



A Kingdom Established • Saul's Jealousy • 1 Samuel 18:1-9; 1 Samuel 19:11-17 • 10/28/2018

## Main Point

It is easy to become jealous of others to the point that it affects our walk with God.

## Introduction

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

**How would you define jealousy?**

**Describe a time in your life when you were jealous of someone else. What does it feel like to be jealous? What were the consequences of your jealousy?**

**What do you think motivates us to jealousy?**

Jealousy is not limited to high school dramas about boyfriends and girlfriends; it is rampant in our society as people want what others have. At the heart of the issue is a sense of entitlement; jealousy is motivated by a belief that we deserve something better than what we have. This attitude not only displays a lack of gratitude, it also is a challenge to the wisdom and provision of God. We can see how jealousy can turn a person to extreme choices in the life of Saul in 1 Samuel 18 and 19.

## Understanding

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| Have A volunteer read 1 Samuel 18:1-5.

**How would you describe the relationship between David and Saul based on these verses?**

**What was David's role in Saul's kingdom? How should Saul have felt about David's success?**

It seems David and Saul had a good working relationship. David was a good commander and fighter, as well as best friends with Saul's son, Jonathan. Saul was initially pleased with David; David was not only loyal but also successful for the sake of Saul's kingdom. But soon his attitude toward David soured.

| Have a volunteer read 1 Samuel 18:6-9.

**How were David and Saul received when they returned home from the war with the Philistines?**

**Put yourself in Saul's place. How would you have felt during this celebration?**

**Have you ever been in a similar situation? When one of your coworkers or friends received greater praise than you? How did you handle those feelings of jealousy?**

**Why do you think Saul became so fixated on David from this point forward?**

**Why does jealousy of another tend to make us fixated on what another person has or does?**

Upon returning home from battle, the women offered their customary songs praising the men for their battles. Saul was praised for killing his thousands and David was praised for killing his ten thousands. Saul was jealous of David's praise, and it drove him mad. His jealousy caused Saul to ignore the blessing that David was to his kingdom and focus on his level of popularity.

| Have A volunteer read 1 Samuel 19:11-17.

**How did Saul's jealousy manifest itself in his actions?**

**What other ways might jealousy of another come to the surface in our own lives?**

**What is the effect on the community when jealousy is present?**

Saul's jealousy drove him mad and he attempted to kill David on many occasions. When his attempts failed, Saul had David followed and tried to use his daughter as a trap to keep David close. Saul's jealousy bubbled to the surface and eventually affected his kingdom and his family. He was chasing his son-in-law, and failing to govern, because all his jealous eyes let him do was go after David.

**Is the issue of jealousy the whole problem? When we are jealous of another, what does that jealousy reveal about what we believe about God?**

**What do you think Jesus would say to the jealous person?**

**Why is the gospel the only ultimate answer for the problem of jealousy?**

Our bigger problem is not with jealousy—it is with God, the One who decides who gets what. When we are jealous of another, we are implicitly challenging the wisdom and generosity of God. Though we might try to not be jealous of what someone else has or does, we most need to be reminded of the goodness of God. As we are, our entitled heart will be transformed into a heart of gratitude, humility, and generosity. Instead of desiring what God has given to another, we will be able to truly celebrate His goodness all around us.

## Application

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

**What are the areas in your life in which you can easily become jealous? How can you guard against jealousy in those areas?**

**How specifically might you remind yourself of the goodness of God in your life this week in order to build a heart of gratitude?**

**Why might serving at our church or in the community help to guard against jealousy?**

**Who is one person you are tempted to be jealous of who you can actively pray for this week?**

**Why might doing so guard you against jealousy?**

## Pray

Close your time in prayer by thanking God for the gifts that He has given you. Pray that God would help you to be content with what you have and not be jealous of the blessings He has given to others. Pray that your group would be characterized by humility and by service to others.

## Commentary

| 1 Samuel 18:1-9

18:1-5. Immediately after David's conversation with the king, his relationship with the royal family changed forever. This was understandable because David and Jonathan had much in common; they were both courageous and capable young warriors who possessed profound faith in the Lord. Both had initiated faith-motivated attacks against militarily superior Philistines that had resulted in great victories for Israel. Jonathan, like his father Saul (16:21), loved David. That love inspired him to make a covenant with David, one that was expressed with extravagant gifts to the new celebrity. In a single day David had acquired the finest sword in the Philistine army as well as one of the finest swords in Israel's armory; he had been permitted to wear the king's clothing in the time of conflict and was given princely clothing in times of peace. The fact that Jonathan gave David the garb and armaments originally reserved for the heir to Saul's throne clearly possesses symbolic and thematic significance. Not only did David's relationship with Jonathan

evolve that day, but so did his relationship with the king. He became a member of the royal household and as such did not prove disappointing. The term translated caused to prosper is theologically significant; according to the Torah (Deut. 29:8), those who would keep the words of the Sinai covenant would “prosper in everything” they did. The author’s employment of language that brings this Torah promise to mind is not accidental. The comment in verse 5 underscores the claim made elsewhere (16:13) that David was a man under the control and direction of the Lord’s Spirit—the same Spirit who had brought into being the Sinai covenant and rewarded its adherents with prosperity. David was rewarded with a position of great responsibility: a high rank in the army. Saul’s action was met by the approval of “all the people and Saul’s officers as well.”

18:6-9. David’s—and thus Saul’s—phenomenal success was celebrated by all. After the Philistine campaign was concluded and the army was returning, grateful mothers, wives, and daughters met them with expressions of appreciation. The triumphant soldiers were treated to the sights and sounds of women singing and dancing. In accordance with an ancient Israelite custom (see Exod. 15:21; Judg. 5:1-31), the women composed songs with lyrics that memorialized the men’s military successes. The poetry possesses characteristics typical of ancient Near Eastern poetry: parallelism and the use of a fixed word pair, thousand and ten thousand. Saul’s reaction to this couplet was predictable and intense. Even more than angry, it was evil in his eyes (“galled him”) because he connected the mention of David with Samuel’s prophecy of a previously anonymous neighbor of Saul to whom the Lord had given the kingdom of Israel (see 15:28). As a result, Saul watched David with jealousy. The writer’s use of the verb translated kept a jealous eye probably is intended as a double entendre involving a similar-sounding word meaning “transgressed.” The effect of this subtle wordplay is to inform the reader that from this point on Saul would carefully observe David for the purpose of committing sins against him.

## | 1 Samuel 19:11-17

19:11-13. Saul sent men (v. 11) to kill David when he left his house the next morning. But Michal was aware of her father’s plan and, like her brother, warned David of the danger and urged him to flee before morning (see v. 2). She even facilitated his escape by letting David down through an unguarded window. Then in an act that revealed as much about her spiritual condition as it did about her commitment to her husband, Michal “took a teraphim” (“idol”) and used it to deceive Saul’s cohorts. In spite of the negative implications of the teraphim, the sequence of actions performed by Michal creates links between her and those of previous biblical heroines. In each case these allusions identify David in particularly favorable comparisons. Jacob too was saved by a woman who had possession of teraphim and deceived her father during a desperate search (see Gen. 31:19-35). Moses also was saved through the efforts of the daughter of a wicked ruler (see Exod. 2:6-10). Furthermore, David’s escape echoed that of the spies saved by Rahab, who were let down through a window at night by a woman who lied to a king (Josh. 2:2-15). In both this instance and the one involving Jonathan earlier in the chapter, members of Saul’s own family took the lead in scheming to protect David’s

life. In both instances David was portrayed as the passive conspirator in the attempts to undermine Saul's will. Saul's own children were the ones who initiated and executed plans in David's behalf to derail their father's purposes. The author's careful description of the circumstances surrounding David's deliverances are not without purpose; they reinforce the claim that David did not usurp the throne from Saul. Leading members of Saul's own family loved and supported David throughout his rise to power and even played leading roles in David's ascent.

19:14-17. The next morning Saul's messengers entered David's residence. However, the socially powerful daughter of the king refused to grant the men access to David's room, claiming he was ill. Being understandably hesitant to act against the objections of a royal family member, they returned to Saul empty-handed. But Saul was still under the malignant influence of the tormenting spirit and would not be dissuaded by circumstances of health. If David was too sick to walk to his death, then he must be brought to Saul in his bed (v. 15)! It might also be that David was only pretending to be ill. Returning to David's house, therefore, the men who entered did not find in the bed one who was about to die; instead, they found one who had never lived. Saul, of course, demanded an explanation. Michal was therefore called upon to answer for her role in the teraphim deception and David's escape. Her response was convenient, if not convincing; she acted as she did because David threatened her with death. Her defense could not be tested, for there were no witnesses. Besides, it was useful for Saul to accept her claim—if David had threatened a member of the royal household, he was doubly worthy of death.

## READING ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

1 Samuel 21-22