



DAVID

A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

Small Group Guide: David, Week 12

Key Takeaways:

1. **Lies, even “little white lies,” have serious consequences.** Michal’s lie to Saul (“David threatened to kill me”) was meant to protect herself, but it gave Saul a public justification to brand David an outlaw and unleash the army against him. Pastor Allen emphasized that our “small” lies can cause major, unforeseen damage, especially in relationships.
2. **Covenant loyalty requires truth and courage.** Jonathan kept his covenant with David by telling Saul the truth and defending David’s character, even at personal risk. Michal had an even deeper covenant as David’s wife, but chose self-protection and deception instead. The contrast highlights that real covenant love stands for what’s right, even when it’s uncomfortable.

3. **Jealousy and fleshly living open the door to spiritual bondage.** Saul's jealousy over David's success, combined with his refusal to obey God, created a "spiritual vacuum" in his life. Pastor Allen connected this with the tormenting spirit that came upon him and his escalating attempts to kill David. When we let jealousy, fear, and anger rule us, we become vulnerable to deeper spiritual oppression and worse decisions.
4. **Conspiracies exist, but God is sovereign, and we shouldn't live in fear.** Saul's organized plan with his inner circle to assassinate David was a true conspiracy, a secret, unlawful plot for political reasons. Scripture acknowledges such things exist. But Pastor's sermon stressed Isaiah 8:12: don't call everything a conspiracy or live in dread as the world does. Even when people plot evil, God is in control, and believers are not called to a life of paranoia and fear.

Discussion Questions:

Jonathan's Integrity

1. What character qualities did Jonathan display in standing up to his father? What made this particularly difficult, given his position as Saul's son and heir?
2. Jonathan reminded Saul of David's past faithfulness and innocence. When have you had to remind someone of another person's good qualities when they were being unfairly judged?
3. How does covenant loyalty (like Jonathan's) differ from conditional friendship? What relationships in your life reflect this deeper level of commitment?

The Consequences of Lying

1. Michal loved David and wanted to protect him, but her lie had terrible consequences. Why do you think she chose to lie rather than tell the truth like Jonathan did?
2. Pastor Allen mentioned that Michal's lie affected her marriage to David permanently. How have you seen "small" lies damage relationships in your own life or observation?
3. Read Proverbs 12:19 and Ephesians 4:25. What do these verses teach us about the value of truthfulness? What makes telling the truth difficult in certain situations?
4. Have you ever told a "little white lie" to avoid conflict or please someone, only to face unexpected consequences? (Share only as comfortable) What did you learn?

Living Without Fear

1. God supernaturally protected David by causing Saul and his troops to prophesy. How does this demonstrate God's sovereignty even when circumstances seem dire?
2. Read Isaiah 8:12 again: "Don't call everything a conspiracy like they do. And don't live in dread of what frightens them." How does this verse speak to our current cultural moment?
3. What's the difference between being aware of real problems/conspiracies and living in constant fear or suspicion? How can we maintain healthy discernment without becoming paranoid?

Character Under Pressure

1. Compare and contrast how Jonathan, Michal, and Saul each responded under pressure. What determined their different choices?
2. David wrote Psalm 59 during this experience. Read verses 1-2, 9-10, 16-17. How did David process his fear and danger? What can we learn from his example?

Practical Application:

This Week's Challenge

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

1. **Truth-Telling Audit:** Reflect on the past week: Were there moments you told "little white lies" to avoid discomfort, please someone, or escape consequences? Commit to one area where you'll practice radical honesty this week (while still speaking truth in love). If you've told a lie that needs correcting, prayerfully consider making it right.
2. **Be a Jonathan:** Identify someone in your life who is being unfairly criticized or treated. Find an appropriate way to speak up for them this week, even if it's uncomfortable. Remind others (or the person themselves) of their good qualities and past faithfulness.
3. **Fear Inventory:** Make a list of things you worry about or fear (personal, political, cultural, etc.). For each item, write out a truth from Scripture that counters that fear. Commit Isaiah 8:12 to memory: "Don't call everything a conspiracy like they do. And don't live in dread of what frightens them." Share your list with one trusted person and ask them to pray with you.

4. **Covenant Relationships:** Evaluate your closest relationships: Are they conditional friendships or covenant commitments? Choose one relationship to deepen by demonstrating Jonathan-like loyalty this week. Have an honest conversation about what covenant friendship means to both of you.

CLOSING REFLECTION

Question for Silent Reflection: When am I most tempted to lie or shade the truth, and what fears am I allowing to control my thoughts and actions in those moments?

Closing Prayer:

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for your Word and for what we've seen in David, Saul, Jonathan, and Michal. Give us the courage to speak the truth, even when it's costly. Heal relationships in our lives that have been damaged by dishonesty. Set us free from fear and from seeing conspiracies everywhere. Grant us wisdom to be discerning without becoming suspicious or paranoid. Protect those among us who are facing unfair opposition, and surround them with Your favor. Form in us hearts of integrity like Jonathan's, loyal to You and faithful to others.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

5-Day Devotional

Day 1: The Courage of Truth-Telling

Reading: 1 Samuel 19:1-7; Proverbs 12:19

Devotional: Jonathan's integrity shines as a model for believers today. When faced with his father's conspiracy against David, Jonathan chose truth over family loyalty, declaring that killing David would be a sin. His courage reminds us that speaking truth, even when costly, honors God and protects the innocent. Like Jonathan, we face moments when telling the truth may strain relationships or create discomfort. Yet Scripture affirms that "truthful lips endure forever." Consider where you might be tempted to shade the truth for convenience or approval. Ask God for Jonathan's courage to speak truth in love, remembering that integrity builds trust while deception—even "little white lies" can have devastating consequences we never intended.

Day 2: The Danger of Deception

Reading: 1 Samuel 19:11-17; Ephesians 4:25

Devotional: Michal's lie to protect herself had unintended consequences. David became branded an outlaw, affecting their marriage and his entire future. Her story warns us that deception, even with good intentions, opens doors we cannot close. When we lie to avoid discomfort or conflict, we sacrifice long-term trust for short-term relief. Paul commands believers to "put off falsehood and speak truthfully" because we are members of one body. Michal could have followed Jonathan's example, pleading David's innocence before Saul. Instead, her fabricated story gave Saul justification for years of pursuit. Reflect on areas where you've been tempted to bend the truth. Confess any deception to God and those affected. Choose today to build relationships on truth's solid foundation.

Day 3: God's Sovereignty Over Conspiracies

Reading: Psalm 59:1-5; Isaiah 8:11-13

Devotional: David penned Psalm 59 while fleeing Saul's assassins, crying out for rescue from those who conspired against him. Yet even in danger, David trusted God's sovereignty. Isaiah warns against seeing conspiracies everywhere and living in constant fear. Yes, conspiracies exist, people plot evil for political and ideological reasons, but God remains in control. When we fixate on conspiracies, we miss God's goodness and provision. David didn't deny the threat, but he turned to God rather than living in paralyzing fear. What conspiracies or threats consume your thoughts? Are you more aware of evil schemes than God's protective presence? Today, acknowledge real dangers but anchor your trust in the One who "neither slumbers nor sleeps." Let faith, not fear, direct your heart.

Day 4: The Spirit's Restraining Power

Reading: 1 Samuel 19:18-24; Romans 8:5-9

Devotional: Three times Saul sent troops to capture David, and three times God's Spirit came upon them, causing them to prophesy instead. Finally, Saul himself came, and God's Spirit overwhelmed him, stopping his murderous intent. This dramatic intervention reveals God's power to restrain evil and protect His anointed. When we walk by the Spirit rather than the flesh, God can redirect even hostile intentions. Saul's experience should have led to repentance, but his hardened heart only grew more determined. This warns

us: we can experience God's power yet resist His purposes. Are you yielding to the Spirit's work in your life, or hardening your heart like Saul? Ask God to keep your heart soft and responsive to His Spirit's leading, choosing obedience over stubbornness.

Day 5: Covenant Faithfulness in Relationships

Reading: 1 Samuel 18:1-4, 19:1-7; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Devotional: Jonathan and Michal both had covenant relationships with David, yet their responses differed dramatically. Jonathan honored his covenant by speaking truth and defending David's innocence. Michal violated hers through deception, damaging their marriage permanently. Covenant faithfulness requires choosing truth, loyalty, and love even when difficult. In marriage, friendship, and community, we make commitments that demand integrity. Jonathan risked his father's anger and his own inheritance to honor his word. His example challenges us: Are we people of our word? Do we honor our commitments when inconvenient? Examine your relationships today. Where have you compromised integrity for comfort? Covenant love "always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres." Ask God to make you faithful in your commitments, speaking truth that builds rather than lies that destroy.