

DISCOVERY QUESTIONS

When God's People Forget God

"Pressure Points" Series

March 4/5, 2017

Main Idea

Sometimes stress causes God's people to "forget" God, which can lead to poor decisions.

Rooted Experience: Serving

Our desire for Life Groups is to continue the rhythms of Rooted that you experienced (prayer, serving, sharing your story) when you first went through Rooted. These next two weeks of Rooted are focused on "what does God want from my life", and we encourage Life Groups to find an opportunity to serve together. If you connected to a ministry or serve opportunity through Rooted, we encourage you to re-connect with that ministry again! The number one factor in making a lasting impact is consistency, and many of the partners we serve would love to have you and your groups come back. If you need fresh ideas or areas to serve, please feel free to email paigew@friends.church to find the right opportunity for your group.

Discovery Questions

1. Have you ever been in a "high-pressure," "high-stress" sales pitch where someone tried to get you to buy something? What was it for? How did it turn out?

So far in our series about David, we've been impressed with David's faith in God and the way that he brought God into almost every single situation in his life. David is not perfect, however, and our passage this week shows that. Feeling the pressure that Saul is pursuing him to take his life, David seems to "forget" God and begins to make some poor decisions. Today, we're going to explore one chapter of the three we looked at in our weekend services. Using David's experience, we're going to talk about how we deal with stressful situations in our own lives, and ways we can avoid making the same mistakes as David.

2. Read 1 Samuel 27:1 – 28:2. What compromises do you see David make in this passage in response to his fear that Saul is going to get him?

- 3.**
- a. When people are faced with stressful or difficult circumstances, how have you seen them react in order to deal with or manage the stress? What things do they do and why?
 - b. What examples have you seen of people who made bad decisions in the midst of difficult and/or stressful times?
 - c. Is there anyone you know who seems to manage stress really well? What's different about them? What do they do?
- 4.**
- a. In general, how do you deal with stress? What do you turn to? (Would you consider yourself a "stressed-out" person? Why or why not?)

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b. Do you ever “forget God” in the midst of stress? What do you think causes you to do that? Has that ever caused you to disobey God or make compromises in your faith? How did that turn out?

c. What can you do to remember God in the midst of stressful, crisis situations? How does that help you in an experience you’re going through right now?

5. Is there someone in your life who is going through a stressful time who might benefit from your reminder of God’s presence? Share that person’s experience with the group. How can you reach out to them this week? Consider spending time in prayer for those individuals as you close.

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DISCOVERY QUESTIONS

Leader Guide

1. Have you ever been in a “high-pressure,” “high-stress” sales pitch where someone tried to get you to buy something? What was it for? How did it turn out?

This is a “lighter” question designed to get the conversation going. Spend about 5-7 minutes on this question.

So far in our series about David, we’ve been impressed with David’s faith in God and the way that he brought God into almost every single situation in his life. David is not perfect, however, and our passage this week shows that. Feeling the pressure that Saul is pursuing him to take his life, David seems to “forget” God and begins to make some poor decisions. Today, we’re going to explore one chapter of the three we looked at in our weekend services. Using David’s experience, we’re going to talk about how we deal with stressful situations in our own lives, and ways we can avoid making the same mistakes as David.

2. Read 1 Samuel 27:1 – 28:2. What compromises do you see David make in this passage in response to his fear that Saul is going to get him?

In this passage, we see David act in a somewhat uncharacteristic manner. Rather than respond in faith, David responds in fear to this stressful experience. There are a few compromising decisions that David makes:

- *First—and most significantly—David “forgets” God. Not once in this chapter is God mentioned. In previous chapters, David almost always brings God into the situations of his life. This time, he doesn’t.*
- *David flees to enemy territory—the Philistines (Gath was where Goliath was from!)—to act as a Philistine (27:1-3).*
- *David petitions a foreign king to live in his territory (27:5-7).*
- *Though David did not kill Israelites, and instead killed the enemy of the Israelites as a part of the Philistine army, he lied to Achish and told him he killed his own countryman (27:10-12).*
- *David pledges completely loyalty to King Achish (28:1-2).*

Spend 8-10 minutes on this question in its entirety.

3. a. When people are faced with stressful or difficult circumstances, how have you seen them react in order to deal with or manage the stress? What things do they do and why?
b. What examples have you seen of people who made bad decisions in the midst of difficult and/or stressful times?
c. Is there anyone you know who seems to manage stress really well? What’s different about them? What do they do?

For part “a,” people deal with stress in a variety of ways. Some turn to unhealthy eating or chocolate, others exercise, others sit and worry and others isolate. Often people do this to find ways to “comfort” themselves, take their mind off the situation, etc.

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For part “b,” some people who worry about money (for example), may turn to stealing from their company, parents, etc. Others may make purchases they can’t afford, or say “yes” to requests of their kids that they normally would say “no” to, etc.

Spend 7-10 minutes on this question in its entirety.

4. **a. In general, how do you deal with stress? What do you turn to? (Would you consider yourself a “stressed-out” person? Why or why not?)**
b. Do you ever “forget God” in the midst of stress? What do you think causes you to do that? Has that ever caused you to disobey God or make compromises in your faith? How did that turn out?
c. What can you do to remember God in the midst of stressful, crisis situations? How does that help you in an experience you’re going through right now?

For part “b,” some people find that this strong sense of “self” kicks in in the midst of stress, which causes them to think, “I can do this on my own; I don’t need God.” For other people there’s a strong “flight” or “fright” syndrome that kicks in, which causes us to act on our instincts, rather than to pause and reflect on God’s control of the situation.

For part “c,” you may want your group to share things they have done in the past to help in the midst of stress. Also, we want to note that God does ultimately redeem David’s bad choices (see 1 Samuel 30). Even if we make bad decisions in the midst of stress, God can redeem those choices when we turn back to Him (see 1 Samuel 30:6).

Spend about 10-12 minutes on this question in its entirety.

5. **Is there someone in your life who is going through a stressful time who might benefit from your reminder of God’s presence? Share that person’s experience with the group. How can you reach out to them this week? Consider spending time in prayer for those individuals as you close.**

God has given us the Church to help each other out in all circumstances, including stressful times. If you know someone who is going through a particularly stressful time, it may benefit them if you reach out to them in some way this week—a phone call, a letter, an offer to make dinner or watch their kids, etc. These small expressions of caring can help in tremendous ways.

Spend 7-10 minutes on this question in its entirety.