



# Absalom Rebels and Is Defeated

2 Samuel 15:1-12; 17:1-12; 18:1-18

Third- and fourth-graders may be very self-focused. They may think the world revolves around them. It's hard for them to see others as more important. This lesson can help kids learn to take their eyes off themselves and think about how their actions affect others.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<b>1</b> Getting Started	<b>Come On Over to My Side!</b> <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Play a game to learn what it means to be persuaded.	2 different types of treats, enough for 1 of each per child.	Recruit an adult volunteer to stay with one group outside of the meeting area for a few minutes.
<b>2</b> Bible Exploration	<b>Absalom's Rebellion</b> <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Answer "Dear Abbie" letters written to Absalom.	Bible, Bible Truth Sleuth, pencils or pens	Tear out the Lesson 4 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
	<b>The Self-Centered Battle Plan</b> <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Create a list of reasons to persuade Absalom of a plan, talk about why the plan he chose was self-centered, and hear the outcome of following that plan.	Bibles, paper, pencils or pens, CD player <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD: "The Battle" (track 8)	



### ► Bible Point

A self-centered attitude hurts God and others.

### Key Verse

"He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8).

### Weaving Faith Into Life

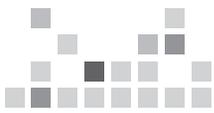
Kids will be considerate of others rather than focused on themselves.





LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2</b> Bible Exploration <i>(continued)</i></p>	<p><b>Bumper Stickers</b> <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Create a paraphrase of the Key Verse to be reminded of how God wants us to act, and sing the Key Verse song.</p>	<p>Bibles, CD player, scissors, white self-stick paper, markers, 1 copy per person of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson) <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD: "Micah 6:8" (track 9)</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>3</b> Weaving Faith Into Life</p>	<p><b>Me, Myself, and I</b> <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Discuss scenarios comparing humble and self-centered acts.</p>	<p><b>Teacher Pack:</b> "Me, Myself, and I" cards</p>	<p>Separate the "Me, Myself, and I" cards.</p> 
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>4</b> Lasting Impressions</p>	<p><b>Daily Challenges</b> <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.</p>	<p>Bible Truth Sleuth</p>	
	<p><b>Weaving Faith at Home</b> <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.</p>		





# Absalom Rebels and Is Defeated

2 Samuel 15:1-12; 17:1-12; 18:1-18

BIBLE BACKGROUND  
FOR LEADERS

## David's Family Turmoil

It's important to know about certain events in the lives of David's other children in order to understand the context in which today's events took place. Amnon, one of David's sons, was attracted to Tamar, a daughter of David and half-sister to Amnon, and he raped her then turned against her. Absalom, Tamar's brother and another of David's sons, took her in. Two years later, Absalom had Amnon murdered and then fled from David and Israel. David mourned for Amnon and wished to be reunited with Absalom (2 Samuel 13:37-39).

## David Restores Absalom

After Absalom had been gone three years, Joab, David's trusted general, had seen enough of David's pain. He enlisted a "wise woman" to confront David and convince him to allow Absalom to return to Israel. David agreed, but apparently he was hesitant to fully forgive and restore Absalom, because he refused to see him after his return. It took setting Joab's field on fire two years later for Absalom to finally get the king's attention and be allowed to visit his father. Absalom bowed to the ground before David, and David kissed him, offering forgiveness.

## Absalom's Revolt

After that meeting, Absalom put a subversive plan into action. He would meet people coming into Jerusalem, criticize his father's system of administering justice, and promise a better one if he were made king. He treated the people as equals, not as if they were below him, as indicated in his response to those who bowed before him (2 Samuel 15:5-6). In this way, he won over large numbers of people.

Finally, Absalom decided to revolt openly, and he chose Hebron for his headquarters. David had been proclaimed king in Hebron, and Absalom had been

born there; it was a significant place of worship; it was the city David had abandoned when he moved his capital to Jerusalem. Absalom must have counted all these factors in his favor.

## Absalom Is Defeated

David must have realized that Absalom had gained quite a following, because when he heard of the revolt, he insisted on fleeing Jerusalem for safety. After receiving conflicting advice, Absalom decided not to attack David right away. The delay allowed David time to muster an army (2 Samuel 18:1).

In the ensuing battle, 20,000 died. In the end, Absalom was killed by Joab, and David again wept over the death of a son. Self-centered attitudes and actions had taken the life of yet another of the king's sons.

## The Jesus Connection

Jesus' selfless life made a world of difference for us. How can we keep our attitude Christ-centered? By looking at him, all the time.

How does a self-centered attitude affect relationships?

How could following Jesus' selfless example improve those relationships?

Thank God for sending Jesus, who leads us on to better relationships by showing us how to treat others with selfless love—the way he treats us. You can write your prayer here.

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### Come On Over to My Side! Supplies

2 different types of treats, enough for 1 of each per child.

### ! ALLERGY ■ ALERT

### Come On Over to My Side! Easy Prep

Recruit an adult volunteer to stay with one group outside of the meeting area for a few minutes.

## 1 GETTING STARTED

# Come On Over to My Side!

### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

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

Then have kids form three groups. Send one group (Group 3) out of the room (with adult supervision). Give each of the other two groups a treat. Each group should receive a different kind of treat. For example, give cookies to Group 1 and cupcakes to Group 2.

Say: **Your job is to try to persuade the kids from Group 3 to come to your side by telling them about what you have to offer. However, you can't tell them exactly what you have; you may just hint about it. For example, you may say, "My treat has chocolate in it." Or you may say, "My treat is very sweet."**

When everyone understands and is ready to play, start the game. Have kids from the third group come in and see whether they can be persuaded by Group 1 or Group 2 to join their group. When everyone is in a group, have kids sit down and enjoy their snacks while you ask the following questions:

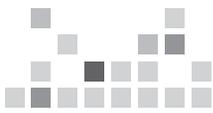
### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Ask:

- What was it like trying to persuade someone to come over to your side?
- For those of you being persuaded, what convinced you to go to the side you chose?
- How can you tell when people are trying to persuade you to join their group mainly to help them, not for your own benefit?

Say: **In today's Bible passage, we're going to learn about Absalom, a man who rebelled against his own father, King David, and tried to persuade other people to come over to his side. We'll learn why he thought he was better than his father and what happened as a result. We'll see how ► A SELF-CENTERED ATTITUDE HURTS GOD AND OTHERS.**





**2**

**BIBLE  
EXPLORATION**

# Absalom’s Rebellion

## What You’ll Do

Say: I need your help in telling the first Bible passage for today, which is 2 Samuel 15:1-12. This passage is about Absalom’s conspiracy to rebel against his father, King David. When I hold my hand up, yell out, “Absalom, Absalom, don’t do that!” I’ll explain why Absalom was headed for trouble. Here we go:

“In the course of time, Absalom provided himself with a chariot and horses and with fifty men to run ahead of him. He would get up early and stand by the side of the road leading to the city gate. Whenever anyone came with a complaint to be placed before the king for a decision, Absalom would call out to him, ‘What town are you from?’ He would answer, ‘Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel.’ ”

Hold up your hand and encourage kids to yell, “Absalom, Absalom, don’t do that!”

Say: Absalom was trying to appear to be concerned for everyone, but he was mostly trying to gain power for himself. Let’s keep going.

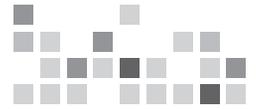
“Then Absalom would say to him, ‘Look, your claims are valid and proper, but there is no representative of the king to hear you.’ And Absalom would add, ‘If only I were appointed judge in the land! Then everyone who has a complaint or case could come to me and I would see that he gets justice.’ Also, whenever anyone approached him to bow down before him, Absalom would reach out his hand, take hold of him and kiss him. Absalom behaved in this way toward all the Israelites who came to the king asking for justice, and so he stole the hearts of the men of Israel.”

Hold up your hand and encourage kids to yell, “Absalom, Absalom, don’t do that!”

Say: Absalom couldn’t possibly judge claims, especially without hearing both sides of the dispute. If he wanted the job of judge, he should have talked with the person who could do something about it—his father, King David. He motive was obvious: to win over the people against King David, and to make political promises that he couldn’t keep. Let’s keep going.

“At the end of four years, Absalom said to the king, ‘Let me go to Hebron and fulfill a vow I made to the Lord. While your servant was living at Geshur in Aram, I made this vow: ‘If the Lord takes me back to Jerusalem, I will worship the Lord in Hebron.’ The king said to him, ‘Go in peace.’ So he went to Hebron.”

Hold up your hand and encourage kids to yell, “Absalom, Absalom, don’t do that!”



### Absalom’s Rebellion Supplies

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Bible  
Bible Truth Sleuth  
pencils or pens

### Absalom’s Rebellion Easy Prep

.....  
Tear out the Lesson 4  
pages from each Bible  
Truth Sleuth student  
book.





Say: **Absalom wasn't going to worship God in Hebron and plainly lied to his father about it. Let's hear Absalom's real reason for going to Hebron.**

**"Then Absalom sent secret messengers throughout the tribes of Israel to say, 'As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpets, then say, "Absalom is king in Hebron." ' Two hundred men from Jerusalem had accompanied Absalom. They had been invited as guests and went quite innocently, knowing nothing about the matter. While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he also sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, to come from Giloh, his hometown. And so the conspiracy gained strength, and Absalom's following kept on increasing."**

Say: **And one last time with feeling:** Hold up your hand and encourage kids to yell, "Absalom, Absalom, don't do that!"

Say: **The Bible makes it pretty clear that Absalom did things not so much out of a desire to help the people, but rather to win people over to his side. He was bold in his deceit and set a course to cause a terrible rebellion.**

Have kids turn to the "Dear Abbie" activity in Lesson 4 of their Bible Truth Sleuth.

Say: **Pretend that you're writing an advice column for Absalom—"Abbie" for short. You've just received the letters written in your Bible Truth Sleuth. Your job is to write responses to these letters as if you're Absalom. Keep in mind that Absalom's motives were not good or godly. He would say anything to people to win them over to his side.**

Give kids several minutes to write. As kids are writing, circulate to offer help. Then ask for willing kids to share their answers.

### **Talk With Kids** ■■■■

Ask:

- **What were some of the promises you made as Absalom to get what you wanted?**
- **In your responses, what level of concern did "Abbie" show for the person's needs versus his own agenda?**
- **If you were trying to lead people, how could you try to earn their trust?**
- **How does a self-centered attitude hurt God or the people you're trying to lead?**

Say: ► **A SELF-CENTERED ATTITUDE HURTS GOD AND OTHERS.** After Absalom had persuaded some people to his side, he needed a plan to take over his father's kingdom. Let's take a look at that plan and what happened as a result of a self-centered attitude.





# The Self-Centered Battle Plan

## What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Absalom had convinced lots of people to turn against his father, and he had to decide what to do next. Two men shared their plans for battle with Absalom. Absalom chose the plan he thought would work best to make him king. Let's read about those plans.**

Have kids open their Bibles to 2 Samuel 17:1-12 and form two groups.

Assign 2 Samuel 17:1-4 to the kids in Group 1 and 2 Samuel 17:11-12 to Group 2.

Say: **Read the plan in your passage and make a list of reasons it would be the best plan for Absalom.**

Give kids time to write their lists, and then have them present their reasons to the rest of the group. Encourage kids to think about which plan would be best for Absalom, not necessarily what would be good for anyone else.

If groups have trouble coming up with lists, here are some suggestions for each of the plans:

### Plan 1 (Ahithophel)

- Chances of winning were greater if the other guys were tired and weak.
- The king would be gone forever.
- All the people would then follow Absalom.

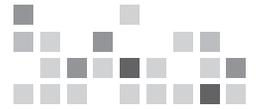
### Plan 2 (Hushai)

- Because David's men were strong and good fighters, making a surprise attack would increase Absalom's chances of winning.
- Many men would fight with Absalom if he gathered them from all of Israel.
- All people Absalom considered enemies would be gone.
- Absalom would become king.

Say: **Let's find out which plan Absalom chose.**

Read aloud 2 Samuel 17:14.

Say: **Plan 2 was the winner! Absalom only looked out for himself when he made his decision. Notice that when he sought advice he didn't seek God's will and he didn't ask God for help. He was so self-centered that he was willing to have his own father killed so he could become king. ► A SELF-CENTERED ATTITUDE HURTS GOD AND OTHERS. Let's find out what happened to Absalom because of his self-centered plans.**



## The Self-Centered Battle Plan Supplies

- .....
- Bibles
  - paper
  - pencils or pens
  - CD player
  - Teacher Pack**
  - CD: "The Battle"
  - (track 8)





Let's listen to what happened in the battle between David's men and Absalom's men. Whenever you hear David's name, say, "Long live the king!" Then whenever you hear Absalom's name, hiss and boo.

Play "The Battle" (track 8 on the CD).

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Ask:

- What kinds of self-centered attitudes did you find in what we learned today?
- What did you discover about the results of self-centered attitudes?
- How does the passage encourage you to put an end to self-centered attitudes?

Say: ► **A SELF-CENTERED ATTITUDE HURTS GOD AND OTHERS.** Absalom's attitude shows us the kind of negative effects self-centeredness can have. We can look to God to meet our own needs as we seek to focus on putting others first.

## Bumper Stickers



■ **Tip** You can purchase white self-stick paper from a grocery or drugstore. You may also buy full-sheet-sized labels from an office supply store. If you use the labels, cut the sheets in thirds lengthwise to create the bumper stickers. If you don't have access to self-stick paper, use regular paper and cut it in half vertically. Ask kids to use tape when they fasten it at home.

### What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: **Absalom showed how ► A SELF-CENTERED ATTITUDE HURTS GOD AND OTHERS. Let's take a look at our Key Verse for today and see what it says about the kind of attitude we can choose to honor God, ourselves, and others.**

Have kids turn to Micah 6:8 in their Bibles, and have someone read the Key Verse aloud: "He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

Give each child a 3x5-inch strip of white self-stick paper, and markers. Explain to kids that *paraphrase* means to put something in your own words, and then have them paraphrase the Key Verse. A suggestion for a simple paraphrase would be, "What does God want? He wants us to be fair, kind, and not proud."

Play "Micah 6:8" (track 9 on the CD) as kids work on their bumper stickers. After kids have come up with a paraphrase that they like for the verse, have them write it on their bumper stickers. Then let kids decorate the stickers.

Pass out copies of the lyrics and again play "Micah 6:8." Have kids sing along, referring to the lyrics if needed.

### Bumper Stickers Supplies

Bibles  
CD player  
scissors  
white self-stick paper  
markers  
1 copy per person of the  
lyrics page (at the end  
of this lesson)  
**Teacher Pack**  
CD: "Micah 6:8" (track 9)

### Bumper Stickers Easy Prep

.....  
Cut 3x5-inch strips out  
of the white self-stick  
paper, one per child.





*(Verse)*

 He has showed you, O man, what is good.  
And what does the Lord require of you?  
To act justly  
And love mercy,  
To walk humbly with your God.  
Walk humbly with your God.

*(Repeat verse.)*

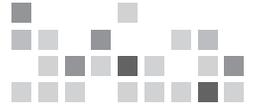
To act justly  
And love mercy,  
To walk humbly with your God.  
Walk humbly with your God.

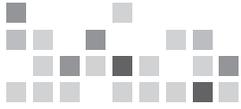
*(Repeat verse.)*

To act justly  
And love mercy,  
To walk humbly with your God.  
Walk humbly with your God.

To walk humbly with your God.  
Walk humbly with your God.  
To act justly  
And love mercy.

"Micah 6:8" by Jay Stocker. © 2004 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.





## Talk With Kids ■■■■

Ask:

- Explain your paraphrase.
- What are some practical ways to do what this verse says?
- How does obeying this verse keep a self-centered attitude away?

Say: If Absalom had done what this verse says to do, his attitude would've been totally different. When we focus on what God wants rather than what we want, we'll end up in a much better situation. Remember, ► **A SELF-CENTERED ATTITUDE HURTS GOD AND OTHERS.**

Take your bumper sticker home, and put it in a place that will help you remember how God wants you to be. But be sure you get your parents' permission before attaching your bumper sticker anywhere!

## 3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

# Me, Myself, and I

## What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: What do you think it means to be "self-centered"? Let's take a look at some situations to see how self-centered attitudes affect the people in each situation.

Have kids form four groups, and give each group one of the "Me, Myself, and I" cards. Have kids discuss the situation and how the self-centered person in the situation affects the other people.

## Talk With Kids ■■■■

Ask:

- How are the characters in your scenarios behaving with a self-centered attitude?
- What could the people in our scenarios change to act more as God wants them to act?
- Why is a self-centered attitude wrong?
- What can you do to change from being less self-centered to being more fair, merciful, and humble?

Say: We learned in our Bible passage that ► **A SELF-CENTERED ATTITUDE HURTS GOD AND OTHERS.** God wants us to treat everyone fairly and love them as we love ourselves. Absalom apparently never understood that truth, as his life tragically shows. Let's choose another path today.

Me, Myself, and I  
Supplies

Teacher Pack  
"Me, Myself, and I"  
cards

Me, Myself, and I  
Easy Prep

Separate the "Me,  
Myself, and I" cards



4

LASTING  
IMPRESSIONS

# Daily Challenges

## What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's think about how we can practice a less self-centered attitude 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:

- **Tell your family members something you like about them.**
- **Listen to your parents without talking back or complaining.**
- **Use watercolor paints to paint a pretty picture for one of your neighbors.**
- **When you give the picture to your neighbor, say one nice thing about him or her.**

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.**

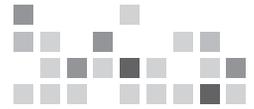
Say: **As Absalom's experience showed, ► GOD WANTS US TO REPENT WHEN WE SIN. Let's follow through with our Daily Challenge this week to embrace a balanced attitude of serving God, serving others, and serving ourselves.**

# Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about how being self-centered hurts God and others. 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](http://group.com/digital).

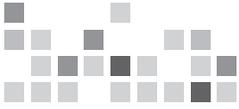
Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids, asking God to help us not be self-centered and help us treat others fairly, love others as ourselves, and not be boastful or proud.



## Daily Challenges Supplies

.....  
Bible Truth Sleuth





## Micah 6:8

*(Verse)*

**He has showed you, O man, what is good.**

**And what does the Lord require of you?**

**To act justly**

**And love mercy,**

**To walk humbly with your God,**

**Walk humbly with your God.**

*(Repeat verse.)*

**To act justly**

**And love mercy,**

**To walk humbly with your God,**

**Walk humbly with your God.**

*(Repeat verse.)*

**To act justly**

**And love mercy,**

**To walk humbly with your God,**

**Walk humbly with your God.**

**To walk humbly with your God,**

**Walk humbly with your God.**

**To act justly**

**And love mercy.**

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