

David Confesses His Sin

(2 Samuel, Psalm 51, Psalm 32)

Pre-Session Warm Up

Have you ever done wrong and tried to cover it up? How did you feel? Perhaps later you admitted what you had done; maybe someone found out and they forgave you. How did you feel then?

Today we are going to learn what King David learned: we have a merciful God.

Opening Prayer

Father, You desire that we are honest. Help us to learn to come to you quickly so that we can have clean hearts before you. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

You are forgiving and good, O Lord, abounding in love to all who call to you. (Psalm 86:5)

Lesson

Does anyone know what the difference is between grace and mercy? Grace is getting what you don't deserve; mercy is NOT getting what you *do* deserve! Grace is unmerited favor; God showers you with His grace by giving you blessings upon blessings even though you haven't really earned them. And, on the other hand, He doesn't punish you for your sins, even though you deserve to be punished. That is His mercy.

Today we are going to learn about a time that King David sinned and he tried to cover it up. But, God, because He is all-knowing and sees everything, knew all about David's sin. And because God is merciful, He forced David to confess His sin, and then, even though David did

some very bad things, God was merciful to him and even called David the apple of His eye.

David believed in God and loved Him very much. Even as a shepherd boy, he composed many beautiful songs of praise to God.

Psalm 9:1-2

I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all the marvelous things you have done. I will be filled with joy because of you. I will sing praises to your name, O Most High.

God's plan since before the foundations of the world was to send Jesus into the world through the family line of David. So God made a promise to David,

2 Samuel 7:16

Your house and your kingdom will continue before me for all time, and your throne will be secure forever.

This caused David, the king of Israel, to praise God.

2 Samuel 7:18-19

Then King David went in and sat before the Lord and prayed, "Who am I, O Sovereign Lord, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far? And now, Sovereign Lord, in addition to everything else, you speak of giving your servant a lasting dynasty! Do you deal with everyone this way, O Sovereign Lord?"

David was in awe of God. He gave God all the credit for making him, a mere shepherd, the King of Israel. And now God was promising to give his family a lasting dynasty! David was humble and thankful to God.

2 Samuel 7:22

How great you are, O Sovereign Lord! There is no one like you. We have never even heard of another God like you!

But even though David loved God, there was a time when he committed a terrible sin.

[Teacher, since David's sin involved adultery and murder, use wisdom in presenting it. This lesson has been designed so that, if you are teaching very young children, you may avoid naming David's sin entirely.]

2 Samuel 11 tells of a time when David slept with another man's wife. And when she found out that she was expecting a baby, David arranged to have her husband killed in battle so that he could marry her.

Now David knew God's laws. He knew that God's Seventh Commandment was you must not commit adultery. What that means is that once you are married, you need to stay true to your husband or wife. God expects husbands and wives to be faithful to each other. David was a married man, and Bathsheba was a married woman, but they were not married to each other. So when they spent the night together, they sinned against God.

You become a believer in God by accepting Jesus Christ as your Savior. Does that mean that you will no longer sin? No! Believers should want very badly not to sin, but even so, they *will* do wrong from time to time. Believers sin, and David was not exception. David sinned even though he was a believer in God.

David knew he had sinned and he tried to cover it up instead of confessing it to God. Have you ever done that? [Teacher, relate a personal example.]

- Perhaps, when your mom sent you to the store, you only gave back part of the change, keeping the rest for yourself. Maybe you thought you deserved that money because you'd been helping around the house.
- Perhaps you borrowed your brother's bike without permission. While racing with your friend, you wrecked it. Instead of telling your brother the truth, you returned his bike and pretended not to know what happened. Maybe you thought all the favors you'd done for him in the past made up for this wrong.

You might think you can make your sin go away by covering it up with the many good things you do, but covering up your wrong doesn't make it go away.

David thought if he ordered Bathsheba's husband to the front line of the battle and he got killed, that no one would know he sent him there. But our God is an all-seeing, all-knowing God.

The Bible warns you about choosing to cover your sin instead of confessing it.

Proverbs 28:13

People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy.

To confess your sins means to admit your sin, agree with God that it is wrong and be willing to turn from it. You need to confess your sin to God and tell the truth to those you've wronged. Only God can take your sin away and He will.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.

If you have accepted God's free gift of salvation, you can be sure that God will forgive your sins when you confess them to Him. But David tried to cover his sin instead of confessing it to God.

David was miserable for a long time.

Psalm 51:1-4

Have mercy on me, O God, because of your unfailing love. Because of your great compassion, blot out the stain of my sins. Wash me clean from my guilt. Purify me from my sin. For I recognize my rebellion; it haunts me day and night. Against you, and you alone, have I sinned; I have done what is evil in your sight. You will be proved right in what you say and your judgment against me is just.

Why was David so miserable? He had a guilty conscience because he had not confessed his sin. That is the same reason you are unhappy when you sin. But God loves you and wants you to be happy. You will be when you have a clean conscience by confessing your sin.

David needed help to admit to his sin and deal with it. God sent a prophet named Nathan to lovingly help David deal with his sin the right way. God spoke through Nathan, saying...

2 Samuel 12:7-9

Then Nathan said to David, "You are that man! The Lord, the God of Israel, says: I anointed you king of Israel and saved you from the power of Saul. I gave you your master's house and his wives and the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. And if that had not been enough, I would have given you much, much more. Why, then, have you despised the word of the Lord and done this horrible deed? For you have murdered Uriah the Hittite with the sword of the Ammonites and stolen his wife.

David found it very difficult to admit that he had done wrong. God didn't want David to go on feeling miserable, so He faithfully used Nathan to make David be honest about his sin. Once David was willing to face what he had done, he was able to confess it to God.

God helps you to see where you have sinned, too, by giving you your conscience, His Word, and people like Nathan to point out your wrong to you. The people God uses may be your parents, your pastor, your Sunday school teacher, a school teacher, or a friend. Once you see where you are wrong, then with God's help, you can confess your sin to God; and you can be sure that when you do, God will forgive you.

It is only God's grace that enables us to admit our sin and be willing to turn from it. Through Nathan, God was helping David to see what he needed to do.

David listened to Nathan and admitted his sin. He knew that his sin had hurt God more than anyone else. Often your sin will hurt others, too, besides God. How might taking your brother's bike or keeping your mother's change hurt God? How might it hurt your family? When

you are tempted to sin, you should think about how your actions will make God feel and how others might be hurt if you give in to temptation.

David prayed, confessing his sin and asking God to forgive him.

Psalm 51:7-12

Purify me from my sins, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Oh, give me back my joy again; you have broken me—now let me rejoice. Don't keep looking at my sins. Remove the stain of my guilt. Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a loyal spirit within me. Do not banish me from your presence, and don't take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and make me willing to obey you.

David not only wanted God to forgive him his sin, he wanted God to change him so that he wouldn't do the same thing again.

Psalm 51:14

Forgive me for shedding blood, O God who saves; then I will joyfully sing of your forgiveness.

David had peace and joy again, and he praised God.

Psalm 32:1-5

Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! Yes, what joy for those whose record the Lord has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty! When I refused to confess my sin, my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long. Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat. Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, "I will confess my rebellion to the Lord." And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone.

You cannot have true peace inside until you admit that you are a sinner and that you need the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior from sin. God hates sin even more than we do. God hates sin so much that He sent His own perfect Son to die on a cross to destroy sin.

God's Words says that *the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil.* (1 John 3:8b) Jesus gave His precious blood for you and for me and for everyone

Romans 5:8 says, *But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.*

When you sin, you need to confess it to God right away. Have you ever allowed a sin to stay in your heart and mind without confessing it to God? Why do you think you did that? What happened? How did you feel? You will not have peace inside until you have a clean conscience.

Do you ever play down the importance of your sin saying to yourself that it's not a big deal? Do you ever make excuses for your sin? (*"Well, everybody does that!" "It was just a little white lie!" "People on TV say that word all the time!"*)

All sin deserves death. God says that *the wages of sin is death* (Romans 6:23). Wages is what you have coming to you at the end of the day for all that you have done.

Have you ever struggled with the sense that your sin is so great you could never be fully forgiven? God says there is no sin so big and so bad that you can't bring it to God, confess it and be cleansed from it.

Even though God knows all about the bad things we've thought and said and done, God loves us so much that he's always willing to forgive us. Remember 1 John 1:9.

When you are having your prayer time this week, ask God to show you any sins that you have not confessed. Don't be surprised when God brings to your mind some wrong things that happened a long time ago, things that you had forgotten about. You may be tempted to listen to Satan who will tell you to ignore them or to try to cover them up by making an excuse. Resist that temptation. Instead, tell God what you have done and ask Him to forgive you. Claim His promise of 1 John 1:9 that He will forgive you when you confess your sins to Him.

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for Your great mercy and forgiveness! We love You, O Lord! Help us to show Your kind of love towards others. Help us to show mercy and forgiveness to others, even when they don't deserve it. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Soap Cross

Hold up a bar of soap and ask the children what it is used for. Yes, it is used to clean away the dirt. In today's lesson we learned about asking God to clean away the sin in our lives so we can live with him in Heaven. This craft will help to remind us that Jesus died on the cross to cleanse us from our sins.



What you need: A bar of Ivory Soap for each crafter (other brands do not work as well), a plastic picnic knife, a toothpick. Have a few extra bars on hand in case the soap breaks during carving.

What you do: Draw an outline of a cross on the soap. Make the cross bars approximately 1-1/2" wide. Whittle away the soap a little bit at a time. DO NOT attempt to cut all the way through at one time. Cut slowly and carefully, otherwise the soap will break apart. Once the cross is carved, place it under running water and smooth out the edges. Scrape the name "Ivory" off the soap. Using a toothpick, carve a heart at the center, or write, "JESUS" across and down the center. (Place the middle letter "S" in Jesus at the center of the cross.)

Game Center

Clean Heart

Set Up: Designate a large playing area. If possible cordon off the play area into the shape of a heart. Fill the 'heart' with items of various sizes and shapes to represent sin (i.e., cones, scarves, cups, rolled up newspaper, boxes, etc.) Establish a start line 15'-30' away from the point of the 'heart'.

How To Play: Divide players into teams. (No more than 5 players per team) Tell the players the playing area represents a heart (a life) filled with sin. Have the teams line up at the start line. At "Go," the first player on each team must run into the heart and remove one "sin." Then run back to his or her team line to drop the "sin" off and tag the next player in line. The next player takes his or her turn. Play continues like this until all the 'sins' are removed.

How To Win: The team with the most "sins" removed from the heart is the winning team.

After the Game Discussion: All those items we collected represented the sins in our lives. Some were big 'sins' and some were small 'sins'. We sometimes look at our own sins as big and small sins, too. Telling a lie or being unkind, we might consider to be a small sin, verses stealing something or killing someone. Those we would think of as big sins! However, God doesn't measure sin like that. God tells us that ALL sin is wrong and that ALL sins, big and small, separate us from his holy presence, and deserve to be punished. The only way we can rid ourselves of sin is to trust in Jesus to save us and forgive us. Jesus died in our place to take the punishment that we deserve for sinning. When we believe Jesus did that for us, and we ask him to forgive us, we are forgiven, and our hearts are cleansed.

Or, use the following review questions in a time of discussion or a game of your choice:

1. How was David feeling when he wrote this psalm?
2. What would you say to God if you sinned?
3. In verse 4, why did David say to God, "Your judgment against me is just"? (He didn't think he deserved God's forgiveness.)
4. In verse 1, what basis did David appeal to God for mercy and forgiveness? (God's unfailing love.)
5. What effect did David's guilt have on him?
 - In verse 3: (It haunted him day and night.)
 - In verse 8: (He had lost his joy.)
6. What do we learn about sin from these verses?
 - In verse 4: (It is against God.)
 - In verse 5: (We are born sinners.)
7. Why do you think it's important that we see our sin as being committed against God? (verse 4)

