



CREATE A CLEAN HEART FOR ME
UNIT 11 • SESSION 4

DAVID

THE FAILED KING

MAIN POINT

Jesus will forgive even your worst sins.

2 SAMUEL 11:2-5,14-17,26-27 • DAVID SINS AGAINST GOD

2 One evening David got up from his bed and strolled around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing—a very beautiful woman. **3** So David sent someone to inquire about her, and he said, “Isn’t this Bathsheba, daughter of Eliam and wife of Uriah the Hethite?” **4** David sent messengers to get her, and when she came to him, he slept with her . . . **5** The woman conceived and sent word to inform David, “I am pregnant.” . . . **14** The next morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. **15** In the letter he wrote: Put Uriah at the front of the fiercest fighting, then withdraw from him so that he is struck down and dies . . . Then the men of the city came out and attacked Joab, and some of the men from David’s soldiers fell in battle; Uriah the Hethite also died. . . . **26** When Uriah’s wife heard that her husband, Uriah, had died, she mourned for him. **27** When the time of mourning ended, David had her brought to his house. She became his wife and bore him a son. However, the LORD considered what David had done to be evil.

2 SAMUEL 12:1-10 • NATHAN CONFRONTS DAVID

1 So the LORD sent Nathan to David. When he arrived, he said to him: There were two men in a certain city, one rich and the other poor. **2** The rich man had very large flocks and herds, **3** but the poor man had nothing except one small ewe lamb that he had bought . . . **4** Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man could not bring himself to take one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the poor man’s lamb and prepared it for his guest. **5** David was infuriated with the man and said to Nathan, “As the LORD lives, the man who did this deserves to die! **6** Because he has done this thing and shown no pity, he must pay four lambs for that lamb.” **7** Nathan replied to David, “You are the man . . . You struck down Uriah the Hethite with the sword and took his wife as your own wife—you murdered him with the Ammonite’s sword. **10** Now therefore, the sword will never leave your house because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hethite to be your own wife.’

2 SAMUEL 12:13-15,24-25 • GOD FORGIVES DAVID

13 David responded to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.” Then Nathan replied to David, “And the LORD has taken away your sin; you will not die. **14** However, because you treated the LORD with such contempt in this matter, the son born to you will die.” **15** Then Nathan went home. The LORD struck the baby that Uriah’s wife had borne to David, and he became deathly ill. . . . **24** Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba . . . She gave birth to a son and named him Solomon. The LORD loved him, **25** and he sent a message through the prophet Nathan, who named him Jedidiah . . .

INTRO OPTION 1 **#FAIL**

SUPPLIES LIST

NO SUPPLIES NEEDED.

Have students describe a time they were given a task by a parent, coach, or another leader, and they completely failed at the task. Examples could include such things as breaking a lawnmower when asked to cut the grass, burning the birthday cake for a friend's party, failing miserably at a take home science project, and so on. Have them discuss what comes to mind with the person seated next to them. Then have them evaluate if they tried to make things right. Why or why not? How? In today's session, we will learn God is gracious to forgive when a sinner repents.

INTRO OPTION 2 **BOSS**

SUPPLIES LIST

NO SUPPLIES NEEDED.

Have students split up into three smaller groups. Have them come up with a set of five rules they would make a group of employees follow as if they were the owner of a company. It could be varying from what time people had to show up, to tasks they have to complete, to how much vacation time would be allowed. Then have them circle which one would be the hardest to forgive if that rule was broken and why. In today's session, we will learn God is gracious to forgive even the greatest of evil when a sinner repents.



SCRIPTURE READING

MAIN POINT

**Jesus will forgive even your
worst sins.**

1. DAVID SINS AGAINST GOD

READ 2 SAMUEL 11:2-5,14-17,26-27

David's life had been on a meteoric rise to this point—from youngest son to anointed king to giant slayer and established king. David has been established as king over all of Israel, reigns in Jerusalem, and the Ark of God has been brought to the city (see 2 Sam. 1-6). God has made an everlasting covenant with David (see 2 Sam. 7) and has blessed all his endeavors (see 2 Sam. 8-10). We are at the pinnacle of David's reign. But just as David reached the pinnacle, he came crashing down.

WHERE DID DAVID INITIALLY GO WRONG?

David noticed a woman bathing on her roof who was very beautiful, and he asked about her. He was told that it was Uriah's wife. At that point, he shouldn't have pursued the thought any further. It should have been over right then. God was giving him an exit through the courage of his servant, but David's heart was determined to sin.

HOW DO WE TYPICALLY RESPOND WHEN OUR SINS ARE FOUND OUT? WHY?

David went into full cover-up mode. When multiple attempts to get Uriah to go home to Bathsheba failed, David conspired to have him murdered. He first used his position as an opportunity for sexual sin, and then he used his authority to murder a faithful soldier.

2. NATHAN CONFRONTS DAVID

READ 2 SAMUEL 12:1-10

HOW DID DAVID RESPOND TO THE STORY OF THE RICH AND POOR MAN?

Though David was blind and callous to his own sin, he hadn't lost all sense of right and wrong. David's sense of justice compelled him to a severe verdict for this hypothetical rich man. Just as Uriah had unknowingly carried his own death sentence in his hand, so David unknowingly spoke his own death sentence from his lips. David was irate and proclaimed that this man deserved to die! He had no idea that Nathan was speaking of him.



2 SAMUEL 11:2-5,14-17,26-27

11:2-27. “Chapter 11 is a watershed in the biblical writer’s presentation of David’s life. Up to this point, David has been portrayed as the ideal servant of the Lord, scrupulously obedient to every point of the law and zealous in his execution of each command. David’s obedience resulted in the fulfillment of Torah promises and an outpouring of blessing on Israel beyond any previously known . . . In this section David becomes for a moment a rebel against the Lord’s covenant, with devastating consequences. His twin sins of adultery and murder rent the tapestry of blessing woven so carefully in the previous narratives.”²⁶

11:2-5. “There is no indication in the text that the woman deliberately positioned herself so as to entice David.”²⁷

11:14-17. “David carries out his deceit without even the remotest hint of remorse or sorrow recorded in the text.”²⁸

11:26-27. “What ends the story in human eyes is really only the beginning of the struggle from God’s perspective. The fact is that 11:27a does not end the matter. Sin has been concealed from human view, but there is much more to reality than only the human view. The little clause that ends the chapter injects a different element, a divine element, that reverberates throughout chapter 12: ‘But the thing David had done displeased the Lord’ (lit., ‘was evil in the eyes of the Lord’). In David’s eyes, sin has been concealed and the matter is over. But in Yahweh’s eyes, evil must be confronted.”²⁹



BIG QUESTION

WHY MUST I UNDERSTAND THAT MY SIN IS NOT JUST BETWEEN ME AND GOD?

As a boat moves forward, it leaves behind a wake. The wake increasingly widens as it leaves the boat, to the point where it is much wider than the boat itself. And so it is with sin. Sin leaves a wake of ever-widening destruction behind it that often seems much greater and bigger than the individual or the sin itself. David is an example of how our sins don’t just affect us. It adversely affected Uriah, Bathsheba, his son, his army, his family, and his nation in the years that followed. Your moral choices are not just between you and God. Do the right thing out of love for God and your neighbors.



SCRIPTURE READING

MAIN POINT

Jesus will forgive even your worst sins.

HOW DOES THIS STORY REMIND US THAT IT IS FOOLISH TO TRY TO HIDE OUR SIN FROM GOD?

At the end of chapter 11, David thought he'd gotten away with it. Uriah was dead and Bathsheba was now his wife. Problem solved—or so he thought. No matter how much we do to cover up our sins and no matter how successful we are at hiding what we've done, we cannot hide anything from God. The author of Hebrews says it best: "No creature is hidden from him, but all things are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give an account" (Heb. 4:13). Students may think they are fooling their parents and teachers, and they may be. But God cannot be fooled.

3. GOD FORGIVES DAVID

READ 2 SAMUEL 12:13-15,24-25

David was broken over his sin. He was done hiding, running, and covering. Here, he turns to God by confessing.

HOW DID GOD RESPOND TO DAVID'S CONFESSION?

Just when David thought all was lost, Nathan came in with these sweet, unthinkable words—"The Lord has taken away your sin" (2 Sam. 12:13). What a wonder! Paul, explaining how the gospel works, says that God forgives us through the blood of Christ, and that is why God was able to pass over sins (see Rom. 3:24-26). Paul goes on to quote David a few verses later saying: "Blessed are those whose lawless acts are forgiven and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the person the Lord will never charge with sin" (Rom. 4:7-8).

WHY DON'T WE NEED TO TRY TO HIDE OUR SIN FROM GOD?

We cannot hide our sins from God, but the good news is that we don't have to. God is gracious; He is merciful; He erases our sins by placing them on Jesus. He cancels our debt and all its legal demands by nailing them to the cross (see Col. 1:14). As the old hymn says, "My sin, not in part but the whole, Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more."³⁰ What a joyous truth, that our sin—not just some of it, but ALL of it—has been nailed to the cross, and it does not control us, define us, or determine our destiny any longer.



2 SAMUEL 12:1-10

12:1-10. “Although David repented of the sins he had committed, irreparable damage had been done; the [kingly] covenant promises graciously given to David remained, but the Torah blessings resulting from obedience vanished. In their place, David began to experience the stern curses of the Torah, including loss of family (cf. Deut 28:18) and even exile (cf. Deut 28:64–67). In all of this David extended the metaphorical comparison between his life and the life of Israel: even as David lost his prestige and homeland through sin, so also would the nation. If David’s sin with its dreadful consequences is a metaphor of judgment for the nation of Israel through the exilic period, it is also a metaphor of hope . . . The Lord graciously brought David back from exile east of the Jordan, and the Lord would graciously bring Israel back to Jerusalem from its Babylonian exile.”³¹

12:7-10. “Of course, when David condemned the rich man’s sin, he also condemned himself, as Nathan emphatically declared.”³²

2 SAMUEL 12:13-15, 24-25

12:13-15. “The biblical understanding of sin is defined elsewhere but is illustrated in chapter 11. Likewise, biblical understandings of repentance and forgiveness are defined elsewhere but are illustrated here. True repentance (12:13a) is met instantly with genuine forgiveness (12:13b).”³³

12:24-25. “Though other children are born to this union (Solomon, in fact, is the fourth, 1 Chron. 3:5), he will have special significance in fulfilling the covenant promises of 2 Samuel 7.”³⁴



ESSENTIAL DOCTRINE

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

Justification refers to the moment when a person is objectively declared righteous before God based on the righteousness of Christ’s atoning death (see Rom. 8:33–34). This act of declaration takes place through faith in Christ and not as a result of human works or effort (see Eph. 2:8–9). Through justification, a person is made to be in right standing before God, changing what was once an estranged and hostile relationship to one of adoption into the family of God.



CHRIST CONNECTION

David, the greatest of Israel's kings and a man after God's own heart, was a sinner in need of salvation. No one is good enough to be right with God. We, too, need forgiveness found only through the sacrifice of Jesus, a perfect King, who took upon Himself the punishment our sins deserve.



HEAD



HEART



HANDS

HOW DO WE MAKE A BIGGER MESS WHEN WE TRY TO HIDE SIN RATHER THAN TURN TO GOD?

Here are some real-life consequences we see from David's sin and cover-up: Uriah and many other soldiers died, David and Bathsheba's child died, David was disgraced before the nation, and David's family relationships were broken (and Amnon & Absalom eventually die). Sin has horrible side effects. The sword never left David's family because he used the sword to try to cover his sin. May David serve as a warning and a reminder. Don't try to hide your sin; confess. Go to God quickly when you find yourself in sin.

HOW DO WE GUARD OUR HEARTS FROM DAVID'S MISTAKES?

David failed in several places in the story. Perhaps he shouldn't have even been in Jerusalem that day he saw Bathsheba. Why wasn't he leading his army? And when his servant informed him that Bathsheba was married, why didn't he change course immediately? And when he sinned, why didn't he confess at first? Pride and impurity are cancers to the heart. We must humble ourselves before the Lord and ask God to purify us from all unrighteousness.

WHAT TRADEOFFS MIGHT YOU UNKNOWINGLY BE MAKING FOR YOUR SIN?

David made several foolish, uneven trades for his sin. He traded his best soldiers, his family, and his honor for temporary pleasure. What are you trading for your sin? Your relationship with your parents or siblings? Your career dreams? You cannot continue in your sins without consequence. It will destroy relationships, jobs, dreams, and ultimately, the sinner. But when we trade our sin for Christ, we gain forgiveness and freedom.