



# groups

## Introduction to April 2019 Sermon Series

In the month of April, we continue to follow the promises of God through His chosen people. Over the past months, we've seen that God doesn't choose the most rosy and moral people, but He chooses broken and sinful people to show His glory and grace. In April, we'll look at David before taking a break for Easter.

Our goal in reading the Bible is not only to know more about the Bible and God or to know the stories better, but also to have a relationship with God and do what He teaches in His Word. Each of these discussion guides will take you through a passage or story and help you to know what God is teaching through His Word.

**During the week of Easter (April 21), we would recommend you consider serving communion in your group. For guidance on how to do that, read the "Communion Guide for Leaders" located here: <https://www.fhcgroupleaders.org/resources>**

### *How to Use This Discussion Guide*

- Use the summary statement for each week to quickly understand the text's theme. You can use that as a reference point to help guide your discussion or bring it back if your group begins to get off topic.
- Use the prayer prompt at the end of each guide to help you close in prayer.

Additionally, here are some tips and guidelines to help you lead these discussions:

1. **Choose the questions that best fit your group and your time constraints.** There are a lot of questions in this guide and your group may not be able to discuss them all. That's okay! You don't have to ask all of them. Before your group begins, choose the questions that are most likely to help your group understand what God is saying in the text and how to apply it to their lives.
2. **Begin every group meeting with prayer.** We can only understand and apply God's Word with the help of the Holy Spirit. So, invite the Spirit to open your hearts and minds to what He says to His people.
3. **Keep the conversation focused on Scripture as much as possible.** Some people may want to bring in their opinions or continually refer to what David said during his message. This is helpful in small doses, but the goal of this discussion guide is to help you determine what God is saying in His Word. Encourage the group to continue to return to the Scripture. One way to do that is by saying, "That's a great insight! Where do you see that in the Scripture we're studying?"
4. **Encourage participation, but don't let anyone dominate.** Encourage everyone to share insights, ask questions, and read aloud. But don't allow any one person – even yourself, the leader – to monopolize the time. Some people are just unaware of themselves and how much they speak, so gently encourage them to listen and make space for others to talk.
5. **Help your group members to be specific in the application of Scripture.** It is easy to generalize when we talk about the Bible and how to apply it. So ask your group members specific questions – for example, "What part of the world do you sense God wants you to pray for? How will you do that? How will you make that a habit?"

We pray that you will hear God speak through His Word and that His Spirit will move you to obey Him. The Word of God – the Bible – lets us know the God who loves us and saves us. May this discussion guide help you and your Life Group to become more immersed in His story.

## David the Shepherd April 6-7, 2019

**Theme:** God chooses, equips, and empowers us for His service.

- **What is the best first impression someone has ever made on you? What is the worst?**
- **Why are we often impressed by other people's surface qualities, like looks, social status, and power? Why is this unhealthy?**

Leader's Note: We often fall into the trap of thinking that God chooses people for His service based on their strength, intelligence, and abilities. Through the example of David, however, we will see that God chooses people to serve Him based upon entirely different criteria. When we realize that God chooses, equips, and empowers us for His service, we can approach our daily tasks with joy and purpose knowing we can do all things for His glory.

### Ask a volunteer to read 1 Samuel 16:1-10

Leader's Note: God led the prophet Samuel to anoint Saul as Israel's first king (see 1 Sam. 8–9). However, in 1 Samuel 15, Samuel told Saul that because of his disobedience, the kingdom would be taken from him and given to someone else. The new person God picked to be anointed as king was chosen based upon an entirely different criteria than we might expect.

- **Is God impressed by the same qualities that impress us? Why or why not?**
- **Why did Samuel initially think Eliab was the Lord's choice? What's the irony here (see 1 Samuel 10:23-24)?**

Leader's Note: Eliab evidently had the physical features of a star actor or athlete, looking every bit the part of a potential king. As Jesse's oldest son stood before him, Samuel must have compared him with the tall and impressive Saul (1 Sam. 10:23-24). Our culture also evaluates people by their appearance, social status, talents, and other superficial traits. Nevertheless, people do not see what God sees. Outward appearances often deceive people, but they never deceive God.

- **What does verse 7 suggest about the qualities God counts as most important for His servants?**

### Ask a volunteer to read 1 Samuel 16:11-13.

- **What characteristic would seem to hinder David from being anointed as king (v. 11)?**
- **What did David's faithfulness in watching the sheep say about his character? How did this prepare him for the future? (See 1 Sam. 17:34-37; Ps. 23)**

Leader's Note: David's faithful work as a shepherd reminds us of two important truths. First, it doesn't matter what we do, but how we do it. No matter what tasks we are given, we are to do them in a way that brings glory to God. Second, we learn that God is working behind the scenes in David's life in order to prepare him for his future role as king. Tending sheep helped prepare David to rule Israel. "Shepherd" would become a symbolic job description for king. God intended the king to care for people with the same compassion that a shepherd gives to the flock. Also, David's encounters with predators developed skills that later became useful in combat.

- **Look at verse 13. What made David qualified to be king? Why did God choose David?**

Leader's Note: While Samuel described David as “a man after God’s own heart” (1 Sam. 13:14), we are given little information about David other than his unimpressive size and his faithfulness to his sheep. What made David qualified to be the king of Israel was God’s decision to choose him and give him the Holy Spirit. David was qualified to be king of Israel because of God’s faithfulness, not because of David’s own faithfulness.

**Ask a volunteer to read John 15:16 and Ephesians 2:8-10.**

- **What makes us qualified to be used by God?**
- **How might knowing that God is always working behind the scenes change your perspective on unfortunate events in your life? Can you share an example?**

Leader's Note: David didn’t have a clue that Samuel and God were discussing anointing him as king, he simply did his job as a shepherd the best way he could while God worked behind the scenes to prepare him to be king of Israel. In the same way, as followers of Christ, we can trust that God is working behind the scenes of our often average and frustrating lives to make us more like Christ and use us for His plans.

**Ask a volunteer to read Colossians 3:17.**

- **How might this verse change the way you think about the less desirable tasks you must do each week?**
- **How might knowing that God has chosen you to serve Him change the way that you view your occupation or role in life? How can you remember this truth this week?**
- **Why is it important for us to remember who we are in Christ? How might doing so help us overcome feelings of inadequacy or unimportance?**
- **What is one thing you have to do every week that you hate? How might you seek to glorify God in the way that you approach that task?**

**Close in prayer, thanking God for making us qualified to live for Him and serve in His kingdom through the work of His Son on the cross. Pray that we would remember who we are in Christ and rely on His power as we seek to fulfill the tasks of life to His glory.**