

Study Hints for Thinking Further

International Bible Lessons

2 Samuel 23:1-7; 1 Chronicles 18:14

Sunday, July 8, 2012

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Some Bible study groups or classes can further discussion by asking some or all of the **Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** below. Others may want to send the bulletin size *International Bible Lesson* home with their students for further study in the coming week to encourage continuing Bible study. The *Study Hints for Thinking Further* below are not actually intended to be answers to the discussion questions, but hints a teacher may use to help students think through and discuss the questions in class.

Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. What is more important, people's deeds or their relationship with God? Give reasons for your answer.

People's relationship with God, as David's last words and the deeds of his life showed. A good relationship will open a person's heart and mind to doing the will of God as revealed in the Bible and as revealed to their spirit as consistent with the Bible's teachings. Those who follow them, if they are leaders, will do so joyfully and even sacrificially, if reasonably required. A godless person, who has no relationship with God, will not be led by God, but He may be controlled by God or restrained by God to keep him from doing more evil than he would otherwise do.

2. What would you think or say to someone if they said to you, "God told me to say this to you" Or, "God told me that He wants you to"?

I would want to know if their history, over a long period of time, was spiritually similar to the spiritual history of King David. I would want to know if what they said or wanted me to do was consistent with the Bible's teachings or inconsistent with God's character and His ways as revealed in the Bible. I would wonder why they would be coming to me, and if God really sent them, or if they wanted me to do something for selfish reasons or to control me. I would tell them that I would pray about it and do what God led me to do. If they came to me to repent of a sin or sins, as the prophet Nathan went to King David (see 2 Samuel 12), I hope I would repent as King David did and restore my relationship with God on God's terms.

3. What difference does a godly leader make to godly people? What difference might a godly leader make to ungodly people?

A godly leader will bring rejoicing to godly people, because the leader and people will understand in their minds and hearts that the leader is open to the leading of God and will be less likely to mislead them: they will all be on the same moral and biblical ground. The godly leader might help ungodly people come to appreciate the ways of God and come to trust in and love God, or the godless might resent their godly leader and fight against the godly leader in every way possible to them, making life difficult for all. The ungodly will not enjoy the godly leader if he tries to restrain their selfishness.

4. What difference might an ungodly leader make to godly people? How should Christians treat the godless?

He will bring much sorrow into the lives of godly people as they see him or her making decisions they know are contrary to the will of God as revealed in the Bible. He might try to persecute the godly or try to lead them to accept godlessness or become ungodly themselves. Christians should pray for the godless, that they repent of their sins, accept Jesus the Messiah as their Lord and Savior, and that they begin to pray and study the Bible so God can rightly and justly lead them to do His will. Christians can also pray that God will deal with the godless in His way according to His timing. They can pray God will restrain the godless from doing harm. They can pray that the godly will replace the godless in places of responsibility. They will need to pray that God will show them what to do toward the godless consistent with the Bible's teachings.

5. Give some reasons why leaders in businesses, churches, families, and governments should lead justly and treat all people fairly?

If they do not lead justly and fairly, they can bring about anger, resentment and division (as did King Rehoboam) in those they mistreat and in those who see others mistreated. Leaders in all of these areas need to be good examples. Leaders who lead justly and treat others fairly inspire confidence, and they will usually have the support of these they lead. If they try to lead justly and fairly, God will help them and give them wisdom to keep on doing what is right and the power to do what is right. If they refuse to do right, God will not help them and actually be against what they are doing. They will be fighting against God, who helps those who are treated unjustly and unfairly.

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