

THE THREAD

DISCOVERING THE THREAD OF THE GOSPEL THROUGH THE BIG-PICTURE STORY OF THE BIBLE

PART 2: A PEOPLE RISE. A PEOPLE FALL.

LESSON 5 || DAVID, BATHSHEBA, AND NATHAN

SESSION SNAPSHOT

NARRATIVE PASSAGE: 2 Samuel 11:1-12:14

GOSPEL FOCUS: Romans 3:23-24

STUDENT TAKEAWAYS:

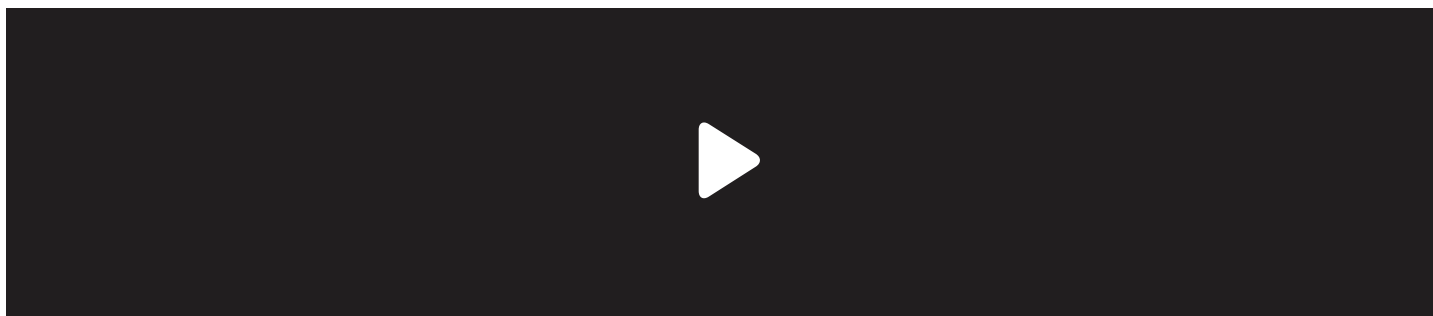
- See that even David, a godly ruler, can really mess things up when left to act out of his sinful nature.
- Grasp that sin affects all humans, but Jesus' sacrifice on the cross is the only means by which the devastating impact of our sin is removed.
- Evaluate their relationship with sin in light of their relationship with Christ.

OVERVIEW:

David is one of the most well-known characters in the Bible. Almost everyone has heard the story of David and Goliath and knows a little bit about who David was. Early in David's life, it was obvious that God had a plan for him. Although God's hand was clearly on David, it didn't mean that David was beyond making some huge mistakes. The lesson of David and Bathsheba shows us just how easy it is for people of great faith to get tangled up in sin and suffer severe consequences. But the good news of the Gospel is that Jesus has not left us to suffer the penalty of our sin: eternal separation from Him.

TEACHER PREP VIDEO:

Each *Thread* lesson comes with a Teacher Prep Video. These short videos are designed to help you grasp the lesson's main point as you prepare to teach.



BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Bible Background is designed to help you provide the basic context for the passages you'll be studying.

- **WHAT DO WE MEAN BY "CONTEXT"?** In every YM360 Bible study lesson, we encourage teachers to help students know *who* wrote a particular book, *when* it was written, and *why* it was written.
- **WHY TEACH CONTEXT?** Grasping the big-picture view of God's story of redemption is difficult for teenagers without understanding the context of the books and passages they're studying.

2 SAMUEL

- *Author:* The author of 1-2 Samuel is unknown. While it's certainly possible that Samuel wrote some of what's recorded in these books, the mention of his death in 1 Samuel 25 means that he didn't write all of it. The books are given the title of "Samuel" because of his prominent role in the establishment of the monarchy.
- *Time frame:* It's difficult to say for sure when 1-2 Samuel was written. It's possible that they were written and edited over some time. More than likely, they were established in their final form around the 10th century BC.
- *Purpose:* The main theme of these books is God's choosing to accomplish His purposes through the lineage of David and to set up Jerusalem as the location for the temple. There are many "ups and downs" throughout 1-2 Samuel, and David goes through times of obedience and rebellion. He experiences blessings and consequences for sins.

ROMANS

- *Author:* Paul is the author of Romans.
- *Time frame:* Romans was probably written from Corinth in the winter of 56-57 AD.
- *Purpose:* Since the church in Rome had not received comprehensive theological teaching on salvation and other implications of following Christ, Paul wrote Romans to ensure a good understanding of such things. In addition, since many Jewish Christians were rejecting some of the new Gentile converts, a level playing field needed to be given to all believers. This is what Paul was advocating for in Romans.

LESSON PLAN

The Lesson Plan contains four elements:

- **GETTING STARTED**— An introductory activity designed to prepare teenagers to engage with God and the truth of His Word.
- **THE STORY**— A section featuring a narrative from Scripture that helps teenagers know God better through learning the story of the Bible.
- **THE THREAD**— A special emphasis where teenagers discover the Gospel thread coursing throughout the story of the Bible.
- **WRAPPING UP**— An application-focused segment helping teenagers ask the question, “How am I impacted by what I learned today”?

GETTING STARTED

- *Goal:* To get students to see that even a person strong in his or her faith can make sinful choices, which carry significant consequences that affect not only them but also those around them.
- *Set-Up:* Be prepared to show this YouTube video, “AFV Treadmill Fails.”
 - Here’s the link: <https://youtu.be/X4EEkIwLjE8>
(If the link is not active when you’re preparing for this lesson, searching “treadmill fail” on YouTube will always provide plenty of worthy videos.)

FIRST, tell the students about a time when you looked clumsy in front of people. It could be a time when you tripped, fell, dropped a plate of food, etc. As embarrassing as those things can be when they happen to you, they’re usually pretty funny to witness. Let the students know that you didn’t want to let them down by not showing a great fail video to get things started.

THEN, show the AFV Treadmill Fails video. When the video ends, ask for students’ reactions. Here are some questions to get them talking:

- Have you ever had a treadmill accident or witnessed one up close and personal? If so, explain.
- What is the worst fail you have ever seen on video?

NEXT, lead students in a brief discussion about a deeper kind of failure—sins that are moral failures. Be prepared to share a story of a real-life moral failure that went very public for someone famous. Sadly, these are not hard to find. Use one that you think will be familiar to your group. Then, **dig deep with these questions:**

- What are some of the main causes people have for moral failures?
- Do you think certain types of moral failures are easier to fall into than others? Explain.
- Do you believe that a person with strong faith in Christ is less or more likely to fail morally? Explain.

FINALLY, explain to the students that even some of the most famous and respected people in the Bible experienced big and embarrassing failures that hurt those around them. Transition to The Story by **saying something like:**

- In this lesson, we’ll look at a true story about someone referred to as “a man after God’s own heart.” We’ll see how even people with deep faith in God can succumb to temptation and fail miserably, hurting themselves and those around them. Rest assured, there is good news in the end, which is always the case for anyone who accepts the free gift of God’s grace.

TRANSITION TO THE STORY.

THE STORY

- *Goal:* For students to grasp that sin affects all humans, but Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross is the only means by which the devastating impact of our sin is removed.

- *Set-Up:* Students will need a Bible or a Bible app.

FIRST, explain that in this lesson, you'll be looking at the story of David and Bathsheba from 2 Samuel. If you'd like, use the Connecting The Dots section below to review or fill in the gaps between your last lesson and this one.

CONNECTING THE DOTS

As you teach The Thread, there will naturally be some gaps in the story. This is an optional way for you to fill in some of the gaps between the last lesson you taught and this one. Use it to review or connect the dots to the events surrounding the passage.

- David was an unassuming younger son who was anointed king by Samuel.
- David's bravery began with protecting sheep and grew into protecting a nation as a mighty warrior king!
- David's deep love for God brought him great responsibilities. In this lesson, you will see how even great people fail and need to be reminded of God's greatest gift: grace.

THEN, ask students to find 2 Samuel 11–12:14 in their Bibles. While students are looking for this passage, use the Bible Background to go into greater detail about how David's journey of faith brought him to this point in his life.

NEXT, ask for volunteers to help read this lengthy passage aloud. Encourage all of the students to make a mental note of the key details of the events that unfold. When you've finished, read or have a student read 2 Samuel 11:1-3.

Ask something like:

- **What tips you off that something is wrong right out of the gate?**
 - *Answer:* Verse 1 tells us that David stayed home at the time when kings "go off to war." The tone and wording of the verse let us know this will be a part of what goes wrong.
- **How can irresponsibility (not doing what you're supposed to be doing) create opportunities to sin? Explain.**
 - *Answers will vary.*

NEXT, let the students know that it won't take long for us to learn exactly what went wrong. Read or have a student read 2 Samuel 11:4-5. **Ask something like:**

- **What's the first thing David does wrong?**
 - *Answer:* He let lust hang around in his heart and mind. He gave sin an opportunity to take a stronghold.
- **What could he have done differently?**
 - *Answer:* He could have seen Bathsheba and moved on with his day. He could have engaged in something to take his mind in another direction, but he dwelt on his lust, and it led him down a dangerous road.
- **Typically, when we really mess up, we have two choices. We can put an end to the bad decisions and deal with the consequences at hand, or we can try and cover things up and get ourselves into a bigger mess. What do you think David did?**
 - *Answers will vary.*

THEN, explain to the students that you're going to read a lengthy chunk of verses that will show how quickly things spiraled out of control. Tell them to make a mental note of all the bad decisions David made in these verses. Read or have a student read 2 Samuel 11:6-27. **Ask something like:**

- **Off the top of your head, list the bad decisions David made that caused the situation to get even worse.**
 - *Answer:* He tried to manipulate Uriah into coming home from battle so he would sleep with Bathsheba, and they could act like the child was actually Uriah's. When Uriah didn't go home, he tried to get him drunk and do the same thing. Then he had Uriah moved to the front of the battle and instructed the other soldiers to let him get killed.

- **What is your reaction to David committing these sins?**
 - *Answers will vary.* The shock of such a bold warrior for God making such bad decisions should permeate the discussion.
- **What does this show us about the power of sin in our lives?**
 - *Answer:* It shows us that sin can quickly run rampant in our lives if we don't seek the Lord and draw on His strength to follow Him.

NEXT, tell the students that most of us would assume that David is going to get away with what he's done since he's the king. However, Nathan had a different plan. Read or have a student read 2 Samuel 12:1-14. **Ask something like:**

- **Have you ever been called out about something you did wrong? How did it make you feel? Explain.**
 - *Answers will vary.*
- **Have you ever really experienced the power of forgiveness for something you know you did wrong? What is one word or phrase that describes how you feel the moment after you have been forgiven for something?**
 - *Answers will vary.*
- **What was the consequence for David's sins?**
 - *Answers might vary.* David and Bathsheba's child will get sick and die.
- **What is your initial reaction to the punishment for David's sins? Explain.**
 - *Answers will vary.* Perhaps some will be shocked. Others might feel it is too lenient. An essential realization about God's justice comes when one respects God's decision and authority regardless of the cost.

FINALLY, as you transition from The Story to The Thread, ask the students to think about how God's grace was displayed at the end of David's trail of sin. Before moving on to The Thread, make sure that students understand that even the strongest people of faith fail and that our sin carries consequences that affect more than just us.

THE THREAD

FIRST, have students look up Romans 3:23-24. If you choose, reference the Bible Background to give students a simple overview of the book of Romans. Then read or have a student read and then reread these two verses. After the verses are read twice, **ask something like:**

- **So, according to this passage, what do the worst of sinners and those who seem to have it all together have in common?**
 - *Answer:* They're both sinners and have fallen short of God's standard.
- **What should this truth do to our spiritual pride?**
 - *Answer:* It should stop it dead in its tracks. There's no room for spiritual pride because the "worst" and the "best" person are in the same boat, separated from God.
- **That sounds pretty bleak. What is the good news that's offered to both?**
 - *Answer:* Everyone, the worst of sinners and the most moral person on earth, is equally as sinful, but redemption is offered to all people through the grace of Jesus.
- **What does grace do to our pride?**
 - *Answer:* Grace also stops our pride because it means we didn't do anything to earn God's love and redemption.

ASK STUDENTS IF THEY HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STORY OR THE THREAD. IF THERE ARE NO MORE QUESTIONS, MOVE ON TO THE WRAPPING UP SECTION.

WRAPPING UP

- *Goal:* To get students to evaluate their relationship with sin in the light of their relationship with Christ.
- *Set-Up:* None.

FIRST, remind the students that if David, a man after God's own heart, can have such colossal sin failures, surely everyone in the room has sin failures. Again, call their attention to the fact that this is the very reason Jesus went to the cross.

NOW, say something like:

- I want to help you think about where you are in your relationship with the Lord and the sin you wrestle with. You may fall into one of the following categories:
 1. You are fully devoted to Jesus. This means you believe Jesus has saved you from your sins, and you try to live for Him every day, but you still experience a battle with sin.
 2. You don't know Jesus. Perhaps you have heard of Jesus but don't know Him personally. You might not really know whether or not certain sin is a big deal or not.
 3. You are stuck in the middle of the first two. You aren't fully devoted to Jesus, but you do believe He gave His life for you. So, you may switch between really trying to battle the sin you struggle with and wondering if it even matters.

THEN, have the students spend some time in prayer. Instruct them to pray about where they see themselves in terms of their relationship with sin and their relationship with Christ. Have them think about how they lean on the grace of God to battle the sin in their lives. Say something like:

- **Whichever category you feel like you're in, the truth is that we all struggle with sin. We all mess up, and our hearts are inclined to seek anything and everything besides God. That's really what sin is. But none of our sin is so big that it's too much for His grace.**

Ask:

- **As Christians, how do we take sin seriously and fight against it but not let it overwhelm us and make us feel unworthy of God's love?**
 - *Answers will vary.* The truth is that battling sin is hard. It's a daily process. We can't be passive in it, but we also can't fall into the trap of believing we can overcome it on our own strength. The grace of Jesus is what has defeated sin and allows us to battle it in our lives. Each day we must commit to following Jesus, trusting His promises over the lure of sin, and praying for wisdom in the decisions we make. When we do fail, we confess it, seek forgiveness, and trust that our failures don't separate us from God's love.

FINALLY, remind students again that you are available for further questions and discussion about personal faith in Jesus before closing in prayer.

- If you've purchased the corresponding devotional journal, remind students they'll be working through Week 18 this week. Encourage them to keep up with the daily devotions and to give memorizing this week's verse their best shot.
- If you're utilizing the digital devotions included in the Thread curriculum, remind students how you'll be making them available, i.e., Instagram, Facebook, etc.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU . . .

- Do you have questions about a lesson?
- Something that worked particularly well that you want to share?
- Something that didn't work that you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns at feedback@youthministry360.com.