

INTRODUCTION

David's fame after killing Goliath quickly endeared him to the people of Israel. This fame came at a cost. With "Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands" ringing in his ears, Saul descended into a ten-year manhunt for David. During these years God was stripping away everything David depended on—his wife, his friends, his home, his fame—leaving David with only his God to depend on. God will sometimes do that in our lives too—uprooting us so we realize all we have (and all we really need) is Him. While these circumstances and long years could have turned David against God in bitterness and anger, David turned to God and trusted God's plan. David kept his eyes on God instead of on the uncertainty of his life. This is another way David was God's man. A man (or woman) after God's heart trusts God's plan even during the times in the wilderness.

The following concepts should be clearly conveyed during the club hour:

- **God:** Sovereign—God is sovereign (in control of everything).
- **Man:** Relying on God—I can always count on God, even when things don't make sense.
- **Bible:** Theme of Redemption—From the beginning to the end, the Bible tells of God's plan to redeem people.
- **Bible:** Instruction for Life—God's Word shows me how to live my life.

Demonstrations of
the lessons and songs in
this series are available at:
cefonline.com/freedemos/gnc



SMALL GROUP TIME

"God's Plan for Your Life" (Optional activity)

(Give each child a piece of paper and a crayon.) I'm going to give you some directions of what to draw, and I want you to go ahead and draw it. Ready? Draw one straight line. Draw another straight line connected to that one. Draw another line connected to that one. Draw one more line connected to two lines. What do you have? *(Allow children to show you.)* That wasn't exactly what I had in mind. It would have been easier for you to draw it if I had shown you the plan. *(Show the pattern for the square.)* So let's try this again. Go ahead and turn your paper over and this time use the pattern to draw a square. *(Do with children.)* It was much easier to do when you had a pattern or plan to follow, wasn't it? I had the plan the whole time. God has a plan for your life. But sometimes it's hard to understand His plan because it seems like things in your life don't make sense. Today in club we're going to talk about how **you can trust God's plan!**

Materials

"Square Pattern" reproducible
(See GNC Resource Pack.)
One piece of paper per child (8½" x 11"
cut into fourths would work)
Crayons

Preschool Help

Simplify this activity for preschoolers by pointing in the direction that they are supposed to draw.

Materials

Word Up! Booklet
(See GNC Resource Pack.)

Show the card and have the children repeat the statement: **“Trust God’s plan!”** Tell them that anytime you call out “Word Up!” they are to shout the phrase back. Call it out during transition times, times when they are restless or just anytime!

If you want to add actions to the Word Up! make a fist with one hand and hold the other hand flat. Bring the fisted hand down onto the flat hand when you say “trust.” Point up twice when you say “God’s plan.”

Preschool Activity

If possible, dim some of the lights during the parts of this lesson that occur in caves to help the children imagine being in a cave with the characters. Make sure there is still some light in the room at all times.

Preschool Activity

Have the children pretend to give a robe to someone else. Let them hold and touch a piece of nice cloth.



WORD UP!

“Trust God’s plan!”

Can you tell me some people in your life you trust? (*Allow response.*) You trust them because you know they love you and want what’s best for you. Do they ever ask you to do things that are good for you but maybe you don’t like to do like brush your teeth, eat your broccoli, make your bed, or go to bed at a certain time? (*Allow response.*) They ask you to do those things because they know what is best for you, even if you don’t enjoy it. You can trust them and what they have planned for you. In a much greater way, God loves you and has a plan for your life. You can trust Him even when life is hard or doesn’t make sense. Say with me, **“Trust God’s plan!”** (*Say with children.*)



LESSON

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever been in a cave? What do you think it would be like to live in a cave? (*Allow responses.*) The Bible tells us about someone who had to spend a lot of time in caves—not because he wanted to, but because he was hiding! Let’s find out who it was.

PROGRESSION OF EVENTS

David had killed Goliath and the Philistines had run away in fear. From that day on King Saul put David in charge of the men of war. David had gone from being a person who took care of sheep and occasionally played the harp for King Saul to being one of the most popular soldiers in the whole kingdom! Women sang songs about how wonderful David was. God was with David and he won all the battles he fought.

Slide 1

David even became best friends with Prince Jonathan, one of King Saul’s sons. Right after David killed Goliath, Jonathan and David became friends. Most princes would have been jealous of David. But instead, Jonathan gave David his robe, his armor, and all of his weapons! A prince would normally never do that but by giving David those things Jonathan was saying, “You’re not just my friend—I know you will be the next king of Israel and I will not be. I am on your side!” God used Jonathan in David’s life to encourage him and help him many times.

Later David and Jonathan made an important promise to each other. They promised to show kindness to and protect each other’s families if one of them were to die. This was a big promise to make!

Slide 2

King Saul could see what good friends David and Jonathan were. Saul became very jealous as David became a great hero! People liked David more than they liked him! Saul became so jealous of David’s popularity was that he began to try and kill David! Saul’s jealousy of David was sin.



You and I have also sinned. Perhaps you have been jealous of someone because they are better at something than you are or because they have things you don't. Being jealous is sin because it shows you don't trust God. Whenever you say, do, or even think things your way instead of God's way, you sin. The Bible says everyone is guilty of going their own way instead of God's way. (*Read Isaiah 53:6a.*) You and I are born already knowing how to sin. Sin separates you from God who made you and loves you. God sent Jesus, His perfect Son, to earth to take the punishment for your sin. Jesus always went God's way and always did, said, and thought right and good things. That is why He could take the punishment for your sin. (*Read 2 Corinthians 5:21a.*) Jesus died and was buried but on the third day, He came alive again. Because Jesus did that, you can be forgiven for your sin. Then you can be close to God, and He will help you to trust Him and not to be jealous of others.

King Saul sinned by being jealous of David. It caused him to do terrible things like trying to kill David. David tried to hide from Saul.

David wasn't the only one running from Saul. Word had spread that David was on the run and many men wanted to join him. They were a rough group! Most of these men were poor and homeless, and some were also running from the king's rule. David trained these 600 men to be soldiers, and they became his loyal friends and mighty (strong) men.

Slide 3

It was a hard life trying to hide from Saul. Sometimes David and his men lived in caves. When they would get settled in one place, someone would tell King Saul where they were. Then David and his mighty men would need to move somewhere else. Let's pretend to run with David from Saul. I'm going to pretend to be King Saul and look around the room. All of you stand up and run in place. When I look one direction, you turn the other direction. (*Do with children.*) David, the famous military hero who had been anointed as king, was living like a criminal, running from cave to cave and city to city trying to get away from Saul. It would have been easy for David to wonder if God was still working out His plan for David's life.



Sometimes when hard things happen it is hard to remember God has a plan for your life. If you have believed on Jesus as your Savior, **you can trust God's plan.** Maybe your really good friend had to move away and you wonder why. Or maybe your mom and dad are fighting, and it scares you, and you are afraid they will get a divorce. Or maybe a parent or family member has to be away for a long time because they are serving their country. It can be hard to trust that God has a plan, especially when hard things happen. You might be worried and feel like everything is out of control, but God is completely trustworthy.

Slide 4

Say with me, **"Trust God's plan!"** (*Say with children.*) He always knows what He is doing. He is bigger than even the bad or hard things that happen. (*Read Isaiah 55:8-9.*) God's plans are bigger and better than we can know or understand. God wants you to trust His plan, even when you don't understand why things are happening.

Preschool Song

"I Believe the Bible" vv. 3-4

Preschool Activity

Have the children stand at attention like David's soldiers and give them simple training orders to follow such as stomp your feet, hop six times, touch your toes, etc.

Preschool Activity

Have two helpers hold up a sheet or large towel while the children crawl under it and pretend to be hiding in a cave while a teacher plays the part of King Saul looking for them outside.

Preschool Song

"I Will Trust"

Teacher Help

The children you teach may be struggling with a difficult situation. Tell them a time when you or another teacher will be available to talk with them if they want to talk about it and have you pray for them.

As a *Child Evangelism Fellowship* volunteer or worker, you need to be aware of and abide by your state's child abuse reporting requirements. If you suspect abuse, contact your local CEF director and they will help guide on what to do. If your club is in a school setting, you may need to report to school officials as well.

Materials

Word Up! Booklet
(See GNC Resource Pack.)

Preschool Activity

Have the children creep quietly to the front of the room and touch a scrap of cloth. If possible, allow each of them to take a small scrap of cloth back to their seat.

Preschool Song

"I Will Trust"

Materials

Word Up! Booklet
(See GNC Resource Pack.)

Slide 5

It would have been easy for David to wonder if God was still working out His plan for David's life while he was running from Saul and living in caves and forests. David and his men experienced many hard times as they tried to stay ahead of Saul and his army of 3,000 men.

When King Saul heard that David had fled to Engedi (*In-GEH-die*), he hurried there with his large army. This time he would not let David escape! Arriving at Engedi, he saw a large cave and went into it by himself. But Saul was being watched—by David and his men! He had picked the cave they were hiding in!

Slide 6

David's men could barely contain their excitement! "David!" they whispered, "Today is the day you've been waiting for! The Lord has brought your enemy to you. You can kill him!"

David crept quietly over to the king. Everyone stand up and walk quietly forward three steps. (*Do with children.*) The men held their breath and watched. Soon Saul would be dead, and they would be free! David carefully picked up a corner of Saul's robe and cut part of it off. Then he slipped back into the darkness of the cave.

David's men stared at him. *Why did he do that?* They wondered. *Why didn't he get rid of this man who wanted to kill him?* "We'll kill him for you, David," they offered. But as David looked at the scrap of cloth in his hand, his heart was troubled.

Whispering to his men, he said, "No! I should not have done even this much to God's anointed king." David knew that Saul was the one God had chosen when Israel had first demanded a king. Even though Samuel had anointed David as the next king, it was not God's time for him to take over. David was trusting God's plan.



If you have believed on Jesus as your Savior, **you can trust God's plan.** God knows every detail of your life because He knows everything. He knows why your friend had to move away or why your parents are fighting so much. He knows when someone you love has to be away. Sometimes hard things happen in your life because we live in a sinful world. But God is even bigger than hard things.

Slide 7

Say with me, "**Trust God's plan!**" (*Say with children.*) He loves you and you can trust Him. When you start to worry, stop and think about how God has worked things out in the past. Read Romans 8:28 and think about what it means. (*Read Romans 8:28.*) God works all things for our good—to make us more like Jesus. That means even the hard things. Pray and talk to God about the hard thing you are facing and ask Him to help you trust Him and His plan. God will work everything in your life for good. If you go through something that is hard, later on, God may use you to help someone else who is going through a hard situation. You can also talk to someone you trust about the hard things that are happening. **You can trust God's plan** for your life.

Slide 8

David trusted God's plan for his life, knowing it was not yet time for him to be king. After a while Saul walked out of the cave, still not knowing David was there. David followed Saul to the entrance of the cave.

After Saul had walked some distance away, David called to him, "Your majesty the king!" Let's say that together. "Your Majesty, the King!" (*Say with children.*) Saul must have spun around when he heard David's voice. He saw David standing in the shadow of the cave opening.

David continued, "Why do you listen to people who say 'David plots against you'? Look! You can see how this day the Lord put you in my power. My men wanted to kill you, but I spared you." David waved the piece of cloth cut from Saul's robe.

Saul must have looked down at the frayed edges of his robe, then back at David in amazement as David said, "I told my men, 'We will not touch him because he is the Lord's anointed one.'"

Saul called back, "Is it your voice, David?" With tears, Saul continued, "You are better than I am. You have been good to me today when I have been mean to you. May the Lord be good to you for the way you have treated me. I know you will be king over Israel. Promise me that you will not destroy my family when you become king." David made this promise.

Saul returned home, and David found a new hiding place. Perhaps he doubted Saul truly had a change of heart about him. And he was right. Some months later Saul was once again looking for David to kill him!

Slide 9

For ten years King Saul continued being jealous and trying to kill David. David and his men were running for their lives and hiding in caves or other cities to try to get away from Saul. Ten years is a long time. How many of you are ten years old? Ten years is your whole lifetime! That is a long time to wait, isn't it? All through this time, David could have said, "Look, I'm the one God chose to be king! Follow me instead of following Saul!" David even had several opportunities when he could have killed Saul. David's men thought David had every right to kill Saul and become the king.

CLIMAX

But David would not kill Saul because he was trusting in God's plan and waiting for God's timing for him to become king.

CONCLUSION

At the end of those ten years, the Israelites were once again at war with the Philistines.

During an important battle against the Philistines both King Saul and Prince Jonathan were killed.

Preschool Activity

Let the children hold and wave a piece of cloth.

Lesson 4

Preschool Activity

Have the preschoolers use their faces to show you what they look like when they are sad.

Materials

Word Up! Booklet
(See GNC Resource Pack.)

Preschool Invitation

When presenting the invitation to preschoolers, use John 3:36a and “believe on” terminology. Ask those who have questions about believing on Jesus to stay with you while the others move on to another activity.

Important Reminder

Remember, it is not the prayer that saves the child. Salvation is the work of the Holy Spirit convicting the child of his or her sinful condition and drawing him or her to trust completely in Christ and His work on the cross. The prayer is the child’s expression of that belief to God. (See “Guiding a Child to the Savior” on the inside front cover.)

Instead of being happy that Saul was dead, David was incredibly sad. People expected him to rejoice, but instead, he cried. This was another way David was a man after God’s heart—David did not get any joy out of his old enemy being dead. Saul had been king for 40 years.

Finally, when the time was right, God told David to go to the city of Hebron, where David was made king.

David had waited for God’s timing instead of trying to become king on his own. This is another way he was a “man after God’s heart”—He trusted God’s plan.

CHALLENGE



If you have believed on Jesus as your Savior, **you can trust God’s plan.** When something happens you don’t understand, like a friend moving or your parents fighting or someone you love being far away, stop and remember how God has helped you in the past. Read Romans 8:28 and think about what it means. (*Read Romans 8:28.*) Thank God for being with you and tell God about the hard thing you are facing. Ask Him to help you trust Him and His plan. God will work all the details out for your life—even the hard things—and will cause them to work out for good. Will you trust God’s plan for you, even when it’s hard?

Slide 10

Say with me, “**Trust God’s plan!**” (*Say with children.*) God is with you! You can also talk to one of the teachers anytime, and we will be happy to pray for you.

INVITATION



If you have never believed on Jesus as your Savior, you can believe on Him today. **God’s plan is for you to believe on Jesus as your Savior from sin.** His plan to save you is only through Jesus, who suffered, died, and came back to life so your sin could be forgiven. (*Read Acts 16:31.*) When you believe (trust completely) on Jesus as the only one who died for your sin, you will be saved. When you are saved, so many amazing things happen! God is with you all the time! He will help you trust His plan for your life. Will you believe on Jesus and be saved today? Please bow your head and close your eyes. If you would like to believe on Jesus as your Savior, show me by looking up at me. (*Acknowledge responses.*) If you looked up at me because you would like to believe on Jesus, please meet me (*designate time and location*) and we will talk more from God’s Word about what it means to believe and be saved.