



# THE SACRED FAITH

timeless truths for modern minds

## Youth Talk Sheet: David, Saul, and Responding to Broken Leadership

Based on: David, Saul, And How We Respond To Broken Leadership | The Sacred Faith: Timeless Truths for Modern Minds

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### 1. Introduction

David and Saul's story offers great insights into how we can respond to flawed leadership with integrity and trust in God. This session explores David's nonviolent resistance and how Jesus exemplified a "third way" of revolutionary love.

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### 2. Key Points

#### a. Respect Without Endorsement

David respected Saul's position as king and acknowledged him as God's anointed, even when Saul acted unjustly. He refrained from violence, trusting God's timing for justice.

#### b. Peacemaking Is Not Passivity

Rather than harming him, David's act of cutting Saul's robe was a powerful nonviolent protest. Similarly, Jesus taught actions like turning the other cheek as active forms of resistance.

#### c. The Third Way

Walter Wink, a New Testament scholar and activist, coined the term "*the third way*" to describe Jesus' radical method of confronting evil without resorting to violence or passive submission. According to Wink, Jesus was not teaching people to become doormats or to quietly endure abuse. Instead, He offered a creative, courageous alternative that actively resists evil while refusing to mirror its violence.

This “third way” is neither **fight** (violent retaliation) nor **flight** (cowardly avoidance), but a bold stance that exposes injustice, reclaims dignity, and disrupts oppression through nonviolent action.

Wink refers to this strategy as “*moral jiu-jitsu*.” Much like the martial art that uses an opponent’s force against them, moral jiu-jitsu turns the power dynamics of oppression upside down. It seeks to disarm the oppressor—not by overpowering them physically, but by confronting them in a way that forces them to see their actions and, hopefully, awaken their conscience.

He illustrates this with Jesus’ teachings in the Sermon on the Mount:

- **“Turn the other cheek”** (Matthew 5:39) is not passive submission. In first-century Jewish culture, a backhand slap to the right cheek was a gesture of insult to someone socially beneath you. Turning the other cheek forces the aggressor to acknowledge your equality—challenging their intent without striking back.
- **“Go the second mile”** (Matthew 5:41) refers to Roman law allowing soldiers to compel civilians to carry their gear for one mile—but no further. By going beyond that, the person reclaims agency and throws the soldier off balance, breaking the oppressive logic of the law.
- **“Give your cloak also”** (Matthew 5:40) takes place in a setting where a debtor is being sued for their tunic. Giving away your outer garment as well would leave you naked—shaming the creditor in public and exposing the cruelty of the system.

Each of these acts is subversive, creative, and dignified. They don’t accept evil, but neither do they repay evil with evil. They expose it, shame it, and refuse to play by its rules.

This is the essence of Jesus’ third way: *disrupting injustice through love, integrity, and imagination*—and doing so in a way that reveals the brokenness of the oppressor without becoming broken in return.

#### **d. Responding to Today’s Leaders**

In a world with imperfect leaders, we’re called to stand for justice without hatred, practising nonviolent resistance and trusting in God’s sovereignty.

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### **3. Reflection Questions**

- Can you think of a time when you witnessed or experienced unjust leadership? How did you respond?
- What does “nonviolent resistance” mean to you?

- How can we practice the "third way" in our daily lives?
  - What challenges might arise when choosing to respond with love instead of retaliation?
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#### 4. Bible Passages to Explore

- 1 Samuel 24:1–15
  - Romans 12:9–21
  - Matthew 5:38–48
  - Luke 23:34
  - Micah 6:8
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#### 5. Further Reading

- Walter Wink, *Jesus and Nonviolence: A Third Way*
  - Shane Claiborne, *Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals*
  - N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*
  - John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus*
  - David P. Gushee & Glen H. Stassen, *Kingdom Ethics*
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#### 6. Conclusion

David's example teaches us to confront injustice with integrity and trust in God. Jesus' teachings invite us into a revolution of love that seeks to transform both the oppressed and the oppressor. As we navigate a world with flawed leaders, let's choose the path of nonviolent resistance and radical love.