



GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

November 2022

Season 1, Episode 4 (Part 2)

Instructions: Our faith was meant to be learned through *conversation* in the Word of God. This discussion guide is intended to function exactly as it is titled, as a *guide* to help your discussions as you watch The Bible, read the Bible, and work through these questions one by one. Please also feel free to allow the conversation to go where the Lord leads, remembering to focus your conversations about the movie on and in *His Word*.

NEW! **Format!** In response to some feedback I have received and thought was insightful, and in order to help your small group meetings focus more on talking about the text and bringing it into your lives of faith in Jesus, I have changed the format for this study a little bit.

No Facilitator Guide: Instead of providing a facilitator guide, I have provided the study questions on the initial pages and the corresponding answers following. This will allow you to either complete the study individually prior to your group meetings and allow your discussion to be more about what you learned or questions you still have, or, read the answers and be able to look at them together as a group.

My Suggestion: Though you can use this any way you like, I might suggest not looking at the answers beforehand, but working through the questions ahead of time, sharing your answers, then looking at the answers I have provided together. But, again, there is no prescription!

May our Lord Jesus bless your fellowship together!

Pastor Jay

P.S. - I always appreciate your feedback as I write these curriculums. I am not writing them for me but for you! God bless all of you in your faith and fellowship with one another.

Introduction: This month we study the anointing of Saul as Israel's first king and all that led up to it. Next month, we will study what led to Saul's downfall and the rise and life of Israel's most famous king, David.

A Friendly Reminder...

The Bible movie... is a movie! Not the Bible. It is a tool to help visualize what you are reading, spark discussion, and sharpen your study skills.

- Yes, there are large parts of the written Bible that are not in the movie... use this as an opportunity to talk about those parts, read them, and study further.
- Yes, there are parts of the movie that don't exactly line up with the Bible... talk about those parts and let the discrepancies in the movie sharpen your knowledge of the Bible!
- No, you do not have to use the actual *The Bible* movie. You can just use this study stand alone with the Biblical text... or, just read your Bible together and discuss!

WATCH:

The Bible, Episode 3, from **39:00 – to the end.**

Then watch Episode 4, from **0:00 - 07:00.**

****This will remain the clip for November and December 2022. There is a lot to cover in the Bible regarding Saul and David!****

Take a few minutes to discuss what you just watched.

Israel's First King: Saul

As we learned in our last study, Israel had rejected God as their king (1 Samuel 8:7) out of their sinful desire for the glory of men. Despite God giving them an explicit and detailed warning (through the mouth of His prophet Samuel) about the suffering that a king of their own making would bring, the Israelites insisted on their own desires. God now grants their request.

Read 1 Samuel 8:19-9:2, & 9:17.

1. How did God give the Israelites exactly what they asked for?

2. The Israelites were foolishly more concerned about the appearance of power and glory rather than the invisible God who alone holds all authority, wisdom, and might, and who had perfectly delivered and preserved them thus far. When it comes to our life as Christians in the Church, how are we tempted to make the same mistake as the Israelites did?

3. In 1 Sam 9:20-21, Samuel and Saul have an exchange, “And for whom is all that is desirable in Israel? Is it not for you and for all your father’s house?” Saul answered, “Am I not a Benjaminite, from the least of the tribes of Israel? And is not my clan the humblest of all the clans of the tribe of Benjamin? Why then have you spoken to me in this way?” What does Saul’s response to what Samuel told him suggest about his character and personality?

8. God bringing reluctant and sinful people to faith and strengthening them in His grace is not a new thing. Who else has fit this description thus far?

Read 1 Samuel 12:14-25

9. Though God gave the Israelites the king they wanted, how do we see in Samuel's farewell address that God remained King of all kings?
10. How do God's words given through Samuel apply to us today and our relationships such as husband and wife, pastor and parish, president and people?
11. How do Samuel's words in 1 Samuel 12:20-24 apply to us in an even more significant way today?

ANSWERS

1. They wanted a king “like other nations.” The Israelites were seeking the appearance of glory and power. So, God gave them Saul who was the most handsome and tallest in all Israel.
2. We are no less tempted to judge people, churches, and our fellow Christians by their appearance and our own subjective ideas of what faithfulness looks like, rather than by God’s Word alone. Think about how easily distracted from the Word we are if the person in front of us is worshiping in a way different than how we worship. If the particular song or hymn isn’t our favorite, or if someone is dressed differently or in a way we think is inappropriate. Our concern over appearances too easily takes our focus off the Word of God being proclaimed. The appearance of power and glory in other men/nations pulled the Israelites eyes and hearts away from God. We must guard against this ourselves.
3. Though tall and handsome, Saul appears to be a modest and unassuming man. One might even say humble.
4. When Saul was seen and heard prophesying with the prophets, those who knew him well were shocked. In fact, they were so surprised to see Saul involved in spiritual things that there was a colloquial proverb created because of it. Clearly, Saul was not known for his spirituality or concern with spiritual things. But God gave him a new heart (v. 9). We also see more of Saul’s personality coming through when his uncle inquired about Saul’s unexpected behavior. Saul chose not to reveal his kingship. Was Saul nervous? Humble? Shy? Not quite sure anyone would believe him based on their reaction to his prophesying? Regardless of which of these might be true, it is clear that Saul had reservations about his aptitude for kingship.
5. Saul’s kingship is the Lord’s divine work. Saul will be king only because God says so. Saul will be king over God’s people. It is God anointing him, through Samuel.

6. The Lord knows that Saul questions what God has called him to, just as Moses and Abraham did, so the Lord provides three evidences that only He could provide to assure Saul of his call: the two men with the message of the donkeys, the gift of bread from three men preparing a sacrifice to God, and the prophesying with the prophets. That this is all the Lord's work is also evidenced by the Spirit of the Lord rushing upon Saul to prophesy (v. 6) and the new heart given to Saul (v. 90).
7. As we have seen, Saul, nor any man, was able or ready to be king of God's people. God calls a man who appears to be worthy of kingship on the outside, as the people demanded, but who was in no way able. His heart was all wrong. He needed a new one. Saul needed to become a different person. God in His mercy and patience with Israel, made Saul that person. What's interesting, is that we still see some of the "old Saul" acting out. Though God gave Saul a new heart, his old sinful self remained – as it does for all of us whom God has made a new creation by grace through the gift of faith. The "new heart" God gave was a heart for God Himself, where there was none before in Saul or in any of us. As new creations in Christ, we still retain our personalities and character, however flawed. It is God working through His flawed and sinful people that He demonstrates His power and brings glory to His name, not ours.
8. Moses tries to convince God to find someone else. Abraham doubted God's promise of a child. All of the judges, Gideon and Samuel as well-known examples, were so clearly flawed men that God called and equipped to serve Him. You and I are no different, and God no less wants to use us right where we are at. Just as he did for Saul and the others, He equips us through His Word written and proclaimed by His servants.
9. Both king and God's people under his authority were still beholden to God and His Word. If either disobeyed, then it would not fare well for them.
10. Husband and wife are equal in their essence, quality, and value having both been made in the image of God, but man and woman were also created differently and given different commands by God in order to fulfill unique vocations. **See Ephesians 5:22-33.** The husband as the head

of the wife is only able to “love his wife as Christ loved the church by giving Himself up for her,” if his first allegiance is to his own head, Christ. The wife and helper to the husband is only able to submit to her husband when she does so “as to the Lord.” This unified service to God in unique vocations is also taught throughout the Bible when it comes to pastors and God’s people in the church. The “keys to the kingdom of God” reside with the church, yet God has taught that the church must entrust those keys to a called and ordained minister who is to serve God by exercising the authority of the keys over His people. See **John 20:19-23** where Jesus teaches pastors are called to exercise the authority of the keys of the Kingdom, and **1 Timothy 3:1-7** where the church has the authority to call a pastor and give and take away the keys entrusted to them. This is also true of governments and those being governed. Read **Daniel 2:20-21 & Romans 13:1-7** to see how God has established all governments and uses them to curb evil in the world while we wait for the consummation of this age and then read **Acts 5:27-32** as one example of how we are ultimately to obey the King of kings when the rule of earthly governments conflicts with the Word of God.

11. We know the King of kings, the Risen Christ, and He IS our King and He has saved us with His own death and resurrection. Though we live by the same faith in the same God and promised Messiah, we are blessed to know immeasurably more than the Israelites did at this point. We have the very Spirit of God given to us in baptism where “it has pleased the Lord to make you a people for himself.” Yes, consider what great things the Lord has done for **us!** He has defeated the enemy who enslaved us with our own sin. He has conquered the grave and given us eternally life and salvation. What fools we are if we, as Samuel warned, “turn aside after empty things that cannot profit or deliver, for they are empty.” Lord, have mercy! Christ, have mercy! Lord, have mercy!