Jerusalem without seeing the king's face. 29 Then Absalom sent for Joab in order to send him to the king, but Joab refused to come to him. So he sent a second time, but he refused to come. 30 Then he said to his servants, "Look, Joab's field is next to mine, and he has barley there. Go and set it on fire." So Absalom's servants set the field on fire. 31 Then Joab did go to Absalom's house, and he said to him, "Why have your servants set my field on fire?" 32 Absalom said to Joab, "Look, I sent word to you and said, 'Come here so I can send you to the king to ask, 'Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me if I were still there!'" Now then, I want to see the king's face, and if I am guilty of anything, let him put me to death." 33 So Joab went to the king and told him this. Then the king summoned Absalom, and he came in and bowed down with his face to the ground before the king. And the king kissed Absalom.

2 Samuel 15:1-16, NIV

In the course of time, Absalom provided himself with a chariot and horses and with fifty men to run ahead of him. 2 He would get up early and stand by the side of the road leading to the city gate. Whenever anyone came with a complaint to be placed before the king for a decision, Absalom would call out to him, "What town are you from?" He would answer, "Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel." 3 Then Absalom would say to him, "Look, your claims are valid and proper, but there is no representative of the king to hear you." 4 And Absalom would add, "If only I were appointed judge in the land! Then everyone who has a complaint or case could come to me and I would see that they receive justice." 5 Also, whenever anyone approached him to bow down before him, Absalom would reach out his hand, take hold of him and kiss him. 6 Absalom behaved in this way toward all the Israelites who came to the king asking for justice, and so he stole the heart of the people of Israel. 7 At the end of four years, Absalom said to the king, "Let me go to Hebron and fulfill a vow I made to the Lord. 8 While your servant was living at Geshur in Aram, I made this vow: 'If the Lord takes me back to Jerusalem, I will worship the Lord in Hebron.'" 9 The king said to him, "Go in peace." So he went to Hebron. 10 Then Absalom sent secret messengers throughout the tribes of Israel to say, "As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpets, then say, 'Absalom is king in Hebron.'" 11 Two hundred men from Jerusalem had accompanied Absalom. They had been invited as guests and went quite innocently, knowing nothing about the matter. 12 While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he also sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, to come from Giloh, his hometown. And so the conspiracy gained strength, and Absalom's following kept on increasing. 13 A messenger came and told David, "The hearts of the people of Israel are with Absalom." 14 Then David said to all his officials who were with him in Jerusalem, "Come! We must flee, or none of us will escape from Absalom. We must leave immediately, or he will move quickly to overtake us and bring ruin on us and put the city to the sword." 15 The king's officials answered him, "Your servants are ready to do whatever our lord the king chooses." 16 The king set out, with his entire household following him;

Scripture Questions:

1. In 2 Samuel 13, Absalom tells his friends to be "brave and strong," how does Absalom's appeal to their pride similar to that of Satan's temptations of Jesus in Matthew 4?
2. Looking at 2 Samuel 13 and 14, in what ways did David's reaction to Amnon's death create more bitterness and anger in Absalom?
3. What were some of the steps Absalom took in Chapter 15 to begin to overthrow David's throne?
4. Do you think God would have spared David having more pain and heartache in his family had David dealt appropriately with Amnon and Absalom? Why or why not?
5. Read Luke 15:11-32 and 2 Samuel 14:33 compare and contrast the two sons (Absalom and Prodigal) and the two fathers(Father and David)? Now read 2 Samuel 18:31-33. Absalom is dead, in what ways does David's heart towards his son seem to have shifted after reading this?

Application Questions:

1. How would you describe loyalty? In what ways has God demonstrated His loyal or fully committed heart towards you? In what ways has a friend or leader demonstrated loyalty towards you?
2. Share a time in your life when your loyalty toward God or in an important relationship was tested.

Application Questions: (continued)

3. Why do you think David did not control his family tragedy and take action with Amnon in the first place? Satan often uses sin and failure against us so that even after we sincerely repent we remain inactive. "Two wrongs don't make a right...restoration does not mean you can no longer stand for the truth because you fell. Restoration means you must stand." Have you experienced this lately and in what ways can you take a stand against the enemy and confront the situations that are facing you or your friends with truth and love?
4. What were some of the strategies and tactics the devil used to stir up disloyalty and betrayal in Absalom? In what ways can we combat the lies of the enemy when tempted to be disloyal to our leaders or friends?
5. Absalom struggled started out with sincere intentions to help his sister then got entangled with bitterness and unforgiveness ending in his dismay after 11 years. Have you experienced a time of unforgiveness in your life towards a loved one? What does the Bible have to say about unforgiveness? How have you since dealt with your unforgiveness and received healing? Do you need more healing in this area and how can the small group help stand with you in this?
6. After reading the story of the prodigal son and hearing David's lamenting words over his imperfect son Absalom, how does this help you understand your Heavenly Father God a little more when it comes to you as His son? How do you feel like you have grown in your understanding of the "Father's heart" in the past few years or weeks?

Prayer Partner Assignment:

Memory Verse: Psalm 3:3-4 "But you, Lord, are a shield around me, my glory, the One who lifts my head high. 4 I call out to the Lord, and he answers me from his holy mountain."

Read 2 Samuel 13-19, Psalm 3.

Please meet with your prayer partner from this week to discuss the following questions on the chapters assigned for this week:

1. What becomes of Absalom and do you view David's reaction as right, wrong, or both (if possible)?
2. Shimei curses David and throws stones on him and his men when he flees for his life. How does David's reaction impact you? Later, Shimei apologizes. What do you think about David's reaction to his apology?
3. How does David's dependency on God through these chapters strengthen you in dealing with your own family?
4. In Psalm 3, David is surprised to even wake his heart hurts so bad and his life was fiercely on the line, is there a verse in this Psalm that you can relate to and why?

LIFE OF DAVID 9

Sacrifice

"But King David replied to Araunah, 'No, I insist on paying the full price. I will not take for the LORD what is yours, or sacrifice a burnt offering that costs me nothing.'"¹

In 1 Chronicles 21, David finds himself in the midst of a pain-filled situation after stumbling once again. David has decided to take a census of the fighting men. Although we don't find direct evidence of a command against counting the people in the Torah, the problem may have been "either David's motivation for the census or the manner in which it was carried out."² He might have wanted to know the number of fighting men he commanded to feed his pride and increase self-reliant confidence or he might have neglected the Torah's injunction to pay a half-shekel ransom for each enrolled male.³ Either way, we know that Joab, the commander, protested strongly, asking David, "Why does my lord want to do this? Why should he bring guilt on Israel?"⁴ And later we read, "this command was also evil in the sight of God..."⁵

This time, however, a prophet did not need to come and call David to account. "David was conscience-stricken after he had counted the fighting men, and he said to the LORD, 'I have sinned greatly in what I have done. Now, O LORD, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a very foolish thing.'"⁶ David recognized his own guilt and confesses it to the Lord, begging for mercy and repenting of the attitude of his heart. While repentance negates the necessary spiritual consequences of sin (rather than allowing us to remain separated we are reconciled to God), it does not often negate natural consequences. David faced an excruciating decision. Nonetheless, he chose wisely, knowing "[the Lord's] mercy is very great" and far better than leaving himself and his people to the judgment of men.⁷

The Lord then sent an angel to execute this judgment resulting in the deaths of 70,000 men. David is devastated by the horrible consequences of his disobedience and pleads with God, saying: Was it not I who ordered the fighting men to be counted? I am the one who has sinned and done wrong. These are but sheep. What have they done? O LORD my God, let your hand fall upon me and my family, but do not let this plague remain on your people.

He humbly intercedes on behalf of the people and declares his willingness to sacrifice greatly on their behalf. He displays God's shepherd heart - brokenhearted by the suffering and peril his sheep are facing. The word of the Lord comes almost immediately to David through the prophet Gad, instructing him to build an altar where the destroying angel stopped, at the threshing floor of Araunah. His love for God, his renewed desire to obey, and his love for the people prompted him to act quickly regardless of the cost, to do what could be done to spare the lives of his "sheep."

Pre-Article Questions:

1. What was one of the big-takeaways last week for you in our study?
2. When you think of the word, "sacrifice," what comes to mind? Who has made the greatest sacrifices for you and why do you think they have made them?

1. 1 Chronicles 21:24

2. The New American Commentary: 1 & 2 Samuel p. 475

3. Exodus 30:12

4. 1 Chronicles 21:3

5. 1 Chronicles 21:7

6. 2 Samuel 24:10

7. 1 Chronicles 21:13

The mount where Araunah's threshing floor stood is significant in Israel's sacrificial history. It was on this same mount that Abraham went to offer his son, Isaac, in obedience to the Lord's command; it is here that David's son, Solomon, will build the great temple to the Lord, where sacrifices will be made to atone for the sins of the people; and it is symbolic of that hill outside Jerusalem where our Savior was crucified as the ransom for us to become sons of God. But at this moment, David has been commanded to build an altar, so he immediately goes and seeks to purchase the designated land so that he may obey. Araunah offers him everything he needs, free of charge. But David recognizes the necessity of value in sacrifice. He realizes that if the altar and the offering aren't worth something to him, they won't be worth anything to God either. Sacrifice is defined as "an act of offering to a deity something precious, [or] destruction or surrender of something for the sake of something else."⁸ David rejected the "easy way out," understanding that a "free" offering is not a true sacrifice.

The most well beloved heroes always sacrifice something precious to accomplish their quest, to serve, and to protect those they love: their time, their comfort, their bodies, or even their lives. Nothing valuable can be gained without sacrifice. Jesus, likewise, knew there was no "easy way out" to reconcile you to Himself and guarantee your adoption as a son, so he didn't look for one. He voluntarily surrendered His heavenly wealth, the acknowledgement of His deity, and even His life to spare the lives of His sheep. Obedience to God is characterized by sacrifice; to be like Jesus it must be embraced rather than avoided. "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."⁹

The question, then, is what does sacrifice look like for you today? How can you be a man who is unwilling to offer God something which costs you nothing? Paul and the writer of Hebrews give us some direction in this. In Romans 12:1, Paul beseeches the brothers to present their bodies as living sacrifices to God – laying down their pride, their ambitions, and their rights to accomplish all that God had for them to do. He says this is our "spiritual act of worship." The literal translation says this is our service to God – just as the priests performed service before God in the tabernacle and temple – it is God-ordained worship, or the service God desires. Likewise, in Hebrews 13:15-16, we are exhorted to "continually offer a sacrifice of praise – the fruit of lips that confess His name. And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased." Because of Christ's sacrifice, our thankful hearts and renewed minds should rejoice in the opportunity to sacrifice our time, energy and resources to rescue the lost through making Him known.

1Chronicles 21:1-28, NIV

Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to take a census of Israel. 2 So David said to Joab and the commanders of the troops, "Go and count the Israelites from Beersheba to Dan. Then report back to me so that I may know how many there are." 3 But Joab replied, "May the Lord multiply his troops a hundred times over. My lord the king, are they not all my lord's subjects? Why does my lord want to do this? Why should he bring guilt on Israel?" 4 The king's word, however, overruled Joab; so Joab left and went throughout Israel and then came back to Jerusalem. 5 Joab reported the number of the fighting men to David: In all Israel there were one million one hundred thousand men who could handle a sword, including four hundred and seventy thousand in Judah. 6 But Joab did not include Levi and Benjamin in the numbering, because the king's

8. "Sacrifice." Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. 17 January 2013.

9. 1 John 3:16, John 15:13

command was repulsive to him. 7 This command was also evil in the sight of God; so he punished Israel. 8 Then David said to God, "I have sinned greatly by doing this. Now, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a very foolish thing." 9 The Lord said to Gad, David's seer, 10 "Go and tell David, 'This is what the Lord says: I am giving you three options. Choose one of them for me to carry out against you.'" 11 So Gad went to David and said to him, "This is what the Lord says: 'Take your choice: 12 three years of famine, three months of being swept away before your enemies, with their swords overtaking you, or three days of the sword of the Lord—days of plague in the land, with the angel of the Lord ravaging every part of Israel.' Now then, decide how I should answer the one who sent me." 13 David said to Gad, "I am in deep distress. Let me fall into the hands of the Lord, for his mercy is very great; but do not let me fall into human hands." 14 So the Lord sent a plague on Israel, and seventy thousand men of Israel fell dead. 15 And God sent an angel to destroy Jerusalem. But as the angel was doing so, the Lord saw it and relented concerning the disaster and said to the angel who was destroying the people, "Enough! Withdraw your hand." The angel of the Lord was then standing at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. 16 David looked up and saw the angel of the Lord standing between heaven and earth, with a drawn sword in his hand extended over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell facedown. 17 David said to God, "Was it not I who ordered the fighting men to be counted? I, the shepherd,^[c] have sinned and done wrong. These are but sheep. What have they done? Lord my God, let your hand fall on me and my family, but do not let this plague remain on your people." 18 Then the angel of the Lord ordered Gad to tell David to go up and build an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. 19 So David went up in obedience to the word that Gad had spoken in the name of the Lord. 20 While Araunah was threshing wheat, he turned and saw the angel; his four sons who were with him hid themselves. 21 Then David approached, and when Araunah looked and saw him, he left the threshing floor and bowed down before David with his face to the ground. 22 David said to him, "Let me have the site of your threshing floor so I can build an altar to the Lord, that the plague on the people may be stopped. Sell it to me at the full price." 23 Araunah said to David, "Take it! Let my lord the king do whatever pleases him. Look, I will give the oxen for the burnt offerings, the threshing sledges for the wood, and the wheat for the grain offering. I will give all this." 24 But King David replied to Araunah, "No, I insist on paying the full price. I will not take for the Lord what is yours, or sacrifice a burnt offering that costs me nothing." 25 So David paid Araunah six hundred shekels^[d] of gold for the site. 26 David built an altar to the Lord there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. He called on the Lord, and the Lord answered him with fire from heaven on the altar of burnt offering. 27 Then the Lord spoke to the angel, and he put his sword back into its sheath. 28 At that time, when David saw that the Lord had answered him on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, he offered sacrifices there.

Isaiah 53:3-12, NIV

He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. 4 Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. 6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our

own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. 8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away. Yet who of his generation protested? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was punished. 9 He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. 10 Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand. 11 After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Scripture Questions:

1. Identify at least two places in the first five verses of 1 Chronicles 1 where the crisis about to occur could have been averted. What leadership qualities that we have discussed did David not exercise in this instance?
2. Why do you think God was displeased with what David did?
3. What does Araunah offer David when the king comes to purchase his land? Why did David respond the way he did?
4. List some of the ways Isaiah describes Christ in chapter 53. How is He pictured as the suffering servant? What does this mean?

Application Questions:

1. Have you ever done something that you didn't see as wrong with the wrong motive behind it? Were you conscience-stricken, or did someone have to call you out? How did you respond to the correction?
2. Sin always demands a sacrifice. The Israelites knew this and it was always in their mind because of their culture. Since God paid for your rebellion by sacrificing His Son, how might bearing that fact in mind affect your decisions?
3. Have you ever made a mistake or deliberately disobeyed the Lord, resulting in suffering for someone you love? How did that make you feel? Was there anything you could do to reverse or lessen the pain?
4. Being a man of God means a calling to be like Christ. What attitudes or actions are required by that call?
5. Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-3. In what ways are love and sacrifice related? How is Christ calling you to sacrifice on behalf of others?
6. Both David's and Christ's sacrifices cost them dearly, but they counted the cost and considered it worth it for the people they loved. Have you been looking for an "easy way out" or are you willing to do the hard thing and give up what is precious to you? i.e. time, comfort, dreams, etc. How will your approach to loving others change after this study? How can we, as a small group, help you stay accountable to your commitment?

Prayer Partner Assignment:

Memory Verse: 1 John 3:16, "This is how we know what love is: Jesus laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers."

Read 2 Samuel 24, 1 Chronicles 21.

Please meet with your prayer partner from this week to discuss the following questions on the chapters assigned for this week:

1. How could David have averted this crisis in the first place? Read Proverbs 15:22.
2. Look at the contrast between David's distress in 1 Chronicles 21 and Jesus' suffering in Isaiah 53. What was the result of each?
3. Where have you been called to sacrifice for the sake of others? Are you willing to sacrifice something that is valuable to you or have you been looking for the "easy way out?"

LIFE OF DAVID 10

Legacy

"He brought me to a spacious place; he rescued me because he delighted in me." 2 Samuel 22:20

"Some lives are so significant in courageous accomplishment; they form the beginning of an era. Others bring with their death, the end of an era. Their thinking, their creative ideas, their magnificent model leave a veritable chasm across life's

landscape... The death of David, the greatest king Israel ever had, marked the end of an era, the closing out of a period of time on earth that could never be duplicated."¹ David established the vast nation of Israel, conquered the Philistines, was a magnificent writer and musician, gathered stone, iron, brass, and cedar for the building of the temple, and in essence, closed the most successful royal career recorded in history.

The Apostle Paul makes a profound statement about David's life in Acts 13:36, "For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep, and was laid among his fathers, and underwent decay." David found that special, God-ordained reason for serving his generation. He served as king and perpetuated righteousness in Israel. In 1 Chronicles 28 and 29 we encounter a record of the end of his life and his last recorded words. After four decades as king, he reflected on his unfulfilled desire to build the temple, commissioned Solomon to carry the plan forward and serve as the next King, prayed, and rejoiced with the entire assembly of Israel.

David reminds the assembly that although Solomon is young and inexperienced, God had chosen him to be King. The prophet Nathan, the priest Zodak, and the warrior Benaiah were chosen to confirm Solomon as king before the people. What a commanding picture of the very heart and life David lived: prophet, priest, warrior, and king. David commissioned Solomon with these places of authority in mind, having each of these men bless him.

David, in his commission to Solomon, admonished him to acknowledge God and to serve Him with wholehearted devotion and a willing mind. The Hebrew word for wholehearted is shalem and is used in other scriptures in reference to, "unhewn, untouched stones." So to serve God with a shalem heart, in this context, meant to serve with an undivided or uncut heart. "A divided heart places our entire lives in jeopardy. Only God can be totally trusted with our hearts. He doesn't demand our complete devotion to feed his ego but to provide for our safety. God uses an undivided heart to keep us out of trouble."² David did not want Solomon to make the same mistakes he did. He wanted his heart undivided and wanted Solomon to live with that peace and protection.

The Hebrew term for willing, in the words of David to Solomon, is chaphets, which transliterates to take delight in, be pleased with, have affection for, or to choose. David wanted Solomon to serve God and honor

Pre-Article Questions:

1. When you think of someone who has left a legacy, who comes to mind? Why?
2. What do you want your legacy to be at this university after you graduate? What do you want to leave in your wake?

1. Swindoll, Charles. David A Man of Passion and Destiny. Thomas Nelson: Nashville, 1997. 284.

2. Moore, Beth. 228.

him because he desired to. As men, God wants us to love Him because we choose to and because we delight in Him. David said God delivered him because he delighted in him, but it is clear to see, David served God, because he delighted in Him! God does not want forced affection and acts of service that are not rooted and grounded in love. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 13 that we can do many great things for the Lord and in the name of the Lord but if we do not do them for love, and through love, those works are meaningless. Unending love remains the true hallmark of David's life. David was a man in love with His God. David had everything but was never consumed with greed; he was undone with adoration for God and His heart for Israel.

"Thank you, David, for being our model, teaching us such significant truths. And thank you, Father, for being our Master; using us though we are weak, forgiving us when we fail, and loving us through all the Sauls and Goliaths and Jonathans and Abigails and Bathshebas and Absaloms and Joabs and Solomons of our lives. Thank you for showing us that we can be people like David...people of passion and destiny."³

So may we, as men, return to our first love and the simplicity of the Gospel. Let us think upon David's early years as a young shepherd boy singing to God in the fields. David was truly a king, a priest, a prophet, and a warrior long before his life ended. He was chosen for his heart, a heart ablaze, a heart that burned, and a heart that never stopped beating for God. As we end our study, may we receive David's commission to Solomon and acknowledge God, serve him wholeheartedly and with a willing mind. May we do this with such a fierce steadfastness that our lives will leave a legacy that inspires others to be people of passion and destiny as well.

1Chronicles 28:1-21, NIV

David summoned all the officials of Israel to assemble at Jerusalem: the officers over the tribes, the commanders of the divisions in the service of the king, the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, and the officials in charge of all the property and livestock belonging to the king and his sons, together with the palace officials, the warriors and all the brave fighting men.² King David rose to his feet and said: "Listen to me, my fellow Israelites, my people. I had it in my heart to build a house as a place of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, for the footstool of our God, and I made plans to build it. ³ But God said to me, 'You are not to build a house for my Name, because you are a warrior and have shed blood.' ⁴ Yet the Lord, the God of Israel, chose me from my whole family to be king over Israel forever. He chose Judah as leader, and from the tribe of Judah he chose my family, and from my father's sons he was pleased to make me king over all Israel. ⁵ Of all my sons—and the Lord has given me many—he has chosen my son Solomon to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel. ⁶ He said to me: 'Solomon your son is the one who will build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father. ⁷ I will establish his kingdom forever if he is unswerving in carrying out my commands and laws, as is being done at this time.'⁸ So now I charge you in the sight of all Israel and of the assembly of the Lord, and in the hearing of our God: Be careful to follow all the commands of the Lord your God, that you may possess this good land and pass it on as an inheritance to your descendants forever. ⁹ And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the Lord searches every heart and understands every desire and every thought. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will reject you forever. ¹⁰ Consider now, for the Lord has chosen you to build a house as

³. Swindoll, Charles. 295.

the sanctuary. Be strong and do the work.” 11 Then David gave his son Solomon the plans for the portico of the temple, its buildings, its storerooms, its upper parts, its inner rooms and the place of atonement. 12 He gave him the plans of all that the Spirit had put in his mind for the courts of the temple of the Lord and all the surrounding rooms, for the treasuries of the temple of God and for the treasuries for the dedicated things. 13 He gave him instructions for the divisions of the priests and Levites, and for all the work of serving in the temple of the Lord, as well as for all the articles to be used in its service. 14 He designated the weight of gold for all the gold articles to be used in various kinds of service, and the weight of silver for all the silver articles to be used in various kinds of service: 15 the weight of gold for the gold lampstands and their lamps, with the weight for each lampstand and its lamps; and the weight of silver for each silver lampstand and its lamps, according to the use of each lampstand; 16 the weight of gold for each table for consecrated bread; the weight of silver for the silver tables; 17 the weight of pure gold for the forks, sprinkling bowls³ and pitchers; the weight of gold for each gold dish; the weight of silver for each silver dish; 18 and the weight of the refined gold for the altar of incense. He also gave him the plan for the chariot, that is, the cherubim of gold that spread their wings and overshadow the ark of the covenant of the Lord. 19 “All this,” David said, “I have in writing as a result of the Lord’s hand on me, and he enabled me to understand all the details of the plan.” 20 David also said to Solomon his son, “Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you until all the work for the service of the temple of the Lord is finished. 21 The divisions of the priests and Levites are ready for all the work on the temple of God, and every willing person skilled in any craft will help you in all the work. The officials and all the people will obey your every command.”

1Chronicles 29:10-24, NIV

10 David praised the Lord in the presence of the whole assembly, saying, “Praise be to you, Lord, the God of our father Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. 11 Yours, Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, Lord, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all. 12 Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all. 13 Now, our God, we give you thanks, and praise your glorious name. 14 “But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand. 15 We are foreigners and strangers in your sight, as were all our ancestors. Our days on earth are like a shadow, without hope. 16 Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a temple for your Holy Name comes from your hand, and all of it belongs to you. 17 I know, my God, that you test the heart and are pleased with integrity. All these things I have given willingly and with honest intent. And now I have seen with joy how willingly your people who are here have given to you. 18 Lord, the God of our fathers Abraham, Isaac and Israel, keep these desires and thoughts in the hearts of your people forever, and keep their hearts loyal to you. 19 And give my son Solomon the wholehearted devotion to keep your commands, statutes and decrees and to do everything to build the palatial structure for which I have provided.” 20 Then David said to the whole assembly, “Praise the Lord your God.” So they all praised the Lord, the God of their fathers; they bowed down, prostrating themselves before the Lord and the king.

21 The next day they made sacrifices to the Lord and presented burnt offerings to him: a thousand bulls, a thousand rams and a thousand male lambs, together with their drink offerings, and other sacrifices in abundance for all Israel. 22 They ate and drank with great joy in the presence of the Lord that day. Then they acknowledged Solomon son of David as king a second time, anointing him before the Lord to be ruler and Zadok to be priest. 23 So Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king in place of his father David. He prospered and all Israel obeyed him. 24 All the officers and warriors, as well as all of King David's sons, pledged their submission to King Solomon. 25 The Lord highly exalted Solomon in the sight of all Israel and bestowed on him royal splendor such as no king over Israel ever had before. 26 David son of Jesse was king over all Israel. 27 He ruled over Israel forty years—seven in Hebron and thirty-three in Jerusalem. 28 He died at a good old age, having enjoyed long life, wealth and honor. His son Solomon succeeded him as king.

1Kings 2:2-4, NIV

When the time drew near for David to die, he gave a charge to Solomon his son.² "I am about to go the way of all the earth," he said. "So be strong, act like a man, ³ and observe what the Lord your God requires: Walk in obedience to him, and keep his decrees and commands, his laws and regulations, as written in the Law of Moses. Do this so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go ⁴ and that the Lord may keep his promise to me: 'If your descendants watch how they live, and if they walk faithfully before me with all their heart and soul, you will never fail to have a successor on the throne of Israel.'

Scripture Questions:

1. Read 1 Chronicles 28:2-3, what was David's unfulfilled desire and why was this desire unfulfilled? What was his reaction to God's "no." as you reflect on the overall chapter?
2. Read 1 Chronicles 28:8-9, 20 and 1 Kings 2:2-3. List all the different commissions and words of encouragement David gave to Solomon.
3. In 1 Chronicles 29:10-16, what did David continue to restate to God in these verses and how do these scriptures show his proper scale of values when it came to all that he had?
4. What part of David's prayer for his people in 1 Chronicles 29:17-20 sticks out to you the most and why?
5. How did the people respond to David's prayer? What do you think David felt in those final moments of his life watching his kingdom rejoicing, bowing to God, celebrating his reign, and the coming of a new king?

Application Questions:

1. David wanted to build a temple for the Lord but God said no. Have you ever experienced an unfulfilled dream or desire in which God said "no" to you too? What was your reaction to His "no"? In what ways does David's acceptance of God's "no" to his greatest dream and his thankfulness for what he had and did with his life encourage you today?
2. "Spiritual living does not come naturally, sin does. The first step to victory is acknowledging the authority of God in our lives." In what ways do you acknowledge God's authority in your life? How is He moving in your life?
3. Read Psalm 86:11. Here David asks God to give him an undivided heart that fears God. What do you think it means to "fear the Lord?" Do you have a healthy fear of the Lord and has this made a difference in the choices you make day to day?

Application Questions Continued:

4. David was a man who was not tied to material things even though he had so much. Do you struggle with materialism or being greedy? What are some ways you can take steps to overcome this struggle?
5. Read Joshua 1:7-9. How is David's commission to Solomon in 1 Chronicles 28:20 similar to that of Joshua's commission to his people? As men we need strength and courage, how have you grown in these two traits by studying David's life?
6. David was a man who fulfilled his God-given destiny for his generation. Has the Holy Spirit given you an idea of what your God-ordained destiny involves here at Virginia Tech and beyond? Are you taking the spiritual and practical steps to achieve that? How can our small group aid you in this?
7. Now that this study is over, please name the greatest thing that God has shown you over these past weeks. How has David's life inspired you to become a man of passion and destiny?

Prayer Partner Assignment:

Memory Verse: 1 Chronicles 28:9, "And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the Lord searches every heart and understands every desire and every thought. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will reject you forever."

Read 2 Samuel 22-24, 1 Kings 1 and 2, Psalm 71.

Please meet with your prayer partner from this week to discuss the following questions on the chapters assigned for this week:

1. In 2 Samuel 22 and 23, David records a psalm of deliverance and sings a song. What verses of the psalm and song stand out to you the most and why?
2. What did David do in chapter 24 that was displeasing to God and what was the result of his disobedience?
3. What events unfold in 1 Kings 1 and 2 to bring about the crowning of a new king?
4. Most scholars agree Psalm 71 was written by David in his old age, what would David always have that no one could take away from him?