



DAVID

A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

Small Group Guide: David, Week 21

Key Takeaways:

1. **Faithfulness to God begins early.** Samuel heard God's voice as a young child and remained sensitive to it throughout his entire life. A deep relationship with God is not reserved for adults or those in formal ministry.
2. **Obedience is more valuable than sacrifice.** As Samuel declared to Saul, obedience to God's voice matters more than religious activity. Rebellion and stubbornness carry serious spiritual consequences.
3. **Courage is required to speak God's truth.** Samuel delivered difficult, unwelcome messages to the most powerful people in Israel -- including the king himself. He did so without compromise because he had learned early that God's word must be spoken regardless of the audience.

4. **God's servants may not live to see the fruit of their labor.** Samuel anointed David as king but died before David ever sat on the throne. Faithfulness does not always come with the reward of visible results in our lifetime.
5. **God's purpose does not die with His servants.** Samuel's death did not cancel God's plan. The word God spoke through Samuel continued moving forward until it was completely fulfilled.

Discussion Questions:

Opening Questions

1. Think of someone in your life whose wisdom and counsel you did not fully appreciate until they were gone. What is one thing you wish you had told them or asked them?
2. If someone were to write your eulogy today, what would you want them to say about your relationship with God?

Digging Into the Sermon

1. Samuel heard God's voice so clearly as a child that he mistook it for an audible voice. How would you describe the way God speaks to you? What helps you recognize His voice versus other voices competing for your attention?
2. Samuel's ability to confront Eli as a child seemed to prepare him for confronting King Saul as an adult. How have difficult conversations in your past shaped your courage or willingness to speak truth today?
3. Pastor Allen pointed out that all of Israel mourned Samuel, even though Samuel frequently delivered

messages people did not want to hear. What does this tell us about the kind of integrity that earns lasting respect? Have you ever experienced or witnessed that kind of respect given to someone who consistently told hard truths?

4. Samuel told Saul in 1 Samuel 15 that obedience is better than sacrifice, and that rebellion is as sinful as witchcraft. In practical terms, what does rebellion against God look like in everyday life? What areas of your own life might God be calling you to simple obedience rather than more religious activity?
5. Pastor described Samuel as standing at the intersection of three major institutions: judge, prophet, and kingmaker. God placed him in a unique position for a unique moment in history. How do you think about the specific role God has placed you in right now, in this season of your life?
6. Samuel died without seeing David crowned as king. He faithfully did his part and then stepped off the stage. How do you personally wrestle with faithfulness when you cannot see the outcome of what God has called you to do?

Going Deeper

1. Pastor Allen made the statement: "God's servants may faithfully begin a work, but it doesn't mean they'll live to see the fruit of their labor." How does this challenge or encourage you in something you are currently doing for God or for others?
2. Pastor also noted that Samuel's death removed a stabilizing figure from the story, and that without him,

both Saul and David would be more fully revealed for who they truly were. What stabilizing influences has God placed in your life? What do those relationships reveal about your own character?

3. Consider the contrast between Saul and David as the sermon described it. Saul was the king Israel asked for. David was the king God was preparing. In what ways are you tempted to settle for what you want rather than waiting for what God is preparing?

Practical Application:

This Week's Challenge

Choose one or more of the following to discuss and apply this week:

1. **Practice listening.** Set aside ten to fifteen minutes each day in silence, asking God to speak to you. Journal anything that comes to mind and bring it back to your group next week.
2. **Honor someone's legacy.** Identify a person -- living or deceased -- whose faithful influence shaped your life. Write them a letter, visit them, or share their story with someone who needs to hear it.
3. **Examine your obedience.** Honestly identify one area of your life where you have been substituting religious activity or good intentions for direct obedience to something God has already made clear to you. Take one concrete step toward obedience this week.
4. **Adopt an eternal perspective.** Write down one thing you are doing right now that you may never see the full fruit of in your lifetime. Pray over it and ask God to help

you release the outcome to Him while remaining faithful to your part.

Closing Reflection

Samuel's life was marked by one consistent thread: from the time he was a child sleeping near the ark of God to the day he was buried at his home in Ramah, he heard God's voice, and he obeyed it, no matter the cost and no matter who was listening. He did not live to see everything God promised come to pass. But God's word did not fail. The same is true for every faithful servant of God. Your faithfulness today is not wasted, even when you cannot see where it is going.

Closing Prayer:

Lord,

give us hearts that are sensitive to Your voice in our daily lives. Teach us to listen, obey, and recognize when You are leading. Give us courage, like Samuel, to speak and act on what You show us, no matter who is listening or what it may cost. Help us live with an eternal perspective, trusting that Your purposes continue even when we cannot see the outcome. Strengthen those among us who are faithfully laboring without visible fruit. Encourage them, sustain them, and remind them that their obedience matters. May our lives honor You.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

5-Day Devotional

Day 1: The Voice That Calls You by Name

Reading: 1 Samuel 3:1-10

Devotional: Samuel did not recognize God's voice at first because he had never heard it before. Yet God was patient, calling again and again until Samuel was ready to listen. This is a portrait of divine persistence and grace. God does not abandon those who are slow to recognize His voice. He pursues. He calls. He waits. The question is not whether God is speaking, but whether we have cultivated the stillness and sensitivity to hear Him. Consider today what noise or distraction may be drowning out the voice of the Lord in your life, and ask God to help you respond as Samuel did. What conditions in your daily life make it difficult to hear God's voice, and what one change could you make to cultivate greater spiritual attentiveness?

Day 2: Obedience Over Sacrifice

Reading: 1 Samuel 15:22-23

Devotional: It is far easier to perform religious activity than to walk in genuine obedience. Saul brought offerings, but he had already disregarded God's direct command. Samuel's rebuke cuts to the heart of a problem that is as old as humanity itself: we prefer to substitute religious effort for surrender. God is not impressed by what we bring to Him if we have withheld what He asked of us. Obedience is not a ladder by which we earn God's favor. It is the natural response of a heart that truly trusts Him. Examine where you may be offering God the appearance of devotion while quietly holding back surrender. Is there an area of your life where you have been substituting religious activity for genuine obedience to something God has specifically asked of you?

Day 3: Faithful to a Work You May Not See Completed

Reading: Hebrews 11:13, 39-40

Devotional: Samuel anointed David as king but never lived to see David crowned. He died while God's promise was still, from a human perspective, unresolved. Yet the promise was not uncertain. It was simply unfinished in Samuel's lifetime. This is one of the most sobering and freeing truths in all of Scripture: God does not require you to see the harvest in order for your faithfulness to matter. You may plant seeds that others will water. You may lay foundations that others will build upon. Your calling is not to see the outcome. Your calling is to obey. Trust that God's purpose does not die when His servants do. Are you discouraged because you cannot yet see the fruit of your faithfulness in a particular area of life or ministry?

Day 4: The Courage to Speak Truth

Reading: 2 Timothy 4:1-5

Devotional: Samuel confronted Eli as a child. He confronted Saul as a prophet. He delivered messages that were unwelcome, uncomfortable, and costly. Yet he delivered them because God had spoken, and Samuel understood that faithfulness to God's word

mattered more than the approval of men. The world does not need more voices that tell people what they want to hear. It needs voices willing to speak the truth in love, regardless of the reception. Courage in speaking truth is not harshness. It is love that refuses to leave a person in a comfortable but dangerous place. Ask God to give you that kind of courageous, gentle, truth-telling faithfulness. Is there a truth you have been withholding from someone in your life out of fear of their reaction, when speaking it in love could genuinely help them?

Day 5: God's Purpose Outlasts His Servants

Reading: Isaiah 46:9-11

Devotional: When Samuel died, it may have appeared that the momentum of God's plan had stalled. The prophet was gone. David was still a fugitive. Saul was still on the throne. But God's word concerning David's kingship continued moving forward without Samuel in the picture. This is the bedrock confidence of every believer: God's plan does not depend on any single person remaining alive to carry it forward. He raises up workers, and He calls them home, and His purpose continues uninterrupted. Whatever loss or transition you are walking through today, be assured that God's plan for your life and for His kingdom is not derailed. He declared the end from the beginning, and He will accomplish it. What loss, transition, or unexpected change has caused you to question whether God's purpose for your life is still moving forward?