



Absalom Rebels and Is Defeated

2 Samuel 15:1-12; 17:1-12; 18:1-18

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

David's Family Turmoil

It's important to know about certain events in the lives of David's other children in order to understand the context in which today's events took place. Amnon, one of David's sons, was attracted to Tamar, a daughter of David and half-sister to Amnon, and he raped her then turned against her. Absalom, Tamar's brother and another of David's sons, took her in. Two years later, Absalom had Amnon murdered and then fled from David and Israel. David mourned for Amnon and wished to be reunited with Absalom (2 Samuel 13:37-39).

David Restores Absalom

After Absalom had been gone three years, Joab, David's trusted general, had seen enough of David's pain. He enlisted a "wise woman" to confront David and convince him to allow Absalom to return to Israel. David agreed, but apparently he was hesitant to fully forgive and restore Absalom, because he refused to see him after his return. It took setting Joab's field on fire two years later for Absalom to finally get the king's attention and be allowed to visit his father. Absalom bowed to the ground before David, and David kissed him, offering forgiveness.

Absalom's Revolt

After that meeting, Absalom put a subversive plan into action. He would meet people coming into Jerusalem, criticize his father's system of administering justice, and promise a better one if he were made king. He treated the people as equals, not as if they were below him, as indicated in his response to those who bowed before him (2 Samuel 15:5-6). In this way, he won over large numbers of people.

Finally, Absalom decided to revolt openly, and he chose Hebron for his headquarters. David had been proclaimed king in Hebron, and Absalom had been

born there; it was a significant place of worship; it was the city David had abandoned when he moved his capital to Jerusalem. Absalom must have counted all these factors in his favor.

Absalom Is Defeated

David must have realized that Absalom had gained quite a following, because when he heard of the revolt, he insisted on fleeing Jerusalem for safety. After receiving conflicting advice, Absalom decided not to attack David right away. The delay allowed David time to muster an army (2 Samuel 18:1).

In the ensuing battle, 20,000 died. In the end, Absalom was killed by Joab, and David again wept over the death of a son. Self-centered attitudes and actions had taken the life of yet another of the king's sons.

The Jesus Connection

Jesus' selfless life made a world of difference for us. How can we keep our attitude Christ-centered? By looking at him, all the time.

How does a self-centered attitude affect relationships?

How could following Jesus' selfless example improve those relationships?

Thank God for sending Jesus, who leads us on to better relationships by showing us how to treat others with selfless love—the way he treats us. You can write your prayer here.



Absalom Rebels and Is Defeated—2 Samuel 15:1-12; 17:1-12; 18:1-18

► **Bible Point**—A self-centered attitude hurts God and others.

Key Verse—"He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8).

Talk Topics

- Talk about why self-centered attitudes are so harmful.
- Talk about ways we can identify self-centered attitudes, and then work to allow God to get rid of them.
- List day-to-day ways you can demonstrate a loving attitude rather than a self-centered one.
- Talk about a time when a self-centered attitude played a role in your life. What happened?

**OK
TO COPY**

Fall Quarter

Lesson 4

Adult

DIGGING
DEEPER

Daily Challenges

Choose one or more of these activities to do this week.

- Look up Scripture passages that mention selfishness, and contrast them with verses that focus on loving other people and putting others first. Think about ways you can apply those verses to your daily life.
- What specifically can you do to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly this week? Choose at least one selfless act to do this week.
- Spend some time this week identifying ways you behave selfishly. Write them down on the left-hand side of a sheet of paper. Then, on the right-hand side, think of ways you could act selflessly in each of those situations instead. Pray over your list, asking God to help you become more like Jesus.

Through the Week

Use the following passages and questions to explore additional biblical perspectives on self-centeredness.

Monday—John 13:34

- Based on Jesus' example, what does it mean to really love others?

Tuesday—Romans 12:10

- What's one way you can honor someone above yourself today?

Wednesday—Romans 12:16

- Who are the people of "low position" in your life? Do you associate with them? Why or why not?

Thursday—Romans 14:13

- How do you think being self-centered causes you to put a stumbling block in another Christian's way?

Friday—Romans 15:7

- How can you *show* that you accept others this week?

Saturday—Ephesians 4:32

- What evidence is there that you love Jesus? How can your love for him grow even stronger?