

DISCOVERY QUESTIONS

Note: This set of Discovery Questions is the last set of Discovery Questions until the fall. If your group is still meeting through the summer, consider going to friends.church/books-resources/ and check out "RightNow Media" for some studies you can do.

David Conclusion & Wrap-Up "Pressure Points" Series June 10/11, 2017

Discovery Questions

1. This weekend we finished our 14-week study of the life of David. What has stood out to you the most about David's life? Is there anything that especially comforted you, challenged you, or even confused you? Any lessons that have stuck with you? Spend some time reflecting on our series about David.

As we closed our series on David's life this past weekend, we asked two lingering questions from our study:

- First, we sought to answer, "What happened to David?" Is there anything we can point to that contributed to the downfall and poor decisions that marked the second part of David's life?
- Second, we sought to answer, "Why, despite his failures, did God continue to use David?" Despite the massive mistakes David made, God did not give up on David. Why was that?

For Discovery Questions today, we'll devote questions #2-#4 to the question of "What happened to David?" Then, we'll spend question #5 on "Why, despite his failures, did God continue to use David?"

2. As we think about what happened to David, we saw that some of David's downfall can be attributed to the old maxim, "Absolute power corrupts absolutely." There is a "corrupting" effect that power can have, tempting sinful people to use their positions of power for their own selfish gain.

- a. Read 1 Samuel 8:11-18. Here God warns the Israelites about what their desire to have a human king will lead to. What does God say a human king will do to the Israelites? List as many things as you can find.
- b. Now, read Matthew 20:25-28. What does Jesus say a leader committed to leading in a biblical way should do? How does this contrast with what we saw in 1 Samuel 8:11-18?

3. What examples of *good* and *bad* leadership have you encountered in your life? Have you ever worked for someone who fit the mold of 1 Samuel 8:11-18? What did they do? Have you ever worked for someone who fit the mold of Matthew 20:25-28? What did they do? What lessons have you learned from each?

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4.
 - a. What makes it so easy to “take” when we find ourselves in positions of influence, power or authority over others? What makes it so much harder to “give” and “serve” than to “take”?
 - b. Think of the positions of influence you have right now—in your home, in your work, in your church, or in your school. Where are you tempted to use your position of influence for your own gain—to “take” rather than “give”? How can you fight against that temptation?
 - c. What would it look like for you to serve and give in the places God has placed you, rather than take? Who is one person this week that you could serve? How could you serve them?

5. We saw this week how, despite David’s mistakes, God still remained committed to him. This actually had nothing to do with David but had everything to do with God: God called David to the position of King and made a promise to honor him (2 Samuel 7), and as Paul states in Romans 11:29, “God’s gifts and His call are irrevocable.” This weekend we saw how God has given each of us a gift and has a calling on our life: He has gifted us with salvation and called us to do the work of the Kingdom. Just like it was for David, this gift and this calling are irrevocable.
 - a. Have you ever been tempted to doubt whether or not God could still save or use you? When did you experience those doubts?
 - b. How can you be reminded of the fact that God will remain faithful to us, even if we fail Him sometimes? What impact might truly embracing that have on how you deal with failure, setbacks, sin, etc.?

Close your time in prayer by thanking God for His gift of salvation that cannot be taken away from us no matter what we do!

Leader Guide Starts on Next Page

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Leader Guide

1. This weekend we finished our 14-week study of the life of David. What has stood out to you the most about David's life? Is there anything that especially comforted you, challenged you, or even confused you? Any lessons that have stuck with you? Spend some time reflecting on our series about David.

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

As we closed our series on David's life this past weekend, we asked two lingering questions from our study:

- **First, we sought to answer, "What happened to David?" Is there anything we can point to that contributed to the downfall and poor decisions that marked the second part of David's life?**
- **Second, we sought to answer, "Why, despite his failures, did God continue to use David?" Despite the massive mistakes David made, God did not give up on David. Why was that?**

For Discovery Questions today, we'll devote questions #2-#4 to the question of "What happened to David?" Then, we'll spend question #5 on "Why, despite his failures, did God continue to use David?"

2. As we think about what happened to David, we saw that some of David's downfall can be attributed to the old maxim, "Absolute power corrupts absolutely." There is a "corrupting" effect that power can have, tempting sinful people to use their positions of power for their own selfish gain.

- a. **Read 1 Samuel 8:11-18. Here God warns the Israelites about what their desire to have a human king will lead to. What does God say a human king will do to the Israelites? List as many things as you can find.**
- b. **Now, read Matthew 20:25-28. What does Jesus say a leader committed to leading in a biblical way should do? How does this contrast with what we saw in 1 Samuel 8:11-18?**

For part "a," the key word in 1 Samuel 8:11-18 is the word "take." In the NIV translation of the Bible, it appears six times. God says a king will...

- *Take the Israelite's sons and send them off to war (v. 11)*
- *Take their daughters to serve in the king's court (v. 13)*
- *Take their fields and crops for the king's court (v. 14)*
- *Take some of their grain to give to his officials (v. 15)*
- *Take their servants and animals for his own use (v. 16)*
- *Ultimately take their very lives for his service (v. 17)*

For part "b," Matthew 20:25-28 is a stunning contrast to 1 Samuel 8:11-18. A true leader (the "great" among them) will be one who serves others rather than make others serve them. And rather than "take," a true leader will follow Jesus' example and "give" up to and including their very lives.

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Spend 7-10 minutes on this question.

3. What examples of *good* and *bad* leadership have you encountered in your life? Have you ever worked for someone who fit the mold of 1 Samuel 8:11-18? What did they do? Have you ever worked for someone who fit the mold of Matthew 20:25-28? What did they do? What lessons have you learned from each?

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

- 4.**
- a. What makes it so easy to “take” when we find ourselves in positions of influence, power or authority over others? What makes it so much harder to “give” and “serve” than to “take”?**
 - b. Think of the positions of influence you have right now—in your home, in your work, in your church, or in your school. Where are you tempted to use your position of influence for your own gain—to “take” rather than “give”? How can you fight against that temptation?**
 - c. What would it look like for you to serve and give in the places God has placed you, rather than take? Who is one person this week that you could serve? How could you serve them?**

For part “a,” we are inherently sinful, selfish human beings. Though God is working to transform that within us, the temptation is always to use what we have for selfish gain. When we are in positions of power, we have the ability to make life easier for ourselves: we have the ability to “take” more money for ourselves, for example, take more perks, and have other people do the things that we don’t want to do. People rarely will willingly make life harder on themselves; they want to make life easier, and being in a position of power and influence makes that possible.

For part “c,” we are asking: How can you use the power and influence you have to serve and give rather than take? It may be as simple as writing a kind email to someone; it may be as big as giving someone a raise or some paid time off (if you have the power to do that).

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

5. We saw this week how, despite David’s mistakes, God still remained committed to him. This actually had nothing to do with David but had everything to do with God: God called David to the position of King and made a promise to honor him (2 Samuel 7), and as Paul states in Romans 11:29, “God’s gifts and His call are irrevocable.” This weekend we saw how God has given each of us a gift and has a calling on our life: He has gifted us with salvation and called us to do the work of the Kingdom. Just like it was for David, this gift and this calling are irrevocable.

- a. Have you ever been tempted to doubt whether or not God could still save or use you? When did you experience those doubts?**
- b. How can you be reminded of the fact that God will remain faithful to us, even if we fail Him sometimes? What impact might truly embracing that have on how you deal with failure, setbacks, sin, etc.?**

The person who is always worried about whether they are “in” or “out” with God will do a lot of things out of fear, obligation, etc. God wants us to do things out of love, not fear. When we truly understand that God loves us, we (hopefully) are compelled to do things not because we fear losing our standing with God, but because we want to share that love with others. Feeling secure

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in our salvation can be a very motivating factor to serve God out of love rather than duty or obligation.

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

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