

FIRST CHRONICLES

FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH



Contents

Welcome, Teacher	3
Teaching Middle Schoolers: Tips for Success	4
First Chronicles at a Glance	5
Session 1: A Name, a Prayer, a Purpose	7
Session 2: The King Who Would Not Listen	11
Session 3: Mighty Men and a Loyal Heart	15
Session 4: God's Way, God's Time	19
Session 5: Dancing, Singing and Giving Thanks	23
Session 6: A Promise That Never Ends	27
Session 7: Defending the Weak, Encouraging the Team	30
Session 8: The Cost of Pride and the Mercy of God	34
Session 9: Preparing for Someone Else's Dream	38
Session 10: Every Servant Matters	42
Session 11: Know the God of Your Father	46
Session 12: Cheerful Givers with Willing Hearts	50
Session 13: Long Live the King!	54
Appendix A: Women of Faith in First Chronicles and Beyond	58
Appendix B: Podcast Episode List	58
Appendix C: All Key Verses at a Glance	59

Welcome, Teacher

Thank you for teaching First Chronicles to your middle schoolers! This study is written from a Calvary Chapel, verse-by-verse heart with one goal: that students see and understand **Jesus Christ** throughout the Bible. Chronicles was written for God's people after they came home from exile, to remind them of who they were, who God is, and that the promised King would come from David's line. That same message can anchor your students today.

This study has a special focus. In every session we ask: **What kind of men and women does God admire?** We look for people who show Christ-like love for others, who defend the weak, and who encourage people as godly leaders. And because Chronicles is honest history, we also look at the kings, leaders and choices that God warns us about, so students learn from both heroes and failures.

What You Receive

- 13 teaching sessions (this guide): big idea, key verse, 45-minute plan, full teaching text, hero and warning profiles, Jesus connection, discussion questions with suggested answers, activity, background notes and tips.
- 13 one-page student handouts (separate PDF) with memory verse, fill-in-the-blanks, heroes and warnings, and a Think-Feel-Do reflection.
- 13 podcast episodes (MP3, about 5 minutes each) with two voices, written at a 5th-7th grade level, for use in class, at home or in the car.
- A companion web app with all 13 sessions, a Listen to the Lesson player, downloadable handouts and a saved Think-Feel-Do reflection with progress tracking.

Your 45-Minute Plan (the same every week)

Minutes	Segment	What to do
0-5	Welcome and Opener	Use the session opener question or activity to get students talking and thinking.
5-20	Teach: Setting the Scene	Teach the Scripture story in your own words using the Setting the Scene text. Read key verses aloud from the NKJV.
20-28	Heroes and Warnings	Walk through the people God admires and the choices God warns about. Ask which quality students want to grow.
28-32	Jesus in the Story	Connect the passage to Jesus using the Jesus section and the featured New Testament verse.
32-38	Talk About It	Choose 3-4 discussion questions. Suggested answers are provided.
38-43	Activity	Use the session activity to make the lesson stick.
43-45	Think-Feel-Do and Prayer	Have students complete the handout reflection or the web app quiz, and close in prayer.

Podcast option. The podcast can replace the Teach segment on a busy week, review the lesson during the week, or be played as students arrive. Each episode includes a recap of the memory verse, heroes, warnings and the Think-Feel-Do questions.

Materials

- Bibles in the NKJV if possible (or the web app), printed handouts, pens or pencils, index cards, sticky notes, markers, a whiteboard or poster paper, and a speaker for the podcast.
- A few activities use simple items (water and a cup, flashlight, basket, a box). Each activity lists what you need.

Teaching Middle Schoolers: Tips for Success

- Keep Scripture central. Have students open their Bibles or the app and read verses aloud. Short passages, read by students, hold attention better than long lectures.
- Use stories and everyday comparisons. Middle schoolers think concretely. The activities and podcast help with this.
- Ask, then wait. After a question, count to seven silently. Quiet students often answer after a pause.
- Say the Jesus connection out loud. In every session, tell students plainly how the passage points to Jesus and what He has done for them.
- Make room for girls and boys. The study intentionally highlights women of faith and generosity as well as men. Invite all students to share.
- Invite response. End each week with the Think-Feel-Do reflection and prayer. Offer a quiet moment for any student who wants to talk with you.

Handling Difficult Passages with Care

- Death and violence (Sessions 2, 4 and 8). Saul's death, Uzza and the plague are real events. Teach them seriously and briefly, without graphic detail, and always bring students to God's holiness and mercy.
- Why did God strike Uzza? Explain that God gave clear instructions, that the ark was holy, and that David's honest sorrow led him back to God's Word and then to joy (Session 5). It is fine to say, "We do not know every detail of Uzza's heart, but we know God is perfectly just and merciful."
- David's sin. Chronicles leaves out David's sin with Bathsheba, but Samuel records it, and Psalm 51 records his repentance. If students ask, answer honestly and age-appropriately: David committed adultery and arranged the death of Uriah, God sent Nathan to confront him, David repented, God forgave him, and consequences remained.
- David's wives. Chronicles notes that David took more wives (14:3). The Bible reports this honestly but does not present it as God's plan (Deuteronomy 17:17). Do not make it a main topic.
- Ahithophel's end and suicide (Session 10). The Bible records a tragic end. Do not give details. Be ready to listen if a student seems hopeless. Speak privately, involve a parent and your pastor, and contact a counselor or the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (call or text 988 in the US).
- Bullying and hurt (Session 7). Students may disclose being hurt. Listen, thank them, and follow your church's safe-ministry policy. If a student discloses abuse, you are required by law to report it; follow your church's procedures and involve your pastor the same day.
- Parents and families. Some students have painful family situations. Phrases like "faith of your father" (Session 11) may sting. Remind students that God can start something new through them.

The Gospel Invitation

Every session points to Jesus. In Session 13 especially, give students a clear chance to respond: to receive Jesus as Savior and King, or to recommit their lives to Him. Keep it simple: *Admit we are sinners, believe Jesus died and rose again for us, and ask Him to be our Savior and Lord* (Romans 10:9-10).

First Chronicles at a Glance

Title	Hebrew: Divrei HaYamim, "Words of the Days." Greek: Paraleipomenon, "things left out." The English name "Chronicles" comes from Jerome.
Author and date	Jewish tradition names Ezra as author or editor. Written after the exile, probably about 450-400 BC. The writer used sources including the records of Samuel the seer, Nathan the prophet and Gad the seer (29:29).
Original readers	Jews who had returned from the 70-year Babylonian exile (538 BC and after). Their land was rebuilt slowly and the second Temple was modest. They needed reassurance that they still belonged to God.
Place in the Bible	First and Second Chronicles were one scroll, placed last in the Hebrew Bible. Jesus' phrase "from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah" (Luke 11:51) spans Genesis to Chronicles.
Purpose	To remind God's people of their identity (the genealogies), God's covenant with David (chapter 17), and the importance of right worship and a loyal heart (chapters 13-16, 22-29).
Key themes	The family of faith; seeking the LORD with a whole heart; God's covenant with David; worship and the Temple; humility and repentance; generosity; unity; and the coming King.
Key verses	28:9 ("know the God of your father"); 16:34 ("give thanks to the LORD, for He is good"); 17:14 (the eternal throne); 29:11 and 14.
Jesus in the book	Jesus is the Son of David whose throne has no end (ch. 17); the true Temple and High Priest; the Good Shepherd who bore the penalty for the sheep (ch. 21); and the King of kings (29:11).

Chapter Map and Session Plan

#	Chapters	Title	Focus
1	1-9	A Name, a Prayer, a Purpose	God knows every name in the family of faith
2	10	The King Who Would Not Listen	Saul's fall and the loyal men of Jabesh Gilead
3	11-12	Mighty Men and a Loyal Heart	David becomes king and the brave people who stood with him
4	13-14	God's Way, God's Time	The ark, Uzza, and David learning to ask God first
5	15-16	Dancing, Singing and Giving Thanks	The ark comes home with joy
6	17	A Promise That Never Ends	God's covenant with David points to Jesus
7	18-20	Defending the Weak, Encouraging the Team	David's kindness, Hanun's cruelty, and brave leaders who say 'be strong'
8	21	The Cost of Pride and the Mercy of God	David's census, a shepherd's prayer, and the threshing floor
9	22	Preparing for Someone Else's Dream	David gets ready for Solomon and the Temple
10	23-27	Every Servant Matters	Levites, gatekeepers, singers, soldiers and a counselor who went wrong
11	28	Know the God of Your Father	David's charge to the leaders and to Solomon
12	29:1-20	Cheerful Givers with Willing Hearts	David's offering and one of the greatest prayers in the Bible
13	29:20-30 + Review	Long Live the King!	Solomon crowned, David's finish, and the Son of David

How Chronicles Differs from Samuel and Kings

Topic	Samuel and Kings	First Chronicles
Audience and tone	Written during or soon after exile to explain why the kingdom fell. More political history and judgment.	Written after return from exile to encourage worship, identity and hope.
David's early years and Saul	Detailed: Goliath, running from Saul, the friendship with Jonathan.	Begins with Saul's death (ch. 10) and moves straight to David as king.
David's sin with Bathsheba	Told in full (2 Samuel 11-12).	Not retold. Chronicles records David's failure with the census (ch. 21) and his repentance.
The Temple	Told within Solomon's story.	Emphasized throughout. David prepares for it in chapters 22-29.
Priests, Levites, musicians	Mentioned briefly.	Highlighted. Worship leaders and gatekeepers are named with their duties.
Why this matters	Teaches why the kingdom fell.	Teaches that God's promise stands and invites us back to wholehearted worship.

A note for teachers. Chronicles leaves out some of David's worst moments. This is a choice of focus, not a cover-up. Samuel preserves those stories, and Chronicles itself records David's sin in chapter 21. Use the differences to help students see that the Bible is honest, and that different books highlight different truths about the same God.

The Qualities God Admires, and the Choices God Warns Against

Qualities God admires	Choices God warns against
A prayerful, honorable heart (Jabez); courage that cries out to God (Reuben, Gad and Manasseh)	Disobedience and partial obedience (Saul); wickedness (Er); stealing what is God's (Achan)
Loyalty and gratitude (Jabesh Gilead); an undivided heart (Zebulun); wisdom to understand the times (Issachar)	Fear of people and consulting the wrong help (Saul); divided loyalty; proud mockery (Jebusites)
Humility, honoring sacrifice (David and the water); teachability (David after Uzza; Nathan)	A casual attitude toward holy things (Uzza and the cart); copying the world's methods
Joyful worship; generosity to every man and woman (David)	A critical, despising heart (Michal)
Kindness to the grieving; protecting the dignity of the shamed; courageous encouragement (David, Joab, Abishai)	Suspicion, rumor and cruelty (Hanun and his princes); gossip
Quick confession; a shepherd's heart; costly worship (David at the threshing floor); honest counsel (Joab)	Pride and trusting in numbers; tempting by Satan; ignoring good advice
Selfless preparation for the next generation; encouragement of the young (David and Solomon)	Selfish ambition and bitterness at God's "no"
Faithful service in unseen jobs; fairness; honest treasurers; women and men serving together	Pride in position; brilliant but disloyal counsel (Ahithophel)
A personal faith passed on; a loyal heart and willing mind	Forsaking the LORD; a half-hearted heart
Willing, joyful giving; humble thankfulness; unity; finishing well	Greed, hypocrisy and theft of what belongs to God (Achan, Judas, Ananias and Sapphira)

SESSION 1

A Name, a Prayer, a Purpose

1 Chronicles 1-9

God knows every name in the family of faith

Big Idea	First Chronicles begins with names because God knows and values every person. Faithful people who pray and trust Him are remembered, unfaithful choices are recorded too, and the whole family line is heading toward Jesus.
Podcast	1chronicles_session_01.mp3 (4:59)

KEY VERSE

"And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, 'Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!' So God granted him what he requested."

1 Chronicles 4:10 (NKJV)

Today's Session Plan

Min.	Segment	Details
0-5	Opener	Ask: 'If someone wrote a book about your family, who would be in it? What would they say about you?' Let two or three students answer, then ask who knows the story behind their own name.
5-20	Teach	Teach "Setting the Scene" below, reading the key verses aloud.
20-28	Heroes and Warnings	Use the two tables below. Ask: "Which quality do you want God to grow in you?"
28-32	Jesus in the Story	Share the Jesus connection and read the New Testament verse.
32-38	Talk About It	Choose 3-4 questions. Suggested answers follow.
38-43	Activity: Name Tag Prayer	See Activity below.
43-45	Think-Feel-Do and Prayer	Students complete the handout reflection. Close in prayer.

Setting the Scene (Teaching Text)

Welcome to First Chronicles! This book was written for God's people after they came home from 70 years of exile in Babylon. Their cities were rubble and their Temple was gone. They needed to hear three things: 'You still belong to God. God still keeps His promises. Worship still matters.' So the writer begins with the biggest family tree in the Bible.

Chapters 1 through 9 look like a phone book, but every name is a person God knew. The list runs from Adam (1:1) through Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, then zooms in on the tribe of Judah and King David's family, because the Messiah would come from David's line. Chapter 3 lists David's sons and the kings who came after him, right up to the Babylonian exile. Matthew 1:1 begins the New Testament with the same line: Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.

Tucked inside the list are small stories. In 4:9-10 we meet Jabez. His mother named him 'pain' because his birth was hard, yet he grew up to be 'more honorable than his brothers.' Jabez did not just hope for a good life. He called on the God of Israel and asked God to bless him, to be with him, and to keep him from evil so that he would not cause pain to others. Notice the heart of the prayer: he did not want to be a person who hurts people. God granted his request.

In 5:18-20, soldiers from Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh were badly outnumbered. They cried out to God in the battle, 'He heeded their prayer, because they put their trust in Him.' A few verses later

(5:25-26) the same tribes turned to idols, and God allowed an Assyrian king to carry them away. Chronicles tells the truth: trust brings help, and unfaithfulness brings loss.

Names also tell us who did the quiet work. In 7:24 a woman named Sheerah, a daughter of Ephraim, built two towns, Lower and Upper Beth Horon. In chapter 9 we meet gatekeepers and singers who guarded and served in God's house day and night (9:22-33). The writer wants returning exiles and us to know that ordinary faithful people are written down by God.

Heroes God Admires

Who	Where	Quality	Why God admires it
Jabez	4:9-10	A prayerful, honorable heart	He asked God for blessing and for help to keep from causing pain to others. Honor is more than good manners; it is living so that people are safer and happier around you.
Jabez's mother	4:9	A mother who kept speaking over her child	She named him after her pain, but her son grew up honorable. Parents and grandparents shape faith, and God can write a better story than a hard beginning.
Sheerah	7:24	A woman who built things that blessed others	She built two towns. Women in the Bible are builders of homes, cities, and communities, and God notes their work.
The Levite gatekeepers and singers	9:22-33	Faithful servants in unseen jobs	They guarded the doors and sang day and night. Nobody clapped for them, but God wrote their names down.
The soldiers of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh	5:18-20	Courage that cries out to God	They fought hard and prayed harder, and 'put their trust in Him.'

Warnings to Heed

Who	Where	Warning	What to learn
Er, Judah's firstborn	2:3	Wickedness God will not ignore	The Bible says Er was wicked in the LORD's sight. A famous family name cannot protect a person who chooses evil.
Achan (Achar)	2:7	Taking what God said not to take	He is called 'the troubler of Israel.' His secret stealing in Joshua 7 brought trouble on everyone.
Reuben	5:1	Losing a blessing through bad choices	As the oldest son, Reuben should have received the double portion, but his sin cost him the birthright (Genesis 35:22).
The tribes that chased idols	5:25-26	Turning from the God who helped them	They forgot the God who saved them, played the harlot with the gods of the land, and were carried away. Unfaithfulness leads to captivity.
Judah in exile	9:1	A whole nation taken because of unfaithfulness	Chronicles ends the family tree with Judah carried to Babylon. It is a warning wrapped in a hope: God still brought a remnant home.

Jesus in the Story

Every branch of this family tree is heading toward one Person. Matthew 1 and Luke 3 trace Jesus back through David and Abraham to Adam. Even the women in Jesus' line are a surprise: Tamar (1 Chronicles 2:4), Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba and Mary. God's plan to save the world did not skip over broken, outsider, or unlikely people. It went right through them.

Jabez prayed that God's hand would be with him. Jesus is 'Immanuel,' God with us. Jabez asked to be kept from causing pain. Jesus actually carried our pain: 'Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our

sorrows' (Isaiah 53:4).

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTION

"Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine."

Isaiah 43:1 (NKJV)

Talk About It

1. Why do you think God put such long lists of names in the Bible? What does that tell you about how God sees people?

Suggested answer: God knows every person by name and values them. The names also prove these people were real and that God keeps His promise to bring the Savior through Abraham and David.

2. Jabez asked God to keep him from evil so he would not cause pain. How could you ask God for that this week? Who might you hurt without meaning to?

Suggested answer: Praying for protection from sin and for kindness. Honest answers about words, group chats, and teasing are welcome.

3. The soldiers in 5:20 'cried out to God in the battle.' What is a 'battle' a middle schooler might face where crying out to God would help?

Suggested answer: Bullying, temptation, a hard test, family trouble, loneliness. The point: we pray in the moment, not only before bed.

4. Sheerah and the gatekeepers did work that is easy to overlook. Who does quiet, faithful work around you? How could you thank them?

Suggested answer: Teachers, custodians, bus drivers, moms and dads, church volunteers. Thank-you notes are a great response.

5. Achan and Er come from famous families but made wicked choices. Why does having a good family not guarantee a good life?

Suggested answer: Everyone must choose for himself or herself. We each need our own faith; Jesus said we must be born again (John 3:3).

Activity: Name Tag Prayer

Give each student a name tag. On the front, they write their own name and the meaning of it if they know it. On the back they write one honest Jabez-style request: 'Lord, keep me from causing pain to ____.' Pray as a group, then let students wear the tag for the rest of the meeting.

Teacher Background Notes

Authorship and date. Jewish tradition names Ezra as the author or editor of Chronicles. The last verses of 2 Chronicles match the first verses of Ezra (the decree of Cyrus, 538 BC), so Chronicles was probably finished after the return from exile, around 450-400 BC. The writer used older records, including 'the book of Samuel the seer,' Nathan the prophet and Gad the seer (1 Chronicles 29:29).

Why genealogies mattered. In the ancient Near East, family records proved who you were, who owned land, and who could serve as a priest. When the exiles returned, men whose family records could not be found were excluded from the priesthood until it could be settled (Ezra 2:62). A priest without a record could not serve, so these lists were precious.

The Hebrew title. In the Hebrew Bible, Chronicles was one book called 'Words of the Days' and sat last in the Writings. That is why Jesus could speak of all the righteous blood shed 'from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah' (Luke 11:51), which stretches from the first book to the last in the Hebrew order. The Greek title means 'things left out,' because the book adds details not found in Samuel and Kings.

How Chronicles differs from Samuel and Kings. Samuel and Kings were written during or soon after exile to explain why the kingdom fell. Chronicles was written for people who had come home, to encourage them: God's covenant with David stands, the Temple matters, and worship is the center of life.

The writer also leaves out some events found in Samuel (for example David's early years running from Saul, and his sin with Bathsheba). That is a choice of focus, not a cover-up, since Samuel preserves those stories and Chronicles itself records David's failure in chapter 21.

Culture note. Names carried meaning. 'Jabez' sounds like the Hebrew word for pain, and naming a child after hardship was not unusual. Jabez's story shows that a name does not have to decide a life.

Teaching Tips

- Do not skip the genealogies. Read a handful of names aloud, then summarize. Students enjoy hearing that names in Hebrew all have meanings.
- Some students may want to turn Jabez's prayer into a formula for getting things. Remind them it is a humble request for God's presence and for kindness toward others, not a magic phrase.
- Be sensitive to students whose families are hurting or whose names carry pain. Emphasize that God writes the end of the story.

Think - Feel - Do

THINK	What did you learn about how God sees people from the long lists of names?
FEEL	How do you feel knowing God knows your name and your story?
DO	What is one thing you will do this week to be someone who does not cause pain to others?

Handout Answer Key

1. Adam; 2. God; 3. trusted; 4. Sheerah

This week's challenge: This week, pray Jabez's prayer every morning and ask God to show you one person you can be kind to.

SESSION 2

The King Who Would Not Listen

1 Chronicles 10

Saul's fall and the loyal men of Jabesh Gilead

Big Idea	Partial obedience is still disobedience. King Saul lost everything because he did not follow the LORD with his whole heart, while the brave men of Jabesh Gilead show us loyalty and respect that God honors.
Podcast	1chronicles_session_02.mp3 (4:29)

KEY VERSE

"So Saul died for his unfaithfulness which he had committed against the LORD, because he did not keep the word of the LORD, and also because he consulted a medium for guidance. But he did not inquire of the LORD; therefore He killed him, and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse."

1 Chronicles 10:13-14 (NKJV)

Today's Session Plan

Min.	Segment	Details
0-5	Opener	Play 'Simon Says' with a twist: give a few commands where students must do the whole thing, then a command where they do half. Ask: 'Did you obey if you did only part?'
5-20	Teach	Teach "Setting the Scene" below, reading the key verses aloud.
20-28	Heroes and Warnings	Use the two tables below. Ask: "Which quality do you want God to grow in you?"
28-32	Jesus in the Story	Share the Jesus connection and read the New Testament verse.
32-38	Talk About It	Choose 3-4 questions. Suggested answers follow.
38-43	Activity: The Whole-Hearted Challenge	See Activity below.
43-45	Think-Feel-Do and Prayer	Students complete the handout reflection. Close in prayer.

Setting the Scene (Teaching Text)

After the long family tree, Chronicles jumps right to the end of King Saul's life. The writer skips Saul's early years because he wants to show the returning exiles one big lesson: a kingdom falls when its leader stops listening to God.

Israel is fighting the Philistines at Mount Gilboa. The battle goes badly. Saul's sons, including Jonathan, are killed. Archers wound Saul. He asks his armor bearer to kill him so the Philistines cannot mock him, but the armor bearer is too afraid, and Saul falls on his own sword. The Philistines cut off Saul's head, strip his armor, and display it in the temple of their false god Dagon. The Israelites run, and the Philistines move into their towns.

Then something beautiful happens. When the brave men of Jabesh Gilead hear what happened, they travel through the night, take down the bodies of Saul and his sons, bring them home and bury them. They fast for seven days. Why take such a risk? Years earlier, Saul had rescued their city (1 Samuel 11). They remembered his kindness and honored him, even when no one else did.

Verses 13 and 14 tell us why Saul fell. He did not keep the word of the LORD, and he consulted a medium instead of asking God. Saul had a pattern. In 1 Samuel 13, he offered a sacrifice he was not allowed to

offer because he was afraid and impatient. In 1 Samuel 15, God told him to destroy the Amalekites, but Saul kept the best animals. Samuel told him, 'To obey is better than sacrifice' (1 Samuel 15:22). Saul said he was afraid of the people. He listened to people more than to God.

The warning for us is not 'do not make mistakes.' David made big ones too. The warning is about a heart that makes excuses, hides, blames others, and turns to something other than God when scared. Saul did not 'inquire of the LORD.' That means he stopped asking.

Heroes God Admires

Who	Where	Quality	Why God admires it
The men of Jabesh Gilead	10:11-12	Loyal, brave, and grateful	They risked their lives to give a king and his sons a proper burial because they remembered kindness shown years before.
Jonathan (in the background)	10:2	Faithful to the end	Jonathan had loved David like a brother and defended him (1 Samuel 20). He died with his father, loyal and courageous.
The seven-day fast	10:12	Humble grief	They did not gloat over a fallen leader; they mourned. Godly people do not celebrate someone else's fall.

Warnings to Heed

Who	Where	Warning	What to learn
King Saul	10:13-14	Unfaithful, fearful, and a seeker of the wrong help	He did not keep the LORD's word, he was afraid of what people thought, and he turned to a medium instead of God.
The Philistines	10:8-10	Cruel pride	They mocked the dead and gave their idol the credit. Pride in a false god is always short-lived.
Saul's armor bearer	10:4-5	Fear that freezes	He could not bring himself to follow his king's order. Fear can make us fail to do what is right too, so we ask God for courage.

Jesus in the Story

Saul was the king the people asked for. He looked the part: tall, strong and handsome. But he would not obey. Jesus is the King God sent. Philippians 2:8 says, 'He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.' In the garden Jesus prayed, 'Not My will, but Yours, be done' (Luke 22:42).

Saul failed because he would not obey. Jesus succeeded where Saul failed, and He did it for us, because none of us can obey perfectly on our own.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTION

"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams."

1 Samuel 15:22 (NKJV)

Talk About It

1. Why is it dangerous to obey God only part of the way? Think of a time you did half of what a parent or teacher asked.

Suggested answer: Because God asks for our heart, not a performance. Partial obedience says 'I will do what I like and skip the rest.'

2. Saul 'did not inquire of the LORD.' What are ways we can 'ask God' before we make a decision?

Suggested answer: Pray, read the Bible, ask a trusted pastor, parent, or mentor, and wait before acting.

3. What does it say about the men of Jabesh Gilead that they remembered Saul's kindness years later?

Suggested answer: They valued gratitude and loyalty. Kindness leaves a lasting mark on people.

4. Saul feared people more than God. When have you felt pressure to follow a crowd instead of doing right?

Suggested answer: Honest sharing about friends, social media, and school. Remind them that Jesus said not to fear people who can only hurt the body (Matthew 10:28).

5. Saul's story is sad. Is there hope for someone who has disobeyed? Where do we find it?

Suggested answer: Yes. 1 John 1:9 promises forgiveness when we confess. Saul never truly turned back; David did, which is the next big difference.

Activity: The Whole-Hearted Challenge

Hand each student an index card with a simple three-step task (e.g., 'stand, spin once, sit'). Give a few cards that are easy to ignore parts of. Afterward talk about why shortcuts feel easy but hurt trust. Then write one thing God has clearly asked of us (love others, pray, tell the truth) and circle one to practice fully this week.

Teacher Background Notes

Setting. Mount Gilboa overlooks the Jezreel Valley in northern Israel, a major crossroad where armies fought for centuries. The Philistines had iron weapons and chariots and were Israel's chief enemy during Saul's reign, roughly 1050-1010 BC.

The temple of Dagon. Dagon was a Philistine god, often linked with grain and harvest. Displaying Saul's head and armor in his temple was a way of saying 'our god beat your God.' First Samuel adds that the armor was put in the house of Ashtoreth and the body fastened to the wall of Beth Shan. The Philistines were claiming a victory that belonged to no god at all.

Jabesh Gilead. This town lay east of the Jordan River. Saul had rescued it from the Ammonites when he was newly crowned (1 Samuel 11). First Samuel 31:12-13 adds that the men burned the bodies and buried the bones, a detail Chronicles does not include. The 'seven days' fast was the usual period of deep mourning.

Saul's medium. In 1 Samuel 28, Saul, terrified and with no answer from God, visited a medium at Endor. He had earlier forbidden mediums in Israel because the law condemned them (Leviticus 19:31; Deuteronomy 18:10-12). He broke his own rule when he felt desperate.

A note on Saul's end. Chronicles reports that Saul fell on his sword. Handle this with care and no detail. If a student reveals thoughts of hurting himself or herself, take it seriously, stay calm, involve the youth pastor, and contact a parent or counselor right away.

Women in this story. No women are named in chapter 10, but Saul's decisions hurt whole households. Rizpah, a woman from Saul's family, later guarded the bodies of her sons for months to protect them from birds and animals (2 Samuel 21:10). Her fierce loyal love is a picture of the kind of care God admires.

Teaching Tips

- Keep the battle scene brief and non-graphic. The point is not violence but why Saul fell and who honored him.
- Students may feel sorry for Saul. That is fine. The Bible shows his tragedy and calls us to learn from it (Romans 15:4).
- Emphasize that Saul's biggest problem was not one sin but a stubborn pattern of excuses and fear.

Think - Feel - Do

THINK	What is the difference between obeying God and only looking like we obey?
-------	---

FEEL	How do you feel when you imagine the pressure Saul was under, and how do you feel about the men who honored him?
DO	What is one thing you will do this week to follow God completely, even when it is hard or when people are watching?

Handout Answer Key

1. word; 2. medium; 3. fasted; 4. David

This week's challenge: Pick one thing you know God wants you to do. Do all of it, not half, and tell your leader how it went.

SESSION 3

Mighty Men and a Loyal Heart

1 Chronicles 11-12

David becomes king and the brave people who stood with him

Big Idea	God builds His kingdom with people who are loyal, courageous, wise, and united. A good leader is humble enough to honor the sacrifice of others, and a good friend has a heart that is not divided.
Podcast	1chronicles_session_03.mp3 (4:26)

KEY VERSE

"All these men of war, who could keep ranks, came to Hebron with a loyal heart, to make David king over all Israel; and all the rest of Israel were of one mind to make David king."

1 Chronicles 12:38 (NKJV)

Today's Session Plan

Min.	Segment	Details
0-5	Opener	Ask: 'Who is the most loyal person you know? What did they do to prove it?' Then ask what makes a team that never gives up.
5-20	Teach	Teach "Setting the Scene" below, reading the key verses aloud.
20-28	Heroes and Warnings	Use the two tables below. Ask: "Which quality do you want God to grow in you?"
28-32	Jesus in the Story	Share the Jesus connection and read the New Testament verse.
32-38	Talk About It	Choose 3-4 questions. Suggested answers follow.
38-43	Activity: Water of Bethlehem	See Activity below.
43-45	Think-Feel-Do and Prayer	Students complete the handout reflection. Close in prayer.

Setting the Scene (Teaching Text)

Saul is gone, and all the tribes come to David at Hebron. They say, 'We are your bone and your flesh,' and they remind him that God had said, 'You shall shepherd My people Israel' (11:1-2). David makes a covenant with them before the LORD, and they anoint him king. Verse 9 sums it up: 'David went on and became great, and the LORD of hosts was with him.'

David's first target is Jerusalem, then called Jebus. The people there mocked him: 'You shall not come in here.' But David and his men captured the stronghold, and it became the City of David. Joab led the charge and became commander.

Then we meet the mighty men. Jashobeam, Eleazar and others did amazing things. Benaiah killed a lion in a pit on a snowy day. Three of them broke through the Philistine camp just to bring David a drink from the well of Bethlehem. When David heard what they had done, he refused to drink it. He poured it out to the LORD and said, 'Shall I drink the blood of these men who have put their lives in jeopardy?' (11:19). David saw their sacrifice as holy, not as something to use.

Chapter 12 lists those who came to David even while he was hiding from Saul. They included men who could shoot arrows with either hand, men 'whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as gazelles on the mountains' (12:8), and men from Judah and Benjamin. When some Benjamites came, David wisely said: if you come to help, my heart will be united with you; if you come to betray me, may God see and judge (12:17). Then the Spirit came upon Amasai, who said, 'We are yours, O David... Peace, peace to you... For your God helps you' (12:18). David welcomed them.

Two groups stand out. The sons of Issachar 'had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do' (12:32). The men of Zebulun were 'not of double heart' (12:33). That means their hearts were not split. When they decided, they were all in. By the end, 'all the rest of Israel were of one mind to make David king,' and they feasted for three days with great joy.

Heroes God Admires

Who	Where	Quality	Why God admires it
David	11:9, 11:17-19	Humble, grateful leadership	He honored the sacrifice of his men by pouring out the water to God instead of using their risk for his comfort.
Benaiah	11:22-25	Courage in hard places	He killed a lion in a pit on a snowy day, and fought a giant Egyptian. Real courage is steady when it is hard.
Abishai	11:20-21	A protector who stood by his leader	He led the three and was famous for courage. He and his brother Joab were sons of David's sister Zeruiah, a mother who raised brave sons.
Amasai	12:18	Encouraging words by the Spirit	He told David, 'Peace, peace to you, and peace to your helpers!' Encouragement is a gift that builds leaders.
The sons of Issachar	12:32	Wisdom to understand the times	They did not just follow the crowd; they knew what to do. Wisdom comes from knowing God's Word and watching the world.
The men of Zebulun	12:33	An undivided heart	They were 'not of double heart.' Whatever they promised, they meant.

Warnings to Heed

Who	Where	Warning	What to learn
The Jebusites	11:4-6	Proud mockers	They bragged that their walls were safe. Pride in a stronghold is no match for God's plan.
Those who would betray	12:17	Divided loyalty	David's careful words show that not everyone who comes is loyal. Be wise about who you trust, and be someone who is trustworthy.
Saul's house and supporters	12:29	Hanging on to a dead cause	Some of Saul's tribe, Benjamin, still held to his house at first. A wise person lets go of what God has replaced.

Jesus in the Story

Jesus is the great Son of David, born in David's town, Bethlehem, where the three mighty men fetched water. David poured out the water and would not drink it. Isaiah 53:12 says of Jesus, 'He poured out His soul unto death.' He did not just receive sacrifice, He gave it.

Jesus called twelve ordinary men to follow Him. 'Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends' (John 15:13). He asks for our loyal, undivided hearts because He gave everything for us.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTION

"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."

John 15:13 (NKJV)

Talk About It

1. David poured out the water the three men risked their lives to bring. Why did he do that?

What does it show about how he saw those men?

Suggested answer: He understood their sacrifice was too precious to treat as a drink. Leaders honor people instead of using them.

2. What does it mean to have a 'loyal heart' or a heart that is 'not double'? How do we show it with friends?

Suggested answer: Keeping our word, not talking behind someone's back, standing with friends when it is hard, and following Jesus all the way.

3. The sons of Issachar had 'understanding of the times.' How can a student today understand the times without being swept along by the world?

Suggested answer: Knowing God's Word, asking what the Bible says about trends, praying, and talking with wise believers.

4. Amasai encouraged David. Who has encouraged you? Who could you encourage this week?

Suggested answer: Honest sharing. Encourage them to send a short text, note, or kind word to someone this week.

5. When David tested the Benjamites, why was it wise to ask questions? How can we be wise about whom we trust?

Suggested answer: Because trust is earned. We can be kind to everyone but wise about who we share our secrets with.

Activity: Water of Bethlehem

Pour a cup of water in front of the class and ask a volunteer to describe what they would feel if a friend risked their life for it. Pour it into a plant or bowl as a 'drink offering.' Discuss what it means to honor someone's sacrifice. Have each student write a thank-you note to someone who sacrifices for them (a parent, teacher, coach, pastor).

Teacher Background Notes

Hebron and the anointing. David had already been anointed privately by Samuel (1 Samuel 16) and then king over Judah at Hebron for seven and a half years (2 Samuel 2-5). Chronicles skips that and focuses on the moment all Israel united under him. Hebron is south of Jerusalem and held the tombs of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac and Jacob, a meaningful place to start a kingdom.

Jerusalem. Jebus was a Canaanite fortress on a ridge with deep valleys on three sides and a hidden water shaft. Taking it unified north and south because it belonged to neither side. It became the political and spiritual capital of Israel.

The mighty men. In Israel's army, elite warriors were called 'mighty men' or 'valiant men.' David's inner circle was called the Three and the Thirty. They were his companions during the years of running from Saul. Joab, Abishai and Asahel were sons of Zeruiah, David's sister (2:16).

Ambidextrous archers. The Benjamites who came to David could use either hand to sling stones and shoot arrows (12:2). Benjamin was famous for left-handed slingers (Judges 20:16). They were from Saul's own tribe, which makes their loyalty to David a surprise.

Women. Chapters 11-12 name no women, but behind these soldiers were mothers, wives and sisters, like Zeruiah, who raised sons of courage. Encourage students to think of mothers, grandmothers and teachers who have shaped them.

Issachar's wisdom. The tribe of Issachar was known in tradition as a tribe of scholars and counselors who understood how to read events and time. In Matthew 16:3, Jesus rebuked leaders who could read the sky but not 'the signs of the times.'

Teaching Tips

- Make the water story vivid, and ask students what they would want a leader to do.
- Some students may be more drawn to the fighting scenes. Redirect: what matters is the heart behind the strength.
- Pair students to practice giving each other one sincere compliment about character, not looks.

Think - Feel - Do

THINK	What qualities made David's mighty men special?
FEEL	How do you feel when someone honors your effort, and how could you make others feel that way?
DO	Who will you encourage or thank this week, and how will you do it?

Handout Answer Key

1. hosts; 2. LORD; 3. times; 4. double

This week's challenge: Write a note or send a message this week to someone who sacrifices for you, and thank them by name.

SESSION 4

God's Way, God's Time

The ark, Uzza, and David learning to ask God first

1 Chronicles 13-14

Big Idea	Good intentions are not enough. God cares about doing things His way, and the wisest leaders ask Him before they act, even when they have won a battle before.
Podcast	1chronicles_session_04.mp3 (4:33)

KEY VERSE

"And David inquired of God, saying, 'Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will You deliver them into my hand?' The LORD said to him, 'Go up, for I will deliver them into your hand.'"

1 Chronicles 14:10 (NKJV)

Today's Session Plan

Min.	Segment	Details
0-5	Opener	Hand a student a simple craft kit or a Lego set without instructions and ask them to build it. Then give them the instructions. Ask: 'Why do instructions matter even when we mean well?'
5-20	Teach	Teach "Setting the Scene" below, reading the key verses aloud.
20-28	Heroes and Warnings	Use the two tables below. Ask: "Which quality do you want God to grow in you?"
28-32	Jesus in the Story	Share the Jesus connection and read the New Testament verse.
32-38	Talk About It	Choose 3-4 questions. Suggested answers follow.
38-43	Activity: Poles, Not Carts	See Activity below.
43-45	Think-Feel-Do and Prayer	Students complete the handout reflection. Close in prayer.

Setting the Scene (Teaching Text)

David has been crowned and has taken Jerusalem. Now he wants to bring the ark of God home. The ark was the golden chest that held the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments, and the lid, called the mercy seat, was where God met with His people. It had been sitting in a house at Kiriath Jearim for about twenty years, ever since the Philistines had sent it back (1 Samuel 6-7). Saul had never cared about it (13:3).

David talks to all the leaders, and everyone agrees. It sounds like a good idea, and it was a good desire. But they put the ark on a brand-new cart pulled by oxen, the way the Philistines had once done. God had told Israel to carry the ark on poles on the shoulders of Levites (Exodus 25:14; Numbers 4:15). The oxen stumbled. Uzza reached out to steady the ark, touched it, and died on the spot (13:9-10).

David was upset and afraid. He asked, 'How can I bring the ark of God to me?' (13:12). He did not argue with God, and he did not walk away. He parked the ark at the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite, and God blessed Obed-Edom's household for three months (13:14). That showed David that God's presence is a blessing, not a threat, to people who honor Him.

Chapter 14 shows us David getting stronger. King Hiram of Tyre sends cedar and craftsmen to build David a house. David knew 'that the LORD had established him as king over Israel' (14:2). Then the Philistines attacked. This time David asked first. 'Shall I go up against the Philistines?' God said yes, and David won at Baal Perazim, saying, 'God has broken through my enemies by my hand, like a breakthrough of water.'

The Philistines came again, but God gave David different instructions: do not go straight at them, go around and wait for the sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry trees. David obeyed exactly. The lesson: God does not use a formula. He wants a relationship. David asked every single time.

Heroes God Admires

Who	Where	Quality	Why God admires it
David	13:12; 14:10	Teachable and quick to ask God	He was shaken by Uzza's death, but he went back to study what God had said, and he asked God before every battle.
Obed-Edom the Gittite	13:13-14	A welcoming heart for God's presence	He opened his home to the ark. God blessed his household.
Hiram, king of Tyre	14:1	A neighbor who helped	A foreign king sent cedar and workers. God can use all kinds of people to bless His plans.
The leaders who agreed with David	13:1-4	A community that wanted God's presence	They did not want the ark forgotten. The desire was good; they just needed to learn the right way.

Warnings to Heed

Who	Where	Warning	What to learn
Uzza and a careless method	13:7-10	Treating a holy thing like an ordinary thing	The ark had been in his family's house for twenty years, and he had grown too familiar. God had given clear directions for carrying it.
The Philistines	14:8-16	Trusting in idols and force	They brought their idols into battle, and David burned them. Idols cannot save.
Following the world's method	13:7	A new cart, the way the Philistines did it	Israel copied the Philistines' way instead of God's. Good goals still need God's methods.

Jesus in the Story

The ark was where God met His people. Jesus is God with us. John 1:14 says, 'And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.' Because of what Jesus did on the cross, we can come near. 'Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need' (Hebrews 4:16).

David asked God before he acted. Jesus lived that way. 'The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do' (John 5:19). If the Son of God depended on the Father, so should we.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTION

"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)

Talk About It

1. David's goal of bringing the ark home was good, but his method was wrong. Can you think of a time when you had a good goal but did it the wrong way?

Suggested answer: Examples: copying someone's homework to help a friend, being rude in 'defending' someone. Good aims need good ways.

2. Why do you think God was so strict about how the ark was carried? What does it teach about God's holiness?

Suggested answer: God is holy, perfect and set apart. He gave clear directions so no one would treat Him casually.

3. How did David respond after Uzza died? Was it wise? What would you have done?

Suggested answer: He was upset, afraid, and honest. Then he went to God's Word and found the right way. Honest feelings plus obedience is wise.

4. The second Philistine battle had different instructions than the first. Why do we need to ask God each time and not just assume?

Suggested answer: Because God is a person, not a machine. Each situation is different, and He wants us to depend on Him.

5. Obed-Edom welcomed God's presence into his house. What does it look like to welcome God into our homes and schedules?

Suggested answer: Prayer at home, Bible reading, worship music, honoring Him with our time and words.

Activity: Poles, Not Carts

Show a short video or picture of a Bible-times ark carried on poles. Have teams use two sticks or broomsticks to carry a box across the room as if it were the ark, with no hands touching the box. Then discuss: What are 'poles' in our lives (the Bible, prayer, church) that help us carry God's things the right way?

Teacher Background Notes

The ark of the covenant. A gold-covered acacia wood chest about 3.75 feet long, with a gold lid called the mercy seat and two cherubim. It held the tablets of the Law (and later Aaron's rod and a jar of manna, Hebrews 9:4). It represented God's throne on earth.

The way it should have been carried. Numbers 4 says the Kohathite Levites were to carry holy objects by the poles, and 'they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die' (Numbers 4:15). Numbers 7:9 notes the Kohathites carried theirs on their shoulders since their work was to bear holy things. The new cart copied the Philistine cart in 1 Samuel 6:7-8.

Why such a strong response? God's holiness was being demonstrated at the start of a new era. The people had to learn that God is near but not casual. Also, Uzza's family had kept the ark for twenty years, and 'familiarity' may have dulled their reverence. Students may ask if this seems unfair. A helpful answer: God is both perfectly just and very merciful, and we do not see every heart. We trust Him, and we notice that David's response of reverence and study led to blessing, not rejection.

Obed-Edom the Gittite. 'Gittite' means from Gath, a Philistine city, though he was likely a Levite who lived there, because 15:18-24 lists him among Levite gatekeepers and musicians. God blessed his household while the ark was there.

Baal Perazim and the mulberry trees. 'Baal Perazim' means 'Lord of breakthroughs.' The valley of Rephaim was just south-west of Jerusalem, and the Philistines raided it repeatedly. The 'sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry trees' (14:15) was God's signal that He was going before David's army.

David's family. Chapter 14 lists David's children born in Jerusalem and notes that he took more wives. The Bible never says this was God's plan, and later it caused trouble. Deuteronomy 17:17 warned kings not to multiply wives. Teachers can note that the Bible tells the truth about David's flaws.

Teaching Tips

- Spend time on Uzza gently. Younger teens often ask 'Is God mean?' Explain holiness, His clear instructions, and the way David's honest grief led him back to God's Word.
- Highlight that David asked God again in the second battle. The same enemy does not always mean the same strategy.
- Offer a prayer time where students can write one decision to take to God this week.

Think - Feel - Do

THINK	Why does it matter to God how we do things, not just what we do?
FEEL	How do you feel when you realize you did the right thing the wrong way?
DO	What decision this week will you take to God in prayer before you act?

Handout Answer Key

1. poles; 2. Obed-Edom; 3. inquired; 4. cedar

This week's challenge: Before one big decision this week (a friend, a purchase, a plan), stop and pray 'Lord, show me Your way,' then ask a parent or mentor.

SESSION 5

Dancing, Singing and Giving Thanks

1 Chronicles 15-16

The ark comes home with joy

Big Idea	True worship is joyful, humble, and generous. David learned to obey God's way, led worship with his whole heart, and shared blessings with everyone, men and women alike, while a critical heart like Michal's misses the joy.
Podcast	1chronicles_session_05.mp3 (4:40)

KEY VERSE

"Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever."

1 Chronicles 16:34 (NKJV)

Today's Session Plan

Min.	Segment	Details
0-5	Opener	Play a short, upbeat worship song or clip of a crowd celebrating a win. Ask: 'What do people do when they are really happy? Do you think we show that to God?'
5-20	Teach	Teach "Setting the Scene" below, reading the key verses aloud.
20-28	Heroes and Warnings	Use the two tables below. Ask: "Which quality do you want God to grow in you?"
28-32	Jesus in the Story	Share the Jesus connection and read the New Testament verse.
32-38	Talk About It	Choose 3-4 questions. Suggested answers follow.
38-43	Activity: Thank-You Psalm	See Activity below.
43-45	Think-Feel-Do and Prayer	Students complete the handout reflection. Close in prayer.

Setting the Scene (Teaching Text)

After the sad day with Uzza, David prepared a place for the ark and a tent for it. Then he did what he should have done the first time. He said, 'No one may carry the ark of God but the Levites, for the LORD has chosen them' (15:2). He gathered the priests and Levites and told them, 'Because you did not do it the first time, the LORD our God broke out against us, because we did not consult Him about the proper order' (15:13). David owned the mistake and made it right.

This time the Levites carried the ark with poles on their shoulders. David appointed singers and musicians, with harps, lyres and loud cymbals, to lift up their voices with joy. Chenaniah led the music because he was skillful. They sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams. David wore a linen ephod, the simple clothing of a worshiper, not royal robes, and he leaped and danced before the LORD.

Then verse 29 tells us something sad: Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window, saw King David dancing and playing music, 'and she despised him in her heart.' Instead of joining in, she judged him from a distance. Second Samuel 6:20-23 says she criticized David bitterly afterward. A critical heart misses the joy of God.

In chapter 16, they set the ark in the tent and offered sacrifices. David blessed the people in the name of the LORD, and he gave to everyone, 'both man and woman,' a loaf of bread, a piece of meat and a cake of raisins (16:3). Nobody was left out. Then David wrote a psalm of thanks and gave it to Asaph and his brothers. It begins, 'Oh, give thanks to the LORD! Call upon His name; make known His deeds among the

peoples!' (16:8).

The psalm tells us what to do: sing, tell, seek, remember, and bless. It reminds Israel of the covenant with Abraham and says, 'Do not touch My anointed ones, and do My prophets no harm' (16:22). It ends with 'Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever' (16:34), then David appoints worship leaders to serve every day.

Heroes God Admires

Who	Where	Quality	Why God admires it
David	15:25-29; 16:1-3	Joyful, humble worship and generous giving	He laid aside his royal robes, danced with all his might and then fed every man and woman. Worship and kindness go together.
The Levites	15:2, 15	Obedient servants	This time they carried the ark exactly as Moses commanded, on poles on their shoulders.
Asaph, Heman, Ethan and Chenaniah	15:16-24; 16:4-7	Skillful, trained musicians	God honors excellence in serving. They practiced and then they led others to give thanks.
The women among the people	16:3	Included and valued	David gave food to 'both man and woman.' Psalm 68:25 tells of 'maidens playing timbrels' in worship processions. In God's house women and men are both welcome to worship and be fed.

Warnings to Heed

Who	Where	Warning	What to learn
Michal	15:29	A despising, critical heart	She watched worship from a window instead of joining. Whatever hurt she carried, her contempt kept her from joy. Judging others can steal our own joy.
A casual, careless approach	15:13	Doing it our way	The earlier failure came from not asking God. David admitted it. We should do the same when we get it wrong.
Pride that hides	15:27-29	Worrying about image	Michal cared how a king should look. David cared about how God should be honored.

Jesus in the Story

When Jesus rode into Jerusalem, crowds shouted, 'Hosanna to the Son of David!' The leaders were angry, like Michal. But Jesus said, 'Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise' (Matthew 21:16). Jesus welcomes the worship of young people.

David danced before the ark, the symbol of God's presence. In Jesus we have the real presence of God. 'God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth' (John 4:24). True worship is from the heart.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTION

"Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise."

Matthew 21:16 (NKJV)

Talk About It

1. What did David do after the first attempt failed? Why is it important to admit when we do something wrong and fix it?

Suggested answer: He gathered leaders, admitted the mistake and obeyed God's way. Humility restores things.

2. David danced in front of everyone without worrying about his image. Why is that hard for middle schoolers? How can we worship without caring what others think?

Suggested answer: Fear of embarrassment and being judged. Remember who we sing to. Start small: sing, lift hands, or pray out loud.

3. Michal 'despised' David in her heart. What do we do when we feel critical of someone else's worship or faith?

Suggested answer: Pray for them, ask questions, and check our own heart. We do not know everything someone is going through.

4. David fed 'every man and woman.' Who is left out at your school or church? How can you include them?

Suggested answer: New students, quiet kids, kids who sit alone. Invite them to sit with you.

5. Look at 16:8-12. List the things David tells people to do. Which could you do this week?

Suggested answer: Give thanks, call on His name, make known His deeds, sing, talk of His wonders, seek the LORD, remember His works.

Activity: Thank-You Psalm

Give each student a card. Have them write four lines of thanks to God, starting with 'Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good.' Allow volunteers to read theirs. Then close with a short group prayer of thanks. If you have a musician available, sing 'Give Thanks' or a similar chorus.

Teacher Background Notes

Why the Levites? God set apart the tribe of Levi to serve in the tabernacle (Numbers 3). Only descendants of Kohath were to carry holy things, which is why David called Levites to handle the ark this time.

Linen ephod. The ephod here is a simple linen garment worn by priests and Levites, like a vest or apron, not the elaborate high priest's ephod. David took off his royal robes and dressed like a common worshiper, showing humility.

Music in worship. Chronicles highlights worship music. Asaph, Heman and Ethan were the chief singers. Many Psalms bear their names (Psalm 50, 73-83 for Asaph; 88 for Heman; 89 for Ethan). Instruments included harps, lyres and cymbals (15:16). The psalm in 16:8-36 combines sections of Psalms 105, 96 and 106, which Chronicles preserves as a worship song of its day.

Michal. Michal was David's first wife and Saul's daughter, who once helped him escape from her father (1 Samuel 19). Later her father gave her to another man, and David took her back (1 Samuel 25:44; 2 Samuel 3:13-16). She may have carried pain and bitterness. Chronicles only says 'she despised him in her heart.' Treat her with compassion: we do not know all she suffered, but the Bible shows us what happens when bitterness is allowed to grow into contempt. 2 Samuel 6:23 notes she had no children.

Women and worship. In 16:3 the Hebrew phrase includes men and women alike receiving food in the celebration. Other Scriptures mention women leading in worship, such as Miriam (Exodus 15:20-21) and Deborah (Judges 5). Highlight that God honors women's worship and leadership in His family.

The tent. David pitched a tent for the ark in Jerusalem, while the tabernacle with the bronze altar remained at Gibeon (16:39). Priests served at both places. This split ended when Solomon built the Temple.

Teaching Tips

- Ask students how it feels to be watched while worshipping. Normalize nerves, but encourage courage.
- Be gentle with Michal. Some students have been hurt by family and may relate to her. Show how forgiveness frees us.
- Play music from your church if possible, and let students pick a song of thanks.

Think - Feel - Do

THINK	What is the difference between how David and Michal treated worship?
FEEL	How do you feel when you worship God? When have you held back because of what people think?
DO	What is one way you will give thanks to God and include someone this week?

Handout Answer Key

1. Levites; 2. ephod; 3. despised; 4. woman

This week's challenge: Write a thank-you psalm and read it to your family, then include one person who is often left out.

SESSION 6

A Promise That Never Ends

1 Chronicles 17

God's covenant with David points to Jesus

Big Idea	God promised David a son whose kingdom would last forever. That promise is fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and David shows us how to receive God's promise with humility, gratitude and faith.
Podcast	1chronicles_session_06.mp3 (4:25)

KEY VERSE

"And I will establish him in My house and in My kingdom forever; and his throne shall be established forever."

1 Chronicles 17:14 (NKJV)

Today's Session Plan

Min.	Segment	Details
0-5	Opener	Ask: 'What is the best promise anyone has ever made you? Did they keep it?' Then ask: 'What makes a promise worth trusting?'
5-20	Teach	Teach "Setting the Scene" below, reading the key verses aloud.
20-28	Heroes and Warnings	Use the two tables below. Ask: "Which quality do you want God to grow in you?"
28-32	Jesus in the Story	Share the Jesus connection and read the New Testament verse.
32-38	Talk About It	Choose 3-4 questions. Suggested answers follow.
38-43	Activity: Promise Wall	See Activity below.
43-45	Think-Feel-Do and Prayer	Students complete the handout reflection. Close in prayer.

Setting the Scene (Teaching Text)

David now lives in a beautiful palace of cedar. One day he tells the prophet Nathan, 'See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of the covenant of the LORD is under tent curtains' (17:1). David feels something is wrong when he lives in comfort and God's ark is in a tent. His desire is to honor God. Nathan says, 'Do all that is in your heart, for God is with you.'

But that night God speaks to Nathan and corrects what he said. Nathan, to his credit, has to go back and tell the king something different. God says, in effect, 'David, you will not build Me a house. I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies' (17:7-8). God reminds David that everything he has was a gift.

Then God makes a promise. 'I will make you a house,' God says (17:10). David wants to build God a house, but God will build David a house, meaning a dynasty. 'He shall build Me a house, and I will establish his throne forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son' (17:12-13). Part of this was fulfilled in Solomon, who built the Temple. But the words 'forever' point beyond Solomon to a King who never dies.

David's response is beautiful. He goes in and 'sat before the LORD.' He does not argue or sulk about being told 'no.' He prays, 'Who am I, O LORD God? And what is my house, that You have brought me this far?' (17:16). He praises God, 'There is none like You, O LORD' (17:20), and then he says, 'Do as You have said' (17:23). That is faith: taking God at His word.

David wanted to do something for God. God said, 'I will do something for you.' We cannot out-give God. The best thing we can do is receive His promises with thankful hearts.

Heroes God Admires

Who	Where	Quality	Why God admires it
David	17:1-2, 16-27	A humble heart that honors God	He wanted to build a house for God, accepted God's 'no,' and thanked Him. He called himself 'Your servant' over and over.
Nathan the prophet	17:3-15	A teachable messenger	Nathan first said 'do all that is in your heart,' then went back when God corrected him. A good leader says 'I was wrong' when God shows him.
Mary, mother of Jesus (a parallel)	Luke 1:38	Humble faith	When the angel told Mary she would give birth to the promised King, she answered, 'Let it be to me according to your word.' She echoed David's 'do as You have said.'

Warnings to Heed

Who	Where	Warning	What to learn
Saul's neglect of the ark	13:3	Ignoring God's presence	David longed to honor the ark; Saul ignored it. Neglecting God shows what we truly value.
The 'sons of wickedness'	17:9	Those who waste and oppress	God promised that wicked people would not 'oppress them anymore, as previously.' God defends His people against injustice.
Self-promotion (the opposite of David's prayer)	17:16-17	Wanting the credit	Proud leaders say 'look what I built.' David said 'Who am I?'

Jesus in the Story

Hundreds of years later an angel told Mary that her Son would be great: 'The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end' (Luke 1:32-33). That is 1 Chronicles 17 coming true.

Hebrews 1:5 quotes this chapter: 'I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son,' and says it is about Jesus. Revelation 22:16 calls Jesus 'the Root and the Offspring of David.' Jesus is the King who lives forever, and His kingdom has no end.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTION

"He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

Luke 1:32-33 (NKJV)

Talk About It

1. David wanted to build God a house. God said no, and instead promised to build David a house. How did David respond? How do we usually respond when we hear 'no'?

Suggested answer: David sat before the LORD, gave thanks, and accepted it. We often argue, sulk, or give up.

2. God reminded David where he came from, 'from the sheepfold.' Why is it good to remember where God brought us from?

Suggested answer: It keeps us humble and thankful, and it reminds us that gifts are from God.

3. Nathan said one thing, then God corrected him. What does it take to go back and fix a mistake?

Suggested answer: Humility, honesty, and quick action. Nathan did not pretend he had been right.

4. Which parts of God's promise to David are fulfilled in Jesus? Read Luke 1:32-33 together.

Suggested answer: Eternal throne, Son of God, kingdom with no end, a descendant of David.

5. David said, 'Do as You have said.' What is a promise of God you can say that about this week?

Suggested answer: For example: 'I will never leave you' (Hebrews 13:5), 'Peace I leave with you' (John 14:27), forgiveness in 1 John 1:9.

Activity: Promise Wall

On a large paper write 'GOD PROMISES' in the center. Have students search the Bible for a promise (a concordance, the Bible app, or a list you prepared) and write each on a sticky note, with the reference. Place them on the wall. End with the group saying together, 'Do as You have said.'

Teacher Background Notes

The Davidic covenant. This is one of the major covenants of the Bible. God promised David a house (dynasty), a throne and a kingdom that would last forever. The parallel is in 2 Samuel 7. Psalm 89 and Psalm 132 celebrate it. When the kings failed and Judah went into exile, the promise became the hope of the people for a coming Messiah.

'House' has two meanings. David wants to build a physical house, the Temple. God promises to build a dynasty, a royal family line. The Hebrew word is the same: 'bayit.'

Why David could not build the Temple. In 22:8 and 28:3 David explains that God said, 'You have shed much blood.' The Temple was to be built by a man of peace, Solomon (whose name is related to the Hebrew word for peace, 'shalom'). We take this up in Session 9.

'I will be his Father.' In the ancient world, kings were often called sons of their gods. The Bible uses the language differently. God adopts David's line as His own sons, not as divine beings. In Jesus, the phrase finds its fullest meaning because He is truly the Son of God (Hebrews 1:5).

Chronicles and Samuel. Samuel's version of the promise includes the line, 'If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men' (2 Samuel 7:14). Chronicles leaves it out because it focuses on hope for the returned exiles. Both accounts agree on the eternal throne.

Mary and women. Mary's response to the angel in Luke 1:38 is a model of humble faith. Luke 1:46-55 gives her song, which echoes Hannah's song and God's promises to Abraham. Women are included prominently in the telling of the promise being fulfilled.

Teaching Tips

- This is a major chapter. Draw a simple timeline: David, Solomon, the kings, the exile, Jesus. Show that the promise outlasted everything.
- Help students see that 'no' from God can be a better 'yes' in another form.
- Have students look up Luke 1:32-33 and Revelation 22:16 themselves.

Think - Feel - Do

THINK	How does God's promise to David show His plan for Jesus?
FEEL	How do you feel when God says no or when He gives more than you asked?
DO	What promise of God will you trust this week, and how will you say 'do as You have said'?

Handout Answer Key

1. cedar; 2. house; 3. forever; 4. God

This week's challenge: Memorize Luke 1:32-33, and say thank You to God for keeping His promise to send Jesus.

SESSION 7

Defending the Weak, Encouraging the Team

1 Chronicles 18-20

David's kindness, Hanun's cruelty, and brave leaders who say 'be strong'

Big Idea	God's leaders show kindness, protect the dignity of the shamed, and encourage others to be strong, while proud and suspicious leaders like Hanun bring shame and war. God gives victory to those who trust Him.
Podcast	1chronicles_session_07.mp3 (4:35)

KEY VERSE

"Be of good courage, and let us be strong for our people and for the cities of our God. And may the LORD do what is good in His sight."

1 Chronicles 19:13 (NKJV)

Today's Session Plan

Min.	Segment	Details
0-5	Opener	Ask: 'Have you ever seen someone being embarrassed or bullied? What did you do or wish you had done?'
5-20	Teach	Teach "Setting the Scene" below, reading the key verses aloud.
20-28	Heroes and Warnings	Use the two tables below. Ask: "Which quality do you want God to grow in you?"
28-32	Jesus in the Story	Share the Jesus connection and read the New Testament verse.
32-38	Talk About It	Choose 3-4 questions. Suggested answers follow.
38-43	Activity: Stand Up Scenarios	See Activity below.
43-45	Think-Feel-Do and Prayer	Students complete the handout reflection. Close in prayer.

Setting the Scene (Teaching Text)

Chapter 18 summarizes David's victories over the Philistines, Moab, and the king of Zobah, and over the Syrians who came to help him. 'So the LORD preserved David wherever he went' (18:6). David dedicated the silver and gold to the LORD. The most important line is 18:14: 'So David reigned over all Israel, and administered judgment and justice to all his people.' A good king is not just strong; he is fair.

Chapter 19 is a story about kindness and cruelty. When the king of Ammon died, David said, 'I will show kindness to Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father showed kindness to me' (19:2). He sent messengers to comfort Hanun. But Hanun's princes whispered that David's men were spies. Hanun believed the rumor, seized David's servants, shaved off half of each man's beard and cut their robes off at the middle, and sent them away humiliated.

David's men were deeply ashamed. When David heard, he did not scold them or ignore them. He sent messengers to meet them and said, 'Wait at Jericho until your beards have grown, and then return' (19:5). He protected their dignity. He took care of them. That is how a godly leader treats the people who serve him.

Hanun knew he had made David angry, so he hired thirty-two thousand chariots and soldiers from Syria. Joab saw enemies in front and behind, and he made a plan. He said to his brother Abishai, 'Be of good courage, and let us be strong for our people and for the cities of our God. And may the LORD do what is good in His sight' (19:13). Joab did his best, trusted God with the result, and they won.

Chapter 20 closes with more battles and giants. Goliath's relatives still taunted Israel. David's men struck them down, including Jonathan, David's nephew, who killed a giant with six fingers and six toes. 'When he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea, David's brother, killed him' (20:7). Giants still fall when God's people stand together.

Heroes God Admires

Who	Where	Quality	Why God admires it
David	19:2-5	Kind and protective	He showed kindness to a grieving enemy, and he shielded his shamed servants and gave them time to heal. That is defending the weak.
Joab and Abishai	19:11-13	Courage, teamwork and trust in God	They split the army, backed each other up, and said 'be strong... may the LORD do what is good in His sight.'
David as judge	18:14	Justice for all	He 'administered judgment and justice to all his people,' not only to his friends.
Jonathan, David's nephew	20:7	A giant-killer from the family	He stepped forward when a giant defied Israel. Standing up to evil often takes one person who says 'I will.'

Warnings to Heed

Who	Where	Warning	What to learn
Hanun, king of Ammon	19:3-6	Suspicion, cruelty and pride	He believed gossip, treated kindness as a trick, and humiliated innocent men. His pride started a war.
The Ammonite princes	19:3	Gossip and bad counsel	They spread a rumor, 'Do you think David is honoring your father?' Whispering lies leads to disaster.
Goliath's family and the giants	20:4-8	Defying God's people	They stood up and mocked Israel. God gave His people victory.
Hadadezer and the Syrians	18:3-5	Trusting in chariots	They came with chariots and horses and still lost. Armies are not a substitute for God.

Jesus in the Story

Jesus does what David did, but perfectly. He defends the weak: 'The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me... He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives... to set at liberty those who are oppressed' (Luke 4:18). When a woman poured perfume on Jesus, and people scolded her, He said, 'Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me' (Matthew 26:10). He restored Peter's dignity after Peter denied Him (John 21).

David's men beat giants. Jesus beat the biggest giants of all, sin and death. 'But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ' (1 Corinthians 15:57).

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTION

"The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed."

Luke 4:18 (NKJV)

Talk About It

1. David showed kindness even to an enemy's son. Why is kindness sometimes hard? Why did David do it?

Suggested answer: Kindness takes humility. David knew God had been kind to him, and honored a debt of kindness from Nahash.

2. What did David do for his embarrassed servants? Who in your life needs someone to protect their dignity?

Suggested answer: He sent word to meet them, let them stay away until they were ready, and treated them with respect. Examples: sit with a student who got laughed at, remove a mean post, sit with someone eating alone.

3. Hanun believed a rumor instead of asking questions. How do rumors and gossip hurt people?

Suggested answer: They destroy trust, start fights, and make people hide. Ask questions first.

4. Joab said, 'Be of good courage... and may the LORD do what is good in His sight.' What does it mean to do your best and leave the result to God?

Suggested answer: Work hard, be brave, pray, and trust God for the outcome, whether we win or not.

5. Psalm 82:3 says, 'Defend the poor and fatherless.' How can middle schoolers defend people who are weak or picked on?

Suggested answer: Stand next to the person, speak up, tell an adult, include them, don't join the laugh.

Activity: Stand Up Scenarios

Read three short scenarios (a student mocked for his clothes, a rumor in a group chat, a new student sitting alone). For each, have teams write what Hanun would do, and what David would do. Then role-play the 'David' response. Close with students signing a card that says 'I will defend the weak.'

Teacher Background Notes

Why Chronicles summarizes the wars. David's victories expanded Israel to the borders God promised Abraham (Genesis 15:18). Chronicles keeps the focus on God's help rather than on military detail. The phrase 'the LORD preserved David wherever he went' (18:6, 13) shows God as the true hero.

Beards and robes. In the ancient Near East, a full beard was a sign of manhood and dignity. Shaving half of it and cutting the robes so that the men were exposed was a deliberate public humiliation. Sending men back in that state was an insult to David himself. David's response, to let them stay at Jericho, was a loving and protective act.

Why the Ammonites fought. Ammon lay east of the Jordan, in what is now Jordan. The Ammonites had long been Israel's enemy (Judges 11, 1 Samuel 11). The kindness David offered was meant to heal that relationship. Hanun's misreading of it shows how suspicion poisons peace.

Joab. Joab was David's nephew and commander, a skilled and brave general but also ruthless (he killed Abner and Amasa in 2 Samuel 3 and 20). His words in 19:13 are admirable. The Bible does not hide his faults. We learn from the good and avoid the bad.

What Chronicles leaves out in chapter 20. Verse 1 says, 'David stayed at Jerusalem' while Joab fought at Rabbah. Second Samuel 11 tells what happened then: David's sin with Bathsheba and against her husband Uriah, and Nathan's rebuke (2 Samuel 12). Chronicles does not repeat it, but David's repentance is recorded in Psalm 51 and the consequences are in 2 Samuel. If a student asks, answer honestly and age-appropriately: David committed adultery and arranged a man's death, God confronted him, he repented, and God forgave him, yet the consequences remained.

The giants. Goliath was from Gath. Chapter 20 lists other 'sons of the giant.' Elhanan killed Lahmi, brother of Goliath. Second Samuel 21 describes these battles as well. Stress that David's army defeated the giants by teamwork and trust in God.

Women. Women are not named in these chapters, but the ideals apply. Proverbs 31:8-9 teaches, 'Open your mouth for the speechless, in the cause of all who are appointed to die.' Women such as Esther,

Abigail (1 Samuel 25) and Deborah (Judges 4-5) defended the weak. Highlight women who stood up in history and today.

Teaching Tips

- Bullying is a real issue for middle schoolers. Be ready for personal sharing. Plan to follow up with students who disclose being hurt.
- Make sure the 'defend the weak' action step is concrete. Students often feel powerless, so give simple steps like sitting with someone, speaking up, or telling an adult.
- Mention that anger is not wrong if it moves us to protect, but it must not turn to cruelty.

Think - Feel - Do

THINK	What is the difference between how David and Hanun treated people?
FEEL	How do you feel when you see someone being picked on, and what does that tell you about God's heart?
DO	Who will you defend or encourage this week, and what will you actually do?

Handout Answer Key

1. justice; 2. kindness; 3. Jericho; 4. courage

This week's challenge: Find one person who is being left out or made fun of, and be kind to them in a visible way this week. Pray for the person who is cruel.

SESSION 8

The Cost of Pride and the Mercy of God

1 Chronicles 21

David's census, a shepherd's prayer, and the threshing floor

Big Idea	Even great leaders can fall into pride, but God's mercy is greater than our sin. David confessed quickly, begged God to spare the sheep, and refused to offer God something that cost him nothing, pointing us to Jesus, the Good Shepherd who gave His life for the sheep.
Podcast	1chronicles_session_08.mp3 (4:41)

KEY VERSE

"Then King David said to Ornan, 'No, but I will surely buy it for the full price, for I will not take what is yours for the LORD, nor offer burnt offerings with that which costs me nothing.'"

1 Chronicles 21:24 (NKJV)

Today's Session Plan

Min.	Segment	Details
0-5	Opener	Ask: 'Have you ever done something wrong and hoped no one would find out? What happened?' Then ask: 'Is it better to confess quickly or wait?'
5-20	Teach	Teach "Setting the Scene" below, reading the key verses aloud.
20-28	Heroes and Warnings	Use the two tables below. Ask: "Which quality do you want God to grow in you?"
28-32	Jesus in the Story	Share the Jesus connection and read the New Testament verse.
32-38	Talk About It	Choose 3-4 questions. Suggested answers follow.
38-43	Activity: Costly Offering	See Activity below.
43-45	Think-Feel-Do and Prayer	Students complete the handout reflection. Close in prayer.

Setting the Scene (Teaching Text)

Chapter 21 begins with a shocking sentence: 'Now Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel' (21:1). This is the first time the word Satan is used as a name in the Old Testament. The enemy of our souls whispered an idea to David: count your fighting men. It sounds harmless, but David's heart was shifting from trusting God to trusting numbers.

David's commander Joab saw the problem. He said, 'May the LORD make His people a hundred times more than they are. But, my lord the king, are they not all my lord's servants? Why then does my lord require this thing? Why should he be a cause of guilt in Israel?' (21:3). Joab, not always known for his faith, had better spiritual sense than the king this time. Good counselors tell us the truth even when it is hard. David insisted, and Joab obeyed, but he did not count the tribes of Levi and Benjamin because the king's word was 'abominable to Joab' (21:6).

God was displeased. David knew at once that he had sinned: 'I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing; but now, I pray, take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have done very foolishly' (21:8). The prophet Gad offered David three choices: three years of famine, three months of defeat by enemies, or three days of the sword of the LORD, a plague. David said, 'Please let me fall into the hand of the LORD, for His mercies are very great; but do not let me fall into the hand of man' (21:13). A plague came on Israel, and many people died.

Then comes the most beautiful part. David saw the angel of the LORD standing between earth and heaven with a drawn sword over Jerusalem. David and the elders fell on their faces in sackcloth. David prayed, 'Was it not I who commanded the people to be numbered? I am the one who has sinned and done evil indeed; but these sheep, what have they done? Let Your hand, I pray, O LORD my God, be against me and my father's house, but not against Your people' (21:17). David did not blame anyone. He asked God to let the punishment fall on him and spare the sheep. That is a shepherd's heart.

God told David to build an altar at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. Ornan offered the land, the oxen and the wheat for free. David answered with the verse we are memorizing: 'I will not take what is yours for the LORD, nor offer burnt offerings with that which costs me nothing.' David paid the full price. Fire came down from heaven on the altar, God told the angel to put his sword back in its sheath, and the plague stopped. This hilltop, Mount Moriah, would become the site of the Temple, and it was the same mountain where Abraham had been ready to offer Isaac.

Heroes God Admires

Who	Where	Quality	Why God admires it
Joab (this time)	21:3-6	Courage to give honest advice	He told the king the truth, even though it could cost him. Good friends and advisors do that.
David (in repentance)	21:8, 17	Quick confession and a shepherd's heart	He did not hide, make excuses or blame. He took responsibility, and he asked God to spare the people.
Gad the seer	21:9-13	A prophet who delivered a hard message	He told David the truth and then helped him find God's way forward.
Ornan (Araunah)	21:23	Generous hospitality	He offered his land, oxen and wheat freely to the king and to God.
David at the threshing floor	21:24	Worship that costs something	He refused a free gift. Real worship involves sacrifice, time and love.

Warnings to Heed

Who	Where	Warning	What to learn
Satan	21:1	The tempter and accuser	He 'stood up against Israel' and pushed David toward pride. He still whispers lies, but he is defeated by Jesus.
David's pride	21:2-4	Trusting in numbers, not in God	Counting soldiers showed his trust was shifting. Even good people can fall into pride when they are successful.
Insisting on one's own way	21:4	Overriding good advice	David overruled Joab's warning. Pride makes it hard to listen to a friend.
The people who followed a sinful decision	21:14	Sin affects everyone	A leader's pride hurt the whole nation. Our choices ripple outward.

Jesus in the Story

David said, 'I am the one who has sinned... but these sheep, what have they done?' The Bible teaches that all of us have gone astray like sheep (Isaiah 53:6). David could only offer himself, but could not take the punishment of others. Jesus is the Good Shepherd: 'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep' (John 10:11). He stepped in front of the sword for us.

The threshing floor on Mount Moriah is where Abraham had been ready to offer Isaac, and God provided a ram instead (Genesis 22). It became the Temple site, and not far away Jesus was later crucified as the Lamb of God, 'who takes away the sin of the world' (John 1:29).

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep."

John 10:11 (NKJV)

Talk About It

1. Why do you think counting his army was a problem for David? What does it show about his heart?

Suggested answer: He was trusting in strength and numbers instead of in the LORD. Pride is looking at what we have rather than at who God is.

2. Joab warned David. Who are the 'Joabs' in your life who tell you the truth? How should you respond when they warn you?

Suggested answer: Parents, teachers, youth leaders, friends. Respond by listening, thinking and asking God, not getting defensive.

3. David chose to fall into God's hands rather than man's. Why do you think he said, 'His mercies are very great'?

Suggested answer: He had known God's mercy all his life (Psalm 51). God's character is faithful, and David trusted it over human mercy.

4. David asked God to punish him instead of the people. How does that remind you of Jesus?

Suggested answer: Jesus took our place. He is the Shepherd who gave Himself for the sheep.

5. What does it mean to offer God something that 'costs you nothing'? What could you give God that costs you something?

Suggested answer: Giving time, talents, money or comfort; serving when it is inconvenient; giving up something for others.

Activity: Costly Offering

Place a basket at the front. Invite students to write on a small paper one thing they could give to God that would cost them something (time on a device, a Saturday to serve, saving allowance, forgiving someone). They fold it and place it in the basket. Pray over the offering. Do not read the papers aloud.

Teacher Background Notes

Why was a census wrong? Counting the people was not forbidden by itself, since God had commanded censuses in Numbers 1 and 26. The problem was David's motive. Joab's reaction shows the census was an act of pride, assuming the army and the people were David's property to measure and trust. Exodus 30:12 also required a ransom with every census to remember that each life belonged to God.

Satan in Chronicles. Second Samuel 24:1 says 'the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel, and He moved David against them.' Chronicles gives the other side: Satan was the one who incited David, with God allowing it. This resembles Job 1-2. Do not push the difference too hard. God is sovereign, even over what Satan does, but He is never the author of sin (James 1:13).

The plague. The text says 70,000 men died in three days (21:14). The numbers are sober, but the focus is that the LORD relented: 'It is enough; now restrain your hand' (21:15). Mercy interrupted judgment at the very edge of Jerusalem. Take time to point out God's compassion.

Ornan or Araunah. Ornan (Chronicles) is called Araunah in 2 Samuel 24. Both names may refer to the same man; one may be a title or alternate spelling. He was a Jebusite, one of the original inhabitants of Jerusalem. His sons hid when they saw the angel, but he kept threshing (21:20), perhaps a picture of an ordinary man caught up in great events.

The price. Second Samuel 24:24 says David paid fifty shekels of silver for the threshing floor and oxen. Chronicles says six hundred shekels of gold for 'the place' (21:25). Most scholars explain this as the smaller purchase of the floor and oxen in Samuel and the larger purchase of the whole site for the future

Temple here. Do not make it a big issue, but be ready if a student notices.

Mount Moriah. Second Chronicles 3:1 says Solomon built the Temple 'on Mount Moriah' on the threshing floor of Ornan. Genesis 22:2 says Abraham was told to go to a mountain in the land of Moriah. Many conservative scholars link these. Chronicles' original readers, newly returned, were reminded that the Temple site was chosen in mercy.

Women. No women are named in this chapter. For a model of honest, humble prayer in a hard time, point students to Hannah (1 Samuel 1).

Teaching Tips

- Present the plague with seriousness but not graphic detail. Emphasize God's mercy: He stopped the angel.
- Remind students that David's repentance did not remove every consequence. We receive forgiveness fully, but some results remain.
- Be alert to students who are carrying guilt. Offer to pray with them privately and remind them of 1 John 1:9.

Think - Feel - Do

THINK	What does David's response to his sin teach you about confessing to God?
FEEL	How do you feel about the fact that God shows mercy even when we fail?
DO	What will you give to God this week that costs you something?

Handout Answer Key

1. Satan; 2. mercies; 3. sheep; 4. nothing

This week's challenge: Give God something that costs you this week, and thank someone who has told you a hard truth.

SESSION 9

Preparing for Someone Else's Dream

1 Chronicles 22

David gets ready for Solomon and the Temple

Big Idea	God admires leaders who accept His 'no' and pour themselves into helping the next generation succeed. David could not build the Temple, but he prepared everything, encouraged Solomon and called the leaders to help.
Podcast	1chronicles_session_09.mp3 (4:51)

KEY VERSE

"Then you will prosper, if you take care to fulfill the statutes and judgments with which the LORD charged Moses concerning Israel. Be strong and of good courage; do not fear nor be dismayed."

1 Chronicles 22:13 (NKJV)

Today's Session Plan

Min.	Segment	Details
0-5	Opener	Ask: 'Has anyone ever helped you reach a goal without taking credit? Who? What did they do?' Then ask: 'What would it be like to work hard on something someone else will finish?'
5-20	Teach	Teach "Setting the Scene" below, reading the key verses aloud.
20-28	Heroes and Warnings	Use the two tables below. Ask: "Which quality do you want God to grow in you?"
28-32	Jesus in the Story	Share the Jesus connection and read the New Testament verse.
32-38	Talk About It	Choose 3-4 questions. Suggested answers follow.
38-43	Activity: Blessing Cards	See Activity below.
43-45	Think-Feel-Do and Prayer	Students complete the handout reflection. Close in prayer.

Setting the Scene (Teaching Text)

Right after the threshing floor, David says, 'This is the house of the LORD God, and this is the altar of burnt offering for Israel' (22:1). He knows where the Temple will stand. But God has told him he will not build it. David could have been bitter. He could have said, 'If I cannot build it, I will not help.' Instead, he said, 'Solomon my son is young and inexperienced, and the house to be built for the LORD must be exceedingly magnificent... I will now make preparation for it' (22:5). So David gathered stone, iron, bronze, cedar, gold and silver, enough to supply a whole generation of building.

Then David called Solomon and told him why. 'My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build a house for the name of the LORD my God; but the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'You have shed much blood and have fought great wars; you shall not build a house for My name' (22:7-8). David was honest. His life of battles and mistakes meant that someone else would build. God had promised a son who would be a man of rest and peace, named Solomon.

David gave Solomon a blessing and a prayer: 'Now, my son, may the LORD be with you; and may you prosper, and build the house of the LORD your God' (22:11). Then he gave advice: 'Only may the LORD give you wisdom and understanding, and give you command concerning Israel, that you may keep the law of the LORD your God' (22:12). The verse we are memorizing follows: 'Be strong and of good courage; do not fear nor be dismayed' (22:13). David's wisdom came from his own mistakes: obey God, and take

courage.

David also told Solomon how much he had prepared: huge stores of gold, silver, bronze and iron, plus wood and stone. And he said, 'Arise and begin working, and the LORD be with you' (22:16). Notice the encouragement: you are not alone. God is with you.

Finally, David turned to all the leaders of Israel and said, 'Is not the LORD your God with you? And has He not given you rest on every side?... Now set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God' (22:18-19). He asked them to help Solomon. A good leader doesn't just prepare a project; he prepares people to support it.

Heroes God Admires

Who	Where	Quality	Why God admires it
David	22:5, 14	Selfless preparation	He accepted God's 'no' and poured his time and money into someone else's work, willing to be forgotten.
David as encourager	22:11-13, 16	A mentor who speaks courage	He told his son, 'Be strong and of good courage,' and 'the LORD be with you.' Young people need to hear that.
Solomon (at this moment)	22:6-16	A willing son who listened	Solomon received his father's charge. Listening to godly parents and mentors is wisdom (Proverbs 1:8).
The mothers and fathers who teach	22:11	Teaching faith to the next generation	Solomon later wrote, 'Hear the instruction of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother' (Proverbs 1:8). Both parents shape the faith of a child.
The workers	22:15-16	Craftsmen and builders	Stonecutters, masons, carpenters and metalworkers did the hard work. Every skilled worker matters to God.

Warnings to Heed

Who	Where	Warning	What to learn
Selfish ambition	22:5	The opposite of David's attitude	A leader who says 'If it is not mine, I won't help' puts himself first. In 1 Kings 1:5, David's son Adonijah exalted himself and said, 'I will be king.'
Bitterness at God's 'no'	22:7-8	What David could have chosen	David could have blamed God. Bitterness poisons a heart; David chose trust.
Forgetting God's law	22:12-13	A warning about the future	David knew Solomon's success depended on keeping God's law. Later kings forgot that, and the kingdom suffered (2 Chronicles).

Jesus in the Story

Jesus is the true 'Man of rest.' 'Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest' (Matthew 11:28). Solomon's name means peace; Jesus is the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6).

David prepared a house for God. Jesus is preparing a place for us. 'In My Father's house are many mansions... I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also' (John 14:2-3). Jesus also said, 'Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world' (John 16:33), the same kind of encouragement David gave Solomon.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTION

"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."

John 14:2-3 (NKJV)

Talk About It

1. How did David respond to hearing 'you will not build the Temple'? What could he have done instead?

Suggested answer: He accepted it, trusted God, and began preparing. He could have been bitter, jealous or lazy.

2. David called Solomon 'young and inexperienced.' How did he help him anyway?

Suggested answer: He gathered materials, gave his blessing and advice, and asked leaders to help.

3. Who has prepared the way for you, such as parents, grandparents, teachers or pastors? How could you thank them?

Suggested answer: Thank them, write a note, pray for them, keep the faith they have taught you.

4. How can you encourage someone younger than you, like a sibling, a kid at church, or a new student?

Suggested answer: Include them, cheer for them, teach a skill, say 'I believe in you.'

5. What does 'Be strong and of good courage' mean? Where do you need courage right now?

Suggested answer: Strong means relying on God, not our own strength; courage means doing right even when we are afraid. Joshua 1:9 gives the same promise.

Activity: Blessing Cards

Give each student two index cards. On the first, they write a blessing and encouragement for someone younger ('May the LORD be with you... Be strong and courageous'). On the second, they write a thank-you to someone who prepared the way for them. Deliver them this week.

Teacher Background Notes

David's gifts. Chronicles reports vast amounts of gold and silver (22:14), enough for a magnificent Temple. The exact weights are debated, but the point is generosity beyond measure, which sets the stage for Session 12. Whatever the numbers, the amounts were far greater than any normal royal gift.

'A man of war.' Warfare was necessary to defend Israel and bring peace, yet God said that a man with so much blood on his hands should not build the sanctuary. This does not mean David was not forgiven. It reflects the difference between conquering the land and building a place of peace. Some students may ask about Bathsheba and Uriah. Be honest: David's sin was serious and forgiven, and the Temple was reserved for Solomon.

Foreigners as builders. David had aliens, or 'strangers,' in Israel gather stone and cut it (22:2). This reflects the common use of conscripted foreign laborers. Some students may ask whether this is fair. Be honest that Bible stories describe real societies, and the New Testament calls us to love foreigners and treat workers fairly (Deuteronomy 10:19; Colossians 4:1).

Solomon's age. Solomon was likely a young man, possibly in his late teens or early twenties, when he became king. Tradition places him around twenty. 'Young and inexperienced' (22:5) fits. Middle schoolers can relate to being young and given big responsibilities.

Mothers and fathers. Proverbs 4:3-4 records Solomon remembering, 'When I was my father's son... He also taught me, and said to me: 'Let your heart retain my words; keep my commands, and live.'" Solomon's mother Bathsheba also had a role, and the text names her (3:5, 'Bathshua'). Parents, grandparents and mentors both shape faith, as Paul says Timothy's faith dwelt first in his grandmother Lois and mother Eunice (2 Timothy 1:5).

Why this chapter is in Chronicles. For returned exiles building a modest second Temple (Ezra 3-6), David's example showed that preparing for the future is faithful service, even if you do not see the finished work.

Teaching Tips

- Ask students who has 'built the road' for them. Some students may not have family support. Honor mentors and teachers as well.

- Be sensitive about the 'shed much blood' phrase. Keep it simple: David was a warrior king; Solomon would be a king of peace.
- Give students time to write the blessing cards. It is a powerful moment.

Think - Feel - Do

THINK	What did David do after God said 'you will not build my house'?
FEEL	How do you feel about helping others succeed when you may not get the credit?
DO	Who will you encourage this week, and what will you say or do?

Handout Answer Key

1. inexperienced; 2. peace; 3. courage; 4. help

This week's challenge: Prepare the way for someone this week: help a younger student, serve at church, or write a blessing for a sibling.

SESSION 10

Every Servant Matters

1 Chronicles 23-27

Levites, gatekeepers, singers, soldiers and a counselor who went wrong

Big Idea	God cares about every job, big or small, seen or unseen. Gatekeepers, singers, judges, treasurers and soldiers all served together under God, with women and men, small and great, sharing the work, while a brilliant counselor like Ahithophel shows that talent without loyalty to God is dangerous.
Podcast	1chronicles_session_10.mp3 (4:53)

KEY VERSE

"And they cast lots for their duty, the small as well as the great, the teacher with the student."

1 Chronicles 25:8 (NKJV)

Today's Session Plan

Min.	Segment	Details
0-5	Opener	Show a picture of a stadium or a big building. Ask: 'Who makes it work? Who cleans, guards, sells tickets, runs the lights?' Let students name unseen helpers. Ask: 'Which of those jobs matters?'
5-20	Teach	Teach "Setting the Scene" below, reading the key verses aloud.
20-28	Heroes and Warnings	Use the two tables below. Ask: "Which quality do you want God to grow in you?"
28-32	Jesus in the Story	Share the Jesus connection and read the New Testament verse.
32-38	Talk About It	Choose 3-4 questions. Suggested answers follow.
38-43	Activity: Unseen Jobs Relay	See Activity below.
43-45	Think-Feel-Do and Prayer	Students complete the handout reflection. Close in prayer.

Setting the Scene (Teaching Text)

These chapters can look like long lists, but they are about something very important: how God's people serve together. David is an old man, and he sets up everything for Solomon. Chapter 23 begins, 'So when David was old and full of days, he made his son Solomon king over Israel' (23:1). Then he organizes the Levites by age and job. Twenty-four thousand oversee the work of the house of the LORD, six thousand are officers and judges, four thousand are gatekeepers, and four thousand praise the LORD with instruments (23:4-5). Their daily job was 'to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at evening' (23:30).

Chapter 24 lists twenty-four divisions of priests so that every priest had a turn, and chapter 25 lists the singers and musicians. This is amazing. 'They cast lots for their duty, the small as well as the great, the teacher with the student' (25:8). Nobody got the best job because of fame or age. The singers 'prophesied with harps, stringed instruments, and cymbals' (25:1). Heman had fourteen sons and three daughters, 'all under the direction of their father for the music in the house of the LORD' (25:5-6). Girls and boys, women and men, all trained and skillful, took part in leading worship.

Chapter 26 shows the gatekeepers, treasurers, and judges. Obed-Edom, the man who had welcomed the ark, had sons and grandsons who were 'able men with strength for the work' (26:8). Gatekeepers protected God's house. Treasurers looked after the gifts that had been dedicated to God (26:20-28). Others served as officials and judges to bring justice to Israel (26:29-32). These are the people who defend the weak, protect holy things and keep things fair.

Chapter 27 describes the army, with twelve divisions of 24,000 men, each serving one month a year. It lists tribal leaders, stewards over David's property and vineyards, herds and flocks, and counselors. Among them were two advisors: 'Ahithophel was the king's counselor, and Hushai the Archite was the king's companion' (27:33). Ahithophel was famous for his wisdom, but later, in 2 Samuel 15-17, he sided with Absalom against David. His brilliance was not enough. Wisdom without loyalty to the LORD can be used against God's people, and his story ended in sorrow.

The big idea is that God's kingdom runs on teamwork. A gatekeeper is as important as a singer. A judge matters as much as a soldier. Nobody is too small to be noticed by God. Paul put it this way: 'The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you'... those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary' (1 Corinthians 12:21-22).

Heroes God Admires

Who	Where	Quality	Why God admires it
The Levite singers and musicians	25:1-8	Skill, training and teamwork	They practiced, led worship, and were chosen fairly by lot. God honors the work done in rehearsal as well as on stage.
Heman's daughters	25:5-6	Women trained to serve in worship	Three daughters served with their father in music in the house of the LORD. Women and girls have always had a place in worship.
The gatekeepers, including Obed-Edom's family	26:1-19	Guarding what is holy	They protected God's house and the people inside. Standing at a door can be a form of defending the weak.
The treasurers	26:20-28	Honesty with what is entrusted	They guarded gifts dedicated to God. Faithfulness with money and things is a sign of a trustworthy heart.
The judges and officers	23:4; 26:29-32	Justice and fairness	They helped keep order and care for the people. 'Learn to do good; seek justice, rebuke the oppressor; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow' (Isaiah 1:17).
Hushai the friend	27:33	A loyal companion	He is called 'the king's companion.' Loyal friendship is a gift from God.

Warnings to Heed

Who	Where	Warning	What to learn
Ahithophel	27:33	Great wisdom without a loyal heart	He was the king's counselor, but later turned against David. Being smart is not the same as being godly.
The tendency to rank people	23:26	Pride about position	God used lots to assign duties so no one would feel superior. Pride says, 'My job is more important.'
Dishonest stewardship (the opposite of the treasurers)	26:20-28	Misusing what is entrusted	The treasurers were careful. Later, Judas stole from the money bag (John 12:6), a warning for anyone entrusted with something.

Jesus in the Story

Jesus said, 'For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves' (Luke 22:27). And in Mark 10:45, 'The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.' The King of kings washed His friends' feet.

Jesus is also the Door and the Gate. 'I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved' (John 10:9). And Jesus is the true Priest, the One who stands between God and people (Hebrews 4:14-16). Every job in the Temple points to Him.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTION

"No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary."

1 Corinthians 12:22 (NKJV)

Talk About It

1. Why do you think David used lots to give out duties, 'the small as well as the great, the teacher with the student'?

Suggested answer: So there was no favoritism. Everyone, young or old, famous or not, could serve and be fairly included.

2. Which Temple jobs do you think would be easy to overlook? Why does God care about them?

Suggested answer: Gatekeepers, treasurers, cleaners, and people who tune instruments. God sees faithful work in secret (Matthew 6:4).

3. Who are the 'gatekeepers' and 'treasurers' in your life, the people who protect and look after things? How can you thank them?

Suggested answer: Parents, teachers, janitors, church volunteers, crossing guards. Say thanks by name.

4. Ahithophel was brilliant but turned away. What can we learn about the difference between being smart and being wise?

Suggested answer: Wisdom starts with the fear of the LORD (Proverbs 9:10). Brains can be used for good or evil; wisdom means using them for God.

5. What is one job at your church, school or home that you can do faithfully, even if no one notices?

Suggested answer: Setting chairs, helping in the kitchen, running sound, caring for a younger sibling, picking up trash.

Activity: Unseen Jobs Relay

Divide students into teams. Write a list of unseen jobs on cards (set up chairs, run the sound board, welcome at the door, clean up, pray for the service, take notes, etc.). Teams draw a card randomly (like casting lots) and act out the job in 30 seconds for the others to guess. Close by asking each student to pick one job to volunteer for in the coming month.

Teacher Background Notes

The big picture. David was nearing the end of his 40-year reign (about 1010-970 BC). Chapters 23-27 show his final organization of worship and government. Every job was planned so that Solomon would inherit order, and so that the Temple, when built, would run smoothly. Chronicles gives this much space because the returned exiles needed to restore proper order in the second Temple (Ezra 3:8-13).

Priests and Levites. Priests came from Aaron's family. Levites were the rest of the tribe of Levi and did support work: carrying, guarding, teaching, singing and caring for the Temple. David lowered the starting age of service to 20 because the Levites would no longer need to carry the tabernacle from place to place (23:24-27).

Lots. Casting lots was a way of letting God decide without favoritism (Proverbs 16:33). The text notes that in the singers' division, the small and the great, the teacher and the student were treated the same (25:8).

Women in worship. Chapter 25:5-6 plainly says Heman's three daughters served in music with his sons. Other places in Scripture show women singing in worship, including Miriam (Exodus 15:20-21), Deborah

(Judges 5), and the 'maidens playing timbrels' in Psalm 68:25. Chronicles does not give a full roster of women, but it does name them where it can.

Gatekeepers. Gatekeepers were responsible to keep out anything unclean and to protect the treasury. This was a position of trust and strength (26:6-8). The Psalmist wrote, 'I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness' (Psalm 84:10).

Ahithophel. Ahithophel was known for counsel like 'one who inquires of the word of God' (2 Samuel 16:23). Many Bible teachers believe he was Bathsheba's grandfather (compare 2 Samuel 11:3 and 23:34), which may help explain his anger at David. He joined Absalom's rebellion, and when his advice was rejected, he left and ended his life (2 Samuel 17:23). Handle this gently. Do not go into detail, and be alert for students who may relate to such pain. If a student shows signs of hopelessness, speak with them privately, involve a parent and your pastor, and connect them to a counselor or crisis line.

Army divisions. The monthly army (27:1-15) was a militia that served one month a year, so the nation was always protected but men could also farm and care for families. This reflects a wise system that spread responsibility.

Teaching Tips

- Do not read every name. Highlight the categories, and a few memorable ones such as Heman's daughters and Obed-Edom.
- Be honest that Bible lists can feel dry. Make it personal by asking students what job they would want and why.
- End with a sign-up sheet for service opportunities.

Think - Feel - Do

THINK	Why does God care about every job, even small and unseen ones?
FEEL	How do you feel when someone notices your quiet work? How can you make others feel noticed?
DO	Which behind-the-scenes job will you take on this month?

Handout Answer Key

1. duty; 2. great; 3. daughters; 4. Ahithophel

This week's challenge: Sign up for one behind-the-scenes job at church or home this month, and thank someone who works quietly to help you.

SESSION 11

Know the God of Your Father

1 Chronicles 28*David's charge to the leaders and to Solomon*

Big Idea	Faith has to become your own. David told Solomon to know God personally and serve Him with a loyal heart, because God searches every heart: if you seek Him, He will be found; if you forsake Him, you lose everything.
Podcast	1chronicles_session_11.mp3 (4:52)

KEY VERSE

"As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever."

1 Chronicles 28:9 (NKJV)

Today's Session Plan

Min.	Segment	Details
0-5	Opener	Ask: 'What things do you do because your family does them? Which of those would you keep even if no one made you?' Let a few answer.
5-20	Teach	Teach "Setting the Scene" below, reading the key verses aloud.
20-28	Heroes and Warnings	Use the two tables below. Ask: "Which quality do you want God to grow in you?"
28-32	Jesus in the Story	Share the Jesus connection and read the New Testament verse.
32-38	Talk About It	Choose 3-4 questions. Suggested answers follow.
38-43	Activity: Passing the Torch	See Activity below.
43-45	Think-Feel-Do and Prayer	Students complete the handout reflection. Close in prayer.

Setting the Scene (Teaching Text)

David calls all the leaders of Israel to Jerusalem: tribal leaders, army commanders, stewards, officers and mighty men. Then he stands on his feet, though he is old, and says, 'Hear me, my brethren and my people' (28:2). He is honest. 'I had it in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant... But God said to me, 'You shall not build a house for My name, because you have been a man of war and have shed blood'' (28:2-3). Then he praises God for choosing him from his father's house, and for choosing Solomon to sit on the throne.

Next David speaks to everyone: 'Now therefore, in the sight of all Israel, the congregation of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God, be careful to seek out all the commandments of the LORD your God, that you may possess this good land, and leave it as an inheritance to your children after you forever' (28:8). He asks the whole nation to pass faith to their children. A nation's future depends on what the next generation believes.

Then he speaks directly to Solomon. This is the heart of the chapter. 'Know the God of your father.' Not just know about Him, but know Him. David wants Solomon to serve with a loyal heart and a willing mind. Why? 'The LORD searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts.' God sees our motives. Then David gives a promise and a warning. 'If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.'

David gave Solomon the plans for the Temple: the porch, the rooms, the treasuries, the courts, the courses of the priests and Levites, and the golden articles. 'All this,' said David, 'the LORD made me understand in writing, by His hand upon me, all the works of these plans' (28:19). God directed the details. David did not invent them.

He closes with encouragement: 'Be strong and of good courage, and do it; do not fear nor be dismayed, for the LORD God, my God, will be with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you, until you have finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD' (28:20). David wants Solomon to remember that God is not just David's God. He should be Solomon's God. Sadly, in later years Solomon's heart was drawn away (1 Kings 11), and the story of Second Chronicles shows how many kings forgot this very chapter.

Heroes God Admires

Who	Where	Quality	Why God admires it
David	28:2-10	A leader who is honest, humble and passes on faith	He stood before everyone, admitted God's 'no,' praised God for His choices, and gave his son a personal charge.
The leaders of Israel	28:1	Those who listened and showed up	The officers, commanders and stewards came when called and heard the king. Listening is the first step to obeying.
Mothers and grandmothers of faith	28:9 (compare 2 Timothy 1:5)	Faith passed down in a family	Paul reminds Timothy of the faith that lived first in his grandmother Lois and mother Eunice. Women pass faith on in the home.
Solomon (at this point)	28:5-10	A young man who received a charge	God had chosen him, and David told him to know God for himself. He now had to choose to seek God.

Warnings to Heed

Who	Where	Warning	What to learn
Forsaking the LORD	28:9	The warning of the chapter	David warned that if Solomon forsook the LORD, he would be cast off forever. The kings who followed show how real that warning was.
Divided or double-hearted people	28:9	Serving with a half heart	David asked for a 'loyal heart and a willing mind.' Half-hearted service is not enough.
Future kings who forgot (preview)	2 Chronicles	Those who walked away	Rehoboam, Ahaz, Manasseh and others forgot the lessons of this chapter. 2 Chronicles tells of their failures and of the few who returned to God.

Jesus in the Story

Jesus said, 'And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent' (John 17:3). To know God is the heart of the Christian faith, and Jesus makes it possible.

God's promise to Solomon, 'He will not leave you nor forsake you,' is repeated to every believer in Hebrews 13:5: 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' Jesus added, 'Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age' (Matthew 28:20). He also said that a 'greater than Solomon is here' (Matthew 12:42). Solomon was a wise king who failed, but Jesus is the wise King who never fails.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTION

"For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'"

Hebrews 13:5 (NKJV)

Talk About It

1. David told Solomon to 'know the God of your father.' What is the difference between knowing about God and knowing Him?

Suggested answer: Knowing about God is facts. Knowing Him is a relationship: talking to Him, trusting Him, obeying Him, enjoying Him.

2. Why does the verse say, 'The LORD searches all hearts'? How should that change the way we live?

Suggested answer: God sees our motives and attitudes, not just our actions. He wants honest, loyal hearts, not performance.

3. Verse 9 has a promise and a warning. What are they? Why do both matter?

Suggested answer: Promise: if you seek Him, He will be found. Warning: if you forsake Him, you will be cast off. Both show that God takes our choices seriously and that He welcomes seekers.

4. Who in your family or church has passed faith on to you? What did they do or say that mattered?

Suggested answer: Parents, grandparents, pastors, teachers, friends. They prayed, taught, modeled faith, and served.

5. What is one way you can make your faith your own this week?

Suggested answer: Pray daily, read the Bible, journal, ask questions, serve, and talk to a trusted adult about faith.

Activity: Passing the Torch

Hand a small flashlight or candle (battery) to the first student. Each person says one thing someone has taught them about God, then passes the light to the next. At the end, shine the light on a card that says 'Know the God of your father (and mother).' Close in prayer, asking God to help each student make faith their own.

Teacher Background Notes

The setting. This is David's last great assembly. He gathers every class of leader: tribal chiefs, army officers, stewards, officials and mighty men (28:1). Shortly after, he will announce Solomon as king in a public ceremony (29:22). In 1 Kings 1, Adonijah had tried to seize the throne. Chronicles skips the conflict, but this gathering is where the nation was reminded who God had chosen.

'House of rest' and 'footstool.' David describes the ark as God's footstool (28:2, compare Psalm 132:7). In the ancient Near East a king's throne had a footstool, and the ark was seen as the place where God's presence 'rested' on earth. The Temple would be a permanent home instead of a tent.

Conditional and unconditional. God's promise to David's line is eternal (1 Chronicles 17), but each king's enjoyment of it depended on obedience. David makes this explicit in 28:7-9: 'If he is steadfast... if you seek Him... if you forsake Him.' Students may find it helpful to see the difference between God's overall plan, which does not fail, and each person's choice, which matters.

Plans by the Spirit. In 28:12 and 19, God gave David the pattern 'by the Spirit' and 'by His hand upon me.' Like the plans for the tabernacle given to Moses (Exodus 25:9, 40), the Temple was designed by God. David was a prophet as well as a king (Acts 2:30).

Solomon's later life. Solomon started well and asked for wisdom (1 Kings 3). But 1 Kings 11 records that late in life he married many foreign women, and his heart turned to other gods. This is why David's words to him, 'know the God of your father,' matter. Be honest with students that great beginnings do not guarantee great endings.

Women and faith. David's speech does not mention women directly, but Solomon himself recorded in Proverbs 1:8 and 6:20 the teaching of both father and mother. Proverbs 31 describes a woman of faith whose children rise up and call her blessed. Paul says Timothy's faith began with his grandmother and

mother (2 Timothy 1:5).

Teaching Tips

- Make sure students hear both the promise and the warning in verse 9. Do not use fear. Emphasize that God is easy to find for those who seek Him.
- Students whose parents are not believers may feel left out of 'faith of your father.' Reassure them that God can make them the first in their family to follow Him (John 1:12).
- Let students share who first taught them about Jesus.

Think - Feel - Do

THINK	What does it mean to know God personally and not only know about Him?
FEEL	How do you feel when you think about God searching your heart?
DO	What will you do this week to seek God for yourself?

Handout Answer Key

1. God; 2. loyal; 3. hearts; 4. leave

This week's challenge: Pick a time this week to be alone with God for ten minutes. Ask Him to show Himself to you and write down what you notice.

SESSION 12

Cheerful Givers with Willing Hearts

1 Chronicles 29:1-20

David's offering and one of the greatest prayers in the Bible

Big Idea	Everything we have comes from God, so giving is just returning what is His. God loves joyful, willing, honest givers, and a leader gives first and gives from the heart.
Podcast	1chronicles_session_12.mp3 (4:47)

KEY VERSE

"But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly as this? For all things come from You, and of Your own we have given You."

1 Chronicles 29:14 (NKJV)

Today's Session Plan

Min.	Segment	Details
0-5	Opener	Ask: 'If someone gave you \$100 and said you could keep \$90 but must use \$10 to help someone, how would you feel?' Then ask: 'What is the difference between giving because you must and giving because you want?'
5-20	Teach	Teach "Setting the Scene" below, reading the key verses aloud.
20-28	Heroes and Warnings	Use the two tables below. Ask: "Which quality do you want God to grow in you?"
28-32	Jesus in the Story	Share the Jesus connection and read the New Testament verse.
32-38	Talk About It	Choose 3-4 questions. Suggested answers follow.
38-43	Activity: Treasure Inventory	See Activity below.
43-45	Think-Feel-Do and Prayer	Students complete the handout reflection. Close in prayer.

Setting the Scene (Teaching Text)

David stands before the whole assembly and says, 'My son Solomon, whom alone God has chosen, is young and inexperienced; and the work is great, because the temple is not for man but for the LORD God' (29:1). Then he does something remarkable. He tells them what he has already given. 'I have prepared for the house of my God with all my might... Moreover, because I have set my affection on the house of my God, I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared... my own special treasure of gold and silver' (29:2-3). David gave first, from his own pocket, before asking anyone else.

Then he asks, 'Who then is willing to consecrate himself this day to the LORD?' (29:5). The leaders of the fathers' houses, the tribal rulers, the captains, and the officials 'offered willingly.' They gave gold, silver, bronze, iron and precious stones. Then verse 9 says, 'Then the people rejoiced, for they had offered willingly, because with a loyal heart they had offered willingly to the LORD; and King David also rejoiced greatly.' Notice the joy. Nobody was forced. It was a party of generosity.

Then David prays one of the greatest prayers in the Bible (29:10-19). 'Blessed are You, LORD God of Israel, our Father, forever and ever. Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in the earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and You are exalted as head over all' (29:10-11). Many Christians hear echoes of the ending of the Lord's Prayer in this passage.

Next comes the verse we are memorizing: 'But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly as this? For all things come from You, and of Your own we have given You' (29:14). David is saying, 'We are only giving back what is already Yours.' He adds, 'For we are aliens and pilgrims before You, as were all our fathers; our days on earth are as a shadow' (29:15). Nothing we have lasts forever, so we hold it loosely.

Then David reveals what God really cares about: 'I know also, my God, that You test the heart and have pleasure in uprightness' (29:17). God is not impressed by the size of the gift. He looks at the heart. David closes by praying for the people: 'Keep this forever in the intent of the thoughts of the heart of Your people, and fix their heart toward You' (29:18), and for Solomon: 'Give my son Solomon a loyal heart to keep Your commandments... and to build the temple' (29:19). Then 'all the assembly blessed the LORD God of their fathers, and bowed their heads and prostrated themselves' (29:20).

Heroes God Admires

Who	Where	Quality	Why God admires it
David	29:2-3, 10-19	A leader who gives first and prays humbly	He led by example, gave his own treasure, and then gave the credit to God.
The leaders of Israel	29:6-8	Willing and joyful givers	They gave gold, silver, bronze, iron and jewels, and gave them freely and cheerfully.
Women who supported Jesus' ministry (a New Testament parallel)	Luke 8:1-3	Generous women	Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna and many others 'provided for Him from their substance.' Women have been generous supporters of God's work from the beginning.
The poor widow (a New Testament parallel)	Mark 12:41-44	Giving everything	Jesus said she gave more than all the rich because she gave all she had. God measures the heart, not the amount.

Warnings to Heed

Who	Where	Warning	What to learn
Achan (from Session 1)	1 Chr 2:7	Stealing what belonged to God	Achan took what God had devoted, and brought trouble. Taking what is God's is the opposite of giving freely.
Ananias and Sapphira	Acts 5:1-11	Giving for show and lying	They pretended to give everything while secretly holding back. God cares about honesty in giving.
Judas	John 12:6	A thief with the money bag	Judas 'had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.' Greed destroyed him.
Grudging, forced giving	2 Cor 9:7	Giving 'grudgingly or of necessity'	Giving with a sour heart misses the point. God loves a cheerful giver.

Jesus in the Story

The greatest gift of all is Jesus Himself. 'For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich' (2 Corinthians 8:9). Jesus gave up the glory of heaven for us.

Jesus teaches us how to give: 'So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver' (2 Corinthians 9:7). And, 'For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also' (Matthew 6:21).

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTION

"So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver."

2 Corinthians 9:7 (NKJV)

Talk About It

1. David gave first before he asked others to give. Why does leading by example matter?

Suggested answer: People follow what we do more than what we say. David showed it was not just a request.

2. David said, 'All things come from You, and of Your own we have given You.' How does remembering that everything is God's change how we think about our stuff?

Suggested answer: We become more grateful, less greedy, and more willing to share, since we are managers of God's things.

3. Verse 9 says the people rejoiced because they gave willingly. When have you felt joy from giving?

Suggested answer: Examples: giving a gift, serving at a food pantry, helping a family. Joy is a sign that God made us to give.

4. God 'tests the heart and has pleasure in uprightness' (29:17). What does it mean that God cares more about our heart than the size of the gift?

Suggested answer: He sees motives. A small gift with a big heart can be worth more than a large gift with a proud heart (Mark 12:41-44).

5. Besides money, what else can you give to God and others (time, talents, kindness, attention)?

Suggested answer: Time, helping hands, listening, forgiveness, music, skills, prayer, encouragement.

Activity: Treasure Inventory

Give each student a sheet with three columns: Time, Talents, Treasure. Have them write one thing they can give in each column this month. Then have them pray 'All things come from You, and of Your own we have given You.' Display a poster of 29:14 in the room. Optionally, plan a service project such as collecting food or hygiene items.

Teacher Background Notes

The size of the gifts. Chronicles lists a staggering amount of gold, silver, bronze and iron (29:4-7). The 'talents' and 'darics' (the Persian coin, 29:7) show that the writer is speaking to a people who knew Persian money. A daric was a gold coin from the period of the exile, which helps us date Chronicles. The point is generosity far beyond the usual.

Ophir. David gave gold of Ophir (29:4), a place famed for its gold, probably in Arabia or Africa. It was a source of luxury in Solomon's time (1 Kings 9:28).

'Willingly.' The Hebrew word for 'willingly' (nadab) appears repeatedly (29:5-9, 14, 17). It also appeared in Exodus 35-36 when the people brought gifts so freely for the tabernacle that Moses had to tell them to stop. David's assembly echoes that spirit.

'Aliens and pilgrims.' David calls Israel 'aliens and pilgrims' (29:15), a phrase the New Testament uses of believers (Hebrews 11:13; 1 Peter 2:11). This life is temporary. The truest wealth is in heaven (Matthew 6:19-21).

Women and giving. In the tabernacle, 'all the women who were gifted artisans' brought spun yarn and cloth (Exodus 35:25-26). In Jesus' day, women supported His ministry (Luke 8:1-3), a widow gave two small coins (Mark 12:41-44), and Mary of Bethany poured out costly perfume (John 12:3).

Teaching on money with middle schoolers. Most students have small amounts of money. Broaden the discussion to time, talents and attention. Be careful not to pressure students to give money, since some may be from families with real need. Focus on the heart.

Teaching Tips

- Do not make this an offering appeal. Make it a celebration of generosity, and highlight kindness.
- Read David's prayer slowly. It is a good model for personal prayer.
- Some students will not have money to give. Point out that time and kindness are real gifts.

Think - Feel - Do

THINK	What does it mean that everything we have comes from God?
FEEL	How do you feel when you give something away, and when you receive something?
DO	What will you give this week, and who will you give it to?

Handout Answer Key

1. You; 2. willingly; 3. heart; 4. shadow

This week's challenge: Choose one thing to give this week, such as time, money or kindness, and give it cheerfully and quietly.

SESSION 13

Long Live the King!

Solomon crowned, David's finish, and the Son of David

1 Chronicles 29:20-30
and review

Big Idea	David finished well: he worshiped, gave thanks, handed the kingdom to Solomon in unity and died full of days. The whole book points to Jesus, the greater Son of David, who calls us to be people who love like Him and who defend and encourage others.
Podcast	1chronicles_session_13.mp3 (5:01)

KEY VERSE

"Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in the earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and You are exalted as head over all."

1 Chronicles 29:11 (NKJV)

Today's Session Plan

Min.	Segment	Details
0-5	Opener	Ask: 'What is the best way to finish a race, a game, or a school year? What does it mean to finish well?' Then ask: 'Who do you know who has finished a hard thing well?'
5-20	Teach	Teach "Setting the Scene" below, reading the key verses aloud.
20-28	Heroes and Warnings	Use the two tables below. Ask: "Which quality do you want God to grow in you?"
28-32	Jesus in the Story	Share the Jesus connection and read the New Testament verse.
32-38	Talk About It	Choose 3-4 questions. Suggested answers follow.
38-43	Activity: Hall of Heroes and Warnings	See Activity below.
43-45	Think-Feel-Do and Prayer	Students complete the handout reflection. Close in prayer.

Setting the Scene (Teaching Text)

After David's prayer, the whole assembly 'blessed the LORD God of their fathers, and bowed their heads and prostrated themselves before the LORD and the king' (29:20). The next day they offered sacrifices, a thousand bulls, a thousand rams, and a thousand lambs, and 'ate and drank before the LORD with great gladness on that day' (29:21-22). Then 'they made Solomon the son of David king the second time, and anointed him before the LORD to be the leader, and Zadok to be priest' (29:22).

Verse 23 says, 'Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him.' Then comes one of the best verses in the book: 'All the leaders and the mighty men, and also all the sons of King David, submitted themselves to King Solomon' (29:24). There was no fighting over the throne. They were unified. 'So the LORD exalted Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel' (29:25).

Then Chronicles closes David's story: 'So he died in a good old age, full of days and riches and honor; and Solomon his son reigned in his place' (29:28). David reigned forty years: seven at Hebron and thirty-three at Jerusalem. His story was written in the records of Samuel the seer, Nathan the prophet and Gad the seer. David was not perfect. He made terrible mistakes, but he repented, loved God's house, and finished well.

Now step back and see what First Chronicles has taught us. We have met heroes whom God admired: Jabez, who prayed to be kept from causing pain; the men of Jabesh Gilead, who honored a fallen king; David's mighty men, with loyal hearts; Obed-Edom, who welcomed God; the Levites who sang and guarded; Joab and Abishai, who said 'be of good courage'; Ornan, who gave freely; and women like Sheerah, the daughters of Heman, and the women who were fed at David's feast. We have also met leaders God warned us about: Saul, who would not listen; Uzza and a careless approach to holy things; Michal's despising heart; Hanun's cruelty; the pride behind the census; and Ahithophel, who had wisdom but not loyalty.

And through it all we have seen a King who is coming. The family tree began with Adam and led to David. God's promise of a throne that would last forever points to Jesus. The same Savior who was born in David's city, Bethlehem, is called 'KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS' (Revelation 19:16). And the first people to see the risen King were women: Mary Magdalene and the others who stayed faithful at the cross and the tomb.

Heroes God Admires

Who	Where	Quality	Why God admires it
David	29:28	Finished well	He repented when he failed, loved God's house, gave generously and passed on his faith. He died 'full of days and riches and honor.'
Solomon and the sons of David	29:23-25	Humble unity	The leaders and David's own sons submitted to the new king. They put God's plan above their own ambitions.
Zadok the priest	29:22	Faithful priest	He served the LORD and the king through a time of change.
The whole assembly	29:20-22	Worshipers who gave thanks	They bowed, sacrificed, ate together and rejoiced. Worship and community go together.
The women at the cross and the empty tomb	John 19:25; 20:1, 18	Loyal and brave followers of the greater Son of David	They stayed when others ran, and Mary Magdalene told the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord!'

Warnings to Heed

Who	Where	Warning	What to learn
Saul	1 Chr 10	Did not obey or seek the LORD	A king who listened to fear rather than to God.
Hanun and the Ammonites	1 Chr 19	Cruel, suspicious and proud	They mistreated the innocent and paid the price.
Ahithophel and double hearts	1 Chr 27:33; 28:9	Wisdom without loyalty	Great talent is not enough. God wants loyal hearts.
The future kings who forgot (preview)	2 Chronic les	Forsaking the LORD	Chronicles continues with kings who either sought God and lived, or forgot Him and fell.

Jesus in the Story

Every page of First Chronicles points forward. Matthew 1:1 says, 'The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.' When Jesus entered Jerusalem, crowds cried, 'Hosanna to the Son of David!' (Matthew 21:9). The angel told Mary, 'The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David' (Luke 1:32). And in Revelation 5:5 Jesus is called 'the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of

David.'

David was a good king, but he died. Jesus is the King who died and rose again, who reigns forever. 'And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS' (Revelation 19:16). Everything God admires in David, Jesus did perfectly: perfect obedience, perfect love, perfect defense of the weak, perfect encouragement. And He gives us His Spirit so we can follow Him.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTION

"And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."

Revelation 19:16 (NKJV)

Talk About It

1. What does it mean to 'finish well'? What choices did David make that helped him finish well, even though he failed sometimes?

Suggested answer: He repented, trusted God, loved worship, gave generously and mentored the next generation. Finishing well means staying close to God, not being perfect.

2. Why was it important that David's sons and the leaders submitted to Solomon? How does unity help God's work?

Suggested answer: Unity avoids division and puts God's plans first. A church or family that quarrels about who is in charge loses its witness.

3. Look back over the book. Which hero from First Chronicles do you most want to be like? Why?

Suggested answer: Let students answer honestly, naming a quality such as courage, kindness, humility, loyalty or generosity.

4. Which warning from the book is the most important for you right now?

Suggested answer: Encourage honest answers, such as pride, fear of people, gossip, or half-hearted obedience.

5. How does knowing Jesus is the greater Son of David change how you read the whole story?

Suggested answer: It shows God's plan was always moving toward Jesus, and that all the good in David and others was a shadow of Jesus' perfect goodness.

Activity: Hall of Heroes and Warnings

Make two posters: 'Hall of Heroes' and 'Warning Signs.' Give students sticky notes. They write a name from First Chronicles and one quality (for example, 'Jabez: prayed to keep from causing pain' or 'Saul: feared people more than God') and place it on the right poster. Read them together. End by having students write one quality they want God to grow in them and place it on a third poster titled 'Long Live the King.'

Teacher Background Notes

'The second time.' Solomon was anointed king twice. The first time was in a hurry during Adonijah's attempted coup (1 Kings 1:32-40). The second, described here (29:22), was a public ceremony with the whole nation, showing unity and God's blessing. Chronicles leaves out the conflict, but it makes the story hopeful.

Zadok. Zadok descended from Eleazar, Aaron's son. He and Abiathar served as priests under David. Zadok remained loyal to David and Solomon during Adonijah's attempted coup, and became the chief priest (1 Kings 2:35). His line served in the Temple for generations.

Reign length. David reigned seven years and six months at Hebron over Judah, and thirty-three years in Jerusalem over all Israel (2 Samuel 5:4-5). Chronicles rounds the numbers: 'forty years.'

'Records of Samuel, Nathan and Gad.' (29:29) The writer of Chronicles used earlier sources that are partly preserved in 1-2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings. The mention of these prophets also shows that God spoke

to David through several faithful voices.

What comes next. Second Chronicles tells of Solomon building the Temple, then the divided kingdom with kings like Rehoboam, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Josiah and others, some who sought the LORD and some who rebelled, ending with the exile and Cyrus's decree to return. Many of the lessons we learned here, such as seeking God, humble obedience and generosity, reappear. You may wish to continue the series with 2 Chronicles.

Women in the whole book. Students may note that First Chronicles names few women. Point out those it does: Tamar, Abigail, Zeruah, Sheerah, Heman's daughters, and Michal. Then remind students of the women whose stories are told elsewhere: Hannah, Abigail, Ruth, Esther, Mary and the women at the resurrection. God's Word values women who are faithful and courageous, and so does He.

Wrap-up. Use this last session to celebrate. Consider a small party and give students the completed quiz journal. Offer an invitation for any student who wants to follow Jesus or recommit their life to Him.

Teaching Tips

- Plan time for a gospel invitation. After reviewing the King, offer students a chance to pray, receive Jesus, or ask questions privately.
- Use the Hall of Heroes and Warnings activity to review. Hang the posters for the next series.
- Celebrate finishing the study. A small treat and certificates help students feel proud of their effort.

Think - Feel - Do

THINK	What is the most important lesson you learned from First Chronicles?
FEEL	How do you feel about being part of God's family and seeing His plan fulfilled in Jesus?
DO	What one quality or habit will you work on, with God's help, in the next month?

Handout Answer Key

1. forty; 2. submitted; 3. honor; 4. David

This week's challenge: Choose one hero quality from First Chronicles, and one warning, to focus on this month. Tell a friend or leader so they can encourage you.

Appendix A: Women of Faith in First Chronicles and Beyond

First Chronicles names few women, so this study also includes women from the rest of Scripture to show how God honors women who build, serve, pray, give and stay loyal.

Who	Reference	What they show	Se ss.
Tamar	2:4	Part of the line of Judah and of Jesus (Matthew 1:3).	1
Abigail and Zeruiah	2:16	David's sisters; Zeruiah was the mother of Joab, Abishai and Asahel.	3
Jabez's mother	4:9	Raised an honorable son after a painful birth.	1
Sheerah	7:24	A woman who built Lower and Upper Beth Horon.	1
Women of Israel at the feast	16:3	David gave bread, meat and raisins to every man and woman.	5
Michal	15:29	A warning: she despised David's worship in her heart.	5
Heman's daughters	25:5-6	Three daughters served in the music of God's house.	10
Mary, mother of Jesus	Luke 1:38	Humble faith: "Let it be to me according to your word."	6
The woman who anointed Jesus	Matthew 26:10	Jesus defended her: "She has done a good work for Me."	7
Lois and Eunice	2 Timothy 1:5	Grandmother and mother who passed on faith to Timothy.	11
The widow who gave two coins	Mark 12:41-44	Gave all she had; Jesus honored her heart.	12
Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna	Luke 8:1-3	Supported Jesus' ministry from their own means.	12
Women at the cross and tomb	John 19:25; 20:18	Loyal to the King; Mary Magdalene was first to announce the risen Lord.	13

Appendix B: Podcast Episode List

#	Episode	File	Length
1	A Name, a Prayer, a Purpose	1chronicles_session_01.mp3	4:59
2	The King Who Would Not Listen	1chronicles_session_02.mp3	4:29
3	Mighty Men and a Loyal Heart	1chronicles_session_03.mp3	4:26
4	God's Way, God's Time	1chronicles_session_04.mp3	4:33
5	Dancing, Singing and Giving Thanks	1chronicles_session_05.mp3	4:40
6	A Promise That Never Ends	1chronicles_session_06.mp3	4:25
7	Defending the Weak, Encouraging the Team	1chronicles_session_07.mp3	4:35
8	The Cost of Pride and the Mercy of God	1chronicles_session_08.mp3	4:41
9	Preparing for Someone Else's Dream	1chronicles_session_09.mp3	4:51
10	Every Servant Matters	1chronicles_session_10.mp3	4:53
11	Know the God of Your Father	1chronicles_session_11.mp3	4:52
12	Cheerful Givers with Willing Hearts	1chronicles_session_12.mp3	4:47

#	Episode	File	Length
13	Long Live the King!	1chronicles_session_13.mp3	5:01

Voices. Each episode is a conversation between a male and a female host, written at a 5th-7th grade level. The episodes contain no speaker introductions, so they can be dropped in anywhere.

Appendix C: All Key Verses at a Glance

#	Reference	Memory verse (NKJV)
1	1 Chronicles 4:10	And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, 'Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!' So God granted him what he requested.
2	1 Chronicles 10:13-14	So Saul died for his unfaithfulness which he had committed against the LORD, because he did not keep the word of the LORD, and also because he consulted a medium for guidance. But he did not inquire of the LORD; therefore He killed him, and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse.
3	1 Chronicles 12:38	All these men of war, who could keep ranks, came to Hebron with a loyal heart, to make David king over all Israel; and all the rest of Israel were of one mind to make David king.
4	1 Chronicles 14:10	And David inquired of God, saying, 'Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will You deliver them into my hand?' The LORD said to him, 'Go up, for I will deliver them into your hand.'
5	1 Chronicles 16:34	Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.
6	1 Chronicles 17:14	And I will establish him in My house and in My kingdom forever; and his throne shall be established forever.
7	1 Chronicles 19:13	Be of good courage, and let us be strong for our people and for the cities of our God. And may the LORD do what is good in His sight.
8	1 Chronicles 21:24	Then King David said to Ornan, 'No, but I will surely buy it for the full price, for I will not take what is yours for the LORD, nor offer burnt offerings with that which costs me nothing.'
9	1 Chronicles 22:13	Then you will prosper, if you take care to fulfill the statutes and judgments with which the LORD charged Moses concerning Israel. Be strong and of good courage; do not fear nor be dismayed.
10	1 Chronicles 25:8	And they cast lots for their duty, the small as well as the great, the teacher with the student.
11	1 Chronicles 28:9	As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.
12	1 Chronicles 29:14	But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly as this? For all things come from You, and of Your own we have given You.
13	1 Chronicles 29:11	Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in the earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and You are exalted as head over all.