

CHAMP SPORTS DEVOTIONAL



SPRING 2023

CHAMP Office – 704.341.5387
Weather Hotline – 704.341.5473
www.champsportsinfo.com

Welcome to CHAMP Sports!

Season Schedule

Practices Begin: Week of March 6

Uniform Distribution: Week of March 6

Game Schedules: Week of March 13

Opening Day: Saturday, March 18

Spring Break: April 7-13 (No practices or games)

Practices Resume: April 14

Season Ends: Saturday, May 20

For any questions or concerns,
contact the CHAMP office, **704.341.5387**
champ@calvarychurch.com

Director: Peter Farynyk, 704.341.5340
Assistant Director: Kelly Lamb, 704.887.3689(o)
704.301.6074(c)

Weather Hotline: 704.341.5473
Updated Mon-Fri. at 3:00 PM; Sat. at 7:30 AM

**Join us weekly for Sunday morning
worship at 9:45 AM in person or via livestream.**

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Welcome to CHAMP Sports!

Week of March 6 – 10

Welcome to CHAMP Sports! This season at CHAMP, we are going to learn about what it means to walk with God by studying the life of King David. God called David, “a man after my own heart” (Acts 13:22). This meant that David wanted to know what God thinks, feels, and wants so that he could do God’s will. What a wonderful way to live!

David spent His growing-up years as a shepherd boy. He was alone with the sheep, but he wasn’t *really* alone, because God was with him. As David watched over the sheep, he spent a lot of time thinking carefully about what God had done as written in the Bible. Most of the Bible hadn’t been written when David was alive, but he definitely had the first five books of the Bible. In these he learned about Creation, the Flood, the promises that God made to Abraham, the Exodus, and so much more! As David walked with God, His love for God grew. During this time, God was preparing David to do a really big job. Do you know what that job was? To be king over Israel.

In Israel, God was King, but the people wanted a human king. They wanted someone that they could see with their physical eyes. They wanted to be like their neighbor nations who had human kings. God warned the people of Israel against having someone besides Him as their king. He said that a sinful human king would take their sons and daughters to work for him; that he would take the best of everything for himself and his servants and he would tax the people; that in the end, the Israelites would, “cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD will not answer you in that day” (1 Samuel 8:18). But the people either didn’t believe the LORD, or they didn’t care. They just wanted a king!

The first human king in Israel was King Saul. In outward things, King Saul was great. He was tall; he was passionate; he was handsome, and he came from a wealthy family. However, in inward things, King Saul was not great. He struggled with envy, jealousy, and a serious lack of self-control.

Saul’s main problem in life was that he did not trust God with his whole heart. Saul’s lack of faith in God led to Saul disobeying God in some serious ways and because of Saul’s disobedience, God rejected Saul from being king.

After God rejected Saul, God sent His prophet, Samuel, to anoint a new king. The LORD directed Samuel to go to the house of Jesse. One of Jesse’s sons was to be the next king of Israel. Jesse’s oldest son’s name was Eliab. He was tall and handsome, but the LORD did not pick Eliab to be the next king of Israel. The man that God chose to be the king of Israel after Saul was David, the youngest of Jesse’s eight sons. Why did God choose David to be the king of Israel after Saul? It was because David was a man “after God’s own heart.” What David wanted in life was to know God. This is what made David special. How much do you want to know God?!

Proverbs 3:5

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.

Questions: Do you want to know what God thinks, feels, and wants? Are you a person “after God’s own heart”?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

David and Goliath

Week of March 13-18

Who was Goliath? Goliath was a Philistine soldier who was about nine feet tall! He was strong and arrogant, and he thought that no one could defeat him on the battlefield. Do you think that Goliath worshiped the God of Israel? He did not. Goliath worshiped the gods of the Philistines.

Goliath may have been big and strong, but think about how much bigger and stronger the living God is. When Goliath picked a fight with Israel, Goliath picked a fight with God. Not smart!

When Goliath and the Philistines came out to fight Israel, Saul was king. Unfortunately, King Saul didn't see Goliath the way that God saw Goliath. King Saul saw a mountain of a man decked out in two hundred pounds of armor and weapons. King Saul was scared of Goliath. He wanted Goliath to simply go away and leave Israel alone. But, David was not like Saul. David knew God. David knew God's covenant with Israel. David knew that God had said, "When you go out to war against your enemies, and see horses and chariots and an army larger than your own, you shall not be afraid of them, for the Lord your God is with you, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. And when you draw near to the battle, the priest shall come forward and speak to the people and shall say to them, 'Hear, O Israel, today you are drawing near for battle against your enemies: let not your heart faint. Do not fear or panic or be in dread of them, for the Lord your God is he who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies, to give you the victory'" (Deuteronomy 20:1-4).

It was because David knew God and knew God's promises that he wasn't afraid of Goliath! When it came time to fight Goliath, David went out to meet him on the battlefield with five stones, a slingshot, and a heart full of faith that God would give David the victory over Goliath. So, David said to Goliath, "You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head [. . .] so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that the Lord saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hand" (1 Samuel 17:45-48).

David defeated Goliath by faith. Do you trust the God of Israel? Do you serve the living God?

Psalm 31:14

I trust in you, O LORD; I say, "You are my God."

Questions: How could David be so confident that he would defeat Goliath?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Saul Becomes Jealous of David

Week of March 20-25

After David defeated Goliath, King Saul was very pleased. Saul was glad to have someone like David. David was brave. David trusted God. David was energetic, and he was able to lead men. Because of David's character and abilities, King Saul sent David out to do some jobs for him. "And David went out and was successful wherever Saul sent him, so that Saul set him over the men of war. And this was good in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants" (1 Samuel 18:5-6).

Everything seemed to be going well for Saul after David defeated Goliath. It seemed like Saul had a new commander of his armies who could help him protect Israel. But, as Saul and the armies of Israel were coming back from battle, the women of Israel sang songs about David. They sang that King Saul was great, but that David was greater. How do you think that made Saul feel? Not good. In fact, Saul became very angry, and he was jealous of David.

The next day, Saul was very upset, and in his rage he tried to kill David twice with his spear. Both times Saul missed because God was with David to protect him. And so, Saul sent David out to command one thousand men in the army. Saul was probably thinking that if David went out to war, David would be killed in battle, but we read in the Bible that, "David had success in all his undertakings, for the Lord was with him" (1 Samuel 18:14).

As David led the armies of Israel, the people of Judah and Israel came to love David because he was the one who taught them courage and defended them against their enemies. Day by day, Saul grew more jealous of David, and he spent his time trying to figure out how he could destroy David.

The story of Saul's jealousy for David reminds us of Satan's jealousy for Jesus. Satan hates Jesus because Jesus is the great and noble One. Satan wants to be the king that everyone loves, but Jesus is the only one who is truly brave, strong, and good. When we spend time with Jesus, we come to love Him like the people of Israel came to love David.

Have you spent time with Jesus? Do you know Him? Have you read of all of the mighty works that Jesus did to destroy the kingdom and power of Satan? If not, you can! Just open your Bible to the Gospels, and you can read all about the mighty and wonderful Jesus!

Psalm 118:25

Save us, we pray, O LORD! O LORD, we pray, give us success!

Questions: Why was Saul so jealous of David? What should you do when you are afraid?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

David Becomes King

Week of March 27 – April 1

King Saul was not a wise man. King Saul was a man who trusted in himself and his own wisdom. This led Saul to disobey God at times.

One time, God gave a very clear command to Saul to go out and destroy everything in a certain place, but Saul did not obey God. Instead, he destroyed *some* of the things that God had devoted to destruction but not all of them. Therefore, God said to the prophet Samuel, “I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following me and has not performed my commandments” (1 Samuel 15:11).

The next day, Samuel met with King Saul, and Samuel had to tell King Saul that God had rejected him from being king over Israel because King Saul had rejected the word of the LORD.

The most important thing that God looks for in a person is whether or not he or she will obey Him by faith. Abraham found favor in God’s eyes because, “Abraham believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness” (Genesis 15:6). The only way that a man, a woman, a boy, or a girl can come to God is by faith. We cannot come to Him trusting in ourselves or our own wisdom. We must come to Him trusting Him and His word.

David was a man who listened carefully to what God said and obeyed God’s voice. This is why God picked David to be the king in Israel after He took the kingdom away from King Saul.

In our world, God put Adam in charge of creation, but Adam, like Saul, didn’t obey God’s voice. Instead, Adam ate the fruit that God commanded him not to eat, and Adam became like God, deciding for himself what was good and what was evil. Therefore, God rejected Adam from being king over this world.

Who did God pick to be King over this world after he rejected Adam? God picked own Son. Why did God pick Jesus? Jesus tells us why God picked Him to be the King of kings and Lord of lords: “And the one who sent me is with me—he has not deserted me. For I always do what pleases him” (John 8:29). Jesus always does what pleases His Father. King David was a great king, but like Saul, King David disobeyed God in many ways. Jesus is the only one who has obeyed God the Father’s voice perfectly! Well done, Jesus!

Psalm 143:10

Teach me to do your will, for you are my God! Let your good Spirit lead me on level ground!

Questions: Why did God choose David to be king? How can we get God’s wisdom?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

David Brings the Ark of Covenant to Jerusalem

Week of April 3-6, 14-15

King David wrote about half of the 150 Psalms that we have in the Bible. Why did David write so many psalms? Psalms are songs. Songs are emotional. David was a man who felt things strongly. When things were going well, David's heart exploded with joy. When things weren't going well, David wept and poured out his heart to God.

David loved to worship God with song and dance. David couldn't stay still when he was worshiping God. He had to express! In Old Testament times, before Jesus came into the world, the worship of God centered on the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark of the Covenant was God's throne on earth. It was where His glory was. God's glory was His presence on earth. His presence was light and shining brightness. God's presence would hover above the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies in God's temple in Jerusalem. However, when King David was alive, the temple in Jerusalem hadn't been built yet, so the Ark of the Covenant was not yet in the temple.

When David became king, he set out to bring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. As David brought the Ark of the LORD to Jerusalem, David "danced before the Lord with all his might" (2 Samuel 6:14). When David arrived in the Jerusalem with the Ark of God, he had to put it in a tent for forty years because the temple had not been built yet.

Here, at this tent, David and all of Israel joyfully worshiped the LORD. David's love for God was infectious. As the people watched David dance and sing before the Lord, their hearts were moved to worship God. David appointed 288 men who were instructed in the songs of the LORD to worship God with cymbals and stringed instruments.

David turned Jerusalem into a mountain of praise to the Lord. We call this mountain of praise *Mount Zion*. Mount Zion became a model of what it is like to praise and worship God with one's whole heart. There was dancing, singing, and great joy!

Today, we don't have to go to Mount Zion to worship God, we can worship Him right here or wherever we are. Today, will you ask the Holy Spirit to fill your heart with God's praises?!

Proverbs 17:22

A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

Questions: How does a joyful heart make us healthy? What are some things that you are thankful for? What are some wonderful things about God that we can praise Him for?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

David's Sin (Invitation Week)

Week of April 17 – 22

King David was a great man, but like all fallen humans beings, King David was a sinner. What is sin? Sin is missing the mark. When an archer shoots an arrow at a target and misses the bullseye, we could say that the archer has sinned. When it comes to people, our target is God's moral law. When we fail to do what God demands, God judges that we are sinners.

King David committed some terrible sins in his life. He stole something that did not belong to him and then he killed a man to cover it up and then lied about what had happened. It wasn't until God sent the prophet Nathan to confront David about his sin that David realized just how wicked he was.

Why do people sin? In the Book of Romans, the Apostle Paul tells us that because of what our first parents, Adam and Eve, did we have become the slaves of sin. Paul tells us about the struggle that goes on inside of each one of us. He says, "I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? (Romans 7:18-24).

King David sinned because the "law of sin" was in him. We each sin because the same "law of sin" is in us.

Who can break sin's power? Only God can break the power of sin, and God has broken the power of sin through what His Son, Jesus Christ, did for us on the cross! Jesus died on the cross for our sins. Jesus was buried. And when God raised Jesus on the third day, God broke the power of sin. Now, if we will believe in the Lord Jesus, we shall be set free from the "law of sin." This is Gospel – God's Good News!

****Coaches, please present "The Gospel" devotion on the next page. If any players on your team respond by praying to receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior, have them sign their name in their own handwriting on the card provided. Please return signed cards to the equipment shed. When we follow up with players we will give them their signed card to take home. Thank you!*

Ephesians 4:32

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

The Gospel

Invitation Week Continued (April 17 – 22)

What is the Gospel? The Gospel is God's good news about His Son Jesus Christ.

What is the good news? The good news is that God sent Jesus Christ into the world to save sinners.

How did we become sinners? By disobeying God. Adam and Eve disobeyed God. Each one of us has also disobeyed God.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6).

The bad news is that:

"The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23a).

The good news is that:

"the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23b).

How do we receive God's free gift?

"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).

What does it mean to "believe in the Lord Jesus"?

It means that we believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that He died to pay the penalty for our sins, that He was buried, and on the third day God raised Him from the dead. It means that we receive Christ as our Savior and surrender our lives to Him as our personal Lord and Master.

Jesus promised, "Everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32-33). Today, "if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9).

If you want to believe in Jesus and confess Him as your Savior and Lord today, please raise your hand. If you have raised your hand, please pray this prayer with me.

Heavenly Father, today I believe in your Son, Jesus. I believe that He died to pay the penalty for my sins and that He was raised from the dead so that I could be justified and receive eternal life in His name. Today, I surrender my life to Jesus as my Lord and Savior, and acknowledge Him before men. Thank you, Jesus, for saving me! Amen.

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Solomon

Week of April 24 – 29

King David had many children, but Solomon was special among David's children. When Solomon was born, David called him Solomon, but God gave him another name: "Jedidiah," which means "beloved of the LORD."

Why did God give Solomon another name? It seems that God gave Solomon another name because of David's sin. After David sinned against God, David might have wondered if God could ever forgive him completely. David might have thought that God *mostly* forgave him, but that God would take away some of His blessings from David. When God gave Solomon the name Jedidiah, God was telling David that His forgiveness is perfect and complete and that God is able to fully redeem (restore) us when He forgives us of our sins.

Solomon was a man of great wisdom. How did Solomon get his great wisdom? Solomon got his wisdom from God. One night God gave Solomon a chance to ask for anything that he wanted. Do you know what Solomon said? Solomon said, "Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number. So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours? (1 Kings 3:8-9).

God was so happy that Solomon asked for a "discerning heart" that God said, "Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be. Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for—both wealth and honor—so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings. And if you walk in obedience to me and keep my decrees and commands as David your father did, I will give you a long life" (1 Kings 3:11-14).

Solomon's name means "peace." Peace comes when everything is done according to what God says is right and wrong. When Solomon became king in Israel he used the great wisdom that God gave him to bring peace to Israel. If we want our lives to be full of "peaceful fruit of righteousness," then we must be trained by God's wisdom like Solomon was!

Proverbs 2:6

The LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

Questions: If God gave you a chance to ask for two things, what would you ask for?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

Absalom

Week of May 1 – 6

David's son, Solomon, brought great joy to his heart. Solomon wrote in the book of Proverbs, "A wise son makes a glad father." Solomon, as we talked about last week, was a very wise son. However, David's son Absalom caused David a tremendous amount of heartache.

Absalom was an incredibly handsome and well-built man. In fact, we read in the Bible that, "In all Israel there was no one so much to be praised for his handsome appearance as Absalom. From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him" (2 Samuel 14:25-6).

King David loved Absalom. Absalom had that kind of magnetic personality that made people love him; but Absalom, unlike Solomon did not ask God for wisdom. Absalom relied on his good looks, cool vibes, and calculating mind to get the things he wanted. Absalom was like a lot of people in this world. Many people trust in themselves and their own wisdom rather than trusting in God and His wisdom.

At some point in Absalom's life he stopped respecting his father, David. It was true that David had made a lot of mistakes, but Absalom, instead of forgiving his father, decided that *he* should be king instead of his father, David.

Absalom spent four years trying to win the hearts of the people of Israel so that they would want *him* to be king instead of David. Then, after four years, Absalom declared that he was king while David was still king. When David heard what Absalom had said, David said "to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, 'Arise, and let us flee, or else there will be no escape for us from Absalom'" (2 Samuel 15:14). How terrible!

In all of this, even as David's son and some of David's closest friends turned against him, he still trusted in God. David didn't know what would happen, but he trusted that God would do what was right. What happened next? God set about to bring harm upon Absalom. In the end, Absalom died and David was king.

What does this story teach us? It teaches us that no matter what Satan tries to do Jesus is the King. Are you on King Jesus' side? Is Jesus your King?

Revelation 19:16

On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, *King of kings and Lord of lords.*

Questions: Who is the King of kings and Lord of lords? [Answer: Jesus!]

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

David Counts the People

Week of May 8 – 13

What would happen if on game day your team was able to put only one player on the field and the other team could put their whole team on the field? Most of the time the team with all of their players on the field would win the game. Why? Because the team with all of their players playing is stronger than a team with only one of their players playing.

One day King David decided to go out and count the people of Israel. The reason that David counted the people was so that he could see how strong his army was. Joab, the commander of the army, didn't think that this was a good idea, but King David didn't listen to Joab's advice. Instead, he counted the people.

God was not pleased that David counted the people. Why not? Because the people of Israel belonged to God not to David. If God wanted the people counted, He would have commanded David to count the people, but God *didn't* command David to count the people.

In this story, we see a struggle between a man (David) and God. David seems to have forgotten that God can win a battle with just one man. Do you remember how God used David to defeat Goliath? God doesn't need big armies to win battles. He created everything that exists with words, and He can just as easily destroy the things that He has created with words. God isn't looking for strong people to do things for Him. He is looking for people who will trust Him so that *He* can do wonderful things for them. David, on the other hand, had started to trust in the power of his mighty men and the armies of Israel.

God tells us that we should never trust in ourselves: "Thus says the Lord: 'Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the Lord'" (Jeremiah 17:5). If we want to walk with God, we have to learn how to trust Him with our whole hearts: "The Lord is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him" (Psalm 28:7).

God defeated Satan, sin, and darkness by sending one Person into battle. That Person was/is Jesus. Jesus didn't trust in human strength to defeat evil. Jesus trusted in His Father and divine strength to defeat evil. Now God commands us to believe in Jesus and be saved through Him!

Psalm 3:3

You, O LORD, are a shield about me, my glory, and the lifter of my head.

Questions: Is God your shield? What wonderful things does God want to do in your life?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!

David Instructs Solomon

Week of May 15 - 20

When David was old, it was time for his son Solomon to become king. As Solomon prepared to be king in Israel, David gave Solomon some instructions. David said, “Be strong, and show yourself a man, and keep the charge of the LORD your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his rules, and his testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn” (1 Kings 2:2-3).

As any good father would want for his children, King David wanted Solomon to be successful. What did David say was the key to success? He told Solomon that in order to be successful he must keep the charge of the LORD his God. What does this mean? It means that Solomon must do what God says.

The great battle in this world is between God’s Word and everything else. The question is: will we do what God says or will we do what Satan says? Will we trust in God or will we trust in self?

David had trusted in himself many times, and it had caused him all kinds of trouble. David’s advice to Solomon was, “Don’t trust in self! Trust in God! Do what God says!”

Do you think that Solomon followed David’s advice? He did in many ways, but not perfectly (Jesus is the only perfect human being who has ever lived on this earth). It was shortly after David gave this advice to Solomon that Solomon asked God for wisdom.

Through God’s wisdom, Solomon was able to do many great things. Solomon was able to build God’s house in Jerusalem. Solomon was able to help people who were fighting with each other to stop fighting. Solomon was able to teach the world about God’s ways and God’s wisdom.

Solomon’s life teaches us about what Jesus came into this world to do. Jesus came to show us who God is and to tell us about how we can have peace with Him.

Who is God? He is Love. God wants to share Himself with us. He wants to be our Father, and He wants us to be His children. He wants us to be successful in everything that we do because He is a good Father! If we seek God, we will find Him, but if we forsake God, He will cast us off forever (1 Chronicles 28:9). The choice is ours. Let’s seek God with all of our hearts!

Proverbs 30:5

Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

Questions: Which book in the Bible would you like to study next? Why?

Please remember to pray for your team and their families!