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# FAITH @ HOME

## WEEK OF JULY 19, 2020

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### Some ideas for continuing Psalm 51 through the week

*Parent note: Everyone who has parented a toddler knows that children are able to understand right and wrong from a young age. With this development, parents have the privilege of teaching them how to take their remorse to God (and the one they hurt) to experience the peace brought about by confession and forgiveness. This psalm is a great introduction for them, because they probably already know some things about David – the shepherd, the king, the boy who killed Goliath. You can temper the way you explain his big sin to match your kids' needs, but don't shy away from letting them see that we all sin and fall short of the glory of God – even David, **the man after God's own heart** – and we can all experience the restoration of that relationship. Use language that matches their development and give it a go!*

Try reading or listening to Psalm 51 in several translations this week.

Don't miss the chance to worship the One Who paid it all led by Rekindle:

<https://youtu.be/k-ICc3IASGg>

## Brokenness

- ? In English, we have one general word for understanding sin, but in Hebrew, there are three different words to represent different kinds of sin. What three words are used in Psalm 51? Read more about the differences and the common problem here: <https://reasonsforhopejesus.com/sin-iniquity-and-transgression/>
- ? Take some time to reflect and confess times you have missed the mark, pursued a sinful desire, or defiantly crossed a boundary. This can be a simple, private, frequent reflection. If you are introducing the idea of confession to children, you may want to set the serious nature of this discipline by setting it apart with a fort and pillows for seats, or by lowering the lights, lighting a candle and sitting around it, playing some quiet music. Afterward, let them know they can do this anytime, anyplace, and consider practicing that, too. Help them participate during our time of confession in worship, too, reminding them of what you've done together.
- **Missing the mark game:** Place a laundry basket on one end of a play space. Get a ball (medium sized compared to the basket – it should fit in easily, but not be a gimme that it will go in). Have a shooting contest from an appropriate distance. Count how many times the ball went in – it's not a competition between the players, but a collective tally, for each and for all. Make sure nobody gets a perfect score; not everyone needs to shoot from the same place, but the basket shouldn't move. After playing, explain that the basket represents God's will for us, and **none** of us gets it right every time. That's why we need Jesus. It's not that we intentionally miss the basket; it's just that we are flawed – nobody is a perfect shot. God knows that and made a plan to cover our missed shots – Jesus. If you want, you could illustrate this by doing the contest again, but having someone representing Jesus catching/fetching the balls and putting them into the basket.

- **Crossing the boundary game:** Make a line with pool noodles or a rope on one end of your yard. On the opposite end, set a target (lawn chair, piece of cardboard, or a willing person) far enough back to be unreachable with a wet sponge. On the other side, place a bucket of water and sponges. The goal is to get the target wet. Make sure the players \*really\* want to get the target wet. The players are not allowed to cross the boundary under any circumstances. The person who makes and explains the rules will be watching as the referee but will not stop anyone from crossing the line. Set a timer to a length that will match your family's attention span. When the time is up, take a minute to talk about times we are tempted to cross a boundary – to do something that we know God has definitely told us not to. We get to choose, and when it is a boundary God has set, there are sad consequences. I would only talk about consequences, and do not recommend adding a consequence or reward to this game, because the referee would have a hard time accurately illustrating God's spirit of sorrow, compassion and disappointment in the playful tone of this illustration. Follow up with a time of water play without such strict boundaries! And in the coming weeks, when kids do cross a boundary and have a consequence to lovingly and sorrowfully point out the connection for them.



Want to learn more about hyssop?

<https://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Library.sr/CT/ARTB/k/1212/Purge-Me-With-Hyssop.htm>

## Joy

- **Create in me a clean heart craft:** You will need: craft foam (or another wipeable surface), washable markers, wet wipes or soapy water and a cloth, permanent marker. Cut the foam into a heart and write or draw representations of sins. Make this a time for each person to reflect on their own sins. Explain that even if we do all the right things, our hearts are sinful by nature, and Jesus is the only one who can make them clean. Using a wet wipe or a container with soap and water clean the sin off the hearts, explaining that Jesus creates a new heart in us. If you use a wet wipe, you can point out that Jesus took our sin onto himself. Celebrate that we can have a clean heart when we ask Jesus to clean us up and help us to follow him. Be sensitive to this moment: if your child is prompted by the Holy Spirit during this time of confession and forgiveness to respond to the free gift of salvation, pray and rejoice with them. Remember that our salvation is God's gift. As parents, we simply get to present truth so our kids can respond. We are not the Holy Spirit!
- **Craft and language for littles:** Note: I would avoid using color to represent sin but would ask the child to draw the ugliest picture they could. <http://stuffwedo-sarah.blogspot.com/2011/05/create-in-me-clean-heart.html>
- Circle back to those clean hearts from the craft. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. Continue the conversation about responding to Jesus' forgiveness with joy that spills out onto others. Talk about how even when we experience the joy of our salvation, it doesn't mean we are done with sin. Talk about how the Holy Spirit will help guide us minute by minute when we ask.
  - ? What is our response to the joy of our salvation? What does God want us to do with our clean hearts?
  - ? What are the sacrifices God wants?
  - ? How can I give those to Him this week? This month? This year?

*This four-part devotional based in Psalm 51 has a storytelling approach to current application of Psalm 51. It is written for school aged kids but would be understandable for younger siblings and definitely edifying for teens and adults. It would be well used at dinner or while kids are coloring or playing as they participate:* <http://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/psalms-for-families-devotions-for-all-ages-psalm-51>