



DAVID

King of Hearts

A Bible Study by Stan Key

—Answers: Volume 1—

*“Man looks on the outward appearance,
but the Lord looks on the heart.” (I Sam 16:7)*



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: THE HEART OF THE MATTER.....	5
CHAPTER 1. THE CALL.....	11
CHAPTER 2. A GIANT PROBLEM	17
CHAPTER 3. THE MADNESS OF KING SAUL	23
CHAPTER 4. THE ART OF SPEAR-DODGING	28
CHAPTER 5. THE PITS	34
CHAPTER 6. THE WORST DAY OF DAVID'S LIFE.....	40
CHAPTER 7. SWEET WILL OF GOD	42
ANSWERS	48
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	50

HYMNS AND POEMS:

- O FOR A HEART TO PRAISE MY GOD (PAGE 10)
- TAKE MY LIFE AND LET IT BE (PAGE 16)
- THE BALLAD OF DAVEY THE GIANT-KILLER (PAGE 21)
- FAITH IS THE VICTORY (PAGE 22)
- ZEAL IS THAT PURE AND HEAVENLY FLAME (PAGE 27)
- O GOD, TO ME BE MERCIFUL (PAGE 33)
- LIKE A RIVER GLORIOUS (PAGE 41)
- SWEET WILL OF GOD (PAGE 47)
- ICU (BACK COVER)



DAVID: *King of Hearts*

A Bible Study by Stan Key

INTRODUCTION: THE HEART OF THE MATTER¹

I. Why study David?

There are many reasons to study the life of David. For one thing, we have a massive amount of biblical material devoted to him. But some of the more important reasons for examining his life are listed below.

- A. He is one of the most influential persons in history. Not just in the history of Israel, but throughout the world, David's influence is felt in:
 - 1. Literature: the stories of Goliath, Jonathan, Bathsheba, and Absalom are classics.
 - 2. Leadership: few men ever led their nation to greater heights; few men ever had more devoted followers (or more passionate enemies).
 - 3. Music and worship: the psalms of David remain a rich source of inspiration.
 - 4. Family dynamics: love, adultery, rebellious children, etc.
 - 5. Psychology: John Calvin (1509–1564) calls the book of Psalms “an anatomy of all parts of the soul; for no one will discover in himself a single feeling whereof the image is not reflected in this mirror.”
 - 6. Theology: though there is not one miracle associated with his life, his story leads us into the depths of who God is and what God does.
- B. Studying David is like looking into a mirror. Understanding David's story helps us to better understand our own story. In David, we have the opportunity to examine our struggles with:
 - 1. Being a leader and being a follower.
 - 2. Facing the giants in our lives.
 - 3. Dealing with moral failure, guilt, confession, forgiveness, and reconciliation.
 - 4. Depression, discouragement, and doubt: “why?” “how long?”
 - 5. Friendship: having a friend, being a friend.
 - 6. How to live with an enemy: the art of spear-dodging.
 - 7. Waiting on the Lord to fulfill his promises.
 - 8. The joy of victory and the agony of defeat.
 - 9. Living with rebellious children.
- C. Studying David helps to introduce us to Jesus, “the son of David.” David's life and reign serves as a prototype, a foreshadowing of the life and reign of King Jesus. Amazingly, Jesus is both the root and the offspring of David (Rev 22:16). “The David story anticipates the Jesus story. The Jesus story presupposes the David story” (Peterson, *Leap Over a Wall*, p 9).

¹ This lesson was not recorded. Video recordings begin with Chapter 1.

II. Where do we find the biblical material on the life of David?

A. We find the life of David primarily in two places in Scripture:

1. *The Historical Books.* One continuous narrative from I Samuel 16 through I Kings 2 (see a parallel account in I Chronicles 11-29). Here we see the outward story of David’s life.
2. *The book of Psalms.* Seventy-three psalms are attributed to David and 14 of them refer to a specific historical event: when he fled from Absalom (Ps 3), when he pretended to be insane before Abimelech (Ps 34), after he committed adultery with Bathsheba (Ps 51), when he was in a cave (Ps 142), etc. Here, we see the inward journey of David’s soul.

B. David’s life as reflected in I Samuel 16 through I Kings 2.

Defining Moment #1	Waiting & Trusting in the Promises	Defining Moment #2	Reigning in Power & Expanding the Kingdom	Defining Moment #3	Dealing with Sin & Reaping the Consequences
<i>Called of God</i>	<i>University of the Desert</i>	<i>Saul Dies</i>	<i>The Golden Age</i>	<i>Moral Fall</i>	<i>A House Divided</i>
I Sam 16	I Sam 16-31	I Sam 31	II Sam 1-10	II Sam 11-12	II Sam 13-I Kgs 2

C. This study of David does not cover every detail of his life but seeks to focus on those moments that were formative and significant in his journey. It also examines some of the psalms of David that relate to his story.

III. The heart of the matter.

Looking at I Samuel 13:14 and 16:7, we learn what set David apart from everyone else: the heart. This is why we have entitled our study, “David: King of Hearts.” The heart of the matter is the matter of the heart.

- “The Lord has sought out a man after his own *heart*, and the Lord has commanded him to be prince over his people...” (I Sam 13:14).
- “For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the *heart*” (I Sam 16:7).

A. Definition of the heart.

In Hebrew (*leb*) and Greek (*kardia*), the “heart” can be used literally, referring to the muscle in your chest (II Sam 18:14), or it can be used metaphorically, referring to the inner life, the center of personality. In English, we use “heart” primarily for our emotions and feelings, but the biblical word is much richer and includes at least four areas of our human person:

1. Our emotions and feelings: joy, pain, fear, anxiety, excitement, anger, despair, etc. (II Sam 14:1; Ps 13:2; 22:14; 38:8; 69:20; etc.)
2. Our desires: passions, lusts, motives, wants, appetites, loves, hates, etc. (Ps 20:4; 21:2; 37:4; etc.)
3. Our intellect: we think with our hearts! Wisdom and folly are found in the heart, not the head. (Ps 4:4; 14:1; 51:6; 90:12; Prov 22:15; Eph 4:18; Rom 1:21; Jam 3:14; etc.)
4. Our will: decisions, choices, and commitments are made (or not) in the heart. (I Kg 8:17; Ex 36:2; etc.) “The heart has its reasons that the reason knows not of” (Pascal).

Thus we see that “heart,” in the Bible, refers to the whole person, our character, the governing center of our being. Beyond our outward actions and the image we present to the world, the heart reveals who we *really* are. The purposes in a man’s heart are like deep water (Prov 20:5; Ps 64:6). Who can understand the heart (Jer 17:9–10). This means that knowing yourself (Socrates) is harder than you think!

B. Heart disease.

When sin entered the world (Gen 3), the heart that had once been perfect and pure became sinful and corrupt. “The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his *heart* was only evil continually” (Gen 6:5; see also Matt 15:19-20). Heart disease, whether physical or spiritual, can kill you! Notice two unsettling characteristics of heart disease:

- The older we get, the greater the risk. “When Solomon was *old* his wives turned away his *heart* after other gods, and his *heart* was not wholly true to the Lord...” (I Kgs 11:4).
- Those with heart disease typically don’t know they have heart disease. They feel fine. It takes a trained cardiologist to detect what is going on inside. David was unaware that he was suffering from spiritual arteriosclerosis when he had his moral failure with Bathsheba. He needed a spiritual EKG.

The Bible is faithful to point out the symptoms that indicate heart disease is present:²

1. A proud heart. “Before destruction a man’s *heart* is haughty” (Prov 18:12). (Deut 8:14; Prov 16:5; Ps 101:5; 131:1)
2. A hard heart. A stubborn, stony heart is a sure indication of spiritual arteriosclerosis. Though Pharaoh³ is Exhibit A for this type of heart disease, it can also be present in the lives of those who have followed Christ for many years (Deut 10:16; Ps 81:12; 95:8; Ezek 36:26-27; Matt 13:15; Mark 3:5; 6:52; 8:17; Heb 3:7-15).
3. A divided heart. Those with spiritual bi-polar disorder can’t decide whether to go through with God or not. Double-minded men are unstable in all their ways (James 1:8). They have enough faith to get out of Egypt but not enough to get into Canaan. Thus, they walk in circles. These people love and serve God, but they love and serve other gods as well. (Ps 86:11; Jer 32:39; Ezek 11:19; II Chron 25:2; James 4:8)
4. A foolish heart. Folly has little to do with IQ. In fact, there are some forms of foolishness one must be highly educated to commit! The real problem is not in our minds, but in our hearts. “Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him” (Prov 22:15). (Ps 14:1; 73:7; Rom 1:21)
5. A deceived heart. The greatest problem for those with heart disease is that they are unaware of their danger. “The *heart* is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? ‘I the Lord search the *heart* and test the mind...’” (Jer 17:9-10). By definition, deceived people don’t know they are deceived. “Blessed is the man... in whose spirit there is no deceit” (Ps 32:2).

² These characteristics seem to describe well the heart of Saul. Like David, Saul had a decisive experience when “God gave him another heart” (I Sam 10:9). However, even though Saul had been chosen by God (I Sam 9:15-16; 10:20-24), filled with the Spirit (I Sam 10:6-11), and changed into a “different man” (I Sam 10:6, 9-11), Saul never came to a place where he surrendered his will to God. He never had a fixed heart, a single heart. This is why Saul was a fool (I Sam 13:13; 26:21), and it ultimately led to his destruction.

³ How did Pharaoh’s heart become hard? Who hardened it? The book of Exodus gives three assessments about Pharaoh’s hard heart: God hardened it (4:21; 7:3; 9:12; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10; 14:4, 8, 17), Pharaoh hardened it (8:15, 32; 9:34), it was hardened—no “credit” given (7:13, 22; 8:19; 9:7, 35).

C. A healthy heart.

The Bible not only describes what a diseased heart is like but also—more importantly—it paints a picture of a heart as God intends it to be:

1. A seeking, hungry heart. In the Bible, seeking God is as important as finding him. “Blessed are those... who seek [the Lord] with their whole *heart*” (Ps 119:2). Perhaps no one modeled this reality more than David. “You have said, ‘Seek my face.’ My *heart* says to you, ‘Your face, Lord, do I seek’” (Ps 27:8). (I Chron 22:19; Ps 42:1-2; 63:1; Jer 29:13; Matt 5:6)
2. A humble, contrite heart. God delights to offer intimate fellowship to those who are poignantly aware of their need, their perversity, their poverty, and their sin and rebellion. When we acknowledge the truth about our hearts, God floods us with his grace. “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite *heart*, O God, you will not despise” (Ps 51:17). (Deut 8:2; Ps 32:3-5; 51:1-3; 131:1)
3. A steadfast, fixed heart. Sin makes the heart arrhythmic, erratic, and unstable. “My *heart* is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast!” (Ps 57:7). (I Chron 22:19; Ps 62:10; 78:8; 112:7; Isa 26:3)
4. A single, undivided heart. Jesus said to Martha, “one thing is necessary”—not many (Luke 10:42). Paul said, “one thing I do” (Phil 3:13). When the eye is single, then your whole body will be full of light (Matt 6:22 KJV). David prayed for God to give him an undivided *heart*, to make his *heart* single (Ps 86:11). “Purity of your heart is to will one thing” (Kierkegaard). (Jer 32:39; Ezek 11:19; James 4:8)
5. A clean, holy heart. Dealing with inbred sin (not just sinful actions) requires a deep work of grace. “Create in me a clean *heart*, O God” (Ps 51:10). Only those with a pure heart are able to see God (Matt 5:8). (Ps 24:3-4; 73:1; Acts 15:8-9; James 4:8)
6. A whole heart. The word “whole” sums up most completely what a healthy heart looks like. It describes a heart that simply is God’s—completely his—nothing held back. Full and complete surrender and abandonment to God. It is those who trust the Lord (Prov 3:5-6) and love the Lord (Matt 22:36-37) with *all their hearts* who are pleasing to him. In II Chron 16:9, “The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose *heart* is [are]...”
 - “Completely his” (NASB).
 - “Fully committed to him” (NIV).
 - “Perfect toward him” (KJV).

D. Is there a cure?

Thankfully, God not only diagnoses our desperate condition, he offers a remedy! Our part is to seek God, to ask for help, to confess our sins, and, most importantly, to trust him to do what he says he can do. Try praying these prayers of David:

- “Search me, O God, and know my *heart*! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!” (Ps 139:23-24)
- “Give me an undivided *heart* [Make my *heart* single].” (Ps 86:11 NIV)
- “Create in me a clean *heart*, O God....” (Ps 51:10)

God’s part is to:

1. Incline our hearts to seek him. May he “incline our *hearts* to him, to walk in all his ways and to keep his commandments...” (I Kgs 8:58). (Ps 119:36)
2. Fill us with his Spirit. The Spirit of God is called the *Holy* Spirit not just because of who he is but also because of what he does: he is the sanctifying Spirit (I Sam 16:13; Acts 15:8-9).
3. Circumcise our hearts (Deut 30:6; Rom 2:29). To have a heart like David requires more than behavior modification. It takes a work of grace, deep in the heart, curing the disease, cleansing the sin, and unifying the whole. This is precisely the work that Jesus came to make possible. This is what the New Covenant is all about.
 - “I will put my law [Torah] within them, and I will write it on their *hearts*...” (Jer 31:33).
 - “I will give you a new *heart*, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a *heart* of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes...” (Ezek 36:26-27).
 - “Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body [the inner person, the *heart*] be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it” (I Thess 5:23-24).

TABLE TALK

1. Think about the gospel message you have heard and believed. Does it put the emphasis on outward behaviors or on the inward heart?
2. Look again at the symptoms of spiritual heart disease (III.B, p 7): proud, hard, divided, foolish, and deceived. Which symptom have you struggled with the most?
3. What do you need to do to have a healthy/holy heart? What does God need to do?
4. Proverbs 4:23 directs us to watch over our heart with all diligence because from it flows the springs of life. What are some specific things you can do to protect and guard your heart?
5. At the beginning of his Confessions, Augustine said, “You have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.” Discuss this idea.

O for a Heart to Praise My God

Charles Wesley (1742)

*O for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free,
A heart that always feels Thy blood
So freely shed for me.*

*A heart resigned, submissive, meek,
My great Redeemer's throne,
Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone.*

*A humble, lowly, contrite, heart,
Believing, true and clean,
Which neither life nor death can part
From Christ who dwells within.*

*A heart in every thought renewed
And full of love divine,
Perfect and right and pure and good,
A copy, Lord, of Thine.*

*Thy tender heart is still the same,
And melts at human woe:
Jesus, for thee distressed I am,
I want Thy love to know.*

*My heart, Thou know'st, can never rest
Till Thou create my peace;
Till of mine Eden repossess,
From self, and sin, I cease.*

*Fruit of Thy gracious lips, on me
Bestow that peace unknown,
The hidden manna, and the tree
Of life, and the white stone.*

*Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart;
Come quickly from above;
Write Thy new name upon my heart,
Thy new, best name of Love.*



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CHAPTER 1. THE CALL

I Samuel 16:1–13

I. Every adventure has a beginning.

Almost every personal story in the Bible begins with **a call**. It is not our job to write the script of our own lives. Thank God! The Author has already chosen roles for us and he wants us to know what those roles are. The invitation (command?) to fill those roles is what *calling* is all about (*vocation*, from Latin *vocatio* for calling). It is only as we find our place in God's larger story (metanarrative) that we discover our true identity and the true **purpose** and the **significance** of our lives.

A. Biblical examples of calling.

1. *Abraham* (Gen 12:1-2): "Now the Lord said to Abram, '**Go** from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation....'"
2. *Moses* (Ex 3:4, 9-10): "God called to [Moses] out of the bush, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here I am.'...[Then the Lord said,] 'The cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.'" After the call came, Moses finally responded; "Oh, my Lord, please **send someone else**" (Ex 4:13).
3. *Gideon* (Jdgs 6:12, 14): "And the angel of the Lord appeared to [Gideon] and said, 'The Lord is with you, O mighty man of valor.'... And the Lord turned to him and said, '**Go** in this might of yours and save Israel from the hand of Midian; do not I send you?'"
4. *Isaiah* (Isa 6:8): "And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' Then I said, '**Here am I!** Send me.'" (Note: Isaiah's call came when he got close enough to God to overhear him talking to himself! This caused Isaiah to simply volunteer to be involved.)
5. *Jeremiah* (Jer 1:4-5): "Now the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 'Before I formed you **in the womb** I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.'"
6. *Peter* and the 12 apostles (Mark 1:17-18): "**Follow me**, and I will make you become fishers of men.' And immediately they left their nets and followed him."
7. *Paul* (Acts 26:15-18): "'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. But rise and stand upon your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to **appoint you** as a servant and witness [to the Gentiles]... to whom I am sending you to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God....'"

B. Some historical examples.

1. *William Wilberforce* (1759-1833): He wrote in his journal on October 28, 1787: "God almighty has set before me two great objects, the suppression of **the Slave Trade** and the Reformation of Manners" (quoted in *The Call* by Guinness, p 27).

2. *George Washington Carver* (c. 1861-1943): “When I was young, I said to God, ‘God, tell me the mystery of the universe.’ But God answered, ‘That knowledge is reserved for me alone.’ So I said, ‘God, tell me the mystery of the **peanut**.’ Then God said, ‘Well, George, that’s more nearly your size.’ And he told me.” (Carver discovered hundreds of uses for the humble peanut and sweet potato, thus making farming in the rural south profitable again after the demise of cotton.)
3. *Eric Liddle* (1902-1945): The Flying Scotsman won the men’s 400 meters race at the 1924 Summer Olympics in Paris then served as a missionary in China. “I believe God made me for a purpose, but he also made me **fast**. And when I run I feel his pleasure” (from the movie, *Chariots of Fire*, 1981).
4. *George Foreman* (b 1949): Two-time World Heavyweight Boxing Champion and ordained Baptist minister. “Preaching is my calling. Boxing for me is only **moonlighting** in the same way Paul made tents” (quoted in *The Call* by Guinness, p 52).

C. Examples in literature.

1. *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien: “‘I am not made for perilous quests,’ said Frodo. ‘I wish I had never seen the ring! Why did it come to me? **Why was I chosen?**’ ‘Such questions cannot be answered,’ said Gandalf. ‘You may be sure that it was not for any merit that others do not possess: not for power or wisdom, at any rate. But you have been chosen, and you must therefore use such strength and heart and wits as you have’.... ‘And now,’ said Gandalf, ‘the decision lies with you. But I will always help you.’ He laid his hand on Frodo’s shoulder. ‘I will help you bear this **burden**, as long as it is yours to bear. But we must do something, soon. The Enemy is moving” (p 59f).
2. *Les Misérables* by Victor Hugo: When Jean Valjean steals some silver from a priest’s home, rather than pressing charges, the priest offers him the candlesticks as well! “Never forget that you have promised me to use this silver to become an **honest man**... Jean Valjean, my brother: you belong no longer to evil, but to good. It is your soul that I am buying for you. I withdraw it from dark thoughts and from the spirit of perdition and I give it to God!” (p 26f).

II. David’s call (read I Samuel 16:1-13).

A. God is looking for a king.

<p>Not Chosen: This is not the one!</p> <p>Not Saul (v 1)</p> <p>Not Eliab (vv 6-7)</p> <p>Not Abinadab (v 8)</p> <p>Not Shammah (v 9)</p> <p>Not the other four sons (v 10)</p> <p>Human standards of leadership focus upon outward appearance.</p> <p>I Sam 16:1-10</p>	<p>Chosen: This is the one!</p> <p>Yes, David is the one.</p> <p>God’s standards of leadership focus on the heart.</p> <p>I Sam 16:11-13</p>
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- B. God is looking for men and women who can influence the world and be agents of change. He is looking for **leaders**. But what does it take to be a leader? Which characteristics are important to God and which characteristics are not?
1. *Characteristics of secondary importance (outward appearance)*. God specifically tells us not to look on outward appearance (I Sam 16:7). The text emphasizes three such qualities that often cause us to make poor choices in determining who God deems to be important and influential in our lives:
 - a. **Birth**. The world values a person's pedigree (Kennedy, Bush, etc.). And first-born children have always been favored. Ethnicity and gender are also involved.
 - b. **Height**. Saul was also tall (I Sam 9:2) and that caused many to think he would be a great king. The world values strength and athletic ability.
 - c. **Appearance**. Most worldly leaders are tall, dark, and handsome. They dress right and drive the right cars. Though David was also "handsome" (I Sam 16:12) the text emphasizes that this was *not* what qualified him for service. In fact, many great leaders in history have been unattractive: Lincoln (gangly, homey), Wilberforce (small, bent), Whitefield (cross-eyed), and Jesus ("he had no beauty that we should desire him" (Isa 53:2)).

Name some other "outward" traits that often play a determinative role in our fallen understanding of who is influential and important and who is not:

 - d. **Education**.
 - e. **Wealth**.
 - f. **Personality and charisma**.
 - g. **Connections**.
 - h. **Giftedness and talent**.
 2. *Characteristics of primary importance (the heart)*. In assessing human attributes, God looks on the heart. What is it about David's heart that causes God to choose him to be king?
 - a. David's **humble position** in life that makes him **invisible**. He is the last born, the baby brother, the youngest.¹ He is the runt of the litter. He is on no one's radar!

*For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is **foolish** in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is **weak** in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is **low** and **despised** in the world, even things that are **not**, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. (I Cor 1:26-29)*
 - b. David's job as a **shepherd**. Shepherding seems to be inconsequential and requires no skills, but it would be hard to find a job that provides

¹ Other examples in the Bible of how God calls the younger to displace the older include: Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, Ephraim and Manasseh, Moses and Aaron, and Solomon and Adonijah.

better training for the kind of leadership in which God is interested.
Describe the traits of character necessary to be a good shepherd:

- 1) It's all about the **sheep**.
- 2) **Provide** food, shelter, protection, guidance.
- 3) **Courage** and skill as a fighter. Enemies (bears, lions, etc.) are real (I Sam 17:32-37).
- 4) **Trust** in God to enable him to accomplish his task.

And all of this is done in **isolation**. No one is watching or applauding except the sheep—and God. David did not view shepherding as a stepping stone to something bigger. He did not **use and abuse** the sheep to advance his career. He cared for the sheep as an end in itself. In fact, these shepherding traits are so important for leadership that God himself sees his role as that of a shepherd (Ps 23; John 10:11; etc.).

- c. David was **faithful** in the little things.

One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? (Luke 16:10-12)

- d. David had an intimate and passionate **relationship** with God. Alone with the sheep, David was not being idle, passive, or lazy. These were years of developmental growth and maturity.

“Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who is skillful in playing, a man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a man of good presence, and the Lord is with him.” Therefore Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, ‘Send me David your son, who is with the sheep.’” (I Sam 16:18-19)

- C. Summary: While David was alone taking care of sheep on the back side of the desert, he was:

1. Becoming a skillful **musician** (lyre) and **poet**. Never underestimate what God may be doing in the heart of a teenager worshiping God with a guitar!
2. Learning how to **love sheep** (feed them, lead them, keep them together, protect them, etc.).
3. Learning how to use a **sling**.
4. Being trained in courage and **warfare** (with bears and lions). (cf. Jdgs 3:1–2)
5. Developing a close **relationship** with God; learning how to pray and worship.
6. **Meditating** on God and his Word—thinking deeply about the meaning of life.
7. Learning how to listen to God and **trust** in his Word.
8. Learning **humility** and how to be invisible.

When you think about it, that's pretty good training in leadership.

III. Characteristics of a call.

Although the concept of “calling” is often associated with the mystical experiences of super saints, the story of David helps us to think more clearly. David experienced **no voice** from heaven nor ecstatic moment of revelation. And after the call came, he went back to taking

care of his sheep. So, what's involved in being called? Studying the Bible helps us to see that there are at least five characteristics of an authentic, God-given call (vocation):

A. The **initiative** is with God, not man.

David did not see a guidance counselor or take an aptitude test to help him decide that he wanted to be a king. No! This calling came from God! For David, God's call came through a person (Samuel). For others the call may come differently (Abraham, Moses, Wilberforce, Frodo, etc.). But there is no calling without **a Caller**. "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit..." (John 15:16).

B. The call is to a **relationship** as much as it is to a task.

Before David was called to **do** something he was called to **be** something: in relationship with God. "And [Jesus] appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be **with him** and he might send them out to preach" (Mark 3:14). Oswald Chambers reminds us that a passion for Christ is more important than a passion for souls.

C. The call is to a **journey** as much as it is to a destination.

"Follow me" (Mark 1:17). "I am the way" (John 14:6). It would be **10 years** between the moment David was anointed king and when he actually sat on the throne. The journey from Point A to Point B was of crucial significance. The lessons David learned along the way prepared him to be a wise and godly king. God can't steer a parked car (Paul Little). Some of us don't need a call, we need a kick in the seat of the pants!

D. The call always involves others. We are called to **a team**.

David soon found fellowship with others who shared this calling (Jonathan, his mighty men, etc.). "It is not good for the man to be alone" (Gen 2:18). Moses had Aaron, Peter had James and John, Paul had Barnabas, etc. Frodo had Sam—and Boromir, Aragorn, Legolas, Merry, Pippin, etc. (*The Fellowship of the Ring*).

E. The call will **cost you everything**.

Salvation may be free, but it is never **cheap**. Obedience to the call cost David everything (family, security, relationships, safety, etc.). "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die" (Bonhoeffer). "Any one of you who does not renounce all that he has **cannot** be my disciple" (Luke 14:33).

TABLE TALK

1. How did this lesson change the way you think about "calling"?
2. Does the thought of God's initiative (his predestined plans) make you feel secure and at peace or does it trouble you and perhaps make you feel insecure? Discuss.
3. Why did God bypass David's brothers?
4. Why did God choose David?
5. Describe your own sense of calling (vocation) in life. Has this study been reassuring to you? Or has it perhaps been disturbing?
6. What does it mean to say that salvation is free but not cheap? Do you agree?
7. In his book, *Ordering Your Private World*, Gordon MacDonald talks about the difference between people who are "driven" and people who are "called." King Saul illustrates someone who is "driven," King David is someone who is "called." Discuss this.

Take My Life and Let It Be

Frances R. Havergal (1874)

*Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
*Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in endless praise.*

*Take my hands and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.
Take my feet and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.*

*Take my voice and let me sing,
Always, only for my King.
Take my lips and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee.*

*Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold.
Take my intellect and use
Every pow'r as Thou shalt choose.*

*Take my will and make it Thine,
It shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is Thine own,
It shall be Thy royal throne.*

*Take my love, my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee.*



DAVID: *King of Hearts*

A Bible Study by Stan Key

CHAPTER 2. A GIANT PROBLEM

I Samuel 17:1-58

I. Jumbo shrimp

- A. The gospel delights in putting together two realities that seem to be contradictory. This paradoxical and **oxymoronic** nature of truth is found everywhere in the Bible: the way up is down, the way to be wise is to be a fool, the way to gain is to give, the way to be joyful is to mourn, the way to be first is to be last, the way to live is to die, etc. One of the greatest of these seeming contradictions is the mustard seed reality (Matt 13:31-32) that bigness comes in being **small**, and strength comes in being **weak**. No story illustrates this better than the battle between David and Goliath.
- B. We all love stories about how an **underdog** wins an upset victory¹. This theme of the unlikely hero is a recurring favorite all over the world:
 1. The tortoise and the hare (*Aesop's Fables*)
 2. Rocky Balboa vs Apollo Creed (*Rocky*)
 3. William Wallace vs England (*Braveheart*)
 4. Hickory High School vs South Bend High School (*Hoosiers*)
 5. Brer Rabbit and Brer Fox (*Uncle Remus*. Joel Chandler Harris)
 6. Susan Boyle (*Britain's Got Talent*)
 7. The Miracle Mets (1969)
 8. The US Olympic hockey team beats Russia (Lake Placid, 1980)
 9. Luke Skywalker vs Darth Vader and the Death Star (*Star Wars*)
 10. Benjamin Netanyahu standing before the United Nations
- C. The most famous underdog story of all time is undoubtedly David and Goliath. I first heard it in Sunday School via the state-of-the-art technology of **flannelgraph**.

II. I Samuel 17:1-58

Goliath's Challenge I Sam 17:1-11	David's Response to the Challenge I Sam 17:12-40	The Battle I Sam 17:41-58
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Read the story (I Sam 17:1-11, 16, 24-54). There are three main characters in this story. Let's examine them one by one:

- A. *Goliath*. We are given a great deal of information about this man:
 1. Ethnicity and national identity: from Gath, a Philistine (v 4).
 2. Religion: he is uncircumcised (v 26) and a polytheist (v 43).

¹ For a recent example, see Malcolm Gladwell's bestselling book *David and Goliath: Underdogs, Misfits, and the Art of Battling Giants*. New York: Back Bay Books, 2013.

3. Size: “six cubits and a span”² (v 4). Over **nine feet** tall. A first-round draft pick for the NBA.
4. Weapons (vv 5-7). State-of-the-art weapons of mass destruction:
 - Bronze helmet for his head.
 - Coat of mail made of bronze (probably from shoulders to knees). This weighed 5,000 shekels (about **125 pounds**).
 - Bronze shin guards.
 - Bronze javelin (type of spear or sword for thrusting in hand-to-hand combat).
 - A spear whose shaft was like a weaver’s beam. The spear’s tip weighted 600 shekels (about **15 pounds**).
 - A shield carried by a personal armor-bearer.
5. Power of intimidation and use of **psychological** warfare. His words are blasphemous, vile, and defiant (vv 8-10, 43-44). He is a terrorist and the prototypical **bully**.

NOTE 1: Goliath may have suffered from a medical condition called acromegaly. This abnormality is caused by a problem with the pituitary gland which results in an overproduction of growth hormone. One side effect can be poor vision. Perhaps this explains the armor-bearer and Goliath’s reference to David carrying “sticks” (v 44), though he had only his staff in his hand (v 40). Was Goliath suffering from double vision?

NOTE 2: Without belittling the very real threat that Goliath poses to Israel, it takes only a little effort to feel a measure of **sympathy** for this overgrown bully. Always the subject of jokes and derision because of his size, suffering from bad eye sight, and filled with massive insecurities, Goliath was perhaps, like many bullies, an insecure little boy, hiding underneath all that impressive weaponry, defiant verbosity, and arrogant belligerence.

- B. *Saul*. Being the tallest man in Israel (I Sam 9:2; 10:23) and having a fine suit of armor himself, Saul was the obvious candidate to fight Goliath! But like the rest of Israelite army, Saul was “dismayed and greatly afraid” (I Sam 17:11). Goliath’s bullying worked. Saul became **paralyzed**, inactive, passive. He therefore decided to find someone else to take on this battle. Saul is the classic example of the **victim**: low self-confidence, fear, anxiety, depression, feelings of powerlessness, submissive and passive.
- C. *David*. No one could have predicted that David (small, young, a civilian, unarmed, a newcomer) would beat Goliath! Imagine a **boxing match** that opens with the referee saying:

In this corner, weighing 355 pounds and measuring over 9 feet tall, a professional soldier for over ten years with a record of 48 knock-outs and no losses, wearing 125 pounds of armor and carrying a sword, a spear and a javelin... Goliath! *And in this corner*, weighing 145 pounds and measuring five foot nine inches in height, for over 5 years having taken care of his father’s sheep; a poet and songwriter, a musician; wearing no armor and carrying a staff and a sling... David!

The bell rings! And before the first round is over Goliath is face down on the ground, dead. How did it happen?

² A cubit was the length from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger (about 18 inches). A span was the length from the thumb to the little finger (about 7 inches)

III. What does it take to be a giant-killer?

Giants and bullies still exist. Whether they come in the form of physical threats of violence, or misfortunes, oppression, injustice, sickness, and disabilities, these powerful opponents threaten us and often render us passive and impotent. From David's example, we can learn what it takes to step into the ring and take on our giant in face-to-face combat.

- A. See the situation with **new eyes**. Get a new perspective. Reframe the situation. "Man looks on the outward appearance but God looks on the heart" (I Sam 16:7). David, filled with the Holy Spirit (I Sam 16:13), was able to see what others could not:

Saul/Israel saw:	David saw:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A personal threat • This is all about me • A dangerous terrorist • This is my battle • Goliath is so big I can't win • He is well equipped with modern weapons • Somebody ought to do something • He has a sword and spear • This is a huge problem • I might get hurt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A threat to my family and friends • This is all about God • An uncircumcised Philistine • This is God's battle • Goliath is so big I can't miss • He is weighed down with cumbersome accessories • I ought to do something • I have a sling • This is a huge opportunity • God's reputation might be hurt

- B. Be **prepared**. It may seem that giant-killers appear suddenly out of nowhere, full grown and ready for battle. Don't be fooled. During years of obscurity, when no one was looking, David had been preparing for this battle, developing a proven **track record**, though he didn't fully understand it. He was no professional soldier, but that didn't mean David didn't know how to fight (vv 33-37). Underdogs work long and hard when no one else is watching. Don't expect to win in the big battles if you are not being faithful in the small battles (daily disciplines, witness to neighbors, tithing, victory over bad habits, etc.). "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a **little**; I will set you over much" (Matt 25:21).
- C. Keep your **motives** pure. David's big brother (Eliab) accused him of having selfish motives (v 28) but that only revealed Eliab's own impure intentions. David is not motivated by personal rewards, by duty and responsibility, or by hatred of the enemy. He did not come to this battle seeking his own glory, but God's: "...that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel... for the battle is the Lord's..." (vv 46-47). "The true soldier fights not because he hates what is in front of him but because he loves what is behind him" (G. K. Chesterton).
- D. Use the right **weapons**. It seemed logical to borrow Saul's armor (vv 38-40). But David was not seduced into letting Goliath set the terms of battle. Saul's armor might work for Saul, but David needed to fight with the weapons that were uniquely suited to David and most honoring to God. The truth is that a man with a sling (speed and

agility, distance, a rock moving at 80 mph toward an unprotected part of the body) can easily have tactical advantage over a giant loaded down with heavy armor.³

For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. (II Cor 10:3-4)

- E. **Trust** in the Lord. The text makes clear that David's trust was not in his sling, but in his Lord! "I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts... This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand...For the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hand" (vv 45-47). It was this trust that gave him **courage**, which simply means that David refused to let his feelings of fear control his actions. It is sobering to remember that the Lake of Fire is where all **cowards** will be thrown (Rev 21:7-8). The battle will be determined not by the size of your enemy but by the size of your God! David was simply living in the reality of what God had promised his people long ago through Moses:

*When you go out to war against your enemies, and see horses and chariots and an army **larger** than your own, you shall not be afraid of them, for the Lord your God is with you... for the Lord your God is he who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies, to give you the victory. (Deut 20:1, 4)*

Little wonder that David could say: "In the Lord I take refuge; how can you say to my soul, '**Flee** like a bird to the mountain, for behold, the wicked bend the bow; they have fitted their arrow to the string to shoot in the dark at the upright in heart'" (Ps 11:1-2).

- F. Be filled with **the Spirit** of God.

It takes more than human skill, ingenuity and courage to defeat Goliath. When "the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon David" (I Sam 16:13), he was given abilities to do things he could not do in his own strength. It was this indwelling Spirit that ignited a fire of **passionate zeal** and love for God in his soul that propelled him into battle. No longer could he sit by passively as God's reputation was slandered and his Name defiled. "For zeal for your house has consumed me, and the reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me" (Ps 69:9).

TABLE TALK

1. Name a "giant" who is currently posing a threat in your life.
2. Thus far, how have you responded to this "giant" problem? Paralysis? Letting someone else fight the battle? Using weapons that don't fit?
3. How has this lesson helped you to think differently (gain a new perspective, reframe) about what you are facing?
4. Name one thing you intend to do to face your "giant" and bring glory to God.

³ Moshe Dayan, leader of Israel's surprising victory in the 1967 Six-day War, wrote an essay on the story of David and Goliath. "David fought Goliath not with inferior but (on the contrary) with superior weaponry; and his greatness consisted not in his being willing to go out into battle against someone far stronger than he was, but in his knowing how to exploit a weapon by which a feeble person could seize the advantage and become stronger" (quoted in *David and Goliath* by Gladwell, p 12).

The Ballad of Davey the Giant-Killer

By Stan Key

*Come listen my friends and a tale you'll be told
Of a lad that was honest and faithful and bold;
With God in his heart and a stone in his sling
He went out as a child and returned as a king.
So if you will listen and lend me your ears
You too can slay giants and conquer your fears.*

*Davey, O Davey I marvel in wonder
You sing like an angel then fight like all thunder!
But stop and consider: it's really not odd,
For Davey's whole heart is devoted to God!*

*Goliath stepped out on the field for the fight;
His armor, his voice and demeanor, his height,
Made Israel tremble and cower in fear
And pray that this monster would just disappear!
The army of Israel froze in their places
Panic and terror were etched on their faces.*

*But Davey just happened to be there that day
And heard what the ogre did mockingly say:
"You're sissies and wimps - and the one you call 'Lord'
Is no match for my strength or my size or my sword.
Come out and do battle and let the world know
That I and my gods are in charge of this show!"*

*It seemed that the giant's assessment was true
For no one in Israel knew what to do.
No Scripture was quoted and none said a prayer,
The mood of the moment was deep, dark despair.
It seemed that the forces of darkness had won
Before the encounter had even begun.*

*Then Davey stepped forward, in passion so hot;
"I'll fight this giant; just give me one shot.
Just who does he think that he's mocking like this
He's so big and so brazen I really can't miss!
I refuse to sit still while my God he's defying;
I'll teach him a lesson... or I'll die while I'm trying!"*

*So Davey went forth with a sling and a prayer
And sent a rock flying up into the air,
And down came Goliath with one mighty thud;
He collapsed and he fell to the earth in the mud.
And wanting to make sure the foul monster was dead,
Davey walked over and cut off his head!*

*So listen, dear friends, to what Davey would say,
When giants oppose you and stand in your way:
Trust firmly in God, don't listen to fear;
His strength and his wisdom and might will appear
Just when your status appears at its bleakest;
He loves to show off his power in the weakest.*

Faith Is the Victory

By John H. Yates (1891)

*Encamped along the hills of light,
Ye Christian soldiers, rise.
And press the battle ere the night
Shall veil the glowing skies.
Against the foe in vales below
Let all our strength be hurled.
Faith is the victory, we know,
That overcomes the world.*

Refrain

Faith is the victory! Faith is the victory!
O glorious victory, that overcomes the world.

*His banner over us is love,
Our sword the Word of God.
We tread the road the saints above
With shouts of triumph trod.
By faith, they like a whirlwind's breath,
Swept on o'er every field.
The faith by which they conquered death
Is still our shining shield.*

Refrain

*On every hand the foe we find
Drawn up in dread array.
Let tents of ease be left behind,
And onward to the fray.
Salvation's helmet on each head,
With truth all girt about,
The earth shall tremble 'neath our tread,
And echo with our shout.*

Refrain

*To him that overcomes the foe,
White raiment shall be giv'n.
Before the angels he shall know
His name confessed in Heav'n.
Then onward from the hill of light,
Our hearts with love aflame,
We'll vanquish all the hosts of night,
In Jesus' conqu'ring Name.*

Refrain



DAVID: *King of Hearts*

A Bible Study by Stan Key

CHAPTER 3. THE MADNESS OF KING SAUL

I Samuel 16:14–23; 18:6–19:24

I. Two kinds of kings

Our Scripture introduces us to two types of kings. Though Saul had the throne, he had lost the **anointing**. Though David had the anointing, he had no throne. Saul threw spears. David **dodged** them. This lesson focuses primarily on King Saul, seeking to understand his fall. Apparently God wanted David to learn these lessons as well.

A. Saul's blessings.

Chosen by God himself to be the first king of Israel (I Sam 10:1), the Lord gave Saul a **new heart**, filled him with the **Spirit**, enabled him to **prophecy**, and turned him into a **new man** (I Sam 10:6, 9–10). Few men have had a more promising beginning than Saul!

B. Saul's slippery slope of folly.

Early in his reign, on two separate occasions he made a **willful** choice to disobey a clear command of God:

1. In the face of an imminent Philistine threat, he did not wait for Samuel but assumed the role of a priest and offered a sacrifice to God (I Sam 13:1–15).
2. Although Saul was clearly commanded to annihilate the Amalekites, he spared the best animals and the king (I Sam 15:1–35). Partial obedience is equivalent to disobedience.

NOTE: Saul was chosen by God and entrusted with a divine mission. God had changed Saul's heart and anointed him with his Spirit for the life he was called to live. Yet Saul repeatedly made willful choices to turn from God's way and do things his own way. He was the consummate **controller** and is to the Old Testament what **Judas** is to the New Testament. To his dying day, Saul insisted on doing things his own way. When he showed interest in God, it was only to seek support for what he already planned to do. Like an **unbroken stallion**, his will was never fully surrendered to the Lord. The root of Saul's madness is here: not your will but mine be done.

There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, "Thy will be done," and those to whom God says, in the end, "Thy will be done." All that are in Hell, choose it. Without that self-choice there could be no Hell. (C. S. Lewis, p 72).

3. Saul's willful, continual disobedience was a sin on the same level as **witchcraft**. Samuel states the matter bluntly to Saul: "Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has also rejected you from being king." (I Sam 15:23)
4. Saul's life continued to spiral downward into increasingly irrational and dark behaviors: prophesying **naked** (I Sam 19:24), consulting a **witch** (I Sam 28:3–25), and **suicide** (I Sam 31:1–6).

5. Saul's tragic fall was not caused by the Philistines, Satan, or God. He self-destructed. Looking back on his life, he summarized it all by saying "I have played **the fool**" (I Sam 26:21).

C. Saul's legacy.

What happened? How to account for a tragic life like Saul's? Given the amount of biblical material devoted to his life, God apparently wants us to learn from Saul's example. He especially wants David to learn. God was preparing David to be the greatest king in history and thus put him in a specially devised **training program**. Perhaps the best way to learn how to be a good leader is to serve a bad one!

II. Diagnosing the madness.

- A. Imagine the scene: Saul raving in the palace; David playing his harp and calming the king. Then suddenly, the madness returns and a spear is thrown! **Why?** How to account for a man who has everything (power, wealth, position, etc.) being threatened by a teenager with a guitar?

NOTE: Music is **powerful** (I Sam 16:14–23). The music of David's lyre refreshed and soothed the raving lunacy that troubled King Saul. This passage suggests that music is therapeutic and positive when it is **melodic** (lyre), **skillfully** performed, and is rooted in **godliness** (the Lord is with David). But just as God can use music for good, so Satan can use music for evil. Perhaps we could suggest that music that is not melodic, not skillfully performed and not rooted in godliness is a source of great evil in this world. Alan Redpath says that music that is throbbing and hypnotic, that dulls the conscience, drugs the senses and stops our thinking is not good for the soul (p 36).

- B. The name for Saul's madness is **envy**.

Jealousy is wanting what someone else has. *Envy* goes further. It **begrudges** the fact that they have it and wants to deprive them from having it: "sorrow at another's good" (Aquinas). It is rejoicing with those who weep and weeping with those who rejoice (cf. Rom 12:15). Erma Bombeck captures the madness of envy when she says, "Lord, if you can't make me thin, then make my friends fat." Envious people throw spears!

- C. What made Saul envious?

It is hard to tell exactly when the **poison** of envy took root in Saul's life. But the real problem began when the women of Israel began to sing: "Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands" (I Sam 18:7). The women were not belittling Saul; they were rejoicing in the strong leadership being exercised in the land. But this little song caused Saul to turn green with envy.

Beyond this, Saul would have been troubled by the fact that:

- His **son** Jonathan had become David's best friend (I Sam 18:1–4).
- His **daughter** Michal was in love with David (I Sam 18:20).
- Everything David did was **successful** (I Sam 18:5, 14).
- Everyone loved David; he was very **popular** (I Sam 18:16).

- D. Six characteristics of envy.

1. Envy makes us obsessive about our **image**. The dominating question in life becomes "how do I look?" Saul's focus was no longer on what God thought but rather on what the people thought (I Sam 15:24, 30). Because of envy, Saul could only compare himself with David. "Lord, what about this man?" (John 21:21). At its core, envy is **competition** with others. Frederick Buechner

defines envy as “the consuming desire to have everybody else as unsuccessful as you are.”

2. Envy makes us angry and **bitter** (I Sam 18:8). Saul was smoldering inside. Life seemed so unfair. Envy took root when Saul **compared** his victories to David's. This is what happened to **Cain**. When God seemed to bless his brother more, he “was very angry and his face fell” (Gen 4:5). So he, like Saul, looked for the nearest spear.
3. Envy makes us depressed and **paranoid**. Saul began to imagine a vast, right-wing conspiracy was working to undermine his reign (I Sam 18:8). Envy makes us so self-centered we imagine that everyone is thinking about us! In its mature form, paranoia is a psychotic condition characterized by **delusions** of persecution. Such people see things that aren't there. They attribute evil intentions to innocent bystanders.
4. Envy makes us **cruel**. On three occasions, Saul tried to spear David (I Sam 18:11; 19:10). Fortunately, he was either a bad shot or David was a good dodger! Saul then promised his eldest daughter to David in marriage but at the last moment, changed his mind (I Sam 18:17–19). The bride price for his daughter Michal was 100 dead Philistines (I Sam 18:25). Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery because they were jealous (Gen 37:11). And the chief priests delivered Jesus to be crucified because of envy (Mark 15:10). Yes, envy makes people do really hurtful things to others!
5. Envy makes us full of **fears**. Three times we are told that Saul was afraid of David (I Sam 18:12, 15, 29). But this fear was neurotic, phobic, and **irrational**. David was not trying to hurt Saul but help him! Jealous people are controlled by their fears, especially their fear of losing control, losing what they think they possess.
6. Envy makes us vulnerable to **evil spirits**. Three times we are told that “an evil spirit from the Lord” came upon Saul (I Sam 16:14; 18:10; 19:9). When evil spirits are at work, a person's behavior may become truly bizarre and violent (“raving,” I Sam 18:10). But the question needs to be asked: did the evil spirits cause Saul to be jealous or did Saul's jealousy cause him to be oppressed by evil spirits? Was he envious because he was crazy? Or was he crazy because he was envious? Regardless of how one might answer, we learn that jealousy, in its mature forms, is a type of **demon possession**.

NOTE: How can God be described as the source of Saul's evil spirit? With its strong insistence on monotheism, the Old Testament is reticent to give any credit to Satan or demons for any activity in the world. Thus, everything that happens (even bad things) are said to be caused by God. Old Testament writers tend to focus on **ultimate** causes, not secondary, intermediate ones. The New Testament is more nuanced and indicates that bad things happen because God **permits** them, not because he **causes** them. This distinction is absent in the Old Testament.

III. There is a cure!

- A. Recognize the danger and heed the warnings.

If envy can destroy Cain in a worship service and Saul who was filled with the Spirit, it can destroy you! “Envy makes the bones rot” (Prov 14:30). “For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and **every vile practice**” (James 3:16). This helps to explain why both jealousy and envy are listed in the works of the flesh (Gal 5:19–21) and why envy has always been included in the list of Seven Deadly

Sins. Here are a few questions to ask to help determine whether envy may be taking root in your heart:

1. Do I throw **spears** at people? Spouse? Kids? Boss? Pastor? Political leaders? Teenagers playing guitars?
2. Do I base my self-worth on how I **compare** to others?
3. Do I **weep** with those who weep or am I inwardly rejoicing?
4. Do I **rejoice** with those who rejoice or am I inwardly depressed?
5. How does the **fear** of losing control manifest itself in my life?
6. Does the poison of **bitterness** find root in my heart?
7. Am I **covetous** (Ex 20:17) of what others have? House? Marriage? Job? Car? Retirement plan? Salary? Looks? Vacation? Spiritual gifts?

B. Steps to victory.

1. **Confess** your sin.

Don't wait until you spear some poor teenager to the wall to wake up to your inner cancer! The first step to victory over envy is to admit that one is envious (I John 1:9).

2. Learn **contentment**.

The jealous person is *never* content. Ironically, all the other Deadly Sins (pride, lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, anger) give temporary pleasure. But envy is the one sin that only makes the sinner **miserable**. To win the battle over envy requires that we **learn** how to be content, regardless of our circumstances.

I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me. (Phil 4:11–13)

3. Be **jealous/zealous** for God.

A single word in Greek is translated in English as “jealous” and at other times as “zealous.” When sin is in the heart, our motives are impure (envy, jealousy, greed, etc.). But when our hearts are holy, our **ambitions** become godly passions. “Do not let your heart envy sinners, but always be zealous for the fear of the Lord” (Prov 23:17 NIV). Let your conduct be governed by “godly jealousy” (II Cor 11:2 NIV). To have godly zeal is to be jealous for the things of God.

4. Come to a place of **absolute surrender** of your will to God.

Saul (like the disciples before Pentecost) illustrates that one experience with Jesus Christ is not enough. Like wild stallions, we must come to a place of full surrender where the will is **broken** and we become unconditionally devoted to the Lordship of Christ in our lives. Not **my will** but your will be done.

TABLE TALK

1. Discuss a time when someone threw a “spear” at you. How did you feel? What did you do? What have you learned?
2. Do you tend to rejoice when those close to you experience great blessing? Do you weep when they experience some great loss? Do you ever find that your heart wants to do just the opposite?
3. Have you thrown a spear lately? Wanna talk about it?
4. Are you learning how to be content in all circumstance? Describe the learning process.
5. Paul says that “love does not envy” (I Cor 13:4). Discuss this.
6. Before this lesson, did you consider envy as a “deadly sin”? Discuss why you think others have chosen to include it in the list of Seven Deadly Sins?
7. Did Saul lose his salvation?

Zeal Is that Pure and Heavenly Flame

By John Newton

*Zeal is that pure and heavenly flame,
The fire of love supplies;
While that which often bears the name,
Is self in a disguise.*

*True zeal is merciful and mild,
Can pity and forbear;
The false is headstrong, fierce and wild,
And breathes revenge and war.*

*While zeal for truth the Christian warms,
He knows the worth of peace;
But self contends for names and forms,
Its party to increase.*

*Zeal has attained its highest aim,
Its end is satisfied;
If sinners love the Savior's name,
Nor seeks it ought beside.*

*But self however well employed,
Has its own ends in view;
And says as boasting Jehu cried,
"Come see what I can do."*

*Self may its poor reward obtain,
And be applauded here;
But zeal the best applause will gain,
When Jesus shall appear.*

*Dear Lord, the idol self dethrone,
And from our hearts remove;
And let no zeal by us be shown,
But that which springs from love.*



DAVID: *King of Hearts*

A Bible Study by Stan Key

CHAPTER 4. THE ART OF SPEAR-DODGING

I Samuel 18:10-11; 19:9-10

- I. Do you get the point?
- A. **Spears** play a prominent role in the story of David, especially in his relationship with Saul.
1. Goliath's huge spear (I Sam 17:7, 45).
 2. Three times, Saul tries to pin David to the wall (I Sam 18:10-11; 19:9-10).
 3. Once, Saul tried to spear his own son Jonathan (I Sam 20:30-34; cf. Eph 6:4).
 4. It seems Saul kept his spear with him at all times (I Sam 22:6; II Sam 1:6).
 5. In the Psalms, David compared slanderous words to arrows, swords, and spears (Ps 55:21; 57:4; 59:7; 64:3).
 6. David finally took Saul's spear away but, strangely, **gave it back** (I Sam 26:6-25).
- B. This reminds us that **conflict** was one of the defining realities of David's life. He had enemies. In the first psalm attributed to David, his **first** words are these: "O Lord, how many are my foes!" (Ps 3:1). The list of David's enemies is a long one:
- Goliath of Gath (I Sam 17:4ff)
 - Doeg the Edomite (I Sam 21:7; 22:6-23)
 - Philistines, Amalekites, Moabites, Syrians, Ammonites, and Edomites
 - Nabal the Calebite (I Sam 25:2-13)
 - Shimei, from the house of Saul (II Sam 16:5-14)
 - Sheba the Benjamite (II Sam 20:1-22)
 - Ishbi-benob the Philistine (II Sam 21:15-17)
- C. It is one thing to have enemies who are foreigners and pagans or who come from other tribes (Benjamites, the tribe of Saul). But when enemies come from your own **family** and your closest **friends**, this becomes very difficult. David's two most trying situations of conflict involved: Saul (king, boss, father-in-law, father of his best friend) and **Absalom** (Hebrew: father is/of peace), his son. How David responded to these attacks was the single thing that distinguished him as a man after God's own heart. (See *A Tale of Three Kings: A Study in Brokenness* by Gene Edwards).
- And if one asks him, "What are these wounds on your back?" he will say, "The wounds I received in the house of my friends." (Zech 13:6)*
- D. In the last lesson, we studied why people **throw** spears. This lesson examines what we should do when spears are thrown at us. David is perhaps the world's foremost example of mastering the art of **spear-dodging**. It was this skill that enabled him to keep his heart aflame with holy passion and become the greatest king in history.

II. The artful dodger.

- A. David became very good at dodging spears. What made this possible? His youth? His wisdom? His pure heart? Enemy spears never seemed to wound David. He “evaded,” “eluded,” “fled,” and “escaped” (I Sam 18:11; 19:10). Twice he had what appeared to be a God-ordained opportunity to strike back:
1. In I Samuel 24, Saul went into a cave to “cover his feet” (v 3). Little did he know that David and his 600 men were hiding inside! His soldiers said, “Here is the day of which the Lord said to you, ‘Behold, I will give your enemy into your hand...’” (v 4). But David refuses to avenge himself. “May **the Lord** judge between me and you, may the lord avenge me against you, but **my hand** shall not be against you” (v 12).
 2. In I Samuel 26, David, Ahimelech, and Abishai sneak into Saul’s camp at night and steal his spear. Abishai tells David, “God has given your enemy into your hand” (v 8). But again, David refuses to retaliate against Saul. “The Lord will strike him, or his day will come to die, or he will go down into battle and perish. The Lord forbid that I should put out **my hand** against the Lord’s anointed” (vv 10-11). Amazingly, David then gives the spear back to Saul (v 22).
- B. The two most important things we can learn from David’s example are these:
1. Learn how to **dodge**. Saul’s spear is not only sharp, it is poisonous. Those hit by a spear thrown by a wicked “friend” risk being infected with the same venom that motivated the aggressor in the first place.

*You can easily tell when someone has been hit by a spear. He turns a deep shade of **bitter**. David never got hit. Gradually, he learned a very well-kept secret. He discovered three things that prevented him from ever being hit. One, never learn anything about the fashionable, easily-mastered art of spear throwing. Two, stay out of the company of all spear throwers. And three, keep your mouth tightly closed. In this way, spears will never touch you, even when they pierce your heart. (Edwards, p 17-18)*

2. Don’t **throw it back**. Everyone knows what to do when someone throws a spear at you: you pick it up and throw it right back! Right?

And 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, 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.

There is also a possibility that some 20 years after your coronation, you will be the most incredibly skilled spear thrower in all the realm. And, most assuredly, by then... quite mad. (Edwards, p 15-16)

Beware: the greatest spiritual danger in fighting a **mad king** is that we become mad ourselves! If David had responded to Saul’s spears by throwing them back, he would have become King Saul II.

III. What to do when you find yourself on the wrong end of a spear

God wants to use the conflict in our lives to help us **grow** in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus (II Pet 3:18). Few situations in life are better designed to prepare us for **leadership** (influence) than when someone close to us (spouse, friend, pastor, parents, child, etc.) throws a spear (words, actions, decisions, attitudes, etc.) in our direction. Leaning heavily on the excellent book by Ken Sande entitled *The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*, let me suggest four things we should do when someone throws a spear at us:

A. Make a decision to **glorify God** in this situation.

This is a God-given opportunity to manifest grace to others and to grow in godliness. “Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (I Cor 10:31). When we make God’s interests, reputation, and commands the focus of our attention, then we protect ourselves from the type of **impulsive**, self-centered reactions that only make the conflict worse. It’s not about you! So the next time someone throws a spear at you, try singing, “God is so good, God is so good... he’s so good to me.”

Think of all the wonderful opportunities that come when some “mad king” seeks to harm us:

- You can learn to **trust** God for protection. God is your refuge and strength.
- You can learn how to obey the commands to “turn the other cheek” and “love your enemies” (Matt 5:38-48).
- You can grow to be more **like Jesus** (On the cross he too was on the wrong end of a spear!).
- You can learn how destructive and hurtful it is to be the target of someone’s spear; so when God places *you* in a position of influence, you will **never** throw spears at others!

B. Be sure that you have gotten **the log** out of your own eye.

Jesus reminds us that it is much easier to see the speck that is in our brother’s eye than the log that is in our own. “You hypocrite, **first** take the log out of your own eye, and **then** you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye” (Matt 7:3-5). Often the conflict that is in our lives is due in some measure to our own sinful attitudes and actions. As David sought a way to live in peace with Saul, he wanted to be sure that there was no log in his own eye.

- To Jonathan: “What have I done? What is my guilt? And what is my sin?” (I Sam 20:1). “If there is guilt in me, kill me yourself” (I Sam 20:8).
- To Saul: “What have I done? What evil is on my hands?” (I Sam 26:18).

To help determine if there is a log in your own eye in some specific case of conflict that you are facing, here are some questions for self-examination:

1. Some offenses are so minor they should just be **overlooked** (Prov 19:11; cf. 12:16; 17:14). Does this offense fall into that category?
2. Have I controlled my **tongue** (James 3:1-12)? Have I gossiped? Grumbled? Told lies? Slandered? Used careless or hurtful words?
3. Have I come to grips with any wrong **motives** that are in my heart (James 4:1-3)? Is there pride? Selfish ambition? Hatred? Greed? Jealousy? Sectarian spirit?

4. If the Spirit of God has indeed convicted me of some specific sin, have I **confessed** it? Have I followed the seven “A”s of confession (Sande, p 94-102):
 - a. **Address everyone involved.** The circle of confession should be only as large as the circle of the offense. If sinful thoughts did not lead to sinful actions, then confess this sin only to God.
 - b. **Avoid If, But, and Maybe.** The best way to ruin a confession is to use words that shift the blame to others or that otherwise attempt to minimize or excuse the guilt.
 - I’m sorry *if* I’ve done something to hurt you.
 - *Maybe* I could have tried harder.
 - I shouldn’t have lost my temper; *but* I was tired.
 - I’m sorry I hurt your feelings, *but* you really upset me.
 - c. **Admit specifically.** Vague confessions produce only vague forgiveness. Name your sin. When Nixon said, “Wrongs were committed,” it helped nothing.
 - d. **Apologize.** Express **sorrow** and/or regret for hurting the other person. “You must have been terribly embarrassed when I said those things in front of everyone. I’m so sorry I did that to you.”
 - e. **Accept the consequences.** When possible, make **restitution**. When we explicitly state that we accept responsibility for any consequences that may have resulted for our hurtful behavior, we let others know that we are not seeking an easy solution. The prodigal son said, “I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me a hired servant” (Luke 15:19).
 - f. **Alter your behavior.** Let the person you have offended know that you are going to **change** your behavior in the future.
 - g. **Ask for forgiveness.** When the time is right, ask specifically, “Can you forgive me?” The question signals that you have done all that you can do by way of confession and that now the next move has shifted to the other person.

C. Loving confrontation.

*If your brother sins against you, **go and tell** him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. (Matt 18:15-17)*

David tried to talk with Saul directly on several occasions and indirectly through intermediaries (Jonathan) but with limited success. David’s situation was complicated by the fact that Saul was the king and he was emotionally unstable (not to mention violent). But as a general rule, when spear throwers seem unable to recognize that their actions are sinful and unacceptable, then they need to be confronted in a **gracious** yet **firm** manner. When a face-to-face conversation doesn’t resolve the matter, then we may need to involve respected friends, church leaders or other neutral persons who can help to restore peace.

D. **Forgive** the offender and, if possible, be **reconciled**.

David was ready and willing to forgive and be reconciled. At least one serious effort was made (I Sam 19:1-7). But because Saul never took responsibility for his actions

nor sought genuine forgiveness, this effort at reconciliation was short lived (I Sam 19:9-10). Eventually, the rupture was so great that reconciliation was **impossible**. Yet it seems that David had forgiven Saul for his violent actions; he was not harboring bitterness and resentment. Thus we see that forgiveness and reconciliation are not the same thing. One may happen without the other. “If **possible**, so far as it depend on you, live peaceably with all” (Rom 12:18).

Note: To forgive a wrong does *not* mean we are excusing the offense (spear), saying it was OK, or forgetting what happened. Nor does forgiveness mean there are no consequences for what happened. Rather, to forgive means getting the poison of bitterness inflicted by the spear out of our hearts. It means letting the offenders off **our hooks** and placing them on God’s.

Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Rom 12:19-21)

TABLE TALK

1. What is the main thing you want to remember from this lesson?
2. Talk about a time when you weren’t able to dodge a spear and were hit. Did the poison on the spear’s tip turn you “a deep shade of bitter”?
3. When you argue with someone, are you typically more intent on winning the argument or preserving the relationship? Discuss this.
4. Though David forgave Saul for his evil actions, he was not able to reconcile with him. Discuss the difference between forgiveness and reconciliation and why this difference is important.
5. Which of the Seven “A”s of confession is most difficult for you? Why?
6. Think about a current conflict that you are experiencing. Look again at the four steps outlined that help us know how to respond when a spear is thrown at us. Which step describes what God is saying to you?
7. David wrote Psalm 59 “when Saul sent men to watch his house in order to kill him” (see I Sam 19:11-17). David prayed this prayer at a time in his life when conflict was a daily reality. Use this Psalm in your own devotional life this week and apply it to a conflict that you are personally facing.

O God, to Me Be Merciful —Psalm 57—

To the choirmaster. According to "Do Not Destroy." A Miktam of David, when he fled from Saul, in the cave. The New England Psalm Book - Translated into English Metre (abridged)

*O God, to me be merciful,
Be merciful to me:
Because my soul for shelter safe
Betakes itself to Thee.*

*Yea in the shadow of Thy wings
My refuge I have placed.
Until these great calamities
Be wholly overpast.*

*I'll cry aloud to God most high,
Till heard my cry shall be;
Ev'n to the God who still performs
All things most fit for me.*

*My soul amidst fierce lions is,
I fire-brands lie among;
Men's sons whose teeth are darts and spears,
And like sharp swords their tongue.*

*They for my steps prepared a net,
My soul it was bowed down:
They dug a pit for me; but they
In midst thereof are thrown.*

*My heart is fixed, my heart is fixed,
O God, I'll sing and praise:
Awake my glory, psalt'ry, harp,
Myself I'll early raise.*

*Thy praise, O Lord, will I proclaim
Among the people round:
Among the nation I with songs
They praises will resound.*



DAVID: *King of Hearts*

A Bible Study by Stan Key

CHAPTER 5. THE PITS

Psalm 40

I. When life is the pits.

A. A man fell into a pit. It was deep, dark, and muddy. He couldn't get out. So he sat down to wait and see what would happen. A number of people walked by and, speaking to the man in the pit, gave their assessment of the situation:

A realist	"That's some pit."
An optimist	"Things could be worse."
A pessimist	"Things will get worse... it's going to rain."
A pragmatist	"Someone should have built a fence around this pit."
An egotist	"You call <i>that</i> a pit! Let me tell you about the pit I fell in."
A doctor	Threw in a bottle, "Take two tablets and call me in the morning."
A sociologist	Decided to do a survey to determine how many others had fallen in.
A philosopher	Wrote a two-volume work, "Pits and the Human Condition."
A politician	Went to Washington and formed a Task Force to study pits.
A psychologist	Sat on the edge of the pit, "How do you feel about being in a pit?"
A Hindu	"Your pit is an illusion."
A Buddhist	"The source of your suffering is your desire to get out. Cease desiring to get out and you'll cease suffering... and enter Nirvana."
A Muslim	"Submit to the will of Allah."
A Baptist	"It's your own fault you fell in that pit."
A Presbyterian	"You were predestined to be in that pit."
A Methodist	"Free will got you in that pit and free will can get you out."
An Evangelical	"God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life."
A Charismatic	"Here's some worship music. Just praise the Lord anyway."
Jesus	Went down into the pit and pulled the man out!

B. The Bible has a lot to say about pits. Our English word "pit" translates a number of different Hebrew terms that refer to things like a hole, a cistern, a well, a dungeon, an animal trap, Sheol, a grave, and even a prostitute. Little wonder that "pit" began to be used **metaphorically** to describe a situation that is very difficult: the pits. The Bible has good news for people in pits. Preaching on pits points people to principles of piety that produce peace.

- C. Numerous characters in the Bible found themselves in “pits.” Although the reasons they landed in the pits varied greatly, God delivered them all.
1. **Joseph.** “[His brothers] took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it” (Gen 37:24).
 2. **Jeremiah.** “They... cast him into the cistern... letting [him] down by ropes. And there was no water in it, but only mud, and [he] sank in the mud” (Jer 38:6).
 3. **Elijah.** “And he came to a cave and lodged in it. And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said to him, ‘What are you doing here, Elijah?’ He said, ‘I have been very jealous for the Lord... I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life...’” (I Kgs 19:9–10).
 4. **Jonah.** “Out of the belly of Sheol I cried... For you cast me into the deep... weeds were wrapped about my head... I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever; yet you brought up my life from the pit, O Lord my God” (Jonah 2:2–6).
 5. **Paul and Silas.** “When they inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them... into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks” (Acts 16:23–24).
- D. Perhaps the person who made “pits” more famous than anyone else was **David**. For a period of possibly **10 years**, David’s life was literally in the pits:
- The cave of Adullam (I Sam 22:1–2)
 - The cave near Wildgoats Rocks in the wilderness of Engedi (I Sam 24:1–3).

Some of David’s best **worship music** (psalms) was composed in caves:

- Psalm 57—A miktam of David, when he fled from Saul, in the cave.
- Psalm 142—A maskil of David, when he was in the cave; a prayer.

On numerous other occasions, though David was not in a literal cave, he nevertheless lived in desolate, desert places (cut off, isolated, in constant danger).

- The **wilderness**—Ziph (I Sam 23:14–15; 26:2), Maon (I Sam 23:24–25), Engedi (I Sam 23:29; 24:1).
- David calls himself a dead dog, a flea (I Sam 24:14), a partridge in the mountains (I Sam 26:20).
- See the titles of Psalms 54 and 63.

II. David’s descent.

David’s descent into “the pit” was long and slow. Few people have fallen from such a height of prominence nor reached such a depth of despair.

A. The height of prominence.

1. David is appointed and **anointed** king of Israel (I Sam 16:6–13).
2. He becomes armor bearer to the king and close adviser. Saul loves him greatly (I Sam 16:14–23).
3. David becomes a national **hero** when he defeats Goliath (I Sam 17).
4. He is loved by Jonathan and all the people (I Sam 18:1–4, 16).
5. He is **successful** in all of his undertakings (I Sam 18:5, 14).

- B. Falling from favor (I Sam 18–21). The madness of King Saul (jealousy) soon makes David public enemy #1.
1. He is not safe in the **palace** (I Sam 18:6–19:10). He is demoted, plotted against, physically attacked, verbally slandered, and psychologically abused.
 2. He is not safe at **home** (I Sam 19:11–17; see Ps 59). He escapes through a window.
 3. He is not safe with his mentor Samuel in Ramah (I Sam 19:18–24).
 4. Though Jonathan makes a valiant attempt at reconciliation, the effort fails. He realizes “that his father was determined to put David to death” (I Sam 20:33).
 5. He is not safe in the **Tabernacle** with the priests at Nob (I Sam 21:1–9). Doeg the Edomite is watching (see Ps 52).
 6. Finally he decides to go over to the Philistines in **Gath**, but he is not safe there either (I Sam 21:10–15; see Ps 34). He must pretend to be insane to save himself.
- C. Living in the pits (I Sam 22–31). David moves from one hole in the ground to another.
1. The **cave** of Adullam (I Sam 22:1–5; Ps 57; 142). Pit pity. Misery loves **company**. People in pits discover it to be a place of deep fellowship and intimate relationships. Scripture describes the 400 men who join David in the cave as men who were:
 - In **distress**.
 - In **debt**.
 - **Bitter** in soul.
 2. Though David saves the city of Keilah, he learns that the citizens are on the brink of turning him over to Saul. So David and his 600 men fled into the desert to hide. “And Saul sought him **every day**” (I Sam 23:1–14).
 3. While he was hiding in the wilderness of Ziph, the Ziphites **betray** David and report his whereabouts to Saul (I Sam 23:15–29). He is almost captured but is saved when Saul suddenly is called home (I Sam 23:28, The Rock of Escape). Now David flees to the wilderness of Engedi.
 4. David is hiding in a **cave** at Wildgoat’s Rocks in Engedi, while Saul pursues David with 3,000 elite troops. David refuses to kill the king when he comes in the cave to “relieve himself” (I Sam 24:1–22).
 5. In the wilderness of Paran, David is insulted by **Nabal**. Abigail intercedes and diverts a disaster (I Sam 25:1–44). David marries Abigail and also Ahinoam of Jezreel. Saul had given his wife Michal to someone else (I Sam 25:44)!
 6. Again in the wilderness of Ziph, at the hill of Hachilah, Saul pursues David with 3,000 men. David sneaks into Saul’s camp but refuses to kill him (I Sam 26:1–25).
 7. David feels he is no longer safe even in **the wilderness**, so he decides “in his heart” to go to Gath and live among the Philistines (I Sam 27:1–12). King Achish gives David the city of Ziklag, where he and his 600 soldiers and families can live. David lives there for a year and four months, conducting raids, killing people, and lying to Achish about what he has done.
 8. When the Philistines prepare for battle against Israel, they refuse to let David and his soldiers join them (I Sam 29:1–11). David seems hurt by their refusal:

“What have I done... that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?” (v 8).

9. When David and his men return to Ziklag, they discover that it is destroyed and their families taken captive (I Sam 30:1–31). He and his men “wept until they had no more strength to weep” (v 4). David was “greatly distressed” and all the people were so “bitter in soul” that they wanted to stone him (v 6). This was the worst day of David’s life. He had finally hit bottom. He had **lost everything**.
- D. For David, the “pit” was not just a geographical phenomenon (a cave) but a **theological** and **psychological** reality that defines the space between a promise God gives you and its fulfillment. God had promised that David would be king, but then all hell broke loose! The great question of life becomes: can I believe God’s promise even when I’m living in the pits?
- E. God was putting David through an incredible **leadership** training program. To be a king after God’s own heart, David’s first course was Spear-Dodging 101. But his second course was Cave-Dwelling 101. Once these two courses are completed, David will be ready for the throne!

III. Pit providence (Ps 40).

David’s life helps us to know how we should respond when we find ourselves in a pit. Whether we are in a pit because an enemy put us there, because we made a bad choice, or even if we don’t know how we got there, David’s words in Psalm 40 give us six simple faith affirmations that we can say when we find ourselves in a deep, dark, slippery, lonely, painful, frightening place.

- A. *This pit is a **hard** place.* For God to deliver us from our pits we must first **admit** that we are in one! David acknowledged that his pit was a place of destruction, a miry bog (v 2). “Evils have encompassed me beyond number” (v 12). Many evangelicals are very good at **denying** their pits. The way to freedom is to confess we are stuck. The way to purity is to confess we are dirty. The way to experience God’s presence is to acknowledge his absence. Alcoholics Anonymous insists that its members regularly state the truth: “Hi, I’m Stan. I’m an alcoholic.” “Hi, I’m Jennifer. I’m in a pit.” The greatest pit problem is not the pit, but the denial that one is in it. “You say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked” (Rev 3:17).
- B. *This pit is a **God** place.* It was in the pit that David wrote, “Blessed is the man who makes the Lord his trust, who does not turn to the proud...” (v 4). “Your steadfast love and your faithfulness will ever preserve me” (v 11). This pit is not an **accident** or a mistake. Evil certainly had its hand in our arrival here but God in his sovereignty is the one who is really in control. Therefore, we should expect to meet God himself in this dark and slippery place! According to many traditions, Jesus was born in a cave and was buried in one. A cave is a great place to write and sing songs of praise! The pits are part of God’s **purpose** for our lives.
- C. *This pit is a **good** place.* This cave may not be pleasant or nice, but it is a grace place and a safe place, because God is here. The palace is dangerous, as is home and even the Tabernacle. But here, in this cave, David takes refuge in the shadow of God’s wings, till the storms of destruction pass by (Ps 57:1). Corrie Ten Boom discovered there were **lice** in their barracks at Ravensbruck. This is awful, she thought, until she realized that the lice kept the Nazi guards away so that they were safe—and free to study the Bible and pray together.
- D. *This pit is a **testing** place.* “I waited patiently for the Lord” (v 1). Here in the cave is where God “put a new song in my mouth” (v 3). This is where David learned to delight in doing God’s will and to hide God’s law within his heart (v 8). Here, David

learned to pray. David got his best theological education in caves! Here, he learned humility, trust, patience, forgiveness, and how to love his enemies. Here, David learned how not to avenge himself but to wait for God to settle the score. “The only way to know strong faith is to endure great **trials**” (George Müller).

It was only when I lay there on rotting prison straw that I sensed within myself the first stirring of good. Gradually, it was disclosed to me that the line separating good and evil passes, not through states, nor between classes, nor between political parties either, but right through all human hearts. So bless you, prison, for having been in my life. (Alexander Solzhenitsyn, The Gulag Archipelago 1918–1956)

- E. *This pit is a **temporary** place.* David is obviously writing this psalm *after* God has delivered him. Though David must have been tempted to take revenge himself and shorten his cave experience through his own strength, he chose to let God decide how long it would last. We are not called to live in pits forever, praise God! How long, O Lord (Ps 6:3; 13:1–2)? For David, it was ten years.
- F. *This pit will become my **testimony**.* David knew that only God could get him out of that pit. He could not save himself. The more you try to get out of a muddy pit, the more you sink into the mud (like Chinese finger locks). So now he wants the whole world to know about his pit experience and how God stepped down and pulled him from the miry clay and set his feet upon a rock (v 2). “Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord” (v 3). “I have told the glad news of deliverance in the great congregation...” (v 9).

Madame Guyon (1648–1717) had a remarkable ministry in the court of Louis XIV through her Bible studies and prayer meetings. The king put her in the Bastille where she was in solitary confinement for four years. But though her outward circumstances were horrific, her inner soul was radiant and free. While in prison, she wrote this poem:

*A little bird am I, shut out from fields of air;
And in my cage I sit and sing to Him who placed me here;
Well pleased a prisoner to be,
Because, my God, it pleases Thee.*

*My cage confines me round; abroad I cannot flee,
But though my wing is closely bound, my heart's at liberty.
My prison walls cannot control,
The flight, the freedom of my soul.*

*Oh, it is good to soar, these bolts and bars above,
To Him whose purpose I adore, whose providence I love:
And in Thy mighty will to find,
The joy, the freedom of the mind.*

TABLE TALK

1. What was the main lesson you learned in today's teaching?
2. On two occasions, David fled to the Philistines, Israel's enemy, for safety (I Sam 21:10–15; 27:1–28:2; 29:1–11). How do you explain David's actions? Was this a sinful choice or a wise one?
3. If Cave-Dwelling 101 is indeed an important course to take in the leadership training program God has for David, what lessons did God want David to learn from that course?
4. Describe people you know who are in "pits" but don't realize they are or perhaps deny it.
5. Describe a time in your life when were in a "pit." When people walked by your pit, what advice did they give to you? How did you get out of the pit? What lessons did you learn?

The Purpose of Pits

By Stan Key

Pits pose a problem for people who ponder. Is my pit a punishment for poor performance? Is this painful place perhaps the product of a pathological past? Will pits persist perpetually? Are people predestined to be put in pits? Yes, pits are profoundly puzzling. Perhaps persons perusing this paragraph are presently passing through some painful and perplexing predicament. Do pits have a purpose?

Pits are part of providence. This is the primary point I am passionate to promote. Put precisely, pits are part of God's plan for people. Don't be paralyzed by pointlessly pondering whether he personally puts people in pits or perhaps permits them to be put in such a predicament. Probing such problems only produces perplexity and prohibits progress. Permit me to point to a more positive path: pits are places pregnant with a plethora of possibilities. When you perceive yourself in a pit, ponder these principles. Pits have the power to:

- Puncture pride.
- Prove the power of prayer.
- Put away petty perspectives.
- Produce perseverance.
- Prompt praise.
- Practice patience.
- Promote peace.
- Protect purity.
- Publish the power of God's promises.
- Prove providence.

Precisely! Pity the person who can't perceive the positive potential in pits.

Perhaps you perceive my epistle as pointless prattle, improper piety, and proof of pastoral pathology. But please pause and ponder my purpose: to provoke and promote passion for divine providence. People who put up with my personal peculiarities may profit from the profound peace promised those who practice the presence of God—even in pits.

Point to Ponder: No pit is pointless.



DAVID: *King of Hearts*

A Bible Study by Stan Key

CHAPTER 6. THE WORST DAY OF DAVID'S LIFE

I Samuel 30

(by Katy Key)

- I. Introduction
 - A. David, even with his feet of clay, is called a man after **God's own heart**.
 - B. Even spiritual giants experience **great troubles**.
 - C. Many of the psalms are **laments**.
 - D. If you want to have a heart like David, be prepared to experience **pain and loss**.
 - E. David weeps even as Jesus weeps. The reason Jesus felt pain and wept was because he **loved**. The measure of my love will determine the measure of my pain, but also the measure of my **joy**.
 - F. Though David had felt sorrow and loss many times before, the experience at Ziklag was different. This time he lost **everything**.
 - G. Notice the context. In I Samuel 29, God **delivers** David from an impossible situation (having to fight against his own people). God spared him one battle but not another (I Sam 30).
 - H. It is not what happens to us in life that determines who we are but how we **respond** to what happens.
- II. What to do when you have a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day.
 - A. David **wept** (v 4).
 1. Emotions are part of the **image of God** in us.
 2. God wants us to have emotional **integrity**.
 3. Tears are a **gift**.
 - B. David refused to **get bitter** or to **blame** (v 6).
 1. When people are hurting, they often want to either turn on or turn from **their leader**.
 2. In dividing up the spoils (vv 21–25), David extends **grace** to his men even when they had not extended grace to him.
 - C. David strengthened himself **in the Lord** (v 6).
 1. Through many days of loss and uncertainty, David had learned that God was the only **constant** in his life: fixed point.
 2. Through praise and worship, David was able to change his **focus**.
 3. Don't let sorrow define you. We are called to pass **through** the Valley of Baca (tears), not set up residence there (Ps 84:6).
 4. Ultimately faith in God is a **choice**.

- D. David **enquired** of the Lord (vv 7–8).
1. Faith comes by **hearing** the word of God (Rom 10:17).
 2. When we are having a bad day, we need to remember that God has a **plan** and he wants to share that plan with us. **Ask** him what you should do!
- E. David **got up** and set out (v 9).
1. David wasn't the only one in the Bible to have a bad day. Look what **Elijah** did on the worst day of his life (I Kgs 19:9–18).
 2. In Gethsemane, perhaps the most important thing Jesus did was to **get up** (Matt 26:36–46).
 3. Redemption never comes without **pain**.

III. From the pit to the palace.

- A. In I Samuel 31, Saul and Jonathan are killed in battle. David mourns yet another loss (II Sam 1:17–27) but now the path is open to assume the throne of Israel. Though Ziklag was the worst day of David's life, this day was also the "day before" the **best** day of his life!
- B. So, if you're having a bad day, should you play Taps? Or **Reveille**?

TABLE TALK

1. What one important lesson did you learn from this study?
2. Why do so many Christians respond poorly when they are having a bad day?
3. Think of someone you know who is currently experiencing a bad day. What is God asking you to do to reach out and help them?
4. If you are personally having a bad day, what is God asking you to do?

Like a River Glorious

Frances R. Havergal (1876)

*Like a river glorious is God's perfect peace,
Over all victorious, in its bright increase;
Perfect, yet it floweth fuller every day,
Perfect, yet it groweth deeper all the way.*

*Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are fully blest
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.
Hidden in the hollow of His blessed hand,
Never foe can follow, never traitor stand;
Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care,
Not a blast of hurry touch the spirit there.*

*Every joy or trial falleth from above,
Traced upon our dial by the Sun of Love;
We may trust Him fully all for us to do;
They who trust Him wholly find Him wholly true.*



DAVID: *King of Hearts*

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CHAPTER 7. SWEET WILL OF GOD

I. Willing to will God's will?

A. Pope Urban II, in Clermont, France, on November 27, 1095, declared *Deus vult!* (Latin: "God wills it"). This became the battle cry of the **First Crusade**. This is a historical reminder of something that every human struggles to know:

- Does God have a plan for our lives? How detailed is his will?
- If he does have a plan for my life, **how** can I know it?
- If God wills it, then am I **free** to choose? Or is everything predetermined?

B. David's life has much to teach us about discerning and doing the will of God. On numerous occasions in the Psalms, we find David meditating and praying about God's will:

1. "Teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth; **unite my heart** to fear your name" (Ps 86:11).
2. "Good and upright is the Lord; therefore he instructs sinners in the way. He leads the **humble** in what is right, and teaches the humble his way" (Ps 25:8-9).
3. "The Lord is my shepherd.... he **leads me** beside still waters.... He leads me in paths of righteousness.... Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me..." (Ps 23:1-4).
4. "I bless the Lord who gives me **counsel**; in the night also my heart instructs me. I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken" (Ps 16:7-8).
5. "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my **eye** upon you. Be not like a horse or a **mule**, without understanding, which must be curbed with bit and bridle..." (Ps 32:8-9).

II. Teach me your way, O Lord

David's life is a magnificent illustration of what it means to know and do (and to *not* know and *not* do) the will of God. Surveying the entirety of his life, we can see several themes.

A. There were times when God's will was sovereignly "**imposed**" on David's life—most notably, when Samuel came to his house and announced that he would be king. Was David free to say no? (I Sam 16:1-13)

B. There were times when David actively **sought** to know God's will or perhaps learned God's will through a prophet.

1. The prophet Gad tells David to return to Judah. (I Sam 22:5)
2. The priest Ahimelech inquired of God for David on numerous occasions. (I Sam 22:15)
3. Through Abiathar the priest (the ephod), David "inquired of the Lord" whether he should fight the Philistines. *Yes!* His men hesitate, so David inquires again. *Yes!* (I Sam 23:1-5)

4. Through Abiathar (the ephod), David asks whether Saul will come after him and whether the men of Keilah will surrender him into Saul's hand. *Yes! Yes!* (I Sam 23:6–13)
 5. After the catastrophe at Ziklag (the worst day of David's life), David called for Abiathar and the ephod and asked whether he should pursue their attackers. *Yes!* (I Sam 30:7–8)
 6. After Saul's death, David "inquired of the Lord" whether he should go up to the cities of Judah. *Yes! Which city? Hebron!* (II Sam 2:1)
 7. After David becomes king, the Philistines attack. David "inquired of the Lord" whether he would be victorious if he went to fight them. *Yes!* (II Sam 5:19)
 8. When the Philistines attacked again, David "inquired" whether he should go out to fight them. God gave explicit instructions: "Go around to their rear" and attack the Philistines "when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees." (II Sam 5:23–25)
 9. David talked to the prophet Nathan about building a temple for the Lord in Jerusalem. At first Nathan said *Yes!* But then, the Lord told Nathan to return to David and tell him *No!* (II Sam 7:1–4)
 10. After his affair with Bathsheba, David "sought God" for healing for the baby that was born from their union. *No!* The baby dies. (II Sam 12:15–23)
 11. When Absalom's rebellion forces David to flee Jerusalem, a man named Shimei curses him and throws stones at him. Abishai wants to cut off Shimei's head, but David says no. "If he is cursing because the Lord said to him, 'Curse David,' who then shall say, 'Why have you done so?' ... Leave him alone, and let him curse, for the Lord has told him to." (II Sam 16:5–14)
 12. When famine came to Judah, David "sought the face of the Lord." God explained that the famine was because of the guilt associated with how Saul, years earlier, had massacred some Gibeonites. David made things right with the Gibeonites and the famine ended. (II Sam 21:1–14)
 13. After David's sin in taking a census, the prophet Gad gives David three choices for how God will respond: three years of famine, three months of enemy attack, or three days of pestilence. (II Sam 24:10–17)
- C. There are times when David seemed to **intuitively** know what God wanted, when there is no indication that he first stopped and "inquired" of the Lord. This is true most notably when David killed Goliath (I Sam 17) and when he twice refused to kill Saul (I Sam 24:4–7, 10; 26:8–11). Because God was "with David" (I Sam 16:13, 18; 18:12, 14, 28), no special guidance was necessary.
- D. There are times when there is no indication that David stopped and "inquired" of the Lord, and the decisions he made were **questionable** at best.
1. When he fled to the Philistines the first time. (I Sam 21:10–15)
 2. When he made plans to kill Nabal. (I Sam 25:13, 26, 33)
 3. When he fled to the Philistines the second time, the Bible says; "Then David said in his heart... 'there is nothing better for me'" than to go live with the Philistines. (I Sam 27:1)
 4. When he chose his wives: Michal (I Sam 18:17–30), Ahinoam and Abigail (I Sam 25:39–44) and Bathsheba (II Sam 11:1–27).
 5. When he tried to bring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. (II Sam 6:1–15)

6. When he brought Absalom back to the palace (II Sam 14:1–3, 18–21). In this situation, Joab got a woman to tell a fabricated story “in order to change the course of things” (vv 19–20).
- E. Notice that the David story is intertwined with the story of **Saul**, who had a very different experience with “the will of God” than did David.
1. Saul was selected as king by **casting lots** (I Sam 10:20–24).
 2. Though Samuel **twice** clearly told Saul God’s will, twice Saul chose not to obey:
 - In the matter of waiting seven days (I Sam 10:8; 13:8–14).
 - In the matter of the Amalekites (I Sam 15).
 3. When the Philistines attacked, Saul did indeed “inquire of the Lord” but God **did not answer** “either by dreams, or by Urim, or by prophets” (I Sam 28:6, 15). So Saul decided to consult a **medium / witch** (see I Sam 15:23; I Sam 28). He wanted to consult the dead (Samuel), something he well knew was strictly forbidden in God’s Law (Deut 18:9–14; Isa 8:19–20).
- F. Notice that the David story is intertwined with the story of **Absalom**, a rebellious young man whose only method of divine guidance was **counselors**. He especially leaned on Ahithophel whose counsel “was as if one consulted the word of God” (II Sam 16:23). David prayed that God would “turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness” (II Sam 15:31). When Absalom decided that the counsel of Hushai was more to his liking, Ahithophel went out and hanged himself (II Sam 17:1–23).
- III. Lessons learned from the David story about discerning the will of God
- A. God does have a plan for our lives and it is often more **detailed** than we imagine.
- B. Even rebels and unbelievers want “divine guidance.” Usually, this means they want to know **the future** so they can personally profit from such hidden knowledge. But God considers all **occult** methods of foretelling the future to be an abomination. Using Deuteronomy 18:9–14 as a starting point, list methods of seeking guidance that are forbidden. Why does God forbid such practices?
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <u>Divination</u> | <u>Tarot cards</u> |
| <u>Child sacrifice</u> | <u>Astrology, zodiac</u> |
| <u>Fortune telling</u> | <u>Ouija board</u> |
| <u>Sorcerer</u> | <u>Reading entrails</u> |
| <u>Necromancer</u> | <u>Eagles in flight</u> |
| <u>Inquire of the dead</u> | <u>Tea leaves</u> |
| <u>Interpret omens</u> | <u>Crystal ball</u> |
- C. When we fail to seek God and “lean on our own understanding,” we risk making **poor choices**.
- D. Though God is sovereign and will accomplish his ultimate purposes one way or another, we have the **freedom** to say either yes or no to God’s plan. Knowledge of God’s will for our lives does not mean we will do what God wants. No one had better guidance than Saul or the Israelites coming out of Egypt, and yet few people were more lost and confused. Rebellion is as the sin of **witchcraft** (I Sam 15:23).

- E. When we seek God, we need to recognize that **“No”** is just as much of an answer as “Yes.”
- F. Sometimes God expects **me** to choose.
- G. God will not be mocked. When we are willfully living in **disobedience** in one area of our lives, then he will not reveal his will to us in another area of our lives.
- H. When our wills are surrendered and we are indwelt by the Spirit, then in many decisions we have no need for “guidance.” We **intuitively** know what is right and we already have the capacity to choose to do it.
- I. God reveals his purposes for our lives in numerous ways:
 - 1. **Scripture.** “Never seek guidance on what God has already forbidden. Never seek guidance on what God has already commanded” (A. W. Tozer).
 - 2. The indwelling **Spirit.** “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth...” (John 16:13).
 - 3. **Prophets,** priests, and counselors. “The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice” (Prov 12:15).
 - 4. **Dreams** (I Sam 3:1; 28:6). Jacob, Joseph, Daniel, Samuel, Solomon, Zacharias, Joseph the husband of Mary, Ananias, Peter, Paul, and John all received guidance through dreams. God even speaks to pagans through dreams (Abimelech, Pharaoh, Pilate’s wife, etc.).
 - 5. **Circumstances.** Gideon’s fleece (Jdgs 6:36-40). “I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel” (Phil 1:12).
 - 6. Urim and Thummim (Old Testament times). There is one example of **casting lots** in the New Testament but no encouragement to continue such a practice (Acts 1:26).
- J. The real challenge in the will of God is not in knowing it but in **doing** it! “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven” (Matt 7:21).

IV. Make it personal

Think of an area in your own life where you need divine direction. God is not hiding his plans for your life. He wants you to know his will and purposes. The following verses help us better understand our part and God’s part in discerning his will.

- A. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths” (Prov 3:5–6).
 - 1. Am I **trusting** in the Lord with **all** my heart?
If my heart is divided and my commitment partial, then there is no promise of guidance. When David prayed for guidance he also prayed for “an undivided heart” (Ps 86:11 NIV).
 - 2. Am I leaning on my **own understanding**?
The Bible has a special term to describe those who lean on their own understanding: **fool** (Prov 28:26). Our cultural obsession in telling children to “believe in yourself” is a sure recipe for disaster. It takes a **wise** man to know how dumb he is.
 - 3. Am I **acknowledging** the Lord in all my ways?

The Bible tells us to “know” (acknowledge) God, not just know *about* him. When we have a personal, vital, daily **relationship** with the living Lord, then guidance becomes almost automatic. The more I know my wife, the more I understand what she wants. Seeking knowledge of God’s will without seeking knowledge of God (seeking his hand but not his face) is blasphemous and makes a travesty of worship.

- Why would God reveal his will in some new area of my life if I am not already obeying those parts of his will that I already know?
 - Why would God reveal his will if he is not sure of my obedience? Have I told God that I’m willing to do his will no matter the cost?
4. When we do our part (trusting, not leaning..., knowing), then God’s **promise** becomes a reality: He will make our paths straight/direct our paths. The word “straight” has a **moral** connotation as well as a directional one. God is promising to enable us to make wise choices in all of life.
- B. “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Rom 12:1–2).
1. Have I come to a place of **full surrender**? Is my body on the altar as a living sacrifice? “Present your bodies” (*aorist* tense: once and for all, a crisis experience). “If anyone’s will is to do God’s will, he will know whether the teaching is from God...” (John 7:17).
 2. Are my attitudes and behaviors in **conformity** with this world? “Do not be conformed to this world” (*present* tense: an ongoing, continual reality).
 3. Have I been inwardly **transformed** by the renewal of my mind? “Be transformed by the renewal of your mind” (*present* tense: keep on allowing the Spirit to renew your mind).
 4. If these things are true, then discerning the will of God becomes (almost) automatic. “And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way, walk in it...” (Isa 30:21).

TABLE TALK

1. Describe a time in your life when you thought you understood God’s will concerning some matter and then later you wondered if you had.
2. “Whatever happens is the will of God.” Do you believe this statement? Why or why not?
3. What are some of the ways people today use to seek divine guidance? What makes a method legitimate and what makes a method illegitimate?
4. Think of an area in your life right now where you need divine guidance. What have you learned from this lesson that you intend to apply in your search to know God’s will?

Sweet Will of God

Leila N. Morris (1900)

*My stubborn will at last hath yielded;
I would be Thine, and Thine alone;
And this the prayer my lips are bringing,
Lord, let in me Thy will be done.*

Refrain:

*Sweet will of God, still fold me closer,
Till I am wholly lost in Thee.*

*Thy precious will, O conqu'ring Savior,
Doth now embrace and compass me;
All discords hushed, my peace a river,
My soul, a prisoned bird set free.*

*Shut in with Thee, O Lord, forever,
My wayward feet no more to roam;
What pow'r from Thee my soul can sever?
The center of God's will my home.*



DAVID: *King of Hearts*

A Bible Study by Stan Key

ANSWERS

Chapter 1. The Call

- I. a call; purpose; significance; (A1) Go; (A2) send someone else; (A3) Go; (A4) Here am I; (A5) in the womb; (A6) Follow me; (A7) appoint you; (B1) the Slave Trade; (B2) peanut; (B3) fast; (B4) moonlighting; (C1) Why was I chosen?; burden; (C2) honest man
- II. (A) outward appearance; the heart; (B) leaders; (B1a) Birth; (B1b) Height; (B1c) Appearance; (B1d) Education; (B1e) Wealth; (B1f) Personality and charisma; (B1g) Connections; (B1h) Giftedness and talent; (B2a) humble position; invisible; foolish; weak; low; despised; not; (B2b) shepherd; (B2b1) sheep; (B2b2) Provide; (B2b3) Courage; (B2b4) Trust; isolation; use and abuse; (B2c) faithful; (B2d) relationship; (C1) musician; poet; (C2) love sheep; (C3) sling; (C4) warfare; (C5) relationship; (C6) Meditating; (C7) trust; (C8) humility
- III. no voice; (A) initiative; a Caller; (B) relationship; do; be; with him; (C) journey; 10 years; (D) a team; (E) cost you everything; cheap; cannot

Chapter 2. A Giant Problem

- I. (A) oxymoronic; small; weak; (B) underdog; (C) flannelgraph
- II. (A3) nine feet; (A4) 125 pounds; 15 pounds; (A5) psychological; bully; sympathy; (B) paralyzed; victim; (C) boxing match
- III. (A) new eyes; [Column 1] my; Somebody; [Column 2] God; miss; sling; opportunity; (B) prepared; track record; little; (C) motives; (D) weapons; (E) Trust; courage; cowards; larger; Flee; (F) the Spirit; passionate zeal

Chapter 3. The Madness of King Saul

- I. anointing; dodged; (A) new heart; Spirit; prophesy; new man; (B) willful; (B2) controller; Judas; unbroken stallion; (B3) witchcraft; (B4) naked; witch; suicide; (B5) the fool; (C) training program
- II. (A) Why?; powerful; melodic; skillfully; godliness; (B) envy; begrudges; (C) poison; son; daughter; successful; popular; (D1) image; competition; (D2) bitter; compared; Cain; (D3) paranoid; delusions; (D4) cruel; (D5) fears; irrational; (D6) evil spirits; demon possession; ultimate; permits; causes
- III. (A) every vile practice; (A1) spears; (A2) compare; (A3) weep, (A4) rejoice; (A5) fear; (A6) bitterness; (A7) covetous; (B1) Confess; (B2) contentment; miserable; learn; (B3) jealous/zealous; ambitions; (B4) absolute surrender; broken; my will

Chapter 4. The Art of Spear-Dodging

- I. (A) Spears; (A6) gave it back; (B) conflict; first; (C) family; friends; Absalom; (D) throw; spear-dodging
- II. (A1) the Lord; my hand; (A2) my hand; (B1) dodge; bitter; (B2) throw it back; mad king
- III. grow; leadership; (A) glorify God; impulsive; trust; like Jesus; never; (B) the log; first; then; (B1) overlooked; (B2) tongue; (B3) motives; (B4) confessed; (B4a) everyone involved; (B4b) If; But; Maybe; (B4c) specifically; (B4d) sorrow; (B4e) restitution; (B4f) change; (B4g) forgiveness; (C) go and tell; gracious; firm; (D) Forgive; reconciled; impossible; possible; our hooks

Chapter 5. The Pits

- I. (B) metaphorically; (C1) Joseph; (C2) Jeremiah; (C3) Elijah; (C4) Jonah; (C5) Paul and Silas; (D) David; 10 years; worship music; wilderness
- II. (A1) anointed; (A3) hero; (A5) successful; (B1) palace; (B2) home; (B5) Tabernacle; (B6) Gath; (C1) cave; company; distress; debt; Bitter; (C2) every day; (C3) betray; (C4) cave; (C5) Nabal; (C7) the wilderness; (C9) lost everything; (D) theological; psychological; (E) leadership
- III. (A) hard; admit; denying; (B) God; accident; purpose; (C) good; lice; (D) testing; trials; (E) temporary; (F) testimony

Chapter 6. The Worst Day of David's Life

- I. (A) God's own heart; (B) great troubles; (C) laments; (D) pain and loss; (E) loved; joy; (F) everything; (G) delivers; (H) respond
- II. (A) wept; (A1) image of God; (A2) integrity; (A3) gift; (B) get bitter; blame; (B1) their leader; (B2) grace; (C) in the Lord; (C1) constant; (C2) focus; (C3) through; (C4) choice; (D) enquired; (D1) hearing; (D2) plan; Ask; (E) got up; (E1) Elijah; (E2) get up; (E3) pain
- III. (A) best; (B) Reveille

Chapter 7. Sweet Will of God

- I. (A) First Crusade; how; free; (B1) unite my heart; (B2) humble; (B3) leads me; (B4) counsel; (B5) eye; mule
- II. (A) "imposed"; (B) sought; (C) intuitively; (D) questionable; (E) Saul; (E1) casting lots; (E2) twice; (E3) did not answer; medium/witch; (F) Absalom; counselors
- III. (A) detailed; (B) the future; occult; Divination; Tarot cards; Child sacrifice; Astrology, zodiac; Fortune telling; Ouija board; Sorcerer; Reading entrails; Necromancer; Eagles in flight; Inquire of the dead; Tea leaves; Interpret omens; Crystal ball; (C) poor choices; (D) freedom; witchcraft; (E) "No"; (F) me; (G) disobedience; (H) intuitively; (I1) Scripture; (I2) Spirit; (I3) Prophets; (I4) Dreams; (I5) Circumstances; (I6) casting lots; (J) doing
- IV. (A1) trusting; all; (A2) own understanding; fool; wise; (A3) acknowledging; relationship; (A4) promise; moral; (B1) full surrender; (B2) conformity; (B3) transformed



DAVID: *King of Hearts*

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ICU

By Stan Key

*I thought that I was doing fine
And in control of what was mine
When suddenly, I'm on my back
Suffering from a heart attack.*

*The monitor above my bed
Puts fear and panic in my head.
They tell me I will lose my life
If I refuse the surgeon's knife.*

*"Lord, I'm almost in despair
Lying in Intensive Care;
The sickness of my heart is such
I need more than human touch!"*

*The Great Physician took my hand
And spoke so I could understand;
"Your options here are only two:
But the choice remains with you.*

*If the fear of my incision
Leads you to the wrong decision
You may spare yourself some pain
Yet your sickness will remain.*

*But if you submit to me
Trusting my ability,
You will find the operation
Causes inward transformation!"*

*As he spoke, his loving Voice
Gave me power to make the choice:
"Doctor, please! I'm in your care,
Cut me open, strip me bare."*



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