

# YOU WILL BE KING

## MAIN POINT.

We're called to walk in the better way of Jesus.



## CHRIST CONNECTION

Even when faced with ridicule, physical harm, and death, Jesus did not retaliate. He embodied the heart of God toward all of humanity by willingly taking our place. Through Him, we can be pardoned from our sin instead of receiving the death we deserve (**Ps. 103:10**).



# CHOOSING THE BETTER WAY

This week, we're covering the passages and main points below. But we encourage you to read all of the content on the timeline as you prepare to teach.

1 Samuel 24:1—1 Samuel 24:22

## WE'RE CALLED TO WALK A BETTER WAY

### 1 SAMUEL 24:1-12

1 When Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he was told, "David is in the wilderness near En-gedi." 2 So Saul took three thousand of Israel's fit young men and went to look for David and his men in front of the Rocks of the Wild Goats. 3 When Saul came to the sheep pens along the road, a cave was there, and he went in to relieve himself. David and his men were staying in the recesses of the cave, 4 so they said to him, "Look, this is the day the LORD told you about: 'I will hand your enemy over to you so you can do to him whatever you desire.'" Then David got up and secretly cut off the corner of Saul's robe. 5 Afterward, David's conscience bothered him because he had cut off the corner of Saul's robe. 6 He said to his men, "As the LORD is my witness, I would never do such a thing to my lord, the LORD's anointed. I will never lift my hand against him, since he is the LORD's anointed." 7 With these words David persuaded his men, and he did not let them rise up against Saul. Then Saul left the cave and went on his way. 8 After that, David got up, went out of the cave, and called to Saul, "My lord the king!" When Saul looked behind him, David knelt low with his face to the ground and paid homage. 9 David said to Saul, "Why do you listen to the words of people who say, 'Look, David intends to harm you'? 10 You can see with your own eyes that the LORD handed you over to me today in the cave. Someone advised me to kill you, but I took pity on you and said: I won't lift my hand against my lord, since he is the LORD's anointed. 11 Look, my father! Look at the corner of your robe in my hand, for I cut it off, but I didn't kill you. Recognize that I've committed no crime or rebellion. I haven't sinned against you even though you are hunting me down to take my life. 12 "May the LORD judge between me and you, and may the LORD take vengeance on you for me, but my hand will never be against you."

## THE BETTER WAY FREES US

### 1 SAMUEL 24:16-22

16 When David finished saying these things to him, Saul replied, "Is that your voice, David my son?" Then Saul wept aloud 17 and said to David, "You are more righteous than I, for you have done what is good to me though I have done what is evil to you. 18 You yourself have told me today what good you did for me: when the LORD handed me over to you, you didn't kill me. 19 When a man finds his enemy, does he let him go unharmed? May the LORD repay you with good for what you've done for me today. 20 Now I know for certain you will be king, and the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hand. 21 Therefore swear to me by the LORD that you will not cut off my descendants or wipe out my name from my father's family." 22 So David swore to Saul. Then Saul went back home, and David and his men went up to the stronghold.

# BEFORE YOU TEACH

## MAIN POINT.

We're called to walk in the better way of Jesus.

Leaders: May God give you the ability to discern between following His will and your own desires (Rom. 12:2).

## BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

### WE'RE CALLED TO WALK A BETTER WAY

#### 1 SAMUEL 24:1-12

"We should not be too quick to skip over that little phrase 'got up' in verse 4. In Hebrew that word indicates that David made a clear decision. The author is not simply telling us that David had to stand up to get to Saul but that the moment had come for David to choose. So he steels himself and picks up his knife, preparing—so it seems to his comrades—to assassinate the king of Israel. Yet David realizes that even though the circumstances seemed unique, killing a defenseless man was still an act of murder. . . . Killing Saul would have solved just about every one of David's problems. And David's men were right in pointing out that God had promised him the throne. Saul deserves death for his crimes. Yet David stands firm because he sees that it is impossible to achieve the purpose of God by breaking the commands of God."<sup>4</sup>

#### 1 SAMUEL 24:4

"This act was far from meaningless because David's confiscation of a portion of the royal robe signified the transfer of power from the house of Saul to the house of David. Furthermore, by removing the corner of the robe, David made Saul's robe to be in a state of noncompliance with Torah requirements (Num. 15:38–39; Deut. 22:12); thus, Saul's most obvious symbol of kingship was made unwearable. In essence, David had symbolically invalidated Saul's claim to kingship."<sup>5</sup>

### THE BETTER WAY FREES US

#### 1 SAMUEL 24:21-22

"Saul takes the opportunity to exact from David an oath that he will not cut off Saul's descendants, though, as Saul sees it, David has already 'cut off' Jonathan from him. Saul no longer has any illusions as to the future of his house, but he will do all he can to protect the family from the slaughter that was expected on a change of dynasty."<sup>6</sup>

## CONTEXT

After David killed Goliath, he was met with praise and respect from the people. Saul took note of this, and from that point forward, he watched David with jealousy in his heart (2 Sam. 18:6-9). We have to wonder if Saul connected David to Samuel's prophecy that God had chosen a new king for Israel. Saul even tried to kill David twice, and to make matters more complicated, Saul's son, Jonathan, protected David (1 Sam. 20). To protect his own life, David had to flee. He found sanctuary in Nob, the city of priests, and as a result, Saul ordered the execution of eighty-five priests and the total destruction of the entire city and all its inhabitants (1 Sam. 22:18-19). This background only makes David's actions in today's lesson more remarkable. Saul continued to pursue David, but in return, David continually extended mercy.

## THEOLOGY CONNECTION

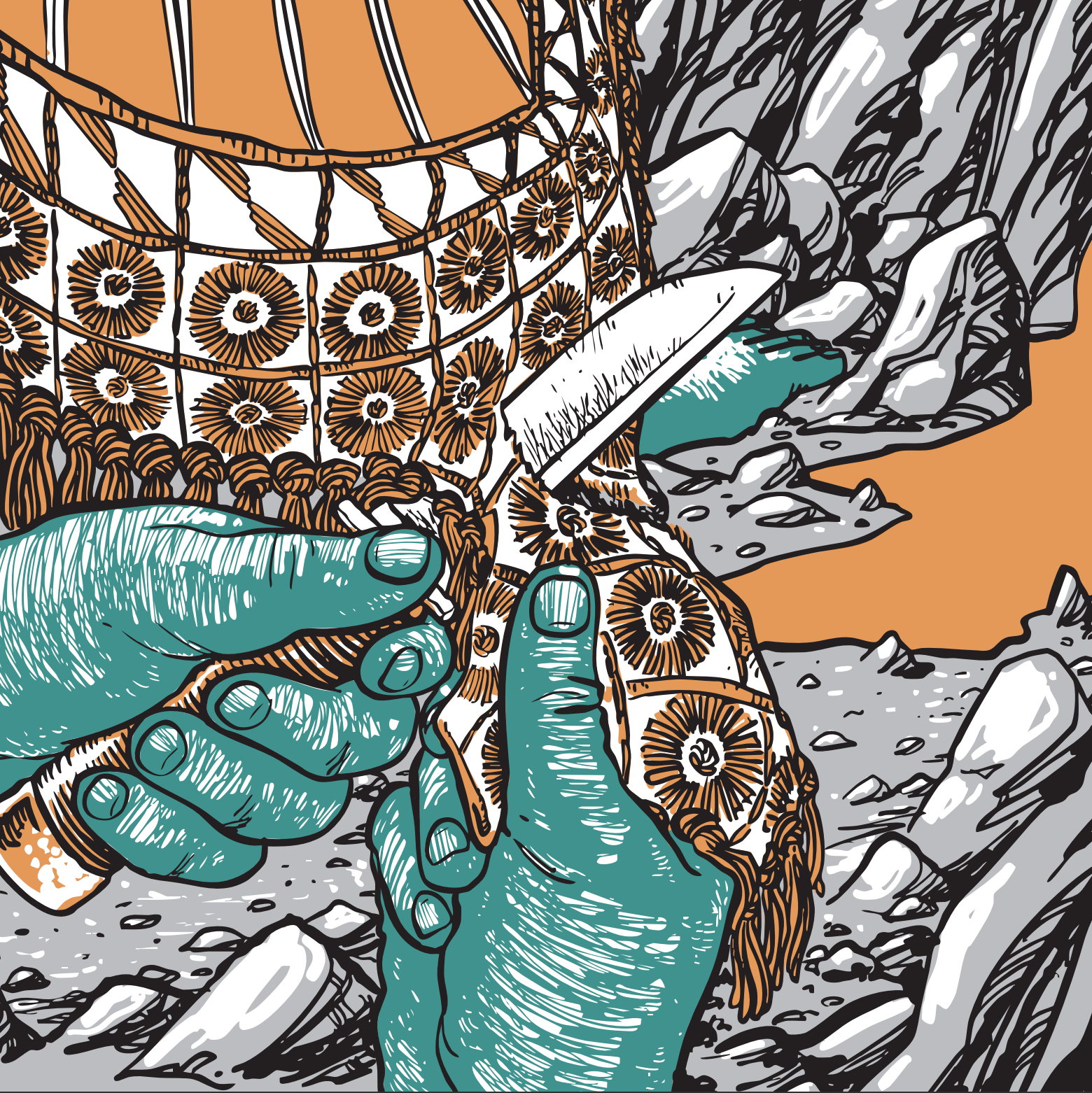
### God Is Merciful

Mercy refers to God's compassion and is often expressed in God's withholding something, such as punishment for sin (Eph. 2:4-5; Titus 3:5). Both mercy and grace are undeserved, meaning people can do nothing to earn God's mercy and grace. If we could, then mercy or grace would no longer be free gifts.

## LEADERS' PRAYER

**GOD, HELP US NOT TO FOLLOW OUR OWN DESIRES OR TO MISTAKE CIRCUMSTANCES FOR YOUR WILL. TEACH US TO SEEK YOUR WILL AT ALL TIMES AND TO MODEL THIS FOR OUR STUDENTS. HELP US TO WALK THE BETTER WAY.**





## KICK STARTER

### RATE IT!

Do you think all good opportunities are sent from the Lord (1=no, 10=of course)?





These optional activities are designed to help your students interact. You'll find a Discussion Activity and a Cultural Connection, which touches on a relevant topic in today's teen culture. Each group is different, so adapt these activities to fit your group's needs. The goal is for students to connect more to the lesson as they connect to the topic and to one another.

# 1

## GOOD OPPORTUNITIES

SUPPLIES LIST: NONE

Ask the following questions, allowing time for students to share responses:

- **WHAT'S A GOOD OPPORTUNITY THAT HAS COME YOUR WAY?**
- **ARE WE SUPPOSED TO TAKE EVERY GOOD OPPORTUNITY? WHY OR WHY NOT?**
- **CAN YOU THINK OF A TIME WHEN YOU MISSED A GOOD OPPORTUNITY? WHAT DID THAT FEEL LIKE?**

Many of us have missed a good opportunity, and it can be really disappointing. However, it can also be really difficult to discern if a good opportunity is the best choice for us, especially when the world tells us to take advantage of anything that could benefit our lives. We have help though: God's Word is living and active (Heb. 4:12), and it guides us make these tough decisions.

# 2

## CULTURAL CONNECTION

Sometimes discerning God's will can be difficult, especially when circumstances seem to work out perfectly. We often assume that God must have sent any opportunity that easily arises. But is an open door always one we should walk through? Does a great opportunity always mean God sent it? Short answer—no. Many times in Scripture, people are presented with good opportunities, but if we examine them a little more closely, we'll see threads of dishonesty, greed, or pride woven throughout. We must examine every opportunity that comes our way through the lens of God's Word. We must ask ourselves hard questions: Will doing this make me more like Jesus? Does it reflect how God wants me to live? Does it hurt someone else? Does it put me in a position to sin? God's Word is so trustworthy and reliable; it's a gift that helps us test all things. Instead of impulsively taking every opportunity, place each one next to the Word and wait for direction. Pray the words of Psalm 139:23-24, and wait for God's answer, which He'll reveal through His Word, the Holy Spirit, prayer, and other godly people. Then, walk that direction and know He's leading you in the better way.

# DISCUSSION

## MAIN POINT.

We're called to walk in the better way of Jesus.

### WE'RE CALLED TO WALK A BETTER WAY

READ 1 SAMUEL 24:1-12

#### READ 1 SAMUEL 18:5-9. WHY WAS SAUL PURSUING DAVID?

After defeating Goliath, David gained popularity and the people's respect. Saul's heart was overcome by jealousy. Could it be that he connected Samuel's prophecy to David—that God had chosen another man to be king? It's likely. Saul had to feel his power slipping from his grasp. **Rather than opening his hand and turning his heart toward the Lord in repentance, he turned toward jealousy. Jealousy, when it takes root, always leads to devastation.** Saul was blinded by his own desires, and though David had done nothing wrong, Saul was determined to stop him from becoming king.



#### WHY WOULD SOME PEOPLE SAY DAVID WOULD BE JUSTIFIED IN KILLING SAUL? WHAT WOULD THIS REVEAL ABOUT HIM?

Leaders: share context for summary of 1 Samuel 18-23. From a worldly perspective, David might be justified in killing Saul. Saul had already attempted to kill David twice; David was on the run to escape Saul. **The world might say the Lord was delivering Saul to David.** But David didn't accept this theory. **In his heart, David knew the Lord would not bless him for taking Saul's life.** Rather than giving in to his servants' advice, he stood by his convictions and displayed loyalty to God and to the king the Lord had anointed for that time.



#### WHAT ARE THE DANGERS OF LETTING CIRCUMSTANCES AND DESIRES GUIDE OUR DECISIONS? WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THIS?

Desires can lead us astray, and most of us know this. We know our desires are sometimes rooted in sin, but we can be so easily confused by our circumstances. For example, circumstances seemed to line up perfectly for David. Surely the Lord had organized this meeting so that he could take Saul's life and secure the throne. We can understand how David wrestled with the right move. It's often the same way for us. **When our circumstances just happen to line up with our desires, temptation can feel like opportunity.** Think about this: After Jesus was baptized, He fasted in the desert for forty days. When He was hungry and physically vulnerable, Satan presented Him with opportunity for bread and power (Matt. 4:1-11). The circumstances were there, and although Jesus already had all authority, surely He desired bread to meet His physical needs. But that was not the way, and He fought this attack using the Word of God. **When our desires intersect with the right circumstances, we must pause and take it back to God's Word. If our opportunity opposes what God has said, then we walk away from it. No matter what.**

## THE BETTER WAY FREES US

1 SAMUEL 24:16-22

### WHY WAS DAVID'S DECISION THE BETTER WAY? WHAT CONSEQUENCES COULD'VE COME FROM KILLING SAUL?

Nothing good would've come from David taking the men's advice to kill Saul. His ascension to the throne would've been earned through murder, which God had forbidden. This would've created more enemies and further division. God had anointed Saul as king, and taking his life would've been working against God's will. The consequences of this? David would not be blessed by the Lord. **David was blessed for choosing to trust God's will and His timing—the better way.**

### WHY IS IT SOMETIMES DIFFICULT TO CHOOSE THE BETTER WAY, LIKE DAVID?

God calls us to walk like Jesus walked and to choose the better way. If we're honest, it isn't always easy. It's isn't always fun or popular. In fact, the better way can often lead to really tough outcomes. **Deep down, we know God's way for us is best, but we struggle to walk in it because of how it may affect our lives here.** We may lose friends or popularity; we may be ridiculed; we will certainly have to walk away from sin. We fear missing out. We fear giving up control. The truth is that we don't have to fear these things. **Walking the better way is costly, but it's worth every sacrifice.**



### HOW DO DAVID'S ACTIONS REFLECT CHRIST'S MERCY AND LOVE TOWARD US?



People and events in the Old Testament often foreshadow what Jesus would later do. David is a clear example of someone who pointed to Christ. In a moment when the world would encourage David to murder Saul, David chose mercy. He chose to show Saul grace instead of seeking vengeance. Saul had previously attempted to kill David—twice! **Instead of taking advantage of this opportunity, David looked at Saul as someone loved and chosen by God. This moved him to choose mercy. God sees us the same way (John 3:16). He loved us so deeply that He sent Jesus to save us from our sin. Jesus shouldered the wrath we deserved.** David suffered as a result of choosing mercy; he waited for God to elevate him in God's timing. Jesus suffered greatly on our behalf and obeyed the Father's will. David's actions closely mirror—and point ahead to—the mercy Jesus showed us.

## WRAP-UP



### WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU FACE A GOOD OPPORTUNITY THAT OPPOSES GOD'S WORD?

Good opportunities will come our way, but we must fight the impulse to walk through every open door. **Every good opportunity isn't necessarily the best choice for us as believers.**

In fact, they can lead us into temptation and sin. For example, maybe you forget to study for a test, and at just the right time while you're taking this test, someone's notes fall on the floor in front of you. Surely this is God sending you a little help? Or maybe you're interested in someone, but you know this person doesn't have the same beliefs as you. They've expressed interest in dating, so surely God wants you to help reach them?

Both of these opportunities are rooted in desires. Is it ever godly to cheat? No, not even when the timing is just right. Is it ever wise to enter a dating relationship with an unbeliever? No, not even when you really like the person and want to justify dating by saying you'll reach them for God. **Instead, choose the more difficult way. Choose to wait for God's timing. Even when the better way is longer or more difficult, it's best.**