Alternate **Endings**

Submission doesn't seem beautiful, but it is. God has used the submissive hearts of His people all throughout Scripture to further His sovereign purpose, and it was ultimately for their individual good and the collective good. Scripture is filled with ordinary, everyday people like you and me who chose to submit to God when there were many influences "telling" them to *not* submit—to choose their own way. Submission is beautiful because it allows the Author to be the Author. Let's think about some alternate endings for the people listed below.

How to do this study:

1) Choose the two biblical people listed below with whom you are most familiar and read the corresponding passages which demonstrate these people's submissive hearts to God in the midst of difficult circumstances.
    - **Joseph** (Genesis 45:4-15 and Genesis 50:15-21)
    - **David** (1 Samuel 17:20-49)
    - **Shadrach**, **Meshach**, and **Abednego** (Daniel 3:8-18)
    - **Mary** (Luke 1:26-56)
2) Now, narrow it down to the ***one*** person who, if you were in his/her shoes, you would have the hardest time submitting to God under the circumstances he/she was in.
3) Once you've chosen just one person from the list, think about this… what if this person had chosen to *not* submit to God?
    - What if Joseph had held a grudge against his brothers and been embittered?
    - What if David had been overcome by fear of Goliath (like everyone else), forgetting God's power in rescuing him from all those wild animals?
    - What if Shadrach and Meshach and Abednego had cowered in fear of Nebuchadnezzar and forsaken their God?
    - What if Mary had rejected Gabriel's message and been unwilling to be God's vessel for the birth of Jesus?
4) Think of as many implications as you can for this "What If" scenario. These alternate endings would not only have hurt the individuals listed above, but would have had enormously negative results for many people, including you and me! Discuss these implications with your discipler and/or journal them in a notebook.
5) **What About You?** God has a plan. He's going somewhere with your story too. Submitting to Him when it is hardest *can be done*. Although these people from Scripture each faced wildly difficult situations, they remained submissive to the Author, and so can you. Discuss with your discipler and/or journal your thoughts concerning how God the Author's plan for you is worth submitting to, and how you can practice living that out every day. *(Hint: Connecting this discussion/journaling exercise to Psalm 139 can be helpful.)*
6) **Bonus Question:** Go back through each biblical person's story above and determine how each person "Kept Their Circles Straight." (Don't know what I'm talking about? See the Personal Growth Study titled "Keeping Your Circles Straight."[1])

[1] Available on the Lifeline for Teens website (https://lifelineforteens.com/book/help-can-i-choose-my-own-gender).

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