

JULY 20, 2025

SERIES 2: FAITH PASSAGES

EVEN GIANTS FALL

LESSON 2.3

FOCUS VERSES

I John 1:8–10

⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

LESSON TEXT

II Samuel 12:1–14

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins.

TRUTH FOR MY LIFE

I will confess my sins to God and forsake them.

Thinking about Last Week:

Have students refer to their Daily Devotional Guide to answer the following questions:

1. What most affected you as you read through the Lesson Text and the Biblical Insights?
2. How did it shape your prayers and thoughts throughout the week?
3. Do you feel you grew closer to the Lord this past week? Why or why not?

TEACHING OUTLINE

Icebreaker: What is the biggest surprise you have read in the Bible?

Lesson Connection: Share the Lesson Connection. (I)

I. DAVID'S FAITH AND FORGIVENESS

A. David's Sin

B. Nathan's Story

» *Much of the Book of Acts is written as a historical narrative to teach spiritual concepts through stories. Why do you feel that method is effective?*

C. David's Repentance

D. I Will Recognize I Am Vulnerable to Temptation

» *What spiritual disciplines could help us avoid the mistake David made to take a vacation from God?*

II. OUR FAITH AND FORGIVENESS

A. We All Are Sinners

B. We All Can Be Forgiven through the Gospel

» *Can you share an experience when you faced temptation but God delivered you by revealing a way of escape?*

C. I Will Confess My Sins to God and Forsake Them

» *Many new disciples testify that the enemy immediately attacked them after being baptized or receiving the Holy Ghost.*

What advice would you give someone who has that experience?

» *David's sins were not the end of the story. Why do you believe he was able to recover his relationship with God?*

Internalizing the Message (V)

Prayer Focus

Lead the group in prayer and consider the following topics of focus:

- For God to restore to us the joy of our salvation
- For God to cleanse our conscience from the guilt of past sin and empower us to accomplish His will

LESSON CONNECTION

A supplemental image is available in the Resource Kit. (I)

A generation of Americans was mesmerized by the fascinating stories and comforting voice of Paul Harvey. He became famous for capturing the attention of listeners on the radio and readers of his syndicated newspaper columns. His signature approach was to first weave a biographical tale about the unknown history of a famous person to humanize that person. Then once the audience felt they could relate to the real and emotional story of tragedy, triumph, and every other human experience in between, Harvey would reveal the person's identity just prior to closing his commentary with the well-known catchphrase: "and now you know the rest of the story."

In a newspaper column that differed from the format that made him a household name, Harvey once offered some ideas about the current state of America in 1964. After the original publication date, it was then recorded and broadcast on the radio in an updated form. Recently it has surfaced again on the internet, reaching a new generation. Many know nothing about Paul Harvey other than this singular commentary. The newspaper column and radio broadcast share the title "If I Were the Devil."

Among the many ideas Paul Harvey saw as plaguing society in his time, he included such issues as the prevalence of drugs and alcohol, the substitution of psychology in the place of religion, and the tendency of Americans to believe that solutions come from Washington, D.C., instead of from the Lord. Those topics would be fitting for every generation and help to explain its popularity over time.

However, one rather obvious tactic of the enemy that Harvey overlooked was the enemy's most treasured weapon against the saints of God. The Bible declares: "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper" (Isaiah 54:17). While that promise is comforting, it does include an underlying message that the enemy actively forms weapons against us. The fiery darts he launches at me may be different from the attacks he designs against you. While these attacks may come in different forms, we must be on guard against one consistent tactic. The Bible identifies the enemy of our souls as "the accuser of our brethren" (Revelation 12:10).

This strategy can only be effective against the saint of God who does not understand the difference between conviction and condemnation. *Conviction* comes from the Lord and is intended to draw us back to Him when we sin; *condemnation* only comes from the enemy of our souls and is intended to drive us further from God by bringing up past mistakes God has already forgiven. They both feel like guilt, but they lead us in opposite directions. When we feel the enemy trying to condemn us though God has already forgiven us, we can hold up the shield of faith which is "able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked" (Ephesians 6:16). If I were the devil, I would be scared to death of a Holy Spirit-filled saint of God who understands the power of repentance and being forgiven.

BIBLE LESSON

I. DAVID'S FAITH AND FORGIVENESS

A. David's Sin

In the springtime when kings typically went out to battle, the mightiest warrior in all of Israel decided to sit this one out. Perhaps he felt he had earned the right to relax at home and catch up on some overdue royal projects. Second Samuel 10 tells the story of David personally fighting against the Syrian army, a battle in which he “slew the men of seven hundred chariots of the Syrians, and forty thousand horsemen, and smote Shobach the captain of their host, who died there” (II Samuel 10:18). The problem with David's decision is he also took a vacation away from God. We are often most vulnerable to temptation after a great victory because we let our guard down.

One evening during his sabbatical, David took a stroll on the roof of his house. Maybe he was having trouble sleeping and wanted to glimpse the grandeur of his kingdom. Whatever the reason for his evening rooftop walk, it ended in David's sinful choice. David saw a married woman bathing; she happened to be the wife of one David's mighty men, Uriah the Hittite. Rather than look away or walk back inside, David caved into temptation and sent someone to bring her to him. He discovered her name was Bathsheba and she was indeed married, but even that holy boundary did not keep him on the right side of righteousness. She was brought to him and he committed the sin of adultery with Bathsheba.

Once he discovered she was expecting David's baby, King David called for her husband, Uriah, to come home from the battle, hoping to make it appear Bathsheba's husband was the father of the soon-to-be-born child. When Uriah refused to spend the night in the comfort of his home—twice—while his companions slept on the battlefield, David ordered him to be intentionally placed and then abandoned on the front lines where he would certainly be killed by enemy troops. Although Uriah was a mighty man of valor, he was not mighty enough to face the enemy alone. There on the battlefield, righteous Uriah died at the hand of unrighteous David.

B. Nathan's Story

David had strayed far from his commitment to lead God's people in righteousness, but thankfully he had a man of God in his life. No matter what position God allows us to fill in His kingdom, we should always prioritize the spiritual authority of church leadership. David ignored conviction and kept his sin a secret. He married Bathsheba when the time for mourning her husband, Uriah, ended. However, the Word of God declares the obvious: “the thing that David had done displeased the LORD” (II Samuel 11:27).

Nathan the prophet then entered the scene. His task was not one for the faint of heart: to stand before King David, who had the ability to order the prophet's immediate execution, and declare the king to be a sinner. Nathan doubtless prayed, and then he entered the presence of the king and exercised tremendous wisdom.

God led Nathan to illustrate the severity of what David had done in a non-confrontational manner, and the best method to do so was by telling the former shepherd a story about a shepherd and his sheep. One rich man was blessed with many flocks and herds, but the poor man only had one ewe lamb, which was more like a daughter than a sheep. To feed his hungry guest, the rich man robbed the poor man of his only lamb, and David was incensed.

He angrily declared, “As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die.” Nathan directly challenged the king by asserting: “Thou art the man” (II Samuel 12:7). He pronounced judgment upon David's house for his sin, including the death of his newborn child.

Much of the Book of Acts is written as a historical narrative to teach spiritual concepts through stories. Why do you feel that method is effective?

C. David's Repentance

David broke down and confessed, “I have sinned against the LORD,” and the Bible transcribes David's prayer in Psalm 51. His words

can serve as a model of repentance: “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin” (Psalm 51:1–2). As David acknowledged his sin, his sincerity screams through the pages of Scripture when we read: “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me” (Psalm 51:10–11). David pledged to teach transgressors the ways of God and declared his “tongue shall sing aloud of God’s righteousness” (Psalm 51:13–14).

When we sincerely cry out to God to forgive our sin, God responds the exact same way every time: with forgiveness. David did not escape the immediate consequences of his transgressions; God judged him, and the remainder of David’s reign was filled with betrayal and strife. In grace God answered David’s prayer request, which we should always pray when we have fallen short: “Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation” (Psalm 51:12).

D. I Will Recognize I Am Vulnerable to Temptation

We should glean inspiration when we discover the great examples of faith in the Bible were flesh and blood, just like us. Noah planted a vineyard and became intoxicated with wine from the grapes. Sarah laughed when God told her she would bear a child. Moses had a temper that denied him access to the Promised Land. Add to that list the name of David: an adulterer, liar, and murderer.

We typically start with people’s failings and conclude by emphasizing God’s ability to use them to accomplish great feats for His kingdom. The inverse must also be a part of our analysis. At times we should begin with the feats of faith and then remind ourselves of the mistakes. David slew the giant Goliath. He wrote the comforting words of the twenty-third psalm. His name appears over eight hundred times in the Word of God, including fourteen times when Jesus is referred to as the Son of David. That same David was guilty of some of the most grievous sins in the Word of God. If it could happen to him, it could happen to any of us.

What spiritual disciplines could help us avoid the mistake David made to take a vacation from God?

II. OUR FAITH AND FORGIVENESS

A. We All Are Sinners

The Book of Romans includes a conviction of all humanity from the pen of the apostle Paul and the inspiration of Almighty God. No one escapes indictment. From the vilest sinner to the most holy, the Bible declares: “There is none righteous, no, not one” (Romans 3:10). Furthermore, Scripture describes our efforts of righteousness as nothing more than “filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6), because we “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Our goodness will never be enough to answer the holy call of Heaven.

B. We All Can Be Forgiven through the Gospel

That is the bad news. However, the same Paul who presented an abundance of evidence to return a guilty verdict from any impartial jury also provided us with the best news of all human history in his first epistle to the church in Corinth. There he identified the gospel as having three components: “Christ died for our sins . . . was buried, and . . . rose again the third day according to the scriptures” (I Corinthians 15:3–4).

When we respond to His death, burial, and resurrection through repentance, baptism in Jesus’ name, and receiving the Holy Ghost, we receive the glorious promise that “if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (II Corinthians 5:17). When the enemy tries to bring up our past, we can remind him God has placed it as far from His mind “as the east is from the west” (Psalm 103:12). While we may struggle with memories of past sin, we have the right to claim the bold declaration of Paul: “Such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God” (I Corinthians 6:11).

When God forgives, He will not bring our past up against us anymore. He empowers us by His Spirit to live holy lives, separated from wickedness in our world. Even when temptation presents itself to us, the Lord will always “make a way to escape, that we will be able to bear it.” (See I Corinthians 10:13.)

Can you share an experience when you faced temptation but God delivered you by revealing a way of escape?

C. I Will Confess My Sins to God and Forsake Them

Unfortunately, we do not always make right decisions. In those times, do not become discouraged and give up. Remember the promise God’s mercy makes available: “And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world” (I John 2:1–2). The blood Jesus shed on Calvary is enough to remove every stain of sin in our lives.

Many new disciples testify that the enemy immediately attacked them after being baptized or receiving the Holy Ghost. What advice would you give someone who has that experience?

While new disciples often deal with condemnation, seasoned saints of God are not exempt from the same fiery darts. We have a scriptural answer that empowers us to shut our enemy’s mouth. When explaining Jesus’ superior sacrifice, the writer of Hebrews explained: “For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Hebrews 9:13–14). When we have obeyed the gospel and are living a repentant life free from willful sin, we can have confidence the blood of Jesus will purge us from any guilt that could prevent us from accomplishing the will of God.

David’s sins were not the end of the story. Why do you believe he was able to recover his relationship with God?

INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE

A supplemental video is available in the Resource Kit. (V)

David and Bathsheba anxiously awaited the day their baby would be born. They could not forget Nathan’s searing prophecy in the back of their minds. David knew he had sinned, and his son would not live long past birth.

When their baby was born, it was obvious he was weak. David pushed away the plate and fasted, lying all night on the cold ground. The staff urged David to eat, but he refused. Perhaps his self-inflicted sacrifice would move God to relent and heal his newborn son. He fasted one day, two days, three days, four days. The little guy hung on. Five days, six days, seven days. On the seventh day, the little boy closed his eyes and died. He was a casualty of David’s rebellion and sin against God. The staff had watched their king grieve and fast for a week. He was so broken. How would he respond if they told him his son had just died? Would he be angry, lash out at them, accuse them of not doing enough?

They met secretly to discuss how to tell the king the sad news. David looked over to see them whispering, and he knew. He quietly spoke up, “Is my son dead?” They slowly nodded. “Yes, sir, he is.” David nodded as well. He stood up off the cold ground, washed, changed his clothes, and then went into the Tabernacle of the LORD and worshiped God. He knew he did not deserve mercy after committing adultery, cover up, and murder. God could have rightly stripped him of his crown, even his life, but God judged him by taking his son.

But that was not the end of the story. After his sincere repentance, David and his wife Bathsheba discovered she was expecting again. When their baby was born, they named him Solomon, meaning “peace.” After all of David’s sins and missteps, his repentance brought

him back to a beautiful place of peace with God again. And this son with Bathsheba grew to be wise and to succeed his dad, King David, as the king of the nation of Israel and builder of the famed Temple where God gloriously met with His people.

Even giants like David fall, but giants also get back up again. Repentance from sin has that amazing power. Our repentance coupled with God's mercy gives God a grace-filled opportunity to write "the rest of the story."

Prayer Focus

Lead the group in prayer and consider the following topics of focus:

- For God to restore to us the joy of our salvation
- For God to cleanse our conscience from the guilt of past sin and empower us to accomplish His will