



# DIGGING DEEPER

THE PRAYER FOR SCREW UPS

JANUARY 7

When we fail, we are invited to run *to* God, not run *from* God.

Work through the following questions and scriptures on your own, and get together with your running partner, life group, or friends and family to talk through what you are learning.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Describe the role that prayer plays in your life and relationship with God right now? Are you content with it or looking to grow in it?
2. Do you plan to participate in Pray First? If not, what holds you back?
3. Read **Psalm 51**. This Psalm is a penitential prayer attributed to King David after he was confronted by the prophet Nathan regarding his sexual sin with another man's wife, Bathsheba.  
Make some observations about this passage (What does the text say?):
  - What do you notice and what are you curious about?Make some interpretations (What does the passage mean?)
  - What do you learn about humanity?
  - What do you learn about God? **What does David depend on God to do? What is God's character and what are His ultimate desires?**Now make some applications (what's my response?)
  - How are you encouraged, challenged, or convicted by this passage?
  - What should be our response to this passage?
4. Notice how David's confession begins with an appeal to God's gracious and merciful nature in the very first verse. His entire petition is based on His knowledge of God's love and grace.
  - What role does confession play in your prayer life? Do you think about God this way when you confess your sin? Why or why not?
5. Read **James 5:16**.
  - How have you experienced the kind of healing through confession to others that James talks about here?
  - How often do you confess your sins to a trusted community? If you don't, what keeps you from that?
  - How might you incorporate this practice more in your relationship with the Lord and others?
6. You can begin practicing this now within your own group. See the prayer guide below and be sure to spend a significant amount of your time together in confessional prayer.

## KEY SCRIPTURE

**Psalm 51** For the director of music. A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba. Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. 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. Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb; you taught me wisdom in that secret place. Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, so that sinners will turn back to you. Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, you who are God my Savior, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness. Open my lips, Lord, and my mouth will declare your praise. You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise. May it please you to prosper Zion, to build up the walls of Jerusalem. Then you will delight in the sacrifices of the righteous, in burnt offerings offered whole; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

**James 5:16** Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

## PRAYER

1. Begin by reading Psalm 51:6 and spend a few minutes in silence, asking God to shed light on any areas of sin in your heart that you need to repent of, remembering that God is waiting with grace and love, He delights in truth and will surely renew you with His good wisdom when you confess your sin. Ask for forgiveness and for the strength to turn from your sin toward God.
2. When you're ready, confess your sins to one another. After each person shares, have one person pray for them and speak forgiveness over them- "You are fully forgiven in Christ."

Corporate confession:

End by reading this traditional corporate confession aloud together:

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

## TAKE A NEXT STEP

Join us in Pray First by participating in 21 days of prayer (1/8-1/28). Go to the Gateway app for a daily prayer guide and videos from our staff. Commit to intentionally praying for and with others through these 21 days and let's see what God does!

# FOR THE PARENTS

Hey, families! Here's a look at what we're covering with your kids so you can help them continue to grow at home during the week.

## THIS WEEK

*All month long we will be talking about how God comes to our rescue! This week we will be learning about a baby in a basket who was rescued to be a great leader who will one day play a part in rescuing God's people!*

**THE BIBLE:** "Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,,and he saved them from their distress."  
(Psalm 103:7)

**THE MESSAGE:** God had a plan all along to save His people through Jesus. And that includes you! When there are times you feel alone or unsure about what God is doing, just call out to Him. He loves coming to our rescue and helping us in our time of need. **What lessons did you learn from today's story?**

**THE BIG IDEA:** When I am in trouble, God comes to my rescue!

## ASK THIS

*Because sometimes you and your kid need a conversation-starter that isn't,  
"So . . . how was church?"*

- ***Can you see how God showed up in baby Moses story?***
- ***Do you have a difficult time trusting God when bad things happen?***

## REMEMBER THIS

As people read the Bible hundreds and thousands of years ago, I bet they had a hard time believing that God was really going to rescue the world through His Son, Jesus. But that's what God does...He surprises us and shows up for us just when we think He doesn't care or doesn't see us. And just like baby Moses' story might seem unbelievable, it happened just like we read. And God loves to turn our unbelief into great faith in Him!

## NEXT WEEK

Next week we will be see how God spoke to Moses through a burning bush!