



DAVID

A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

Small Group Guide: David, Week 18

Key Takeaways:

1. **God's guidance is clear, wise, and trustworthy.** David repeatedly sought the Lord before making major decisions. Through Abiathar and the ephod, David received specific direction from God about whether to rescue Keilah and whether Saul would come after him. David did not move based only on instinct, emotion, or pressure. He paused to seek God's will.
2. **God knows not only what will happen, but what could happen.** When David asked if Saul would come to Keilah and if the leaders of Keilah would betray him, God said yes. But after David left, Saul did not come. This shows that God knew what would happen if David stayed. God's knowledge is greater than ours, and His guidance can protect us from dangers we cannot see.

3. **Many times, the people you help the most appreciate it the least.** David rescued Keilah when Saul would not. He fought the Philistines, recovered what had been stolen, and saved the city. Yet the leaders of Keilah would have betrayed him to Saul. Pastor Allen reminded us that we should still do the right thing, in the right way, with the right heart, even when others do not appreciate it.
4. **Do what needs to be done, even if it is not in your job description.** It was Saul's responsibility as king to protect Keilah, but he failed to act. David stepped up and acted like Israel's true shepherd before he ever received the title of king. Faithfulness often means carrying responsibility before receiving recognition.
5. **Obedience does not always make life easier.** David obeyed God by rescuing Keilah, but that obedience placed him in a vulnerable position. Saul heard where he was and planned to trap him. Obedience may bring hardship, danger, or disappointment in this life, but God sees and rewards faithfulness in the end.

Discussion Questions:

Opening Question

1. Have you ever done the right thing and expected it to make life easier, only to find that it made life more complicated? What happened, and what did you learn from it?

Seeking God's Guidance

David did not assume he knew what to do. He inquired of the Lord before going to Keilah, and he sought the Lord again when his

men were afraid.

1. Why do you think it is so easy to make decisions first and seek God afterward?
2. David asked God specific questions and received specific direction. What are some decisions in your life where you need to slow down and seek the Lord more intentionally?
3. Pastor Allen emphasized that David did not move until the Lord gave direction. What does it look like practically for believers today to seek God's guidance, since we do not use the Urim and Thummim?
4. David sought the Lord again, likely for the benefit of his men. How can spiritual leaders, parents, or friends help others trust God's direction when fear is present?

God Knows What We Cannot See

God told David that Saul would come to Keilah and that the leaders of Keilah would betray him. Saul knew that if David stayed, he would come. God knows not only what will happen, but He knows what could happen in every possible situation.

1. How does this story strengthen your confidence in God's wisdom and knowledge?
2. Have you ever looked back and realized God protected you from something you did not fully understand at the time?
3. Why is it important to remember that God knows not only what will happen, but what could happen in every possible situation?
4. How should God's complete knowledge affect the way we pray, make plans, and respond when He redirects us?

Helping People Who Do Not Appreciate It

David rescued Keilah, but the leaders of Keilah would have handed him over to Saul. Pastor Allen said, “Many times, the people you help the most appreciate it the least.”

1. Why is it so painful when people you have helped respond with ingratitude, criticism, or betrayal?
2. How can disappointment with people harden our hearts if we are not careful?
3. Jesus taught us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. How does Matthew 5:44–45 challenge the way we naturally respond to ungrateful or hurtful people?
4. What is the difference between helping others with a godly heart and helping others because we need appreciation, loyalty, or recognition from them?

Do What Needs to Be Done

Pastor Allen pointed out that rescuing Keilah was Saul’s job, not David’s. Yet David stepped up because something needed to be done.

1. Where do you see people avoiding responsibility because “it is not their job”?
2. Have you ever had to step up and do something that needed to be done, even though it was not technically your responsibility? What did that require from you?
3. Pastor Allen gave the precept, “Do the job before you get the job.” How does David’s life illustrate that principle?
4. What are some dangers of seeking the title, promotion, or recognition before developing the character and faithfulness required for the role?

Obedience Does Not Always Make Life Easier

David obeyed God and rescued Keilah, but that obedience exposed him to danger. Saul planned to trap him in the city.

1. Why do we sometimes assume that obedience should immediately make life smoother?
2. Can you think of a biblical example where obedience made someone's life harder before it got better?
3. Pastor Allen said that doing the right thing may not always work out in this life, but it will work out in the end. How does the hope of eternal reward help us remain faithful?
4. What is one area where God may be calling you to obey, even though obedience may not make things easier right away?

Practical Application:

This Week's Challenge

As a group, discuss which of these feels most personally relevant this week. Encourage honesty over performance.

1. Before making an important decision this week, pause and intentionally seek the Lord. Pray specifically, search Scripture, and ask for wisdom before acting.
2. Identify one place where fear may be influencing your decision-making. Ask God to replace fear with faith, wisdom, and a sound mind.
3. Serve someone this week without expecting appreciation, recognition, or repayment. Do it as an act of obedience to God.

4. Look for one situation where something needs to be done, even if it is not technically your responsibility. Step up with humility and faithfulness.
5. If obedience has made your life harder recently, bring that honestly before God. Ask Him for endurance and trust that He sees your faithfulness.

Closing Reflection

Pastor Allen reminded us that David acted like Israel's true shepherd before he ever became Israel's king. He did the right thing, even when it was not his job. He helped people who would not appreciate it. He obeyed God, even when obedience put him in danger.

Faithfulness is not measured by immediate reward, public recognition, or easy circumstances. Faithfulness is doing the right thing, in the right way, with the right heart, because God sees and God will reward in the end.

Closing Prayer:

Father,

Thank You that You know what we cannot see. You know what will happen, and You know what could happen in every situation. Teach us to seek Your guidance before we act. Give us faith to obey You even when obedience is costly or complicated. Give us courage to do what needs to be done, humility to obey without applause, and endurance to trust You when obedience does not make life easier. Help us remember that You see, You know, and You reward faithfulness in the end.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

5-Day Devotional

Day 1: Seeking God Before You Step Out

Reading: 1 Samuel 23:1-5

Devotional: David did not rush into battle based on instinct or reputation. He stopped and asked God first. Before every significant decision, there is a moment where we choose to consult God or trust ourselves. David's habit of inquiry before action was not weakness; it was wisdom. The same God who guided David through the Urim and Thummim speaks to us today through Scripture, prayer, and the Holy Spirit. Before you make your next major move, pause. Ask. Listen. God does not reward recklessness dressed up as faith. He rewards the humble heart that waits on His word before taking a single step forward.

Day 2: God Knows Every Possible Outcome

Reading: Psalm 139:1-6

Devotional: Pastor Allen's sermon highlighted a profound truth from 1 Samuel 23. God told David that Saul would come and that the people of Keilah would betray him. David left, and neither event occurred. This reveals what theologians call middle knowledge: God's complete awareness of what would happen in every possible scenario. This is not a small comfort. It means that when you face uncertainty, God is not uncertain. When your future feels unpredictable, God holds every possible version of it in His hands. You are never navigating blind when you walk with a God who sees all things, in all directions, at all times.

Day 3: Doing Good to Those Who Will Not Thank You

Reading: Matthew 5:43-48

Devotional: David rescued Keilah at great personal risk. He was not obligated to go. The king would not go. Yet David went, won the battle, returned the stolen grain, and brought back livestock as well. The reward for his sacrifice? The people of Keilah were prepared to hand him over to Saul the moment it became convenient. Pastor Allen's first principle cuts deep: many times, the people you help the most appreciate it the least. But David's call was not to be appreciated; it was to be obedient. God does not ask you to help people because they will thank you. He asks you to help them because that is what His children do.

Day 4: Do the Job Before You Get the Job

Reading: Luke 16:10-12

Devotional: David carried the weight of a king's responsibilities long before anyone placed a crown on his head. He protected Israel's people when the actual king refused to. He led with courage, sought God's guidance, and bore the cost of leadership without receiving any of its recognition. The sermon's second principle challenges us deeply: do the job before you get the job. Faithfulness is not a strategy for advancement; it is a reflection of character. God does not promote people into greater responsibility and then hope they develop integrity. He watches how you handle what you have been given right now, in obscurity, without applause, before He entrusts you with more.

Day 5: Obedience Does Not Always Make Life Easier

Reading: Romans 8:28, James 1:2-4

Devotional: David obeyed God completely. He went to Keilah when no one else would. He fought, he won, and he saved a city. Then he found himself trapped inside that same city with an army marching toward him and the very people he rescued preparing to betray him. Obedience placed him in a more dangerous position than disobedience would have. The sermon's third principle is one of the most important truths a believer can internalize: obedience does not always make life easier. But it always makes eternity richer. God does not promise that doing right will produce immediate comfort. He promises that in the end, for those who remain faithful, it will all work out, if not in this life, then fully and finally in the life to come.