



EXPLORE THE BIBLE®

Session 9: God's Conviction

Suggested Week of Use: July 27, 2025

Core Passage: Psalm 38:1-8, 18-22

News Story Summary

Parental guilt is an emotional response that occurs when one's effectiveness as a caregiving parent is questioned by oneself or by others. A recent survey of 3,010 American parents examined the role financial decisions play in creating parental guilt. While 96 percent of the respondents said that parenthood brought them joy, 72 percent also expressed guilt due to their financial decisions. When 35 percent of these parents stated that they want to be the best parent possible and 44 percent of them want to give their children their best life, their personal goals and financial goals often come into conflict. In addition, parents may try to buy the guilt away by offering treats and overspending on an item or experience that is beyond their budget. In effect, children see an inaccurate value system where money is used to solve emotional problems. Parents need to remember that the best gifts of all for children are time and attention.

For more information on this story, search "Ameriprise parental guilt survey."

Engage

To supplement the Engage activities, bring several small stones to Bible study. Enlist some adults to put a stone in one shoe and to walk around. Ask: *On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being "It's not a problem" and 10 being "It's really got to go," how badly do you want that stone removed?* Lead the group to discuss options for dealing with the stone. Ask: *How is guilt like a stone in your shoe?* Discuss responses. Share the information from the article on parental guilt and finances. Allow volunteers to suggest other sources of guilt in our lives. Highlight the guilt produced by sin. Point out that David wrote about his sin and guilt in Psalm 38, which is the focus of this session. Remind adults that sin causes spiritual pain, but the guilt it creates also can produce physical and emotional suffering. Share that this session challenges us to deal with guilt by following David's example of confessing sin and finding God's forgiveness.

Challenge

To supplement the Challenge activities, ask: *Who would like to trade places with the ones who had a stone in their shoe? What figurative stones of guilt do we carry even though we serve a God who is ready to hear us and heal us?* Remind adults about the article describing parental guilt and finances. Review the other sources of guilt mentioned in the Engage activities. Affirm that sin represents the most dangerous source of guilt in our lives. Ask: *Why is it difficult to ask for forgiveness?* Emphasize that seeking forgiveness is the only way to remove the guilt (and its consequences) from our lives. Lead the group in a time of prayer, asking God to reveal anything that individuals need to confess so that they can experience His forgiveness and healing.