

After God's Heart

Lesson 5

1 Samuel 24:1-22, 26:1-25

February 3, 2019

Life's Most Subtle Temptation

Introduction

Once a virtuous, but simple man, Edmond Dantes became an angry man totally focused upon revenge on his enemies in the classic book *The Count of Monte Cristo*. Even though he had pretty viable reasons to be angry since his enemies took everything from him, he reveals an odd aspect of our human nature: our desire for justice and sometimes even revenge.

David seems to run completely counter to this desire. His belief is based upon the truth of God's sovereign rule and control over what He has made, and that David's role is simply to trust that God is ultimately good and will follow through on His plan to make David the king of Israel. As we will see in this story, David trusts in this so deeply that even when he has opportunities to take matters into his own hands, he still leaves them in God's. May we learn to do the very same.

Memory verse: "The LORD rewards everyone for their righteousness and faithfulness. The LORD delivered you into my hands today, but I would not lay a hand on the LORD's anointed. As surely as I valued your life today, so may the LORD value my life and deliver me from all trouble."—1 Samuel 26:23-24

Pray and read 1 Samuel 24:1-22 and 26:1-25. What questions or observations do you have about these passages?

What do the passages say?

1. How many men did Saul take with him to pursue David? (1 Samuel 24:2)
2. What did David do when he caught Saul in a vulnerable position within a cave? How did David feel about what he did? (1 Samuel 24:3-7)
3. What did David say to Saul to try and prove he wasn't trying to harm the king? (1 Samuel 24:8-15)
4. How did Saul respond to David's argument? (1 Samuel 24:16-21)
5. Who goes down into Saul's camp with David? When did they go? (1 Samuel 26:6, 7)
6. What's David's reasoning for not allowing his companion to kill Saul? (1 Samuel 26:9-11)

7. Who put Saul's camp into a deep sleep?
(1 Samuel 26:12)
8. How does Saul respond this time to David's merciful gesture? (1 Samuel 26:21-22)

What do the passages mean?

1. As usual, throughout these stories, David shows great faith in the Lord and His sovereignty, even when an irrationally vengeful and jealous king leads Israel. How do we do the same? (Psalm 9:10; Proverbs 16:1-4)
2. Our natural human inclination can often be to take revenge on someone who hurt us or to wish ill of them. What do these verses say about how a Christian should respond in these situations? (Matthew 5:44; Luke 6:27-28; Romans 12:19; Ephesians 4:31-32)

3. David trusted that God was ultimately the sovereign ruler of the world. People often resist the idea of God being sovereign over His creation because they fear to lose their free will. How do these verses explain and define what God's sovereignty is? (Psalm 24:1-2; Job 42:2; Romans 8:28; Hebrews 4:13)

4. Saul went back and forth on his word to stop pursuing David to kill him. Saul's word clearly was not binding, and David couldn't trust him. What does Jesus have to say about this? (Matthew 5:33-37)

Applying the Passages

1. How have you felt a desire for revenge in your life toward someone who hurt you? How did you work through it?

