

News Story Summary

Leaders of Volkswagen acknowledged they have a fix ready for the diesel engines that they allegedly assembled to give false emissions tests. The car maker admitted that emissions controls were built to turn on during government lab tests and turn off while the car was on the road. Because of this design, the car emitted more than 40 times the legal limit of nitrogen oxide. The scheme was undetected for seven years until discovered by independent researchers.

The car fixes offered by Volkswagen need to be approved before execution. The fixes may include a software update and a new catalytic converter. Also Volkswagen has agreed to pay a record \$15.3 billion to settle consumer lawsuits and government allegations against Volkswagen.

(For more on this story, search the Internet using the phrase “Volkswagen emissions cheating fix.”)

Focus Attention

Before the session begins obtain a definition for the word *cheat*. When group members arrive, share the definition. Ask: *Why do you think people succumb to cheating?* Share the Volkswagen news summary. Lead the group to propose possible reasons Volkswagen leaders rigged their vehicles. Ask: *What are some ways people justify actions that are knowingly unlawful and potentially harmful to others? Does understanding why a person might do something make you more or less sympathetic?* Help the group understand that the motives explain why but they usually do not excuse a person or group from consequences.

Explain that today’s session focuses on the prideful character of Saul. He exhibited jealousy, fear, hatred, and paranoia, which caused him to make desperate decisions related to David.

Challenge

Remind the group of the possible reasons they proposed for Volkswagen rigging the emissions on some of their vehicles. Lead the group to identify any possible reasons they saw in Volkswagen’s actions with reasons for Saul’s actions against David. Help the group understand that pride can be seen in people seeking their own interests over the interests of others. Lead the group to discuss ways pride can blind a person. Challenge the group to examine their own lives for pride and to confess to God any prideful attitudes they discover.