

It's Complicated.

A STUDY OF DAVID'S LIFE

Dear Youth Leader,

In season 2 of *It's Complicated*, we are working in step with our teaching team as we dive into our series on the second half of David's life. We will cover some of the most challenging stories in his life, covering murder, lying, rape, desire, hate, etc. Please know that statistically, you will have kids in your group and families in your church that have been affected by sexual abuse. Make sure you disclaim all difficult conversations, and be gentle and mindful as you have them. Most of these weeks can focus on the difficulty between the underlying emotions/desires in the characters, so focusing on the emotions and our own relationships (with parents, siblings, friends, etc) is a good step to applying these stories to our life without getting caught up in the awful details.

I am praying for you as you prep your time with your youth group, and can't wait to hear how it went. Please reach out if you have any questions, ideas, or stories. I'm here to support you!

Mark Ricalde

Youth Pastor, Crosswalk Redlands

SERIES OUTLINE

Week 1 | 2 Samuel 2:1-10

David The King

Week 2 | 2 Samuel 6

David The Worshipper

Week 3 | 2 Samuel 11:1-25

David The Murderer

Week 4 | 2 Samuel 12:1-13

David The Adulterer

Week 5 | 2 Samuel 13

David The Parent

Week 6 | 2 Samuel 18

David The Broken-Hearted

SUGGESTED FORMAT

Belonging | 25 - 30 min

Breakfast / Welcome

Sharing Activity

Experience | 25 - 30 min

Worship

Message / Discussion

Momentum | 5 - 10 min

Challenge / Application

Announcements / Visioning

CRSWLK

THE WALK

David The King

PREPARATION

Read 2 Samuel 2:1-10

notice main ideas, points of tension, and any connections for your youth

Listen to the Series

listen to the *Crosswalk Daily Study* podcast and the *Abide Daily* podcast and sit in the texts with our pastors

Reflect on your Experience

think of a story where you waited on God for discernment on what to do

Activity Idea

- Search BibleGateway.com for "may the lord bless." Print or write out the verses and hand them out to students. Have them pair up and bless each other. Repeat and continue.

Icebreaker Questions

- What does it feel like to bless someone? What does it feel like to receive a blessing?
- What is the modern version of blessing, and how can we bless each other more often?

Message Main Points

- v1: David has just mourned Saul and Jonathan. It is a sad moment, but now the moment is primed for him to make his move to be the king. Before, he was opposed to hurting "the Lord's anointed," but now there is no one alive whom David can feel that way about. It is time for action, but David patiently waits and asks the Lord before he makes his move.
- v4: David is anointed the king over the people of Judah, not the entire kingdom of Israel. David will have to work and convince the rest of Israel to trust him. How do you feel God answers your prayers or hopes? Sometimes it feels both late and partial, as we see in David's life.
- v5: David begins his campaign with the people of Jabesh-gilead. He comes in by noticing the good they have done. He honours and blesses them, and then asks for their loyalty. Is that a way we should approach difficult asks? Or is that manipulative? How do we balance truly honouring others while also achieving our personal goals?
- v8-10. The people do the opposite, and proclaim Ishbosheth king over Gilead. War and strife follow. Even being polite, loving, and kind doesn't mean that people will respond well.

CHALLENGE

How often do you pray to God about what you should do next?

How can we make this our daily practice?

David The Worshipper

PREPARATION

Read 2 Samuel 6

notice main ideas, points of tension, and any connections for your youth

Listen to the Series

listen to the *Crosswalk Daily Study* podcast and the *Abide Daily* podcast and sit in the texts with our pastors

Reflect on your Experience

think of a story where you felt judged after having a genuine experience

Activity Idea

- If your group would be open to this, make a fun Christian playlist and have a dance off.

Icebreaker Questions

- Is dancing in front of people fun or awkward?
- Do you think it is true that we are supposed to worship God with our whole body? Why or why not?
- Are there wrong ways to worship? Does God get upset when we worship incorrectly?

Message Main Points

- There are three main sections in this chapter (probably won't have time to do all of them). You could do an overview then focus on 1 or 2 sections.
- SECTION 1: Uzzah is struck dead. Uzzah and his family has had the Ark in his home for many years. He knows the proper way to move it (priests carry it on shoulders), but they decided to move it on a cart (way easier for the long uphill journey). What excuses allowed Uzzah to decide this? Did he feel comfortable with the Ark? How does this apply to our worship?
- SECTION 2: David leads the people in correct worship. This time, David ensures the Ark is carried, and the text seems to imply they stopped often (they stopped after 6 steps!) to sacrifice and worship. This would have taken a whole day or more.
- SECTION 3: Michal is filled with contempt. David has chosen to remove his kingly clothes, and worship with the people as a regular person. Michal is ashamed that David has chosen to "lower himself." David answers by saying he is willing to be even more foolish for the sake of God. Do we have guardrails that stop us from worshipping with everything we have?

CHALLENGE

Worship is not just something you only participate in. You can improve your heart and actions as you worship. Intentions are everything. Review your own attitudes towards worship. What can you be more intentional about?

David The Murderer

PREPARATION

Read 2 Samuel 11:1-25

notice main ideas, points of tension, and any connections for your youth

Listen to the Series

listen to the *Crosswalk Daily Study* podcast and the *Abide Daily* podcast and sit in the texts with our pastors

Reflect on your Experience

think of a story when you got caught trying to cover

Activity Idea

- Have everyone write down something bad they have done and are not proud of to be read in front of everyone (ask them to use wisdom). Put them all in a bowl, and read them out loud, having the group guess who did what. Do it in a light spirit, hopefully concluding with the idea that this is something we all have done, and an area God wants us to make sure we deal with correctly.

Message Main Points

- This week is the first of two weeks in this story. Today, we focus on the murder of Uriah; next week, we focus on the Adultery with Bathsheba.
- We see Uriah being used as a foil to David. David skips wars with the army, while Uriah cannot imagine being comfortable at home while his men are at war. David gets lazy, avoids doing the important little things, and gets trapped by the compounding consequences.
- What is the lesson for us? Can we get ourselves into bad situations by lacking integrity in the smaller, important choices in life?
- v14-25. David has to set up a plan to have Uriah killed to cover up his sin. It involves bringing others into his plan (Joab) to kill someone. Often when we know we have done something wrong, our instinct is to cover up what we have done.
- How can we make sure that we take ownership for what we have done, face the consequences, and try to make things right? What can you do to avoid hiding your mistakes?

CHALLENGE

What do you think about Joab? He never questions David, and instead blindly follows the orders that lead to Uriah's death. What can we learn from this to avoid enabling our friends when they have made bad choices?

David The Adulterer

PREPARATION

Read 2 Samuel 12:1-13

notice main ideas, points of tension, and any connections for your youth

Listen to the Series

listen to the *Crosswalk Daily Study* podcast and the *Abide Daily* podcast and sit in the texts with our pastors

Reflect on your Experience

think of a story where someone called you out on your wrongdoings

Activity Idea

- find a game online where you have to guess logos, teams, etc. Play the game on a tv or projector, having the kids yell out what each logo represents (YouTube has a ton)

Icebreaker Questions

- Our text today uses a parable/symbol to represent the truth in David's life.
- Sometimes happenings in our life can be signs that we need to rethink and repent. Do you agree with that statement?

Message Main Points

- v1-4: Nathan is sent by God to talk to David. The approach is meant to be a parable that will evoke David's emotions. This is a tactful play, the goal is for David to discover his errors and call out himself. How should we take that approach when people around us do things wrong?
- v5-6: It's easy to give grace to ourselves, but have no grace for others. Is this true about you? How can you remember that fact when you start judging others?
- v7-10: David might never have repented if God did not send Nathan. It reminds us of an important truth: God makes the first move, and we have a choice to respond. When teachers, parents, or friends call you out, could it be that God is working to bring a light to the dark parts of your life? Is being exposed a form of grace?
- Share a story where this has happened to you. It sets an example that dealing with sins is part of the Christian walk, and that being called into the light often takes a community.
- Sin is something that is difficult to deal with alone. We are not good at looking at the mirror, so we often need someone else to help us.

VERSE FOR THOUGHT

"The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it." - John 1:4-5

David The Parent

PREPARATION

Read 2 Samuel 13

notice main ideas, points of tension, and any connections for your youth

Listen to the Series

listen to the *Crosswalk Daily Study* podcast and the *Abide Daily* podcast and sit in the texts with our pastors

Reflect on your Experience

think of a time when you saw something bad and took no action

Disclaimer/Topic Advice

- If you teach a younger group, it might be better to focus on the desires of love and hate, of instant gratification and learning good advice. The feelings that are displayed by the characters are things we can still focus on without dwelling on details.
- If you teach an older group, it might be educational to go over statistics on abuse in your area, and talk about how to navigate these topics with friends.

Message Main Points

- v3-5: Jonadab represents all those who live for creating drama, giving bad advice, and caring for friends and not others. They operate out of chaos, not morals and love. These are the kids of people that we must be careful around. For Amnon, Jonadab is a cousin, so he will always be around. When we have classmates and friends who are bad news, it doesn't mean we have to cut them out, but it also doesn't mean we should listen to their advice.
- v6-7: David says yes to Amnon's request. I can't help but think that David had a feeling that Amnon was up to no good (it is such an odd request), but he doesn't ask any questions or put any safeguards. I think it is our duty to ask good questions all the time, always thinking about what is best for those around us.
- v15: "Love turned to hate." Taking things that God has made for good out of selfish power often leads to pain and suffering. To live well means to lean into good things the right way.
- v20-22: The inaction of Absalom and David is shocking. Absalom convinces her to stay silent, and David is angry but has no real response. What would we do in this situation? Are we prone to see broken things and not say anything, or are we prone to take action? I think what is hard for both David and Absalom is that they are all royalty and there is no good response. They are frozen and instead choose no response, which might be worse!
- v23-39: David mourns his broken family, but much of the problems stems from his inaction and lack of leadership. What would it take for David (and us) to take responsibility for our actions?

David The Broken-Hearted

PREPARATION

Read 2 Samuel 18

notice main ideas, points of tension, and any connections for your youth

Listen to the Series

listen to the *Crosswalk Daily Study* podcast and the *Abide Daily* podcast and sit in the texts with our pastors

Reflect on your Experience

think of the character you resonate with the most. why is that so?

Activity Idea

- Journal and Listen to the Story
 - (use NLT, The Message, NIV, a dramatised version, or something easier to listen to)
- Play the chapter and give each kid a pen and paper. Have them write any thoughts or emotions they have as they listen.
- Give 5 minutes to reflect and write down main questions and what they each think is the main point.
- Debrief it all together.

Message Main Points

- The activity idea should take most of the time today.
- If you have time, or choose not to do the activity, it may be a good time to practice character study as Bible study. Break the youth into groups and give them each a name:
 - David, Joab, Absalom, Ahimaaz, the Ethiopian
- Ask the group to read the chapter and put themselves in their character's shoes.
- Give the following questions:
 - What is their motivation? Did they make good decisions? What emotions are they facing? Can we apply something from their story to our story?
- KEY FOIL: Joab takes no time to mourn; in fact, he holds an unceremonious burial for the prince. David on the other hand mourns Absalom in spite of his rebellion. It is always better to mourn our enemies, not hate them. Relationships in our life are always tricky, but what we learn from this story is that it is always better to respond with love, not hate.

CHALLENGE

Our series concludes with a tragic end between a father and a son, a king and a prince. Often, family is the most difficult relationship to manage. How can you better handle conflict in your own home?

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A STUDY OF DAVID'S LIFE

A Final Note,

Life gets crazy. Sometimes we walk into a room knowing we haven't prepped enough. A high-schooler might walk in with the weight of a hard week on their minds, and the last place they want to be is youth group. The teenage community you are leading will have cliques, crazy couples, and apathetic kids. All this to say that teaching in this scenario will rarely feel like you did a great job. Don't worry, you don't need to. **Jesus shows up.**

If every week you:

eat together,

pray together,

worship together,

and study the word together,

then you have faithfully structured the youth time for God to work.

Thank you for your effort and compassionate heart.

I'm a leader in the church because of influencers like you!

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CRSWLK
THE WALK