**1. Motivate**

What is the most menial job you have had to do?

* sweep/mop floors
* wash pots and pans

A video introduction to the lesson is available. Watch at <https://tinyurl.com/ycym572b> . If you have no wi-fi where you teach, it is best to download the video file to your computer from <https://tinyurl.com/y38fpk6j>

* empty/clean bed pans
* car wash
* enter data
* answer the phone
* order filler in warehouse
* carry bricks, mortar for bricklayer
* shovel coal
* construction demolition

**2. Transition**

God calls us to excellence in our lives

* Serve with excellence
* Even when that work is not appreciated by others.

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 Give Your Best as a Follower

Listen for successes.

1 Samuel 18:5-7 (NIV) Whatever Saul sent him to do, David did it so successfully that Saul gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the people, and Saul's officers as well. 6 When the men were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out from all the towns of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs and with tambourines and lutes. 7 As they danced, they sang: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands."

Note two preceding events that contributed to Saul’s decision to insist David reside in his house.

* David brought in to play the harp when Saul was feeling depressed
* David defeated the giant, Goliath

What are a couple of traits of David that led Saul, the troops, and others to accept him as worthy of their accolades?

* David did his assignments very successfully
* earned an advancement in rank
* apparently successful warrior

What were some elements of the celebrations that took place in the cities as Saul, David, and the troops returned in triumph?

* sounds like they took a victory tour through several towns
* there was dancing and singing
* one of their songs/cheers was of Saul and David’s success

What motivates you to do your best at something?

* see the job done well
* get paid
* get a good grade for academic work
* get an advance in rank
* just to be done with the job
* the results will look good (lawn mowing, painting a house)
* people declare their appreciation, admiration for your work

What attitudes might a person need to adjust to become the best servant leader possible?

* willing to do whatever needs to be done
* not afraid to get hands dirty
* work hard do the job right
* work in a timely fashion to finish on time
* determine not to procrastinate

Why might David have been lauded as more of a hero than Saul from the time of his very first exploit?

* his victory was very public – the whole army watched him
* he was victorious against a BIG guy
* his fight was over in seconds
* his victory was not a typical knockdown, drag out battle

3.2 Give Your Best Even If Not Valued

Listen for how Saul saw David’s success.

1 Samuel 18:8-11 (NIV) Saul was very angry; this refrain galled him. "They have credited David with tens of thousands," he thought, "but me with only thousands. What more can he get but the kingdom?" 9 And from that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David. 10 The next day an evil spirit from God came forcefully upon Saul. He was prophesying in his house, while David was playing the harp, as he usually did. Saul had a spear in his hand 11 and he hurled it, saying to himself, "I'll pin David to the wall." But David eluded him twice.

What disturbed Saul about the joyous singing of the women?

* the contrast between his “only” thousands and David’s tens of thousands
* didn’t matter that his name was stated first
* he figured David was obviously “ahead in the polls”
* felt that next step would be loss of the throne to David

What was the source of the evil that was at work in Saul and how do you understand its having come from the Lord?

* verse says “an evil spirit from God”
* seems unlike our understanding of the nature of God, to sic an evil spirit on the king
* like saying “sic-‘em” to an attack dog
* Saul had disobeyed and chosen an attitude of hate and paranoia and God let that attitude and thinking take its course
* could have been God caused a period of depression to come over Saul

Why do you think Saul bestowed honors on David even though he resented him?

* to save face, to look good
* occasional moments of clear thinking
* didn’t want people to see the king as a bad guy
* may have wanted to give him more battle responsibilities, figuring David had a higher probability of being killed or sidetracked by injury

What can cause jealousy tinged with paranoia in our lives?

* missing a promotion or raise
* people seem to like another person’s singing better than mine … and I’ve had voice training
* your children seem to get along better with your spouse than with you
* that other person “brown noses” up to the teacher and she/he gets better grades as the teacher’s pet
* the neighbors praise that other person’s house not yours … you work hard and the other person has a professional gardener – not fair!

What else can we learn about the destructive nature of jealousy from this passage?

* can be a runaway problem, can get out of hand
* destroys relationships
* probably David lived with a fear or at least dread
* becomes an obsession
* almost a mental illness
* there were times when Saul expressed sorrow and realization that he was wrong
* then he turns around and tries to harm or destroy David

What is the best way to respond to the jealousy of others towards you?

* pray for them, pray God’s blessing on their lives
* be careful not to flaunt your successes (good grades, increase in pay, etc.)
* try to turn away their anger with kindness and complements on their achievements
* don’t fight back with unkind comments
* within a Christian group, you might need to confess your problems, share your fears or needs

3.3 Give Your Best as Honor to God

Listen for why David succeeded.

1 Samuel 18:12-16 (NIV) Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with David but had left Saul. 13 So he sent David away from him and gave him command over a thousand men, and David led the troops in their campaigns. 14 In everything he did he had great success, because the LORD was with him. 15 When Saul saw how successful he was, he was afraid of him. 16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he led them in their campaigns.

Why was Saul afraid of David?

* Saul could sense that God’s blessing was no longer with him
* God was “with” David
* Saul could see the results of the events

What action did Saul take?

* gave him a promotion
* he now had a whole battalion under him
* gave responsibility to lead the military campaigns

What words describe the quality of David’s life and what do they mean?

* the Lord was with him (stated twice)
* in everything he did, he had great success
* very successful
* all Israel and Judah loved David
* he was a good leader

How does humility or the lack of it influence these characters' interactions and outcomes?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Saul – Lack of Humility | David – Demonstrates Humility |
| * thought (hoped) he was powerful, authoritative * afraid when someone else seemed to show him up * resented the success of others * thought too highly of himself * worried about his own image, influence | * willing to do menial work (play music to calm the king) * willing to do hard jobs – military campaigns * willing to face danger * didn’t think less of himself, just thought of himself less |

How can we have an assurance of God’s presence with us in a place of responsibility?

* A chair with a cross on it

  Description automatically generatedthe believer is indwelt by God’s Holy Spirit
* the Spirit empowers us as we surrender to His direction
* God’s Spirit gives wisdom, direction
* our part is to allow the Spirit to be in control of our lives
* don’t try to run things on your own

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

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Confess your shortcomings.

* Identify an area where you’ve not strived for excellence.
* Commit to giving God your best in that area.
* Keep growing by learning from your battles and helping others with their burdens.

Give the credit to God.

* When you succeed or when others compliment or praise you for a job well-done…
  + Thank them for the encouragement
  + Give God the glory
* Make a list of opportunities you’ve had to praise God at the end of the week.

Maintain your integrity.

* Always do the right thing, even when others are doing the wrong thing to you.
* Don’t retaliate against hate, knowing that the presence of God is there for your peace of mind and protection.
* List a few adversarial people you can pray for in the coming week.

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