

David Showed Mercy

Bible Passage: 1 Samuel 24

Memory Verse: ⁶No one is like you, LORD; you are great, and your name is mighty in power. **Jeremiah 10:6**

Bottom Line: I trust Jesus and follow Him because God's plans and timing are best.

Big Picture Question: Is anything or anyone greater than God? No, God is greater than everything.

Christ Connection: *David showed mercy to Saul, his enemy, because David trusted God's plan. Jesus also trusted His Father's plan. He died on the cross so His enemies could experience God's mercy and live forever as part of God's family.*

Leader Notes:

CONTEXT

David's relationship with King Saul was complicated. Early on, David served the king by playing the lyre for him whenever he felt unwell. After David killed Goliath, he became good friends with Saul's son Jonathan. But David's success made Saul jealous. Saul could see that David was rising in popularity. He won victory after victory. Saul made several attempts on David's life, and David fled to the land of Moab.

David wasn't alone. His family and other men—anyone who was "desperate, in debt, or discontented" (1 Sam. 22:2)—joined David, and he became their leader. About 400 men were with David. Once in Moab, the prophet Gad instructed David to return to the land of Judah. When Saul found out David's location, he pursued David, intending to kill him. Yet God protected David from Saul.

Saul was in pursuit of David when he stopped to relieve himself. Imagine David's surprise when Saul entered the very cave in which David and his men were hiding. This was David's chance! Saul was outnumbered and could easily be defeated. David got up and secretly cut off the corner of Saul's robe, but he did not allow his men to hurt Saul.

When Saul left the cave, David followed after him. He acknowledged Saul's authority—"My lord the king!" (1 Sam. 24:8)—and showed Saul the corner of his robe, proof of David's passed-up opportunity. Saul wept upon realizing David's mercy toward him. God had put Saul in David's hand, and David let him go unharmed. Saul realized God had clearly chosen David to be Israel's king.

David showed mercy to Saul, his enemy, because David trusted God's plan. As you teach, point kids to Jesus, who also trusted His Father's plan. He died on the cross so His enemies could experience God's mercy and live forever as part of God's family.

TEACHING FOCUS (1 Samuel 24)

David was hiding in the wilderness. He had served **King Saul** and won many battles, but now Saul **was jealous of David** and wanted to kill him. Saul took three thousand men **and went looking for David**.

David and his men were hiding in the back of a cave when Saul happened to pass by. Saul decided to go inside. David's men saw Saul and said, "Look! God said He would hand your enemy over to you. This is the day! You can do whatever you want to him!"

David got close to Saul and secretly cut off the corner of Saul's robe. Saul didn't realize that David was there. David felt bothered about what he had done, and he told his men, "I won't fight the king. God chose him." So **David did not let his men fight against Saul. Then Saul left the cave and went on his way.**

David left the cave and called to Saul, "My lord the king!" Saul turned around, and David knelt low before him. "Why do you believe people who say I'm trying to hurt you?" David asked. "**See, God handed you over to me today in the cave. I had a chance to kill you, but I showed mercy.**" **David showed Saul the corner of the robe that he had cut.**

"I have done nothing against you," David said. "God might punish you, but I will never harm you. Let God decide who is right and who is wrong. May He protect me from you."

When Saul heard David's words, he cried. "You are more righteous than I," Saul said, "because you have done what is good to me though I have done what is evil to you. Most people would kill an enemy, but you have let me go. May God reward you for your kindness."

Saul realized God was with David, and he knew David would be the king of Israel. "Promise me you won't kill my family," Saul said. So David promised. Then Saul went home, and David and his men returned to their hiding place.

Christ Connection: *David showed mercy to Saul, his enemy, because David trusted God's plan. Jesus also trusted His Father's plan. He died on the cross so His enemies could experience God's mercy and live forever as part of God's family.*

TODAY'S TAKEAWAYS

- *David knew that God's plans and God's timing are best.*
- David showed mercy to Saul, his enemy, because David trusted God's plan.
- **BL:** I trust Jesus and follow Him because God's plans and timing are best.
- Jesus also trusted His Father's plan. He died on the cross so His enemies could experience God's mercy and live forever as part of God's family.

Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (15 minutes)

Activities that encourage preschoolers to enter the classroom and begin engaging with peers and small group leaders by providing age appropriate and hands on fun while introducing new concepts they will hear in the day's Bible story.

Find Your Match:

What You Need: no supplies needed

What You Do:

- Instruct kids to group together based on different characteristics or clothing.
- Groups may be based on hair color, shirt color, boys verses girls, food preferences such as favorite flavor of ice cream, or play preferences such as favorite games. Preschoolers may also line up by height- shortest to tallest.

What You Say: "You did a great job following directions and finding people who were similar or different than you. In our stories the next few weeks we will be looking at ways that God chose people to lead in many different ways. Let's listen today and see how God communicated to the David and Saul."

Worship

Gather children on a rug or in a specific area of the classroom to tell the story. Some kids (especially the younger ones) may wander. That's okay. They're still listening and learning!

Play the DVD of All Star Kids worship (choose 1 song for today)

What You Say: "Way to go! You are such amazing singers. Now let's sit down to learn from the Bible Story today."

Story Time: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways

Engage kid's hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible story and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

Bible Story

What You Need: Bible

What You Do: Place a book mark in 1 Samuel 24 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it.

What You Say: The Bible is God's Word. Everything we read in the Bible is true. Today's Bible story is from the Book of 1 Samuel. 1 Samuel is in the Old Testament.

PLAY BIBLE STORY VIDEO

Talk about the Bible Story:

"God was with David when David served King Saul. People liked David, and Saul became angry with David. David ran away to stay safe. David and his men were hiding in a cave when Saul went inside it! David's friends said, "Look, God said He would help you defeat your enemies,." David said, "I will fight God's king."

David was so close to Saul, he cut off the corner of Saul's robe! David felt sad about what he did. David came out of the cave and said to Saul, "I am not against you. I did not hurt you when I had the chance." Saul knew that God was with David and would make him king."

Learn the Big Picture Question

What You Say: Our big picture question asks, Is anything greater than God? No God, is greater than everything. Jesus perfectly rules over everything. David showed mercy to Saul, and that was good! But King David was not perfect; we will learn that in the next few weeks. Jesus is the perfect King. Jesus died on the cross so His enemies could have mercy and live forever as part of God's family.

Practice the Memory Verse:

Open your Bible to Jeremiah 10:6. Read the memory verse aloud several times.

What You Say: "No one is like God. No King, good or bad, can ever measure up to how great God is."

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (25 minutes)

Create a safe place to connect through activities that are written to reach every learning style while reinforcing the Main Point that was introduced during the Bible Story and applying it to real life experiences. In addition, these activities provide preschoolers with an opportunity to build relationships with their Small Group Leaders.

1. Make a crown

What You Need: paper crown (1 per kid), markers, stickers

What You Do:

- Give each kid a paper crown to decorate.
- Scatter stickers and markers on the table for them to use to decorate their crowns.
- When most kids are done, write names on their crowns and help fit it to their head to wear.

What You Say " Your crowns look amazing! Who wears a crown? That's right! A king! Saul was not a perfect king. David was not a perfect king either. Jesus is the perfect King. Jesus perfectly rules over everything because He is God. Is anyone or anything greater than God? No, God is greater than everything.

2. Practice signing the Memory Verse

What You Need: Memory Verse Poster

What You Do:

- Show the poster to the kids.
- As you say the words point to them on the poster.
- Create simple hand motions to teach toddlers the memory verse. Sample hand motions include, "No one is like you (shake your head, like saying no), Lord (point to the sky); you are great (sign for "great", both hands up like giving a double high five), and your name is mighty in power (flex your muscles)

What You Say " The Holy Spirit gave Jeremiah exactly the right words to say to God's people. God wanted them to know that God is perfect, and there is nothing and no one who can compare to Him. Only God is all powerful, perfectly holy, and eternally loving."

Pray and Dismiss:

What You Need: no supplies needed

What You Do:

- **Pray-** " Father you are Lord of all and You love us. We know that we cannot earn the wonderful gifts You offer. Thank You for sending Jesus to die for our sin and make the way for us to live forever with You in Your kingdom. Amen."

What You Say: Tell parents something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during your small group session. Send home the crown and tell families, we are talking about how great our God is.