

Breathe

Module: PEOPLE WHO BREATHED

Lesson 1: DAVID

Objectives:

- Students will learn that a strong relationship with God helps us do the right thing, even when that doesn't make sense to outsiders.
- Students will identify Psalm 54 as a reflection from David's experience as recorded in 1 Samuel 26.
- Students will connect their relationship with God to the challenges they face.

Materials Needed

- ☐ 3-5 (or more if you have a very large group) different images for visual synaptics (e.g. full page magazine ads, old wall calendar pages, or images from the internet). Note: If you enjoy using this type of activity with your group, it would be worth laminating the images for future use in another context.
- ☐ Paper and pens
- ☐ Index cards
- ☐ Chart paper and markers
- ☐ Large paper with the following questions already written out:
 - Do you see any hint of revenge in the psalm?
 - Do you think David wrote this psalm before or after he spared Saul's life? What clues do you have?
 - What does this psalm tell you about David's relationship with God?

Minds On

Prompt: Have you ever been in a situation where somebody hated you for no good reason? Allow students to share what happened and how they felt.

Divide your students into groups of 3-6 (depending on overall group size), and give each group one of the images to look at. Have each person complete the following sentences within their group:

“Revenge is like this picture because _____”

“Revenge is not like this picture because _____”

When you gather everyone back together, each group can choose their favourite analogies and share with the bigger group.

Prompt: Over the next few weeks, we are going to be looking at different people from the Bible who had relationship with God, and tried to live them out each day. This week we are going to be looking at David and his interaction with a man named Saul. King Saul hated David because he knew God wanted him to be the next king of Israel and he was jealous that he could not have a dynasty. King Saul had disobeyed God and that is why he was losing the kingdom. Instead of facing the consequences, he tried to kill David! David was on the run from Saul, but God turned the tables and gave David an opportunity to kill Saul himself!

Action

Provide students with a pen and paper. Ask students, as you slowly read 1 Samuel 26, to write down words or draw images of the emotions they are sensing. Afterwards, ask them the following questions and see if any of their words/images might give some indication.

- Why was King Saul coming after David? (Since this is not clear in the text, explain that Saul felt threatened by David because he knew God had chosen him to be the next king of Israel.)

- If the situations were reversed, do you think Saul would have spared David's life?
- Why did David spare Saul's life?
- How did Saul feel when he learned David spared his life?
- What do you think might have happened if David had killed Saul? Did David make the right decision?

Tell your students that David wrote a psalm (similar to a song or a poem) about this experience. First, ask students to suggest what they think David wrote. Record these answers on chart paper. Then have a volunteer (who you know can read well publicly) read Psalm 54.

Think/Pair/Share: Have your students think about what David wrote compared to what was earlier suggested. Then have them pair with a partner to share their thoughts. Post the large paper with questions as possible discussion starters. Students should be prepared to share their partner's answers.

Consolidate/Debrief

Distribute paper and pens to your students and invite them to think of a difficult time in their life and write a psalm like David did. They can try to follow the same pattern as Psalm 54 or make up their own format. The important part is to communicate how their relationship with God is affected by the difficult situation - does their trust in God get stronger or weaker as they face problems?

Depending on your group, some students may wish to share their psalm, or they might prefer to keep their writing private. Use your judgment as you wrap up this activity.

Prompt: David's relationship with God gave him the strength to do the right thing and leave revenge in God's hands. To the people around him it looked like he was passing up

a God-given chance to get even, but David was willing to trust God even when his own life was at stake.

Breathe In: Have each student write Psalm 54:4 on an index card. Encourage them to put this card in their purse or wallet, or tape it to a mirror at home where they will be reminded of this promise.

Breathe Out: On the other side of the index card, have students write a name or situation that they need to trust God with and not intervene with their own actions. Encourage your students to memorize Psalm 54:4 so they can say it as a prayer when faced with these difficult situations.

Close in prayer thanking God for his help and protection in our daily lives and asking him to reveal himself in the difficult situations that students wrote on their index cards.