

David: A Study of 1+2 Samuel

A Tale of Three Leaders

Jack Doney // January 25, 2026

1 Samuel 23

Big Idea: Godly leaders submit to God's plan, not their own.

Reality Distortion Field = A leader's ability to convince others that the impossible is actually possible.

God's Plan for:

- **King Saul: His disobedience has cost him the throne.**
- **Jonathan: His father's sin has cost him the throne.**
- **David: His love for God will lead him to the throne.**

1 Samuel 23:1-2

David sought out God's plan, not his own.

1 Samuel 23:3-4

David submitted to God's plan even when it was risky.

Godly leaders submit to God's plan even when it is risky.

1 Samuel 23:5, 7-8

1 Samuel 22:5, 17a, 19

1 Samuel 23:10-12

David submitted to God's plan even when it was disheartening.

Godly leaders submit to God's plan even when it is disheartening.

1 Samuel 23:16-17

Jonathan submitted to God's plan even when it was costly.

Godly leaders submit to God's plan even when it is costly.

Matthew 16:24-25

1 Samuel 23:13a, 14, 26b-28

Saul resisted God's plan even though it was inevitable.

Reality distortion fields don't work on God.

Luke 22:42

Who is leading you?

Who are you leading?

Message Questions

We're in a year-long journey through the books of 1 and 2 Samuel, tracing the rise, reign, and legacy of Israel's most famous king. We'll see the story of how God works through real people with real flaws to accomplish his purposes. This week we are in **1 Samuel 23**, and the big idea is: Godly leaders submit to God's plan, not their own.

Use these questions to discuss the message from Sunday, focusing on how you can **grow** as an everyday follower of Jesus and how you can **go** accomplish what Jesus calls you to do.

1. Have someone read **1 Samuel 23:1-2**. When David hears that Keilah is being raided, his first reaction is to inquire of the Lord. How does this initial response reflect the big idea that godly leaders submit to God's plan rather than their own instincts or hero complexes?
2. Have someone read **1 Samuel 23:3-4**. Even after receiving a word from God, David's men are afraid, prompting David to inquire of the Lord a second time. Why is it important for a leader to seek God's confirmation when those they lead are fearful, and how does David's submission to God's plan even when it was risky impact the outcome in verse 5?

3. Have someone read **1 Samuel 23:7-8**. Saul interprets David's location in a walled city as God "handing him over" to be trapped. How does Saul's "Reality Distortion Field" lead him to mistake his own selfish desires for God's will, and what are the dangers of trying to fit God into our own plans instead of submitting to his?

4. Considering that David's love for God led him to the throne while Saul's disobedience cost him his, what is one specific area of your life where you need to **grow** in choosing God's plan over your own personal comfort or security?

5. Based on David's willingness to rescue the inhabitants of Keilah despite the danger to himself, how can you **go** and serve someone in your community this week who is being affected by life's circumstances, using that act of service as a way to demonstrate God's love and share your faith?

