



THE STORY *continues...*

*Join us each week as God weaves His Story into the fabric
of our daily lives.*

Chapter 12 The Trials of a King

Listen to *The Story*

Read **Chapter 12** of *The Story* this week.

Our patterns of sin are what separate us from God. It is hard for the spirit of God to live within you when you are consumed with sin. We cannot forget the importance of confession and absolution and the cleansing power that God provides. We need times of solitude with God so that He can restore our soul. God not only forgives us, He also cleanses us so that our hearts can be consumed with a deep love for Him, just as David's was.

During the Confession and Forgiveness in worship, we begin, "Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and one another."

Reflect on the importance and impact of this act?

Learn *The Story*

*Look for ways in which God's story and your story
connect this week.*

Make a habit of blessing your family each night this week. Bless them with the Aaronic Blessing [*Numbers 6:24-27*] throughout the season of Advent. Start by giving each of them, "God's Promise" and then this blessing:

²⁴ "The Lord bless you
and keep you;
²⁵ the Lord make his face shine upon you
and be gracious to you;
²⁶ the Lord turn his face toward you
and give you peace." ²⁷ "So they will put my name on the
Israelites, and I will bless them."

Love *The Story*

Intentionally take a step forward in faith.

Pray the [51st Psalm](#), three times daily, for a week straight. Speak this prayer out loud when you wake up, at each meal, and finally when you go to bed.

Ponder the words and let them guide you through the day.

Luther's Explanation

Confessing your sins doesn't tell God anything new. In the words of Frederick Buechner, "Until you confess them, however, they are the abyss between you [and God]. When you confess them, they become the bridge." (Buechner, *Wishful Thinking*, p. 15) Prayers for repentance are important to Lutherans. In the Book of Psalms (you can view the Psalms on page 339 in your hymnal!), Psalm 51 is the sharpest and most complete expression of repentance. The psalm's title refers to David's prayer after the meeting with the prophet, Nathan, following David's adulterous relationship with Bathsheba.

Martin Luther summarized the power of this penitential psalm: "Psalm 51 is one of the foremost of the psalms of instruction. In it David truly teaches us what sin is, where it comes from, what damage it does – and how one may be freed from it. In this psalm, as nowhere else, it is clearly shown that sin is an inheritance, born in us, and that no works can help us against it, only God's grace and forgiveness. Through His Spirit, He creates us new again, as a new person, a new creation. Otherwise, says David, sin with its terror and despair is so mighty that it even crushes the bones, until God's grace comes to our comfort.

Afterward, when by grace and the Spirit we have again become new, then we not only learn how to praise, but actually thank and praise God – yes, even suffer and bear the cross. All of this David calls the true sacrifice and worship. He rejects all other sacrifices that the raving saints bring. He prays at the end that God might build and preserve the city of Jerusalem to such sacrifices and worship."



PROMISE

This week, cling to God's promise for you:

"My heart overflows with love for you. My heart overflows with grace."

The EXTRA Mile



Keep a record of the times this week that God's love "overflows" for you in real ways. Warning! You might come to the end of the week and realize that it was a tough week filled with frustration. That's OK. Record those moments, no matter how simple in which God showed that he is still watching out for you.