



August 24, 2014

1 Samuel 18

“When Jealousy and Insecurity are King”

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In our study last week, we saw how important it was for David to defend the honor and the name of the Lord, as well as to ascribe all of the glory to the Lord for his victory over Goliath and the Philistines. And as a result, David never let the popularity he received go to his head, and his ability to handle popularity would be the first thing that would be tested.

In this study, we’re going to look at the impact Saul’s anger and jealousy had in his life, and how we can learn from the way Saul viewed David, and how David handled the things that Saul was angry and jealous about.

Historical Background

1. After David killed Goliath, and the Israelites, with God’s help, were victorious over the Philistine army, there was what amounts to a “ticker-tape” parade.
2. As King Saul, David, and the Israeli army made their way home, they were met by women from all the towns of Israel who greeted them with *“singing and dancing and joyful songs and with tambourines and [musical instruments].”*
3. **1 Samuel 18:7** tells us that as *“they danced, they sang,”* and they made up their own little ditty: *“Saul has slain his thousands,”* and if that’s how the song ended, Saul would have been on top of the world, but they added a second verse, which changed everything: *“[A]nd David has slain his tens of thousands.”*
4. The meaning behind the lyrics of their song was that Saul was a *“thousands”* guy, but David was a *“tens of thousands”* guy, which meant that Saul was being upstaged by a 17-year-old shepherd boy!

5. **1 Samuel 18:8** - *“Saul was very angry...”*
 - a. The KJV uses the term *“very wroth”* for the NIV word, angry.
 - b. The Hebrew word is charah, which means, *“to burn furiously.”*
6. **1 Samuel 18:9** - *“And from that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David.”*
 - a. The Hebrew word for jealous, is avan, which means, *“to watch with jealousy.”*
7. Not only was Saul angry and jealous, **1 Samuel 18:12** says, *“Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with David but had left Saul.”*
8. When you put all these emotions/feelings together, what you see is Saul was a man who started out as a reluctant, humble leader, who soon became a paranoid, insecure, jealous, and angry man.
9. And, instead of humbling himself before God and giving his insecurities, jealousy, and anger to God, he became obsessed with killing David.
10. Saul thought that eliminating David would eliminate his problems, but Saul’s problem was David, it was himself.
11. The first attempt on David’s life happened the very next day after the victory parade!
 - a. **1 Samuel 18:10-11** - *“The next day an evil spirit from God came forcefully upon Saul. He was prophesying in his house, while David was playing the harp, as he usually did. Saul had a spear in his hand and he hurled it, saying to himself, ‘I’ll pin David to the wall.’ But David eluded him twice.”*
12. David, after surviving the second attempt on his life, met with Saul’s son, and his friend, Jonathan, to tell him about the attempts on his life.
13. **1 Samuel 19:9-10** - *“But an evil spirit from the Lord came upon Saul as he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand. While David was playing the harp, Saul tried to pin him to the wall with his spear, but David eluded him as Saul drove the spear into the wall. That night David made good his escape.”*
14. In **1 Samuel 19:12-17**, we read that David left the palace and went home to his wife, Michal, Saul’s daughter, who said to him, *“Listen, my father is crazy, and he’s going to kill you, so you’ve got to make a run for it!”*
15. **1 Samuel 20:1-3** - *“Then David fled from Natioth at Ramah and went to Jonathan and asked, ‘What have I done? What is my crime? How have I*

wronged your father, that he is trying to take my life?' 'Never!' Jonathan replied. 'You are not going to die! Look, my father doesn't do anything, great or small, without confiding in me. Why would he hide this from me? It's not so!' But David took an oath and said, 'Your father knows very well that I have found favor in your eyes, and he has said to himself, "Jonathan must not know this or he will be grieved." 'Yet as surely as the Lord lives and as you live, there is only a step between me and death.'

16. Jonathan and David made a plan, which would help them figure out whether or not Saul was trying to kill David.
17. **1 Samuel 20:30-33** - "Saul's anger flared up at Jonathan and he said to him, "You son of a perverse and rebellious woman! Don't I know that you have sided with the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of the mother who bore you? As long as the son of Jesse lives on this earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established, Now send and bring him to me, for he must die!' 'Why should he be put to death? What has he done?' Jonathan asked his father. But Saul hurled his spear at him to kill him. Then Jonathan knew that his father intended to kill David."
18. It's hard to imagine the degree to which Saul was driven by his jealousy, anger, and fear that he would attempt to kill his own son!

Saul Was Angry About David's Popularity

19. Saul was angry about the women who were dancing in the streets and singing songs about how David was more a hero than he was.
20. We must find our security in Christ alone, and we've got to know him and know who we are in Jesus.
21. **Philippians 3:10-11** - "I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead."
22. How did David handle his newfound popularity?
 - a. **1 Samuel 18:10** - "The next day an evil spirit from God came forcefully upon Saul. He was prophesying in his house, while David was playing the harp, as he usually did." (Emphasis added)

23. David didn't let the fact that he was anointed by Samuel to be the next king of Israel to go to his head, he went back to tending sheep, and in this case, he went back to playing the harp for a madman!
24. He wasn't out trying to promote himself nor was he out rounding up more women to sing a song of praise about him.
25. The fact is, the music will eventually fade for everyone, so the same answer applies to those who feel unpopular as much as it does to those who are popular: we must find our security in Jesus Christ, because when the music fades, we need to know who we are in him.
 - a. [Galatians 2:20](#) - *"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."*
 - b. [1 John 3:1a](#) - *"How great the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!"*

Saul Was Jealous About David's Success

26. [1 Samuel 18:5](#) - *"Whatever Saul sent him to do, David did it so successfully that Saul gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the people, and Saul's officers as well."*
27. [1 Samuel 18:14-15](#) - *"In everything he did he had great success, because the Lord was with him. When Saul saw how successful he was, he was afraid of him."*
28. [1 Samuel 18:30](#) - *"The Philistine commanders continued to go out to battle, and as often as they did, David met with more success than the rest of Saul's officers, and his name became well known."*
29. [2 Corinthians 10:12](#) - *"We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise."*
30. [Proverbs 14:30](#) - *"A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones."*
31. The key to not becoming envious of the success of others is to celebrate their successes whenever possible.
 - a. [Romans 12:15](#) - *"Rejoice with those who rejoice..."*

- b. **James 3:14-16** - *“But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth...[it] is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.”*
32. **Luke 19:24-26** - *“ ‘Then he said to those standing by, ‘Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.’ ‘Sir,’ they said, ‘he already has ten!’ ‘He replied, I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away.’ ”*
33. When we are good stewards of what God has given us, he will entrust more to us, and when we are not good stewards, he will entrust what we’ve been give to someone else.
34. The key to handling success is to seek the Lord and keep a right relationship with him.
- a. **2 Chronicles 26:3, 5** - *“Uzziah was sixteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-two years. He sought God during the days of Zechariah, who instructed him in the fear of God. As long as he sought the Lord, God gave him success.”*

Saul Was Afraid Because Of David's Relationship With The Lord

35. **1 Samuel 18:12-13a** - *“Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with David but had left Saul. So he sent David away from him...”*
36. When someone is not walking with the Lord and other people are he or she doesn't want to be around the Christ-follower(s), because they feel guilty.
37. It's the quiet testimony of a life lived for Christ that reminds them of what they don't have, and how they aren't living.
38. The easiest way to turn this around is to turn to the Lord!
39. Just think how different the story would have been if Saul had simply humbled himself, and said to David: “I've not been walking with the Lord; I've sinned against him; and I've been rebellious against him. But you are different, and I admire your relationship with him. It's easy to see that his hand is upon your life. Do you think you could help an old man get back on the right track with him? Could you help me find my back to the Lord?”

40. David didn't make his relationship with God something that would intentionally shame Saul.
41. David just ministered to him, playing his harp for the mad king of Israel, while he served, loved, and respected Saul.
42. David would end up living the next eight to tens years on the run as a fugitive from Saul, but during these difficult years, he would discover a closeness with God like never before, and he would be inspired to write several psalms during the years he was hiding.
43. Saul, on the other hand, would end up living the next eight to tens years becoming more and more distant from God, and more and more consumed with jealousy, anger, and insecurity.
44. We need to come humbly before the Lord, giving him your anger, jealousy, and insecurities, and he will help us find our fulfillment in Christ.
45. [Psalm 73:26](#) - *"My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."*

Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read [1 Samuel 18:6-16, 28-30](#) to provide an overview for this study.
3. How well do you handle the popularity of others when it means that you are unnoticed or passed over?
4. How have you handled situations in which you wanted a job that was given to someone else or when you didn't "make the cut" because someone else was chosen who was more talented/skilled than you?
5. Has there been a time in your life when you thought that someone else was the source of your problems, when it was the case that the source of your problems was within?
6. Read and discuss [Philippians 3:10-11](#).
7. How do you define having your identity in Christ?

8. In what ways have you been successful or unsuccessful handling your own popularity or the popularity of others?
9. Share examples of the ways you've handled your successes or the successes of others?
10. Using the examples below, allow the people in your group to share experiences of times in their life when they were jealous because:
 - a. Someone received a promotion and they didn't.
 - b. Someone's business turned a profit and theirs didn't.
 - c. Someone received an award and they didn't.
 - d. Someone's salary exceeded their salary.
 - e. Someone's kids were more talented or had better grades than their kids.
 - f. Someone bought a bigger house than theirs.
 - g. Someone bought an expensive new car when they couldn't afford one.
11. Is jealousy a "they" problem or is it a "me" problem?
12. Read and discuss [2 Corinthians 10:12](#); [Proverbs 14:30](#); [Romans 12:15](#); and [James 3:14-16](#).
13. How has the Lord helped you handle these situations in a Christ-like manner?
14. Read and discuss [2 Chronicles 26:3, 5](#).
15. Allow the people in your group to talk about times when being around people who lived for the Lord made them uncomfortable or caused them to feel guilty.
16. Did the Lord use the quiet their witness to minister to you?
17. Are there any people like Saul in your life who don't need another sermon (because they already feel enough guilt) who just need you to minister to them, serve them, love them, pray for them, and be Jesus to them?
18. Close your time in prayer by asking the Holy Spirit to help each person: find their identity in Christ; humble themselves before the Lord in such a way that they would bring their anger, fears, and jealousy to him so he could bring healing into their life; ask someone in the group ready to read [Psalm 73:26](#) pray the Scriptures.

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).