

LESSON FOUR: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHRISTIAN SINS

SESSION TWO

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small-group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

Using Psalm 51 as our key Scripture, this is the second of three sessions exploring what happens when a Christian sins. In the previous session, Pastor Rogers introduced four specific consequences believers face when they sin. In this session, he will continue to develop that theme and will present three more consequences of sin in the life of Christians.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

At the beginning of the session, read the **Introduction** to your group, then open discussion by asking the **Reflection Questions** before viewing the video segment. After viewing the video together, you may want to ask for comments before next leading your group through the **Amplification and Discussion** section. Feel free to add your own commentary if needed, but be cognizant of time and do not personally dominate the session. As you read through the **Amplification** section, engage your group by using the provided **Discussion Questions** to stimulate additional dialogue.

As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to being presented as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

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INTRODUCTION

King David was “a man after God’s own heart,” yet he suffered through a terrible moral failure, the pain of which he detailed in Psalm 51. Though few of us may ever fall to the depths of depravity that David did, sin is still sin, and it always brings with it spiritual consequences for the believer. The good news is that our salvation is secure in Christ as we previously studied; the bad news is the consequences sin brings. In our previous session, we learned how sin in the life of a Christian dirties the soul, dominates the mind, disgraces the Lord, and depresses the heart. That would certainly seem to be enough to persuade us all to avoid sin, but there are still more consequences that Christians will face when they sin. In this session, Pastor Rogers continues to explore three more damaging effects of sin in the life of a Christian.

OUR KEY PASSAGES

Psalm 51:8 “Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which You have broken may rejoice.”

Psalm 51:10 “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”

Psalm 51:14-15 “Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What do you think are some of the inner issues or stresses that we, as Christians, may suffer from as a consequence of having sinned?
- Do you believe there any sins that could ever separate us from God's love and cause Him to abandon us, even though we might have to endure His chastisement?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “What Happens When a Christian Sins”

AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION

Folks who are out of fellowship with God are quick to find fault with other people. If you want to, you can always find fault because all of us are just a society of sinners who finally realized it and banded ourselves together to do something about it. —

Adrian Rogers

Amplification: As Christians, we are not exempt from sin. The difference between a saved person and one who is lost is not an absence of sin, but a desire not to sin. We need to recognize that it is not just big sins that can be devastating in the life of a Christian. Small sins are just as debilitating when it comes to enjoying an unhindered relationship with our Holy God. Consider the flow of a mighty river. Sometimes a major natural disaster, a rockslide, volcanic upheaval, (etc.) can block the river's flow. But most often, it is the slow accumulation of tiny deposits of silt that, in time, blocks its flow. So it is with the accumulation of tiny sins in our life that work gradually to obstruct our relationship with God.

For Discussion: What can we do to avoid the accumulation of “little” sins?

Amplification: Fortunately, God brings pressure to bear on our lives to bring us back to Him when we sin. As the Bible tells us, “For whom the LORD loves He corrects [chastens], just as a father the son in whom he delights. (Proverbs 3:12).” We need to remember, He is never the one who leaves us, but we too often are the ones who stray from Him. As Pastor Rogers has shown from Scripture, sin in the life of the Christian brings painful spiritual consequences. It dirties the soul, dominates the mind, disgraces the Lord, depresses the heart, diseases the body, defiles the spirit, and destroys one’s testimony.

For Discussion: How do you think harboring sin in one’s life can hinder their personal evangelism?

Amplification: The story is told of a young girl who stole something of minor value from a home where she had been a housekeeper. Later, when as an older woman she became a Christian, she carried the burden of that theft for years. As she would pray, the memory of that transgression was constantly before her and became a heavy weight upon her soul. She was advised to make restitution, but she made many excuses; “The person is dead,” “My reputation would be ruined,” and so on. She considered placing the value of what she had stolen into the church offering, but realized God neither needs nor wants “stolen” money. The only thing to do was to make restitution, so she sought out a surviving son of the family she had stolen from to give him the value of what she had stolen. Though he was reluctant to receive her restitution and was graciously forgiving, she insisted he take the money. She returned with a joy and peace in her life, and she became a magnificent soul winner who led many into the light of Christ.

For Discussion: How do you think making restitution for a sin made against another works in the life of a believer? Do you have a story to share with the group as a means of encouragement to others who may be struggling in this area?

Amplification: Sin builds up an uncrossable barrier between us and God. A man may be highly respected in the community, and may be a member of a local church “in good standing,” but the real question is, “How does he stand in the sight of God?”

For Discussion: How can we effectively maintain a righteous life before God, and not just in the eyes of other men?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week during your personal devotions, ask the Lord to reveal anything that may be hidden in your heart that you need to confess, repent, or make right. If there is anything wrong in your life, make it right.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Lord, You are holy! Help us O’ God, to be more like you through obedience to Your Holy Spirit, and to Your Word.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

These two chapters detail how sin was able to creep into the life of David, “A man after God’s own heart,” and how God intervened to bring divine chastisement. As you read through these chapters, take note of the issues that caused David to stumble, and commit to keep the same issues from infecting your life (laziness, wandering eyes, lust, covetousness, greed, evil schemes, murder, deceit, etc.)

2 Samuel 11, 12

After Nathan confronted David with what he had done, note the depth of contriteness, confession, and repentance that David experienced.

Psalm 51

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- John Bunyan, “The Pilgrim’s Progress,” (CreateSpace, 2016)
- Martin Luther, “Table Talk [see “Of Sins”],” (Dover Publications, 2005)
- R. A. Torrey, ed., “The Fundamentals; A Testimony of Truth,” (Bible Institute, 1917)

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VIDEO PRESENTATION NOTES

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