

## Engaging Gospel Doctrine (Episode 101.2)

### LESSON 24 (STUDY NOTES)

#### “Create in Me a Clean Heart”

Hook	As children we know David from his fight with Goliath, but as adults we remember him for the tragic mistakes he made once king.
Goal	Class members should feel empowered to bring up difficult issues relating to these stories in an appropriate way.
Overview	(see below)
Conclusion	

1. Sunday School
  - a. Disclaimer and defense of approach, content warnings, recommendations to push the envelope in a Sunday School environment
    - i. Content Note: It should not surprise anyone that a story about adultery, sex without consent, and premeditated murder prompts discussion that may not be suitable for all listeners.
  - b. Discussion of the narratives (Comment on how powerfully these are told, facilitating thoughtful and honest discussion. Can let the stories do much of the work. David’s humanity is clearly on display here)
    - i. David and Bathsheba
      1. When did he sin?
      2. Should he have been home anyway?
      3. What was her role? (it was not at all consensual, and the roof was a normal place to have a bath... she was likely purifying herself after her period)
    - ii. Uriah’s faithful foil (he isn’t just a soldier, but ancient special forces)
    - iii. “You are the man”
    - iv. God committing infanticide
    - v. David’s reaction (2 Sam 12:20-24)
  - c. Modesty, nudity, normalcy
  - d. Sexuality and consent
    - i. Rape culture, patriarchy, imbalance of power (Bring up #YesAllWomen, Jacob’s post etc) (will discuss more in part 2)
    - ii. Empowerment (Okazaki quote, problem there isn’t anything more specific)
    - iii. Scott quote
  - e. The way we talk about sexual transgressions at Church, beware victim blaming (where is the “it is better to die than ABUSE message???”); bring up Elisabeth Smart
  - f. Repentance, including the power of seeing from another’s perspective
  - g. Conclusion I

## 2. Scholarship

- a. David and Bathsheba in historical context (1 Kings 1-2 portrays Bathsheba as a much more active figure, whose machinations lead to Solomon, David's 10<sup>th</sup> son, succeeding David. She holds David to his promise Solomon would succeed him).
- b. Psalm 51

## 3. Study Notes

- a. More on modesty culture, nudity etc. (sexual attraction/appreciation/arousal vs. lust.)
- b. Return to the topics of sexuality, consent, rape-culture
- c. "bro culture/rape culture" (juxtaposing David's treatment of Jonathan vs. Bathsheba)
- d. Talk about the rape of Tamar (no where else does a woman speak so powerfully on her own behalf)
- e. What can we do?
- f. How we deal with mistakes and change (including thoughts on our blindness at times to our own shortcomings and mistakes, or at least fail to see them clearly)
- g. Conclusion II

<http://www.yale.edu/yrurp/issues/Fudman,%20Beauty%20as%20a%20Status%20Characteristic.pdf>  
(physical attractiveness bias)

<http://lettersfromthevineyard.wordpress.com/2014/05/29/yes-all-men/>

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2008/04/to-heal-the-shattering-consequences-of-abuse?lang=eng>

Yes Even Mormon Women (fMh)

<http://www.feministmormonhousewives.org/2014/05/yesevenmormonwomen/>

One Being a Victim (fMh)

<http://www.feministmormonhousewives.org/2014/06/on-being-a-victim/>

<https://www.lds.org/manual/gospel-principles/chapter-39-the-law-of-chastity?lang=eng>

Fife's podcast

Quotes

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2008/04/to-heal-the-shattering-consequences-of-abuse?lang=eng>

The beginning of healing requires childlike faith in the unalterable fact that Father in Heaven loves you and has supplied a way to heal. His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, laid down His life to provide that healing. But there is no magic solution, no simple balm to provide healing, nor is there an easy path to the complete remedy. The cure requires profound faith in Jesus Christ and in His infinite capacity to heal. It is rooted in an understanding of doctrine and a resolute determination to follow it.

Healing may begin with a thoughtful bishop or stake president or a wise professional counselor. If you had a broken leg, you wouldn't decide to fix it yourself. Serious abuse can also benefit from professional help. There are many ways to begin healing, but remember that a full cure comes through the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, our Master and Redeemer. Have faith that with effort His perfect, eternal, infinite Atonement can heal your suffering from the consequences of abuse.

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If you are currently being abused or have been in the past, find the courage to seek help. You may have been severely threatened or caused to fear so that you would not reveal the abuse. Have the courage to act now. Seek the support of someone you can trust. Your bishop or stake president can give you valuable counsel and help you with the civil authorities. Explain how you have been abused and identify who has done it. Ask for protection. Your action may help others avoid becoming innocent victims, with the consequent suffering. Get help now. Do not fear—for fear is a tool Satan will use to keep you suffering. The Lord will help you, but you must reach out for that help.

Do not be discouraged if initially a bishop hesitates when you identify an abuser. Remember that predators are skillful at cultivating a public appearance of piety to mask their despicable acts. Pray to be guided in your efforts to receive help. That support will come. Rest assured that the Perfect Judge, Jesus the Christ, with a perfect knowledge of the details, will hold all abusers accountable for every unrighteous act. In time He will fully apply the required demands of justice unless there is complete repentance. Your preoccupation with a need for justice only slows your healing and allows the perpetrator to continue his abusive control. Therefore you should leave punishment for the diabolic acts of abuse to civil and Church authorities.

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To you who hold the keys of a judge in Israel, painstakingly assure that every individual that is suffering from abuse receives appropriate help. The Church handbook and the help line listed there are valuable resources to guide your ecclesiastical action and coordination with civil authorities.<sup>4</sup>Carefully supervise the participation of any individual who may have had past offenses. Recognize that it is very unlikely that a perpetrator will confess his depraved acts. Seek the guidance of the Spirit when you feel that something may be amiss. Enlist the help of ward and stake leaders to avoid potential dangers.

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1992/04/spit-and-mud-and-kigatsuku?lang=eng&query=okazaki>

*Kigatsuku* means “an inner spirit to act without being told what to do.” First, we can do great good when we act as an organized group. One hundred and fifty years of Relief Society speaks for itself. One stake in Denver, Colorado, is making quilts—dozens of thick, warm, comforting quilts—which they will donate to the homeless and those in need. Second, we can do great good when we act in small, informal groups. The Relief Society general board volunteered to clean a littered highway, pulled on their gloves, and discovered that it doesn’t take a long time to make a big difference. And third, we can do great good on our own—just as individuals who care enough to serve. Think of Sister Julia Mavimbela in South Africa, teaching children who had never had a real home to tend the earth by planting gardens. It is the desire in individual hearts that powers not only small, individual acts of service, but also the great acts that become mass movements and even revolutions. You have that power, too.

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You are powerful! Where does that power come from to “do many things of [our] own free will”? It comes from the Savior himself. Feel that desire to serve in your own heart. Sense within yourself that strength to choose!

<http://lettersfromthevineyard.wordpress.com/2014/05/29/yes-all-men/>

(so good I just have to read the whole thing)

<http://www.feministmormonhousewives.org/2014/05/yesevenmormonwomen/>

When I was... a BYU student, I wondered why we hadn’t all been taught more about consent. I knew all about boundaries that the church and God set (no necking, no petting, no french kissing according to some), but no one ever told me I could set my own boundaries. And no one ever told me that my consent mattered, or what to do if a boy ignored it or violated it. I figured all Mormon boys knew to respect women and not to push boundaries—a myth I was disabused of as roommates and friends told me their stories—so that was why we never addressed it in church. Because we all knew not to abuse other people.

What I didn’t realize was that my church pews are filled with women aching from the consequences of abuse, of rape, of incest, of assault. So why don’t we talk about this more? Why don’t we make it perfectly clear, for 11-year-olds to 99-year-olds, that our bodies are not the receptacles of other people’s shame? That if someone hurts me, I ought not be embarrassed but ought to feel like I can demand help until I get it? That sex in the wrong context is bad, but sex in a violent, coercive context is infinitely worse?

Our faith community needs to hear this issue addressed publicly. The statistics in [Utah](#) are damning. We are worse than the national average, with one in three women being sexually assaulted in their lifetime. (In the United States, it’s one in four.) Even worse, nearly a third of sexual violence victims are abused by family members....

But BYU and Utah are not the church. We are a worldwide church, and this is a [worldwide problem](#). Think of the good we could do if we mobilized. We can't prevent every assault, but we can warn youth that it happens, and we can promise to stand up for them when it does. We can teach them about consent so they don't cross someone's boundaries and think aggression is manly or romantic. We can teach the law of chastity so that not crossing your date's boundaries is just as crucial as not crossing God's boundaries. We can just be there. But if we keep on pretending this doesn't happen, that Mormons don't commit and aren't harmed by sexual violence, then we will continue to fail our daughters and sons. There will be more young children and teens who don't even know they can ask for help. And there will continue to be victims scarred and scared and hurting.

Let us address the issue that so pervasively hurts us, not just through an occasional conference talk, but through clear guidelines in the For the Strength of Youth pamphlet, in wedding prep classes, in youth lessons and singles wards. Let's tell young men that keeping the law of chastity isn't only about staying worthy to serve a mission but just as much about respecting a child of God and that person's autonomy. Let's explicitly encourage parents to prepare their kids for sexual violence. Let's promise to be there for our Primary children and youth. Let's follow the law and report these crimes to the police when our children trust us enough to tell us.

But first, let's mourn with those who mourn. In the past few days, many women have documented their experiences with sexual violence with the hashtag #YesAllWomen. I am asking all LDS women who have survived sexual violence to also document it with the hashtag #YesEvenMormonWomen. I invite our leaders to read these accounts and prayerfully consider how to address this gaping wound in the body of Christ. I'm pleading with all of us to take sexual violence seriously and do something about it. Because the efforts we've put forth thus far simply aren't enough.

<https://www.lds.org/manual/gospel-principles/chapter-39-the-law-of-chastity?lang=eng>

Sound advice:

Parents can begin teaching children to have proper attitudes toward their bodies when children are very young. Talking to children frankly but reverently and using the correct names for the parts and functions of their bodies will help them grow up without unnecessary embarrassment about their bodies.

Children are naturally curious. They want to know how their bodies work. They want to know where babies come from. If parents answer all such questions immediately and clearly so children can understand, children will continue to take their questions to their parents. However, if parents answer questions so that children feel embarrassed, rejected, or dissatisfied, they will probably go to someone else with their questions and perhaps get incorrect ideas and improper attitudes.

It is not wise or necessary, however, to tell children everything at once. Parents need only give them the information they have asked for and can understand. While answering these questions, parents can teach children the importance of respecting their bodies and the bodies of others. Parents should teach children to dress modestly. They should correct the false ideas and vulgar language that children learn from others.

By the time children reach maturity, parents should have frankly discussed procreation with them. Children should understand that these powers are good and were given to us by the Lord. He expects us to use them within the bounds He has given us.

Modesty

(the previous article is “Modest at any age”

<https://www.lds.org/friend/2010/05/modesty-checklist?lang=eng>

carl bloch paintings changed: <http://www.sltrib.com/sltrib/blogsfaithblog/54142351-180/bloch-church-angels-modesty.html.csp> (December 2011 Ensign)

High school yearbooks changed: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/03/utah-school-apologises-yearbook-photos> (Wasatch High School)

“There is no true Latter-day Saint who would not rather bury a son or a daughter than to have him or her lose his or her chastity – realizing that chastity is of more value than anything else in all the world.”

- Prophet Heber J. Grant, *Gospel Standards*, compiled by G. Homer Durham, p. 55

“Also far-reaching is the effect of loss of chastity. Once given or taken or stolen it can never be regained. Even in a forced contact such as rape or incest, the injured one is greatly outraged. If she has not cooperated and contributed to the foul deed, she is of course in a more favorable position. There is no condemnation when there is no voluntary participation. It is better to die in defending one’s virtue than to live having lost it without a struggle.”

- Prophet Spencer W. Kimball, LDS Prophet, *The Miracle of Forgiveness*, p. 196