

News Story Summary

In recent months, several airlines have issued apologies for consumer related incidents. Delta apologized for removing a family from a flight. American apologized for almost hitting a baby when a stroller was removed. United issued several apologies for incidents that included placing a passenger on the wrong flight, causing an infant to pass out when a plane sat on a hot tarmac for an extended time, and the forced removal of a passenger from a plane. When asked about the value of these types of apologies, aviation lawyer Justin T. Green said, “An apology will go a long way to avoid a lawsuit and is a very effective and economical way to improve customer relations.”

(For more on this story, search the Internet using the phrase “airlines say I’m sorry.”)

Focus Attention

To supplement the Focus Attention idea, share the news story. Ask: *Do you agree or disagree with the value of the apologies? How important is it to receive an apology when wronged?* Emphasize the value of an apology to both the one who was offended, the persons who witnessed the offense, and those who are aware of the offense.

In Psalm 51, David recognized his offense and pleaded with God for mercy. During the session, ask group members to take note of what David asked God to do in his prayer for forgiveness.

Summarize and Challenge

To supplement the Summarize and Challenge ideas, remind the group of the news article. Ask: *How important is the motive behind an apology? What difference does an apology along with a confession make?* Emphasize that David wanted his humble prayer for forgiveness to result in freedom from guilt, cleansing, and restoration with God.

To challenge group members, explain that when we sin, we are nearer to cleansing and restoration than we may think. David’s simple heartfelt prayer of confession freed him from guilt, cleansed him, and restored his relationship with God. We all need to voice this type of prayer when we fall short of His standards in our lives, knowing that our loving God will extend compassion and mercy when we approach Him with confession.