

# DISCOVERY QUESTIONS

David and the Ark  
“Pressure Points” Series  
March 25/26, 2017

Main Idea

***“The fear of man brings a snare, but he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted.” (Proverbs 29:25, NASB)***

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## Discovery Questions

1. Have you ever done something out of the ordinary or outrageous to get someone to notice you? It may have been something for a crush or love interest, a celebrity, a game show host, a teacher, a contest, as part of a college application process, etc. What did you do? How did it turn out?

As we continue this week in our series about the life of David, we’re presented with one of the rare “missteps” David makes in the early part of his reign as King over Israel. In an attempt to honor God, David tries to bring the Ark of the Covenant—the most sacred object in all of Israel—to Jerusalem, the new capitol city of God’s people. But David does not follow God’s instructions for how to transport the Ark, and his mistake costs someone their life. From this passage, we learn something about the power and holiness of God, and the importance of fearing Him—and Him alone—in the decisions that we make in this life.

2. Read 2 Samuel 6. Though God expressly instructs the Israelites to transport the Ark by carrying it with poles (see Numbers 7:9), David has the ark placed on a “new cart” instead. What do we learn from this passage about obeying God—and only God—in our lives?

3. a. What things have you seen people do because of the “fear of man”—doing something for the sake of approval / acceptance of other people?  
b. Why do you think we get so concerned about and therefore so motivated by what other people think of us? What are the dangers of living this way?

4. a. When is a time in your life when you did something largely because you were seeking approval from another person? How did that situation turn out?  
b. In general, how concerned are you with the opinions of other people on your life? Why do you think that is?  
c. What could you do to stop worrying less about what other people think about you and concerning yourself more with God’s opinion of you?  
d. Is there an area in your life right now where you feel God is leading you to do something, but you’re afraid to do it because of what someone else might think? Share that with your group. What would it take to do that thing simply because God wants you to do it?

5. We see in this passage that David ends up “dancing before the Lord” because he is so overjoyed that The Ark of God’s covenant is coming to Jerusalem. Have you ever felt yourself get as excited as David does to worship God at home or in a church service? How do you generally view those worship times? What may keep you from worshipping God in those times “with all your might” as David does in this passage?

*Leader Guide Starts on Next Page*

# DISCOVERY QUESTIONS

## Leader Guide

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**1. Have you ever done something out of the ordinary or outrageous to get someone to notice you? It may have been something for a crush or love interest, a celebrity, a game show host, a teacher, a contest, as part of a college application process, etc. What did you do? How did it turn out?**

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

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**2. Read 2 Samuel 6. Though God expressly instructs the Israelites to transport the Ark by carrying it with poles (see Numbers 7:9), David has the ark placed on a “new cart” instead. What do we learn from this passage about obeying God—and only God—in our lives?**

*The key object in this passage is the “Ark of the Covenant.” The Ark of the Covenant was a piece of furniture—a better name for it might be the “Covenant Chest” (like a chest you might have at the foot of your bed)—that was designed by God for two purposes. First, it was meant to hold the stone tablets upon which the 10 Commandments were written (though other things got added to it as well). Second, it was meant to be a visible reminder of God’s presence here on this earth—in several places in Scripture it is described almost as if it is God’s “throne” here on this earth.*

*Therefore, the Ark was the most holy object in all of Israel. And in Scripture, God’s holiness is described almost like a flame, a fire, to the “oil” of mankind’s sinfulness. Whenever sinful mankind came into contact with the holiness of God, death resulted. That’s why God instructed the Israelites never to touch the ark, and required that it be carried by two poles placed one on each side.*

*David ignores those instructions in this passage. Though David’s intentions are good—he wants to bring the ark to Jerusalem so that God’s throne can be with him in Jerusalem—David doesn’t transport the ark the way God instructs. He sets the ark on a “new cart” (v. 3) carried by oxen instead. When the oxen stumble, the Ark looks as though it’s going to fall off the cart, and Uzzah, a priest in charge of transporting the Ark, reaches out to steady it. Because of his “irreverent” act Uzzah is killed on the spot by God’s anger.*

*We learn in this passage that while our God is a loving and gracious God, He is also a Holy God. While our God is a God who is “slow to anger,” He is a God that sometimes does get angry. And sometimes we can do something so “irreverent”—so profane, so flippant—that’s God anger lashes out at us on the spot. Therefore, the only one we should “fear” in this life is not our fellow man, but God—because it is God’s opinion, and only God’s opinion that matters.*

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David eventually recognizes this. After this incident with Uzzah, the Ark sits in the house of a man by the name of Obed-Edom in Israel, near Jerusalem. Upon hearing about the blessing that this man is receiving by God because of the Ark, David once again tries to bring it to Jerusalem. This time, however, they do it the way God asks. They “carry” the ark (v. 13) and they offer sacrifices along the way. God blesses this new attempt, and in celebration, we’re told that David “dances before the Lord” (the phrase “before the Lord” is a key phrase, occurring five times in the second part of this passage – 6:14, 16, 17, and 21 [twice]). Though Michal, David’s wife, thinks David’s dancing is undignified, we see that David has learned the lesson of the Ark: he will do whatever it takes to honor God, even if it causes him to be humiliated in his own eyes (v. 22). For not honoring God, Michal faces a punishment—she does not bear any children to David, and the line of Saul thus ends with her (v. 23).

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

3.
  - a. **What things have you seen people do because of the “fear of man”—doing something for the sake of approval / acceptance of other people?**
  - b. **Why do you think we get so concerned about and therefore so motivated by what other people think of us? What are the dangers of living this way?**

*For part “b,” it’s common to feel as though our self-worth comes from other people—that we need other people to like us in order to feel good about ourselves. If ever we think someone is mad at us, or doesn’t like us, there is something innate within many people that wants to correct that. For some, it becomes an obsession—their whole lives are about doing what other people think, at the expense of doing what they want or what God wants them to do. Some people, in the pursuit of pleasing others, have completely lost their own selves, compromised their integrity, etc.*

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

4.
  - a. **When is a time in your life when you did something largely because you were seeking approval from another person? How did that situation turn out?**
  - b. **In general, how concerned are you with the opinions of other people on your life? Why do you think that is?**
  - c. **What could you do to stop worrying less about what other people think about you and concerning yourself more with God’s opinion of you?**
  - d. **Is there an area in your life right now where you feel God is leading you to do something, but you’re afraid to do it because of what someone else might think? Share that with your group. What would it take to do that thing simply because God wants you to do it?**

*For part “c,” we talked in church this last week about the “fear of the Lord.” The “fear of the Lord” is recognizing the power and majesty of God, and responding appropriately—with awe, respect, worship and obedience. The modern American church has lost some of the idea of the “fear of the Lord”—we are more apt to perceive God as our “buddy” than we are to see Him as the Almighty Creator of the Universe. Recognizing the bigness and holiness of God—as David does in this passage in the incident of the ark—will remind us that it’s God we should seek to please, not our fellow man. Jesus puts it this way in Matthew 10:28: “Don’t be afraid of those who want to kill*

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*your body; they cannot touch your soul. Fear only God, who can destroy both soul and body in hell” (NLT).*

*For part “d,” allow the group to encourage the person who feels as though God has put something on their heart. Show that person that they have the group’s support, even if they make some other people angry. David’s dancing before the Lord made Michal angry—but David knew that His only audience was God, and that’s why he insisted on doing it.*

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

**5. We see in this passage that David ends up “dancing before the Lord” because he is so overjoyed that The Ark of God’s covenant is coming to Jerusalem. Have you ever felt yourself get as excited as David does to worship God at home or in a church service? How do you generally view those worship times? What may keep you from worshipping God in those times “with all your might” as David does in this passage?**

*In this question, we want to facilitate a general discussion on worship, and how we approach God in times of worship. **Note that we don’t want this to become an opportunity to talk about different worship “styles,” or complain about the music in the church!** Instead, it’s all about our response to worship in church—are we coming to God with enthusiasm during that time, or are we worried about what other people might think of us? You might want to share this quote with your group:*

*“There are, doubtless, times to be calm, and times to be enthusiastic; but can it be right to give all our coldness to Christ and all our enthusiasm to the world?” (W.G. Blaikie)*

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