



DAVID

A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

Small Group Guide: David, Week 10

Key Takeaways:

1. **Popularity comes with a price.** Success and favor often provoke jealousy and opposition from unexpected sources.
2. **Not all spiritual activity is from God.** We must discern between the Holy Spirit, demonic spirits, and our own desires speaking through us.
3. **Wise behavior under attack is crucial.** David's response was to continue serving faithfully and wisely, not to retaliate or defend himself aggressively.
4. **God's presence is our protection.** David escaped harm repeatedly because "the Lord was with him" (v. 12, 14).
5. **Guard your heart and mouth.** What's in our heart comes out of our mouth, but our words can also fuel negative emotions and lead us into sin.

Discussion Questions:

Understanding the Text

1. What changed in David's life after he defeated Goliath? How did his role in Saul's service transform from part-time harpist to full-time military commander?
2. What was Saul's response to David's popularity? Read 1 Samuel 18:8-9. Why did the women's song provoke such anger in Saul?
3. Pastor Allen explained that Saul "prophesied" under an evil spirit (v. 10). What does it mean that this was prophecy from his own spirit rather than from God? Why is this dangerous?

Personal Reflection

1. Have you ever experienced jealousy over someone else's success or popularity? What emotions and thoughts accompanied that experience? How did you handle it?
2. On the flip side, have you experienced the "price of popularity"? Share a time when success, recognition, or favor brought unexpected negative consequences.
3. David "behaved himself wisely" despite Saul's attacks (v. 14-15). What does wise behavior look like when others are jealous of you or trying to harm you?

Deeper Application

1. Pastor Allen's sermon warned about "prophetic declarations" that come from our own desires rather than God's Spirit. How can we discern whether our prayers, declarations, or prophecies are from God, from ourselves, or from a demonic influence?
2. Verse 12 says, "Saul was afraid of David because the Lord was with him." What does it look like practically for the

Lord to be "with" someone? How would others recognize God's presence in your life?

3. David never retaliated against Saul despite multiple assassination attempts. What does this teach us about responding to those who harm us? When is it most difficult to resist retaliation?

Practical Application:

This Week's Challenge

Choose one of the following to put into practice:

1. **Examine your heart for jealousy or envy.** If you're struggling with someone else's success, confess it to God and pray blessings over that person daily this week.
2. **Practice wise behavior.** If you're facing opposition or jealousy from others, commit to responding with wisdom, humility, and continued faithfulness rather than retaliation or self-defense.
3. **Guard your words.** Pay attention to how you speak about others, especially those who have wronged you. Refuse to curse or speak evil over anyone, even in jest.
4. **Seek God's presence.** Make it your daily prayer that the Lord would be "with you" in a way that's evident to others through your character and actions.

Accountability Questions

- Who in your life might be struggling with jealousy toward you? How can you respond with grace?

- Are you harboring jealousy or resentment toward anyone? What steps will you take to address it?
- How can this group pray for you as you navigate success, opposition, or relationships this week?

Closing Prayer:

Lord,

Thank you for the example of David. When you give us success or favor, keep us humble and faithful, desiring only to serve you. Reveal any jealousy, envy, or bitterness in our hearts, and give us the courage to repent of it. When we face opposition, grant us wisdom to respond righteously, not in fear or retaliation. Give us discernment to recognize the true source of spiritual impressions and words, so we follow only your Spirit. Let your presence be clearly evident in each of our lives, for your glory.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

5-Day Devotional

Day 1: When Success Breeds Opposition

Reading: 1 Samuel 18:1-9

Devotional: David's victory over Goliath brought him national acclaim, but it also awakened jealousy in King Saul's heart. Success in God's service doesn't guarantee human approval. When you faithfully serve the Lord and experience His blessing, be prepared for opposition from unexpected sources. The same achievements that should inspire gratitude may instead provoke envy in insecure hearts. Like David, maintain purity of motive, serve God and others without seeking recognition. Remember that your faithfulness is ultimately to the Lord, not to those who might resent your success. God sees your heart and will vindicate you in His time. Don't allow others' jealousy to diminish your commitment to excellence in all God calls you to do.

Day 2: Discerning the Source of Prophetic Words

Reading: 1 Samuel 18:10-11; James 1:13-15

Devotional: Not every spiritual manifestation comes from God. Saul prophesied under the influence of an evil spirit, speaking death over David from his own corrupted desires. This sobering reality reminds us to test every spiritual word and impression. The enemy knows our weaknesses and can exploit our desires, tempting us to speak curses rather than blessings. True prophecy from God builds up, encourages, and aligns with Scripture. When anger, jealousy, or bitterness fuel our words, even spiritual-sounding ones, we've crossed into dangerous territory. Guard your heart diligently. What you harbor inside will eventually manifest in your words and actions. Submit every thought, desire, and word to the Holy Spirit's examination before releasing it into the atmosphere.

Day 3: God's Protection in Impossible Situations

Reading: 1 Samuel 18:10-14; Psalm 91:1-7

Devotional: Twice, Saul hurled his javelin at David in close quarters, and twice David escaped. This wasn't luck or quick reflexes; it was divine intervention. When God has a purpose for your life, no weapon formed against you will prosper. Saul recognized the Lord's hand protecting David, which only increased his fear. You may face situations where harm seems inevitable, where enemies plot your downfall, where circumstances appear impossible. Take courage: the same God who deflected Saul's javelin stands as your defender. He can make your enemies' schemes backfire and turn intended harm into greater blessing. Trust His protection even when danger feels imminent. Your safety rests not in your ability to dodge life's javelins, but in God's sovereign hand over your life.

Day 4: Wise Behavior Under Hostile Leadership

Reading: 1 Samuel 18:12-16; Proverbs 21:1

Devotional: David behaved wisely despite serving under a king who wanted him dead. He didn't retaliate, scheme, or attempt to seize power. Instead, he faithfully executed his duties with excellence. This wisdom frustrated Saul's plans and increased David's favor with the people. When you face hostile authority or unjust treatment, your response reveals your character. Wisdom doesn't demand immediate justice or vindication; it trusts God's timing and continues faithful service. Don't allow others' dysfunction to corrupt your integrity. Like David, lead well, serve excellently, and let God manage the outcomes. Your consistent faithfulness under pressure will showcase God's presence in your life more powerfully than any self-defense. The Lord was with David, and that made all the difference.

Day 5: The Visibility of Authentic Leadership

Reading: 1 Samuel 18:13-16; Matthew 5:14-16

Devotional: David "went out and came in before the people." his leadership was visible and authentic. He didn't command from safety while others risked their lives; he led from the front lines. This visibility, intended by Saul to destroy him, actually increased his influence and the people's love for him. God often uses what enemies intend for harm to

showcase His faithfulness in our lives. Authentic spiritual leadership requires visibility, not self-promotion, but genuine engagement with those you serve. People need to see faith lived out in real circumstances, not just proclaimed from positions of comfort. Your willingness to be present in the battle, to share both the risks and victories with others, builds trust and demonstrates Christ's love. Let your light shine visibly before others that they may glorify your Father in heaven.