

# FEARLESS CONVERSATION™

HOW CAN WE BE  
FULLY FAITHFUL  
WHEN WE'RE FULLY FLAWED?

DISCUSSIONS FROM 1-2 SAMUEL,  
1 CHRONICLES, PSALMS

PARTICIPANT GUIDE

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**LESSON 7: IF GOD  
FORGIVES ME, THEN  
WHY DO I STILL GET  
PUNISHED FOR MY  
SINS?**

**GREETING**

**When was a time that you, as a child or as a teenager, did something wrong and had to face the consequences?**

**Why do you think we do wrong things, when we know we might get caught and have to face the consequences?**

## BEHIND THE SCENES

As a prophet, Nathan was required to confront sin, even the sin of a king. It took great courage and discernment to approach David with his wrongdoings. When Nathan confronted David about the death of Uriah, he did it in the form of a story. He wanted to “ease” David into the realization of what he had done. But hot-headed David flew into a rage and said that any man in his kingdom who would do such a thing was worthy of death and would be executed. Nathan then pointed his finger at David and said, “Thou art the man!”

And the shoe, as they say, was suddenly on the other foot. At that point David understood that God knew what he had done and the consequences were coming.

## G R O U N D I N G

### God’s Word: Psalm 51

<sup>1</sup> Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your unfailing love;  
according to your great compassion  
blot out my transgressions.

<sup>2</sup> Wash away all my iniquity  
and cleanse me from my sin.

<sup>3</sup> For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is always before me.

<sup>4</sup> Against you, you only, have I sinned  
and done what is evil in your sight;  
so you are right in your verdict  
and justified when you judge.

- 5 Surely I was sinful at birth,  
sinful from the time my mother conceived me.
- 6 Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb;  
you taught me wisdom in that secret place.
- 7 Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;  
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
- 8 Let me hear joy and gladness;  
let the bones you have crushed rejoice.
- 9 Hide your face from my sins  
and blot out all my iniquity.
- 10 Create in me a pure heart, O God,  
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.
- 11 Do not cast me from your presence  
or take your Holy Spirit from me.
- 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation  
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.
- 13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways,  
so that sinners will turn back to you.
- 14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God,  
you who are God my Savior,  
and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.
- 15 Open my lips, Lord,  
and my mouth will declare your praise.
- 16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it;  
you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.
- 17 My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit;  
a broken and contrite heart  
you, God, will not despise.
- 18 May it please you to prosper Zion,  
to build up the walls of Jerusalem.
- 19 Then you will delight in the sacrifices of the righteous,  
in burnt offerings offered whole;  
then bulls will be offered on your altar.

**What are the first questions that come to mind? What sort of jumps out at you and catches your attention?**

Capture those thoughts here.

# GRAPPLING

## GOING DEEPER

You can help your group go deeper by how you handle disagreements. If you have a difference of opinion with someone, saying, “I’m not sure I agree. Can you help me understand?” goes a long way to show you respect their opinion, even if you don’t share it.

## BEHIND THE SCENES

In Psalm 51 the Greek word *metanoia* is used to indicate true repentance: a change of mind and purpose and life. In this sense, David is conscious of his guilt and helplessness to do anything about his past sins on his own. He is at the mercy of God.

David realizes that true repentance consists of 1) a true sense of one’s own guilt and sinfulness; 2) a desire for God’s mercy; and 3) a heartfelt desire to live a holy life.

**From this account in Psalm 51, what can we learn about God's desire to forgive?**

**Why does David say he has only sinned against God?**

INTERESTING THOUGHTS SPARKED  
BY OTHERS IN MY GROUP:

## BEHIND THE SCENES

Even though David faced his sins following Nathan's confrontation and asked God to forgive him, things didn't end there. David could see his faults and readily admitted them. And while David was forgiven, his house would continue to display the sins he had sought to cover. ▶

David's life and family were never the same as a result of what he had done. Murder was a constant threat in his family, his household rebelled against him, his wives were given to someone else, and his first child by Bathsheba died.

**Do you think David was bargaining with God? Explain your answer, and tell if you think this is a good idea or not.**

# GROWING

## BEHIND THE SCENES

Because we are born sinful (Psalm 51:5), our natural tendency is to please ourselves rather than God. David followed that pattern when he decided to take another man's wife. David also discovered what he needed to do to make his heart right with God. Right behaviors come out of a right heart.

David prayed for cleansing from his sin. Hyssop was a plant used by the priest in Old Testament ceremonial laws to symbolize the cleansing of sin. In his prayer David cried, "Restore to me the joy of your salvation." He understood that unconfessed sin makes intimacy with God impossible. The message of this psalm is evidence that David's prayer was answered.



**My personal psalm for forgiveness and restoration:**

A sheet of white lined paper with a vertical margin line on the left side. There are six circular binder holes along the left edge. The paper is ruled with horizontal lines. A large, light gray watermark with the word "SAMPLE" is oriented diagonally across the page from the bottom-left to the top-right.