
Growth Group Notes: David 4– a difficult place

Warm Up...

How do you naturally respond to difficult situations?

With other people? with work? with everyday life (eating, sleeping, socialising etc)

And with God?



Background

David was anointed by Samuel as the next king back in chapter 15, and since then God has used him to defeat the Philistine champion Goliath, develop a deep friendship with Jonathan (Saul's son) and serve king Saul, both as a harp player and military leader. However, Saul's jealousy has resulted in David being forced to be on the run, under threat of death. This week we look at the long period of time – approximately 8 years – that David had to live on the run, as told in 1 Samuel chapters 21-31.

(do encourage people to read as much of ch21-31 as they can either beforehand or after the session)

Read 1 Samuel ch 22v1-2,

Where is David forced to live?

Who joins him there?

Why might we be surprised to learn who David is spending time with?

Read 1 Samuel ch 23:14-29

How does the author of 1 Samuel make clear who is in charge of David's situation, v15?

Who comes to see him and why might his words have been encouraging? v16-17

How is David saved this time?

How might you have felt in David's shoes?

Read Psalm 57

This psalm appears to have been written whilst David was hiding in the cave of Adullam (ch 22v1-2)

In v1 what image does David use to describe his experience of God's protection?

What does this image evoke for you?

How does David approach God in v2?

What does this psalm reveal of David's understanding of the God to whom he is speaking? V1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 11

David does not ask the question "Why has this happened?", but "How should I respond?" He is more concerned to live rightly in the midst of the trial than to try and wonder on why it has come.

Reflecting on our response to trouble

How does your natural response to difficulties compare with David's approach?

How easy do you find it to cry out to God when you are in distress?

How might a better understanding of who God is help us when we face difficulties?

How does God respond to David's cry? v3, v6

Reflecting on God's response to trouble

Can you recall any times when you have seen God intervene in a difficult situation? Why not share these together?

How would you describe where David "ends up" in his heart and mind v7-11?

Reflecting on our response to trouble

How much of our attitude towards God do you think is based on our circumstances, rather than on who God is?

How easy do you find it to praise God when things are tough?

What has been your experience (if any) of what happens when you do praise God in difficult times?

How might we be able to encourage and strengthen one another's faith in troubled times?

With the benefit of hindsight, what benefits might this time on the run have brought to David in the long-term.

How is the life and songs (psalms) of David an encouragement to us in our journeys?

Pray together

Spend some time thanking God for his presence with us in and through every trouble and praising him for His greater purposes.

Do spend some time bringing specific issues that the group is facing to God.

Our need for God's presence and care in our lives is a daily reality. However, when life is good we may be less conscious of our need. As C. S. Lewis wrote in *A Grief Observed*, sometimes "life is so good," we may be "tempted to forget our need of Him." But there are times in our lives when we are acutely aware of our need of God. In times of distress, when we are threatened with loss or harm or even with death, we remember our need for God and we turn to him with great urgency and He is there to uphold us and support us through those times.

¹⁶ Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Hebrews 4