



DAVID

A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

Small Group Guide: David, Week 16

Key Takeaways:

1. David's family ties to Moab through Ruth, his great-grandmother, provided both relational and political grounds for asylum under the Moabite king.
2. God called David to leave safety and return to danger because spiritual growth and maturity come from facing adversity, not avoiding it.
3. Saul's paranoia led him to project his own guilt onto others, accusing them of the very things he himself was doing. This is a recognizable pattern of human nature.
4. Confession, drawn from the Greek word *homologeō*, means to agree with God about our sin rather than justify or argue around it.
5. God does not exist to serve us. We exist to serve God. We are not the protagonists of the story; we play a supporting role in His.

Discussion Questions:

Opening Question

1. Think of a time when the safest or most comfortable choice was not the right choice. What made you recognize that? What did you do?

Leaving Safety Behind

1. David's original plan was completely logical: to stay in Moab until the threat from Saul passed. What does it tell us about David's character that he obeyed the prophet Gad and returned to Judah anyway, even knowing the danger?
2. Pastor Allen stated: "God's will for David was not for him to be in the safest and most comfortable environment, but for him to be in an environment that would prepare him for his future position." How does this challenge the way we typically pray about difficult circumstances?
3. Read James 1:2-4. The passage instructs believers to consider trials an opportunity for joy. Be honest with the group: does that feel natural or does it feel forced? What makes it difficult to hold that perspective in the middle of a hard season?
4. Can you identify a specific adversity in your own life that, looking back, shaped you in a way comfort never could have?

The Danger of Projection

1. Pastor Allen defined projection as "an unconscious mechanism where a person attributes their own sinful thoughts, feelings, or impulses to someone else." Saul

accused David of wanting to kill him, accused Jonathan of encouraging it, and accused his officers of conspiring against him, all while he himself was guilty of every one of those things. Where do you see this pattern showing up in everyday life, in relationships, workplaces, or even churches?

2. Pastor said: "It is human nature to accuse people of what we are guilty of." Why do you think this defense mechanism is so common? What does it protect us from having to face?
3. Saul's projection did not stay static. Pastor Allen noted that the more we project our guilt onto others rather than owning it, the more depraved we become. What does that progression look like in practice? What is the cost of never owning our sin?

Honest Confession Before God

1. The Greek word for confess, *homologeō*, means "to speak the same thing," or to agree with God about our sin. How is that different from simply saying "I'm sorry" or asking God to overlook something?
2. Pastor pointed out that we tend to add a "but" to our confessions, which often nullifies what came before it. What are some common "buts" that people attach to confessions? What makes it hard to agree with God without qualification?
3. The passage in 1 John 1:9 says God is both faithful and just to forgive. Pastor Allen explained that "just" means God forgives us according to the rules, because Jesus bore the full weight of sin on our behalf. How does understanding the justice behind forgiveness, not just

the mercy, change the way you approach confession?

You Are Not the Protagonist

1. "God does not exist to serve you. You exist to serve God. You are not the protagonist of the story. You play a supporting role in the story." How does that land with you? Does that feel freeing, convicting, or both?
2. If we genuinely believed we were playing a supporting role in God's story rather than the lead role in our own, what would change about the way we make decisions, handle disappointment, or respond to adversity?

Practical Application:

This Week's Challenge

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

1. **Identify an adverse situation in your life right now that you have been trying to escape or minimize.** Spend time in prayer asking God whether He may be using it to prepare you for something ahead rather than punish you or abandon you.
2. **Reflect honestly on a relationship where you have been quick to accuse or criticize.** Ask yourself whether any of what you are attributing to that person is something you recognize in yourself. Bring that honestly before God in confession.
3. **Practice homologueo this week.** When you become aware of a sinful thought, feeling, or action, resist the urge to explain or justify it. Simply agree with God that it is sin, receive His forgiveness, and move forward.

Closing Reflection

Close your time together by reading James 1:2-4 aloud as a group. Then allow a moment of silence before praying together. Ask God to give each person in the group the courage to embrace the adversity He has allowed rather than simply endure it, and the honesty to confess rather than project.

Closing Prayer:

Lord,

Thank You for reminding us that Your will is not always the safest or easiest path, but it is always good. Help us trust You when You lead us into difficult places, knowing You use adversity to grow our faith and prepare us for Your purposes. Keep us from blaming others for what we need to confess, and give us humble hearts that agree with You about our sin. Thank You for Your faithfulness to forgive and cleanse us through Jesus. Teach us to live as servants in Your story, not our own.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

5-Day Devotional

Day 1: When God Calls You Out of Comfort

Reading: 1 Samuel 22:3-5

Devotional: David had every reason to stay in Moab. He was safe, protected, and sheltered from the man who wanted him dead. Yet God, through the prophet Gad, called him back into danger. This is a sobering reminder that God's will does not always lead us toward comfort. It leads us toward purpose. Safety and ease are not always signs of God's blessing. Sometimes the most faithful thing you can do is leave the stronghold behind and walk back into the difficult place God has appointed for you. Trust that the One who

calls you out is also the One who goes before you.

Day 2: Adversity as God's Classroom

Reading: James 1:2-4

Devotional: James tells his readers to consider trials an opportunity for great joy. This is one of the most counterintuitive commands in all of Scripture. Yet the reasoning is clear: when faith is tested, endurance grows, and when endurance is fully developed, we become mature and complete. God did not shape David into a great king in the halls of a palace. He shaped him in caves, in wilderness, and in seasons of being hunted. The adversity was not punishment. It was preparation. Whatever hardship you are currently facing, ask God what He is developing in you through it rather than simply asking Him to remove it.

Day 3: The Danger of Projection and the Freedom of Confession

Reading: 1 John 1:8-10

Devotional: Saul is a tragic example of what happens when a person refuses to own their sin. Rather than confessing his murderous jealousy before God, he projected it outward, accusing David, Jonathan, and his own officers of the very conspiracies he himself was engineering. The longer he refused to confess, the more depraved he became. The word "confess" in the original Greek means to speak the same thing as God, to agree with Him about what is true. When we sin in thought, feeling, or action, God calls us to stop arguing and start agreeing. Confession is not defeat. It is the doorway to cleansing and freedom.

Day 4: Loyalty, Faithfulness, and the God Who Redeems Outsiders

Reading: Ruth 1:14-17

Devotional: Ruth was a Moabite woman who had every cultural and social reason to return to her own people after her husband died. Instead, she clung to Naomi and declared that Naomi's God would be her God. This act of radical loyalty placed her inside the story of redemption in ways she could not have anticipated. She became the great-grandmother of King David and a forerunner in the lineage that would lead to Jesus Christ, our ultimate Kinsman Redeemer. God does not overlook the faithful. He weaves their devotion into His larger story. Your faithfulness today is never wasted, even when the outcome is invisible to you.

Day 5: You Are Not the Protagonist

Reading: Romans 8:28-30

Devotional: One of the most clarifying truths in the Christian life is this: God does not exist to serve you. You exist to serve God. This does not diminish your value. It actually elevates your purpose. Romans 8:28 assures us that God works all things together for good for those who are called according to His purpose. Notice the phrase "according to His purpose." The good being worked out is not primarily your comfort or convenience. It is your conformity to the image of Christ, as verse 29 makes clear. David was not the

center of his own story. He was a servant in God's story. So are we. That is not a burden. It is the greatest honor imaginable.