I Know How This Story Ends

Conversation Starters

- What's the most surprised you've ever been by the ending of a movie or book?

- Pastor Steven and his sons almost got trapped on a sandbar. If you were trapped on a sandbar, would you rather be trapped alone for two days, or trapped for one day with the most annoying celebrity you can think of?

- If you could live inside any story *(movie, book, fairy tale, Bible story, etc.),* what would you choose?

Review

Ask eGroup members to share their favorite points from the sermon, what spoke to them, a phrase or moment from the sermon they related to the most, or questions they have. If members have a hard time recalling the sermon, talk through your notes and share your favorite points.

Make It Personal

- Someone you know has to write a story about your life. Who would you choose and why?

- Read **1 Samuel 17:48-51**. David couldn't look back at his own story to see how it would end — and it could have ended "a whole lot different." What's a battle from your life that ended with you winning, but it could have ended "a whole lot different"? How would you have experienced that battle differently if you had been focused on who was

in control of the story?

There are three ways we can be distracted before we ever get to the real battle — ordinary, offense, and only.

- There's no "one thing" you can do to win battles — it takes a bunch of **ordinary** steps. As a group, talk about some of the ordinary steps David took. What are some ordinary things you're not motivated to do right now (or that you're not doing with a good attitude)? How could those steps make a difference in your future?

- Read 1 Samuel 17:28-30. David could have been distracted from his real enemy if he had taken **offense** at Eliab. What offenses are you fighting? What real battles are you being distracted from? *(Are you fighting against someone who's actually on your side? How do you need to get on the same side with them?)*

- During your average week, what are some ways you might finish this sentence: "I'm **only** _____." *(e.g., I'm only a low-level employee, I'm only 22, I'm only barely making rent as it is, etc.)* Why do you think we have "only" thoughts? How do they distract us from the real battle?

- Which of the three *(ordinary, offense, or only)* has you the most stuck? How is it keeping you from seeing victory in your life?

- If something hasn't turned for good yet, then it's not over. Where in your life do you need to carry that truth with you? How did this sermon help you look differently at a situation that seems dead?

- The challenge is to know how the story ends even when you don't know how it's going to get there. What does that mean for the battles you're currently fighting? How does that statement challenge your faith?

Act On It

Where do you most need to focus this week: ordinary, offense, or only? Write down a statement to help you fight this week. *(e.g., I'm going to serve my family in the ordinary things with a good attitude, I'll stay focused on the real battle and won't take offense at my boss, I'll trust that God has equipped me and I'm not "only" _____, etc.)* Each morning, read what you wrote, and let it remind you to be faithful in the present instead of focused on your future.

Prayer Requests and Prayer

Ask eGroup members to share any prayer requests they have. Record any notes or prayer requests to pray for members during the week. *Father, thank You that no story ends with our defeat. We give You praise because nothing is over until You say so. Stir up our faith this week to believe beyond any doubt that You are in control of every battle we'll ever face, so we don't have to worry about how they will end. Give us guidance to see the things that are distracting us from fighting the real battles You have for us, and help us defeat those distractions. We give You the glory for the victories You have in store for us. In Jesus' name, amen.*