

SAMPLE

# David

A GOD-WARD  
HEART IN A  
DRIFTING  
WORLD

 **access**  
downloadable curriculum  
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# David: A God-ward Heart in a Drifting World

## INTRODUCTION

One of the most visited, war-torn, and recognizable cities in the modern world is named after him. Famous statues have been built to memorialize him. His hymns are sung and read by believers of every persuasion around the world. His words are read more often in hospitals and prisons than from any other book known to man. He is David the boy who became king.

This study of David focuses on his early years, how God chose him, the trials he faced as a result of that calling, and the powerful principles we can learn from his experiences with both God and people.

It is important to get the word out every way possible. The following lesson titles and objectives are structured for use in newsletters, church bulletins, e-mail, and other sources such as Facebook and blogs.

## SESSION 1: ADrift IN A SEA OF SELF

Israel had been on a long drift away from God and had finally hit bottom. The problem was they didn't know they were at the bottom. Israel, adrift in a sea of self, chose a king that mirrored their collective spiritual condition. This session focuses on the circumstances and setting into which God called David to be king.

## SESSION 2: THE MAN GOD CHOOSES

Israel had reached a dead-end spiritually and nationally. They had chosen their hero, and he had led them to ruin. Now God would choose His hero from a most unexpected source. In this session, group members discover the qualities God wanted for the leader of His people and how He built those into a young man named David.

## SESSION 3: THE STAGE GOD USES

Though most have heard the story of David and Goliath numerous times, its timeless truths are often overshadowed by the excitement of the battle. This session focuses on those life principles that are of value to all believers of all times.

## SESSION 4: YOU'RE NEVER ALONE WHEN YOU'RE ALONE!

Trying times always lie within the shadow of success. On the other side of David's success over Goliath was a deep valley of trial. It was in this desperate time that David learned more about himself and God than he had ever known before. Most important, David discovered, "when you're alone, you're never alone."



## SESSION ONE

When God wants to drill a man,  
And thrill a man,  
And skill a man  
When God wants to mold a man  
To play the noblest part;  
When He yearns with all His heart  
To create so great and bold a man  
That all the world shall be amazed,  
Watch His methods, watch His ways!  
How He ruthlessly perfects  
Whom He royally elects!  
How He hammers him and hurts him,  
And with mighty blows converts him  
Into trial shapes of clay which  
Only God understands;  
While his tortured heart is crying  
And he lifts beseeching hands!  
How He bends but never breaks  
When his good He undertakes;  
How He uses whom He chooses,  
And which every purpose fuses him;  
By every act induces him  
To try His splendor out-  
God knows what He's about.

(Anonymous)

# Adrift in a Sea of Self

## MATERIALS NEEDED

- Bibles
- Extra pens and pencils
- White board or poster board
- Handouts

## LESSON OBJECTIVE

Israel had been on a long drift away from God and had finally hit bottom. The problem was they didn't know they were at the bottom. Israel, adrift in a sea of self, chose a king that mirrored their collective spiritual condition. This session focuses on the circumstances and setting into which God called David to be king.

## CONNECT

Begin this session by asking participants to name their favorite psalms. Have participants record the group's favorite psalms on the handout, "The First of the Story." Allow time for volunteers to read some these for the group. Ask: *What is it about David's songs that make them so special?* The psalms are special because God inspired them and because they show us the soul of a man who, in spite of his failings, had a God-ward heart. Read the poem from the sidebar and tell the group this will be a study about how God made David into the man He wanted him to be.

## CONSIDER

For years, journalist Paul Harvey had a radio program called *The Rest of the Story*. In each episode, he would relate an interesting tale of sometimes famous and sometimes unknown people with a twist at the end that made that person's life amazing. Instead of "the rest of the story," this could be called be "the first of the story" of David's life.

Refer to the handout, "The First of the Story." Have participants look over the questions and lead in a brief discussion of their answers.

The first of the story for David is the condition his country was in when he arrived on the scene. One can't fully appreciate the stage David stepped onto without looking at what happened before his unexpected turn in the spotlight came. Distribute the handout, "Adrift in a Sea of Self," and encourage participants to note the events in Israel's history leading up to David being chosen as king.

## IT'S A LONG WAY DOWN! (JUDGES 2-3)

Israel had been on a long downward slide for generations before the time of David. The Book of Judges gives us a stark picture of the sad drift of Israel away from God. Display the following points that illustrate this on a poster board or PowerPoint slide.

- They lost connection with their spiritual heroes.



- They slid into a pattern of spiritual decline.
- They could not escape their enemies.

### **NO MORE HEROES**

Read Judges 2:8-9. All the people had left were stories about Moses and Joshua and all they knew of God was second and third-hand information. Their spiritual life was built on the experiences of those who had gone before them. Ask: *Are there any dangers in becoming too attached to spiritual leaders or symbols?*

### **SPIRITUAL DECLINE**

Ask participants to identify the proof of Israel's spiritual decline as you read Judges 2:11-19. Write their answers on a poster or white board. These should include: Israel forsook God and pursued false gods (verses 11-13); their rebellion brought God's discipline (verses 14-15); God raised up judges to lead the people back to God (verse 16); Israel became stuck in a downward spiral of listening to God followed by rebelling against Him (verses 17-19).

### **LIFE AMONG ENEMIES**

Read Judges 2:20-23. God never intended for Israel to have to live among her enemies, but He now declared He would no longer drive them out. Have participants read Judges 3:1-4 and then ask, *Why did God decide to leave Israel's enemies with them?* He allowed this to pull His people back to a loving relationship with Him. Reveal the life principle poster (that you make) or PowerPoint and ask participants to fill in the appropriate blank.

#### *Life Principle:*

Sometimes God leaves us in a problem to show us who we really are. He may later remove that problem or He may never. His purpose is to pull us back to a loving relationship with Him.

### **THE DEAD-END OF A SPIRITUAL SLIDE (1 SAMUEL 1-8)**

The first few chapters of 1 Samuel describe where Israel's downward slide finally ended.

Display the following points that illustrate this on a poster board or PowerPoint Slide.

- The religious leaders became selfish and corrupt.
- The Ark of the Covenant was lost.

## CORRUPT RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Call on various participants to read 1 Samuel 2:12-22; 3:1-2; and 4:10-11. Ask: *Were the people a reflection of Eli and his sons or were Eli and sons a reflection of the people?* Lead in a discussion of the effect wayward religious leaders have on those they lead. Point out that people cannot simply point to their leaders but must look at themselves. Eli's blindness and his son's wickedness was a symptom of a people that had turned their back on God.

## ALL SYMBOLS GONE

Ask: *What did Eli hear that caused him to fall and die?* As bad as the news of his sons' death was, it was news of the loss of the Ark of the Covenant that was more than he could take. The Ark represented the presence of God among the people. In Moses and Joshua, they lost their personal connection to God. Now, with the Ark gone, they no longer had their symbols of God.

Reveal the life principle poster or PowerPoint and have participants fill in the appropriate blank.

*Life Principle:*

When we stray from God, He may remove everything we cling to until we return to Him.

## THERE'S NOTHING AT THE BOTTOM BUT SELF (1 SAMUEL 8-10)

The perfect plan was for Israel to have no king besides God. But with their symbols and leaders gone, Israel demanded Samuel give them a king (1 Samuel 8:4). Read 1 Samuel 8:5 and ask, *What were the reasons the people gave for wanting a king?* They pointed to Samuel's impending death and the weakness of his sons, but the real reason was they wanted to be like all the nations around them. As a result the people chose Saul to be their king (1 Samuel 10:23-24). Ask: *What was it about Saul that attracted the people to him?* Saul was everything the world could admire. He was the choice of a selfish people that wanted to be like the world rather than God. It wouldn't take long for them to wish they had listened to God rather than their own carnal hearts.

*Life Principle:*

What we want often becomes something we wish we could get rid of.





## COMMIT

Refer back to the questions on the handout, “The First of the Story.” Encourage participants to consider each of these questions on a regular basis. Ask: *Which life principle speaks most to you?* Allow plenty of time for discussion.

The real question is how you will apply these principles in your daily life. Encourage participants to go over the questions on the handout “The First of the Story” during their daily devotional times and deal honestly with God. Lead the group in prayer asking God’s Spirit to show each person where they are in their own spiritual walk.

SAMPLE

# The First of the Story

## FAVORITE PSALMS:

## QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

1. Can we learn as much from our failures as we do from our successes?
2. Have you ever found yourself clinging more to some external symbol of religion rather than Christ? How did it affect your relationship to Christ and others?
3. Have you ever felt if God would just do a certain thing or give you a certain thing all would be well? Did things always work out like you thought they would after receiving what you had been so focused on?



# *Adrift in a Sea of Self*

## **IT'S A LONG WAY DOWN! (JUDGES 2-3)**

### *Life Principle:*

Sometimes God leaves us in a \_\_\_\_\_ to show us who we really are. He may later remove that problem or He may never. His purpose is to pull us back to a \_\_\_\_\_ with Him.

## **THE DEAD-END OF A SPIRITUAL SLIDE (1 SAMUEL 1-8)**

### *Life Principle:*

When we stray from God, He may remove \_\_\_\_\_ we cling to until we return to Him.

## **THERE'S NOTHING AT THE BOTTOM BUT SELF (1 SAMUEL 8-10)**

### *Life Principle:*

What we want often becomes \_\_\_\_\_ we wish we could get rid of.

