

# INSIDE OUT

A young green plant with several leaves is being held by two hands, one on the left and one on the right, in a field of dry, brown leaves. The background is a bright, hazy landscape with a sun flare effect. The overall tone is warm and hopeful.

**THREE MONTH SERIES  
ON CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT FROM  
THE LIVES OF DAVID AND SOLOMON**

THE MAIN AND THE PLAIN SERIES  
VINEYARD YOUTH CURRICULUM

**vineyard**youth

# INSIDE OUT

| A SERIES ON CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT FROM THE LIVES OF DAVID AND SOLOMON |

# WELCOME!

## to Vineyard Youth Curriculum

**Hello, friends.** What you hold in your hands is the product of lots of people, lots of prayer, and lots of purpose. As youth leaders in the Vineyard movement, we believe that the work we do with students will have much influence on what the movement will look like over the next ten to twenty years.

We set out to design a curriculum that communicates and reinforces the biblical and kingdom values of the Vineyard while inviting students to embrace the reality that they are part of something bigger than themselves.

### **About This “Inside Out” Curriculum**

We would like to thank Tehachapi Mountain Vineyard Church for donating this curriculum to Vineyard Youth. This eleven-week study of David and Solomon was created by Dave Paolozzi for their youth group class, making the format somewhat different than VY’s usual curricula. The format Dave uses is Hook, Book, Look, Took—there is a description in detail below.

### **Why This Topic?**

Most of us are familiar with the main figures in the Old Testament, but how does that help us today? What can we possibly learn from the mistakes of those that have come before us? This curriculum is a character study from 1 & 2 Samuel and 1 Kings. In this study we will learn how to live well from the “inside out” by looking at the successes and failures of people like Samuel, David, and Solomon. These are high-powered and down-to-earth people who make the same core mistakes that we often make today.

### **Connecting to Vineyard Values**

We intentionally connect our curriculum to Vineyard Values and Distinctives. This series connects to the Vineyard Distinctive “The Main and the Plain.” This is the Vineyard’s commitment to teaching the main and plain teachings of Jesus, and by his grace and Spirit, learning to live by them. You can read more about these here:

<https://vineyardusa.org/about/vineyard-distinctives/>

## How To Use This Format

### **Hook**

We start each week (or lesson) with a hook: something fun and enjoyable to get things moving, get the group engaged, and build relationships.

### **Book**

Next we'll move into the Scripture. Each week is based on a story about a character in 1 or 2 Samuel, or 1 Kings, and focuses on one character trait we can learn from their lives. Feel free to incorporate different ways of reading, including having the teens read out loud, as many of the passages are fairly long.

### **Look**

After reading we will provide you with some teaching points. Feel free to make these your own. Some lessons also embed some discussion questions in the teaching points. This should be a time where you help the group generate some discussion around the main theme, and start thinking about how to apply the story they're reading to their lives. It is important for us as the leaders to not talk too long and dominate the discussion. Focus on asking open-ended questions and letting the teens explore the ideas themselves.

### **Took**

The last part is the takeaway section. This will normally be small group questions with a focus on how to take what we've discussed and apply it to our lives. This will also be the time when ministry time and prayer will be built in.

### **Ministry Response**

For some weeks we created an opportunity to respond with Holy Spirit ministry through prayer in groups or partners. Depending on your group's age and size, some of these may not "work." Use your discretion!

# FAITHFULNESS

## HOOK

### 1 SAMUEL 1 | HANNAH

1) **Whiteboard brainstorm:** How does God feel about you?

OR

2) **Do an organized trust fall:** After several students try the trust fall, explain how Hannah in the Bible story today had to trust that God would do what he said he would do.

## BOOK

**Passage:** 1 Samuel 1:1–28

**Character:** Hannah

**Topic:** Faithfulness

Have volunteers read the text (don't force anyone). Depending on your group, you may want to paraphrase and tell the story rather than reading it.

## LOOK

<https://thebibleproject.com/explore/1-samuel/>

This is an overview of the next few months.

This week we are looking at *Hannah and the birth of Samuel*.

#### **Five things we can learn from Hannah's faithfulness**

1. Hannah knew where to take her problems—straight to God in prayer. What kinds of things do you bring to God? Do you bring anything to him?
2. In her brokenness and pain, Hannah trusted God's power and ability to work on her behalf.

Talk about a time when you were desperate and God answered your cry. Ask students if they have any examples of this.

3. She believed God would do what He said He would do.

What are some of God's promises?

Have the group come up with some before going through some of these.

- He loves you unconditionally. (Romans 8:38–39)
- You are redeemed and have an eternal home in heaven. (John 3:16–17)
- God formed you with intention and knows you intimately. (Psalm 139)
- God's plan for your life is to prosper you, not to harm you. (Jeremiah 29:11–12)
- You have special strength available to you through faith. The best resource that's available to you is the power of Christ. (Philippians 4:13, Psalm 5:12, Romans 8:31)

#### 4. Hannah was faithful and strong to uphold her end of the prayer.

Hannah was committed to God's plan and sovereignty. We all have a part to play in God's plan for our lives, and part of that is trusting and believing God will do what he says he will do. Trust is an action: You have to let things go and decide not to do it your own way.

#### 5. She gave God praise for the way He had worked.

Having an attitude of gratitude can change the way you think and feel. The chemicals released (endorphins) in your brain can change your attitude. You actually have control over that.

## TOOK

### Small Group Discussion

1. What stands out from today's lesson?
2. What do you do with this? Every time we come into contact with Jesus he asks for a response. What is your response?

## MINISTRY RESPONSE

Split into pairs or small groups for prayer.

Share one thing you can take to God in prayer in your life, and pray for each other.

# RESPONSIVENESS

## 1 SAMUEL 3 | SAMUEL

### HOOK

#### Do a few rounds of "name that song."

Create a playlist of current songs. Maybe recruit a student a few days before to put the playlist together. Make sure it's a range of genres. There are a couple of ways to do this. One way is to break them into teams, play 15 seconds of a song (or less!), and have each person write down their votes. Each team gets a point for every person on their team who got it right. This way every gets to play. Another way you could play is to have each team send one person forward and two people face off each time to see who can guess the song fastest.

### BOOK

**Passage:** 1 Samuel 3:1–19

**Character:** Samuel

**Topic:** Responsiveness to God's Voice

### LOOK

Samuel had never heard God's voice before. He couldn't tell the difference from other voices he had heard.

What are the voices you are familiar with?

- Mom, Dad, etc

What are some of the things these voices are saying?

- What are some messages the world is speaking about who you should be?

How can we learn to recognize God's voice?

*"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me." (John 10:27)*

Watch this video that shows the power of sheep knowing the shepherd's voice.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e45dVgWgV64>

**The best way to know the Lord's voice is to spend time with Him.**

How can you spend time getting to know Jesus?

- Read scripture. Mark is a really straightforward and easy-to-read gospel, making it a great place to start.
- Spend time in worship.
- Tune out all the other voices. Take steps to quiet your heart; journaling can be a good way to do this.
- The reason you know the songs in the game we played is because you have spent time listening to them. If you want to know God's voice, then you will need to spend the time.

**Big Question!**

How do I know God's voice? Give your testimony about what this looks like in your life. *(Leader: Share a story too.)*

## TOOK

**Small Group Discussion**

1. What stands out from today's lesson?
2. What can you do in your life to start learning to recognize God's voice?
3. What do you do with this lesson? Every time we come into contact with Jesus he asks for a response. What is your response?

## MINISTRY RESPONSE

If you have time (depending on how your meeting is structured), you can do a clinic on hearing God's voice. Break your group into small groups and have them pray for each other. While praying, have them listen for God's voice and share with each other any words they hear from him.

# FEAR AND ANXIETY

## HOOK

### 1 SAMUEL 13 | PEOPLE OF ISRAEL

Watch some of this video for fun:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xicp0PRoEE>

#### Discussion Starter

Have you ever been afraid of something? What are some things you are afraid of or give you anxiety?

## BOOK

**Passage:** 1 Samuel 13:1–15

**Character:** Saul

**Topic:** Fear and Anxiety

## LOOK

In verse 7 Saul waits seven days while his men are terrified. Fear and anxiety can be major sources of motivation, and oftentimes we respond poorly to them.

Does anyone have an example of a time that fear and anxiety stopped you from doing something? *(Leader: Share an example from your life.)*

#### Here are some tips for dealing with fear and anxiety:

1. Tell on yourself.

Bring in some extra help. Look, life sucks sometimes. There is no reason to face challenges alone. Tell a friend, mentor, or parent. Choose someone safe. Let them pray for you and be there for you. After all, we are designed for community.

2. Tell yourself the truth.

Your words have power. Psychologists call it a self-fulfilling prophecy. It's where you literally speak something that isn't true into being true. The more energy and power you give the fear or anxiety, the bigger it will become.

Use truth statements. Identify your negative statements, challenge them, and replace them. For example, suppose you find yourself thinking or saying, "I suck at everything!" Ask yourself: Do I really suck at "everything"? Then try to identify the source of what's actually bothering you. Did you do poorly on a test or a paper? Tell yourself the truth about what you are upset about.

3. Learn to catch it early.

The longer you wait to get help or tell the truth about it, the more it will snowball out of control.

**Read Matthew 6:25–34**

How does God feel about us and our fears and anxieties?

Have the group direct the passage.

**Watch this Video:**

**Skit guys** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZslltDhgvBI>

## TOOK

**Small Group Discussion**

1. Do you ever struggle with fear and anxiety? In what situations?
2. What have you learned that helps you to cope with or overcome those feelings in your life?
3. What from the lesson today could help you the next time you do?

## MINISTRY RESPONSE

Break into pairs and spend time praying for one thing that causes fear and anxiety in each of your lives.

# DISOBEDIENCE

## HOOK

### 1 SAMUEL 15 | SAUL

*Leader: Be prepared to answer questions like this: "Why would a Loving God call for complete genocide?" if you don't know how to answer this, it's okay; just be honest about it to the kids.*

#### Play "Simon Says."

If you have an older group, make it more challenging. Or you could play "Psychiatrist," which is another game about following the rules. One kid will be the psychiatrist and the others will sit in a circle as the "patients." Send the psychiatrist out of the room while you decide what your "ailment" will be. Here are a few examples:

- We all answer questions as if we were the person to our right.
- We all answer questions as if we were all the same person in the circle (pick one).
- We all answer YES or NO depending on whether we have our legs crossed or not.

*The psychiatrist comes in and asks yes or no questions around the circle and tries to figure out the "ailment."*

## BOOK

**Passage:** 1 Samuel 15

**Character:** Saul

**Topic:** Disobedience

*This is a long chapter. You can set it up and read verses 13–24 for a shorter version.*

## LOOK

What's the real issue here?

*Leader: The issue is only obeying God half-way.*

**Short video about doing something half-way:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kom3QLsT4ro>

*For fun: What are some examples of things that would be awkward if they were only half-way complete?*

**Another funny video to illustrate the point:**

<https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7wyN/nationwide-insurance-do-things-halfway>



## TOOK

### **Sometimes it can be hard to completely obey God. What does God want from us?**

Read Matt 26:32–40 and discuss the passage. Is it hard to “love God and love others as we love ourselves?” Is this all God wants from us?

We could spend a lifetime just learning to love ourselves, but then you add in the need to love others. Wow that can be hard! Then level up again to loving God. Take time and talk about these three aspects of the two greatest commandments.

Make three lists to talk about ways to love God, love others, and love ourselves.

### **Small Group Discussion**

1. Have you ever felt God leading you to do something and you didn't follow through all the way? Tell us about it. What made you stop?
2. Why do you think it is hard to obey when God prompts you to pray for someone or talk to someone who is lonely or reach out to someone having a hard time? What gets in the way? How can we overcome these feelings and roadblocks?
3. Which of these comes easiest to you: loving God, loving others, or loving yourself? Which comes hardest and why do you think that is?

## MINISTRY RESPONSE

Break into small groups and share one thing in your upcoming week that you would like prayer for to help you be bold and follow God. Then pray for each other.

# COURAGE

## 1 SAMUEL 17 | DAVID

### HOOK

Get a bunch of rubber bands and big red plastic cups.  
Have a competition to see who can hit the cups from the furthest away.

### BOOK

**Passage:** 1 Samuel 17:25–51

**Character:** David

**Topic:** Courage

*This is quite a long chapter. Go ahead and set up the story, and then pick it up at verse 25 where David starts to converse with the soldiers.*

**Watch this brief video from the History Channel:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=swY3NVcl7Qo>

### LOOK

Discuss these questions with your group:

What are the Goliaths in your life?

What are the things that seem impossible to overcome?

*Leader: Take a look at the list below and choose some of these to go over with your group. Consider writing them on the whiteboard and having students put a check mark next to all that apply. Then talk about the item with the most checks (adapted from beliefnet.com).*

#### **Goliath #1: Insecurity**

Lack of confidence in one's self is a terrible way to live and God wants you to be confident in your ability in Him. When we understand who we are, we can walk in confidence. We use Philippians 4:13 to bring down the giant of self-doubt.

#### **Goliath #2: Approval of Others**

We often compare ourselves to others. Instagram, Facebook, and other sites cause us to look at people and wish we could be more like them. When you put your faith in man instead of God, it opens your life up to disappointment and a world of failed expectations. People will fail you—that's a fact—but God won't. "Fearing people is a dangerous trap, but trusting the LORD means safety." – Proverbs 29:25 (NLT)

#### **Goliath #3: Blaming Others/Not Taking Responsibility**

We can't control the circumstances of those around us, but we can dictate

our reaction to them. Take ownership of your decisions and watch God transform your life. Don't make excuses for your shortcomings. Deuteronomy 30:19 says, "...I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live."

#### **Goliath #4: Fear**

The more energy you spend on fear, the bigger this Goliath will become. The spirit that God gives us is one of power, love, and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7). When we operate in fear, we essentially allow our original design and function to be affected by the distorted realm of the enemy.

#### **Goliath #5: Selfishness**

The giant that is most difficult to take down is ourselves. Living a life that is closed to others' needs and only concerned about survival is not God's perfect will for His children. Greatness in God's kingdom is based on servanthood. Instead of gearing your whole life toward yourself and what you want, live a life of love and serving others design and function to be affected by the distorted realm of the enemy.

Read more at <https://www.beliefnet.com/inspiration/galleries/7-goliaths-god-wants-you-to-knock-down-in-life.aspx#t4p8luEleytvkFtQ.99>

## TOOK

#### **Small Group Discussion**

1. Do you feel like courage is something that comes naturally to you? Are you someone who likes to take a risk or take on a challenge? Do you like to put yourself out there, or not?
2. Pick two of the Goliaths that we talked about today that you face most often. Share with the group how it affects your life and how you've learned to combat them.
3. What do you think gave David the confidence he had, and how can you apply that to your life now in this day and age?

## MINISTRY RESPONSE

Break into groups of two or three and take turns praying for each other about one of the Goliaths that each of you are facing.

## HONOR

## HOOK

## 1 SAMUEL 24 | DAVID

Name that Disney Movie.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jrB-sQ-O5FY>

What does honor look like in these Disney movies? Discuss how the movies portray honor. Does this look like honor in your life?

## BOOK

**Passage:** 1 Samuel 24:1–13

**Character:** David

**Topic:** Honor

## LOOK

David and Saul had a complicated relationship. Even though David didn't agree with how Saul was leading, he honored and respected Saul as the one God had put in charge.

**Discuss:**

Is there a leader, teacher, or person of authority in your life that is hard to follow?

*Leader: Describe a situation in your life where it was hard to follow someone in authority.*

- Just like David found a way to honor Saul, come up with a list of ways we can practice honoring those around us who are difficult to honor. On a whiteboard make two separate lists: one that says "honor" and one that says "dishonor." Brainstorm with students ways that we do both to those around us.
- After you do this, take time to read over the following list together and compare with the ideas you came up with as a group.

**Eleven ways to honor the Sauls in your life:**

**(Taken from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/living-the-questions/201503/20-expert-tactics-dealing-difficult-people>)**

1.Listen.

Listening is the number one step in dealing with "unreasonable" people. Everyone wants to feel heard. No progress can take place until the other person feels acknowledged. While you're listening, really focus on what the other person is saying, not what you want to say next.

2. Stay calm.

When a situation is emotionally charged, it's easy to get caught up in the heat of the moment. Monitor your breathing. Try to take some slow, deep breaths.

3. Reflect respect and dignity toward the other person.

No matter how a person is treating you, showing contempt will not help productively resolve the situation.

4. Saying, "I understand," usually makes things worse.

Instead, say, "Tell me more so I can understand better."

5. Don't return anger with anger.

Raising your voice, pointing your finger, or speaking disrespectfully to the other person will add fuel to an already heated situation. Use a low, calm, almost monotone voice. Don't try to talk over the person. Wait until the person takes a breath and then speak.

6. Don't argue or try to convince the other person of anything.

7. Say, "I'm sorry," or, "I'm going to try to fix this."

This can go a long way toward defusing many situations.

8. Set limits and boundaries.

While some of the above tips have encouraged listening and letting the angry person vent, you also have the right to say, "Please don't talk to me like that."

9. Trust your instincts.

If your gut is saying, this is going downhill fast, be ready to do what you need to do to remain safe. Look for an exit strategy.

10. Debrief.

After the situation is over, talk to someone about what happened.

11. Give yourself credit for getting through an uncomfortable situation.

It takes a lot of energy not to act like a jerk when someone else is behaving badly. Don't skip this step!

## TOOK

### Small Group Discussion

1. Which one of those eleven steps do you think you don't do very easily? Which one comes naturally to you?
2. When someone disrespects you, what is your first reaction?
3. If someone treats you badly, do you feel like you have the right to get them back or treat them badly in return?
4. When Jesus talks about "turning the other cheek," what do you think he means? Do you think you could do this if someone said something mean about you?

## MINISTRY RESPONSE

Spend a little time in reflection. Ask everyone to close their eyes and ask the Lord to bring to mind one relationship in which they could learn to respond with honor more. This doesn't have to be long. Just give them a chance to reflect on this relationship and on how they can respond with more honor.

# WORSHIP

## 2 SAMUEL 6 | DAVID

### HOOK

What do you spend your free time doing? If you could be doing anything right now, what would it be?

### BOOK

**Passage:** 2 Samuel 6:12–23

**Character:** David

**Topic:** Worship

### LOOK

Watch this funny video before discussing:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bvVz-YtEpr8>

**Discuss:**

What is worship? How do we do this as a church or youth group?

What does it look like?

**Worship:** Intense love or admiration. The act of freely giving love to God. An expression of awe, submission, and respect. It involves our thought, our intellect, and our bodies.

1. In verses 20–21 what was David criticized for?
2. What are some things people worship? Make a list together as a group
3. Now make a list of reasons to worship God.

**Why we worship:**

- God created us for relationship (Adam and Eve in the garden).
- God really does want to hang out with us.
- There is a God-shaped place inside of us that can only be filled with him. Worship is a great way to connect with him.
- John 4:1-26 (you might need to paraphrase if you don't have time)  
*How do we worship God with our lifestyles? And "in spirit and truth"?  
What lifestyle was she living?*
- He changes our lives (anger, rage, hate, lust, impurity).
- We will worship something else, if not God.
- God dwells in the praises of His people.
- "For where two three gather in my name, there am I with them."  
(Matthew 18:20)

**Big Thought:**

What we worship establishes what side we are on (with Jesus or with the world). We were made with the capacity and the need to express adoration and be in communion with objects of our longing. If we make poor choices about how and what we worship, we put ourselves in the terrible position of seeking inner satisfaction from things that can never give it to us. When we worship him, we are changed.

Finally let's discuss things that get in the way of us worshipping God during worship times.

*Leader: Have each student make a list of what gets in their way. Then have students share their lists. You can also discuss this list:*

**Things that get in the way of worship/during worship times:**

1. Our attitude
2. Busyness
3. Thinking about the person next to us
4. Daydreaming
5. Sin or shame
6. Worried about how you look or sound, or what others think
7. Listening to how good you sound
8. Inability to focus
9. Heart in the wrong place

## TOOK

### Small Group Discussion

1. Are there places in your life where it is easier to feel God's presence, or feel close to God? (For instance, in nature, while listening to worship music, in prayer, etc.)
2. When you worship in church or at youth group, do you feel God's presence? Why or why not?
3. Do you think worship is something you can grow in? What can you do to grow and have worship become a more meaningful experience for you?
4. If you were in charge of worship at your church (or youth group), what would you change?

## MINISTRY RESPONSE

This really depends on whether you are in a large or small group, and how much time you have. If it works, move into worship after you finish small groups. Do worship with an emphasis on connecting with Jesus.

## HOOK

## 2 SAMUEL 11 | DAVID

**Murder, rape, violence, deception, cover-up! Nope, we are not talking about the news around the United States. We're talking about King David!**

**Have you ever done something that you knew was wrong?  
Did you get in BIG trouble?**

## BOOK

**Passage:** 2 Samuel 11

**Characters:** David and Bathsheba

**Topic:** Sin

*Some of this may be embarrassing for younger ones to read, so you may need to do the reading, or choose to explain the story in a more sensitive way.*

## LOOK

Let's look at and talk about three parts of the text.

**Verses 2–5**

Sin is meeting a legitimate need in an illegitimate way. David had six other wives, but because his desires were left unchecked, he acted on them and raped someone that was married. It's a blatant abuse of power. (A lot can be said about this section. Discretion is advised. Discussions can include lust, pornography, OT wives and concubines, rape etc.)

**Discuss:**

Sin often starts in the heart, with a desire:

**James 1:14–15**

"...each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death."

We always have a choice. There is a point where we know we are choosing to act on that desire and we know it is wrong. That is called conviction, and it is something the Holy Spirit does for us.

What could David have done to prevent this desire from becoming sin?

*Leader: A couple ideas you can share if the students don't:*

- *He could have told someone he was tempted.*
- *He could have asked for prayer.*
- *He could have gone to war like he was supposed to.*

Let's go around and share a time when you felt the Holy Spirit convicting you—when you knew you should not do something you were about to do. How did you react?

#### **Verses 6–13**

Then came the cover-up! As if taking another man's wife while he is fighting your battle wasn't bad enough, David engineered a cover-up, but it didn't work. We've all tried to cover up a mistake before, but David's was on a much bigger scale.

#### **Discuss:**

Do you remember a time when you were younger when you did something wrong, and then you tried to cover it up so your parents wouldn't find out? Did you hide it, lied about it, or blame someone else? (Leader: Tell a story of a time when you tried to cover something up if you have one.)

#### **Verses 14–27**

Murder. This is a great example of a cover-up getting out of control. David continues to dig himself a deeper hole. So much about this is wrong. David is clearly misusing his power in order to keep himself from looking bad. In the end, word gets out about how badly David handled himself. Do you think David covered up anything else during his rule? People don't just wake up and murder someone; there is usually a progression. You don't have to share this, but ask yourself whether you have anything in your life that could be progressing toward something bigger.

#### **Discuss:**

How could David have stopped this progression?

*Leader: This is a great chance to talk about the power of confession and bringing things into the light so they don't have the power to destroy your life.*

## TOOK

### Small Group Discussion

1. Because this story is in the Bible, does that mean that God condones David's actions? If not, then why is it included in the Bible?
2. How was David called by God "a man after God's own heart" when he did all of this?
3. Do you think it is good that God is willing to forgive David for all of this? Does it make you feel hopeful for your own life? Or does it feel unfair to you?

# OWNING YOUR SIN

## HOOK

### 2 SAMUEL 12 | DAVID

**Have you ever made a bad decision, and then gotten caught?**

This video is kind of long, but you can pick a few "fails" that you think your group will find humorous. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nyNuwKNHL9I>

**Moral of the story:**

Sometimes there are consequences for our bad decisions. The bigger the bad decision, the bigger the consequence.

## BOOK

**Passage:** 2 Samuel 12:1–10

**Character:** David

**Topic:** Owing Your Sin

## LOOK

**Three ways to take responsibility for your actions:**

(adapted from <https://thriveglobal.com/stories/9-ways-to-take-responsibility-for-your-life/>)

*Leader: Take time and talk about each item with the students and how they can use this in their own lives.*

1. Take responsibility for your thoughts, feelings, words, and actions.

When confronted, David took responsibility for his actions. It was the first good thing he did in this whole debacle. He didn't argue, try to shift the blame, or defend himself. He admitted his wrong and repented.

When someone confronts you with something you've done wrong, or has hurt them, do you ever get defensive? Do you say things like, "I didn't mean it that way?"

Have you ever walked away from a conversation and realized you said something that might have been hurtful? What would it look like to take responsibility for your words in that situation?

## 2. Stop blaming

Have you ever found yourself trying to shift the blame? Here's an example: "It's not my fault that what I said hurt you. You took it the wrong way!" Or "I know I'm late, but you should have told me what time it was, Mom!"

When are we most likely to shift blame?

Think about the word ownership. It's about owning what we've done—whether it is good or bad—and dealing with the consequences. Often we shift the blame so we won't be held responsible and therefore won't suffer the consequences.

Several leaders discuss this concept this way: "When something goes well, I look out the window and give someone credit; when something goes wrong, I look in the mirror and take responsibility." The opposite is normally true of human nature. When something goes wrong, we LOVE to look for someone else to blame. So what if you started looking in the mirror every time something went wrong and asked yourself, "How can I take ownership in this situation, and what can I learn to grow from it?"

## 3. Use the power of intention

You have one of the greatest powers that God has given to mankind: the power of choice. You can choose to do good, or to do evil. You can choose to help, or to stay quiet. You can choose to be kind, or to be mean. Your choice determines your actions. David made choices, and they defined who he was. We have that same power.

What kind of person do you want to be? Think about this question, and maybe write this down before sharing it: If you could pick five attributes or characteristics that people would use to describe you, what would they be?

*Leader: Once students have had time to reflect and write those down, talk about how it is a choice to make that happen, and they have the power to choose how they live their lives.*

## TOOK

### Small Group Discussion

1. Why is it difficult to admit when you are wrong?
2. When confronted about wrongdoing, people tend to either get defensive OR beat themselves up. Which way do you lean and why?
3. Who in your life is it hardest to hear correction from? Why do you think that is?

## 1 KINGS 3 | SOLOMON

## HOOK

If you could ask for anything, knowing that you would be 100 percent successful and knowing there was no fear or cost involved, what would you ask for? Go around the room and give each person a chance to answer.

## BOOK

**Passage:** 1 Kings 3:5–15  
**Character:** Solomon  
**Topic:** Wisdom

## LOOK

Why do you think Solomon asked for wisdom? Maybe he felt overwhelmed with running the kingdom. He clearly wanted to make good decisions.

What is the difference between wisdom and knowledge?

*Leader: After they share, talk about what you think the differences are. Knowledge seems to be more about gathering information, while wisdom seems to be about applying it in real-life situations, but you can talk about more than that too.*

How do you think you can grow in wisdom?

*Leader: Is there any way to grow in this? Is it just from life experience? How about talking to, and listening to, wise people? How about reading Scripture on a regular basis?*

James 1:5

If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

Sometimes making choices can be hard:

**Watch this funny video:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JAKdZ7aw-hI>

What are some of the more difficult decisions that you face?

*Leader: Take some time to go around the room and share. Why was it difficult? How did it turn out? Do you have any regrets? Also, leader, share one of your own.*

How do you make these decisions?

*Work this out on a whiteboard together. Let everyone share how they make tough decisions in life. Then discuss a few of these ideas:*

- Pray about it and see if God gives you direction
- Search Scripture to see if there is guidance in the Bible for you
- Make a list of pro's and con's
- Ask someone (or multiple people even) you trust what their thoughts are on the decision
- Talk to a mentor in your life about it
- Don't rush—take your time and allow yourself to come to peace about it

## TOOK

### Small Group Discussion

1. Do you feel like you are good at making decisions, or is it a struggle for you? If it's a struggle, why do you think that is?
2. Fear is a major obstacle in making decisions: fear of failure, fear of letting people down, fear of making the wrong choice. Do you struggle with any of these fears? Which ones? What can you do to overcome that fear?
3. What are some issues or areas in your life that you wish you had more wisdom about?

## MINISTRY RESPONSE

Break into groups of two or three and spend some time praying for each other. Have each person share one thing they could use wisdom in their life about, and then have the other people in the group pray for that.

# GREED AND INDULGENCE

## 1 KINGS 10-11 | SOLOMON

### HOOK

Go around and ask, “What’s your favorite stuff?” Or “If you were on a desert island and you could only bring one item for comfort or enjoyment, what would it be?” Hopefully you will get answers like, phone, TV, music, gadgets, books, and so forth.

### BOOK

**Passage:** 1 Kings 10:23–11:13

**Character:** Solomon

**Topic:** Greed, indulgence

### LOOK

What is consumerism?

Solomon wanted and received more and more stuff. He immersed himself in things. As a result, his heart drew far from God.

#### Watch This Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PzyENavtLFo>

#### Discuss:

Do you agree with what he is saying in the video—that after your needs are met, more stuff and money won’t make you any happier? Why or why not?

Do you believe the statement, “When you focus on the things that actually matter, then your wants and desires will come anyway”?

What are some of the things that pull you away from God?

How many of you think your cell phone pulls you away from time with God?

Is it possible to break the cycle of consumerism in our lives? Why or why not?

#### 7 keys to breaking consumerism

*Leader: Talk about each key, and discuss with the teens if they think it works, and why.*

1. Think about what advertisements are really selling us. Are they selling a product, or just an emotion, a feeling, a desire, or a status symbol?

## TOOK

2. Buy things for their usefulness not for their status.
3. Repurpose, reuse, reduce, and sell it don't toss it.
4. Ask yourself, "Is this a want or a need?"
5. Block, mute, reject ads and commercials.
6. Find it used.
7. Learn to be content with what you have.

### Small Group Discussion

1. What rules could you put around your phone so it doesn't detract from your relationships with people? With God?
2. Do you think of yourself as being materialistic? How would you know if you were?
3. What's the difference between having lots of stuff, and your stuff having you?
4. Generosity is often seen as a counterbalance to greed. Do you think you are generous? In what ways have you been generous lately? How can you be more generous?
5. Do you have to have a lot to be generous? How can you be generous with a little?

## MINISTRY RESPONSE

As a group, discuss some sort of way to give back as a group. Brainstorm and plan some kind of outreach, giving drive, or fundraiser so that you can work together as a group and defeat greed in your lives.

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Dave Paolozzi is the Associate Pastor at Tehachapi Vineyard where he oversees kids, youth, and whatever else needs to be done. He and his wife, Jen, have been in youth ministry on and off for twenty-plus years. They have a nineteen-year-old daughter who has completed two missions trips with YWAM. Dave graduated from St. Stephens University with a Masters in Ministry. Dave and his family have a passion for missions. They often take trips to Mexico to build houses, help the local church with outreaches, and visit orphanages. One of Dave's focuses is developing disciples that love God and love others.

# WELCOME TO VINEYARD YOUTH CURRICULUM

Hello friends. What you hold in your hands is the product of lots of people, lots of prayer, and lots of purpose. The Vineyard movement is at a crucial place, and we believe that the work we do with students will have much influence on what the movement will look like over the next 10-20 years. We set out to design a curriculum that communicates and reinforces the biblical and kingdom values of the Vineyard while inviting students to embrace the reality that they are part of something bigger than themselves.

Understanding the diversity within the Vineyard movement, we purposefully designed curriculum that can be utilized by groups of differing sizes led by either paid or volunteer leaders in any geographical setting or location. Easy, right? We believe we accomplish this by offering a buffet of activities that allow you – the in-the-trenches leader – to choose what works for you and your group. We're pretty sure no one will use all of the material proposed, but we're confident some of it will be a good fit for your group.

## Each lesson includes:

- Experiential, hands-on activities that reflect a variety of learning styles.
- Large group questions to frame a conversation (I.E., not a lecture).
- Application suggestions to reveal and experience the kingdom of God.
- Small group questions each week.

## Why This Topic?

Most of us are familiar with the main figures in the Old Testament, but how does that help us today? What can we possibly learn from the mistakes of those that have come before us? This curriculum is a character study from 1 & 2 Samuel and Kings. In this study we will learn how to live well from the "Inside Out" by looking at the successes and failures of people like Samuel, David and Solomon. These are high powered and extremely down to earth people who make the same core mistakes that we often make today.

## About the Author

*Dave Paolozzi*

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