

2013/2014 Edition

LIVING
HIGH SCHOOL OUTREACH



**Living it
Bible
Experience
Application Guide**

A team Bible knowledge challenge for
2 Samuel



North
American
Division
Pathfinder
Ministries

2013 Edition

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Introduction

King David didn't have a Bible and he never sat on a hillside reading a devotional book. He probably couldn't even read—and yet he knew God as well as anyone who ever walked the face of planet earth. In fact most people you read about in the Bible were illiterate so they memorized large portions of the Bible as they listened to it being recited by their parents and read by the priests and scribes in the local synagogues and the Sanctuary. It was by listening and memorizing it for himself that David learned to love the Bible. Throughout Psalms David talks about how much he loves the Sanctuary and God's law—he even says he meditated on it day and night.

The most important passage of scripture in ancient Jewish culture is the Shema:

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and
with all your soul and with all your strength.

These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts.

Impress them on your children.

Talk about them when you sit at home
and when you walk along the road,
when you lie down and when you get up.

When you sit down and immerse yourself in scripture—spending long periods of time in just a few verses—you are following in the footsteps of the ancient Israelites and Jesus Himself. Reflecting on Scripture and memorizing it's lessons locks it in your mind where no one can take it from you.

This Living it Application Guide is to help you in this journey of understanding scripture and especially with Living it. The chapter guides are not comprehensive—they do not cover every detail of each chapter—that would take a few hundred pages. Each chapter guide chooses a few key points to help you start thinking differently about Scripture—to remember it and internalize it. The guides for the chapters are structured as follows:

1. Warm Up: Questions for individual reflection/small group discussion. These questions will attempt to help the participants relate aspects of their own lives to the lives of the Bible characters. This will involve personal sharing.
2. Engaging the Passage: This will include some discussion of the passage and one or more of the following:
 - a. Entering the passage as a participant or bystander to help imagine the scene.
 - b. Relevant historical/background information.
 - c. Reflection/discussion questions that go deeper into the passage
3. Applying the Passage to Your Life
 - a. Thought provoking application questions
 - b. Calls for commitment to action
4. Time of Prayer: May include any or all of the following:
Adoration/confession/requests/praises/silent prayer/conversational prayer

Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

— JOHN 17:17 (NKJV)

Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophets' own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

— 2 PETER 1:20-21 (NIV)

It is not safe for us to turn from the Holy Scriptures with only a casual reading of their sacred pages... Rein the mind up to the high task that has been set before it, and study with determined interest, that you may understand divine truth. Those who do this will be surprised to find what the mind can attain. The mind must be restrained and not allowed to wander. It should be trained to dwell upon the Scriptures and upon noble, elevating themes. Portions of Scripture, even whole chapters, may be committed to memory to be repeated when Satan comes in with his temptations.

— ELLEN G. WHITE

IN *MIND, CHARACTER, AND PERSONALITY*,
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Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

— PSALMS 119:105 (NKJV)

5. Outreach Ideas: Some chapter guides will include ideas for getting outside of yourself or your group and reaching the world around you—that's how you *Live it!*

The recommended companions for this series are: Andrews Study Bible, Authentic: Committed for Life, by Scott R. Ward, <http://livingiths.org/resources/pathfinders>

May Jesus Christ Himself bless you richly as you embark on this journey to making God's Word a Living and vital part of who you are.

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Chapter Guide Outline:

1. Warm-up

Questions for individual reflection/small group discussion. These questions will attempt to help participants relate aspects of their own lives to the lives of Bible characters. This will involve personal sharing.

2. Engaging the Chapter

This will include some discussion of the chapter and one or more of the following:

- a. Entering the verses as a participant or bystander to help imagine the scene
- b. Relevant historical/background information
- c. Reflection/discussion questions that go deeper into the chapter

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life

- a. Thought provoking application questions
- b. Calls for commitment to action

4. Time of Prayer

May include any or all of the following: Adoration/confession/requests/praises/silent prayer/conversational prayer.

5. Outreach Ideas

Some chapter guides include ideas for getting outside of your group and reaching the world around you—that's how you *Live it!*

Recommended Companions for this Series

Andrews Study Bible, <http://bible.andrews.edu>

Authentic: Committed for Life by Scott R. Ward, www.adventistbookcenter.com

Living It High School Outreach Resources for Pathfinders, <http://livingiths.org/resources/pathfinders>

Part I: David's Kingdom Established

(Chapters 1-10)

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 1

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have you ever cut yourself accidentally with a pocket knife or some other sharp object? How did it happen? Did you cry?

- b. Have you ever been bullied or seen someone else get bullied? What was it like? How can you help stop bullying from happening?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

Background: The Bible talks repeatedly about tens of thousands of soldiers marching against each other as they conquered the promised land one battle at a time and it was this very type of battle that was being referred to here in the first chapter of the book of 2 Samuel. These were barbaric times and God had to try and work with the people where they were....

Have you ever seen any of the Chronicles of Narnia or The Lord of the Rings movies? The epic battle scenes just captivated my imagination when I saw my first Narnia movie. I'd never been able to picture what these ancient battles with armies wielding swords and spears looked like before. To me they look just like what the Bible describes in it's raging battles for The Lord (minus the Gryphons, Centaurs, etc.).

Picture it: Imagine you were a soldier in ancient Israel. How do you think you would feel being in the midst of thousands of mighty men swinging razor sharp swords and spears in every direction? Do you think you would be crying out for God's help like David often did?

What kinds of things make you cry out to God today?

When David and his men found out that Saul and Jonathan had lost their lives due to one of these epic battles they tore their clothes and put dirt on their heads and wailed and cried for hours—even days. Jonathan was David’s best friend, but keep in mind that Saul hunted David like a wild animal for years trying to kill him out of jealous rage. And yet, David mourned both his friend and his enemy. Have you ever felt such compassion for someone who didn't seem to deserve it? How hard is that to do? Why?

 **3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)**

- a. Watch one of the Chronicles of Narnia movies or a Bible movie with epic battle scenes to try and get a feel for what ancient Biblical battles must have looked and felt like. Ask yourself or discuss with a friend how God could work in such barbaric conditions back then and how you can be used by God in the conditions in which you live today.
- b. Often times bullies have been victims of bullying themselves. What do you think you can do to be more like David and show kindness to those who bully you or your friends?

 **4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)**

Spend a few minutes praying for those who have been mean or inconsiderate to you or a friend. Ask Jesus to help them feel bad about the way they treat you and to give them a desire to change their ways. Ask Jesus to help you be kind to them in spite of the way they treat you

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 2

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Do you know what a Ouija Board is? What do you know about how it works and what it does?

- b. Do you know what the Thummim and Urim are? What do you know about how they work and what they are for?

- c. What is the difference between Ouija Boards and the Thummim and Urim?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

Have you ever wished you could ask God a question and He would answer in a voice as clear as your mom or dad's? In David's time they had something called the Urim and Thummim—funny names—right?

The Urim and Thummim were special stones mounted on the High Priests breast-plate. This breast-plate was a kind of covering that fit over the High Priest's chest and was used in ceremonies and for asking God questions. It was made of gold and had jewels representing each of the twelve tribes of Israel and the Urim and Thummim were the way God would answer simple questions—one would light up when the answer was "yes" and the other would light when the answer was "no."

Why do you think God no longer use theses special "yes" and "no" stones to communicate with church leaders today? Do you think it would be an easier way to get answers from God?

If God did still communicate with people that way—what kind of questions would you like to ask?

How does God answer questions like this today?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

- a. Have a conversation with an adult that you know and trust. Ask them what kind of questions God has answered for them and ask specifically how they knew the answers were from God.

- b. Make a commitment to spend more time reading your Bible each day so that you can become familiar with the kinds of questions God typically answered in the Bible times and why you think He answered them the way He did.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray and ask Jesus to help you focus your prayers on the requests that we know God wants to answer with a “yes.” Requests like:

- a. Please help me to remember to spend time with you every day.
- b. Please help me to have peace in my heart.
- c. Please help me to be used by You to help others

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 3

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have you ever had a crush on two people at the same time? Do you think it would be hard to date two people at once? Why/why not?

- b. Have you ever said something and then wished you could take it back immediately? Is it easy to take back hurtful things you've said? Why/why not?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

Background: Notice that here, in the first few verses of Chapter 3, it is recorded that David had 6 sons born to him while he lived in Hebron. Did you also notice that these son's mothers all had different names? In Bible times it was common for kings to have more than one wife. Many kings also had lots of concubines. Why do you think it was acceptable for kings to live and have children with so many different women at the same in those days?

Why do you think it is not acceptable—in fact it is illegal—to have more than one wife in the United States today?

What do you think would be the hardest part about having more than one spouse at the same time? What would be the best part? Do you think the best part would outweigh the worst part? Why/why not?

More Background: In the next part of this chapter we see some of the problem with having too many wives/girlfriends at once. Ishbosheth, Saul’s son, accused Abner, the commander of Saul’s army, of sleeping with one of his father’s concubines. This led to Abner defecting to David’s side and ending the reign of Saul’s son over Israel. All the betrayal, fighting, death in this chapter was over women and sex. Do boys/men still fight over girls/women today? Why do you think that is? Do you think girls/women like being fought over? Why/why not?

One of David’s greatest mistakes recorded in the Bible is when he saw Bathsheba bathing on her roof and sent for her so that he could sleep with her. How much of this situation do you think was due to the fact that the culture considered it acceptable for kings to sleep with lots of women? Do you think David would have made the same kind of mistake if he were the president of the united states today? Why/why not?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

- a. After reading about all the drama over sex in this chapter it would be a great time to make a vow to wait until marriage to have sex. Ask your parents or youth leader about how to take a purity vow. Google “true love waits” and “vows of purity” for ideas and curriculums for doing this.
- b. Have a discussion with your parents or a youth leader about how watching movies with sex and love scenes and listening to music with sexually explicit lyrics can impact your own personal views of sex and love.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Pray for God to help you have pure thoughts towards other people.
- b. Pray for Jesus to help you to choose to avoid entertainment that is sexually inappropriate.
- c. Pray for your future spouse and for yourself to remain pure until the day that God brings you together in marriage.

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 4

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. What is the worst story of betrayal you know of in Bible times? What made it so bad?

- b. What is the worst story of betrayal you know of in modern times? What made it so bad?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

The Situation: This chapter tells the story of betrayal. Two men, Baanah and Recab, who were captains of king Ishbosheth's raiding parties heard that their great commander, Abner, had defected to David's side and then been killed. They apparently realized that king Ishbosheth was in the process of losing power so they decided to kill him and take his head to David to show what they had done.

What is the difference between killing and murder in times of war?

What do you think Baanah and Recab felt they had to gain by committing this act of murder?

What makes this story a story of betrayal?

How do you think the sleeping doorkeeper should be treated in this situation?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

In this story David shows that he doesn't believe in getting revenge on his enemies himself. Instead, David leaves revenge and justice in God's hands.

Think of a time when you have tried to get revenge

- a. What happened that made you feel like you needed to get revenge?

- b. How did the situation turn out?

- c. What did you learn from David's story that could help you to deal with situations like this differently?

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Pray and ask Jesus to forgive you for the times you've tried to get revenge.
- b. Pray and ask Jesus to help you remember to leave justice in God's hands.
- c. Pray for peace to always deal with difficult situations calmly.

5. Outreach Idea

Go and talk to someone that has made you angry and made you feel like you needed revenge. Tell them that you forgive them and want to start over with your relationship.

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 5

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have you ever moved to a new school and had to make new friends? What was it like to be the “new kid on the block” and have to start over in a new place?

- b. How do you treat new students that move to your school? Are you welcoming and friendly or do you keep your distance? Is it easy or hard for new students to break into your circle of friends?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

The Situation: After years on the run David is finally being established as king of the entire Israelite nation and sets up Jerusalem as the capitol of his kingdom. All his patience and kindness in tolerating Saul’s mistreatment because he was “the Lord’s anointed” has finally paid off.

Do you think that when people are being bullied today they should be patient like David or fight back?

David didn’t give-in to bullying. He always defended his friends and family from the bully but he never went on the offensive when Saul was after him. Why do you think that was? How can people follow David’s example when they are being bullied today?

David always talked to God about his situation and always asked God to tell him what to do weather he was running from Saul or setting up his kingdom. How can you seek God’s guidance in all the situations you face in your life today?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Think of a situation you are involved in right now where someone is being unkind to you. Discuss the situation with your youth leader and some friends and try to make a plan of how you can deal with the situation like David did.
- b. Think of some times when you have had conflict with your parents. Discuss with your youth leader how you can apply the principals David used in dealing with conflict in your situation. Is dealing with parents different than dealing with others?

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Pray for Jesus to help you to always be kind to others—especially those who mistreat you.
- b. Pray and ask Jesus to help you learn what it means to “turn the other cheek.”

5. Outreach Idea

Think of something nice you can do for someone who either ignores you or is unkind to you. Try writing a nice note or just smiling and saying, “hello.”

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 6

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. What is your favorite style of music? Why?

- b. Have you ever heard people fight over what style music should be played in church? Why do you think that is?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

The Situation: David has decided to bring the Ark of the Lord to Jerusalem where he will establish the religious center of his empire. The procession consisted of 30,000 elite troops and lots of people singing and playing instruments. Here are just a few of the instruments mentioned: Lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets, and cymbals. This chapter also says that David danced before the Lord with all his might in a priestly robe and offered sacrifices along the way.

Why do you think David brought so many soldiers in the procession?

Why do you think David offered sacrifices along the way?

Why do you think David and his people used loud instruments like cymbals and tambourines for a sacred procession?

Why do you think David danced before the Lord? What do you think is the difference between David's style of dancing and the style of dancing that takes place in bars where people go to drink alcohol late at night? Do you think there are kinds of dancing that are appropriate and inappropriate?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Choose 2-3:

- a. Different churches use different styles of music during their worship services. Search the internet and try to find several different styles of church music.
- b. Have a discussion with the pastor or other leaders of your church to try and find out why your church used the style of music that it does.
- c. Have some discussions with your parents and other youth leaders about what kind of secular music is appropriate to listen to. Do different people have different feelings about what kind of music is appropriate to listen to? Why do you think that is?
- d. Have a discussion with your youth leader about dancing. Discuss what each of you thinks is appropriate and inappropriate..

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide you when you choose which styles of secular and sacred music to listen to. Pray for God to impress you if there is any music you need to delete from your life.

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 7

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have you ever underestimated someone's character or abilities? What happened?

- b. What kind of potential do you think God has given you?

- c. What talents do you have that you think God may want to use in His service?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

Background: David was born a simple shepherd but God could see his character and his potential so He chose him to become the second king of Israel. God chose both Saul and David to be kings. Why do you think David was so much better as a king? Do you think God made a mistake when he chose Saul? Why/why not?

The Situation: Now that David's kingdom is established and he has a capitol and a palace he feels bad that there is no permanent sanctuary for God. Have you ever felt bad about how your church looks? Do you ever wish it was a nicer place? What could you do to make it better?

Do you think it would be nice to have a prophet around today—someone you could talk to and they could come back and tell you exactly what God thinks of your plans? Why/why not?

How can you get input from God on your life and plans today? How does God communicate with us and answer questions?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

- a. Make a list of all the talents you think God has given you. Have a conversation with an adult about how you can improve and develop your talents.

- b. Make a list of all the talents you wish you had. Try to decide why it is that you want these talents. Do you think it is better to pray for talents that benefit others or yourself? Why?

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray for God to help you develop the talents He has given you. Ask Him to help you recognize which talents He is giving you opportunity to work on and use. Pray for Him to help you accept his direction in this area rather than trying to force your own.

5. Outreach Idea

Plan a work bee for your church. Talk to your church pastor and other leaders to determine what work projects would be most appreciated and doable.

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 8

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Have your parents ever told you that you were not allowed to go somewhere or do something that looked like a lot of fun? Have you ever found out later that you could have gotten hurt if you had gone there or done that? Talk about your experience and what you learned.

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

Background: It can be hard to understand why God would command David to wipe out entire groups of people. Some books of the Bible talk about so much blood-shed it's hard to understand how a loving God could do such things. My best explanation is that these people were so far from God and so much against Him that there was no hope for them to ever be converted and love God. So, God wiped them out so they would stop hurting and tempting His people and leading them away from Him. Since they had seemingly committed the unpardonable sin it seems better to wipe them out and save His own children in the process—or at least give them a better chance. All good parents try to save their children from the things that are hurting them.

Do you think it's fair for God to send soldiers to wipe out people that hate Him and are destroying His children? Why/why not?

What specifically would you like to ask God about His treatment of enemy nations when you get to heaven?

Do you ever wish you could wipe out things that hurt you? What kinds of things might that be? Do you think God would want those same things wiped out of your life?

What would your world be like if television and the internet were suddenly wiped out? Do you think you would be a better or worse person?

What would happen to your life if music suddenly disappeared? Do you think the music you listen to is uplifting or do you think it distracts you from God?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Try turning off the internet for one week. Only use it if you need to for school assignments—nothing else. Take the time you would normally spend surfing the internet and spend that time with God. Record what happens in a journal.
- b. Try listening to only Christian music for one week. That means no secular music at any time. Record your thoughts and feelings every day in a journal. At the end of the week ask your friends and family if they notice a difference in you.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

Pray for God to help you make good decisions in the activities you choose to engage in. Ask Him to help you identify the negative influences in your life and to give you the strength and help you need to eliminate them.

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 9

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have you ever befriended someone that everyone told you to stay away from? How did that go?

- b. Think about your devotional life? What does it consist of? Does it help you to feel closer to God? Why/why not?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

Background: In David's time it was common for a new king to wipe out every living descendent of the previous king. Most people expected David to do this as well. But just as David refused to touch the "Lord's anointed"—he refused to kill his descendents as well—especially not the son of his best friend, Jonathan.

It can be very hard to go against traditions and people's expectations of you. How do you think David was able to do this so well?

Has there ever been a time when you did something that you thought was wrong but did it because you felt it was expected of you? Does that kind of pressure come more from adults or your peers?

What can you do to be more like David and do what God is calling you to no matter what? Do you think that your devotional life plays a role in helping you to do this? Why/why not?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Talk to a spiritual person that you know and trust. Talk to them about your devotional life. Ask them to help you to develop and progress in your own personal devotional time.
- b. Find someone you can be accountable to regarding your devotional life. Ask them to check in with you every few days and ask you how your time with God is going.
- c. Do some research on the devotional life and get a recommendation of a good book that will help you in your personal devotional journey.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Pray for Jesus to guide you in your devotional times. Ask Him to send the Holy Spirit to draw close to you and remind you to spend time with Jesus.
- b. Pray for the Holy Spirit to fill you powerfully and help you to be addicted to your time with God.

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 10

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have you ever made a decision that you regretted almost immediately afterwards? What happened?

- b. Have you ever volunteered to do something that sounded like a lot of fun and then you later realized it was far more than you could really do? What happened?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

The Situation: The new king of the Ammonites accepts bad advice from his friends and makes a rash decision to try and humiliate king David. Once he realized that what he'd done wasn't working out well the king hired thousands of foreign soldiers to try and help him fight David. But even with thousands of extra soldiers the Ammonite king ended up getting beaten badly by David's army that was powered by God.

Imagine it: How would you feel if you, like David, were trying to reach out to someone to offer sympathy and friendship and were called a spy and an enemy instead? Have you ever been misunderstood in this way? Explain.

Do you think there would have been a better way for the new king of the Ammonites to deal with his mistake rather than hiring extra soldiers to try and help him?

After learning about David in the first 9 chapters of 2 Samuel, what do you think David would have done if the Ammonite king had apologized rather than fight?

Have you ever made a mistake? What do you think is the best way for you to deal with mistakes you make in your life—fight and defend yourself or apologize and make peace? Why?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Think of someone you have offended recently and think back to how you handled the situation. What steps can you take to make the situation better? Talk the situation over with an adult you trust and then go and do your best to make things right.
- b. Think of someone who has offended you recently and think back to how you handled the situation. What steps can you take to make the situation better? Talk the situation over with an adult you trust and then go and do your best to make things right.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Pray for God to help you to respond rationally rather than emotionally when you encounter difficult situations. Pray for patience and wisdom in adversity.
- b. Pray for Jesus to help you forgive those who have offended you.
- c. Pray for Jesus to forgive you for the mistakes you have made and to give you the strength to ask for forgiveness from those you have hurt.

Part II: David's Sin, Repentance and Punishment *(Chapters 11-20)*

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 11

☐ 1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. What is the difference between a regular lie and a white lie? Do you think one is worse than another? Why/why not?

- b. Do you find that you get into more trouble when you are bored or when you have a lot to do? Why do you think that is? Describe a situation where this happened to you?

☐ 2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

The Situation: Here David not only gets himself into trouble by making a bad decision but by lying about it and trying to cover it up too. We don't know why David didn't go out to war with his troops this time but it was obviously a bad decision. We don't know why Bathsheba was taking a bath on the roof either but it was obviously a bad decision too. If either one had chosen to do something different at that time this trouble probably could have been avoided.

Have you ever stumbled into a bad situation that turned out to be a great temptation for you? What happened?

Have you ever heard of someone trying drugs or alcohol just once and getting hooked? What happened?

Have you ever had people pressure you to try drugs or alcohol? How did you deal with it?

What can you do to try and avoid these temptations?

Have you ever found that one lie leads to another and another like it did for David? Explain.

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

- a. In our culture today people don't walk around on their roof-tops or take baths there either. A similar type of situation for us today might be unintentionally finding pornography on the internet. Talk to an adult you trust and ask them to help you set up some of safeguards to help you avoid stumbling into this type of situation.
- b. Brainstorm with your friends and think of ways that you can make it easier to say no to temptations to try drugs and alcohol.
- c. Brainstorm with your friends and think of ways that you can make it easier to say no to all sexual temptations.
- d. It has been said that, "idle hands are the Devil's workshop." Discuss ways you can get involved in more activities so that you can keep your hands from "being idle" and getting into trouble.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Pray and ask Jesus to help you focus more on Him so that temptation will be less tempting.
- b. Pray and ask Jesus to help you set up a regular prayer routine that will help you learn to "pray without ceasing."

5. Outreach Idea

Choose one or more:

- a. Talk to the deacons and elders at your church and ask if there are any church projects you could help with in your free time.
- b. Talk to a teacher or the principal at your school and ask if there are any volunteer opportunities at your school.
- c. Talk to someone at your city's parks and recreation department and ask if there are any community service projects you could help with

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 12

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have you ever been caught doing something you know you shouldn't have been doing? How did it make you feel?

- b. Have you ever gotten away with doing something you know you shouldn't have been doing? How did it make you feel initially? How did it make you feel later?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

The Situation: David got caught! Even though no people except Bathsheba and Joab knew about David's horrible deeds God knew and sent the prophet Nathan to bust him! And even if we think we have fooled everyone by getting away with something we shouldn't—God always knows.

How do you think Bathsheba felt about participating in an adulterous affair? Why?

How do you think Joab felt about participating in the murder of Uriah the Hittite? Why?

Do you think David apologized to Bathsheba and Joab for asking them to participate in his mistakes? Why?

What do you think it is that can sometimes make leaders feel like they are above the law? Give examples?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

- a. Talk to your youth leaders and make a plan of action for what you should do if a leader you know and trust tries to get you to do something that you know is wrong.
- b. If a leader you know is making or has made you do something you feel uncomfortable with in the past make sure you talk to an adult you trust about the situation.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Pray and think through your life and relationships and make sure you aren't leading others to do things they shouldn't.
- b. Pray and ask for forgiveness from God and others if you feel there are times you've led others to do things they shouldn't.
- c. Pray and ask Jesus to strengthen your conscience so it will help you to be a better example and influence to those around you.

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 13

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have you ever had a crush on someone? What was it like?

- b. Have you ever personally known someone had an uncontrollable obsession with someone of the opposite sex? Describe the situation and how it turned out.

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

The Situation: In this chapter we find a great example of why coveting is considered a sin. Amnon was terribly infatuated with his half-sister, Tamar, because she was so beautiful. He thought about her and dreamed of her so much that in his mind everything focused on her beauty and it got out of control. He eventually wanted her so badly that he was willing to do anything at all to have her. And it seems that he wasn't wanting her to talk to and have a relationship with her—he seems to have just wanted her body. So, his over-aggressive desire turned into rape and then, since there was nothing more there than sexual desire, his desperate lust turned into hatred as soon as he had her and then he despised her.

In this situation was Amnon thinking about Tamar's health and well-being or only himself?

How do you think Tamar felt about being outwardly beautiful? Do you think she ever thought her outward beauty would lead to such a violent act against her?

In the Bible we read that David and other kings had hundreds of wives and concubines. Why do you think kings had so many women in their lives—was it possible to have meaningful relationships with that many women or was it just for unlimited sex? How do you think the wives and concubines felt about this?

Do you think this cultural atmosphere played a role in setting up Amnon to rape Tamar?

Do you think our culture today is more or less obsessed with sex? Why?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. If you are a guy it is very important to think about how you view girls. Pornography, sexual advertisements, and sexual situations in movies can lead to treating girls like objects to be used rather than people to know. Sexting, hook-ups and other sexual encounters that teens get into result from how guys and girls view themselves and each other. Have a discussion with a group of guys and girls along with your adult youth leaders and discuss how Christian guys and girls should view each other.

- b. If you are a girl the way you present yourself to the world in many ways determines how the world, especially guys, see you. Have a discussion with a group of guys and girls and youth leaders and discuss the issue of how girls dress from a girls perspective and from a guys perspective. Discuss: Jewelry, short shorts or skirts, low-cut tops, skin-tight clothes vs. looser fitting, lots of make-up vs. a little, etc. What's the difference between being a little flirty and being provocative? How should a Christian girl dress? What should a Christian guy do when he sees an inappropriately dressed girl?

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Spend some time in prayer over how you view the opposite sex and how you view yourself. Pray that Jesus will help you to see and deeply impress on your mind that He doesn't want you to "use" other people or to be "used" yourself.

- b. Ask Jesus to impress upon your mind how much He loves you and all the wonderful positive things He has in store for you.

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 14

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have you ever held a grudge against someone? Why?

- b. Has anyone ever held a grudge against you? Do you feel like you deserved it? Why/why not?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

The Situation: David was holding a grudge against Absalom for killing his son Amnon. Absalom had killed Amnon for raping his beloved sister, Tamar. In doing this he was attempting to defend his sister's honor and take revenge into his own hands.

Did David have the right to be upset with Absalom for killing Amnon? Why/why not?

Did Absalom have the right to be upset with Amnon for raping his sister? Why/why not?

Why do you think God made the statement, "vengeance is mine saith the Lord"?

After already being raped and humiliated by her half-brother, Amnon—do you think Tamar was happy that her brother Absalom killed Amnon? Why or why not?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

- a. Holding grudges and trying to get revenge can often lead to more trouble than you began with. In the New Testament Jesus said to forgive someone 70 times 7. Think through your own life—do you tend to hold grudges or to forgive? Why do you think that is? Which do you think is a better approach?

- b. In addition to teaching on forgiveness Jesus also violently cleared the temple courts of money changers who had made His Father’s house into “a den of thieves.” How can you tell the difference between the two types of situations in your own life?

- c. Think through a situation where you were forgiving to someone else. How did it turn out? Do you think it was better or worse than holding a grudge?

- d. Think through a situation where you held a grudge. How did it turn out? Do you think it was better or worse than forgiving?

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Pray and ask Jesus to help you learn to be as forgiving as He was. Remember that Jesus even forgave the people who were crucifying him. Pray and ask him to give you the same forgiving spirit.
- b. Pray and ask Jesus to also help you to stand up for what is right just as He did in the temple and ask Him to give you wisdom to know the difference between the two kinds of situations.

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 15

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Has anyone ever betrayed you? What happened?

- b. Have you ever had to run away from a bad situation so that it didn't get worse? What happened?

- c. Have you ever tried to communicate with someone who wasn't really listening to you? How does it make you feel?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

The Situation: This chapter starts detailing some of the consequences of David's mistake with Bathsheba. The prophecy was: "Because of what you have done, I will cause your own household to rebel against you (12:11)." Now Absalom, home from exile, decides to try and take the kingdom from his father by winning over the people's hearts with sympathy, kindness and his good looks.

What role does the way a person's looks play in their life? Why do you think that is? Is that fair?

What role does being nice to people play in life? How do you feel when someone is especially nice to you? How do you know if someone is being kind just to manipulate you?

What does this story tell you about people's desire to have someone listen to them and place value on them?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Think through your life and try to determine if you are a good listener or not. Talk to someone you know that is a good listener and ask them to give you some tips to improve your listening skills.
- b. Think through your life and try to determine ways that you may have betrayed someone. Think and pray about how you can be a more faithful friend to those you know.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Pray and ask Jesus to help you be a better listener.
- b. After taking some time in prayer sit quietly for 5 minutes just trying to listen to what Jesus may be trying to tell you.

5. Outreach Idea

Think of an outreach ministry that you could start that would involve listening to people and showing them that you care.

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 16

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

- a. How would you define the word loyalty? Give an example of how you have been loyal to a friend.

- b. Give an example of how a friend has been loyal to you?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

The situation: Rather than fighting with his son and having Jerusalem torn up with war, David decides to leave town with his family and friends. His most loyal followers go with him but a few also decide to stay behind. Other friends of David's defect to his aggressive son, Absalom.

How much do you think Absalom could trust the people that defected from his father to him? Does the passage indicate that all of those seemingly following Absalom really were following him? What lesson can you learn from this?

If a friend abandons you when it looks like you are losing popularity, do you think they were ever really a friend? Why/why not?

Have you ever abandoned a friend? Why? Was that being disloyal? Why/why not?

How do you know who your true friends are?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

- a. Think through your friendships and make a list of the top 2-5. Are you more loyal to some friends than others? Why do you think that is? Are there some friends you think you should be more loyal to? Why/why not?

- b. Think about your friends that are always there for you? What qualities that you see in them would you like to develop more in yourself? Have a conversation with those friends and ask them to help you try and develop those good qualities you see in them.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Pray and ask Jesus to help you be a loyal friend. Ask Him to help you emulate the good qualities you see in others around you.
- b. Thank Jesus for being loyal to you no matter how you treat Him. Pray and ask Jesus to help you treat Him better and spend more time with Him.
- c. Thank Jesus for the friends in your life and ask Him to help you express that gratitude to them more frequently as well.

5. Outreach Idea (Optional)

Talk to a friend that you used to be close to. Discuss what went wrong and try to make things right again.

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 17

☐ 1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. What is the best advice anyone has ever given you? Did you take the advice? How did it turn out?

- b. What is the worst advice anyone has ever given you? Did you take the advice? How did it turn out?

☐ 2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

The Situation: Absalom is listening to two of his father’s former advisors—one is truly on his side and the other is secretly against him.

David has always been a “man after God’s own heart” and has typically sought God’s counsel for his every move (with the exception of the whole Bathsheba incident). In this situation how does it appear that Absalom is making his decisions? Do you think he is consulting God as well or following his own desires?

Why do you think Absalom has turned out to be so different than his father?

In what ways are you like/unlike your father? In what ways would you like to be more like your father?

How do you think Absalom got to the point of wanting to kill his own father?

In this situation God's will prevailed. In spite of Absalom's best efforts God was in control. How does this make you feel about spending time with God and pursuing His will in your life? Do you think you can truly be successful in life without God on your side?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Choose one or two:

- a. Think about how you make decisions in your life and who's advice you follow the most often. Who do you listen to more: Your parents, God, friends, or popular culture/advertising? Why do you think that is? How is that working out for you?

- b. Think about your perfect Father in heaven. In what ways do you think you are like Him? In what ways are you not like Him? How would you like to be more like Him?

- c. The best way to become more like your Father in heaven is to spend more time with Him. Make a list of 3-5 ways that you would like to spend more time with God/Jesus. Write out a plan and a schedule for implementing this in your life.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Pray and ask Jesus to send the Holy Spirit to remind you to ask Him about all the decisions you need to make in your life. Ask Him to help you make wise decisions and to give you the strength to always do what you know is right.
- b. Pray for your friends and relatives who are making some bad choices right now. Ask for God's will to prevail in their lives.

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 18

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. What's the worst fight you've ever gotten into with your parents? What was it over? How did it start? How did it end? In retrospect, was it worth fighting over?

- b. What's the worst fight you've ever gotten into with one of your siblings? What was it over? How did it start? How did it end? In retrospect, was it worth fighting over?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

The Situation: The battle of Absalom vs. David finally begins with thousands of soldiers fighting on each side. Keep in mind that these are all Israelites fighting with each other. This is a civil war.

This war is a son fighting against his father for power and control. Do you think there were any other fathers and sons fighting against each other or brothers who had taken opposite sides? How do you think it made the people involved feel to know that they may end up killing someone from their own family?

Studies show that one of the most dangerous situations for police to encounter is domestic violence. Why do you think people that are supposed to love each other the most can sometimes hate each other and hurt each other more than anyone else?

People have been fighting for power and control ever since Lucifer rebelled against God in heaven. Why do you think it is still so natural for so many people to want power and control?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Try to think of three things you can do to help reduce the fighting that takes place between you and your siblings at home. Write the list on a nice piece of paper and post it where you and your siblings will see it often.
- b. Try to think of three things you can do to help reduce the fighting that takes place between you and your parents at home. Write the list on a nice piece of paper and post it where everyone in your family will see it often.
- c. Try to think of three things you can do to reduce your desire to control others.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Pray and ask Jesus to help you give control of your life over to Him so that He can use His perfect nature to control your imperfect nature.
- b. Pray for your family to live in harmony and for your home to be a place where Jesus is in control and a place where you can find peace and love rather than anger and fighting.

5. Outreach Idea

Talk to your youth group about volunteering at a local women's shelter. Ask for the shelter's director to talk to your group about domestic violence and what you can do to help stop it.

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 19

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Have you ever worked out your differences with someone and decided to accept each other? Explain the process you went through to do that.

- b. How long can you successfully avoid someone you have a problem with? Is it easier to live with that awkwardness or to work things out and try to get along? Why?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

The Situation: The war is over and it's time for David to bring reconciliation and healing to his nation.

Why do you think someone had to tell king David to stop crying and go back home and bring his nation back together? Which do you think is harder: lose a rebellious son or have trusted friends betray you and fight against you? Why?

How much do you think this whole situation is part of the curse God put on David for his mistake with Bathsheba and how much do you think it was just selfish people trying to get power and control?

Do you think that part of the reason David was just sitting there crying was because he felt guilty for bringing the curse on his nation? Why/why not?

Was this “curse” from God really some kind of supernatural condemnation or is the “curse” really just God predicting the natural results of this type of sin? Why do you think that is?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

- a. Spend some time thinking about all the cause and effect relationships in your life. Make a list of the top 5 most important.
- b. What do you think you can do to “cause” better effects in your life? Make a list of the top 5 things you would like to do to cause better effects in your life.
- c. Think about your devotional life. What effect does spending time with Jesus every day have in your life? What effect does skipping or forgetting your devotions have in your life? Make a promise to Jesus of how you’d like to improve your time with Him. Write your commitment down and post it somewhere that is easy for you to see.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Pray and ask Jesus to help you remember to take control of your life every day and then give that control to Him. Ask Jesus to help you not sit idly by while others control you and influence you to do what they want you to do.

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 20

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

- a. Have you ever ignored a situation that you wished you had taken care of before it got out of control? What happened? What would have happened if you had taken action sooner?

- b. Has there ever been a situation where you acted too quickly and it turned out that waiting would have been a better option? What happened? What would have happened if you had waited?

- c. How can you tell the difference between the two types of situations?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

The Background: We know David was a man of war—but do you ever wonder if that’s what he wanted to be or if that’s what he had to be? He grew up a peaceful shepherd boy and musician who’s peace was occasionally interrupted by a lion or wolf that he had to fight in order to protect his flock.

The Situation: Another revolt! Even though David probably didn’t like it he found himself in another situation where he had to go to war. He took decisive action to avoid even more trouble.

What could have happened if David had sat around crying about the situation instead of dealing with it?

What could have happened if Joab hadn’t listened to the wise woman on the wall of the town they were attacking?

Why do you think conflict is sometimes necessary to bring peace?

 **3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)**

- a. Is there a wise woman/man that you would do well to listen to more in your life (like maybe your mom)? Think about what you can do to pay more attention to the wise advice of those who are older and more experienced than you are. Make plans for how you can get regular advice from adults for your life.

Choose one:

- b. If you are a person who prefers to avoid confrontation what can you do to learn to take more decisive action when you need to? Make an action plan and reminder for how you plan to do this.
- c. If you are a person who tends to jump into conflict, what can you do to learn to take a step back and get some wise advice before you act? Make an action plan and reminder for how you plan to do this.

 **4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)**

- a. Pray and ask Jesus to take away the conflict in your life and replace it with peace.
- b. Pray and ask Jesus to bring people into your life who can mentor you and give you wise advice.

Part III: David's Kingdom Preserved

(Chapters 21-24)

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 21

☐ 1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Think of a time when someone showed you grace. What happened?

- b. Think of a time when someone didn't show you grace. How did it make you feel?

- c. What role does grace play in our society today? What role should it play?

☐ 2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

Background: In the Old Testament the Israelites were under the old covenant. In the old covenant there was a lot of bloodshed that is hard to understand. Besides the offering of lambs we see bloodshed amongst people as well. God commanded the Israelites to wipe out entire nations of people who were completely opposed to God and were trying to slaughter His chosen people (they had basically committed the unpardonable sin).

The Situation: Here, in this chapter, we see a group of people whom the Israelites had promised not to kill but then Saul broke the promise and killed many of them anyway. Now, there was a famine in the land until their blood had been avenged. (Kind of makes you wonder if this is where Hollywood got some ideas for their horror movies!)

How would you feel if the Old Testament principle, “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth,” was still in effect today? Why?

Why do you think God waited to fully bring out His teachings on grace until New Testament times?

Do you think it’s more common for children, especially siblings, to naturally want “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth” or to extend grace to each other? Why do you think that is?

What do you think we could do as a church to help people be more “graceful” towards each other?

 **3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)**

- a. Do a word search for “grace” in the Bible and try to understand more clearly what it is?

Choose one:

- b. Think through some of the conflicts you have endured in your life. Do you naturally tend to be a person who extends grace or wants revenge? Have a discussion with some friends and try to think of ways you can extend more grace to others.
- c. Think of the person who has extended the most grace to you in your life. Sit down with that person and thank them and ask them how you can be more full of grace as well.

 **4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)**

- a. Pray and thank Jesus for the grace He has shown you by dying in your place and offering to take you to heaven.
- b. Pray and thank Jesus for those who have shown you grace in your life.
- c. Pray and ask Jesus to help you to be a person of grace in the lives of others.

 **5. Outreach Idea**

Choose one square block near your church or home and go around the block offering to extend grace to the residents by praying for any requests they may have.

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 22

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

- a. What is your favorite style of music? Why does that style appeal to you?

- b. What is your parents favorite style of music? Why do you think that style appeals to them?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

Background: Here David sings a song to God to praise Him for delivering him from his enemies. The same song is found, with minor variations, in Psalm 18. David uses some crazy imagery here...

What role should praise and thanksgiving play in the lives of Christian adults?

What role should praise and thanksgiving play in the lives of Christian youth?

Why do you think youths and adults often see/use music differently?

How can you help youth and adults to understand each other's musical tastes and uses better?

Why do you think David's song, here in 2 Samuel 22, pictures Jesus flying down from heaven riding the on the back of an angel breathing fire and shooting arrows and with smoke pouring out his nostrils? Do you think it's possible that this is where the idea of fire-breathing dragons in fairy tales originated? It's almost certainly where C. S. Lewis got the idea for Gryphons...

In what other ways is Jesus depicted in Scripture? Give 3 examples.

How many ways do you think you need to picture Jesus to have an accurate overall picture of Him?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

Choose one or two:

- a. What is your favorite depiction of Jesus (fire-breathing, shepherd, creator, etc)? Why do you think that is?
- b. Think about your favorite way of seeing Jesus and then try to think of which other sides of His personality/roles He has that you don't naturally think of.
- c. Have a discussion with your friends and youth leaders and see how many ways you can all think of to develop a well rounded view of who Jesus really is.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Pray and ask Jesus to reveal Himself to you in as many ways as possible.
- b. Pray and ask Jesus to remind you daily of all the ways He is there for you as: comforter, protector, healer, disciplinarian, etc.

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 23

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. Do you hope to be famous one day? What would you like to be known for? Why?

- b. Who is the most famous person you have ever met? What were they known for?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

The Situation: David is nearing the end of his life and he wants to honor the mighty men who have stood with him in battle and commemorate them in the history of God's chosen people.

Why do you think David wrote Psalms all throughout his life but waited until now to write about his famous friends?

Why do you think this is the first thing David wants to record after writing one last Psalm?

Why do you think it is important to keep a history of what happens in life?

David's history is full of successes and some mistakes as well. Which do you think people learn more from?

Which is your favorite historical book in the Bible? What have you learned from it?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

a. Think about your history so far. What do you think would be the most interesting chapter so far?

b. Think about what you would like your next chapter to be and write about it in a journal so you don't forget your goals.

c. At the end of your life what would you like to be said about you? Make plans for what you need to do to become the kind of person that you want to become.

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

a. Take some time to pray through the history of your life with Jesus so far. As you pray think about the times you have seen God's hand leading you.

b. Pray and ask Jesus to give you a glorious life just like he gave David. Ask him to help you avoid David's mistakes and to have even greater victories than he did.

c. Praise Jesus for being the great God of history.

Application Guide: 2 Samuel 24

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)

Choose one:

- a. What is the worst punishment you have ever received for doing something wrong? What had you done? Do you think the punishment was fair? Why/why not?

- b. What is the worst punishment you have ever heard of one of your friends receiving? What had they done? Do you think the punishment was fair? Why/why not?

2. Engaging the Chapter (15-20 min)

The Situation: David got into trouble for going through Israel and counting how many warriors he had that he could rely on.

Why do you think this was such a terrible thing to do?

Do you think that it shows that he was trusting more in human power than in God's power? Why/why not?

Which punishment would you have chosen if you were David? Why?

Did you know that there were angels that were assigned to kill people? How do you feel about that?

How do you think the “death angel” felt about the job he had to do?

When people commit terrible sins today how does God punish them?

Why do you think it’s different now than it was in David’s time?

What do you think our world would be like if there was never any punishment or consequences for doing wrong?

How do you think you will punish your children when you have them some day? Why?

3. Applying the Chapter to Your Life (5-10 min)

- a. Think through your life and try to determine what kind of punishment has been the most effective in helping you to become a better person. Why do you think that punishment works for you? Do you think it is possible to discipline or punish yourself before someone else has to? Why/why not?

- b. Talk to your parents and thank them for punishing you. Spend some time talking with your parents and ask them how it feels when they have to punish you. Let them know which punishments are the most and least effective for you—be honest!

4. Prayer Time (3-5 min)

- a. Pray and thank Jesus for the times He has punished and corrected you. Be specific.
- b. Pray and ask Jesus to continue to guide you in your life and to continue punishing you when you need it.

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