



DAVID

A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

Small Group Guide: David, Week 19

Key Takeaways:

1. **Jonathan encouraged David by pointing him to God.**
David was being hunted day after day by Saul, but Jonathan sought him out and encouraged him to stay strong in his faith in God. True and meaningful encouragement does not merely tell people to “hang in there” or “be strong.” It points them back to the Lord, because God is the only lasting source of strength, comfort, and hope.
2. **Jonathan submitted his own ambitions to God's will.**
Humanly speaking, Jonathan could have expected to inherit Saul's throne. But he knew God had chosen David. Instead of competing with David, Jonathan supported him. He was willing to play second fiddle if that meant God's purpose would be accomplished.
3. **The hope of God comforts us in grief.** Pastor Allen

reminded us that when death, loss, or tragedy comes, the only true comfort is found in God. Like David said after his son died, “I will go to him one day, but he cannot return to me.” Believers grieve, but not like those who have no hope. Our hope is that those who die in Christ are with the Lord, and one day their bodies will be resurrected.

4. **Some trials repeat because we live in a sinful world among sinful people.** The Ziphites betrayed David more than once. This does not always mean David failed to learn a lesson. Sometimes people repeat the same sinful patterns because of their fallen nature. Wisdom means recognizing patterns and knowing when certain people or places need to be avoided.
5. **People may betray us, circumstances may be dire, and situations may seem hopeless, but they cannot thwart God’s purpose.** Saul seemed to have David trapped. He and his men were closing in. But at the right moment, a messenger came and told Saul that the Philistines were raiding the land. Saul had to leave, and David escaped. God’s purpose cannot be stopped by betrayal, danger, or impossible circumstances.

Discussion Questions:

Opening Question

1. Have you ever had someone encourage you at exactly the right time? What did they say or do that helped strengthen your faith?

Jonathan Encourages David

1. Why do you think meaningful encouragement often requires intentional effort?
2. Jonathan encouraged David to stay strong in his faith in God. What is the difference between worldly encouragement and godly encouragement?
3. When someone is hurting, afraid, or discouraged, why is it important to point them to God rather than just offering words of encouragement?
4. Who in your life may need you to seek them out and encourage them right now?

Pointing People to God

1. When you are going through a difficult season, what helps you keep your faith anchored in God?
2. Why is God the only true source of comfort when people experience deep grief, loss, or tragedy?
3. How can we comfort people without sounding shallow, dismissive, or overly simplistic?
4. What Scriptures, promises, or truths about God have brought you comfort during a painful season?

God's Promises in Difficult Circumstances

1. Why is it easy to doubt God's promises when circumstances seem to contradict them?
2. Jonathan told David, "You are going to be the king of Israel." How can godly friends help us see God's promises when fear or discouragement clouds our vision?
3. Pastor Allen said, "When circumstances make God's promises difficult to see, godly friends strengthen our faith by reminding us that what God has promised, circumstances cannot prevent." How does that truth

apply to David's situation?

4. How does that truth apply to something you are facing right now?

Repeated Trials and Sinful Patterns

1. Pastor Allen said that sometimes we face the same trials again and again, not because we failed, but because we live in a sinful world. How does that perspective help us?
2. Why do people often repeat the same sinful or dysfunctional patterns?
3. Have you ever had to recognize a repeated pattern in someone's behavior and respond with wisdom?
4. What is the difference between forgiveness and foolishly placing yourself back in the same harmful situation?
5. Pastor Allen said that after the Ziphites betrayed David again, David learned to stay away from the wilderness of Ziph. Are there "wildernesses of Ziph" that some believers need to avoid today?

God's Purpose Cannot Be Thwarted

1. What stands out to you about the timing of David's escape?
2. How does this story show that God can use circumstances, interruptions, and even enemies to protect His people?
3. Have you ever seen God intervene at just the right time, even when things seemed hopeless?
4. Why should believers take comfort in the truth that people cannot thwart God's purpose?
5. What situation in your life do you need to entrust again to God's sovereignty and timing?

Practical Application:

This Week's Challenge

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

1. Seek someone out to encourage them. Do not wait for them to ask. Reach out intentionally and point them back to God.
2. Remind someone of God's promises. Share a Scripture, a truth about God, or a word of biblical encouragement with someone facing discouragement.
3. Ask yourself where circumstances are making God's promises hard to see. Write down one promise of God and choose to trust it this week.
4. Practice Jonathan-like humility. Look for one opportunity to support, celebrate, or serve someone else without needing recognition.
5. Grieve with hope. If you are carrying grief, bring it honestly to God. Remind yourself that believers do not grieve as those who have no hope.
6. Recognize repeated patterns. Ask God for wisdom about any relationship, habit, or environment where repeated sinful patterns keep harming you.
7. Trust God's purpose. If you feel trapped, betrayed, or surrounded, pray and surrender the situation to God. Ask Him to make a way in His timing.

Closing Reflection

Jonathan's encouragement came at a critical moment in David's life. David was hunted, weary, and surrounded by

danger. Jonathan did not offer shallow optimism. He pointed David back to God and reminded him of what God had promised.

Soon after, David was betrayed by the Ziphites and nearly captured by Saul. But even when betrayal came from his own tribe, and danger closed in on every side, God's purpose still stood. Saul could not stop what God had promised. The Ziphites could not stop what God had promised. Circumstances could not stop what God had promised.

Faithful friends remind us of that truth. Godly encouragement strengthens our faith when life makes God's promises difficult to see. And even when people betray us, God remains faithful.

Closing Prayer:

Father,

Thank You that Your promises are stronger than our circumstances. Teach us to be people who encourage others by pointing them back to You. Help us to remind one another of Your truth when fear, grief, betrayal, or discouragement makes it hard to see clearly.

Give us the humility of Jonathan, who submitted his own ambitions to Your will. Give us the wisdom of David, who learned to trust You even when others betrayed him. Help us grieve with hope, forgive with grace, and walk with wisdom.

When we feel trapped or surrounded, remind us that no

person, circumstance, or betrayal can thwart Your purpose.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

5-Day Devotional

Day 1: The God Who Does Not Let Go

Reading: 1 Samuel 23:14-18

Devotional: David was hunted, hidden, and hemmed in on every side. Yet the text is clear: God did not let Saul find him. There is a profound comfort in recognizing that no enemy, no circumstance, and no conspiracy can outmaneuver a God who is actively working on your behalf. You may feel surrounded, but you are not abandoned. The same God who shielded David in the wilderness is the same God who watches over you today. His protection is not passive. He is engaged, intentional, and sovereign over every detail of your life. Rest in that truth today.

Day 2: The Courage to Encourage

Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:11 and Hebrews 3:13

Devotional: Jonathan did not wait for David to come to him. He sought David out in the wilderness and pointed him directly to God. That is the model of true encouragement. It is not flattery, and it is not empty reassurance. It is one believer walking toward another in their darkest moment and saying: God is still faithful. God has not changed His mind about you. Jonathan reminded David of what was true when David could not see it clearly for himself. The world offers comfort that fades. Godly encouragement anchors a person to something that cannot be moved. Be the Jonathan in someone's life today.

Day 3: When Circumstances Contradict the Promise

Reading: Romans 4:18-21

Devotional: David had been anointed king, yet he was living as a fugitive. The promise and the circumstances were in direct conflict with one another. This is a tension that every believer eventually faces. God says one thing. Life appears to say another. But as Jonathan reminded David, what God has promised, circumstances cannot prevent. Abraham faced the same tension and chose to believe God over what he could see. Faith is not the absence of difficulty. It is the decision to hold onto what God has said even when everything around you tells you otherwise. The promise is still the promise.

Day 4: Grief, Hope, and the God Who Holds What We Have Lost

Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Devotional: David's words in 2 Samuel 12:23 after the death of his son capture one of the

most honest and hope-filled statements in all of Scripture. He acknowledged that his child would not return to him, but he declared with confidence that he would go to him one day. That is not wishful thinking. That is resurrection hope. For every believer who has stood at a graveside and felt the weight of permanent goodbye, the Word of God speaks a different word. It is not permanent. It is temporary. The grave is not a final resting place. It is a waiting place. Your hope is not a feeling. It is a Person.

Day 5: Betrayal, Purpose, and the Sovereignty of God

Reading: Genesis 50:19-20 and Romans 8:28

Devotional: The Ziphites belonged to David's own tribe. They were extended family, and they betrayed him not once but twice. Betrayal from those closest to us carries a unique kind of pain. Yet even in that betrayal, God's purpose for David was never in danger. Just as Saul was closing in, God redirected the entire situation through a Philistine raid. What men intend for harm, God reserves the right to redirect for His purpose. This does not minimize the pain of betrayal. It does, however, put it in its proper place. People may betray us, circumstances may be dire, situations may seem hopeless, but none of it can thwart what God has purposed for your life.