

Lesson 4: King David: David Makes a Great Mistake*

Scripture Reference: II Samuel 10–12

Today's Big Idea: David's life teaches us to make right the wrong things we have done.

* Today's Bible story contains some sensitive content. You may want to read through the story first and think through how you want to present the content to your kids.

Lesson Time:

Introduction: When you do something that is wrong and hurtful to others how do you feel on the inside? Why do you think you feel that way? What are some of the things we do to try to work out those feelings? When someone has hurt you what do you hope that they will do?

Share: We've been following the life of David. David was one of the greatest kings in all of Israel's history. David trusted God in many incredible ways. But David was not perfect. He made mistakes just like we make mistakes. In today's story, we'll hear about one of the greatest mistakes of David's life. Because of David's decisions, families were destroyed, and people died. Our mistakes can have very big consequences. From David's story, we learn that one of the most important things to do when we've made a mistake is to be honest and with God's help to work to make things right.

Activity: Tangled Up

You will need: A long piece of twine (10 feet or so) per kid, scissors.

Instructions: As you work your way through the Bible story there will be points along the way where you will pause and wrap your child(ren) with their piece of twine. By the time the story is complete they will be completely tangled up in twine. This is a visual representation of how our bad choices often lead to further bad decisions and we find ourselves tangled in them.

Read: Today's story takes place at a time when the armies of Israel are off fighting in a war against the Ammonites. David, however, has chosen to stay behind rather than lead his troops into battle. Does that sound strange based on what you know about David? Read **II Samuel 10:1–5**.

Tangled Up: Take the piece of twine and tie it around the wrist of your child(ren). Wrap it around their torso and arms one time and then continue with the Bible lesson.

Share: David became obsessed with this woman Bathsheba, because of her beauty. He forgot what it meant to be faithful to God in his relationships with other people. Because of his power as king, David was able to manipulate the situation and have Bathsheba brought to him. Even though she was the wife of another man, a man who was off fighting in a war for David, David thought he had the right to take her for himself.

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Ask: When we think only of ourselves, and what we want, we may do things that are hurtful to others. Imagine a group of kids at a birthday party. The kid whose birthday it is opens an awesome present that everyone else wishes they had. When he sets the gift down to open another, one of his guests sneaks that gift away and begins playing with it. What might the outcome of this situation be? What problems do you think David's bad decision may create?

Read: After David discovers that Bathsheba is pregnant with his child, he tries to cover up his mistake. Let's hear what happens next. **Read II Samuel 11:6–13.**

Tangled Up: Continue to wrap your child(ren)'s twine around them one or two more times. Now they should be starting to look pretty well tied up.

Share: David tried to trick Uriah into thinking he was the one who made Bathsheba pregnant. Has there ever been a time when you did something wrong and you tried to cover your tracks so that you wouldn't be found out? What happened in the end? Did you feel better as you were trying to cover you mistake or did you feel worse? What did Uriah do that surprised David? Based on his actions would you describe Uriah as an honorable or a dishonorable man?

Read: When David's first plan fails, he continues to make the situation worse. He sends Uriah back to the war and manipulates the situation so that Uriah will die. **Read II Samuel 11:14–25.**

Tangled Up: Continue to wrap your child(ren)'s twine around them one or two more times. Now they should be really well tied up and have trouble moving.

Ask: How does it feel to be all tied up? Do you feel free or do you feel trapped? What do you think David might have been thinking or feeling at this point? How do you think God was feeling about David's actions? Sometimes it may feel like the right thing to try and cover up the wrong things we've done. But the truth is that it doesn't work out that way. The further we go, the more trapped we become. Even if we don't get caught there is something that happens in our relationships with those who have been hurt or lied to.

Ask: What do you think David should do to get out of this trap he has created for himself?

Share: After all of these things take place, God sends the prophet Nathan to confront David. Let's hear what God says to David. Pay close attention to how David responds.

Read: II Samuel 12:7–15.

Ask: How would you describe David's response after God confronts him through Nathan?

Tangled Up: Take out the scissors and cut away the twine that is tangling you child(ren).

Share: As David began to face the truth of his wrongdoing the chains that he was trapped in began to fall away. Honesty is the only real way to move out of a cycle of lies and cover-ups. Psalm 51 is believed to be a Psalm written by David in response to this confrontation with God.

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Pull out the printed copy of Psalm 51:1–12. As you read these verses instruct your child(ren) to circle any words or phrases that express David's newfound honesty about his wrongdoing. How many times in these first twelve verses of Psalm 51 does David make a statement of repentance, need for God's help, or acknowledgment of his wrongdoing? What does this observation say to you about David's heart at this point? What do David's words teach us about God?

Activity: Getting Right with God

Instructions: *The point of this simple game is to illustrate how we need God's help to be made right when we have done wrong. Have your child(ren) sit with their legs crossed on the floor. Explain to them that they need to stand up from their seated position without using anything. They cannot press their hand against their knees for leverage and they cannot hold onto any objects to pull themselves up with. When their efforts fail, which they should, then sit behind them so that your backs are pressed against one another. Now working together, slowly stand up together. You may find it helpful to lock arms as well.*

Debrief: When we try to cover up our mistakes, like David did, it's a lot like trying to stand up on our own. It just does not work out well for us. We need God's help to be made right. Until we come to Him and ask for His help our sin still clings to us. I John 1:8–9 says it this way, *"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* We need God's help to be made right when we've done wrong. The very good news is that God is ready and willing to help us when we call out to Him!

Close in Prayer