

When a Good Relationship Goes Bad...

A Lesson from the Life of David

Background

After David triumphantly defeats Goliath, he becomes enormously popular among the people. The more notoriety David gains, the more that King Saul becomes jealous and envious of him.

Recall that David had been the one person who was able to play his harp and provide relief for King Saul's suffering. David had found favor with Saul and David was loyal to Saul and respected him greatly.

This good relationship between these men turns sour when David becomes more popular than Saul. Saul's ego simply can't handle David's success.

Two men who were once close friends have experienced a significant rift in their relationship. As we begin this lesson, I want you to think about someone who you were once close to and then something or someone came in between the two of you and caused a separation in the relationship. As you will see, for David, his separation from King Saul was a painful, disappointing event in his life. Maybe you have experienced the pain of losing a relationship. Let's look at how David deals with this issue in his life and how we might learn from his experience.

Life Lesson: Sometimes people will dislike you for the wrong reasons.

Jealousy is a powerful emotion...

- I Samuel 18: 5-16
 - The more successful David became, the more jealous Saul became of him. Saul's jealousy led him to try to kill David.
 - Questions for Thought:
 - Jealousy caused Saul to try to kill David. If we are not careful, jealousy can cause us to do some things that are ungodly. Has jealousy ever caused you to do something you regretted?
 - The women who sang, "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands" seem to have ignited the conflict between the two men. Do you think the women did this on purpose? Have you ever instigated or started a conflict between two people? Has anyone ever started a conflict between you and someone else? How might you have handled those situations in a better way?
 - Life Lesson: There are times when space between you and another person can be a good thing. God wants us to live in peace.

King Saul tries to kill David...



Friendly Advice

- I Samuel 19: 1-6
 - Saul's son, Jonathan, becomes very good friends with David. Jonathan tries to warn David that there is danger and Jonathan also tries to intervene and talk some sense into his father, Saul.
 - Questions for Thought: Has anyone ever tried to warn you about the intentions of another person? How did you respond?
 - Jonathan tries to talk to his father on David's behalf. What role should we play when it comes to trying to talk to our loved ones when we see that they are about to make a mistake? Has anyone ever tried to talk some sense into you? How did you respond?



The Possibility of Revenge

It turns out that Saul was not being honest when he told his son that he would not harm David. Saul chased David and tried to kill him on a number of other occasions.

In I Samuel 24, David has his chance to get revenge on Saul.

- I Samuel 24: 1-13
 - David does the noble thing and refuses to take revenge on Saul. He cut off the corner of Saul's robe to prove to Saul that he could kill him and David even felt bad about doing that! What is David's message to us as we contemplate getting revenge on someone?
- **Life Lesson: Vengeance belongs to the Lord.**
- Question for Thought:
 - David tries to talk to Saul to convince him that there should be no animosity between the two of them. Have you tried to talk to the person you are in conflict with? If so, what was the result? If you have not tried to talk to that person, why not?
- **Life Lesson: Do your best to talk to the person you are in conflict with.**

Questions to Consider

1. David sought to do what was noble and good by facing Goliath and had Saul's blessing to do so. Yet, when David was successful, Saul's attitude towards him changed. Have you ever tried to do something that was good and then you were disliked or attacked as a result? How did you deal with that situation? What emotions were involved?
2. What is the driving force behind King Saul's obsession with killing David? Why is Saul so committed to harming David?
3. Has anyone ever been jealous of you? Have you ever been jealous of anyone? How have you dealt with jealousy?
4. What should the Christian do when a good relationship goes bad? What responsibility do we have to try to repair the relationship?