

Monday  
**2 Samuel 12:1-24**

Once while David was king of Israel, he did something that was terribly wrong. David took another man's wife and had the man killed in battle. He thought no one knew about it. But God knew, and God wanted David to confess his sin, be sorry, and repent of what he had done. So God sent his prophet, Nathan, to confront King David about his sin.

Nathan told King David a story to help David see how terribly he had sinned. Nathan told him about someone who had done something really bad. He told him that someone had taken a lamb from a man who only had one lamb, and that the owner of that lamb loved the lamb very much. After David heard the story, he was very angry and said: "The man who has done this deserves to die."

Then Nathan rebuked David and told him, "You are the man!" Nathan reminded King David of all God had done for him – how God had made David king over all the people of Israel; how God had delivered David from all his enemies; how God had given David everything he had.

"Why," Nathan asked, "have you despised the Word of the Lord, to do what is evil in his sight?" Nathan told David that God would punish him for the wrong he had done.

Right away, King David knew that what he had done was terribly wrong. "I have sinned against the Lord," David confessed.

Nathan told David, "The Lord has taken away your sin, and you will not die."

Nathan went back to his own house. Later God did punish King David, but David remembered God's forgiveness for him. Even when God punished David, David went to God's house to worship God.

We win each day. We do and say things that break God's commandments, and we deserve God's punishment. But God sent Jesus to die on the cross to take away our sin and our punishment. God wants us to come to him in prayer and worship and say, "I'm sorry. I have sinned against you. Please forgive me." God will always love and care for us. God promises always to forgive us for Jesus' sake.

- **What did David do when he was confronted about his sin?**
- **What should we do when we sin?**
- **What has God promised he will do when we confess our sins?**

Close with a prayer for forgiveness

Tuesday  
**1 Kings 3:1–15**

When King David died, his son Solomon became the king of God's people. King Solomon loved God and worshipped him. One night while King Solomon was sleeping, God came to him in a dream. Solomon could ask for whatever he wanted, and God would give it to him.

Solomon thanked God for his faithfulness to his father, David. And Solomon thanked God for making him king. But Solomon told God that he did not know how to be king – that he was young and there was so much he did not know! The Israelites were God's people, so they must have a wise and godly king. Then Solomon asked God for the one thing he most wanted – that God would give Solomon a “wise and understanding mind to govern your people,” so Solomon would be able to “discern between good and evil,” right and wrong.

God was pleased that Solomon had asked him for wisdom to know right from wrong in ruling God's people. God told Solomon that because he had not asked for riches or for long life or for victory over his enemies, God would give him what he asked for – and everything else as well! “I give you a wise and discerning mind,” God told Solomon, “so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days.” Then God reminded Solomon that he must obey God's commandments as his father David had done.

Solomon woke up and realized God had spoken to him. He went to the tabernacle to pray and to burn an offering in thanksgiving to God.

We need God's wisdom and help, too, because we are sinners and often do things that are wrong. But God has given us his wisdom in his Word, and he has given the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus forgives our sins through faith in him, and he changes our sinful hearts so that we want to obey God. God also gives his Holy Spirit to live in his people, helping us to understand and follow God's Word. Just as God gave wisdom to Solomon, God gives us wisdom too – through his Word, his Son, and his Holy Spirit.

- **When God asked Solomon what he wanted, what did Solomon ask for?**
- **Why was wisdom so important to Solomon?**
- **Can you name some specific areas of your life in which God's wisdom can guide you?**

Close with a prayer for wisdom.

Wednesday  
**Mark 14:26–72**

After eating the Passover meal, Jesus led his disciples out of the city limits of Jerusalem to a large garden on a hill called the Mount of Olives. Jesus knew he was about to be arrested. And he knew his disciples would be afraid and would run away. Jesus told them, "You will all leave me."

When Peter heard this, he said, "Even if everyone else leaves you, I will not."

Jesus knew this was not going to be the case. He told Peter that that very night, before a rooster crowed twice, Peter would deny him three times. Peter protested. He was confident that he would never be willing to deny that he knew Jesus. Peter said, "Even if I have to die with you, I am willing to do that. I will not deny you." The other disciples all agreed with Peter and felt that they'd never leave Jesus.

When Jesus and his disciples reached the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives, Jesus told most of his disciples to sit and wait for him. Jesus was troubled about what was going to happen soon, and he was sad. He knew he would soon suffer and die for the sins of all people. He asked Peter, James, and John to come with him a little further into the garden.

Then Jesus went off by himself a little farther. Jesus prayed to his heavenly Father and asked if it might be possible to take away the suffering that he would have to go through. But Jesus also said that, if that was not possible, he would do his Father's will.

When Jesus came back to the three disciples, he found them sleeping. Jesus asked Peter, "Could you not watch one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation."

Three times, Jesus came back from praying. And three times, Peter, James, and John were sleeping. The third time Jesus woke Peter and the others. He knew it was time for him to be handed over to his enemies. Soon Judas, another one of Jesus' disciples, came with a mob of men to arrest Jesus. Judas had agreed to betray Jesus for money. So Judas walked up to Jesus and kissed him on the cheek – a signal to show the guards which man to arrest.

Peter and the other disciples were so afraid that they all ran away and left Jesus with the mob of angry men. Secretly, Peter followed the crowd to the house of Caiaphas, the high priest. Inside, Caiaphas and other leaders put Jesus on mock trial.

Outside, Peter waited in the courtyard. As he was warming himself by the fire, a servant girl came up to Peter. She said she recognized him as one of the men who had been with Jesus. Peter said that was not true. When he walked away, a rooster crowed.

The servant girl saw him again and began to tell other people Peter was one of Jesus' followers. Again, Peter denied it. Soon more people questioned Peter. They said, "Certainly you are one of them."

Peter insisted, "I do not know the man." Just then, the rooster crowed a second time. Then Peter remembered how Jesus had told him that, before the rooster crowed twice, he would deny him three times. Peter began to cry. He was very sorry he had been so scared and so ashamed that he denied Jesus.

Jesus forgave Peter for denying him. We, like Peter, are sometimes afraid to let people know that we are followers of Jesus. Jesus tells us we should never be ashamed of him. But even when we fail, he will never fail. He will never stop loving us. And he will never stop forgiving us our many sins.

- What did Peter say he would never do?
- What are some of the ways that we deny Jesus?

Close with prayer.

Thursday  
**Exodus 1–4**

For many years, the people of Israel were held captive as slaves in Egypt. The king of Egypt put in place a plan to keep the people of Israel under control by making a law that all boy babies that were born were to be killed by being thrown into the Nile River.

But one woman who gave birth to a son refused to obey the wicked king. She made a tony boat of reeds and pitch. Then she placed her baby in the boat and set it afloat among the weeds in the waters of the Nile River. The baby's sister Miriam was to watch the baby as he floated stuck in the weeds.

When the Egyptian princess, the king's daughter, came down to wash in the river, she saw the boat with the baby inside. The princess felt sorry for the baby when he cried. She decided to raise the baby as her son. She named him Moses.

This adoption was part of God's plan so Moses would know the language and customs of the Egyptians. His Egyptian education and life in a palace would one day assist him in God's plan to rescue the Israelites. God had special plans for Moses and the future of the nation of Israel.

When Moses was a man, God called to him out of a bush that burned in flames but did not burn up. God told Moses he was the person God had chosen to lead his people to the Promised Land. God told Moses he would give him all he needed to lead God's people. God helped Moses to live out God's plan for his life. In a similar way, God will help each of us to live our lives for him.

• **What does it mean to you that God has adopted you into his family?**

Dear heavenly Father, thank you for adopting me into your family through Christ Jesus. Help me not to worry about things. Keep reminding me of your love for me, and help me trust in you. I ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Friday  
**Luke 5:1–11**

One day, Jesus was teaching a crowd of people by the lake of Gennesaret (another name for the Sea of Galilee). The people were so eager to hear Jesus' teaching that they pressed in on him at the waters' edge. In fact, they almost pushed him into the water! Then Jesus saw two boats that had been left there by the fishermen who were washing their nets. He got into the one belonging to Simon Peter and asked Peter to move the boat a little distance from shore. Then Jesus sat down in the boat and taught the people who were gathered at the edge of the water.

When Jesus finished teaching, he asked Simon Peter to move out into deeper water and to put down his nets for a catch. Peter, who had just returned from fishing, replied, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing." Then he added, "But at your word I will let down the nets."

Peter and his fishing partners rowed out from land and let down their nets. To their surprise, the nets filled up with fish. In fact, the nets were so full that they began to break. Quickly, Simon Peter and his fishing partner motioned to James and John, who were in a nearby boat, to come and help. Soon, both boats were so full of fish that they began to sink.

When Peter saw all of the fish, he fell down at Jesus' knees and begged him to go away. "I am a sinful man!" he cried. Peter was sorry that he had not believed Jesus at first. He knew of his sinful life and felt unworthy to be in Jesus' presence.

Then Jesus said to Peter, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be fishers of men." Jesus was referring to the people who would later believe in him through Peter's preaching.

So the fishermen pulled to shore their boats filled with fish. They left everything and followed Jesus. From that day on they were his disciples.

Soon Jesus had 12 disciples. These men went all over the land with Jesus. They listened to him and helped him as he taught people. They saw his miracles and the way he loved everyone. Later, after Jesus ascended into heaven, the Holy Spirit gave these men power to tell others that Jesus was the Savior of all that God had promised. They also wrote down what Jesus had done and taught, so that we can tell others about it to as we follow and serve Jesus as his disciples today.

- **Why did Peter think there was no use going out into deep water to let down the nets?**
- **After the fish had been caught, why did Peter want Jesus to go away?**
- **How are Jesus' disciples still fishers of men today?**

Close with prayer