

David Asks For Forgiveness

Psalm 51

MEMORY VERSE

PSALM 51:10

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

“Soft” paper (like a paper towel), lemon juice, cotton swabs and a small electric lamp with an exposed light bulb.

Two plastic 16 oz. jars with tight lids, bleach, food coloring and paper towels.

Masking tape and three balloons.

ATTENTION GETTER!

What’s in Our Heart

In today’s lesson we are going to learn about God’s forgiveness. The Bible teaches us that we are all sinners. Even if we try to clean up the outside there is still sin in our hearts. That sin needs to be dealt with and forgiven by the Lord in order for us to have a relationship with Him. For this activity you will need “soft” paper (like a paper towel), lemon juice, cotton swabs and a small electric lamp with an exposed light bulb.

Before class gather your ingredients. Cut a large heart shape out of the paper. Use your cotton swabs to dip into the lemon juice. Write the word “SIN” in large letters on the paper heart with the lemon juice swab. Allow it to dry.

During class introduce today’s lesson. Ask the children if they can see anything wrong with the heart (once the lemon juice is dry they should not be able to see the word “SIN”). Explain that sometimes we can look in our own hearts and think that we are

right with the Lord. But in all of our hearts there is something that we need to be concerned about. Let's see what that is...Turn on the light with the exposed bulb. Hold the paper over the warm lamp and the word "SIN" should begin to be exposed. Explain that even though we may try to cover it up, sin is still in each one of our hearts. We need to be forgiven by Jesus.

LESSON TIME!

Forgiveness is a beautiful theme that flows through the Bible from start to finish. God took the first step towards forgiveness for mankind in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve disobeyed Him. Just as soon as they fell into sin, God took it upon Himself to restore them and all mankind back into fellowship with Him again. Genesis 3:15 is the first mention of God's plan to send His Son to take the punishment for man's sin. Through faith in Jesus Christ, we have forgiveness.

King David expresses God's forgiveness over and over in the Psalms so beautifully. He was a man who knew his need for God's forgiveness. Psalm 51 was written after Nathan the Prophet had come to confront David with God's judgment against him because of his adulterous relationship with Bathsheba and his murder of Uriah, her husband (2 Samuel 12:1-23).

In our lesson today, we will learn that **God is faithful to forgive**. Sorrow and disappointment over our sins may last for a time, but when we seek God's forgiveness and receive it, it is like a weight has been lifted off our shoulders. Sin is a cruel master and it is so good to have the guilt of our sin removed forever. God will restore the joy of a forgiven life when we repent and turn to Him for forgiveness and restoration. God desires to repair and restore a broken and battered heart that has been beaten up by sin. God wants our heart to be right with Him.

PSALM 51:1-4

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.

Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight—

that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge.

The words of this Psalm express a beautiful prayer of King David who has been humbled and is ready to ask for forgiveness and return to a right relationship with God. He had failed miserably to represent God and his country as both a king and a servant of God. He had given in to his sinful nature to disobey God

David's first action was to cover up his sin before anyone would find out about it. As he considered his options he chose to end the life of an innocent man (Bathsheba's husband, Uriah). Sin can be very embarrassing, especially when we want to keep it a secret; but we cannot hide it from God--He sees everything.

When Nathan the prophet confronts David with his sin, David admits he was wrong, having sinned against God. David pleads for God's grace and mercy, knowing that God is a compassionate God of love. He was truly sorry for his sin with Bathsheba and for murdering her husband. He knew his actions had hurt many people.

For about a year David had carried his sin, refusing to seek God's forgiveness. When David kept silent about his sin, he describes his body as wasting away, like living in the drought of a summer day, groaning, with the heavy hand of the Lord upon him (Ps. 32:3-4). Oh, how David longed for God's forgiveness, to be washed and cleaned from his sins. **God is faithful to forgive.**

When we have sinned and we think that no one knows about it, we need to remember that God knows. He sees everything. If we don't ask for His forgiveness we can carry the guilt of that sin for a long time. It will be like carrying a weight on our backs. It will drag us down until we turn and make things right with the Lord.

God had mercifully forgiven him. No sin is too great to be forgiven. God's mercy goes beyond our darkest sins to reach us with His lovingkindness and grace. We can be given a fresh start, leaving our guilt behind to walk anew in His grace. God can and will forgive us of any sin. While God does forgive us, we need to remember that He doesn't erase the natural results of our sin. David's life and family were never the same as a result of his sin.

There is the old example of someone who murders a person. They may turn to the Lord and be saved, but they will still have to serve the time in jail for killing someone. Forgiveness does not mean erasing the bad results from the sin. That is why we need to be obedient. Our sin can affect other people, those we love. Even though we can be forgiven there is a lot of damage that can be caused to others and to ourselves.

PSALM 51:5-9

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.

Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones You have broken may rejoice.

Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

David expresses his hopeless condition, with the acknowledgment that he was a sinner. He realizes that he is by nature a sinner. At no time in his life was he ever without sin. But God desired truth and wisdom, which was contrary to David's sinful nature.

If we are honest with ourselves in light of how God sees us, we will agree with Him that we are born sinners as David. The Bible says that we are all sinners (Romans 3:23). We all fall short of God's moral standard. We need to be forgiven by God, washed and cleansed by His loving mercy of grace.

We are also affected by our sin nature. We are born into this world as sinners and will "naturally" sin; however, when we ask Jesus to come into our hearts, we become a brand new creation. We can now say no to sin and yes to God. While the "old" sinful person is still there, we can now be controlled by our "new" nature empowered by the Holy Spirit. As a Christian we can choose to do what is right in life.

David called out to God for a new heart. He wanted to be cleansed and washed so his heart would be as white as snow. When David spoke of God cleansing him with hyssop, he was alluding to the use of hyssop at the religious ceremonies to sprinkle sacrificial blood on the altar. This represented the removal of sin through the

shedding of blood and was a picture of the sacrifice that Jesus would one day make for our sins (Hebrews 9:22). David knew he needed to ask God for His forgiveness. Sin had left him with nothing but sorrow and guilt. **God is faithful to forgive.**

If we confess our sins, God is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). David desired to have his joy back, but he would only receive it from God's forgiveness. David had failed to honor God, but God could restore the joy of his salvation and his relationship with Him.

PSALM 51:10-13

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit.

Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You.

Because we are born as sinners, our natural desire is to please ourselves rather than God. David followed that inclination when he took another man's wife. We also follow it when we sin in any way, acting according to our own selfish desires. Like David, we need to ask God to cleanse us from within, cleaning our heart and mind with new thoughts and desires.

David asked God to create a new heart within him. He wanted to be changed so he would be filled with clean thoughts and right desires. Only God could change his heart of sorrow to joy, with a new attitude to serve Him. **God is faithful to forgive.**

Has sin driven a wedge between you and God, making Him seem distant? God wants us to be close to Him and experience the blessings that He can only give. Sin that remains unconfessed (not admitted to God and taken care of) makes such closeness impossible. Being restored to God can only come from a heart that desires to turn to God, seeking His forgiveness. With a forgiven heart, David desires to tell others about God's mercy so they too may repent and turn to Him. When God forgives our sins, we are restored back into a relationship with Him.

Create in Me a Clean Heart!

For this activity you will need two plastic 16 oz. jars with tight lids, bleach, food coloring and paper towels. Before class fill one jar 1/2 full with bleach and the other jar 1/2 full with water. Remember which jar is which for your activity. This activity will demonstrate how sin will "cloud" our hearts, but Jesus will cleanse our hearts when we ask Him to come in.

Talk about sin and how it can cloud and stain our hearts. Use the food coloring to describe some of the sins. Talk about how green represents envy and drop 2 - 3 drops of green food coloring into the jar with water. Talk about how red represents anger or hatred and add a few drops, think of other sins for the remaining colors to represent. Once you have several drops of food coloring in the water it will make a grayish, black color in the water. Explain that this is what sin does in our hearts.

Next, explain that the other jar represents Jesus. He is perfect and sinless. Put a couple of drops of food coloring into the jar with the bleach. The color should immediately disappear. Next, explain that when we ask Jesus to come into our lives that He will cleanse us of all of our sins. Pour the bleach into the container with the water and food coloring. The bleach should turn the water to clear. You may want to practice this at home first to get down how you

want to share it and to make sure that it works well for you. Explain to the children how that we need Jesus to be cleansed from our sin.

We might think when we have sinned, God can never use us again. We must be careful—that is what the enemy would like us to believe. David teaches us that we can be forgiven of great sin and still be useful for God's purposes and used by Him. Romans 8:1 says that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. In other words, when Jesus has forgiven us, we are free from the results of sin. We have a clean slate and can be used by God. What great news!!! So do we go out and sin all the time and then ask forgiveness? No way! We see God's great love for us and it makes us want to serve Him all the more.

PSALM 51:14-19

Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness.

O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise.

For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; you do not delight in burnt offering.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart—these, O God, You will not despise.

Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion; build the walls of Jerusalem.

Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering; then they shall offer bulls on Your altar

Sometimes we can feel as if we need to offer God something that requires some sacrifice on our part to receive His forgiveness. David wanted to offer his sacrifice to God, but he knew that God did not desire simply an animal sacrifice from him. He needed to find forgiveness. A peace offering to God did not qualify. The only acceptable sacrifice to God was a broken and contrite heart. David needed to come to God with a humble spirit, broken and crushed because of his sin. Putting on an act of religious ceremony never pleases God. We must truly turn from our sins.

No matter what we have done, or how bad we think we have been, we can never do anything that would go beyond the grace and mercy of God's offer of forgiveness. David found spiritual renewal and cleansing. God had restored the joy of his salvation to give him a new beginning in life. Best of all, he was restored back to God; now he would enjoy an intimate relationship with Him again.

God's love bridges the gap of separation between you and Him. When Jesus Christ died on the cross and rose from the grave, He paid the penalty for our sins. When we admit that we are sinners and repent with a sincere heart, we will find and receive God's mercy. With a humble heart we need to put our faith and trust in Jesus Christ and the salvation He offers us by His death on the cross. He personally carried the load of our sins in His own body when He died on the cross (1 Peter 2:24).

Today you can turn from your sins and open the door of your heart and life. Let Jesus be the Lord and Savior of your life. He will renew your heart and give you a new life. The only thing He requires is that you come to Him with a heart of repentance and a desire to be forgiven. "For whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13). **God is faithful to forgive.** Forgiveness is free, but we must accept it.

Balloon Blessing Breakout

For this game you will need masking tape and three balloons. Use the masking tape to make a large circle in the center of the classroom. This will serve as the boundary for the game. Divide the class into two groups. One group will stand on the tape and make a circle. They must stay in their place on the line and never go off of the line. Their job is to protect and keep the balloons inside the circle.

The second group will have the three balloons. Their job will be to try to throw the balloons outside. When you say, “go” the children on the inside should try to get their balloons out while the other children try to keep the balloon in the circle. Allow play for a couple of minutes, then stop. Switch sides and resume play for a couple of minutes.

Explain that the group on the inside represents our old nature trying to get out to cause us to sin. But the children surrounding the circle represents our new nature in Jesus and the protection He gives us. We need to be in the Word every day and in prayer to help our “new” nature to grow and be strong. If we feed our “old” nature it will get stronger and we will be tempted and sin. We need to learn from David that there are consequences to sin and we need to stay far away from it.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of confession and forgiveness. Ask the children if there is something in their hearts that they need to confess to the Lord. You can pray together and ask the children to silently lift that up to the Lord, asking forgiveness. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.