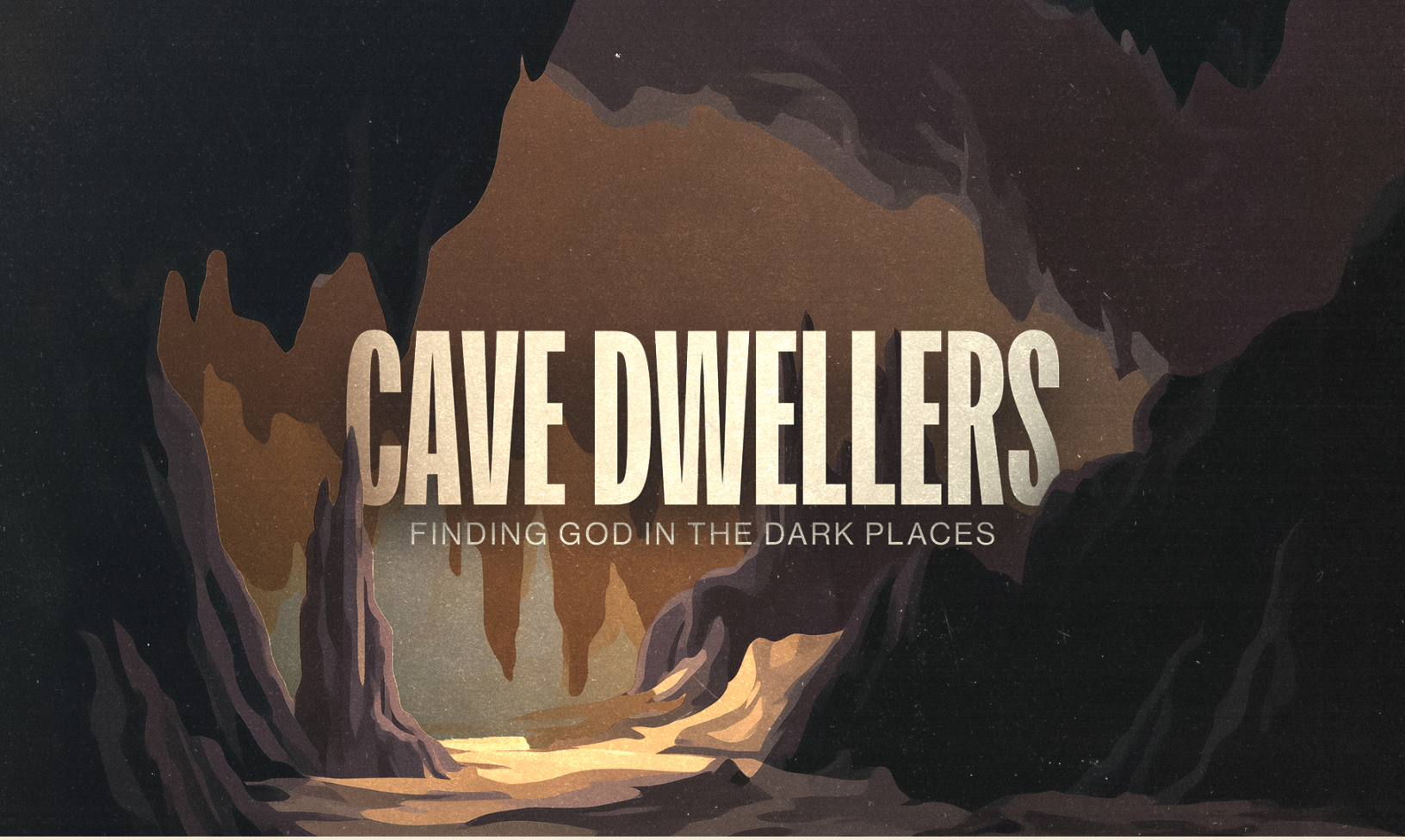


WEEK ONE

The Cave of Fear

1 Samuel 21:10–15; 22:1–2

5-DAY DEVOTIONAL · SMALL GROUP GUIDE

5-DAY DEVOTIONAL

When God Meets You in the Cave

DAY 1 When Fear Makes You Run

READING · 1 SAMUEL 21:10–15

David, a man of extraordinary courage and proven victories, found himself running from Saul out of sheer fear. The same man who faced lions, bears, and giants was now hiding his identity and acting like a madman. Fear has a way of doing that. It does not always change your circumstances; it changes the way you see them. When fear takes over, you begin making decisions based on feelings rather than what God has spoken over your life. Today, pause and ask what fear is causing you to believe that contradicts the promises God has already given you. His word has not changed.

REFLECTION

What promise has God spoken over your life that fear is currently causing you to doubt?

TRY THIS WEEK

Write down one promise from Scripture that directly addresses the fear you are facing. Read it aloud each morning this week and anchor your decisions to that promise rather than to your feelings.

DAY 2 The Cave God Already Knew About

READING · 1 SAMUEL 22:1–2

David fled to the cave of Adullam thinking he was simply finding a place to hide. What he did not realize was that God had already gone ahead of him. Nothing catches God by surprise. The broken, bitter, and debt-ridden men who gathered around David were not an accident. God was assembling something in that cave that David never could have planned on his own. Sometimes what looks like your lowest moment is actually God's greatest setup. The cave you are running to may be the very place God is building something in you that could not be built anywhere else.

REFLECTION

Looking back on a difficult season, can you identify something God was building in you that you could not see while you were in it?

TRY THIS WEEK

Reach out this week to someone in a difficult season. Share something honest about a cave experience from your own life and how God met you there. Let your pain become a bridge to someone else's healing.

DAY 3 Community in the Cave

READING · ECCLESIASTES 4:9–12

David did not stay alone in his cave. God sent him people. Not polished people, not people who had it all together, but broken people who were struggling just as he was. Ecclesiastes describes the power of two walking together, how one can lift the other when they fall, and how a cord of three strands is not easily broken. God never designed you to do life in isolation. The enemy wants you to believe that nobody understands, nobody cares, and nobody is coming. But God has a way of sending exactly the right people to the exact cave you are hiding in.

REFLECTION

Is there an area where you have been isolating yourself, convinced that no one would understand what you are going through?

TRY THIS WEEK

Take one step this week toward genuine community. Join a small group, attend a mid-week service, or have an honest conversation with a trusted friend. Choose connection over isolation. You were never meant to dwell in the cave alone.

DAY 4 The Cave Is Not Your Final Destination

READING · PSALM 34:4

David reflects on his season of fleeing and hiding and declares that he sought the Lord, and the Lord heard him and delivered him from all his fears. Notice carefully what he said. He did not say God removed his circumstances. He said God delivered him from his fears about his circumstances. That is a critical distinction. God is far more interested in transforming what is inside of you than in simply rearranging what is around you. The cave was not David's final

destination; it was a preparation ground. He entered as a fugitive and emerged as a commander. Your cave is not your home. It is part of your journey.

REFLECTION

Have you begun to treat a painful season as your permanent identity rather than a temporary stop on the path God has you on?

TRY THIS WEEK

Identify one area where you have let a cave experience define you. Write out a declaration from Scripture that speaks to who God says you are, and return to it whenever the old identity tries to reassert itself.

DAY 5 God Meets You Where You Are

READING · PSALM 139:7–12

The psalmist asks where he could possibly go to escape the presence of God, and the answer is nowhere. Not in the heights, not in the depths, not in the darkest night. God's presence reaches every cave. The darkness is not dark to Him. This is the great comfort for every cave dweller: God has not abandoned you in your hiding place. He has not turned away because the season is hard or because fear caused you to run. He is already there, already at work, already preparing a way forward. The cave may be dark, but God's presence is not diminished by darkness. One step at a time, He will lead you out.

REFLECTION

Do you genuinely believe God's presence is with you right now, or does the darkness of your circumstances make Him feel far away?

TRY THIS WEEK

Spend ten minutes today in quiet prayer, not asking for anything, simply acknowledging that God is present with you in whatever cave you find yourself in. Invite Him to speak, and listen.

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

The Cave of Fear

OPENING PRAYER & ICE BREAKER

> *Open your time together in prayer, asking God to meet each person honestly in whatever cave season they are walking through.*

Ice Breaker: When you were a child, what was your go-to hiding spot when things felt overwhelming or scary? What made that place feel safe?

SERMON OVERVIEW

This session explores David fleeing to the cave of Adullam and what it reveals about how God meets us in our darkest, most fearful moments. Rather than treating the cave as a place of defeat, the guide helps the group discover how God uses seasons of hiding, fear, and isolation to gather, develop, and prepare His people for greater purposes.

KEY SCRIPTURE · 1 SAMUEL 22:1–2

David escaped to the cave of Adullam. And everyone who was in distress, everyone in debt, and everyone who was bitter in soul gathered to him, and he became their commander. About four hundred men were with him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Section 1 · Fear Can Make You Run

1. David had already been anointed king, killed Goliath, and won countless battles, yet he still ran in fear when Saul threatened his life. What does this tell us about how fear works, even in people who have seen God move powerfully?
2. Fear drove David to act like a madman before the king of Gath. Can you think of a time fear caused you to act like someone you were not? What did that season look like?

3. Read Psalm 34:4. David says God delivered him not from his circumstances, but from his fears. What is the difference between those two things, and why does the distinction matter?

4. “Fear doesn't need to change your circumstances. It just needs to change the way you see them.” How have you seen this play out? What looked different once fear was removed from the equation?

5. In what areas of your life right now are you giving the voice of fear more authority than the voice of God?

Section 2 · God Can Use the Cave to Gather You

1. When David arrived at the cave, broken, bitter, and indebted people began showing up around him. Why do you think people are sometimes more drawn to someone else's pain and failure than to their success?

2. People can relate to your pain in ways they sometimes cannot relate to your victories. How has someone else's honesty about their struggle helped you feel less alone in your own?

3. Read 1 Samuel 22:1-2. David did not go to the cave looking for community. Community found him there. Has God ever sent unexpected people into your life during a hard season? What did that look like?

4. We were never meant to do life alone, and connection to a body of believers matters deeply in cave seasons. What makes it difficult to reach out when we are struggling? What keeps us isolated?

5. How can your small group specifically function as a community for people who are in cave seasons right now?

Section 3 · Your Cave Can Become a Place of Preparation

1. David went into the cave as a fugitive running for his life and came out as a commander over 400 men. What does this tell us about how God views our lowest moments compared to how we view them?

2. “A lot of us love the promises of God, but we don't like the preparation it takes to get there.” Where do you see that tension in your own life?

3. The sermon offered a question for cave seasons: “Lord, what are you trying to teach me here?” When did you last genuinely ask that? What might God be developing in you right now?

4 There is a difference between visiting a cave and making the cave your identity. How does a person know when they have crossed that line? What are the signs?

5 “David didn't become a king because he never saw a cave. He became a king because he was in a cave and learned how to get out.” How does that reframe the way you think about your own cave experiences?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ✓ Fear does not always change your circumstances. It changes the way you see them.
- ✓ God has a history of meeting people in caves. His presence does not disappear in dark seasons.
- ✓ Your cave is not your final destination. It is a place of preparation and development.
- ✓ God can use the same place the enemy intended for your destruction as a place of development.
- ✓ Sometimes God's deepest work in a cave season is what He changes inside you, not what He rearranges around you.
- ✓ Do not confuse where you are with where you are going.
- ✓ What happened to you may be part of your story, but it does not have to become your identity.
- ✓ You were never meant to do life alone. Community matters in cave seasons.

THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE

Choose one to put into practice this week:

Option 1 Seek the Lord About Your Cave

Set aside intentional time to pray and ask the question from the message: “Lord, what are you trying to teach me here?” Write down what you sense Him saying and bring it back to the group next week.

Option 2 Reach Out to Someone in a Cave

Think of one person who may be isolated, struggling, or hiding right now. Reach out this week, not with answers, but simply to let them know they are not alone.

Option 3 Identify the Lie Your Cave Is Telling

Write down one specific thing your cave season has made you believe about yourself or God. Then find one scripture that directly contradicts that lie and commit it to memory this week.

Option 4 Share Your Cave Story

If you have come through a difficult cave season, consider sharing that story with someone currently in one. Your testimony of how God brought you through is a ministry in itself.

Option 5 Commit to Community

If you have been isolating yourself from your church or small group, make a concrete plan this week to reconnect. Send the text, make the call, or show up.

PERSONAL JOURNALING

- What cave are you currently in, whether it is fear, failure, rejection, loneliness, disappointment, or exhaustion?
- What has that cave been making you believe about yourself, your future, or God?
- Does what you are believing in that cave line up with what Scripture says?
- What is one step you can take this week toward trusting God in that season rather than running deeper into the cave?

CLOSING PRAYER POINTS

- That God would meet each person in whatever cave they are currently facing.
- That fear would lose its grip and God's word would become louder than circumstances.
- That your group would be a genuine community where people do not have to hide.
- That each person would have courage to take the next step, even when they cannot see the exit.
- That God would use the caves in your lives not to destroy you but to develop you for His purposes.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- Memory Verse · Psalm 34:4: I sought the Lord, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears.

LOOKING AHEAD

Next session we continue the Cave Dwellers series with another cave dweller from Scripture, exploring what their story reveals about how God meets people in dark and isolated seasons.

> *The greatest miracle isn't that God gets you out of the cave. It's that He gets the cave out of you.*
>
> CAVE DWELLERS · WEEK ONE