

## Dive into the Bible!

**David:** 1 Samuel 16 is where the story of King David starts, when he is a young shepherd. Imagine the surprise for David, his brothers, and his dad when the prophet Samuel shows up and makes David the next king of Israel! Celebrate surprise with your family. Try any of the following ideas that fit your life best.

**Pre-K:** Take some time to read the story of David (1 Samuel 16:1-13) together, then do this fun activity. All you need are six clear cups filled  $\frac{1}{3}$  full with water and red, blue, and yellow food coloring!

Point out that God's world is filled with beautiful surprises. One of these involves colors. Invite campers to tell about rainbows, sunsets, flowers, and other colorful things they have seen. Then have children make a little circle with their thumb and pointer finger. Ask them to look through their spyglass (little finger circle) to find objects with the colors you name.

Begin with: "I spy with my little eye something that is blue." Have campers look through their spy glasses and call out all the blue things they see. Explain that even the beautiful colors God created are surprising!

Next, fill six clear plastic cups about one-third full of water.

As you add a drop or two of red food coloring to one cup, have campers call out the name of the color. Repeat this for blue and yellow in separate cups.

Admire the red, blue, and yellow. But point out that you still need green, purple, and orange. Wonder aloud what you can do to get those colors when you only have red, blue, and yellow. Demonstrate how to create green by mixing yellow and blue, orange by mixing yellow and red, and purple by mixing blue and red.

**Elementary:** God knew what made up David's personality and knew those traits would make him a good king. Brainstorm ideas about what makes a good king or queen, then ask campers to pantomime the unique parts of themselves that would make them a good king or queen while the other campers guess what they are acting out. Once everyone has had a chance to pantomime, give each person 5 minutes to find an assortment of clothes and accessories. They have 4-5 minutes to create a royal outfit out of the clothes and accessories gathered. Upper elementary campers may want to vote for a costume "winner."

Ponder these questions together: Did the addition of a "royal outfit" change the way the king or queen thinks about themselves and who they are on the inside? Why or why not?

**Junior High:** David's anointing was a surprise to everyone, except God. The Bible described how David looked, but it also notes that God knew David's heart. God cares about our hearts too,

as well as our bodies. Our whole self is a gift from God and all our skills and talents are useful to God's work in the world. Invite campers to take turns completing this sentence: "I would be a good leader because I \_\_\_\_\_." Give the campers time to think. They can say anything that is true about them. (For example, I am a good listener. I run quickly. I have lots of friends. I am good at video games.)

**Senior High:** David's anointing was a surprise to him and to his family. It probably shocked his friends as well. In our day, such news would be shared on social media with different hashtags or phrases. Social media and online spaces have a strong potential to build up or to tear down friends and communities. People are often trying to portray themselves in the very best way. God, however, sees all of our lives and cares about all of it. What are some ways to look at social media or use it to think about and showcase God's surprising love and faithfulness? What are the risks and benefits in revealing one's true self? Invite campers to share their positive and negative experiences with social media.

**Adult:** Invite campers to explore how unexpected outcomes continue in the story of David. Grab a sheet of paper and divide it into six equal sections. Each section should contain one of the following descriptions and scripture references. Read the passage (*1 Samuel 17; 1 Samuel 18:1-9; 1 Samuel 19; 1 Samuel 24*) and create simple graphics to illustrate these 6 parts of the story. Consider using a graphic novel approach, with multiple frames to convey the plot and action.

- David prepares to face Goliath, an enemy who seems impossible to overcome (1 Samuel 17:1-30).
- David convinces Saul to allow him to fight Goliath and the Philistines, trusting God's promises (1 Samuel 17:31-58).
- After overcoming Goliath, David meets King Saul and becomes friends with Saul's son, Jonathan (1 Samuel 18:1-5).
- As David serves Saul, his military victories became known. When the people show favor for David, Saul becomes jealous (1 Samuel 18:6-9).
- Eventually Saul threatens to end David's life, sending David into hiding (1 Samuel 19).
- David has the chance to take Saul's life and take his place, but he does the unexpected and lets Saul live (1 Samuel 24).

Reflect on how the promises (land, descendants, and blessing) made to Abraham and Sarah found expression in David's life up to this point.

Craft: Self-Affirmation Mirror

Materials: bathroom mirror(s), Post-It notes or small pieces of paper, markers, tape (if needed)

Directions:

1. Invite campers to write down positive things about themselves on the pieces of paper. Encourage them to name personal qualities and skills rather than aspects of physical appearance. Challenge campers to also write positive things that God might see in them.
3. After campers write on their papers, instruct them to stick the pieces to the mirror. The idea is for their words to surround the mirror, which will eventually look like a flower.
4. Be prepared that older campers, especially, may struggle to come up with positive things to say about themselves.
5. Talk with campers about God choosing unexpected people, like David, to lead and serve God's purpose of blessings for all.

Environmental Education: Nature Beatitudes

Materials: Paper, Writing Utensils, Bible

Directions:

1. Read the Beatitudes in Matthew 5 or Luke 6 and invite campers to briefly discuss how the Beatitudes are an example of something that is unexpected. Then invite them to think about how creation is filled with animals and plants that help us and other life forms in unexpected ways:
  - Insects that pollinate or decompose food.
  - Pigs and plants that consume compost.
  - Sheep that provide wool for clothing.
  - Snakes that maintain the rodent population.
2. Explain that even plants and animals that we might not "like" have a vital part in our ecosystem, and it is our responsibility as caretakers of God's creation to protect them even if we might not personally be drawn to them.
3. Have the campers come up with at least five creatures that are commonly considered to be "gross" and why they should be considered blessings and how they are important in our ecosystems.



