

# Becoming a Person After God's Own Heart

## The Life of David, the Boy

### Session 1. You Gotta Have Heart

**Lesson Objective:** That students assess the spiritual condition of their hearts.

**Bible Passage:** I Sam. 16: 1-13

**Bible Truth:** God's view of our worth is based on our hearts.

**Memory Verse:** 1 Sam. 16: 7b

**What you need:** a variety of magazines or newspapers, preferably with pictures of people instead of places or animals; prepare Bible Application reading; paper and colored pens or pencils, copies of "Heart Health Test" and weekly reading guide, the words to songs for closing.

#### Opening

Have a variety of magazines and/or newspapers available and ask the students to each rip out a picture of someone who looks like a leader. When everyone has chosen a picture have each student share why they think that person looks like a leader. Then explain that you are going to spend the next four weeks studying the life of one of the greatest leaders in the Bible, David. Also, since most of the students are still in the stage of developing their leadership skills, you are going to look at the time in David's life when he too was beginning to develop and use the skills and the character that would later make him the greatest king of the nation of Israel.

#### Interactive Learning

Read the following story:

##### *The Suitor's Test*

*A long time ago in a land far away, a king invited all of the young men in his kingdom to a private audience. When the day came, the palace courtyard filled up and the king announced, "My daughter has come of marriageable age. Any of you who desire her hand in marriage will be given a seed. In six months you will return with the plant you have grown from this seed and the person with the best fruit of his labors will marry the princess."*

*Our interest lies with one young man, who considered himself ordinary in every way, and would never imagine himself able to compete for the love of the princess, but who was eager to see what he could do with the seed he was given. He bought a pot, simple but lovely, filled it with the best soil, planted the seed, and carefully tended it. The weeks passed and nothing happened; no sprout appeared. As time went by, he grew ever gloomier as he saw the plants that others were proudly displaying, with beautiful flowers or luscious fruit.*

*When the six months had passed all of the young men returned to the palace, bearing their pots with the exotic plants they had grown. Our friend sadly watched them pass down the road. Since his pot was still barren, he did not plan on joining them. But as he watched the parade of fine plants, he became more and more curious to see who would win, so he made up his mind to go to the palace. He picked up his pot filled only with dirt and walked towards the palace, his head down, avoiding the eyes of those he heard snickering as he passed.*

***Once inside the castle he tried to hide in the back of the crowd of suitors and blushed with shame as the king and his advisors walked past examining each plant. Finally the king appeared with his daughter. Everyone held their breath in anticipation. The daughter then called out the name of our friend with the barren pot.***

***The crowd began to buzz, but the king called for silence and explained, “Hundreds of suitors have come to the palace seeking the hand of my daughter. Many of them looked very impressive and worthy, but we needed a way to reveal what was inside of every eligible young man, so we devised this test. The seed that was given to each of you was specially treated to be sterile. It would never produce a plant. Yet all save one of you tried to impress me with the beauty of your plants. Only someone who has the valor to be true and honest, even in the face of difficulty, rejection, and shame, could ever truly love my daughter and be a wise king.”***

Then discuss the following questions:

- **What do you think of the test?**
- **What do you think you would have done and why?**
- **Now look at the picture you chose. There are external and physical qualities that we associate with leadership. Often someone who stands tall, looks you in the eye, and is self-confident is seen by others as having leadership characteristics. Do you think these are reliable indicators of a leader? Why or why not?**



***Now let’s look at what it was about David that made God choose him to be king.***

### **Bible Application**

Have the students to open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 16:1-13. Ask for three volunteers and give them the parts of Samuel, Jesse, and the Lord. Explain that everyone else will read the part of the narrator in the story (for example: Everyone: “The Lord said to Samuel”, Lord: “How long...”). Before class familiarize yourself with the passage so that you can cue the readers when it is time for them to read. After the reading discuss the following questions:

- **What do you find interesting in this story?**
- **Why do you think that Samuel assumed that Eliab was God’s choice?** [he was the oldest, his height and appearance (v. 7)]
- **Why do you think that David wasn’t even invited by his father to the meeting with Samuel?** [he was the youngest of the family; he was way too young to be a king]

Break up into groups of 3 or 4, give each group a piece of paper and colored pens or pencils so they can create a “rebus” out of the last sentence of 1 Sam. 16: 7, “Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.” Explain that a rebus is a representation of words or syllables by pictures of objects or by symbols whose names resemble the intended words or syllables in sound. Show them a simple example that you have prepared beforehand. (Note: If you can’t view these images in the M.S. Word Version, you may have to look at the pdf version.)

For example: Can you see well?  UC  ?

Allow a few minutes for the teams to finish their work, while you walk around and offer help to any group that may be having trouble. Then, one at a time, have each group hold up their rebus so the rest of the class can read it. Finally get several responses to the following question:

- **How does it make you feel to hear that God judges you based on your heart?**

### **Commitment**

***We see that God didn't choose David because he was the oldest or the youngest, the tallest or the most handsome. He chose him because of what he saw in David's heart. This should encourage us because it means that God can use each one of us for great things, even if we don't feel like we have important gifts and talents. But it should also make us feel concerned, because if we really know what is in our hearts, we know that there is a lot of sin and selfishness.***

Hand out "Heart Health Test" worksheets and pens or pencils. Explain that in general when it comes to being healthy, most of us know what to do—eat right, exercise, and get enough rest—but living that way on a regular basis is something else. It's the same with our spiritual 'heart health'; if we've gone to church much at all we've heard what we should do to strengthen our relationship with God, but we don't always do it.

Ask someone to read Jeremiah 17: 9-10. Explain that only God truly knows what is in our hearts, so before they fill out the sheet have them pray along with you as you ask God to reveal to each student the truth about what is in their hearts. Give them time to fill out the handout. When they have finished ask if anyone has any questions or comments. Then have a few people share what they see as their weakest area and how they can improve in that area.

Explain that in the next few weeks we will be studying what God saw in David's heart so we can develop hearts that are more like his. Hand out copies of the weekly reading guide and encourage them to become more like David by doing the reading assignments during the week. Explain that the readings all come from psalms written by David.

### **Closing**

Before class choose several well known praise songs or hymns that you think would be good to help the students respond to God with their hearts. Make sure you have copies of the words available so everyone can join in fully. As you close with the songs, encourage the students to think about the words they are singing and to really respond to God's love for them with their hearts.

♥ Heart Health Test ♥

Dead or Alive

There are two kinds of hearts according to Ezekiel 36: 26:

hearts made of \_\_\_\_\_, which means \_\_\_\_\_

hearts made of \_\_\_\_\_, which means \_\_\_\_\_

According to this verse how does someone get a new heart?

\_\_\_\_\_.

Which type of heart do you have?

\_\_\_\_\_.

Heart Healthy Habits

If God has given you a “new heart”, circle the number of hearts that represents the “strength” of your heart in each area below.

**A Clean Heart**

I keep my heart from having a buildup of sin by asking forgiveness for my sins and repenting (turning away) from them. (See 1 John 1: 9) ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

**A Powerful Heart**

I exercise the love in my heart for God by obeying his commands: loving Him and loving those around me. (See Mt. 22: 37-39) ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

**A Strengthened Heart**

I strengthen my heart with good spiritual food: studying the Bible, communicating with God through prayer, learning from and sharing with other believers. (See Acts 2: 42) ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

**A Rested Heart**

I rest in God, trusting him with my burdens and resting from my work for a day every week. (See Mt. 11:28; Ex. 20: 8-10) ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

My Strongest Area \_\_\_\_\_

My Weakest Area \_\_\_\_\_

***The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart,  
and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart.  
For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.***

Jesus as recorded by Dr. Luke in chapter 6 verse 45.

## How To Become a Man or Woman after God's Own Heart Reading Guide Week 1

*Too often we feel like what we read in the Bible washes over us without ever really sinking in. This series of readings and their accompanying meditation exercises is designed to help you connect with God's word in a deeper way. Most of us don't have much practice meditating so you might find yourself frustrated, wishing you could just write down a few answers to some questions and get on with your day. But once you begin to feel a deeper intimacy with God, you will be amazed at how present he is in His word and in your life. You will find that your time with Him makes you feel centered and peaceful. Keep in mind that the purpose of meditation is "to enable us to hear God more clearly." (Richard Foster) To this end, you will get the most out of these readings if you do them regularly in a quiet place when you are not distracted by time pressure (and when you aren't sleepy!)*

**May God use His word to form His heart in you.**

### Day 1 **Psalm 16**

Read the psalm once through. Then carefully re-read each verse or section, turning it into a prayer, affirming what David is saying or asking for the same thing for your life.

### Day 2 **Psalm 25**

Read the psalm carefully. Choose a verse or verses that resonate with what is going on in your heart and then write those verses on an index card. As you write them out think about the words, tell God what you are feeling, ask Him to help you understand and live out this passage in a deeper way. Don't do all of the talking; be quiet and let him talk to you. Then throughout the day and until your next devotional time, pull out the card, read the verses and prayerfully think about them.

### Day 3 **Psalm 32**

This psalm focuses on confession, acknowledging our sins before God and asking for him to forgive them based on Christ's death on the cross (1<sup>st</sup> Jn. 1:9). Prayerfully read verses 1-7 and then kneel facedown on the floor, and spend time confessing your sins, both things you have done that you shouldn't have and things you should have done but didn't. Then in this humble position, be silent and let God show you things in your life that aren't pleasing to him. After a few minutes of silence, read verses 8-10, and ask God to show you his path and give you the power to walk in it. Finish by reading v. 11 and thanking God for His forgiveness.

### Day 4 **Psalm 63:1-8**

Read the psalm slowly, trying to *feel* and *see* what David is expressing in each verse. Here are some ideas for how to do this: after you read verse one, spend time thinking about what it feels like to be thirsty, to be hot and tired and long for water and think about longing for intimacy with God with that kind of intensity. Consider what it means that Jesus is "living water" and "the Bread of Life."

After you read verse two read Isaiah 6:1-4, Ezekiel 1:4-28, and/or Revelation 4:2-11 and spend some time imagining the scene depicted there. Then as you read v. 3-5 picture your praises joining the praise that is constantly going on around God's throne.

Let verses 6-8 remind you of times when you haven't been able to sleep because you were worried about something. Let yourself feel the anxiety of something that concerns you right now, then think about the power and majesty of God that you glimpsed in His throne room,

picture yourself walking up to him, explaining the situation and asking for His help. Let yourself “sing in the shadow of His wings” because “he is your help.”

**Day 5 Psalm 141**

Read the psalm looking to understand the nature of David’s heart and life. Think about what he liked and what he disliked, according to these verses. Choose a verse from the psalm to memorize and repeat it to yourself throughout the day.