

OLD TESTAMENT GOSPEL DOCTRINE CLASS

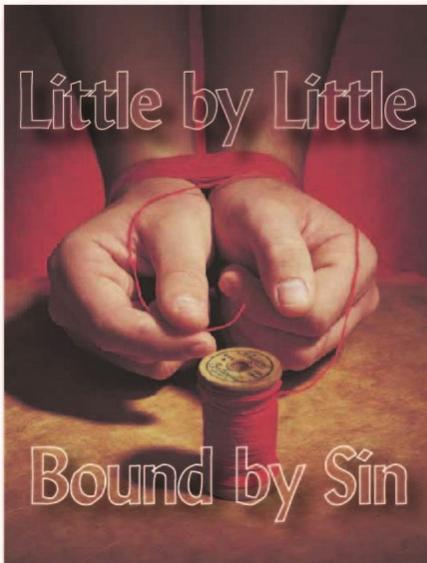
Green Mountain 1st Ward, Lakewood, Colorado

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Lesson #24: "Create in Me a Clean Heart" (2 Samuel 11–12; Psalm 51)

Introduction



Those "little sins"—unrepented—can put us in a bind. What should we do when an unclean thought enters our mind? Dismiss it immediately! When we allow unclean thoughts to stay in our minds we become "bound" by them.

Part of this lesson deals with the consequences of dwelling on unclean thoughts. The lesson also discusses ways to free ourselves from unclean thoughts.

David commits adultery with Bathsheba and arranges the death of Uriah, Bathsheba's husband. (2 Samuel 11)

Note: While not part of this lesson, 1 Samuel 25 through 2 Samuel 10 provide important information about the historical setting for this lesson. You may wish to include these chapters in your personal study.

Background: Soon after David spared Saul's life, Saul sought David's life one more time. Again David had the opportunity to kill the king, but he refused to do so. Battles continued between the people of Judah and the surrounding nations, and Saul and Jonathan were killed in one of those battles. David succeeded Saul as king and became one of the greatest kings in the history of Israel. He united the tribes into one nation, secured possession of the land that had been promised to his people, and set up a government based on

God's law. However, the last 20 years of his life were marred by the sinful decisions that are discussed in this lesson.

2 Samuel 11:2 - David was walking on his roof when he saw Bathsheba and was tempted to commit adultery with her. David should have looked away and gone inside when he saw Bathsheba.

2 Samuel 11:2-4 - David sent for Bathsheba to come to his house and that led him to sin with her.

2 Samuel 11:6-13 - When David learned that Bathsheba was with child, he tried to get Uriah, Bathsheba's husband, to return home to her. Then it would appear that the unborn child was Uriah's.

2 Samuel 11:11 - David's plan failed because Uriah would not return home then because he was loyal to his battlefield companions and felt that he should stay with them.

2 Samuel 11:14-17 - David committed a more serious sin in an attempt to hide his immorality.

Elder Richard G. Scott said: "Do not take comfort in the fact that your transgressions are not known by others. That is like an ostrich with his head buried in the sand. He sees only darkness and feels comfortably hidden. In reality he is ridiculously conspicuous. Likewise our every act is seen by our Father in Heaven and His Beloved Son. They know everything about us. ...If you have seriously transgressed,

Lesson Highlights

- David commits adultery with Bathsheba and arranges the death of Uriah, Bathsheba's husband.
- David is told that he will be punished because of his sins.
- A repentant David seeks forgiveness.

A study of this lesson will encourage us to be chaste in thought and action and to repent of our sins.

Next Week

#25 "Let Every Thing That Hath Breath Praise the Lord" (Psalms)

you will not find any lasting satisfaction or comfort in what you have done. Excusing transgression with a cover-up may appear to fix the problem, but it does not. The tempter is intent on making public your most embarrassing acts at the most harmful time. Lies weave a pattern that is ever more confining and becomes a trap that Satan will spring to your detriment” (Ensign, May 1995, 77).



David Sees Bathsheba

Dismissing unclean thoughts from our minds

Elder Boyd K. Packer: “The mind is like a stage. Except when we are asleep, the curtain is always up. There is always some act being performed on that stage. It may be a comedy, a tragedy, interesting or dull, good or bad; but always there is some act playing on the stage of the mind.

“Have you noticed that without any real intent on your part, in the middle of almost any performance, a shady little thought may creep in from the wings and attract your attention? These delinquent thoughts will try to upstage everybody. If you permit them to go on, all thoughts of any virtue will leave the stage. You will be left, because you consented to it, to the influence of unrighteous thoughts.

“If you yield to them, they will enact for you on the stage of your mind anything to the limits of your toleration. They may enact a theme of bitterness, jealousy, or hatred. It may be vulgar, immoral, even depraved. When they have the stage, if you let them, they will devise the most clever persuasions to hold your attention. They can make it interesting all right, even convince you that it is innocent—for they are but thoughts.

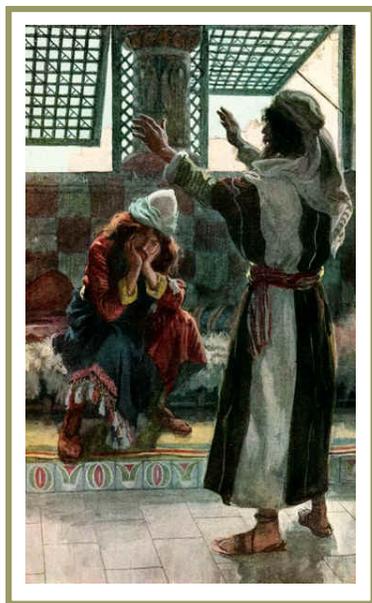
“What do you do at a time like that, when the stage of your mind is commandeered by the imps of unclean thinking, whether they be the gray ones that seem almost clean or the filthy ones which leave no room for doubt? If you can control your thoughts, you can overcome habits, even degrading personal habits. If you can learn to master them, you will have a happy life.

“This is what I would teach you. Choose from among the sacred music of the Church a favorite hymn, one with words that are uplifting and music that is reverent, one that makes you feel something akin to inspiration. Go over it in your mind carefully. Memorize it. Even though you [may] have had no musical training, you can think through a hymn.

“Now, use this hymn as the place for your thoughts to go. Make it your emergency channel. Whenever you find these shady actors have slipped from the sidelines of your thinking onto the stage of your mind, put on this record, as it were. As the music begins and as the words form in your thoughts, the unworthy ones will slip shamefully away. It will change the whole mood on the stage of your mind. Because it is uplifting and clean, the baser thoughts will disappear. For while virtue, by choice, will not associate with filth, evil cannot tolerate the presence of light.

“In due time you will find yourself, on occasion, humming the music inwardly. As you retrace your thoughts, you discover some influence from the world about you encouraged an unworthy thought to move on stage in your mind, and the music almost automatically began.

“Once you learn to clear the stage of your mind of unworthy thoughts, keep it busy with learning worthwhile things. Change your environment so that you have things about you that will inspire good and uplifting thoughts. Keep busy with things that are righteous” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1976, 99–100).



Nathan Reproaches David
James Tissot

David is told that he will be punished because of his sins. (2 Samuel 12:1–23)

2 Samuel 12:1-6 - The prophet Nathan told the parable of the ewe lamb to illustrate how displeased the Lord was with David. David was indignant about the rich man’s actions against the poor man in the parable and said that the rich man should make four-fold restitution and forfeit his life.

2 Samuel 12:7-9 - David’s actions been like the rich man’s. As Nathan said: “Thou art the man!”

2 Samuel 12:13 - David reacted to the Lord’s rebuke by acknowledging his sins. David failed to recognize that he was represented by the rich man in the parable. Sometimes we are unable or unwilling to recognize our own sinfulness.

2 Samuel 12:10-14 - As the consequences of David’s sins, the prophecies in 2 Samuel 12:15-23 and subsequent chapters of 2 Samuel and 1 Kings were fulfilled.

Adultery is a serious sin, but David forfeited his exaltation because the Lord held him accountable for the murder of Uriah.

President Marion G. Romney said: “David, ... though highly favored of the Lord (he was, in fact, referred to as a man after God’s own heart), yielded to temptation. His unchastity led to murder, and as a consequence, he lost his families and his exaltation” (Ensign, May 1979, 42).

There are immediate consequences of immorality today and there are some long-term effects for the unrepentant. The Lord's laws of chastity have not changed over the centuries.

A repentant David seeks forgiveness. (Psalm 51)

In a psalm to the Lord, David expressed a desire to help others repent, saying, "I [will] teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee" (Psalm 51:13). Even though David forfeited his exaltation because he arranged the death of Uriah, we can learn from his repentant attitude as he sought forgiveness for the sin of adultery. His words in Psalm 51 teach many aspects of true repentance.

Psalm 51:1-3 - David first acknowledged God and His mercy; then he acknowledged his own sinfulness.

Psalm 51:16-17 - We must sacrifice to receive forgiveness of our sins. Our sacrifice is "a broken and a contrite heart".

Psalm 51:3, 10 - Our sins are "ever before [us]" before being forgiven, but cleaned away when we repent.

Psalm 51:9; Isaiah 43:25; D&C 58:42 - God no longer remembers our sins after he has forgiven us.

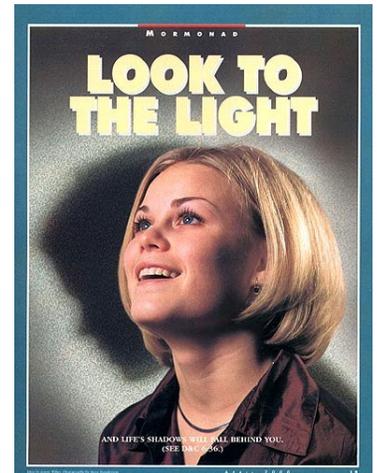
Psalm 51:1-2, 7, 9-10, 12 - David described forgiveness as a cleansing, a restoration, and a deliverance.

Conclusion

No matter how successful or strong we may be, we are not above temptation. We must make any necessary changes in our lives that will help us be chaste in thought and action. To help, we should remember our love for Jesus Christ and be grateful for his Atonement. Because of the Atonement, we can be forgiven of our sins.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

—Psalm 51:10



And Life's Shadows Will Fall Behind You. (see D&C 6:36.)

Gospel Doctrine Notebook

Record your thoughts on the teachings discussed in this lesson.

- How do people try to cover up sins today? What happens when we try to cover our sins?
- What are some of the immediate consequences of immorality today? What are some long-term effects for the unrepentant?
- Why is it important that we recognize God's greatness and our own sinfulness when we repent of our sins?