



FUEL

**PURITY FOR
LIFE**

HEART OF THE KING



PURITY FOR LIFE

HEART OF THE KING

The Core: A Seven-Volume Series

My Life of Purity

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Graphic Design by Ryan Jackson.

Produced for Carmel Baptist Church.

Commentary is from the ESV Study Bible.

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Getting Started

We are so excited that you have chosen to be a part of Discipleship Community! It is our prayer that God will use this study to deepen your relationship with Him. The contents of this material include core truths that we want you to learn so that you will have a firm foundation in your faith. The goal is for you to begin Discipleship Community your seventh-grade year and continue each year until you graduate from high school. This book will lead you to take time each day to read God's Word and to pray.

Plan on spending 15 – 30 minutes each day of the week with God. This spiritual discipline will help you to grow to be more and more like Jesus Christ. In this book, we have used the English Standard Version of the Bible (ESV). Please keep this version of the Bible nearby while doing this study, or refer to an online Bible, such as the one at www.biblegateway.com.

This material is written based upon our Milestone Strategy here at Carmel. The Essentials are the core principles and truths that we want to teach for each of the Milestones. The Milestones and Essentials are as follows which ultimately lead to Life in Christ:

Milestone 4: Purity for Life

ESSENTIALS:

Biblical Purity, Healthy Relationships, Identity in Christ, Biblical Sex

Milestone 5: Rite of Passage

ESSENTIALS:

Roles of Men and Women, Spiritual Gifts and Service, Catechism

Milestone 6: High School Graduation

ESSENTIALS:

Apologetics, Dating/Marriage, God's Plan for Me, Person of Influence, Life Skills

Life in Christ

ESSENTIALS:

Scripture, Prayer, Authentic Faith, Obedient Follower, Disciple-Maker, Generous Living, Biblical Community

At the end of every year, you will be challenged to complete a project that demonstrates your growth in Christ. Be ready to be challenged. We are confident that God will amaze you as you get to know Him through these studies. It has been a great joy to write these books, knowing that you will get to know the one true God in a deeper way!

WEEK

1

God as King

PSALM

47:2

A CHOSEN PEOPLE

We've all heard of pure gold or pure water. Pure, It's kind of hard to define.

What does "pure" really mean?

What does it mean that we are supposed to live pure lives?

We know that God desires that we live pure lives. God desired the same with the kings of Israel in the Old Testament. They didn't always do such a good job with this. However, some of them did, and we will learn a great deal from their lives.

To understand the kings of Israel, we first need to understand the nation of Israel by answering the following questions according to the Bible:

- 1) Where did the people of Israel come from?
- 2) Who are they?
- 3) Why are they important?

Read Genesis 12:1-3, and write verses 2-3 below.

The verses above record God's promise to Abram about the nation that would come from his family.

Read Genesis 22:17-18.

Again, we see God's promises. From these two passages in Genesis we see common wording.

What did God say He wanted to do for the people of Israel?

Then both passages speak of Israel becoming what to other nations?

From what nation did Jesus come?

In God's perfect plan, a Savior was to be born into the world, and that Savior would come from Israel. What a blessing Jesus is to all nations! God's choice of the people of Israel as His people meant that the Israelites were to be different from the people of all the other nations. The Israelites were to be holy and to live according to God's law. Then the other nations could look at the Israelites and desire to learn more about their God. The Israelites were to be missionaries to the surrounding nations.

The Israelites often failed. They allowed other nations to influence them more than they influenced other nations. The Israelites looked more like the world and less like the nation God intended them to be.

Read 1 Peter 2:9-12.

How are all believers a chosen people like the Israelites?

REJECTING GOD

Do you remember the two reasons God chose the nation of Israel? Write them down.

1)

2)

God desired to be the Ruler over His people. Although He did appoint leaders of the people, such as Moses, Joshua, and the judges, God remained the ultimate Ruler of His people, their King. However, there came a time when the Israelites rejected God as their King. They wanted to be like the other nations that had a human king.

Read Judges 8:22-23.

What did Gideon, one of Israel's judges, say to the people when they asked him to rule over them?

Look at 1 Samuel 8. Does your Bible have a subtitle for this section of Scripture? If so, what is it?

Read 1 Samuel 8:1-7.

What did the people specifically ask for in verse 5? How did God respond in verse 7?

Do you see the Israelites' foolishness? Think about when God called Israel to be set apart in Genesis 12. Now the Israelites cared more about being like the other nations than being who God called them to be. They wanted to follow their own ways rather than the ways of God.

When have you been guilty of wanting to do something your way rather than God's way?

Soon we will see that the Israelites quickly realized God's way is always better. Let's learn from their mistakes and choose to live God's way.

EXCHANGING THE TRUTH OF GOD FOR A LIE

Read Romans 1:25.

How does this verse relate to the Israelites' situation and their desire for a human king?

Before earthly kings came to power in Israel, the people looked to God as their Creator and Ruler. However, when earthly kings came into the picture, the people lost focus. They began to look to a man, rather than God, for direction.

Read Deuteronomy 17:14-15.

In God's perfect knowledge, He knew that the Israelites would one day seek an earthly king. Deuteronomy 17 foretells what will happen in 1 Samuel 8 when the Israelites demand a king. God is so gracious. He works to accomplish His will even when we get off track. Since God knew the Israelites would one day reject Him as King, He set up guidelines for the kind of earthly king they should seek.

Read Deuteronomy 17:15-20.

This passage lists several criteria for an earthly king. List as many of them as you can find in that passage. There are at least ten.

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1) | 2) |
| 3) | 4) |
| 5) | 6) |
| 7) | 8) |
| 9) | 10) |

This list is extremely important. As we study the kings of Israel, you will notice that some kings met these criteria, while others veered far off this path. Some kings were pure; some were not.

Why do you think these criteria were important for the king of Israel?

While we are not kings of Israel, some of these criteria are important for us to remember also.

NOW WHAT?

Choose three criteria for kings listed in Deuteronomy 17:15-20, and explain why each is important in your life.

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

List any areas that you are not representing God well.

In what ways do you need God's help for you to live your life His way?

PRAYER:

Pray one another to abstain from sinful desires and live holy lives.

GOING DEEPER

How is your life different from the lives of others around you?

What can you do that would cause people look at you and want to know more about your God?

PRAYER:

Thank God that He provides a way for us to live that is right and good. Pray that God will help you walk in His ways and not in your ways.

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Psalms 47:2

REAP

DAY

1 PETER 2:9

1

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

How does this passage call all believers to purity?

How has your lifestyle truly changed now that God has called you out?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

PROVERBS 16:9

DAY

2

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

Despite making plans of our own, who's plans will ultimately come to completion?

Knowing that the Lord's plans prevail, how does this change the way you live?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

3

LEVITICUS 20:26

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

How does this passage point to God's desire for his people to stay pure?

How do you practically live this verse in your daily life?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

4

MATTHEW 1:1-17

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

According to this passage, how did God keep his promise about Abraham's offspring?

How does Jesus' birth, death, and life bless all nations?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

5

GENESIS 18:17-19

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What do these verses reveal to us about the purpose of the nation of Israel?

In what areas of your life do you need to lean on God keeping his promises?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

ROMANS 1:21-23

DAY

6

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What are some ways that you tend to exchange God for other things?

According to this passage, what is the result of not honoring or giving thanks to God?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

7

ROMANS 1:28-29

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

How easy is it to stop acknowledging God in our lives?

According to this passage, what happened when the people quit acknowledging God?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

WEEK

2

Proper Direction

PSALM

119:9

LED ASTRAY

Look back at the list you made last week of the criteria for an earthly king. This week, we will focus on two main criteria listed in Deuteronomy 17:17. The warning for the king was to watch out for worldly pleasures that might lead him astray.

- 1) Relationships
- 2) Possessions

Read and fill in the blanks from Deuteronomy 17:17.

"And he shall not acquire many _____ for _____, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he acquire for himself excessive _____ and _____."

You and I are not called to be kings of Israel, but we can still learn from these instructions.

Describe a friendship or dating relationship that led your heart astray.

Relationships are a blessing from the Lord, but if they are unhealthy, they can lead us astray.

Read 1 Corinthians 15:33.

How can you remove yourself from a relationship that is leading your heart astray?

The Israelite kings were also to be careful when acquiring silver and gold. While you are not likely storing up silver and gold, you might spend too much time and give too much thought to acquiring other possessions. A word for this is "materialism."

MATERIALISM – PREOCCUPATION WITH OR EMPHASIS ON MATERIAL OBJECTS, COMFORTS, AND CONSIDERATIONS, WITH A DISINTEREST IN OR REJECTION OF SPIRITUAL, INTELLECTUAL, OR CULTURAL VALUES.

Have you ever been guilty of being materialistic?

____ Yes

____ No

What possessions of yours get in the way of your relationship with God?

While these things aren't necessarily evil on their own, they can lead us astray on our walk with God.

Based on your knowledge of the Bible, how does God want you to respond in regard to your possessions?

God knows best, and He wants His best for your life. He knows that relationships and possessions can sometimes get in the way of your walk with Him.

Describe some practical ways that you can please God with your relationships and how you handle your possessions when you go home today.

PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

Hopefully you are paying close attention to God's criteria for an Israelite king. As we study the kings in this series, you will refer back to this list and see how some kings listened to the Lord and others didn't. Remember, God ultimately wanted the kings to have a pure heart that led to a pure life.

Read Deuteronomy 17:18-20 again, and fill in the blanks below.

"And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall _____ for himself in a book a copy of this _____, approved by the Levitical priests. And it shall be _____ him, and he shall _____ in it _____ the days of his life, that he may learn to _____ the Lord his God by _____ all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them, that his _____ may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may _____ long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel."

The king was to write a copy of the law. The law is the Scriptures, likely Genesis through Deuteronomy at that time.

Why do you think God wanted the king to write the Scriptures?

WRITING HAS A WAY OF HELPING US REMEMBER WHAT WE ARE LEARNING.

Some Christians write passages of Scripture in a journal. What a great way to study the Word of God!

Have you ever tried writing the Scriptures?

____ Yes ____ No

In addition to writing them, notice that the kings were to read the Scriptures all the days of their lives.

Do you read the Bible every day?

____ Yes ____ No

Do you want to read the Bible every day?

____ Yes

____ No

Why do you think it is important to read God's Word every day?

This study is made to help you be in God's Word every day. Make a commitment to complete the devotions in this study daily rather than all in one day. You will grow so much more spiritually if you are in God's Word daily.

God's Word is our daily bread. We need it to get through every day. We are bombarded with worldly messages all day long. We need to be taught the truth, and God's Word is our source of truth.

Read Psalm 119:9-16.

We don't read it because we have to; we read it because we get to! How is this attitude reflected in the passage listed above?

PRAYER:

Spend some time around your table asking God to help you be a young man/woman of the Bible. May it truly be your daily bread!

Think back to the Israelites' request for a king. Although they rejected God as their King, God answered their prayer for an earthly king. In His graciousness, He provided direction by telling the people what to look for in a king. Next week we will begin to study some of the kings of Israel. Keep Deuteronomy 17:15-20 in mind as you study the lives of the Israelite kings. You will realize that when the kings led God's way, there was blessing. When they went their own way, there was trouble.

NOW WHAT?

Describe the areas that you personally struggle with being led astray?

Describe specific reasons why your relationships either lead you to God or away from him.

PRAYER:

Ask the Lord to reveal a relationship that is unhealthy. Ask Him for wisdom on how to end it. Talk to one of your parents, a mentor, or your Discipleship Community leader if you need help.

What possessions take your attention from God?

PRAYER:

Take time to ask God if He is calling you to get rid of any of these possessions. It may be a gaming system, clothing, or a phone.

GOING DEEPER

How can you become an influencer rather than being influenced?

How could you use your possessions that you already have to benefit the kingdom of God?

What would you do if you had an extra \$20 a week?

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Psalm 119:9

REAP

DAY

1 TIMOTHY 4:12

1

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

God gave specific criteria for the king of Israel, what criteria does this passage give for us?

List ways that you set an example in these things in your life.

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

2

MATTHEW 6:19-21

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

Why does this passage encourage us to store treasures in heaven and not on the earth?

What possessions of your do you need to quit "storing" on earth?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

3

2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What does this passage claim about Scripture?

According to this passage, what is the benefit of reading the Bible daily?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

4

PSALM 119:104-105

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What is the “word” in the life of a believer?

Why do you think the metaphors of a lamp and a light were used?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you’ve spent in His Word.

REAP

PROVERBS 13:20

DAY

5

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What does this passage teach about those with unhealthy or foolish relationships?

What relationships in your life are wise? Which are foolish?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

6

PSALM 139:3-4

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

How does this passage support that God knew the Israelites would want a king?

What comfort does it bring you that God knows everything before you do?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

7

PROVERBS 1:1-7

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

How does this passage capture the reason for spending time reading the Bible each day?

According to this passage, what is the difference between the wise and the foolish?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

WEEK

3

The First Earthly King

1 SAMUEL

8:1-10

BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU ASK FOR

You are going to be overwhelmed by the impact and damaging consequences that one decision can have for years to come for God's people.

Read 1 Samuel 8:1-18.

Samuel warned the Israelites what it would be like to have an earthly king. List a few of the results of having such a king.

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1) | 4) |
| 2) | 5) |
| 3) | 6) |

Read 1 Samuel 9:19-20.

What was the Israelites' response?

- A) You're right; we're going back to God.
- B) No! We want a king over us!
- C) How could we have been so stupid?

Ultimately, what did the Israelites want?

Read 1 Samuel 9:21.

So the Lord granted their request. The Israelites made a foolish choice. God created us with the ability to choose to love and serve Him. He did not make us robotic; we have free will. While being free certainly is a blessing, it also means followers of God sometimes will choose the wrong way.

Read this Proverbs 1:29-31.

Why is it important to accept advice and disapproval of those that we respect and honor?

Read Isaiah 40:27-31.

According to this passage, list the reasons why we can trust God?

WE WOULD BE WISE TO LEARN FROM THE ISRAELITES' MISTAKES.
GOD'S WAYS ARE ALWAYS BETTER THAN OUR WAYS.

What are some areas in your life that you typically seek your own way rather than God's way?

God's way is always better because he has a bigger perspective than we do. We can only see what's happening right now. He sees the past, present and the future.

When you have you asked for something that you really wanted and after receiving it didn't turn out to be so great after all?

Read Romans 1:24-31.

What is the exchange mentioned in verse 25?

REMEMBER, SATAN IS A LIAR AND HIS GOAL IS FOR YOU TO EXCHANGE
GOD'S TRUTH FOR HIS LIE.

Human sin is not confined to sexual sins, and Paul lists a whole catalog of the evils common among human beings as a result of turning from God. People do not generally sin in innocent ignorance, for they know God's righteous decree (at least in an instinctive way) that their evil deserves condemnation. Indeed, the evil goes further when people give approval and applaud others for their sin, probably because having others join in their sin makes them feel better about the evil course they have chosen.

YOUR HEART

Read 1 Samuel 9:1-2.

What were some of Saul's traits as the soon-to-be king?

- A) Impressive (Handsome)
- B) Young
- C) A head taller than the others
- D) All of the above

Let's pause here for a moment. Why do you think the people chose this man to be their leader?

Why would these traits be desirable for him to have?

If school officials were going to choose the perfect guy or girl to lead your school, what qualities would they seek? List at least three.

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Read 1 Samuel 16:7.

As people, we see people with such a limited view. However, how does God see people?

BAGGAGE CLAIMED AS KING

Yes, it's true; the Bible has funny stories. In the first part of 1 Samuel 10, Samuel privately anoints Saul as king. However, what follows is quite humorous.

Read 1 Samuel 10:17-24.

Think through this scenario: Samuel gathered everyone around. He reminded them that they had rejected God. Then He gave them an opportunity to meet Saul, their new earthly king. Verse 22 is a funny Scripture! "So they inquired again of the Lord, 'Is there a man still to come?' and the Lord said, 'Behold, he has hidden himself among the baggage.'"

The baggage? Really? Isn't this their tall, impressive new leader? What's he doing in the baggage? Yet the people still wanted Saul as their king. They rejected God Almighty — the Creator of the universe, who delivered them from slavery — and chased after the guy who was hiding in the baggage! You would think this would have been a sign to them that they had made the wrong choice, evidently not. The Israelites continued to look to man for answers to their problems instead of trusting God.

This story sounds ridiculous but we have made poor decisions before as well when we allow our hearts to get set on something other than God and his will.

NOW WHAT?

Describe any warning signs that you have experienced before that pointed out that you were heading down the wrong path.

Are you experiencing warning signs now? What needs to change?

Write out the areas in your life that you need God to lead rather than you.

Read Luke 9:23.

What do you need to do to personally daily surrender to God?

PRAYER:

To close today, ask the Lord to help you look to Him and trust Him in your life rather than trusting in your own plans or trusting in man.

GOING DEEPER

In what ways do we reject God and choose something he created instead of him?

Read Proverbs 4:23.

Why is your heart so valuable?

How is your heart the source of everything you do?

When do you experience the most attacks on your heart?

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

1 Samuel 8:7

REAP

PSALM 37:4

DAY

1

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

How can you “delight yourself in the Lord”?

When you “delight yourself in the Lord” your desires will match his? How is this true in your life?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you’ve spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

2

PROVERBS 3:5-6

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

How does this passage help you to seek God's way and not your own?

In what ways are you leaning on your own understanding right now?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

3

PROVERBS 16:1-3

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

Who is the one who ultimately decides everything that happens?

What happens when we commit our plans to the Lord?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

PROVBERS 16:9

DAY

4

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

Why is it important to let the Lord have control over your plans?

What will it take for you to allow the Lord to have control over your plans?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

GENESIS 1:26-27

DAY

5

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

Why does it not matter what the world says about your outward appearance?

According to our study this week, what is more important than outward appearance?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

6

PHILIPPIANS 4:6

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

Where do you normally run to with your problems?

Where are you supposed to run with your problems?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

7

DEUTERONOMY 32:18

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

Why do you turn from the God who made you to less satisfying things?

How can you break this habit in your life?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

WEEK

4

Control vs. Confidence

JOSHUA

24:15-24

THE HEART OF GOD

Read 1 Samuel 12:1-25.

We will focus on verses 19-25 for our study today. In verses 19-25, Samuel shared with the people God's will for them and the reason for it. God is very consistent throughout His Word.

What did God instruct the people not to do through the prophet Samuel? (See 1 Samuel 12:21.)

What was the first commandment? (See Exodus 20:3.)

What did Jesus say was the most important commandment? (See Mark 12:29-31.)

What does God think about idols, based on 1 Samuel 12:21?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

While idols can be statues made of gold or silver, they also can come in many other forms. Anything we put in the place of God is an idol. An idol can be a friend, a school, a status, popularity, a girlfriend, a boyfriend, a possession, or even your reputation.

What are you tempted to make an idol in your life?

God says idols are no good; they can't rescue us, and they are useless. How have you found this to be true in your life?

IDOLS ALWAYS OVER PROMISE AND UNDER DELIVER. –UNKNOWN

Read 1 Samuel 12:22 and fill in the blanks below.

"For the _____ will not _____ his people, for _____ great name's sake, because it has pleased the _____ to make you a _____ for himself."

According to that Scripture, why would God not reject His people?

It is amazing that even though Israel rejected God as their King, God assured the people that He would never reject them. God's name represents His character, and it is not in His character to reject His people. God responded to the Israelites with unconditional love. He does the same for you and me today through Christ.

How have you experienced unconditional love from God?

SAUL'S DOWNFALL

We are learning what purity looks like through a study on the Israelite kings. Based on what you have learned so far, do you think Saul was a good, pure king?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't Know

Why or why not?

Scripture will give us a good idea of the kind of king Saul was.

Read 1 Samuel 10:8.

Here, the prophet Samuel is giving instructions to Saul. Fill in the blanks to see what Samuel told Saul to do.

"Then go down before me to Gilgal. And behold, I am coming down to you to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice peace offerings. _____ days you shall _____, until _____ and show you what you shall do."

Read 1 Samuel 13:7b–12.

What did Saul do wrong?

This is a major hint that Saul was not a godly king. He decided to do things his way instead of obeying the voice of the Lord through the prophet Samuel.

Most likely your parents have told you that you will have to suffer the negative consequences of your bad choices. They are right. This is a biblical truth. We can read about Saul's consequences for not fully obeying the Lord.

Read 1 Samuel 13:13-14 and fill in the blank below for verse 14.

"... the LORD has sought out a man after his own _____"

GOD IS CONCERNED WITH OUR HEARTS. IF WE ARE TO LIVE PURE LIVES,
WE NEED TO MAKE SURE OUR HEARTS ARE PURE.

If we want to live a pure, godly life, we must be sure our hearts are pure. This can only be done by a work of the Holy Spirit.

WHO WILL BE YOUR KING?

If we are honest, we are a lot like the Israelites! They wanted to be like everyone else, they thought they knew better than God, and they continually went after useless idols.

Do you ever see yourself doing the same thing? In what ways do we “reenact” the Israelites’ actions?

Read Matthew 2:1-2 and 27:11.

According to these passages, who is the king of the Jews (the Israelite people)?

Describe the irony. In the Old Testament, the Jewish people rejected God as their King and sought an earthly king, and in the New Testament God gave His people the true King in human form, and most rejected Him.

Why do you think people in the Old and New Testaments rejected God as their King?

Jesus didn’t fit their image of a king. He wasn’t rich, powerful (by the world’s standards), or handsome. He came to earth as a humble man. He confronted religious leaders who cared more about their own power and position and showed kindness to thieves and prostitutes.

When Jesus died on the cross, the unbelieving Jews mockingly put a sign above His head that read “King of the Jews.” The Israelites rejected God as their King again. Are we anything like that today? Before you quickly answer, “No way!” consider a few more questions.

What is the role of a king?

God is a loving, just, and good King. We can choose to live by His rules because we know they are right and for our good.

How well are you living under God's kingship and rule? Answer these questions to help you evaluate your life:

1) Do you pray about decisions you need to make?

___ Yes ___ No

2) Do you go to God for wisdom and guidance before acting out your decisions?

___ Yes ___ No

3) Do you know the God of the Bible, or just some version of Him you get from people's opinions?

___ Yes ___ No

4) Do you care more about honoring God, or doing what you want?

___ Yes ___ No

5) Do you have idols?

___ Yes ___ No

6) Do you seek to grow in your relationship with Christ daily?

___ Yes ___ No

All these years later, God is still the same. He wants you to reject the useless idols, and trust and serve a loving God, who is pleased to make you His own.

NOW WHAT?

PRAYER:

Think about the ways you have experienced God's unconditional love and spend some time in prayer thanking God for those circumstances.

What are some ways that you show God's unconditional love to your family and friends?

When do you struggle with allowing your heart to wander?

How will you allow your heart be softened to the God's leadership in your life?

GOING DEEPER

What causes you to have trouble loving others unconditionally?

Read James 5:19-20.

Who do you know what has wandered in their relationship with God?

How can you show love and grace to draw the individual(s) listed above back to the heart of God?

What does confidence do for your heart?

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

1 Samuel 12:24

REAP

DAY

2 TIMOTHY 2:11-13

1

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What does this passage say of God's character?

What is the warning described in this passage?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

2

PSALM 139:23-24

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

Why is it important for God to search your heart?

What are some things that you try to hide from God deep in your heart?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

3

ZECHARIAH 13:9

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

Describe the importance of God purifying our lives.

What are some things in your life that God needs to purify today?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

4

1 CORINTHIANS 10:6-7

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What are some idols you have in your life?

How can you destroy the idols in your life?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

PSALM 86:5-13

DAY

5

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What aspects of God's character are revealed in this passage?

How have you seen these characteristics of God in your personal life?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

HEBREWS 1:8

DAY

6

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What impact does the eternality of Jesus' kingship have in your life?

What does it mean for God to be Lord of your life?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

7

JAMES 4:7-8

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What does it mean to "submit yourself to God"?

What does God promise to do when we draw near to him?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

WEEK

5

A Well- Trained Heart

1 TIMOTHY

4:7-10

WORK WITH ALL YOUR HEART

You've learned by now that David spent his early years tending sheep. When Samuel was sent to the house of Jesse to anoint the next king of Israel, David didn't strike the prophet (or his own father) as particularly kingly. God reminded Samuel that man tends to be impressed by outward appearance, while God is more concerned with the heart.

Thinking back to elementary school, do you remember that dreaded playground experience of choosing teams for kickball, baseball, or another sport? We can all picture the kids who were picked first or second; they were athletic, confident, game-changing. We can just as easily picture the poor souls who weren't chosen until the end. It's almost like they were invisible. You can't always see what someone is capable of by his or her speed, height, or strength.

David was very young, had a ruddy face, and played a ... harp? He didn't exactly fit the profile of an "ultimate fighter," did he? In comparison, Saul was a head taller than the rest of his army, covered in battle armor, and downright kingly.

Based on appearance, if you were the team captain and you had next pick, would you choose David or Saul?

Thinking about David's upcoming battle with the nine-foot Philistine warrior-champion, it seems like David's best preparation would have been wrestling matches, weightlifting, and sprints.

Read 1 Samuel 17:34-37.

Based on this passage, describe David's training program?

Although David was probably still a teenager at this time, how do you think his battles with wild animals affected his self-confidence?

When David wasn't herding sheep or wrestling wild animals to the death, we get a clue that he had time for other things.

Read 1 Samuel 16:16-18.

List the six traits for which David had become known.

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1) | 4) |
| 2) | 5) |
| 3) | 6) |

According to verse 17, what kind of harp player did Saul want?

Saul was the reigning king of Israel, after all. So he must have already been used to enjoying the best food, entertainment, and comforts that his nation had to offer. Talk about high standards! The fact that David didn't just play the harp, but played it well, is easy to overlook, but just in this little observation, we can see that when David set his mind to something, he put his whole heart into it.

Do you put your whole heart into the things that you accomplish each day? Explain.

Despite David's young age and body, he already had a giant heart. It's a good thing, because we all know there was a "giant" in his near future.

FAITHFUL IN THE SMALL THINGS

Read 1 Samuel 17:4-7.

As you read the description of the gigantic champion from Gath, it almost sounds like the Bible had already conceded the fight: "Advantage: Goliath!"

The writer of 1 Samuel used the weights and measures of his day to describe the giant, but your Bible probably has a footnote using today's measures. How tall was Goliath?

Goliath wore "a coat of mail" weighing 5,000 shekels. How many pounds did his "coat" weigh?

What the writer wants us to understand is that this fellow was huge, and his reputation for being mighty was even bigger. God put an obstacle in front of David that made his odds look bad from a human point of view. As if Goliath's size and strength weren't intimidating enough, he was also talking some major smack!

Read 1 Samuel 17:8-11.

According to verse 8, whom did Goliath single out as the leader of the Israelites?

Even the mighty King Saul was shaking in his boots. Goliath was certainly a force to be reckoned with. You might know that the writers of the Old and New Testaments often used numbers or images to symbolize a deeper meaning. We see such symbolism in this passage when it describes how long Goliath taunted the Israelite army.

Read 1 Samuel 17:16.

How many consecutive days did Goliath come forward to call Saul's army out to battle?

Match these Scripture identifications with the correct verses.

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 1) Genesis 7:12 | A) Moses fasted forty days before writing the Ten Commandments. |
| 2) Exodus 34:28 | B) Jesus was in the desert forty days, being tempted by Satan. |
| 3) Joshua 5:6 | C) Rain fell on the earth forty days. |
| 4) Mark 1:13 | D) The Israelites wandered in the desert forty years. |

When we see the number "forty" in Scripture, it often indicates that God wants His people to look to Him and depend on Him. Goliath's taunting the Israelites for forty days is a hint that the Lord wants His people to depend on Him.

Read 1 Samuel 17:17-26.

What did David's father, Jesse, send David to do? (See vv. 17-18.)

It seems like a pretty ordinary task, doesn't it? David was just a delivery boy, or so he thought. What seemed to be a food delivery trip turned out to be an opportunity for David to slay a giant! You know, Jesus spoke about this in the New Testament, too. God calls us to be faithful in the small things, and He will give us greater things to do.

Write Matthew 25:23 in the space below.

Do you ever feel like you are doing just ordinary things for God? Like you try to live for the Lord, but you don't have "Goliath" moments every day?

What are some things you do that seem just plain ordinary? Examples might include being kind to people and obeying your parents.

A life of purity is built on one small decision at a time. For example, choosing not to listen to that song stops you from watching that music video, which may have led you to look at that website. Another may be how you obey your parents can lead to you respecting other authority figures in your life.

While those things might be ordinary, choose to be like David. May we be faithful in the small things, and who knows, one day God might use us for something extraordinary!

NOW WHAT?

What will it require of you fully commit to Jesus?

Read Colossians 3:23.

How does an eternal perspective impact the way you accomplish the tasks that are set before you?

Describe some areas that you need to work at with all of your might.

PRAYER:

Ask God to help you be faithful in the small things.

GOING DEEPER

What would you like for God to trust you with?

How does your faithfulness now impact your future?

How can the Holy Spirit help you fully trust in the Father's good will?

What does it take to move past outward appearance and get to know the heart of someone?

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Matthew 25:23

REAP

DAY

1 CORINTHIANS 10:31

1

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What should be the goal of everything that you do?

How is it possible to bring God glory in everything we do?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

COLOSSIANS 3:23

DAY

2

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What should be our goal when we work?

How will working for the Lord change the way you accomplish routine tasks?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

3

MATTHEW 25:14-30

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What does it mean to be “faithful over a little”?

Describe the difference in how the master responded from one servant to the next?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you’ve spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

4

PROVERBS 12:11

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

Describe things that you are pursuing that are worthless pursuits?

What shortcuts are you trying to take in your relationship with God?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

5

1 TIMOTHY 4:7-10

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What areas do you need to spend more time training on for godliness?

How can you push others to train hard for godliness?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

GENESIS 2:15

DAY

6

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

Why did God put man in the Garden of Eden?

How is work a blessing rather a curse? How does God reward our hard work?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

7

PROVERBS 22:29

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

Why is it important to always improve on your abilities?

How have you seen God use your abilities?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

WEEK

6

A Giant Heart

1 SAMUEL

17:46

ENDURING OPPOSITION

Read 1 Samuel 17:26-28.

Unfortunately, when we choose to do something for the Lord, we will often face opposition. Much like David, often it will be from someone we know well.

Do you think David was discouraged by his brother's words? Why or why not?

Not only did David's brother oppose him, but he also questioned the motives of his heart. Opposition is always hard, but it particularly hurts when someone speaks against our character.

Read 1 Samuel 17:29-30.

How did David respond to this opposition from his brother?

David stood up under the harsh words. He didn't let his brother deter him from doing what he was determined to do for God.

Read 2 Timothy 4:5 and fill in the blanks below.

"As for you, always be sober-minded, _____, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry."

Describe a time when you tried to do something for the Lord but received opposition from someone regarding it?

Trials will come our way, especially when we choose to live for the Lord. We should seek to endure those trials. Never give up. Keep your eyes on the Lord, and depend on Him to get you through. Embrace trials with joy as a way to grow in the Lord.

CONFIDENCE IN THE LORD

From his early days, David focused on God's goodness and might, not his own. The circumstances before him didn't seem to shake his confidence in God's deliverance.

Think for a moment about something or someone that fills you with confidence, and write it down. How does your behavior change when you are near that thing or person?

Do you suddenly become bolder? A little reckless, even? How does it impact your confidence?

If you can relate to this, imagine how confident David must have been when he trusted so fully in His God. As David goes face to face with the giant, let's listen in as the boy-shepherd talks some heavenly smack:

Read 1 Samuel 17:45-47.

Where did David's confidence lie? (Be specific.)

Now we're going to play a game called "Name Your Goliath." What giant stands in front of you day after day, intimidating you, scaring the daylights out of you, making you want to tuck your tail between your legs and slink away like a whipped dog? Is it your math teacher? Is it the empty table you sit down to for lunch day after day? Is it the body image you frown at every time you look in the mirror?

Describe your Goliath below, and if he has some brothers or sisters, describe them, too.

Now imagine it's tomorrow, time to face your Goliath once again. Can you picture the scene in your mind? Maybe you've faced this giant a hundred times already. As you imagine tomorrow, let's change the scenario just a bit. This time, you're bringing a friend. It's the same one David referred to as "the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel." Can you see it? Pause for a minute, and make a specific request of God. Ask Him to cause you to feel His presence the next time you face your Goliath. Ask Him to turn this "fantasy" into faith.

Write this request in your own words.

Now that you've asked Him, take a breath and be still. Prayer is a two-way street. Give God a chance to respond to you. The Bible says God's voice is rarely in the wind, earthquake, or fire. More often, it's a gentle whisper. Just listen for Him.

If He spoke to you, write down your impression.

However, if all you heard was cricket chirping, don't lose heart. Listening takes practice and stillness. Try again at home. Get alone in a quiet space and be with God without distractions.

GOD'S GLORY

Our study wouldn't be complete if we didn't read the final outcome of David's battle with Goliath.

Read 1 Samuel 17:48-58.

With what did David kill Goliath?

How is it that a little shepherd boy killed a nine-foot-tall giant with one stone? You might think this was a large stone, but the five smooth stones David picked up from the stream were likely no bigger than a baseball. (See 1 Samuel 17:40.)

Isn't that just like God? He takes ordinary things and uses them to bring glory to His name. God's often uses ordinary, everyday items to perform a miracle.

Read John 6:1-13.

With only five small barley loaves and two small fish, Jesus fed more than 5,000 people!

In both of the previous stories who received the glory for the miracles?

We see God's character in both the Old and New Testaments, and it remains the same today. God wants to use willing people to make His name famous.

Fill in the blanks of your memory verse, 1 Samuel 17:46.

"This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head. And I will give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, that _____ the _____ may know that there is a _____ in _____,"

David's motivation for slaying the giant was not his own glory, but rather that of the God of Israel. David was a king with a heart for God. To review what you have learned the past two weeks, write the major headings in each week's lessons.

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Which of David's five qualities do you find most challenging? Why?

NOW WHAT?

Based on today's lesson, what did you learn about handling opposition?

What are specific steps you need to take to handle opposition better in your life?

Spend some time researching Voice of the Martyrs website at www.persecution.com this week. Consider how you can partner with their ministry to care for those that are being persecuted around the world.

How can you make God famous in your life today?

GOING DEEPER

What do you think it would be like for it to be illegal to be a Christian?

Describe the importance of your faith settling into your heart and not just your mind.

As we bring the story of David and Goliath to a close, take one more look at the last portion of this week's memory verse, and personalize it. As you pray today, fill in the first blank below with your name. Leave the second blank open for a few minutes while you meditate on it. What extraordinary results does God want to achieve through your "ordinary" self? Ask Him! Keep asking Him! If your desire is to let the world know that there is a God in Israel, He will show up on your battlefields.

"Today _____ will _____, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel."

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

1 Samuel 17:46

REAP

JOHN 3:30

DAY

1

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

When do you struggle with wanting to receive glory for your actions rather Jesus?

How does this passage impact the way that you prepare for each day of your life?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

2

PHILIPPIANS 3:7-11

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

How much worth do you assign to knowing Christ?

What is the ultimate gain in knowing Christ?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

3

1 CORINTHIANS 10:31

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What responsibility do you have toward others with your actions?

How can your actions bring glory to God?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

4

1 CORINTHIANS 4:10-13

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What are we called to do when we are persecuted?

Describe a situation when you have been persecuted and think of a Biblical way to respond?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

5

JAMES 1:2-4

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What does it mean to “count it all joy” during trials?

According to this passage, what is the purpose of trials?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you’ve spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

6

PROVERBS 3:25-26

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

Where should our confidence come from?

How does fear have a way of showing where we place our true confidence?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

7

ISAIAH 48:11

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What is God's motivation for everything he does?

How can your life bring him glory?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

WEEK

7

Iron Sharpens Iron

PROVERBS

27:17

DAVID AND JONATHAN

If your perspective about the Bible is that the Bible is outdated and not useful in your life today, think again. The Bible may not list technology we have today but it does speak a lot about relationships. Today's lesson is a story you'll want to remember: Before you look at their relationship, think about your own best friend(s).

Do you have a best friend, or maybe a few? Write the name of one best friend, and briefly describe how you met and became friends.

Now read 1 Samuel 17:57-18:1, and fill in the blanks.

"... the soul of Jonathan was _____ to the _____ of David, and Jonathan _____ him as his own _____."

What do you think it means to be "one in spirit" with someone and to have souls "knit" together?

The words "one" and "knit" clue us in to how close David and Jonathan really were. If you braid three pieces of string, you get one string. If you knit multiple strands of yarn together, you get one blanket. David and Jonathan were bound together in life, friendship, and spirit. If one was happy, the other rejoiced. If one was hurt, the other hurt, too.

Now think back to your best friend. You explained how the two of you met and became friends. Now explain why you are friends. What keeps you so close? What do you like about this person?

SOMETHING IN COMMON

David and Jonathan were bound together through a common interest or focus. Looking at them on the surface, it might be hard to find something they had in common. Strong relationships are based on a common bond. When you look deeper at David and Jonathan's friendship, you'll see what these individuals from different backgrounds had in common. First, take a moment to review some basics about each of these men and the circumstances surrounding their friendship.

| David | Jonathan |
|---|---|
| Youngest son of Jesse the shepherd. | Oldest son of King Saul and in line to inherit the throne of Israel. |
| Chosen by God and anointed by Samuel to replace Saul as king. | God rejected Saul as king. The throne would no longer be given to Jonathan because of his father's sin. |

Jonathan grew up with the expectation of one day becoming king. He trained to be a great leader and soldier so he would be ready to lead Israel when he took the throne. His life was built on a future expectation, but because of his father's sin, everything changed for Jonathan. He was no longer the future leader of God's people.

How would you feel if you were Jonathan?

How would you feel toward David, the person God chose instead of you to take over as king?

Read 1 Samuel 18:1-3, and fill in the blanks.

"And Jonathan made a _____ with David because he _____ him as _____ soul."

COVENANT — A PROMISE WHERE ONE PERSON PLEDGES TO BLESS OR SERVE ANOTHER PERSON IN A SPECIFIC WAY.

Jonathan made a choice based on God's standard for living. Jonathan knew that God had always been and would always be the true King, and he chose to serve God first and honor Him. God chose David as an earthly king over Israel, and Jonathan chose to submit to God's will for the kingdom. Even more, he chose to love David as the closest of friends.

Read 1 Samuel 18:4, and fill in the blanks in the first column of the following table. Then look at the significance of Jonathan's actions described in the right-hand column. Look up each verse listed to help you better understand.

| | |
|--|--|
| "Jonathan took off the _____ he was wearing ..." | Symbolizes the kingdom of Israel and Jonathan's right to inherit the throne. (1 Samuel 15:24-28) |
| "... and _____ it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt." | Signifies Jonathan's love for David. Jonathan did not just give up the throne to David; he gave his all to David in love. (1 Samuel 20:42) |

David and Jonathan were the ultimate best friends because of what they had in common — a desire to honor God in His kingdom.

What is the focus of your friendships?

You've seen the beginnings of David and Jonathan's friendship. You now know they shared a desire to serve God and see His kingdom glorified. Things should be easy from now on, right? Think again.

THE STORY CONTINUES

Relationships are complicated, even for Christ followers. The world presents circumstances, events, and even people that get in the way or cause problems. David and Jonathan's friendship was no exception. God's kingdom brought them together, but Saul, as an earthly king, sought to tear them apart.

Saul was a man full of insecurities. He became a man who longed more for the love and respect of people than of God. David, on the other hand, was more concerned about honoring God. God rewarded David with success and the respect of the people, which caused fear and jealousy in Saul.

Read 1 Samuel 18:12-16, 28-29.

According to these verses, who were David's admirers?

Read 1 Samuel 19:1-7.

David wasn't the only one who had a complicated relationship with Saul. Jonathan, Saul's own son, became a victim of his father's jealousy of David. Jonathan was caught in the middle, but he knew his father was in the wrong. He had a decision to make.

David was a shepherd boy who had been brought into the service of the king. That required him to honor the king. He was also a child of God, which required him to honor God and the earthly king God had appointed (Saul).

Saul was Jonathan's father and his king, so Jonathan had to honor him as a parent and as the royal authority over him. Jonathan also had sworn a covenant with David to bless and serve him in friendship and love. Plus, Jonathan was a child of God, which meant his actions had to be right and just in the eyes of God.

Imagine being caught in this situation. How would you have handled it?

How do you honor your God, your family, your friends, and the authority figures over you?

Read 1 Samuel 20.

Put yourself in Jonathan's shoes for a moment. What thoughts would be racing through your mind?

ULTIMATELY, JONATHAN'S LOYALTY TO DAVID WAS JONATHAN'S LOYALTY TO GOD'S PLAN.

NOW WHAT?

Write down the names of three friends that you know are not Christians and three friends that are Christians.

PRAYER:

Take time today to pray for your friends. If they are Christians, pray that God will strengthen their relationship with Him. If not, pray for an opportunity to share your testimony with them.

Describe areas that you need wisdom from God to take your relationships to the next level by making God the center of your friendships.

PRAYER:

Thank God for your friends and what you have in common with them. Ask for wisdom for the next steps in taking your relationships to the next level by making God the center of your friendships.

GOING DEEPER

Describe the how relationships between David, Saul and Jonathan help you better understand how to honor Christ in your relationships.

Read 1 Samuel 20.

The following are three options Jonathan could have chosen. After you read the options, write under each one why you think it would have been the wrong choice.

Option 1) He could have yelled at his father in front of all of the attendants and defended his friend.

Option 2) He could have said nothing. David would have been killed, and Jonathan could have taken back the throne.

Option 3) He could have run to David to warn him, and they could have run away from home together and been safe.

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Proverbs 27:17

REAP

DAY

ECCLESIASTES 4:9-10

1

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What does this passage suggest about the need of good friendships?

How have you been a friend like this passage displays?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

JOHN 15:12-13

DAY

2

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

How does this passage relate to your friendships?

Are you a loving friend or do you have a tendency to neglect your relationships?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

3

JOHN 15:14-15

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

Who does Jesus call you once you place your faith in him?

How do you live your life differently knowing that Jesus is your friend?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

PROVERBS 12:26

4

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

Who are your friends that give godly advice?

What does this passage display about God's desire for healthy friendships?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

PROVERBS 22:24-25

DAY

5

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What does this passage teach about how friends can influence you?

Describe friendships in your life that are causing you to stumble in your purity.

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

6

1 CORINTHIANS 15:33

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

Explain how your friend group causes you to grow closer to Christ?

How does this passage help you pick good friends?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

1 SAMUEL 20

DAY

7

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What does this passage show about David and Jonathan's relationship?

Describe a circumstance that a friend chose to love you the way Jonathan loved David.

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

WEEK

8

Saul's Rejection as King

2 TIMOTHY

1:7

DISOBEDIENT HEART

Remember that Saul was the first king of Israel. He was exactly what the people said they wanted. God was their King, but they demanded to have an earthly king to rule over them just like all the other nations. When God gave them Saul, the nation of Israel was so excited. In 1 Samuel 15, God said he wanted the Israelites to punish the Amalekites for what they did to them when they came out of Egypt. God specifically told Saul to destroy the enemy. Every person was to be killed, along with the animals. Nothing was to remain alive.

Read 1 Samuel 15:8-23.

What did Saul do?

Look at 1 Samuel 15:12, what did Saul do that was very arrogant?

Fill in the blanks from verse 23:

Rebellion is like _____.

Presumption (arrogance) is like _____.

We don't think of simple disobedience as being equal to trying to contact the dead. That is exactly what God says it is. Divination is witchcraft. God says rebellion against Him is the same as witchcraft.

Presumption (arrogance), being full of pride, is the same to God as worshiping idols. It is when we put ourselves above God.

In verse 23, what is the ultimate consequence of Saul's disobedience of rebellion and arrogance?

Write out what rebellion and arrogance could cost you in the following areas?

A) School

B) Home

B) Friends

D) Dating Relationships

SERIOUS CONSEQUENCE

Saul was disobedient to the Lord. From the beginning, he was not willing to do what God told him. So God chose another king — David. You already learned that Samuel anointed David when he was just a kid. David was called a man after God's own heart. He was totally different from Saul. Saul looked like a

king physically, but David was willing to follow God as a king or as a shepherd boy. Since he was still so young, David would not become king for many years.

Read 1 Samuel 16:14-23 and fill in the blanks below.

Verse 14 says, "... a _____ spirit from the _____ tormented him."

That is really hard to understand. How could an awesome, good God send something evil to torment Saul? Whenever something does not make sense, it is always good to back up and think about the things you do know.

What are some things we know about God?

When God's presence departed Saul, His protective covering went away. Without God's protective covering, the evil spirit came to Saul to torment him. God allowed it because of Saul's wickedness.

JEALOUSY

When David killed Goliath he became an immediate celebrity. Everyone was talking about this boy who killed a giant, which led to the defeat of the entire Philistine army. The people instantly loved David. He was a hero. He had won the people's hearts.

Read 1 Samuel 18:5-7.

What did the people sing about David?

Did they say anything bad about Saul?

_____ Yes _____ No

The people were grateful, and even though they said good things about Saul, their song grated on Saul's nerves. He did not like this young kid getting all the attention he wanted for himself.

Read 1 Samuel 18:8-9.

Why do you think what the crowd said made Saul so angry?

Keep in mind that Saul was still the king. David was just a kid. Saul was eaten up with jealousy; he was consumed by it. Saul had already been told that God had rejected him as king, and it killed Saul to see David get so much attention. David's popularity threatened Saul.

Read 1 Samuel 18:12-16.

Why was Saul afraid of David?

Why did David have great success at everything he did?

You may have a friend who seems to be great at everything he or she does. Maybe this person is an incredible athlete, singer, dancer, or musician, or is amazingly smart. Are you jealous of that person? Or are you glad for his or her success? Circle on the line how you usually feel about this person. Be honest.

Happy for the person 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Angry at the person

JEALOUSY LEFT UNSETTLED CAN LEAD TO DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR.

GOD'S PROTECTION

Read 1 Samuel 18:10-11.

The day after David killed Goliath, Saul acted extremely jealous of David. What did Saul try to do?

This is no accident. Imagine what David must have thought. Did the king just try to kill me? He was just playing the harp when, Wham! A spear came flying at him.

Does Saul try to kill David just once?

_____ Yes _____ No

Since Saul couldn't kill David himself, he tried a new method. Do you remember there were prizes for the man who would go up against Goliath? One of the prizes was one of Saul's daughters in marriage. When David killed Goliath, he should have received the reward.

Read 1 Samuel 18:20-27 and note how Saul used the reward for killing Goliath as a plot to kill David.

How many Philistines did David kill?

_____ 100 _____ 50 _____ 200 _____ 75

NOTHING TO FEAR

Saul couldn't catch a break. Every one of his plots to kill David was ruined because God was with David. God was protecting David from the king's crazy schemes.

Read 1 Samuel 18:28-30.

As a Christ follower, the Lord is also with you. While you and I aren't free from every trouble, we can be sure the Lord's protection is over our lives, and He will not let anything come to us that does not go through His loving hand first.

Describe a time in your life when you felt God's protection?

Saul spent the rest of his life hunting down David. He was afraid of David, but he still spent all of his time and effort trying to kill him. God was with David, and God did not allow this to happen.

Jealousy and fear are traps by the enemy. Fearing someone is better than you is no way to live. The truth is there will always be someone better than you at different things. That is not supposed to threaten us; it is supposed to help us become the best we can be. A healthy rivalry is okay. Competition is okay, however, being frightened only brings you down.

Is there someone whom you fear because that person is better than you at something?

___ Yes

___ No

Fear was one of the pitfalls of King Saul. Due to his fear of David, he was unable to do the task set before him. It's time that you and I stop comparing ourselves to others, and get busy focusing on God and fulfilling the plans He has for us. Stop comparing yourself to that person. Stop competing with that person, and start being the best you can be. Start living the way Jesus intended; full of life, not fear. Fear sucks the life out of you. It takes away your vision for yourself and places your focus on what you are afraid of. Saul never reached his full potential as king, partly because of his jealousy and fear.

Ultimately, Saul was a bad example of an Israelite king. Let's learn from his mistakes. If you want to live a pure life for God, ask God to rid you of any fear or jealousy, and to allow you to live fully for Him and His glory.

NOW WHAT?

Thinking back to what you have learned so far about David and Saul, draw a line to the correct descriptions of these men.

| | |
|-------|--------------------------------------|
| | Future king of Israel |
| | Loved by the people |
| | Killed thousands |
| David | Killed tens of thousands |
| | Disobeyed God |
| | Current king of Israel |
| | Killed a giant |
| Saul | Filled with fear |
| | Great success with everything he did |
| | Played the harp |
| | Jealous |

Who do you often feel jealousy toward?

PRAYER:

If you feel jealousy, confess your sin of jealousy to God. Ask Him to help you release this emotion in your life and truly be happy for the blessings in other people's lives.

GOING DEEPER

How does being jealous of someone cause you to get so wrapped up in yourself and take your attention away from God?

PRAYER:

Thank God for His protection in your life. Express your gratitude to God for His protection.

Read 2 Timothy 1:7.

PRAYER:

Thank God that He has not given us a spirit of fear. Ask Him to help you walk in courage and boldness as you focus on Him.

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

2 Timothy 1:7

REAP

DAY

PHILIPPIANS 2:3

1

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What does this verse teach about jealousy?

How are we supposed to view others?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

2

2 THESSALONIANS 3:3

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

How does this verse comfort you?

According to this verse, how can we see God's protection of believers?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

3

PSALM 91:1-3

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What structure does this passage compare to God?

How does knowing God is your refuge and fortress comfort you?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

1 JOHN 4:18

DAY

4

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

One of Saul's mistakes was fear. What does this verse teach about fear?

If you truly love your neighbor, can you fear not being as good as them?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

EXODUS 20:17

DAY

5

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

What does this commandment teach about jealousy/coveting?

How does this commandment show how God feels about jealousy?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

EPHESIANS 2:1-5

6

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

How does this passage describe human nature before becoming a believer?

How does Jesus save us from our dead rebellious state?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

REAP

DAY

7

MATTHEW 5:21-22

READ

Spend time reading the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction and correction. Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

Saul was angry with David. Is there someone that you are angry with?

What does Jesus equate your anger with?

ASK

How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

PRAY

Talk with God about the passage and your application. Ask Him to change your heart and life based on the time you've spent in His Word.

LOOKING BACK

How do you feel now that you have completed this study?

So now you are thinking, okay, now that I've completed this study, I know everything I need to know now, right?

Discipleship isn't about completing a study. It is about a lifestyle of learning and living as you follow Jesus throughout your lifetime. What you have learned throughout this study will become more important to your Christian life in the months, even years, to come. Think about some of the major concepts that you have learned and lived out.

- Learned that God chose us to be pure.
- Discussed how it is our choice to reject or follow his statutes.
- Discussed the danger of exchanging the truth of God for a lie.
- Examined the areas that often lead us astray.
- Discovered the purpose of living according to God's word.
- Discussed the reasons to be careful of what you ask for.
- Considered the importance of protecting your heart.
- Learned how to recognize warning signs of being led astray.
- Discussed the importance of listening to those that you trust the most.
- Examined the danger of following human wisdom.
- Considered the danger of not being patient.
- Learned that we all have the privilege of choosing who is king of our hearts.
- Learned the significance of giving your entire heart to God.
- Discussed the dangers of compartmentalization.
- Studied the impact of being faithful in the small things.
- Discussed how to endure opposition.
- Studied how confidence only comes from the Lord.
- Living a life of purity leads to God being glorified.
- A common bond in Christ creates friendships that last.
- Learned the importance of biblical accountability.
- Friendships focused on Christ contribute to a life of purity.
- Learned about the damage a disobedient heart causes.
- Discussed how jealousy destroys.
- Examined how God always protects those who love him.
- Discovered that we have nothing to fear in Christ.

Wow! That's a lot! Now it's time to continue to live out what you have learned in this study.



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