

Small Group Discussion Guide

For the week of October 16 - 22, 2022

Main Thought and Scriptures:

(From 1 Samuel 18, 24-26)

God prepares us for His purpose through challenging situations, including mistreatment and persecution. How we respond to the abuse of others will determine our future. After David killed Goliath, he became Israel's hero. The current king, Saul, became immensely jealous and tried to kill David on several occasions causing him to flee for his life. On at least two occasions, David had the opportunity to kill Saul and end his persecution once and for all. David's response was a decisive turning point.

Instead of killing him, he offered forgiveness and an opportunity for repentance. He stated, *"The Lord forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, or lay my hand on him; for he is the anointed of the Lord." With these words David sharply rebuked his men and did not allow them to attack Saul.*

(1 Samuel 24:6-7 NIV)

Even though Saul refused to do the right thing, David honored the Lord and God saw fit to eventually promote him over Saul. David's faithful response reveals that he understood several essential Biblical principles on how we are to respond to the mistreatment and persecution of others.

1. When we are mistreated, we must respond in a way that honors the Lord because He is the one who brings justice.

"As surely as the Lord lives," he said, "the Lord himself will strike him, or his time will come and he will die, or he will go into battle and perish. But the Lord forbid that I should lay a hand on the Lord's anointed."

(1 Samuel 26:10-11 NIV)

2. When we trust the Lord to bring justice, we don't retaliate but instead do good—even to those who mistreat us.

“Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ says the Lord. ²⁰On the contrary: ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.’ ²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Romans 12:19-21 NIV)

3. We are to forgive because the Lord first forgave us.

“Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.” (Colossians 3:12-14 ESV)

Discussion Questions:

- As you reflect on the weekend sermon, main thoughts, and scriptures above, what is the Lord highlighting to you and why?
- Share about a time when you had to trust in the Lord to bring justice to a situation. How did you respond? What happened and what did you learn as a result?
- Is there a situation in your life now where you can apply the lessons from today's discussion? Explain.

Prayer:

- Pray for one another to apply the lessons from this week's message and for any challenging situations that may be going on.