

- One of God's gracious acts is not showing us our f_____.

Recap of 1 Samuel 17:

- David, a young man in his 20's, moves from shepherd to giant killer.
- Saul keep his conditions for the giant killer and welcomes David into his courts.
- David ascends to great popularity in the eyes of the people of Israel
- You would think he then ascends straight to the promised throne as King....yet, David actually moves into the deepest, longest, and darkest v_____ of his entire life instead!

Summary of 1 Samuel 18:

- David will become the greatest king in Israel, but first the Lord had to break him, shape him, and crush him through the "*crucible of pain*" with a future he had no expectation for
- David moves from the "pinnacle of popularity" to the "lowest depression of despair."

Four Relationships in David's Valley Up Ahead:

1. **S_____ to Saul (v.2-5)**
 - David submitted to authority, and God lifted him up above his peers.
2. **F_____ with Jonathan (v.1; vv.2-4)**
 - David and Jonathan had never met prior to this point but instantly there is a kindred spirit between them.
 - God knows David will need a close friend to walk through the valley with.
 - In this friendship, we see the elements of true friendship: willingness to sacrifice(v.4), loyal defense before others(v.4), freedom to completely be yourself(20:41), constant source of encouragement(23: 15-16)
3. **Elevation with the People of Israel (v.5-7)**
 - David has never served in the army, but now commands Israel's army.
4. **O_____ with Saul (vv.8-9)**
 - David lives with pure motives, right actions, and right leadership but...Saul's jealousy gets in the way!

"Saul became angry"(*charah*): "to burn within"; a slow burn of anger inwardly

"For this displeased him": "inner turmoil"; stomach turned within Saul

Fear + Worry= Paranoia

"Looked at David w/suspicion from that day on"\

Summary (v.15): *“When Saul saw how successful David was, he was afraid of him.”*
Saul’s focus moves off of making Israel bigger and better to now making David’s life miserable...David becomes the o_____ of Saul’s jealousy.
In the hard, long season, David walks by faith trusting the Lord and doing what’s right and pleases Him.

“Prospered” (Hebrew- sakol)

- F_____ times in this chapter we are told “David prospered” and “behaved wisely”
1. **Proverbs 10:19**> A prosperous person is wise and knows when to keep their m_____ shut.
 - Can keep confidence in what the fragile things others share
 - Can be trusted with the details of life
 - And yet, when a wise person does open their mouth, they do so with discretion.
 2. **Proverbs 21: 11**> **A prosperous person keeps a t_____ spirit.**
 - No matter the promotion or elevation, we must never lose our teachability.
 - Never above criticism
 - Never a time I no longer need the input of others
 - Best lesson in life are often learned from enemies.

TWO APPLICATIONS

1. Not knowing the future requires us to live by faith one day at a time.
2. Prospering through tough valleys of life often requires a disciplined mouth and a humble heart.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why do you think many Christians struggle to keep a TEACHABLE SPIRIT? What are some negative consequences of not having a teachable spirit as we grow in Christ?
2. Share about a valley season in your life where you leaned heavily upon a close Christian FRIENDSHIP. Share how the Lord used that friendship to help you keep faith through the valley.
3. Of the four elements of Relationship #2 we looked at, which of the four is hardest for you personally to live out in your own friendships with others? Why do you think that is?
4. Saul’s jealousy began consuming his life. Share an example from culture today where we see jealousy leading to personal attack, hurt, or offense in the lives of another.