

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.



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

- ☐ "Be A Servant" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- ☐ "Lyre Template" printable, 1 per kid
- ☐ craft sticks, 2 per kid
- ☐ rubber bands, 5 per kid

Session Starter (Option 2)

- ☐ music



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- ☐ music
- ☐ display various instruments (optional)

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- ☐ dry erase board
- ☐ dry erase marker

Reflection and Prayer

- ☐ Bible story coloring 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)
- ☐ cardstock, 1 piece per kid



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 your favorite song? Why do you like it so much?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Be A Servant” activity page.

| **SAY** “Today, we will see how David showed kindness to King Saul by serving him.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: MAKE A LYRE

Provide each kid with a “Lyre Template” printable. Be sure to print the “lyres” on heavy duty cardstock. Then distribute two craft sticks, five rubber bands, and glue to each kid. Guide kids to loop one end of the rubber bands on a craft stick. Direct kids to glue the craft stick to the bottom portion of the lyre. Pull the rubber bands taut and loop the other end around the second craft stick. Glue the craft stick to the top of lyre, allowing the rubber bands to serve as the lyre’s “strings.” Once the glue has dried, invite kids to “play” their lyres.

| **SAY** “Today, we will learn how **DAVID SERVED SAUL AND PLAYED MUSIC TO COMFORT HIM**. The instrument David played for Saul was called the lyre, and it looked similar to the one you created. The musician, like David, would pluck the strings of the lyre to make music.”

☐ OPTION 2: MUSICAL STATUES



Invite kids to spread out around the room. Begin playing music. When the music begins, invite kids to dance, walk, or act silly. Challenge kids to freeze like a statue and make a sad face when the music stops. Kids who do not freeze and make a sad face are out for the next round. Repeat as time allows.

| **SAY** “Music can be such fun! When we hear music, we may want to dance, sing, or enjoy its beautiful song. Sometimes when we are sad or discouraged, music can help us feel better. Today, we will learn how King Saul became very upset by an evil spirit. But when David played music for Saul, he would feel much better. Let’s learn how David served Saul.”





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 “Hi, kids! My name is [your name], and today we get to learn more from God’s Word. If you have a Bible with you, will you take it out? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] The Bible teaches us about how kind God is and how He wants to serve us. The greatest way God has served us is by sending His Son, Jesus, to die for our sins. God wants us to be like Him and serve others too.

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 “Today is our last time reviewing our big picture question. **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.**

Jesus is not like many kings of this earth. Many kings only look out for themselves and use their position for their own gain. Jesus is the King who became a Servant. He came from His throne in heaven to serve others. Today, we will see how David was a bit like King Jesus. Even though David was chosen by God to be the next king, he chose to serve King Saul. Like Jesus, he didn’t think he was too important to show kindness and help others. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

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

SAY “Who did the people of Israel choose as their first king? [Allow responses.] God’s people chose Saul to be the first king of Israel. Saul saved Israel from some of their enemies, but he was disobedient to God. God rejected Saul as king. Who did God choose to be the next king of Israel? [Allow responses.] God chose David to be the next king. David may not have looked 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

Strum it: If kids made the lyre during the session starter, invite them to strum it while you share how David played music for Saul. Or invite kids to pretend to strum the lyre.

Play music: Play harp or lyre music quietly in the background as you tell the story.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “Saul was upset because an evil spirit bothered him. Saul had disobeyed God, and the Spirit of the Lord was no longer with him. What did Saul ask his servants to do? [Allow responses.] Saul told his servants to find someone who could play music. Saul’s servants remembered that David could play the lyre. So, Saul sent for David.

Last week, we learned that God chose David to be the next king over Israel. But **DAVID SERVED SAUL AND PLAYED MUSIC TO COMFORT HIM**. David didn’t think he was too important or special to serve Saul. How did Saul feel toward David? [Allow responses.] Saul loved David and made David his armor bearer. Saul appreciated the kindness David showed him. David knew he would be king one day, but 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. We can serve others, remembering how much Jesus has served us.”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “Jesus loved people and put them first. When Jesus died on the cross, He served people by making the way for them to be saved from their sin. Jesus showed us the greatest love by laying down His life for us (John 15:13). Have you trusted in Jesus to take away your sins?”

(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 over 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.

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



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

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, remember that Jesus is the one true King who laid down His life to save us and invite us into His kingdom.”

Distribute one piece of cardstock to each kid. Challenge kids to use markers, crayons, and colored pencils to draw pictures that help them remember the meaning of the key passage like a crown or a throne.

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 “Dear God, You are kind and generous. Thank You for sending Jesus to serve us by His life, death, and resurrection. Help us serve others and make the name of Jesus great. Amen.”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





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. Tell kids that after David was anointed as king, he returned home to Bethlehem where he shepherded his father's sheep.

Consider pointing out the location of Bethlehem (I5) on the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud 1 Samuel 16:23 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verse aloud.

SAY “Saul felt better when David would play the lyre. It would have been easy for David to think that since he would be the next king, he didn’t need to serve Saul. But David was humble. He still served Saul and honored God.

David reminds us of Jesus, who showed the greatest service when He died on the cross. The Bible tells us that because believers know the love of Jesus, we should lay down our lives for others (1 John 3:16). This means we serve other people like Jesus served us.”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “What make you feel better when you are sad or upset? Does someone serve you? Who?”

Answers will vary. Discuss how God places people in our lives that He uses to show us love and help us when we are upset. Share how we can also find comfort through the Holy Spirit who prays for believers and encourages them to keep trusting God.

SAY “Does it please God when we serve other people? Why?”

Explain how God is pleased when we serve other people in love because we are modeling the same attitude as Jesus, who did not come to be served but instead gave His life to save people from sin. Encourage kids to remember that serving others is ultimately about glorifying God.

SAY “Who have you served? Who can you serve?”

Answers will vary. Encourage kids to think about how they can “lay down” their lives by putting others’ needs ahead of their own. Tell kids that God provided us with many opportunities to help others. A great place to start is by serving in your home. Ask the adults in your home if there is a way you can help serve them or serve your family. You can also be involved in service at church. Ask your parents, leaders, or other adults for places you can serve. Wherever and however you serve, do it well, out of your love for God and for His glory.

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





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC



Provide kids with paper and markers. Play some worship music and invite kids to draw pictures about today's Bible story as they listen to the music. While kids draw, discuss how music is one way we can worship God. Tell kids that some people in the church are gifted at playing a musical instrument or singing. Explain how they lead people in worship of God through their talents. Tell kids that David wrote many songs of worship to God in the book of Psalms. Consider reading one of David's psalms of praise as kids draw such as Psalm 8, Psalm 24, or Psalm 145. You may also consider displaying different types of instruments or pictures of instruments.

SAY “ God created us to praise Him and worship Him. One way we can do this is through music and singing. **DAVID SERVED SAUL AND PLAYED MUSIC TO COMFORT HIM.** As David served Saul, he also worshiped God. When we serve others, whether through song or some other way, we also worship God. Serving others shows that we love God and people. ”

☐ OPTION 2: BIBLE TIC-TAC-TOE

On a dry erase board, create a large tic-tac-toe board and write the following Bible references on the squares: 1 Peter 4:10; Acts 20:35; Mark 9:35; Mark 10:44-45; Romans 12:13; John 15:13; 1 John 3:17-18; Galatians 6:10; Luke 6:35. Form kids into two teams and give each team a Bible. Assign one to team to be Xs and the other team to be Os. Tell kids that they will race to be the first team to get three in a row by finding the Bible references on the board. Explain that once they find the passage, the team will raise their hands. Assist the team with reading the passage. Write an X or an O on the board once the passage has been read. Continue playing until one team is the first to get three in a row.

SAY “ Each passage we read aloud reminds us how God commands His people to serve others. Jesus modeled how we should serve and then commanded His followers to go and do as He did. When we serve others we bring glory to God and point them to the example of Jesus. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.