

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
TEACHER'S PACKET

Kindergarten

Sunday Morning

Study 33

Saul Pursues David

Saul Pursues David

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective The goal of this lesson is to examine the danger of jealousy through the story of Saul and David.

Key Verses

1 Samuel 18:1-16—Main Teaching Passage
Brief summary of 1 Samuel 19-31

Memory Verse - 1 Samuel 16:7b (April Memory Verse)

"For *the LORD* does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

Hook

Ask the class a question such as, "What is your favorite color?" Tell them that you will be awarding points for their answers. Award these points unevenly, giving more to some than others. Ask the class if they think this is fair.

Next ask the students if they know what it is called when you are upset because someone got more than you. Tell them it is called "jealousy." Ask them if they think jealousy is good or bad.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

Over the past few weeks, we have seen how the Lord rejected Saul as king and instead determined that David would be the new king over Israel. In battling Goliath, David demonstrated why he was the Lord's choice. David's success in battle catapulted him to incredible fame. He became best friends with Saul's son Jonathan, and the people of Israel loved him. However, David's popularity caused Saul to become jealous.

One day, Saul heard the Israelites singing that David had slain ten thousands of men, while he had slain only thousands. Saul feared that he was going to lose his entire kingdom to David. Later on, David was playing music for Saul in his house while Saul was holding a spear. Saul tried to throw his spear at David and kill him, but David was able to escape. This happened twice. Saul then realized that the Lord was with David, and he was afraid to go after him again, so he made him an army captain, hoping he would die in battle.

After this story, Saul would spend most of the rest of his life trying to hunt down and kill David. The rest of 1 Samuel records this long pursuit, which eventually ends in the death of Saul and all his sons. Saul had already lost his kingdom, but rather than repent and seek the Lord, he acted out on his jealousy and spent the rest of his life trying to stop God's will from happening. This will be our final week in 1 Samuel. Our next lesson will take us to the beginning of the reign of David.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK

Saul at this point was in a difficult place. His sin had disqualified him from ruling over Israel, and he had failed to defeat the Philistines on his own. Instead, a young boy had stolen his glory and defeated the Philistine champion. Now this child was more popular than him. Women were singing David's praises in the streets. All of this reached a boiling point in today's story. Saul couldn't take it any more. He had to get rid of this kid David and take back his kingdom.

Jealousy is a powerful emotion that can lead to drastic action. For Saul, that action was trying to murder David. Jealousy takes place when we stop looking thankfully at all that God has given us and instead look longingly at what He has given someone else. Saul was not content that God had made him king, given him popularity, and allowed him to have military success. David had more popularity and success, and that just wouldn't do for Saul. His problem was not that God gave David everything and him nothing. Saul was upset that even though God had given him a lot, He had given David more. Notice how silly Saul's jealousy is here. The women sang that he had slain thousands. That is a great military accomplishment. But it was not enough. Saul wanted more.

LOOK (Continued)

Notice how twice this passage says, “David behaved wisely” (vs. 5, 14). David was not gloating in his accomplishments or the fact that he would be the next king. He did not instigate Saul’s jealousy. It is important to remember to act this way when others are jealous of us. We should give them no reason to be jealous through bragging about what God has given us.

The bigger lesson today is the danger of being jealous ourselves. God has blessed us with so many blessings, especially here in the United States. Even more, if we are believers, we have more blessings than we could ever dream of. It is never helpful to compare what we have or how we have been blessed with other people. Instead, we ought to be content, knowing that God has given and will continue to provide all that we need. Rather than live in jealousy over what others have we ought to show thankfulness for what we have.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

Have the class make a list of things God has blessed them with. Draw a big circle and write these things in the circle. Outside the circle, write, “what others have.” Ask the class which one we should focus on, and cross out “what others have.”

Pray: Thank the Lord for all the things He has blessed us with. Ask Him to keep jealousy away from us all.

Parent Question: What things has God given you that you can be thankful for?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on 1 Samuel 18:1-16 by David Guzik

CONFLICT BETWEEN SAUL AND DAVID

A. David, Jonathan, and Saul.

1. ([1 Samuel 18:1-4](#)) The friendship between David and Jonathan.

Now when he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. Saul took him that day, and would not let him go home to his father's house anymore. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan took off the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, even to his sword and his bow and his belt.

a. **When he had finished speaking to Saul:** When David finished the “after-killing-Goliath” conversation with Saul, his fame in Israel was assured. He performed a remarkably heroic deed and was initially welcomed by the leadership of Israel.

b. **The soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul:** Jonathan, the son of Saul, appeared before in [1 Samuel 14](#). He is the remarkably brave man of faith who initiated a one-man war against the Philistines.

i. Jonathan was a lot like David. They were approximately the same age, though Jonathan was probably at least five years older. They both were bold, both were men of great trust in God, and both were men of action. Most of all, both had a real relationship with God.

ii. At the same time, Jonathan and David were different. Jonathan was the first-born son of a king ([1 Chronicles 9:39](#)) and David was the last-born son of a farmer. This made Jonathan more than a *prince*, he was *the crown prince*. By everyone's expectation Jonathan would be the next king of Israel.

c. **The soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David:** This happened *after* David **had finished speaking to Saul**. Jonathan heard David give an extended explanation of his heart, his faith in the living God, and Jonathan *knew* that he and David had the same heart. They could not be such close friends until Jonathan knew that about David.

i. The way most people think, Jonathan was the one who had the most to fear from David's success. Yet he loved David, because what they had in common — a real relationship with the LORD God — was bigger than any difference.

d. **Saul took him that day:** David would never again be just a shepherd. David still had a shepherd's heart but would be *more* than a shepherd.

e. **Then Jonathan and David made a covenant:** Two men, each on track for the same throne — yet they **made a covenant** of friendship that would prove stronger than jealousy, than envy, than ambition.

f. **Jonathan took off the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, even to his sword and his bow and his belt:** When Jonathan gave David **the robe** and **his armor**, he said by this action, “You will be the next king of Israel. You should be dressed and armed as the crown prince. God's hand is on you and these rightfully belong to you.” Because Jonathan was surrendered to God he could see the hand of the LORD upon David. He knew David's destiny and was perfectly willing to set aside his ambition to honor the LORD's choice.

g. **Gave it to David:** For his part, David *received the robe* and Jonathan's **armor**. But he did not then say or think, "Good Jonathan. We all see who is boss around here. Now get out of my way because I'm going to replace your father as soon as I can." It would be some *20 years* until David would receive the throne of Israel and replace Saul. If Jonathan was ready to recognize David as God's choice for the next king, David was willing to let *God* put him on the throne, and to do it in *God's* timing. Both of these men were thoroughly submitted to the LORD.

i. David couldn't receive Saul's armor but David received Jonathan's armor, not only because they were more similar in size. More importantly, they shared the same **soul**. They both loved God and lived more for Him and for others more than for themselves. David and Jonathan both knew that if the circumstances were reversed, David would do the exact same thing for Jonathan — because they had the same **soul**.

ii. If the issue of "who will be the next king?" were not settled in the hearts of Jonathan and David, they could never have had this kind of close love and friendship. They loved each other more than the throne of Israel because they loved the LORD more than the throne of Israel.

iii. Some people read a homosexual relationship into the love between David and Jonathan. They suppose that two men cannot love each other without it being something the Bible clearly says is immoral. But the relationship between David and Jonathan shows the Bible doesn't condemn real love between men, only a sexual relationship between men.

2. ([1 Samuel 18:5-9](#)) Saul's jealousy of David.

So David went out wherever Saul sent him, and behaved wisely. And Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants. Now it had happened as they were coming home, when David was returning from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women had come out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy, and with musical instruments. So the women sang as they danced, and said:

**"Saul has slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands."**

Then Saul was very angry, and the saying displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed *only* thousands. Now *what* more can he have but the kingdom?" So Saul eyed David from that day forward.

a. **David went out wherever Saul sent him, and behaved wisely:** David was fully submitted to Saul and sought to serve him **wisely** in every way. David knew the way to be blessed. It was to work hard to be a blessing to his boss. He would not undercut Saul's position or authority in any way.

i. Where did Saul send David? **Saul set him over the men of war**. This is a remarkable promotion — a man perhaps in his young twenties is now a "general" in the army of Israel.

b. **He was accepted in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants:** David quickly became popular both among **the people** and among the leaders (**Saul's servants**). This was not because David was a yes-man-people-pleaser-sycophant kind of man. David did not *seek* this popularity and did not depend on *any* of those carnal tools to gain it. David became popular because he was a *man after God's own heart* and people could see the *love*, the *wisdom*, and the *peace* of God in him.

i. We might imagine Saul's initial reaction was positive. "Good," he thought. "My new assistant is well received. Everyone thinks I made a brilliant choice in bringing him on staff. This is working out well."

c. **Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands:** David became unexpectedly popular. When the people of Israel started singing everyone knew David was more popular than Saul.

i. When **women** sing and dance in your honor, you are popular. When it happens in **all the cities of Israel**, you are popular. This song was the number one hit in Israel! David wisely received this popularity because [1 Samuel 18:14](#) says of this period in David's life, *And David behaved wisely in all his ways, and the LORD was*

with him. In this environment of praise and popularity, David *behaved wisely in all his ways*.

ii. When you are praised and popular, it isn't *wise* to let it go to your head. David was happy to hear these affirming words, but he didn't let it dominate his thinking or *change* his opinion of himself. He kept the heart and the mind of a shepherd, even in a season of great success.

iii. This wasn't easy. This was a test, one the devil wanted to use to bring David down and one the LORD wanted to use to build David up. David never received this kind of affirmation when he kept the sheep. The sheep never danced and sang a song praising him. Now David faces the challenge of success. Many people who handle adversity well enough fall under the challenge of success.

iv. But because David could be so content and so happy before the LORD in keeping sheep with no praise or popularity, it put his heart in the right place to handle it when he received praise and popularity. Out in the shepherd's field David had his heart set: "I'm doing this for the LORD. I love the LORD, and my reward is from Him." Because his heart was right in the shepherd's field, David *behaved wisely in all his ways* when praise and popularity came.

v. We also see this by David's reaction to the scorn and criticism from his brother Eliab ([1 Samuel 17:28-30](#)). When Eliab scorned and criticized David didn't like it, but it didn't crush him. It didn't deter him. Most people are corrupted by praise and popularity to the same degree they are crushed by scorn and criticism. Because of what God built in him out in the shepherd's field, David could live his life more for the LORD than for people. It wasn't that David didn't care about people or what they thought, but he could put the opinion of man in the right perspective because he cared more about the opinion of God.

d. **Then Saul was very angry:** Knowing his character, we are not surprised by Saul's reaction. Saul did not have a right or close relationship with the LORD. All he had to affirm his heart was the praise of man so when David was more praised it really bothered Saul.

i. It is a bad sign in a leader when they resent or feel threatened by the success of a subordinate. It is a certain sign of weakness in the leader.

ii. **Now what more can he have but the kingdom:** This is a typical over-reaction in the proud and insecure. Saul could have thought, "David did well, and he has his glory today. I'll keep serving the LORD and have this kind of praise another day." Instead, he over-reacted and said, "**Now what more can he have but the kingdom?**"

iii. However, there is another dynamic at work in Saul: a guilty conscience. He remembered the prophet Samuel told him, "*The LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel.*" Saul knew his sin disqualified him from being king, and he clung to the throne in the energy of his flesh. An honorable man would step down, but if Saul were an honorable man, he wouldn't be in this mess. Instead, Saul constantly worried, "When will God cast me off the throne? Who will He raise up to replace me?" This insecurity, borne of guilt, also made Saul over-react to the praise and popularity given to David.

iv. Yet the crowds *did* praise Saul. They *did* sing, "**Saul has slain his thousands.**" For Saul, it wasn't enough to slay thousands as long as someone else was slaying **ten thousands**.

f. **So Saul eyed David from that day forward:** Now Saul's mind is filled with suspicion towards David. He began to hear most everything David said with suspicious ears. He looked at David's actions with suspicious eyes. His thoughts were twisted by suspicion.

i. "He gave way to that devilish vice of envy, which was henceforth as a fire in his bosom, as a worm continually gnawing upon his entrails... He looked upon him with an evil eye: prying into all his actions, and making the worst of everything." (Trapp)

B. Saul's first attempt to kill David.

1. ([1 Samuel 18:10](#)) The scene in Saul's royal court.

And it happened on the next day that the distressing spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied inside the house. So David played music with his hand, as at other times; but there was a spear in Saul's hand.

a. **The distressing spirit from God came upon Saul:** This **distressing spirit** was first mentioned in [1 Samuel 16:14](#). It came upon Saul, permitted by the LORD, when the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul ([1 Samuel 16:14](#)). David was brought into Saul's royal court to play music, so that Saul would be ministered to and soothed when suffering from the **distressing spirit**.

b. **And he prophesied inside the house:** Why would a **distressing spirit** make Saul *prophesy*? Saul wasn't speaking from the LORD at all, and **prophesied** is a bad translation here. The Hebrew grammar here can be used of idle ravings as well as of prophecy from the LORD. Saul simply babbled like a man not in his right mind.

i. "He was *beside himself*; made *prayers, supplications*, and incoherent *imprecations*: 'God preserve my life,' 'Destroy my enemies,' or such like prayers, might frequently escape from him in his agitated state." (Clarke)

c. **So David played music with his hand:** The same hands that had killed Goliath and carried the trophy of his severed head now sweetly played music unto the LORD, ministering to a troubled king.

i. David obviously had skillful *hands*, both in war and in music ministry. More remarkable was his *humble heart*. Most men, after the fame that came to David, would consider this kind of service "beneath" them. David was a general in the army, famous in all Israel, and had women dancing and singing his praises. Yet he faithfully performed this job of personally ministering to Saul in music.

d. **But there was a spear in Saul's hand:** David held a harp and **played music with his hand**. But there was violence **in Saul's hand**.

2. ([1 Samuel 18:11](#)) Saul throws a spear at David.

And Saul cast the spear, for he said, "I will pin David to the wall!" But David escaped his presence twice.

a. **And Saul cast the spear:** If a spear is in your hand, you'll probably use it. As Saul held the spear the *distressing spirit* moved upon him, and instead of receiving ministry from David's music the *distressing spirit* prompted Saul to strike out at David.

i. We must say that the *distressing spirit* did not "make" Saul do this. But the spirit *prompted* it. Saul was able to choose, "Will I do this or not?" and he chose to **cast the spear**.

ii. This same music ministry once soothed Saul, and made him *refreshed and well*, giving him relief from the *distressing spirit* ([1 Samuel 16:23](#)). Now, it is of no effect at all, and Saul even responds to David's music ministry with a murder attempt. David's music ministry or heart did not change — Saul did, and for the worse. Saul refused to receive from David's ministry and that refusal set the stage for this kind of violence.

b. **For he said, "I will pin David to the wall with it":** This wasn't an accident. Saul may have wanted it to seem like an accident. Though he wouldn't admit it, his heart was set on killing David. He didn't want to just frighten or wound David. He wanted the spear to deliver a fatal blow, completely through the body.

c. **But David escaped his presence:** Saul threw the spear, and it missed David. Perhaps Saul's aim was bad, affected by his poor mental and emotional state. Perhaps David saw the spear and ducked. Perhaps God simply supernaturally guided the spear to miss. However, it happened, the spear missed and was on the floor. **And David escaped his presence.**

i. Of many of us it would be written, "And so-and-so picked the spear up off the floor went over to Saul saying, 'If Goliath couldn't scare me, you sure can't. If Goliath couldn't kill me, you sure can't.' And with one thrust of the spear, so-and-so pinned Saul to the wall."

ii. But David didn't pick up the spear. He didn't throw it back. He simply **escaped his presence**. No one could

blame David if he struck back; it could easily be called self-defense. But David had a different heart. It wasn't a matter of what he could get away with, but it was a matter of what God's heart wanted. David was determined to leave the situation in God's hands, and not *take* the throne himself. *God* would have to take care of Saul, because David wouldn't do it.

iii. David said, "LORD, you put Saul on the throne. And I know I'm supposed to be the next king, because You gave me Your promise and Your anointing. But getting Saul out of the way is Your business. I won't touch it, because he is an authority appointed by You. You started his reign, so *You* have to end it."

d. **But David escaped his presence twice:** Perhaps the most remarkable word in this chapter is **twice**. This means that *Saul threw the spear twice*. This means that *Saul missed twice*. This means that *after the first miss, David came back and played again*.

i. This is where many draw the line. "Look, I'll sit with the bulls-eye on my chest once, and I'll dodge the spear. I'll even leave the spear on floor and resist the temptation to throw it back. But one spear whizzing by my head is enough. One miss and I've paid my dues. Once is submission to the LORD. Twice is stupidity."

ii. We might even say that David's submission didn't even *begin* until he sat back down to play for Saul *again* after the first attempt on his life. Now he knew the danger, now he knew Saul's heart, and *now* he had to trust God.

iii. If David struck back after resisting the temptation the first time we can suppose that David still would become king. We can suppose that we still admire David's heart in not throwing the spear back the first time, and we would understand how he struck back the second time. But if David did this, he would have *surrendered his destiny to be the greatest king of Israel*. He still would be a king, but not *the king* the LORD destined him to be.

iv. "In doing this small feat of returning thrown spears, you will prove many things. You are courageous. You stand for the right. You boldly stand against the wrong. You are tough and can't be pushed around. You will not stand for injustice or unfair treatment. You are the defender of the faith, the keeper of the flame, detector of all heresy. You will not be wronged. All of these attributes then combine to prove that you are also obviously a candidate for kingship. Yes, perhaps you are the Lord's anointed. *After the order of King Saul.*" (Gene Edwards, *Tale of Three Kings*)

3. ([1 Samuel 18:12-16](#)) David is transferred from the palace to the army.

Now Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, but had departed from Saul. Therefore Saul removed him from his presence, and made him his captain over a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people. And David behaved wisely in all his ways, and the LORD was with him. Therefore, when Saul saw that he behaved very wisely, he was afraid of him. But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.

a. **Now Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him:** By all outward appearance, Saul is in control. Saul has the throne. Saul has the army. Saul has the spears. Yet Saul was **afraid of David because the LORD was with him**.

b. **But had departed from Saul:** This made Saul uncomfortable with David and made it hard for Saul to have David around (**Therefore Saul removed him from his presence**).

c. **Made him his captain:** Saul's desire was not to bless David, but to set him up for harm. Saul's jealousy has made him manipulative, working a hidden, secret agenda on David.

i. "This was under pretence of doing him honour, when it was in effect only to rid himself of the object of his envy." (Clarke)

d. **David behaved wisely in all his ways, and the LORD was with him:** It isn't easy to behave wisely when spears are being thrown at you. It isn't easy to behave wisely when you are put out of the palace. It isn't easy to behave wisely when you have powerful and determined enemies. Even in the midst of all those terrible cir-

cumstances, you can behave wisely in all your ways as **the LORD is with** you.

e. **But all Israel and Judah loved David:** David became even more popular because God was with him. David was tempted to use this popularity as a spear against Saul, but he refused.

f. **Because he went out and came in:** This is a Hebrew figure of speech meaning, “David conducted successful military operations.” God’s hand of success was with David even though Saul was against him. Saul might attack and pain David in any number of ways, but God would not allow Saul to have the victory.

i. *David was never a victim.* He *looked* like a victim, because he was attacked. But David **behaved wisely in all his ways**, so he did not give into the victim’s state of mind, thinking that *his fate was in the hands of the one attacking him*. David knew his fate was in God’s hands, and could have peace in that.