

UNIT 11

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CREATE A

CLEAN HEART

FOR ME



“The Lord Has Taken Away Your Sin”

by Y Bonesteele

Everyone loves an unlikely hero story. Most Marvel movie characters are of this sort: Captain America, Ant-Man, Guardians of the Galaxy, Shang-Chi, Spider-Man, and more. We love them because we love to root for the underdog. In one sense, they don't deserve to be the hero, but we want them to be.

We get upset, however, when evil is rewarded, when the villains win. They're getting something they don't deserve as well, but in this case, we think evil shouldn't win—justice must prevail! We're in shock at the end of Infinity War, then, when Thanos is victorious. We're left speechless, just like the heroes.

The stories in movies are representative of the stories in our own lives. At times, we feel like the underdog, so we want to be the hero. Others who have hurt us are the villains, so we want them to experience their due justice. Because God created us and made us in His image, we understand the need for grace and the need for justice.

God is amazing in His perfect balance of holiness and grace, seeing justice played out on His own terms. We see the graciousness and justice of God in the life of David, an unlikely hero and a ruthless villain. Yet God's grace pervades throughout his life story. We're thankful to see God's grace in these stories because we're reminded that sometimes we are the unlikely hero and sometimes we also are the villain in the stories of our lives.

GOD'S GRACE AT EVERY MOMENT

David's life and character are enjoyable to analyze because he was not a static figure. He embodied both poet and warrior, selflessness and selfishness, wisdom and foolishness, and faithfulness and disobedience. In summary, he is us—at times making great choices and at other times making poor ones. At times he succeeded in what he did, and at other times he failed miserably.

There is no greater joy than to be in the presence of the Lord and no greater sorrow than to be absent from it.

But did God not walk with him through it all? Did God not see his heart through the good and the bad, the moments of faithfulness and the moral failures? Even there, God was present and sovereign, enacting His plans for His purposes.

From the beginning, God chose the unlikely hero, the youngest in the family, the shepherd, to be king (1 Sam. 16:11-13). The servant/musician/poet (16:18-23) was not the leader type many thought of in those times, nor in ours. This throws all the leadership books we know of off into the wayside. God picks the unlikeliest of heroes because it reveals how He pours out His grace to us, His unmerited favor upon those who don't deserve it.

When we look at our lives, we must be thankful and acknowledge how God's grace is present through every moment.

God's grace pervades in our birth story, in protecting us in our teenage years, in the disciplining of our sins, in His felt presence in our trials and suffering. And indeed, God's graciousness is revealed to us in that even while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8).

GOD'S GRACE IN FORGIVING SIN

Through David's story, we can see God's gracious character even before Jesus was born. God is gracious because that is who He is. When David sinned—adultery, deceitfulness, and murder (2 Sam. 11)—and Nathan rebuked him, David knew he had sinned against the Lord, and he repented (Pss. 32; 51). Because of that, God forgave him, though he still faced consequences (2 Sam. 12:10-14).

In our own lives, when we sin, natural consequences occur, but we still maintain our relationship and fellowship with God when we repent. Through Christ, this is all possible. Without Christ, none of it would be possible. Though we are unholy and unrighteous, Christ's humiliation through His incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection makes us clean, reconciling us to the Father, saving us from death (Rom. 6:23), guilt, and shame.

Jesus is the ultimate King of this world and of our lives.

Praise God that He picks unlikely heroes. And praise Him that He forgives repentant villains.

No one but a perfect King can do that for us—Christ alone. After David’s sin, God kept His promise to him to establish his house, throne, and kingdom forever, ultimately fulfilled through Jesus Christ Himself. Jesus is the ultimate King of this world and of our lives. Because of the Father’s grace to David and to us, we can enter God’s presence with confidence and joy, praising Him for His goodness and love.

RESPONDING TO GRACE WITH PRAISE

The Psalms exist today because of David’s continued fellowship with the Lord, confessing to Him, lamenting, thanking and praising Him, even through acknowledging his sin and repenting of it. We too can respond with praise when we reflect on the many times God has manifested His grace and presence with us.

There is no greater joy than to be in the presence of the Lord and no greater sorrow than to be absent from it. Because of God’s graciousness through the work of Christ, we will never be apart from Him again.

When have you seen God choose you to fulfill His purposes, even though you felt like the unlikely candidate? When have you felt His arms around you when you’ve confessed and asked for forgiveness? When we reflect on our actions and God’s grace, we can’t help but thank and praise God for His goodness. As David was an unlikely hero, so Jesus was an unlikely Messiah in our eyes. But praise God for unlikely characters because they are an example of what God can do in our own lives. Through the work of Jesus, that unlikely Messiah, we experience the love and mercy of the Father, the goodness and grace of the Son, and the wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Praise God that He picks unlikely heroes. And praise Him that He forgives repentant villains. There is hope for us all because Christ makes it possible. For all things are possible with Him (Matt. 19:26).

