

DAVID PLAYED FOR SAUL

1 SAMUEL 16



KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 103:19

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who is our King? Jesus is our King forever, and He rules over the world.

CHRIST CONNECTION: Even though David knew he would be king one day, he served King Saul faithfully. Even though Jesus is God, He humbled Himself and took the form of a servant. He served His disciples by washing their feet, and He served His people by dying on a cross for their sin and rising again.

STORY POINT: David served Saul and played music to comfort him.



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

In 1 Samuel 16, we see the newly anointed future king of Israel serve his predecessor with humility and grace. Though David was promised the throne of Israel, his time had not yet come. Thus, David returned to his life as a shepherd. God would use the waiting and the trials for David's good and to point us toward the Suffering Servant in whom we place our ultimate hope: Jesus.

How did God use David's humility for His glory and David's good? How do we see this idea fully exemplified in Jesus?

When God rejected Saul as king, the Spirit of the Lord left him, and an evil spirit tormented him day and night. Upon hearing that someone could relieve his distress, Saul sent his servants to retrieve the young David after one of Saul's young men had heard David play the lyre (1 Samuel 16:18). Previously, we learned that David was a man after God's own heart, and we see a humble, serving heart as David played the lyre in Saul's time of distress.

Saul didn't know then that David would be his successor as king. Saul loved David so much that he even gave him the role of armor-bearer, asking Jesse for permission to allow David to remain in his service. David faithfully and humbly served Saul.

We see an even greater picture of service through Christ's depiction in Isaiah 53 as the Suffering Servant. While David's humble service offered temporary relief for King Saul, the humble, sacrificial death of Jesus offers eternal rescue from sin for all who believe in Him.

May a humble, obedient adoration of the Lord mark us as His faithful followers. Pray for boys and girls to see Christ's humility as our example and as our means of salvation by faith. Like Saul, we need peace only God can provide through Christ alone.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- ☐ "Color to Reveal" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- ☐ music

Session Starter (Option 2)

- ☐ trays, 1 per team
- ☐ plates, 1 per team
- ☐ napkins, 1 per team
- ☐ forks, 1 per team
- ☐ cups, 1 per team
- ☐ boxes, 1 per team



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set



LIVE

Journal and Prayer

- ☐ Journal Page
- ☐ "Search It" activity page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video
- ☐ Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "David Played for Saul" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- ☐ "Unit 10, Session 5" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- ☐ "New Believers Class" printable

Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "The LORD Is Over All (Psalm 103:19)" song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)
- ☐ dry erase board and marker



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “What is something kind someone did for you? How did it make you feel?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Color to Reveal” activity page.

| **SAY** “Today, we will learn how **DAVID SERVED SAUL AND PLAYED MUSIC TO COMFORT HIM.**”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: GUESS THE INSTRUMENT



Form kids into teams of three or four. Using an electronic device, search for various musical instrument sounds such as a harp, piano, xylophone, guitar, bongos, flute, etc. Write the names of the instruments on a dry erase board. Then challenge kids to listen to the music and guess which instrument is being played. Award a point to teams who guess correctly. The team with the most points wins.

SAY “We have so many musical instruments that can play a variety of sounds. Playing music can calm us, excite us, cause us to dance, bring us joy, or even be a way to play games. Today, we will see how King Saul was very troubled. David came to play the lyre, a type of string instrument, for Saul. **DAVID SERVED SAUL AND PLAYED MUSIC TO COMFORT HIM.**”

☐ OPTION 2: SET THE TRAY

Before this session, gather all the supplies, and place them in a box for each team. Form kids into teams of five and gather teams on the end of the room opposite the boxes. Tell kids that teams will send one kid at a time to their box where they will take out one item at a time to set up their team’s tray. Here is the order kids must set up each item: tray, plate, napkin, fork, cup. The team to set up their tray first wins.

SAY “Have you ever had to set the table before a meal? Setting the table for our family or friends is one way we can serve them. The Lord is pleased when we serve one another in love. Today, we will learn how David served Saul. Even though David knew he would be king one day, he served King Saul faithfully.”





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “Welcome, kids! My name is [your name], and I can’t wait to share God’s Word with you. If you have a Bible with you, will you take it out? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Throughout the Bible we see many examples of God’s people serving and caring for others. When we serve one another, we model Jesus—who came to earth to serve others and give His life for our sin.

Today, we will see how **DAVID SERVED SAUL AND PLAYED MUSIC TO COMFORT HIM**. [Display the Story Point Poster.] Let’s pray and ask God to prepare our hearts to hear from His Word: ‘Lord, thank You for sending Jesus to serve us through His life and death. Help us desire to learn from Your Word and see ways we can serve one another. In Jesus’ name, amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “Who is our King? [Allow responses.] **Jesus is our King forever, and He rules over the world.** Let’s say the answer again: **Jesus is our King forever, and He rules over the world.**

Today, we will see that even though David was the next king of Israel, he humbled himself and served Saul faithfully. Jesus, the King of kings, humbled Himself, came to earth to serve people, and died on the cross for our sins. Jesus is the King who rules this world with perfect love. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “God’s people demanded a king and chose Saul to be the first king of Israel. Saul was a mighty warrior and saved Israel from some of their enemies, but he was disobedient to God. God rejected Saul as king and chose a shepherd boy named David to be the next king. David didn’t look like a king on the outside, but his heart pleased the Lord. Today, we will see how **DAVID SERVED SAUL AND PLAYED MUSIC TO COMFORT HIM**. ”



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to 1 Samuel 16:14-23. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “David Played for Saul.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

DAVID PLAYED FOR SAUL

“**The Spirit of the Lord had left Saul, and an evil spirit began to torment him. So, Saul’s servants said to him, “You see that an evil spirit is tormenting you. Let us look for someone who knows how to play the lyre. Whenever the evil spirit comes on you, that person can play the lyre, and you will feel better.”**

Saul commanded his servants, “Find me someone who plays well and bring him to me.”

One of the young men answered, “I have seen a son of Jesse from Bethlehem who knows how to play the lyre. He is also a brave warrior, a great communicator, and handsome. The LORD is with him.”

Saul sent his servants to Jesse and said, “Send me your son David, who is with the sheep.” So, Jesse took a donkey and loaded it with bread, a wineskin, and one young goat. Then **Jesse sent David**, along with the donkey loaded with gifts, to Saul.

When David came to Saul and began to serve him, Saul loved him very much. David became his armor-bearer. Saul sent word to Jesse: “Let David remain in my service, for he has found favor with me.” Anytime the evil spirit came on Saul, David would pick up his lyre and play. Then Saul would feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him.

Christ Connection: Even though David knew he would be king one day, he served King Saul faithfully. Even though Jesus is God, He humbled Himself and took the form of a servant. He served His disciples by washing their feet, and He served His people by dying on a cross for their sin and rising again. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Play music: Play soothing or calming music quietly in the background as you tell the story.

Emphasize it: Help kids understand that God was with David as he served Saul. Remind kids that God is with believers through the Holy Spirit.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ God had rejected Saul as king and removed His Spirit from Saul. Now, Saul was bothered by an evil spirit. His servants offered to help him by finding someone to play music to comfort him. One of Saul’s servants thought of David. How did the servant describe David? Look at 1 Samuel 16:18. **[Ask a volunteer to read aloud 1 Samuel 16:18.]** Saul’s servants described David as being a skillful musician who had the Lord with him. Last week, we learned God chose David as the next king and that the Spirit of the Lord was with him. Today, we see that other people noticed God was with David. People can notice God is with us as well by the way we love Him and others. When we follow the Spirit’s leading and seek to serve one another, people can see God is with us.

Saul sent his servants to David’s father, Jesse, to ask for David to come and serve Saul. How did David respond? Look at 1 Samuel 16:21. **[Ask a volunteer to read aloud 1 Samuel 16:21.]** Even though David knew God had chosen him to be the next king of Israel, he became Saul’s servant. Saul loved David. **DAVID SERVED SAUL AND PLAYED MUSIC TO COMFORT HIM.** David didn’t think he was too important or special to serve Saul, and Saul felt better when David played for him. In the same way, we should never think we are too important to serve others. When we serve others, not only are we bringing them joy, but we are also glorifying God.

Even though David knew he would be king one day, he served King Saul faithfully. Even though Jesus is God, He humbled Himself and took the form of a servant. He served His disciples by washing their feet, and He served His people by dying on a cross for their sin and rising again. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ Jesus is the King over all kings, but He came as a servant to die on the cross and rise again. His death paid for our sin. Our service to others will not save us from our sin. We must repent of our sin and trust in Jesus to be saved. Have you trusted in King Jesus? ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 10, Session 5” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. How do we help people not feel sad?
2. How did Jesus make the way for all sadness to one day be gone forever?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display the “New Believers Class” printable. Tell kids that more than one million university students live in Bangkok, Thailand. Explain that missionaries recognize how the younger generation of Thai people, like the university students, are more interested in the good news about Jesus than their elders who are more devout in their Buddhist faith.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

SAY “One way missionaries are trying to help people know more about Jesus in Thailand is by helping Thai students on the university campuses learn English. While they learn English, missionaries also teach them about Jesus. The students in the photo are attending a new believers class at the university where they can learn more about Jesus and how to share the gospel with others. The missionaries hope to start a new church so they can continue to reach out to more university students.”

Pray for university students in Thailand to understand their need to trust Jesus as their Savior. Pray that more churches can be started in Bangkok to help more young people hear about Jesus.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Psalm 103:19 together.

SAY “As we finish our last week reviewing our key passage, let’s see how well you can remember what we’ve learned.”

Write the first letter of each word of the key passage on a dry erase board, leaving space between each letter for the word to be written. Invite kids to write in the rest of the word using the first letter as a clue.

Lead kids to sing “The LORD Is Over All (Psalm 103:19).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “Thank You, Lord, for sending Jesus as a servant to live on the earth, die on the cross, and rise again to save us from our sin. Help us serve You and serve others with our lives. Amen.”





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles, and display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 16. Point out that the Spirit of God (1 Samuel 16:14) is displayed in Scripture with a capital “S” to help us see how this word refers to God and not evil spirits or the spirit of people.

Consider comparing the Old Testament Kingdoms Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where David was from. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around modern-day Bethlehem [15]). Choose a volunteer to read aloud 1 Samuel 16:23, or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verse aloud.

SAY “ David faithfully served Saul and brought comfort to him. God desires for His children to serve others. When we serve others, we show we love the Lord and demonstrate His love to those around us.

David’s life not only reminds us to humbly serve others, but also points us to the ultimate Servant, Jesus Christ. Jesus left His throne in heaven to live as a man on earth. Throughout His earthly ministry, Jesus served people, loving them and meeting their physical and spiritual needs. Then He died on the cross, serving as the perfect sacrifice for our sin. Because Jesus humbled Himself as a Servant, we can be free from the punishment of sin and experience eternal life with Him. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ What is humility? ”

Explain that humility is thinking of others more than you think of yourself. David demonstrated humility when he served Saul. Even though David knew he would be king, he didn’t think he was too important to serve Saul. When we are humble, we model the same attitude as Jesus. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Phil. 2:3.)

SAY “ How does serving others bring glory to God? ”

Discuss how putting another’s needs before our own reveals how we love others and God because we are following His commands. Anytime we love others through service, we are performing good works which reveal a heart desiring to please the Lord and show how the Spirit is at work within us. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matt. 5:16.)

SAY “ How can you serve someone this week? ”

Answers will vary. Remind kids that when we serve others, it often opens the door to share the good news of Jesus with them. We can serve God at any age, whether we help our families with chores or be kind to a friend. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Col. 3:17.)

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: MUSICAL GUEST

Before the session, invite a musician or a member from your church's worship team to play an instrument for the kids. Allow the guest to discuss what the instrument is, how it is played, and how they learned to play it. If the guest is comfortable, invite kids to try playing the instrument as well. Discuss how playing music serves the people of your church as you worship the Lord together. Encourage kids to ask questions. Then ask the guest to play a worship song for the kids.

SAY “**DAVID SERVED SAUL AND PLAYED MUSIC TO COMFORT HIM.** As David played for Saul, he was also worshiping God through his service. Many people, like our guest, play music as a way to worship the Lord. While, we may not all play an instrument, we all have ways we can serve others and glorify God. I encourage you to think of ways you can serve others and worship God this week.”

☐ OPTION 2: THE ULTIMATE SERVANT



Play a Bible drill game while also learning about how Jesus is the ultimate Servant. Form kids into teams of three or four, and provide each team with a Bible. Tell kids that you will call out a Bible reference, and the first team to find it gets a point. Invite the team to read the Bible verses aloud. Then discuss how the verses point to Jesus as the ultimate Servant. Consider the following examples or choose your own: Isaiah 61:1-3; Matthew 12:17-21; Luke 12:24-27; Matthew 20:28; Philippians 2:5-8; John 13:12-17.

SAY “ Even though David knew he would be king one day, he served King Saul faithfully. Jesus is God, but He humbled Himself and took the form of a servant. He served His disciples by washing their feet, and He served His people by dying on a cross for their sin and rising again. God calls us to follow the example of Jesus and serve one another.”

2 JOURNAL AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Review the gospel, and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray, thanking God for sending Jesus as the ultimate Servant who died for our sins. As time allows, lead kids to complete “Search It” on the activity page.