



God Forgives David

2 Samuel 12:1-7; Psalm 51:1-12

Third- and fourth-graders know right from wrong, and they have consciences. However, shame or embarrassment can prevent them from telling the truth when they've done something wrong. Before they can understand confession, they must be able to admit when they've sinned and take responsibility for their actions. Use this lesson to help them understand that God will forgive them when they do confess.



Bible Point
God wants us to repent when we sin.

Key Verse
"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

Weaving Faith Into Life
Kids will learn to take their sins to God for forgiveness.

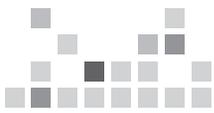
LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Bell Sneak <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Play a fun game, trying to sneak up and ring a bell without getting caught.	bell, masking tape, CD player Teacher Pack: CD: "Bell Sneak" (track 4)	
2 Bible Exploration	Gimme, Gimme! <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Play a game about losing important items.	paper clips	
	Nathan Tells the Truth <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Experience the conversation between Nathan and David.	Bible, CD player Teacher Pack: CD: "Nathan Tells the Truth" (track 5)	
	Nathan's Reply <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Examine David's reaction to Nathan's parable.	CD player, paper, chair Teacher Pack: CD: "Nathan Replies to David" (track 6)	





LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p>2</p> <p>Bible Exploration <i>(continued)</i></p>	<p>Clean Hearts <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Learn the Key Verse, and create reminders of God's cleansing power when we confess.</p>	<p>Bible, 1 bar of soap per three children, 1 plastic knife per child, large bowls, lukewarm water, CD player Teacher Pack: CD: "If We Confess" (1 John 1:9) (track 7)</p>	
<p>3</p> <p>Weaving Faith Into Life</p>	<p>Psalm of Confession <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Write their own psalms of confession using David's as a guide.</p>	<p>Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, pencils or pens</p>	<p>Tear out the Lesson 3 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.</p>
<p>4</p> <p>Lasting Impressions</p>	<p>Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.</p>	<p>Bible Truth Sleuth</p>	
	<p>Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.</p>		





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BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

A note about this lesson: You might be surprised that you’ve been asked to teach this Bible passage to children this age. Rest assured that for this age level, we’ve chosen to focus on God’s forgiveness when we sin. Any details about David’s inappropriateness have been left out. Check out the lesson—we think you’ll find God has a lot to teach third- and fourth-graders through this important Scripture.

David Stays Home

David didn’t maintain a large year-round army. At that time, the world was largely agrarian, and farmers had to mind their crops at certain times of the year. So after the grain harvest in April and May, the farmer-soldiers were able to fight with the army, making the spring, especially late spring, a convenient time for war.

Although his soldiers went out to battle, it wasn’t necessary or wise for David to risk his life to do so. Instead he directed the fighting through messengers sent back and forth between him and Joab, his general.

David’s Eyes Get Him in Trouble

David’s walk on the roof was not unusual. Bathsheba was likely bathing herself as part of the purification ritual required after menstruation. The comment in 2 Samuel 11:4 that Bathsheba had just purified herself from her “uncleanness” (menstruation) establishes that she was not made pregnant by her husband, Uriah, because he was away fighting in the war.

David Covers Up His Sin

In summoning Uriah home from the war, David hoped that Uriah would sleep with Bathsheba so that later, when the baby was born, no one would suspect that the baby wasn’t Uriah’s. It may seem odd that Uriah steadfastly refused to sleep with his wife, but in fact it was not unusual for Israelite soldiers to take a vow of sexual abstinence during times of war. They felt it was wrong to indulge their own pleasures while their fellow soldiers were fighting.

Nathan Confronts David

Although Nathan was a prophet, it took tremendous courage for him to confront David about his sin. Remember that David had already killed once to cover up his sin with Bathsheba. What was to stop him from killing again to cover up the sin of killing Uriah? In spite of that possibility, Nathan did what God sent him to do.

Nathan’s prophecy came true: David and Bathsheba’s firstborn son died, David’s son Absalom incited a rebellion against him in which David was driven from Jerusalem, and Absalom slept with David’s concubines.

David Asks for—and Receives—God’s Forgiveness

David eloquently proclaims his remorse and repentance in Psalm 51. David’s sin devastated him and his kingdom, but he sought forgiveness in one of the most beautiful psalms of contrition ever written. His plea for cleansing is an example for us all.

The Jesus Connection

Sin separates each of us from God, but Jesus reunites us through his death and resurrection. Through him we have new life and the chance to repent and begin again! Reread Psalm 51. When was the last time you felt that kind of remorse for sin?

Thank Jesus for the beauty of being cleansed from sin. Without his sacrifice, we would be lost forever. You can write your prayer here.





Bell Sneak Supplies

bell
masking tape
CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: "Bell Sneak" (track 4)

1 GETTING STARTED

Bell Sneak

 **Tip** If you don't have a bell, use another noisemaker such as a horn or buzzer.

What You'll Do

Greet kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Stand on one side of the room. Have kids stand on the opposite side of the room. Place a strip of masking tape approximately two-thirds of the way across the room from the kids. Place a bell on the floor between you and the strip of masking tape.

Say: **Your goal is to get across the room, step over this piece of masking tape, and ring the bell. When I turn my back, you'll move forward. But you must move forward only in slow motion. When I turn around, you must stop where you are. So you have to pay attention to me. If I turn around and catch you moving, you'll have to go back to the beginning.**

Play "Bell Sneak" (track 4 on the CD). Turn around with your back to the kids, and play the segment as kids play the game. Play for several minutes, turning around every few seconds to stop the kids.

After someone has rung the bell, stop the CD. Play the game again. Then have kids sit together in a large group.

Talk With Kids

Ask:

- What was it like trying to sneak up to the bell?
- How is that like sneaking around, trying to do something you're not supposed to do?
- What happens when you get caught doing something you're not supposed to do?
- What happens when you do something wrong and *don't* get caught?

Say: **In this game, you tried to sneak to the finish line without getting caught. Some of you got caught, and some of you didn't.**

Sometimes in life when we do things that are wrong, we get caught; sometimes we don't. In our game, God could see you moving even when I couldn't. And God always knows when we do things that are wrong—there's no sneaking anything past him. ► GOD WANTS US TO REPENT WHEN WE SIN. In today's Bible passage, we'll learn about a man who sinned, and we'll find out what he did about it.



2

BIBLE
EXPLORATION

Gimme, Gimme!



Tip As an alternative to paper clips, use pennies, marbles, or other small objects.

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Have you ever wanted something so badly that you were willing to do almost anything to get it? Let's play a game in which you may or may not get what you really want.**

Give each child a handful of paper clips.

Say: **The object of this game is to collect as many paper clips as you can. To do this, walk up to someone and say, "Gimme, Gimme!" and then say a number, such as four. If that person has four or more paper clips, he or she will have to give four paper clips to you. If that person has fewer than four paper clips, he or she can keep them. But if the person has just one paper clip when you say, "Gimme, gimme!" he or she must give you the one paper clip left in his or her hand and then must sit down.**

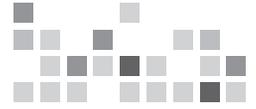
Play this game for several minutes.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Ask:

- What was it like when someone took your paper clips away from you?
- If you had only one paper clip left, and someone who had a lot of paper clips took yours, what was it like to lose it?
- How have you seen greed like this in the way others have treated you?
- What does God tell us about jealously wanting something that belongs to someone else?

Say: **Just as in our game, King David wanted something that belonged to someone else. Even though he had a lot of things, he wanted more. By doing several wrong things, David sinned against God and other people. David loved God very much, but that did not stop him from sinning in a big way. As we look at David's choices, we'll explore why ► GOD WANTS US TO REPENT WHEN WE SIN.**



Gimme, Gimme! Supplies

.....
paper clips





Nathan Tells the Truth Supplies

.....
Bible
CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: "Nathan Tells the Truth" (track 5)

Nathan Tells the Truth

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **We'll find the first part of today's Bible passage in 2 Samuel 12:1-7. In the audio segment you're about to hear, the prophet Nathan confronts King David about David's sin of taking something precious that wasn't his, and then trying to cover up his sin. Instead of yelling at David, Nathan told David a parable. A parable is a story that contains a truth or a lesson. Let's listen to Nathan's parable.**

Play "Nathan Tells the Truth" (track 5 on the CD). Make sure you pause the CD right after you hear "and prepared it for the one who had come to him."

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Ask:

- **What do you think of Nathan's technique of telling David a story instead of immediately confronting the king about his sin?**
- **Why do you or don't you think a parable is an effective way for you to confront a friend about sin?**
- **What's your usual reaction to someone who confronts you about the wrong things you do?**

Say: **Let's read about David's reaction to Nathan.**

Have someone read 2 Samuel 12:5-6 aloud. Ask the reader to strongly emphasize David's words of shock and protest about what he heard in Nathan's story.

Say: **David's own angry words tell us that he knew that stealing was wrong and that it made God angry, especially when the thief had plenty and the victim had a lot less. David's words also show that he didn't understand yet that Nathan was comparing the king to the rich man in the story. But he was about to learn that**
▶ **GOD WANTS US TO REPENT WHEN WE SIN.**





Nathan's Reply

What You'll Do

Say: **Let's listen to what Nathan said to David next.**

Play "Nathan Replies to David" (track 6 on the CD).

Say: **Before we talk about what you've just heard, let's do a little experiment. Think of a sin that you've committed recently. You don't have to say it out loud, just think about it.**

Place a chair in the middle of the room. Give each child some paper.

Say: **This chair represents all our sins. Let's see what happens when we try to cover it up.**

Have kids work together to use the paper to cover the chair as completely as they can without using any other supplies.

Talk With Kids

Ask:

- **How is David's attempt to hide his sin like or unlike trying to hide the chair with paper?**
- **What happens when we try to hide our sin?**
- **Based on Nathan's comments, how does God react to hidden sin?**

Say: **Even when we try to hide our sin from other people as David did, we can't hide our sin from God. Instead, ► GOD WANTS US TO REPENT WHEN WE SIN. That means God wants us to confess it to him so that we can be forgiven.**

Clean Hearts

What You'll Do

Say: **Let's take a look at our Key Verse for today to find out what God wants us to do when we've sinned.**

Open your Bible to 1 John 1:9, and read the verse aloud: **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."** Then have kids repeat it after you.

Say: **To confess means to admit we've done something wrong. This verse tells us that God is "faithful and just." That means God keeps promises. So if God tells us he'll forgive us, he will forgive us. Not only that, but God will help us do what's right and clean our hearts from bad things! Let's make a craft that illustrates this truth.**



Nathan's Reply Supplies

CD player
paper
chair

Teacher Pack

CD: "Nathan Replies to David" (track 6)

Clean Hearts Supplies

Bible
1 bar of soap per three children
1 plastic knife per child
large bowls
lukewarm water
CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "If We Confess"
(1 John 1:9) (track 7)





Have kids take turns grating the bars of soap into the bowls by scraping pieces from them with the plastic knives. Have kids keep rotating the bars of soap among themselves so no one is waiting very long.

Pour a small amount of lukewarm water into each bowl, and have kids mix the soap and water with their hands. Keep adding water until the mixture is squishy and claylike.

Give each person some of the soap mixture. Say: **Mold your soap into a heart shape. When it dries, you'll have a heart-shaped bar of soap to remind you that God can clean your heart. As you shape your heart, repeat the Key Verse silently and make it a prayer that God will clean your heart.** Play "If We Confess" (1 John 1:9) (track 7 on the CD) as kids mold their soap and pray.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Ask:

- How does your soap represent your own heart after you repent from sin?
- How can you confess your sins?
- Explain whether you think God will always forgive us when we confess.

Say: ► **GOD WANTS US TO REPENT WHEN WE SIN.** And God promises to forgive us when we confess our sins. God promises to purify, or cleanse, us from all unrighteousness. So take your miniature heart-shaped soap home with you as a reminder of what God will do for you when you confess your sins.

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Psalm of Confession

Psalm of Confession Supplies

Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth
pencils or pens

Psalm of Confession Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 3
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.

What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: **David's confession of his sin is not only found in the book of 2 Samuel, but also in the book of Psalms. Let's listen to David's confession of his sin to God in Psalm 51.**

Ask kids to open their Bibles to Psalm 51:1-12. Have four willing kids give turns reading the passage in order:

- Psalm 51:1-2
- Psalm 51:3-5
- Psalm 51:6-9
- Psalm 51:10-12

Thank the readers.

Say: ► **GOD WANTS US TO REPENT WHEN WE SIN.** Sometimes the confession can be as poetic as what you just heard in Psalm 51. But what God wants most of





all is a desire to confess our wrongs and repent, which means to turn away from sin and back toward God.

Have kids turn to the “Psalm of Confession” activity on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages.

Say: **You’ll write your own psalm of confession. On your Bible Truth Sleuth page, you’ll see some of the verses from David’s psalm. You can use them as a guideline for writing your own. You don’t have to use big or fancy words—just confess to God your sins.**

Allow time for kids to write. After kids have finished writing, have them find partners. Have kids pray with their partners, asking God to forgive their sins. Encourage kids to share specific sins if they want to, but don’t force them to. If they aren’t ready to share their sins aloud, have them pray, “Dear God, I have sinned. Please forgive me.”

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Ask:

- **What did you think of this method of confessing?**
- **Tell about a time you confessed a sin and felt much better.**

Say: **When we confess our sins to God, we don’t have to be amazing poets like David. We just need to be honest about our sins and ask God to forgive us. And we need to have hearts that are willing to live differently. That’s how ► GOD WANTS US TO REPENT WHEN WE SIN.**

Have kids take their psalms of confession home to remind them to repent when they do something wrong.



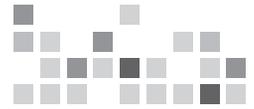
4 LASTING
IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You’ll Do ■■■■

Say: **Let’s think about how we can repent of our sins this week.**

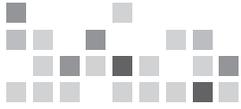
Direct kids to find this week’s Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and to choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:



Daily Challenge
Supplies

.....
Bible Truth Sleuth





- **Make a present for God and tell God that the present is for him because you're thankful that he forgives you when you repent.**
- **Say a prayer each night before you go to bed, thanking God for forgiving you.**
- **Use your heart-shaped soap to wash your hands and confess your sins to God each day this week.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Share a time, a place, or other ideas.**

Say: ► **GOD WANTS US TO REPENT WHEN WE SIN.** God used the prophet Nathan to confront David in a way that David would realize his sin, confess the sin, seek God's forgiveness, and repent of his sin. God forgave David, and God will forgive us, too.

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about sin and repentance. Kids can also do the activities on the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about e-mailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids, thanking God for forgiving our sins when we confess them and asking for help to confess our sins and to never try to hide them.

