

Becoming a Man or Woman after God's Own Heart: The Life of David, the Boy By Annette Gulick

Session 3 A Heart Trained to Trust in God

Lesson Objective: That students learn how to use their daily experiences as training in trusting God.

Bible Passage: I Sam. 17:32-40

Bible Truth: David had learned how to trust God through his ordinary life situations.

Memory Verse: Psalm 20:7

What you need: 2 balls, candy for the winning team; a copy of Bible application questions for each student, pens, extra bibles; strips of blank paper, a small basket or container. (Note two separate pdf files available after this lesson at www.reach-out.org in the "lessons" section where you got this lesson).

Opening

Divide the group into two equal teams and have them form two parallel lines. (If your group is larger than 30, you may choose to form 3 or more teams.) Before you pull out the balls or explain the relay, lead the students in the following "training drills" (for fun you can do this as if you were a coach or a drill sergeant):

Stand with your legs spread wide enough apart for the ball to fit through them. Reach your hands up over your head and then bend forward at the waist and put your hands through your legs. Do this about 15 or so times until it becomes automatic. Then lead them in the second "drill": reach both hands back around to one side (the movement of grabbing the ball from the person behind you) and then swing them forward and in front to the other side (the movement of passing the ball to the person in front of you.) Do this side-to-side motion 15 or so times.

After the drills pull out the balls and explain that you will give the first person in each team a ball. When you give the signal they will pass the ball over their head to the person behind them, who will pass it under their legs to the next person and so on. When the ball gets back to the front of the line they will pass it down the line and back again, but this time in the side to side manner of the drill—each person receives the ball from behind them on one side and hands it off to the next person towards the other side. Congratulate the winning team and reward them with some candy. After the students sit down discuss:

- ***Was the pre-relay drill helpful? If so, why?***
- ***Ask for examples of other types of drills (sport specific drills, math drills, etc.) What are the advantages of doing these drills?*** [in sports you become stronger and faster, more prepared to react to different situations, in academics they help you remember things you've learned]
- ***In the military they make soldiers disassemble and reassemble their guns again and again, timing them until they can do it at a certain speed. What is the point of that kind of drill?*** [so that the action becomes automatic, they can do it under pressure, in the dark or whenever without having to consciously think about it]

Whether it has been on a sports team, preparing for a role in a ballet or play, or learning a new instrument or language, most of us have experienced the importance of training and preparation. As they say, "Success is 10% inspiration and 90% perspiration."

Interactive Learning

Explain that for the past few weeks the reading guides have provided the students with the opportunity to learn a new "skill"—how to meditate on God's word. Ask for a show of hands of the people who did some of the weekly readings and have several of them describe one of the meditation activities that was particularly meaningful to them. Be prepared to encourage discussion by sharing one that you enjoyed and why. Here are some possible questions for discussion:

- ***What is something you learned by doing these activities?***
- ***How are these activities different than your usual way of reading the Bible?***
- ***Have you enjoyed this approach? Why or why not?***
- ***What has God taught you through your devotional time in these past few weeks?***

One of the most important parts of our training and preparation for our Christian life is spending time with God and in his Word. The truths found in the Bible provide us with a solid rock to stand on so we are not blown back and forth by doubts and by other people's opinions. Knowing God better strengthens our faith, which is a shield against the flaming arrows of the evil one. By studying the Psalms we have been getting to know the heart of David, the attitudes and passions that produced his actions. Today we are going to learn about some of the drills and training that God put David through to get him ready to fight Goliath and eventually to become a great king.

Bible Application

Make sure each student has a Bible and something to write with, and then hand out the Bible study questions. Allow a few minutes for the students to read the passage and answer the questions. Then discuss:

- ***How do you think David learned to use a sling?*** [probably by watching his brothers, maybe they even taught him when he was sent out alone with the sheep]
- ***What did David probably do to be ready for a bear or lion?*** [he probably practiced using his sling, aiming at rocks or plants, maybe lizards or snakes, he also was probably practiced with different kinds of stones and was always on the lookout for good ones to carry with him]
- ***If the predators were not going after David, if they just wanted to get a sheep and get away, why didn't David just hide and let them go in peace?*** [he was responsible for the sheep and being a good shepherd he did what was right instead of what was easiest and safest]
- ***As he prepared to fight Goliath, why was his sling a better choice for him than the king's best sword?*** [because David knew how to use his sling but did not have practice with a sword]

Commitment

On a chalkboard draw three columns. Ask one of the students who draws well to put one of the following sets of pictures at the top of each column: a lion and a bear; a giant; a sling and some stones. Explain that the lions & bears represent problems or temptations we face regularly, maybe even daily, while the giant represents problems or temptations that we face infrequently

and that are so big they could overwhelm us. Get quite a few ideas from the students about their “lions and bears” and write them on the board under the appropriate drawing. Some ideas might be stealing, cheating in school, getting angry with their siblings, lying to their parents, talking about someone behind their back, etc.

Then talk about possible giants they might have to face one day. These should be big things, possibly a moral crisis like what Joseph faced with Potipher’s wife or a crossroads in their life like being willing to lose their job or even die for their faith. Remember the goal is to get them thinking, not for them to get “right answers”, so thank each student as they participate and be careful not to judge their contributions. [For example instead of saying “No, that’s not a giant.” You might say, “Is that something some of us have occasionally experienced? If so then it could be something that God is using to train us, so how about if we write that down with the lions and bears.”]

When the majority of the students have participated and you have a good list under the two categories ask how reacting properly to the “lions and bears” (relatively common difficulties or temptations) could be preparation for the “giants” (big trials or temptations.) [For example: standing up for what is right with our friends could make it natural to stand up for what’s right even if our life depends on it.]

After some discussion explain that when David was out tending his sheep he never expected to come face to face in battle with the best Philistine warrior. In the same way we have no way of knowing what kind of giant we will come across or when it will show up. But we do know that God promises that we will never face any temptation beyond what we can bear (1 Cor. 10:13.)

Then explain that the sling & stones represent the tools that help us have the victory. Brainstorm together about what these are in our lives, writing the answers down in the appropriate column. Try to guide the conversation away from general answers like “prayer” to more specific descriptions like “asking God for courage.” If you have time, you might even want to go down the list of “bears” and identify “stones” that would help with those specific issues. For example, asking God for patience with our siblings will help us not get angry with them, or disciplining ourselves to ask their forgiveness every time we are unkind to them will make us think twice before we are rude.

Closing

Give each student a small piece of paper for his or her prayer request. Ask the students to think about a “lion” that they are facing in their life right now or that they face on a regular basis. Ask them to write down a prayer request that deals with that situation. Then have the students put their papers in a container, shake them to mix them up. Pass the container around the room and have each student remove a paper. Then go around the room and have each student pray for the request they drew from the container.

Read 1 Sam. 17:32-40

What animals occasionally attacked David's sheep?

What did David do when one of his sheep was carried off?

What did he do if the predator turned on him?

What does he say God did to help him?

Why did David take off the armor king Saul loaned him?

How To Become a Man or Woman after God's Own Heart Reading Guide (Week 3)

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 37**

As you read through this psalm make two lists, one where you write down what David says about evil men, what they are like and what will happen to them, and the other where you write down what David says about the righteous. Does what you have seen throughout your life support or differ from what David says? A significant part of our training in trusting God is believing that He does bless the righteous and punish the wicked even when life seems to show something else. Spend some time talking with God about how you feel about this issue. Then choose a verse from this psalm, maybe v. 4 or v. 25, 26 and underline it or write it somewhere so you can refer to it if you ever begin to doubt the wisdom of living for God.

Day 2 **Psalm 51**

This psalm is one of the most excellent prayers of confession and repentance. Read it through prayerfully. You may want to kneel facedown on the floor. After you read verses 3, 4 confess your sins specifically, both things you have done that you shouldn't have and things you should have done but didn't. As you continue reading slowly through the psalm, tell God what you are feeling, ask Him to help you understand and live out these verses in a deeper way. When you have finished reading, quiet your heart before God, giving him the chance to speak to you. If you feel like He is guiding you to do something specific, write it down so you don't forget.

Day 3 **Psalm 131**

After reading this brief psalm once through, imagine that you are a young Israelite who works in the palace of King David. You admire him greatly and want to learn everything you can about him so you try to watch him and listen to him whenever you get the chance. One day you are out in the gardens and you hear his voice. You quietly move towards the voice, straining to hear every word and what you hear him say are the words recorded in Psalm 131. Spend some time thinking about each phrase of this psalm, asking yourself "What does King David mean when he says....?"

Day 4 **Psalm 143**

Read the psalm through slowly and carefully two times in the morning. Read it again in the middle of the day and before you go to bed. Write down any thoughts that have occurred to you as a result of spending time thinking about these verses.

Day 5 Psalm 20

Read the psalm through completely. Think of someone who is struggling and needs God's strength. Pray through this psalm as a prayer for them, putting in their name and specific situation. If you want you may even write it out for them the way you have prayed it for them. This will be a very great encouragement for them if you do.