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The Story of Ruth

Scripture: Ruth 1:1-4:22

Theme: God works through ordinary faithfulness to accomplish His plan

1st-3rd Grade (Ages 6-8)

Free curriculum for small and rural churches

Lesson Overview

Lesson Overview: David's Big Mistake and God's Big Love Introduction (Grab Attention): "Have you ever done something really wrong that made you feel really bad? David did, he made a big mistake, and even though he felt guilty, God still forgave him!" Story of David & Bathsheba (Key Lesson): David saw a beautiful woman bathing (Psalm 51:3) and asked her husband's permission to take her. But God's heart was against it. Later, when David found out she was pregnant, he sent her husband to the front lines to die. Then, David had Bathsheba's baby, but God sent the baby's death as a message. David realized he sinned against God and others. Repentance & God's Grace (Application): David wrote Psalm 51, confessing his sins: "I know I've done wrong, but you are merciful and full of love." Even though he was guilty, God forgave him. How can we apply this? When we mess up, we can admit it, ask for forgiveness, and trust God's grace, just like David did! Closing Challenge (Encouragement): "God doesn't stop loving us because we make mistakes! Even when we sin, His grace is stronger, let's trust Him today!" Short Activity Suggestion: - Have kids draw their "sin" and "God's forgiveness" (e.g., a big X for wrongdoing, a heart for love). - End with a prayer: "Lord, help us to trust Your love when we fail!"

Bible Story

David and Bathsheba: A Lesson About Choosing Right

Long ago, the king of Israel was named David. He was a brave warrior and loved by God, but one day, his heart wandered. While David was sitting on his palace roof one hot summer day, he saw a beautiful woman bathing on her roof. Her name was Bathsheba, and she was married to a man named Uriah. David knew she was married, but he was tempted to do what he shouldn't. The Bible says he wanted Bathsheba for himself. He sent a message to get her, and soon she came to the palace. Though David loved Bathsheba, she was already married to someone else, and that was wrong.

One day, David sent Uriah home from the army so he could be with his wife, but Uriah refused to go home because he loved his job protecting his country. The Bible says, "David's heart hardened" (2 Samuel 11:26). He knew what was right, but he kept making bad choices. He sent Uriah to battle where he was sure to be killed. Meanwhile, Bathsheba gave birth to a baby boy, and David named him Solomon. But all this time, David was hiding his sin.

Soon, God sent the prophet Nathan to talk to David. Nathan told a story about a poor man who stole from a rich man, and David was furious. The prophet said, "You are the man!" David knew Nathan was talking about him. He wept and said, "I have sinned against the Lord." He begged God to forgive him. God heard his heart and showed him mercy. David wrote a prayer, called Psalm 51, asking for forgiveness and saying, "Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow." David knew that asking God for help was the only way to be forgiven.

David's story shows us that no matter how far we go from God, we can always turn back. Sin hurts us and makes us feel bad, but God loves us so much that He forgives us when we ask. David's heart was broken, but he trusted God, and God made him whole again. This story reminds us that no matter what we've done wrong, God wants us to come to Him with our mistakes and ask for His help. Just like David, we can ask God to cleanse us and make us new.

This story matters because it teaches us that God's grace is always available. Even when we make choices that hurt us or others, God forgives us if we ask honestly. David's story is a reminder to always listen to God's heart and choose right, even when it's hard. We can ask God to help us when we're tempted, just like David did!

Key Verse

Ruth 1:16

This Bible verse is a special prayer from King David, who felt sorry for his bad choices and wanted to change. His words remind us that God wants us to feel close to Him and be kind and honest all the time. When we ask God to help us, He listens and gives us new strength to do what's right. Imagine you're playing a game with friends, and you accidentally hurt someone's feelings. You might say, "I'm sorry, and I want to be better." David prayed like that to God, asking for a fresh start. Just like a gardener trims a plant to help it grow healthier, God helps us when we ask Him to clean our hearts and make us brave and loving. Being kind and honest feels easier when we ask God to help us. Maybe you've felt upset or angry before, but God wants you to feel calm and sure of Him. When you pray this verse, close your eyes, and imagine God holding your heart gently. Ask Him to help you forgive others, speak nicely, and trust Him more. Here's how you can try it today: 1. When you feel nervous or sad, take three deep breaths and pray, "God, help me be kind and honest." 2. Draw a picture of God holding your heart and write down one way you want to change. 3. Share a kind word with someone today, maybe a hug or a smile! Remember, God doesn't give up on us. If we ask Him to help, He'll always answer!

Activities

Activity 1:

Students create a paper-doll character to role-play David's sin and how he later repented, then design a new choice for themselves.

1. Introduce David's Mistake (5 min): Read 2 Samuel 11 (the first part) in simple language. Ask: "What did David do that was wrong?" (Hint: He looked at Bathsheba instead of worshipping God.)
2. Make the Paper Doll (7 min): Cut out two identical human body shapes from red/blue paper. Let students decorate their character with features (eyes, hair, clothing) using crayons. Label their

Activity 2:

Kids create "rock" stones with Bible verses about repentance and grace, then use them to tell the David story in teams.

Supplies needed:

- Uses basic craft items (no special tools).

1. Paint or Draw Bible Words (5 min): In small groups of 3, 4, students:
2. Write one word from Psalm 51 (e.g., "sin," "repent," "forgive," "clean") on one rock.
3. Write one word about God's grace (e.g., "love," "forgive," "new heart") on another rock.
4. (Teacher may pre-write words for younger kids.)
5. Create Story Stones (3 min): Glue the rocks onto cardboard to make a "stone set." Add a third rock to represent David's action (e.g., praying, writing a letter to God).
6. Play the Game (7 min):
7. Teams take turns spinning a spinner (teacher-made) with prompts like:
8. "Show how David saw Bathsheba wrongly." (Point to the "sin" rock.)
9. "Show how God forgave David." (Point to the "forgive" rock.)
10. After each round, discuss: "How does God's grace help us when we make mistakes?"
11. Application Tip: End by praying together: "Thank you, God, for forgiving David, and for forgiving us when we sin!"
12. Why These Work:
13. Creative & Kinesthetic: Paper dolls and rock games engage multiple senses.

Discussion Questions

- Here are four open-ended discussion questions for early elementary children (ages 6, 8) based on the lesson of David and Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11, 12, Psalm 51). These questions encourage thoughtful reflection, connection to personal experiences, and discussion of sin, repentance, and God's grace:
- What is one thing David did that he later regretted?
- Explain: David's story shows how easy it is to make mistakes, even when we know God's rules. What are some ways people might act in a wrong way, like being mean to someone, lying, or not listening to a grown-up? How could David have handled his feelings differently? How can we learn from his story to keep our hearts pure?
- God says in Psalm 51: 'I know my sins, and I hate them.' What does that mean?
- Explain: This verse tells us that even when we mess up, we can admit it and want to change. How have you ever done something you later felt bad about? What helped you feel better, like confessing to someone or asking for forgiveness? How can we show God (and others) that we care when we do wrong?
- After David sinned, he asked God to forgive him. How can we show God we're sorry like that?
- Explain: David didn't stay angry or hide his sin, he turned to God and asked for help. How can we ask God for forgiveness? Could you write down what you did wrong and say, 'God, I'm sorry, please help me'? What might happen if we do that? How can we also forgive others who hurt us?
- God's grace means He doesn't give up on us even when we fail. What does that mean for you?
- Explain: Grace is like a gift, God loves us so much that He forgives us no matter what. David's story shows that even though he sinned, God showed up for him. How has God shown grace to you? Have you ever done something hard (like being lonely or feeling afraid) and God helped you? How can we thank Him every day for His love?
- Follow-up Tip: After discussing, ask volunteers to share a personal example of when they felt bad about something but learned to ask for help. This helps kids see the story's lessons in their own lives!

Prayer Focus

Prayer Focus for Early Elementary Students: David and Bathsheba (Teacher opens with a quiet, kind invitation:)
"Friends, let's pray together about a very important lesson in the Bible, a lesson about making mistakes, feeling

sorry, and asking for help from God. We'll pray about David, who made a wrong choice, but learned how to ask God for forgiveness. Will you listen and pray with me?" *First Prayer: Asking God for Wisdom* "Dear God, You are the best Friend who always knows what's right. Help David, and all of us, to think carefully before we act, just like you taught him in your Bible story. Show us how to choose kindness and fairness, even when it's hard. Teach us to listen to Your voice, so we don't make the same mistakes David did. Thank You for listening! Amen." (Application: Have students hold hands and whisper, "What's one kind thing we can do today?" as a reminder.) *Second Prayer: Feeling Sorry for Mistakes* "Lord, David was sad when he saw Bathsheba and made a wrong choice. He knew it was wrong, but he also felt scared or tempted. Help us when we make mistakes, to stop, think, and say, 'I'm sorry.' Show us how to ask for forgiveness like David did. Help us not to hide our feelings from You or others. When we mess up, remind us: You always forgive us if we ask! Amen." (Activity: Draw a line from "Mistake" to "Say Sorry" on a board, repeat this connection.) *Third Prayer: Thanking God for Grace* "Thank You, God, for being a kind Father who forgives even when we don't deserve it! David cried and asked You for help, and You gave him grace. Help us to trust You like David did, even when we feel guilty. When we ask for forgiveness, remind us: Your love never ends, and You will always help us grow. Amen." (Closing: Hold up a heart shape made of paper. Say, "This heart shows how God forgives us, like a brand-new, loving heart!") *Teacher's Note: End with a simple retelling of David's repentance (from 2 Sam. 11:1-17 22:1-5) to tie the prayer to the story. Encourage kids to share: "What's one thing I can do today to trust God more?"*

>> Missions Spotlight

In many cultures around the world, shame is a powerful force. Missionaries working in Japan, where shame runs deep, share David's story to show that God's grace is greater than our deepest shame. The Gospel offers forgiveness, not just behavior change.

-> To the Cross

David sinned terribly, adultery and murder. Yet when he truly repented, God forgave him. This points to the amazing truth: no sin is too great for the cross. Jesus died for ALL our sins, even the ones we're most ashamed of.