



STUDY GUIDE

GOD IS FOR ME: Week 1 9.15.13

[set up]

When have you felt overlooked or looked down upon by someone else because of your image or an impression they had of you (maybe a relationship, job, opportunity, etc)?

When have you learned a lesson about not looking down upon someone else or underestimating them based on their image or your impression of them?

Why is it so easy for us to get trapped in making judgment calls on other people based on image rather than a person's heart or character?

[digging deeper]

We kicked off our series in the Life of David this last weekend. Take a moment to write down what immediately comes to mind when you think of David. If you are in a LifeGroup take some time to share these answers.

When we think about David, it will help to understand more about the context that surrounds his appearance on the pages of the Bible. Read through some of the historical biblical snapshots to have a better understanding of the events that initiated David's eventual leadership as King of Israel. After each passage selection, share key understandings of what information the verses provide:

1 Samuel 3:19, 20

1 Sam 7:15-17

1 Sam. 8:1-7

1 Sam. 9:1, 2; 15-17; 9:27-10:1

1 Sam. 10:17-24

1 Sam. 13:5-14

1 Sam. 15:24-28

1 Sam. 16:1-13

Acts 13:16-22

What stands out as some similarities and differences between the selection and anointing of Saul and the selection and anointing of David?

What did the Lord caution Samuel about in 1 Sam. 16:7?

Why do you think that after God shares what He does in verse 7, that we then still get a physical description of David, and of what value is that information?

If you know anything about family dynamics, especially with lots of siblings, what do you think was going through the mind of David's father and brothers during his anointing by the mighty prophet Samuel?

In several of the verses above, David is referred to as a "man after God's own heart". What does that mean? If you know anything about David, he was far from perfect, so how do we reconcile a person being after God's heart yet capable of grievous sin?



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The title of this series in David's life is "God is for me". What is the best understanding of this phrase? Does it mean that God exists to make our desires and wants become reality? Does it mean that God will not allow negative experiences in our lives?

"God is for me", is a direct quote of David in Psalm 56:9. In Psalm 56, David is lamenting his pain and capture by the Philistines. It's a Psalm of grief, but then turns into a Psalm of praise and trust in God. David does the same thing in Psalm 118:5-7.

Clearly God was for David and with David, from the beginning and through all his ups and downs. Can we say with the same confidence that "God is for me?" Can we look into our hearts and into our lives and confidently see that God is rooting for us, leading us, using us, destining us for a purpose no matter what we experience in this life? How is Romans 8:28-31 like our personal Psalm 56:9 cry?

We see that God has selected David as king and rejected others. God was handpicking someone for His purposes. Does that mean God was only for David and not for the others? We don't know what purposes God had picked for the others, and how He may have been "for them" in those purposes. How does this thinking connect us as individuals and as a community of Christ followers in light of Ephesians 2:10?

[living it out]

Realizing that God looks at the heart and knows our heart (Ps. 139:1-4), what do you think he sees in your heart right now? What words come to mind?

In light of God looking into our heart, and people looking at our image, what do you need to do differently in your life when it comes to image management verses heart management?

What can you adjust in your life when it comes to deflecting and forgiving those who have and will overlook you based on appearance or image?

What can you adjust in your life to not fall into the trap of making a judgment call on others based merely on appearance or image?

When you survey your life, where do you see that God is for you?

Think about someone in your community - a special needs child, an elderly person, a family in need - who has probably been ignored, overlooked or even ridiculed by others. How can you and your LifeGroup look not at their outward appearance but at their heart and serve that person this week?"

Close this time in prayer. Open up to Psalm 139. And pray back to the Lord some of the very words of David in Psalm 139:1-4; 23-24. Asking God to search your heart, and reveal to you the things in your heart that please Him, and the things in your heart that displease Him. Ask for help in purging the wrong out of your heart so that it can be said of you that (your name) is a person after God's heart. During this time in prayer, ask for help to forgive anyone who has made you feel overlooked based on appearance. Also ask for help to not do that to others, but to be able to get a sense of their heart and character over their image.