

CALLED BY GOD

CONNECT

Here are some questions to get your group started:

- If you could choose to be any age for a week what would it be?
- List 3 things you're grateful for right now.
- What's the worst thing about facebook?
- What's one word to describe your relationship with God at the moment?

INVOLVE

Get everyone to get their phones out and send a thoughtful and encouraging text (if they have credit) to someone in their phone. Here are 2 ground rules:

- It needs to be genuine encouragement, not just careless words
- It needs to be to someone you wouldn't normally encourage

DISCUSS

When it comes to heroes of the Bible, David would surely be in most people's top 5. The shepherd-boy-turned-king is one of the great characters in Christian history but in many ways he wasn't particularly unique: he wasn't the first king of Israel, he wasn't the longest serving king, he wasn't the strongest warrior and he certainly wasn't perfect. So what was it about David that made him so unique? Why does he stand out?

Whatever it was, David had it from pretty early on. He stood out but not in the human sense. He wasn't a likely candidate at the time but when David was only a young gun God personally chose him to be king.

Ask a volunteer to read 1 Samuel 16:1-13

NEW CHRISTIANS

- Think about the process of picking sports teams at school. What is/ was that like for you? Where do/did you fit in the mix of it?
- In general, what are the criteria for being first picked in one of these team selection processes? Do you think it's a fair way to pick sides?
- Samuel sees Eliab and, based on his appearance assumes he must be God's anointed one. In verse 7 God corrects him for this. Do you think people in church ever judge people too much based on their appearance? Why?
- What do you think God saw in David's heart that made him special? What qualities do you think God was looking for in a king?
- Earlier in 1 Samuel we read that the previous king Saul had disobeyed God's command and so the prophet Samuel confronted him. Read 1



**STANDING OUT
FROM THE CROWD**



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Samuel 13:13-14. The person Samuel was talking about was David. What do you think it means to be a man/woman 'after God's own heart?' Do you think David was born like this? If not, where/how did he learn it?

- We're not all called to be a king like David, but God's unique plan for our lives is lived to the fullest when our hearts mirror God's heart. How can we get a heart that looks like God's?

ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

- If you had to choose a king to lead a country, what kind of qualities would you look for?
- What do you think was on God's 'essential requirements for a king' list that he saw in David's life? What kind of characteristics do you think made him stand out from his brothers?
- How do you think Australia might look if every politician was a man/woman after God's own heart?
- If you were a person after God's own heart do you think you would stand out from the crowd? Why? How would it affect the decisions you make about relationships, or with your career?
- What do you think are the biggest blockages to us having a heart like God's?
- None of David's brothers recognised him as God's anointed. What things may stop us from seeing God's call on other people's lives?

APPLY

Ask everyone to share one aspect of their heart/character that doesn't currently resemble God's heart. Pray about it as a group and then challenge your group to find and memorise a Scripture verse that will help them in this area.

Bring some prizes next week for learnt verses.

LEADER'S NOTES

- A 'heifer' is a young cow
- It might be helpful to find out how much people actually know about David before making too many assumptions. Challenge your group to read through David's story as recorded in 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel. It's a pretty easy read with plenty of action...plus there's so much more to be learnt from his life than can be covered in 5 weeks at LIFE group.
- If your LIFE group isn't into reading it would be worthwhile doing an overview of his life in this first week of the series. Check out the King David Lego Lowdown at <http://youtu.be/d1rpOKdxBdg>



COURAGE & FAITH

CONNECT

Here are some questions to get your group started:

- What's the funniest thing someone has said to you this week?
- What's something you are thankful for this week?
- What's a prayer request you have for your personal growth?

DISCUSS

If your life group has grown up going to Sunday school then chances are they've heard this story many times before. But whether they are engaging with David and Goliath for the first time or the 100th time, this is much more than a children's story.

The reality is that David was standing out from the crowd a long time before he was standing over Goliath's dead body. From the moment he arrives on the scene he's thinking and acting differently to everyone around him, so much so that his brother feels compelled to pull him back into line. David isn't fazed though. Despite the ridicule, doubt, negativity and sheer physical circumstances, his faith is unshaken.

The battle was won a long time before the first stone struck Goliath. Use the following questions to push your group to unpack what it was that really made David stand out from the crowd.

Read 1 Samuel 17:3-51 together

QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

- What do you think about David after reading this story? What words would you use to describe him?
- Fear can easily stop us trusting in God. What do you think the Israelites were afraid of?
- Do you think David was afraid at all of Goliath? Why/Why not? What can you learn from this?
- Have you ever been in a situation where everyone expected you to fail? How did you feel? How did their attitudes affect you? What ended up happening?
- What's your personal 'Goliath' at the moment – something that's big and difficult and is stopping you from moving forward? What do you think God's message to you about that thing is?



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COURAGE & FAITH

QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

- What stands out to you most from what we've just read?
- List all the ways that David stood out from the crowd in this story. For each one, ask whether that particular thing was significant to the bigger story going on. (E.g. David stood out because he didn't take a sword into battle... significant because he wasn't distracted by the 'normal' concept of what a soldier is meant to look like.) *Leader: It might be helpful to have everyone write their own lists and then share.*
- "Some of the Israelites were probably more afraid of standing out from the crowd than they were of Goliath himself." What do you think about that statement? Do you think people today sometimes don't stand up to their own 'Goliath's' because they're afraid of standing out from the crowd? What examples can you think of?
- Do you think David was certain that God was going to give him the victory? Why do you think that? What can you learn here?
- Where are the issues in your own life (family, school, work, church) where you want to have the courage to stand out from the crowd and do what is right?

INVOLVE

In Acts 4:29, the early Christians pray for "great boldness" sharing God's word in response to threats and persecution. Spend some time as a group doing the same thing. You could pray for:

- Each other within the group – that God would give each of you "great boldness" about your faith
- Your church as a whole
- Believers from all churches across your city
- Believers from heavily persecuted nations
- The global church

APPLY

Ask your group to share one thing they've discussed that can be put into action this week

OR

Have everyone share one situation where they sense God challenging them to respond in faith rather than to go with the 'safe' option. Encourage each other to step out into it this week!



RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY

This week you will need lined paper and a pen for every person.

CONNECT

Here are some questions to get your group interacting with each other:

- What's one irrational fear that you have?
- What are you looking forward to? (short term or long term)
- If your week was a style of music, what style would it be?
- What role has the Bible played in your life this week?

INVOLVE

Brainstorm as a group what you love about your community (safe, heaps of buses, skate park etc)

As a group write a letter (yes, a paper one) to your local MP expressing to them how much you appreciate their efforts in serving your community. Let them know what particular things you love (the things you just wrote down) and let them know you're praying for them.

Get everyone to sign it and send it off.

DISCUSS

Submitting to authorities can be easy sometimes but sometimes it can suck eggs. Ever had a teacher who was on a power trip? Or have your mum or dad ever forced you to do something you thought was a stupid idea?

After defeating Goliath, David got pretty famous and everyone loved him; everyone except King Saul who was suffering from a severe case of jealousy. Saul made no secret of his dislike for David and he ended up chasing David around the countryside trying to kill him.

Saul played right into David's hands though and David is left to decide how he should respond to his psychotic King. This is where we pick up the story.

If your group hates reading then read 1 Samuel 24:1-13. If your group love reading you should read all of chapter 24.

QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

- Do you think David did the right thing? What would you have done in his situation?
- David's friends would have thought they had a really good point (v.4). Why do you think David didn't listen to them?
- Is there ever a time that we don't need to keep respecting our



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RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY

leaders? What does the word 'respect' mean in this context anyway?

- What do we gain if we respect our leaders, even the dodgy ones?
- What about in your life...are there people in authority over you that you just struggle to respect? How do you normally respond?
- How much do your friends influence your decisions to respect your leaders/teachers?

QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

- Do you think David did the right thing? What would you have done in his situation?
- Why do you think David had such a strong opinion about respecting his leaders? What had contributed to this aspect of his character?
- Does it make a difference that God had anointed Saul to be King? Would it be different if the leader wasn't God-anointed? Or are all leaders God-anointed?
- Can you think of any other examples in the Bible where someone has respected the authority over them even if it was difficult?
- What about in your life...are there people in authority over you that you just struggle to respect? How do you normally respond?
- Do you think it's okay for us to ask our friends for advice when we have to make decisions? How do you decide whether their advice is good/bad?

APPLY

Ask each person to think of one person in their life that they struggle to submit to. As a group, pray that God would grant each of you the grace required to respect them fully and that his Spirit would prompt you to act wisely and to discern the godliest course of action.

LEADER'S NOTES

Bonus question: If your group loves to wrestle with the tough questions you could also ask "How we should respond to leaders who are clearly fighting against the Kingdom of God?"

Imagine you were a German Christian in 1939, how should you respond to your country's leadership?

Extra passages that might be helpful:

- Submitting to authorities - Romans 13:1-7
- Submitting to rulers - 1 Peter 2:13-25
- Jesus has all authority - Matthew 28:18



ABUSE OF POWER

This week you will need enough A5 paper to give everyone 2 sheets and pens for everyone.

CONNECT

Here are some questions to get your group started:

- If you had to choose, would you rather be smart or funny?
- Rate your week out of 10 and explain why.
- What food/beverage tempts you most?
- What's one aspect of your character that God has been refining lately?

INVOLVE

Make a list of the leaders in your church, including your officers/pastors. Discuss what you think might be some of the challenges they face as leaders.

Pray specifically for them and their families.

DISCUSS

As we've talked about over the last few weeks, David was a bit of a legend. He's the shepherd with the heart of a King, the giant slayer, the guy who refused to lay a hand on the king that was trying to kill him.

Despite all this he didn't have it all together, he wasn't bullet-proof. David was tempted like all of us.

Lucky for us, the consequences of his decisions were recorded in the most popular book of all time for us to learn from.

Ask a volunteer to read 2 Samuel 11:1-17

QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

- Because he's human we can assume that David faced a lot of temptations. Why do you think he gave in this time?
- What are some of the temptations you face in your life?
- When are you most prone to being tempted?
- Should we feel guilty for being tempted?
- Does God understand the temptations we face?
- Read Hebrews 4:15-16. What do these verses mean for us as we face temptations? How should it affect the way we pray about our temptations?



**STANDING OUT
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ABUSE OF POWER

QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

- When are you most prone to temptation? What are the common factors of times you are tempted?
- Because he's human we can assume that David faced a lot of temptations, why do you think he surrendered to temptation this time?
- If even Jesus was tempted then surely we'll always face temptations. Do you think it ever gets any easier?
- Are there any positives in having to face temptations?
- What are some tools that can help us in facing temptation?

APPLY

Present the following challenge to your group:

Think about the temptation you struggle with most. What's one thing you can put into place this week (and keep in place for the long term) that will help you in facing this temptation?

Write your answer down on 2 pieces of paper, then share your answer with the group.

Give one copy to the life group leader and keep one for yourself (one for yourself to remind you to put it into place, one for the leader so they can ask you about it next week).

LEADER'S NOTES

Ideally your life group will be connected enough to discuss their personal temptations and if that happens then it's a worthwhile getting sidetracked and making space for this to play out naturally.

Extra passages that might be helpful

- Jesus temptation in the desert – Luke 4:1-13
- Jesus sympathises with us – Hebrews 4:15-16
- No temptation is too great – 1 Corinthians 10:13

Random story:

There was a young boy in a corner store suspiciously wandering around the shop. He kept sheepishly walking past the Mars Bars on the front counter, clearly tempted but unable to make his move. Eventually the shopkeeper confronted the young boy, "You're trying to steal a Mars Bar aren't you?". The young boy replied, "No sir, I'm trying not to".



TEACHABLE SPIRIT

CONNECT

- What's the most interesting thing that has happened to you this week?
- What's something you'd like to accomplish before you finish high school?
- How can we be praying for you at the moment?

DISCUSS

Discipline is rarely fun or pleasant.

As a result, lots of people respond with anger, bad attitude, gossip and rebellion. David stands out from the crowd by responding to discipline with humility and a repentant heart.

Out of today's discussion, challenge your group to think about the way they respond to discipline at home, at school, at work and at church.

QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

Read 2 Samuel 12:1-13 together

- Have you ever been caught out doing something wrong? How did you feel? How did you respond?
- What is the normal response (at school / work / home) to being disciplined? How do you and your friends normally respond if you've gotten in trouble with a parent or a teacher? How does David's response compare?
- How do you think David was feeling when Nathan let him have it? Do you think it would have been easy or hard for him to respond the way he did?
- David is freely forgiven in verse 13, but verse 11 lists the consequences of his actions. Forgiveness and consequences normally seem like opposites, so what do you think this means?



STANDING OUT FROM THE CROWD



TEACHABLE SPIRIT

QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

Read 2 Samuel 12:1-25 together

- What stands out to you most from what we've just read?
- David was an incredibly powerful man and previously had even killed people who had brought him bad news. Why didn't he respond that way this time?
- Think about how you personally have responded to discipline in the past. Do you think you've dealt with it in a healthy way? Give yourself a score from 1-10 on how well you feel you cope with criticism and discipline and share where you think you need to grow.
- In verse 13 David is freely forgiven for his sin but in verse 14 he is told his child will die. Does that make sense?
- David stands out from the crowd again in v15-25 and confuses those around him by his seemingly erratic behaviour. What can we learn from David about asking God for things in prayer?

INVOLVE

David was a passionate worshipper of God, so it makes sense to conclude this series with an opportunity for prayer and worship. Have your group share some things they are thankful to God for (who he is and what he's done). Create space for your group to join in prayer, expressing this thanks to God.

(Nb. You could ask them to share stuff specifically related to the life of David or you could just allow your group to express whatever is on their heart as worship to God).

APPLY

Thinking back across the whole series on David, have everyone share one area of their life where they feel God has challenged them to grow. As a group, decide on a way to commemorate or remember what God has spoken to you about so you can reflect back on it in the future!