

WE RESPECT PEOPLE IN CHARGE

RESPECT IS... honoring God and others.

Saul was terribly mean to David and had even been trying to kill David. Saul was the king, and David wouldn't do anything against him—no matter how mean Saul was. David respected King Saul because God had made Saul the king. Use this lesson to teach kids that respecting some people isn't always easy, but we still respect people in charge.

1 Samuel 24:1-22:
David Spares
King Saul's Life

WHAT KIDS DO	WHAT YOU'LL NEED
<p>God Sightings (5 minutes) Share ways they've seen God at work.</p>	
<p>Bible Experience (15 minutes) Perform a puppet show to illustrate what David went through.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bible • 4 puppets (see skit cast) • puppet-sized crown • puppet-sized robe with a piece of fabric taped to it • plastic knife • copies of the skit (found at the end of this lesson)
<p>Those in Authority (10 minutes) Examine those in authority, and connect that to God's authority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pencils • copies of the handout (found at the end of this lesson)
<p>Cooking Up Respect (20 minutes) Follow a recipe together and share the treat with someone in authority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a simple treat recipe • recipe ingredients • kitchen tools • resealable bags • index cards • markers • tape
<p>Life Application (10 minutes) Get tied up in knots to illustrate respect.</p>	



ILLUSTRATION BY DREW ROSE

*Photocopy the Take-Home page at the end of this lesson for each child.

RESPECT DEVOTION

As David showed in this passage, it's good to respect those in charge. We're called to respect parents, bosses, and elected officials. Jesus is, and always should be, our ultimate authority, but we still need to respect our human authorities. Are there areas in your life where you resist respecting someone in authority? Pray for help in showing respect for God by respecting those in charge.

BIBLE FOUNDATION FOR TEACHERS

1 Samuel 24:1-22: David Spares King Saul's Life

A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

What are the chances? Saul is set on killing David, God's chosen successor to the kingdom. While pursuing David and his men in a mountainous region, Saul goes alone into a cave to relieve himself. Saul is unaware that David and his men are hiding far back in the cave. It's no wonder David's men thought this was a chance God had provided for David to get rid of the king who wanted him dead and who stood in the way of his ascent to the throne!

RESPECTING AUTHORITY

But as the passage tells us, David would have no part in taking Saul's life. Saul's wanting to kill David was not enough reason for David to kill Saul. David was even ashamed that he secretly cut a corner from Saul's robe. In David's eyes, Saul was the man God had chosen and anointed king of Israel, and David was not going to be the one to take justice into his own hands if it meant killing God's anointed.

SAUL REPENTS

When Saul left the cave and David pointed out to him the opportunity he'd passed up to kill Saul, Saul seemed truly repentant for his attitude toward David. He seemed to concede that God had chosen David to replace him and would reward David for his kindness. Saul even pleaded for kindness to his descendants.





GOD SIGHTINGS

As a group, share God Sightings—ways you’ve seen God at work. Then celebrate how God is at work in your lives through a prayer of thanksgiving.

BIBLE EXPERIENCE

Talk about: **“That’s unfair!” Have you ever said that? The truth is, sometimes life *is* unfair. Even people in charge can treat us unfairly. I have good news, though. The Bible teaches us that we respect people in charge and that God can help us handle hard situations.**

Open your Bible to 1 Samuel 24:1-22 and show children the words.

Talk about: **David was the boy who relied on God for strength, and God helped him defeat the giant warrior Goliath! First Samuel 24:1-22 tells about a hard decision David had to make. We’ll let puppets retell what happened.**

Have kids perform the “David’s Dilemma” puppet skit, found at the end of this lesson.

Afterward, lead this discussion: **What did you learn about respecting people in charge, even if they’re unfair? Why is it hard to respect unfair leaders? What’s one way you can show a leader respect this week?**

Talk about: **Nobody likes to be picked on, and David was certainly treated unfairly by King Saul. David knew that we respect people in charge, so he honored the king by letting him go. We can be like David! David was still kind to the king and showed respect for him. When we feel as if a parent, a coach or leader, a teacher, or even a babysitter is treating us unfairly, we can still show that person respect.**

THE LESSON

YOU’LL NEED:

- ✓ Bible
- ✓ 4 puppets (see *skit cast*)
- ✓ puppet-sized crown
- ✓ puppet-sized robe with a piece of fabric taped to it
- ✓ plastic knife
- ✓ copies of the skit (*found at the end of this lesson*)

YOU'LL NEED:

- ✓ pencils
- ✓ copies of the handout
(found at the end of
this lesson)

FOR TEACHERS: TRUSTING YOUR GUT

Not everyone in authority is trustworthy. According to The National Center for Victims of Crime, only 14 percent of child victims were abused by an unknown predator. (If your church doesn't already have a safe environment policy in place, visit ChurchVolunteerCentral.com and click on the Protect tab for resources.)

Use this activity to teach children to listen to their instincts about leaders. If something feels or seems wrong, encourage them to talk to you, a parent, or another trusted adult about it. This is a great way to develop children's discernment.

THOSE IN AUTHORITY

Talk about: **Saul was terribly mean to David and had even been trying to kill David. Saul was the king, and David wouldn't do anything against him—no matter how mean Saul was. David respected King Saul because God had made Saul the king. Respecting some people isn't always easy, but we still respect people in charge.**

Have kids find partners and talk together about this topic: **Share about someone in charge of you—and what you do to respect him or her.** Then invite volunteers to share with the group.

Say: **Just as King Saul treated David unfairly, people in charge of us may treat us unfairly sometimes. When that happens, we can still show respect. And we can talk about it with who's in charge of all of us: God. When we struggle with someone in charge, whether it's an older brother or sister, a parent, a teacher, coach, or leader, we can tell God about it.**

Distribute handouts and pencils. Say: **In the cross outline, write the names of people in charge of you whom you need to respect.**

Allow time and assist younger kids as needed. Then say: **Talk to God about each person. Share with God any challenges you're having with respecting these people. Ask God for help.**

After several minutes, lead this discussion: **What was this experience like for you? How can prayer help you respect someone in charge?**

Talk about: **God understands that sometimes people in charge can make mistakes and be unfair, but we respect people in charge. God is willing to help us do that. The first step is simply to ask for God's help.**

Ask: **How can you show respect when the person in charge asks you to do something you don't want to do? When should you *not* do what a leader tells you to do? How do you show respect to people in charge when you disagree?**

Say: **Each of us is uniquely made by God and placed exactly where God wants us to be. Just as David was respectful to King Saul, God wants you to be respectful to the people He has placed in authority in your life.**

COOKING UP RESPECT

Have kids wash their hands. Follow a recipe for a homemade treat, allowing children to help in a variety of ways: read directions, open packages, measure ingredients, and stir. You'll need to make enough for kids to share with parents and a few extras to share with authority figures at your church.

As you work together to put the finished treats in resealable bags, lead this discussion: **What can go wrong when we don't follow recipe directions? How is that like what happens when we don't listen to people in charge? What does it mean to respect those in charge?**

Have kids decorate index cards with the words "I Respect You" and attach them to the bags.

Together deliver treats to several people who are in charge at your church, such as the office manager, the worship leader, and a pastor. Have kids each set aside a treat to take home to a parent.



YOU'LL NEED:

- ✓ a simple treat recipe
- ✓ recipe ingredients
- ✓ kitchen tools
- ✓ resealable bags
- ✓ index cards
- ✓ markers
- ✓ tape

ALLERGY ALERT

Food allergies can be dangerous and even life-threatening. Consult with parents and be aware of any allergies the kids in your group might have.

LIFE APPLICATION

Have kids form a circle. Talk about: **Sometimes we have a hard time showing respect because we think we can do things better on our own. But sometimes when we do this, we get all tied up in knots!**

Have kids stand and join hands with two different people across the circle, creating a "tangle." Find out which child is youngest.

Say: **It looks like you're all tied up! When I give the signal, the youngest person is in charge, so you'll need to respect his or her authority by listening to instructions carefully.**



The person in charge is the only person who can tell you what to do. Ready? Untangle!

Afterward, lead this discussion: **What was it like to follow the leader's instructions and not be able to speak? How did you show respect to the person in charge as you tried to untangle? When is it difficult to show respect to someone in charge?**

Talk about: ● **We respect people in charge. Showing respect for someone in charge means paying attention, not being rude, and letting that person make the decisions. And it could "untangle" a problem for you!**

PRAYER

Dear God, please give us the strength we need to respect people in charge. We want to honor You in all we do. In Jesus' name, amen.

TAKE-HOME PAGE

Give each child a Take-Home page to take home. Encourage kids to select one of the six challenges for the week ahead.



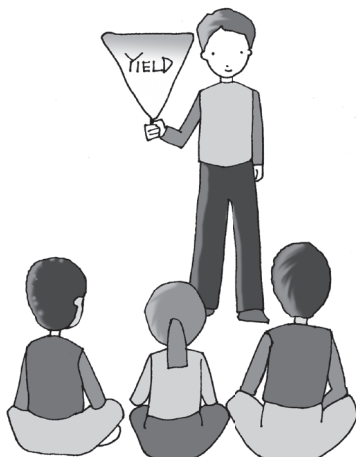
PRACTICING RESPECT

Keep growing in your faith and character. Choose one of the following challenges to do this week to respect people in charge.



CHALLENGE 1

Help your parent or grandparent with dinner by setting the table before you're asked. As you set the table, talk about respect and how you want to help without being told to.



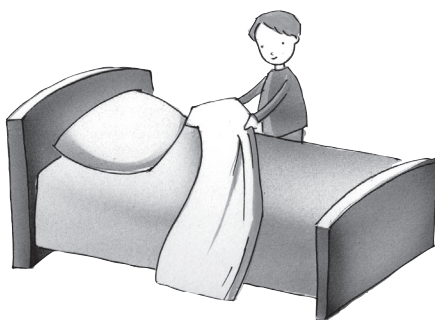
CHALLENGE 2

When you are in a sport or activity, listen carefully to your coach or leader and show your respect by paying attention.



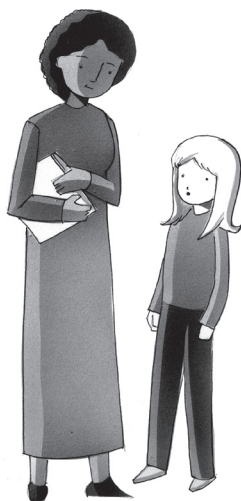
CHALLENGE 3

Ask God to help you show respect to someone in charge even if you don't like the way this person does things.



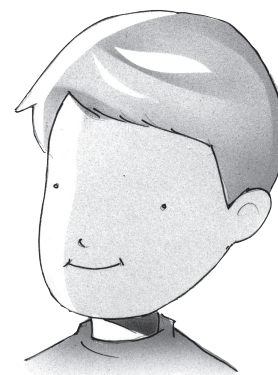
CHALLENGE 4

Show respect for your family by making your bed and keeping your room clean all week without having to be asked.



CHALLENGE 5

Show respect for your teachers by doing what you're told the first time, handing in clean, neat work, and listening while they are talking.



CHALLENGE 6

Show respect for your parents by talking to them in a nice tone of voice, even when you may be frustrated with them.



THE SCENE

A cave

THE SIMPLE SETUP

Set up an area to serve as a puppet stage.

THE CAST

- ✓ **King Saul (wearing a crown and a robe with a piece of fabric taped to it)**
- ✓ **David (with plastic knife)**
- ✓ **Soldier 1 and Soldier 2 (accompanying David)**

THE PROPS

- ✓ **4 puppets (dolls, stuffed animals, socks with holes for pinky and thumb “arms,” or actual puppets)**



DAVID'S DILEMMA

Kids use puppets to re-enact David's decision when he found Saul asleep in the cave.

The scene opens with David and two of his soldiers running onstage “into” the cave, arriving breathlessly at center stage.

DAVID

(Looking around wildly) This cave is a perfect hiding place. I don't think he'll find us here!

SOLDIER 1

(Pointing frantically toward cave opening) Did you see Saul's army? He must have 3,000 men looking for you by now!

SOLDIER 2

(Spreading arms) King Saul is jealous of you, David. He'll stop at nothing to get rid of you once and for all.

SOLDIER 1

(Pacing from one side of the stage to the other) He's right. Ever since you killed Goliath and God promised to make you king of Israel, you've been a marked man.

DAVID

(Motioning for the Soldiers to calm down) God will protect us. We've been on the run for a long time, but He's taken care of us so far, hasn't He?

SOLDIER 2

(Places a hand to his ear.) I think I hear 'em!

DAVID

(Motioning for the Soldiers to follow him) Hurry! To the back of the cave! *(The three rush to a corner of the stage and crouch down.)*

SAUL

(Entering center stage and calling back to unseen troops) Take a break, men! I'm going to rest in here for a few minutes!

(Stretching arms as if yawning) Whew! It's much cooler in this cave.

(Talking to himself and gesturing largely) Curse that David! Every time I've closed in on him, he slips away. Not this time, though! I'm hot on his trail. He's nearby—I can just feel it.

(David and Soldiers try to crouch smaller.)

SAUL

(Throwing arms up) What is it about that David? Why does God honor him over me? Why does everyone think he's so special? I could've killed Goliath if I wanted to. But I'm the king! I'm the one in charge!

(Sighs.) One thing at a time. Right now I'll take a short break—but then...*(draws his hand across his throat in an exaggerated motion)*... that David's a goner for sure. *(Lays down as though taking a short nap.)*

SOLDIER 1

(Stands and places his hand to his mouth, as if whispering to David.) Can you believe it? King Saul! Right here in front of us!

SOLDIER 2

(Springs up excitedly and starts boxing and dodging an imaginary opponent.) Now's your chance, David! Jump on him! C'mon, David, let him have it!

DAVID

(Motioning for them to be quiet) Shhhhhh!

(David raises the knife and moves toward Saul. Saul rolls over and makes a "hmmffgh" noise.)

(David ducks, and then continues to creep forward. He stands beside Saul for a moment, raises the knife and then lowers it. Finally he kneels and then "cuts" off the taped piece of fabric. Then he retreats to his men.)

SOLDIER 2

(Throws his arms up in disbelief as David shows him the scrap of robe.) You came that close to the enemy—and you let him go?





SOLDIER 1

David! If you killed him when you had the chance, you wouldn't have to run anymore!

DAVID

(Places his hands against his temples as he shakes his head with guilt.) I can't believe I cut his robe. I shouldn't have done that to a king chosen by God. It was disrespectful—and wrong.

(The Soldiers make agitated motions, disappointed that David didn't kill Saul. Saul awakens and stretches, and then looks around without any concern.)

SAUL

Well, that short nap was all I needed. It's time to finish what I came for.

(Cupping his hands to his mouth and shouting to his troops outside the cave) Saddle up, men! We've been chasing David long enough! Today's the day I capture him.

DAVID

(Moving toward Saul while the Soldiers try to hold him back) My king!

SAUL

(Freezes in mid-step and warily turns around.) David?

DAVID

(Bows low before the king; then stands up and extends his arms.) Why do you listen to people who say I'm trying to harm you? You can see with your own eyes it isn't true. Think about it—God gave me the chance to take your life just a few minutes ago. Even though my own men want me to kill you, I would never hurt you.

(Startled, Saul backs up and grabs his own throat as though to protect it. David holds up the scrap of robe.)

DAVID

Look! Here's a piece from your robe! I cut it off to show you how close I was, but I didn't kill you because I respect you as my king.





(Saul lowers his hands and looks down, ashamed. David slowly walks closer to him.)

DAVID

I'm not an evil man, so I can't do an evil deed. God will judge you, not me.

SAUL

(Wipes a tear from his eye.) You're a better man than I am, David. You showed me kindness and respect when you could've killed me. *(David reaches out and places his hand on Saul's shoulder. Saul spreads his hands in resignation.)*

I can tell God's on your side. You'll become the new king of Israel. *(Heaves his shoulders as he stands for a moment and sighs, and then holds his head up high and exits.)* Men, about face! We're going home!

(Soldiers 1 and 2 rush excitedly from their corner.)

SOLDIER 1

(Gives David a high five.) Whoa! I can't believe I saw that with my own eyes!

SOLDIER 2

(Patting David on the back with congratulations) That was amazing, David! You got yourself out of a big mess—and nobody even got hurt!

DAVID

(Pointing up) I only followed God's rule.

SOLDIER 2

What's that?

DAVID

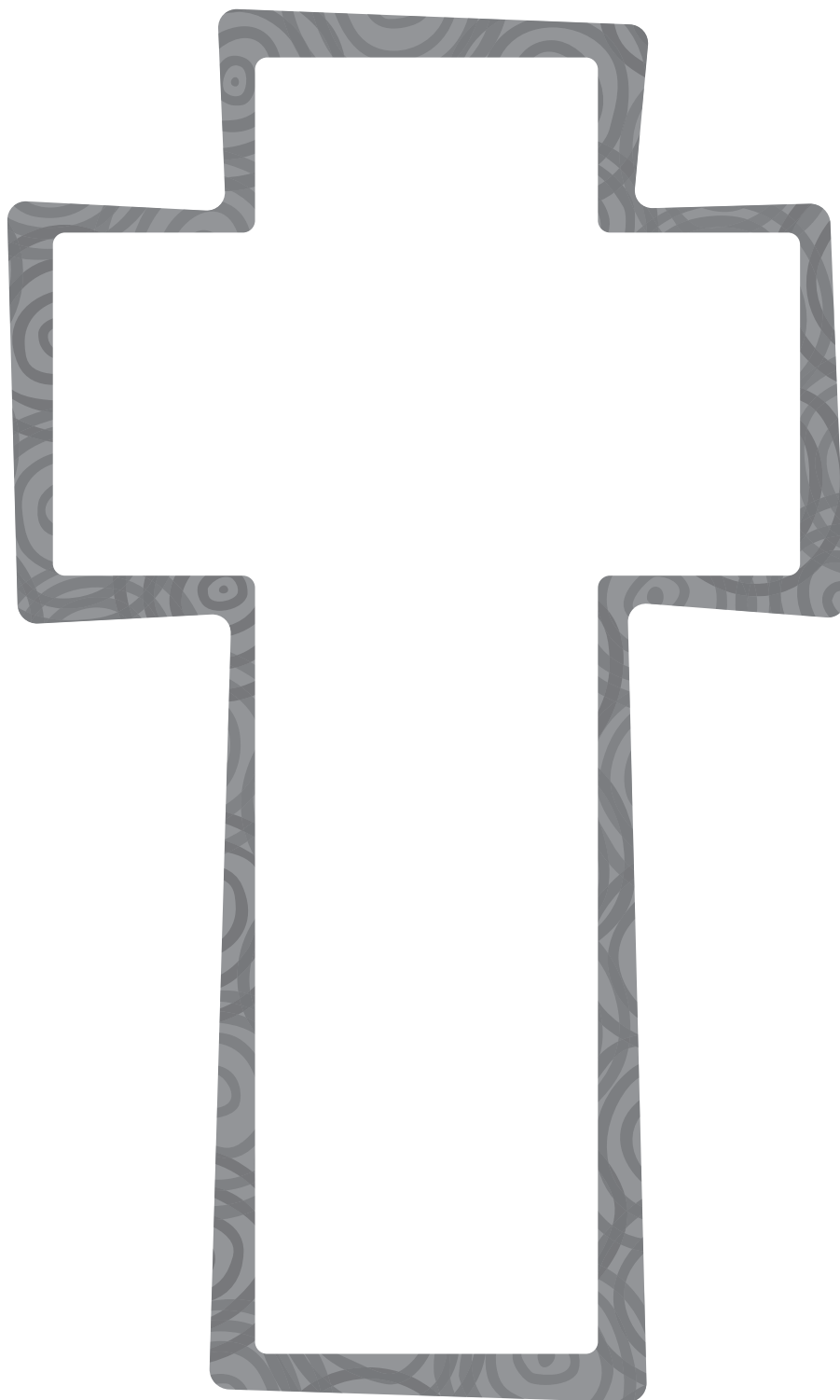
(Placing his arms around Soldiers' shoulders as they start to walk out of the cave) Simple: God tells us to respect people in charge, no matter who they are.

(The Soldiers exit, but David stops and turns, looking at the place Saul had rested.) I'm glad I did. *(Exits.)*





THOSE IN AUTHORITY





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