

# FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Galatians 5:22-23

## Lesson 8

### Self-Control

#### David Spares Saul's Life

*1 Samuel 26*

**As we learned in Lesson 6, Saul became insanely jealous of David because the people showed David more respect than King Saul. Once King Saul tried to kill David in the palace, David became a man on the run. The first time David had an opportunity to kill Saul was in a cave, but he did not. Now a second time arises and David shows tremendous self-control.**

#### Introduction

An army encampment was set up similar to the way the 12 tribes of Israel did while wandering in the wilderness. Tents would be pitched in a large circle with the commander's tent pitched in the center of the circle. In the case of the Israelites, the Tabernacle was in the center and their tents circled around. Just outside the commanders tent would be his spear stuck in the ground. This was done as a symbol of his authority.

#### Progression of Events

King Saul continued his pursuit of David. The Ziphites told King Saul where David was. So King Saul along with 3,000 of his men traveled to the hill of Hakilah in the Desert of Ziph in search of David.

- David sent spies out to confirm that King Saul had come to the wilderness in search of David.
- David arose one night and came to where Saul had set up his tent. David saw the place where Saul was laying. Beside him was Abner, the son of Ner, the captain of

his army. Saul lay in the middle of the camp and his men were encamped around him.

- So David asked Ahimelech the Hittite and Abishal the son of Zeruah “ who will go down with me to Saul in the camp? Abishal said, ‘I will go down with you’” (verse 6).
- So David and Abishal came to where Saul was sleeping within the camp with his spear stuck in the ground by his head. Abner and others were asleep around the king.
- Abishal said to David, “God has delivered your enemy into your hand this day. Now therefore, please, let me strike him at once with the spear, right to the ear; and I will not have to strike him a second time” (verse 8). Abishal's advice must have been tempting.
- But David answered, “Do not destroy him; for who can stretch out his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?” (verse 9). Once again, David did not harm the Lord's anointed. David was determined to follow God and not murder His anointed.
- David took the spear and the jug of water by Saul's head, and he and Abishal ran away. None of the men woke up because a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen on them.
- Then David went and stood on a hill that was a great distance between them.

### **Climax**

- David called out to the people and to Abner saying, “Do you not answer, Abner? Then Abner answered and said, ‘who are you, calling out to the king?’ David answered ‘Are you not a man? And who is like you in Israel? Why then have you not guarded your lord the king? For one of the people came in to destroy your lord the king. This thing that you have done is not good. As the Lord lives, you deserve to die, because you have not guarded your master, the Lord’s anointed. And now see where the king’s spear is, and the jug of water that was by his head.’” (verses 13-16).
- Then Saul knew David’s voice and said, “Is that your voice, my son David?” David said, “ It is my voice, my lord, O king. Why does my lord pursue his servant? For what have I done, or what evil is in my hand?” (verses 17, 18). Self-control is essential for a leader to possess. David certainly showed great self-control.

### **Conclusion**

Then Saul said, “I have sinned. Return, my son David. For I will harm you no more, because my life was precious in your eyes this day. Indeed I have played the fool and erred exceedingly” (verse 21). Saul blessed David. David went on his way and Saul returned to his palace. David could easily have killed Saul and Abner, but he did not. Instead he made his point in a creative way. He had the opportunity to do evil but instead showed God respect by not killing the anointed king.

### **Self-control**

This is the last of the nine virtues of the Fruit of the Spirit. While it is the last, it is the one virtue that enables us to add the other eight virtues of the Fruit of the spirit to our lives.

### **Memory Verse**

“...love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you” (Matthew 5:44).

### **Questions**

For class discussion ask your students any of the following:

1. Explain self-control
2. What did the spear struck in the ground symbolize?
3. What did Abishai want David to allow him to do?
4. Why didn’t David do what Abishai suggested?
5. What two items did David take to taunt Abner with his carelessness?
6. David was determined to do what was right. Other than self-control what other fruit did David show?
7. Why was King Saul jealous of David?
8. Is it always a good idea to use force to solve a problem?
9. Was David creative in how he solved his problem with King Saul?
10. If yes, explain how he was creative.

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## Lesson 8 Craft



### Materials

- Stand-up figures pattern from below.
- Crayons or felt tip markers
- Scissors
- Construction paper.

### Directions:

- Give each student a copy of the pattern on the following page to trace onto a piece of construction paper. They need to cut out two figures.
- Show students how to slash one figure from the top down along the dotted line on pattern, and slit the other figure from the bottom along the dashed line on the other pattern.
- Have students fit the two figures together so they will stand up, and then write the following verse: "Do you not know you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? (I Corinthians 3:16).



