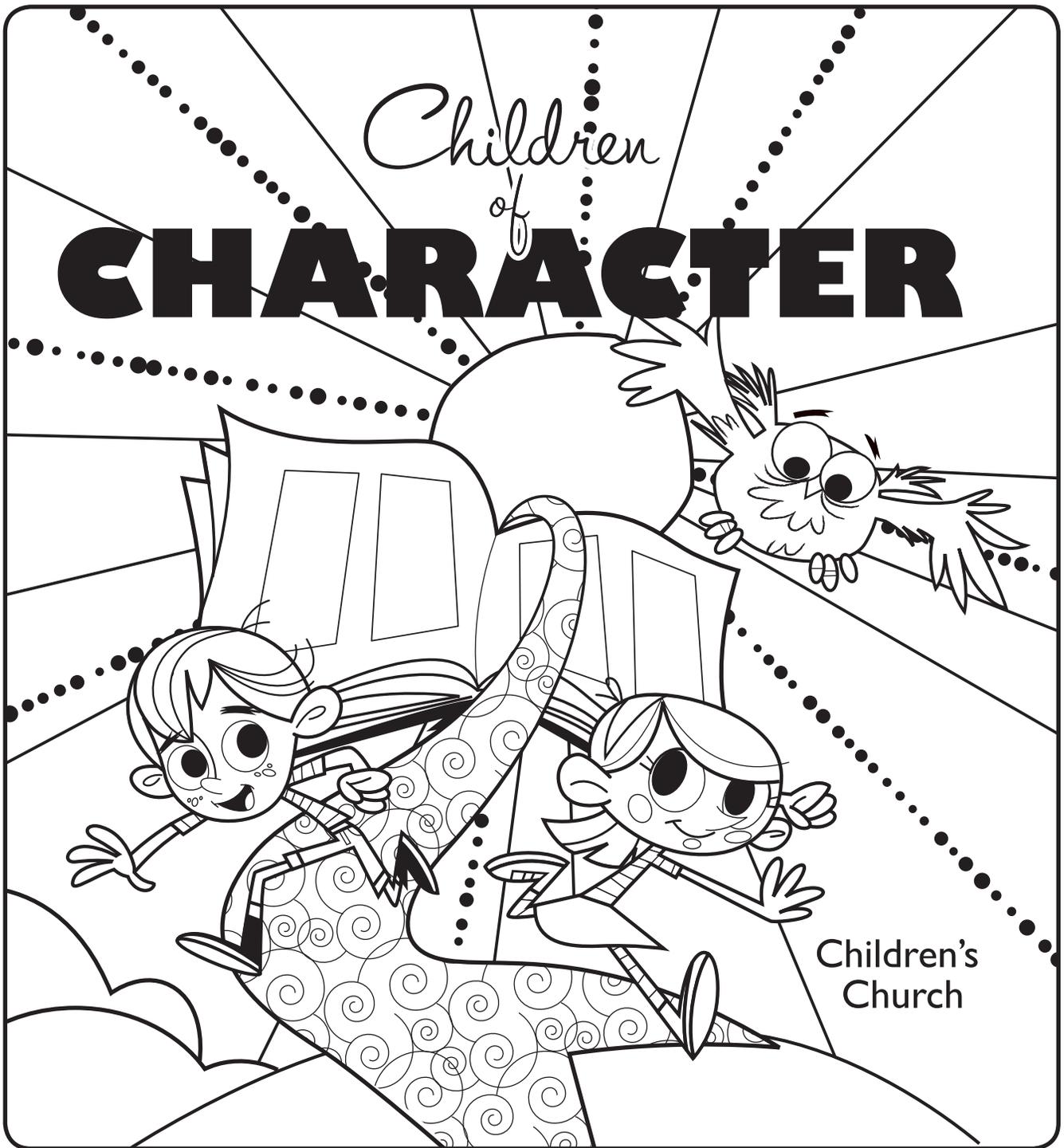


Children  
of  
**CHARACTER**



**Year One**

# ***Children of Character***

***One***

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# TO THE TEACHER

## IMPORTANT ----- PLEASE READ

### LESSONS DO'S AND DON'TS

- Do make the lessons exciting. Be enthusiastic. Keep your energy and personal interest level high.
- Do use props, visuals, vocal and bodily expression as you tell the story.
- Don't get ahead of your lesson. Some of these lessons zero in on just one life lesson. The entire story may take weeks to tell. Therefore, stick to the Life Lesson and portion of the lesson at hand. Otherwise you may overlap and tell too much of the story. Always read ahead to see where you are going in a quarter.
- Do dwell on the Life Lesson. This needs to be at the front of your mind and the focus of each lesson. Keep pointing it out to your students.

### ABOUT THESE LESSONS

#### PRAYER AND INTRODUCTION

- This is your time to set the mood and introduce the day's Life Lesson. Quiet everyone down for prayer. Prepare hearts to listen.
- Use the introduction to direct thoughts.

#### SONG TIME

- The song time should be used to quiet the children's hearts and prepare them for the lesson. Many, well meaning children's workers, think this is the time to have the children scream and yell in order to "get the wiggles out." Having them sing enthusiastically can still be reverent without having them yell at the top of their lungs.

---

- Don't sing meaningless, nonsense songs. You can use both old and new songs. If you can find songs to fit the day's theme, great! You can spend time teaching them hymns and what the words mean. Some of the supporting stories are hymn histories. Teach these songs ahead of time so when you get to the lesson with that song, they will say, "I know that song," and it will mean more to them.

- A great source for children's songs that zero in on specific character traits is Majesty Music. Ask about the "Patch Praises" song books. They are inexpensive and have many songs per book. You can call them toll free at 800-334-1071.

## SUPPORTING STORY

- Sometimes you will be given a story, sometimes an object lesson, hymn history, puppet script etc. These are designed to emphasize the Life Lesson.

## MEMORY VERSE

- Play memory verse games to aid learning. Several games have been included in the back of this manual.

- Aim for repetition while learning the verse. This aids memory.

- Emphasize that knowing the verse could bring team points at the end of Children's Church.

- Vary the games and methods used to teach the verses. Games that are well liked can be done often, but not every week.

- You can go back and review verses from past lessons every month or so, if you have the time.

## BIBLE LESSON

- Read the Study Text for your own knowledge.

- Weave the scripture into each lesson. You can also bring in the memory verse and Life Lesson as appropriate.

- Keep the lesson exciting. Act it out using different voices and postures. Ask questions. Bring in props occasionally.

---

## INVITATION

- Always present the plan of Salvation in a simple manner. Never assume everyone is saved.
- Have appointed counselors ready so the main leader will not have to leave the other children.
- If someone responds, continue with quiz time or quiet songs while the child is being counseled.

## QUIZ

- If you have extra time, you can use the quiz to review the story. You can even go back and use questions from past lessons.
- Divide the students into two teams and keep score. You need not give prizes, just winning is enough. You may occasionally wish to give a small treat.
- Use this time to review the lesson.

## LIFE LESSON

- Emphasize it!
- You can write it on the board or an 11 x 17 poster board.
- Work it in often.

## ACTIVITY SHEETS

- Copy what you need before Children's Church.
- Hand them out as the children leave to avoid distractions during the story.
- You can have the children do the sheet during the time period if you have lots of extra time.



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## LESSON 1

# SWEET FRUIT

### LESSON ORDER

Prayer / Introduction

Song Time

Supporting Story

Memory Verse Time

Bible Lesson Time / Invitation

Challenge / Quiet Time

Bible Quiz



### BIBLE TEXT

Genesis 1:26 - 2:25

### CHARACTER TRAIT

I will let God  
produce sweet fruit in my life.

### MEMORY VERSE

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

Galations 5:22-23



## OPEN IN PRAYER

## INTRODUCTION

God has a lot to say in the Bible about the kind of person He wants you to be. This year we will be learning about different character traits that God wants in your life. All year long we will be talking about the character traits that God calls the Fruit of The Spirit. We will start by talking about the sweet fruit that God wants to produce in your life.

Today's Life Lesson is: I will let God produce sweet fruit in my life.

## SONG TIME

## SUPPORTING STORY

### HOW GREAT THOU ART

Obtain Flash Cards

Reverend Carl Boberg was a preacher in Sweden. One day in 1886 Rev. Boberg was visiting the beautiful area along the coastline of Sweden. He decided to take a brisk walk to just admire the beauty that surrounded him. (Show Flash Card A)

All of a sudden a fierce storm blew up. Around Rev. Boberg the lightning flashed and the rain poured down. He had no place of refuge, nor did he want one. He was so intrigued by the amazing display of beauty with the ocean heaving, and the lightning flashing, and the rain coming down in torrents. Then, just as suddenly, the storm stopped and the sun came out and shone brilliantly. He could hear the sound of birds chirping and the world looked washed clean and sparkling. All was calm once more.

The wonder of the awesome beauty of nature that surround Rev. Boberg caused him to fall to his knees and worship God. He could only be thankful that God had created such a wonderful place for him to live. So he bowed his head in humility and offered his praise to God.

Soon afterwards, thinking back on the day when he had witnessed the storm and the beauty of God's nature, he wrote a poem. His poem described the beauty of the world and the greatness of the God who had created such beauty. The words were written in Swedish and years later they were put to music and sung in Sweden.

We may never have heard or sung this wonderful song if a missionary and his wife had not translated the song into English about forty-five years later in the mid 1930's. (Show Flash Card B)

Rev. Stuart K. Hine and his wife were missionaries to Russia. They heard a Russian translation of the song while they were ministering in that country. They heard the song being sung in a church in the Ukraine and they fell in love with it. It was sung to a simple Swedish folk tune and the words were wonderful.

The husband and wife team would go into the small Russian towns to reach the people with the Gospel. The people in these towns knew nothing about God. They did not know how much God loved them. Rev. Hine and his wife would sing the song as a duet. The people listened intently to the words that spoke of how great God was and how much He loved them. It was clear that the simple words touched hearts. Then Rev. Hine would share the Gospel and many came to know Jesus Christ as their Savior.

The Hines decided to write similar words for the beautiful song in English. If it had been such a great blessing to the people of Russia, then surely others would be blessed as well. Surrounded by the beautiful Carpathian mountains of Russia, the Hines added some of their own impressions as they translated the song.

In 1939 World War II began and it was no longer safe for the Hines to remain in Russia. They returned to their home country of England, taking with them the song, *How Great Thou Art*. Since that time it has been sung over and over and those listening and singing can't help but remember the greatness of our God.

O Lord my God, When I in awesome wonder  
Consider all the works thy hands have made,  
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,  
Thy power throughout the universe displayed!

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee;  
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!  
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee;  
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!

When through the woods and forest glades I wander  
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees,  
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur  
And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze,

And when I think that God, His Son not sparing,  
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in -  
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing,  
He bled and died to take away my sin!

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation  
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!  
Then I shall bow in humble adoration  
And there proclaim, my God, how great thou art!

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee;  
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!  
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee;  
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

Galatians 5:22-23

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Genesis 1:26-2:1-25

### LESSON

#### **SWEET FRUIT**

Most often when you eat fruit, it is very sweet. Plump red strawberries, crisp apples, juicy plums. They are all different and yet they are all so sweet to eat. On the outside each fruit looks beautiful and inviting. On the inside the fruit is sweet to the taste. In fact, as beautiful as the outside of a fruit is to look at, the best part is really the sweet inside, isn't it?

The fruit in your life can be the same. God wants you to produce sweet fruit in your life that is outwardly beautiful so that when others look at your life they will see something that attracts them to the Lord. Then when they get to know you, they will have a chance to "taste" the sweetness that the Lord produces inside your heart and life. When they get to know you they will see that the best part of your Christian life is the sweet inside that they have gotten to know. They will see the sweetness of love, of joy, of peace, of a good attitude, of honesty, and of so many other things that let others know that you are a child of God.

Is your life beautiful on the outside as well as sweet on the inside? With God's help it can be!

#### **CONSIDER GOD'S CREATIONS**

Let's take a moment to consider God's creations.

It is hard to imagine how God could think up so many different wonderful things to create. God started with the planets. He placed each one in just the right place. He placed the earth in the exact spot it needed to be. If God had placed the sun any closer to the earth, the earth would have burned up. If God had placed the sun any farther away from the earth, we would freeze to death. But God knew how to make everything just right.

God gave us oxygen to breathe and gravity to keep us from floating away into space. On earth God made plants and vegetation that are both beautiful to look at, as well as, good to eat and healthful for our bodies. God made animals and gave them instincts that enable them to automatically know how to survive.

God made the human body to be an amazing thing. It has millions of cells and every cell works together with the other cells to make a complete organism that can walk, talk, communicate, breathe, feel, and think. That's very amazing when you think about it!

But even more amazing is the fact that people do so much more than just walk, talk, breathe, feel, and think. Humans also have a spiritual side. Humans have a soul. That is what makes us different from animals.

Genesis 1:26 tells us, *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

On the sixth day of creation God made all the animals. Then God made a man. But the man was different from the animals. Animals were made for man to use and to have as pets. But God made man in His own image. God made man to be a friend for Himself.

Then God planted a beautiful garden called The Garden of Eden. What a marvelous place it must have been. It was beautiful beyond belief with lush green grass, beautiful flowers, and trees to grow that were filled with all kinds of sweet fruit for Adam to enjoy.

There God placed Adam and all His other creations.

Genesis 2:8-9 says, *And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.*

*And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.*

God let Adam name all the animals. That was quite an important responsibility for Adam. But after Adam named all the animals, God saw that Adam did not have a companion that was just right for him. The animals were nice pets, but they were not the same as Adam. So God created a woman named Eve. Eve was created from Adam's rib, and she was the perfect companion for Adam.

Genesis 2:18-22 tells us, *And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.*

*And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.*

*And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.*

*And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;*

*And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.*

How amazing that God created such a beautiful and sweet garden to live in! Oh, how much God loved Adam and Eve!

### **GOD MADE YOU FOR A PURPOSE**

God had a purpose for Adam and Eve. He had a physical purpose for them. God wanted them to care for the animals and everything that grew in the beautiful Garden of Eden where they lived. They used their bodies to work in the garden.

But God also had a spiritual purpose for them. God came into the garden daily to talk with Adam and Eve. He enjoyed talking with them. He enjoyed spending time with them. They had fellowship together.

Because Adam and Eve had fellowship with God, they had spiritual life. God is spiritual life. This was God's most important purpose for Adam and Eve, for them to have fellowship together with God.

How wonderful it must have been for them to be able to spend time every single day walking through the garden having fellowship with God. They must have had some wonderful conversations.

### **GOD MADE MAN FOR A PURPOSE**

God made you for a purpose too!

God has things He wants you to do while you live your life. He wants you to love those around you. He wants you to be obedient to your parents. He wants you to show the love of God to others. When you do that, you are showing the world around you the sweet fruit that God is producing in your life.

God also wants to have fellowship with you. What does that mean? Well, with Adam and Eve God would come daily to the Garden of Eden and walk and talk with them. They had a very close relationship. They were close friends.

God wants the same with you! He wants to spend time with you. He wants to talk with you. He wants to talk to you. He wants to be close with you.

The way to be close to God is to make sure you are spending time with Him each day by reading His Word. When you read the Bible you are learning more about God and you are allowing God to speak to you.

Another way to be close to God is through prayer. In prayer you are speaking to God. You are talking to Him about the things in your life that you think about and are concerned about. God loves it when you talk to Him.

You can also be close to God by spending time with God's people. When you go to church you are spending time with others who love and serve God. You are learning about God in Sunday School, Children's Church and Church.

But perhaps you are not a child of God. If you have never asked God to forgive your sin and come into your heart, then you are not His child. You cannot produce sweet fruit.

God says that we are all born in sin. We are all sinners. And God hates sin. But God loves you and He wants you to be saved from your sin. He wants you to have a life that is pleasing to Him.

Romans 6:23 says, *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

The payment or wages of sin is death. You deserve that payment for sin. Because you have sinned, you deserve that payment for sin. But God loves you so much that He sent you a free gift. That free gift is salvation. You can only get salvation from sin through Jesus Christ. Jesus came to earth to die on the cross for your sin. Jesus took your payment for sin so that you could become a child of God.

How can you become a child of God?

1 John 1:9 says, *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

It's not hard to become a child of God. You simply must admit that you are a sinner and cannot take away your own sin. Then ask Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your life.

We would be happy to take a Bible today and show you exactly how you can become a child of God. Then you can begin to produce sweet fruit in your life.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to let God help you to produce sweet fruit in your life.

What kinds of fruit does God want to produce? Our memory verse today tells us some of the fruit God wants in your life. Love, joy, peace, and longsuffering, are just a few of the fruits God wants to produce. In the lesson we will have this year we will be looking at each of the fruits of the Spirit. We will learn more how to produce sweet fruit. But even this week you can begin to produce sweet fruit.

How? Ask God to help you to be kind, loving, and obedient. When you are tempted to do something that would not produce sweet fruit, stop right away and ask God to help you to do what is right.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to let Him produce sweet fruit in your life.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Quote today's Bible verse.
2. What would have happened if God had placed the sun farther away from the earth?
3. You are made up of millions of these tiny things. What are they called?
4. What special job did God give to Adam?
5. What did God discover that was lacking for Adam after all the animals were named?
6. What place did God create especially for Adam and Eve?
7. What job did God give to Adam and Eve?
8. What did God do every day?
9. What was your spiritual condition when you were born?
10. What is the "gift of God?"

# Sweet Fruit

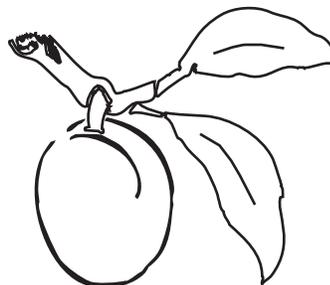
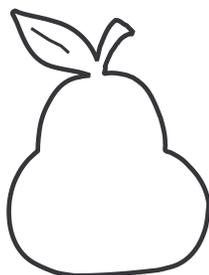
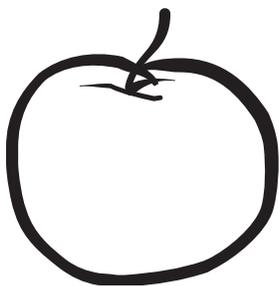
*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

Galatians 5:22-23

I will let God produce sweet fruit in my life.




Use the squares to guide you and draw the tree in the empty box then add fruit to your trees. Color both pictures.



---

LESSON 2

BITTER FRUIT

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-6

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

I will let God  
produce sweet fruit in my life.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness,  
goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

Galations 5:22-23



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

If you took a big bite of a piece of fruit, would you like that fruit to be sweet or bitter? Well, of course you would want it to be sweet! No one likes bitter fruit!

But sometimes we allow our lives to produce bitter fruit and when others look at us and speak to us, they get a bitter taste in their mouths. That is not pleasing to God.

Today we are going to talk about how terrible bitter fruit can be!

Today's Life Lesson is: I will let God produce sweet fruit in my life.

### SONG TIME

### SUPPORTING STORY

#### ORNAMENTAL ORANGES

Obtain Flash Card

Once there was a young man who lived in Arizona. He hadn't lived in the warm, sunny state very long. He was from Michigan where the winters were cold and snowy.

Every day as the young man walked on his way to college, he would pass a house that had a beautiful front lawn. Lining the street, right by the sidewalk where he passed was a row of orange trees. (Show flash card.)

The trees were green and soon their branches were full of sweet smelling orange blossoms.

There were no oranges in Michigan. They couldn't grow there because it was too cold. So the young man was fascinated to watch the fruit as it first blossomed in the spring. The flowers were snowy white and smelled so sweet.

Next the blossoms fell and there appeared small buds. Slowly, the buds grew, and as the year passed, the young man could see that the time had finally come for the fruit to be picked.

But that was the strange thing. Even though the fruit seemed ripe, it didn't look like anyone ever picked any of it. Why would that be? Maybe the people had so many trees, they just couldn't eat all the fruit. Maybe they just didn't like oranges.

After a while the young man got to thinking. He thought, "No one is picking that fruit. No one seems to want it. It is just rotting and going to waste. Surely, no one would care if I picked just one orange to eat on my way to school."

So the young man reached up and picked one orange and went on his way to school. As he walked, he began to peel back the thick orange skin and white pulp that lay beneath. It smelled so wonderful.

When the skin was off, a whole orange lay in his hand. He split it in half and peeled off a single section. He was anticipating the wonderful, sweet taste.

What a startling surprise for the young man when into his mouth and over his taste buds rushed the most bitter taste he had ever tasted!

A friend from college laughed as he explained to the young man that the orange was an “ornamental orange.” It was just for looks. It was never meant to be eaten. That was why no one had picked the oranges. They were only for looks. They looked as beautiful as any real orange, but inside they were bitter. They were not true oranges. They were fakes.

Church members can be like that. On the outside, they can look like and act just like all the other Christians around them. They can say all the right words and act just the right way, but on the inside they are not real. They are not sweet. They are bitter. They are fakes.

To look at them, you might be fooled. But there is one person who can never be fooled. The Bible says that man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart.

What kind of fruit are you producing in your life? Are you an “ornamental Christian” who looks good on the outside but produces bitter fruit? Or are you a true Christian who produces sweet fruit that pleases God?

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

Galatians 5:22-23

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Genesis 2:16-17, 3:1-6

### LESSON

#### **FRUIT IN THE BIBLE**

The Bible talks about fruit quite often. Do you like fruit? Most people do. God seems to like fruit, also.

When God created the Garden of Eden, He planted all sorts of trees. Many of the trees were full of luscious, ripe fruit that Adam and Eve were given to care for. God told Adam and Eve that they could eat freely of any tree in the entire garden. Any fruit that looked good, they could eat at any time.

Any fruit except one! Of the many, many fruit trees in Eden, only one was forbidden. God made it clear to them, that they were not to eat from that one tree. Can anyone tell me the name of the tree that they were forbidden to eat?

#### **FORBIDDEN FRUIT**

It was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

In Genesis 2:16-17 God told Adam, *And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

That was pretty clear. God said one tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, was off limits. It was forbidden.

Have you ever heard of something being referred to as a "forbidden fruit?" That means it is something - anything - that is not allowed. It is off limits.

But very often, a forbidden fruit is just the thing that tempts and teases us most of all. It is the very thing that we want above all else.

We know that for a while Adam and Eve stayed away from the forbidden tree. They may have wondered why God told them not to eat the fruit. They may have thought, "What would happen if I eat the fruit?" They may have asked each other, "Why can't we eat the fruit? Why would God deny us that one tree?"

But whatever they wondered, they didn't touch the tree or its mysterious fruit.

## SATAN TEMPTS EVE

But eventually, one day something happened. Satan, in the form of a Serpent, came to Eve.

Genesis 3:1-5 says, *Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*

*And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:*

*But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.*

*And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:*

*For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*

Now, you know that if a snake slithered up to most girls today, they would run away screaming. But back then, the Serpent was a beautiful creature. It walked upright on legs. Eve wasn't afraid of it.

Satan knew all about Adam and Eve. He also knew all about the fact that God had told them not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Satan knew God had given Adam and Eve a free will. That means they could choose what they wanted to do. He knew they could decide what they would do with their days. They could choose how they would spend their time. They could choose whether or not they would obey God's rules.

## EVE LISTENS TO THE WRONG VOICE

Satan spoke to Eve, and she listened to him.

Genesis 3:6 says, *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*

Let me tell you, Satan was definitely the wrong one to whom Eve should listen. He hated God. He only wanted to destroy all that God had made. Satan did not care about Eve. He wasn't concerned about what happened to her. He wasn't distressed that she was being denied the fruit from that one tree. Satan only wanted to hurt God.

Eve should never have listened to Satan in the first place. As soon as he planted the idea of disobeying God and doubting what God had said, she should have remembered that God only wanted the best for her. She should have known God didn't want her to eat the forbidden fruit for a very good reason.

You see, God knew the terrible consequences of what would happen if they did eat the fruit.

But God allowed Eve to make a choice. He didn't force her to obey what He had commanded.

Eve would have made a wise choice if she had been content with all that God had provided for her. She had plenty of wonderful fruit that was allowed to her. She should have listened to God.

Unfortunately for us all, Eve listened to Satan. When Satan tempted and teased her with the forbidden fruit, she began to doubt God. She began to want something she should never have touched.

### **FORBIDDEN FRUIT TODAY**

One of these days, like Eve, you are going to come across some forbidden fruit. What is forbidden fruit?

The Bible tells us of many "forbidden fruit" that we should not touch, such as lying, stealing, murder, envy, impure thoughts and actions. All of these are things we should not have in our lives. They are things that God has said are forbidden to us.

Why? Why does God say some things are off limits? Is God trying to boss us around? Does God want to spoil our fun? Is God just mean?

No. God tells us what to do and what not to do, because He knows what is best for us. He also knows the terrible, bitter consequences we will have to pay if we disobey God and His Word. God knows that those things might seem like fun at the beginning, but their end leads to bitter destruction.

### **A TERRIBLE LOSS**

Adam and Eve chose to disobey God and eat the forbidden fruit. As a result their lives were completely changed. Their lives became bitter. They no longer were allowed to live in the beautiful Garden of Eden. They were thrown out of the garden. They had to work hard to raise food and make a living.

But the worse thing that happened as a result of Adam and Eve's sin is that they no longer had fellowship with God. Before, God would come to walk and to talk with them daily in the garden. But that would never happen again. Their sin separated them from the one who loved them the most.

God told them in the very beginning that, if they ate from the forbidden fruit, they would die that very day. Forbidden fruit was bitter and deadly for them.

## **FORBIDDEN FRUIT IS DEADLY**

Forbidden fruit is the same for you. If you make the choice to do the things that a Christian should not do, then you will pay the consequences of sin. You can have a sweet, productive life that is pleasing to you and to God. But disobedience brings bitter, sad results, even to Christians.

Perhaps you are not a child of God. You have never asked Jesus to forgive you sin. You are born in sin and if you do not ask Jesus to forgive your sin, you will have Spiritual death. You will be separated from the One who loves you most - God.

God hates sin, and sin must be punished. But God gives you a free will. God lets you decide whether you will obey Him, or if you will disobey Him.

Adam and Eve did not get much of a chance to enjoy the forbidden fruit. It only took one bite before it became bitter in their mouths. Immediately they regretted it. But they couldn't undo what they had done.

The same is true for you. Forbidden fruit looks so good, but you won't enjoy it for long. You will never be able to undo your sin.

## **WHOSE VOICE WILL YOU LISTEN TO?**

So who will you listen to in your life? What choice will you make? If you plan to obey God, you need to make up your mind right now to listen to God and to ignore Satan when he comes to tempt and tease you.

So many times, God's voice is a still, small whisper, while Satan shouts at us to listen to him. All around you, Satan is tempting you to taste forbidden fruit. The TV tells and shows you all sorts of ungodly things. Your friends may tempt you to do things you shouldn't do. Worldly music can tease you to be like the world.

Satan will use everything he can to get you to disobey God. Satan still hates God, and he doesn't care one little bit about what's best for you. All Satan wants is to destroy your life and your testimony.

But you can choose to listen to God, instead. God speaks to us through His Word, the Bible. You need to spend time reading the Bible to see what God wants you to do.

You can also choose to be content with all the blessings that God has given to you. Every day God guides us. He provides for us. Every day God loves us. And some day we will get to spend eternity in Heaven with Him.

Maybe you are a Christian, but you have listened to Satan. You have tasted some of his forbidden fruit. Afterwards you discovered how bitter that forbidden fruit can be. God is ready to forgive you. You just need to pray and ask His forgiveness.

Maybe you have never asked Jesus to forgive your sin. You aren't even a Christian, yet. Would you like to be? We can show you how.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to examine the fruit in your life. Is it sweet or bitter?

When your parents ask you to do something for them, how do you react? When you have a job to do, do you do your best or just enough to get by? When temptations come to you, do you resist doing things that are not pleasing to God or do you listen to Satan's voice?

Sweet fruit is grown on a good tree. Your life must be right with God. You must be close to Him if you want to grow sweet fruit. I challenge you to ask the Lord every day this week to produce sweet fruit in your life. Ask Him to help you.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to show you how you can produce sweet and not bitter fruit in your life.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Name something the Bible calls a “Forbidden Fruit.”
2. What animal allowed Satan to use him in the Garden of Eden?
3. From how many trees did God forbid Adam and Eve to eat?
4. What was the name of the tree from which Adam and Eve were forbidden to eat?
5. Quote today’s Bible memory verse.
6. What did God say would happen if they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?
7. What other things happened to Adam and Eve after they sinned?
8. How does God speak to people today?
9. How can people speak to God today?
10. Name a way that Satan will tempt you to eat “Forbidden Fruit.”

# Bitter Fruit

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy,  
peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,  
meekness, temperance: against such there is  
no law. Galatians 5:22-23



I will let God produce  
sweet fruit in my life.

- Adam
- Choice
- Content
- Death
- Eden
- Eve
- Evil
- Forbidden
- Fruit
- Garden
- Good
- knowledge
- Life
- Obey
- Satan
- Serpent
- Sin
- Tempted
- Tree
- Whisper

E	G	D	E	L	W	O	N	K	G	J	H	U	B	I
A	A	G	V	V	H	S	E	D	I	L	B	F	S	G
A	R	S	E	M	I	Z	D	F	N	P	Z	G	G	R
D	D	S	E	M	S	L	D	L	I	S	N	U	K	C
D	E	A	T	H	P	M	I	O	S	L	I	O	A	K
E	N	T	M	I	E	N	B	E	O	D	M	U	C	Q
P	I	A	P	V	R	E	R	K	E	G	E	H	X	B
U	Q	N	E	M	Y	P	O	T	C	R	O	L	I	G
X	J	D	W	S	E	P	F	R	U	I	T	R	A	Z
R	X	C	T	N	E	T	N	O	C	X	B	I	R	B
D	A	Q	T	U	R	S	M	E	K	E	Q	Y	V	I
S	N	F	L	K	U	Z	B	J	D	L	A	Q	E	L
R	H	N	U	J	J	E	O	Y	W	E	K	Q	M	S

Find the words below. Look forward, backwards,  
up, down and diagonally.



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LESSON 3

THE FRUIT OF OBEDIENCE

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Genesis 2:16-17, 4:1-12

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

I will let God  
produce sweet fruit in my life.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness,  
goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

Galations 5:22-23



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

Fruit in a person's life refers to the things you say and do. It also refers to the things that happen as a result of what you say and do.

For example, if you say something that is a lie about another person, then the fruit of that lie may be that the other person is hurt very much. It might produce an enemy for you. It might produce hard feelings. It might even cause big trouble!

But if you were to say something kind about a person, then the fruit of those kind words might be that the person feels good about themselves and they think highly of you. Your kindness will produce a sweet fruit.

God wants to produce sweet fruit in your life. He never wants to produce bitter fruit. One of the best ways to produce sweet fruit for God is to be obedient to Him. God will not force you to produce sweet fruit, but how wonderful sweet fruit always is in a life!

Today's Life Lesson is: I will let God produce sweet fruit in my life.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### IN THE GARDEN

Obtain Flash Card

Charles Austin Miles trained to be a pharmacist and he worked in that job for many years, but one day he felt the tug of God to do something totally different with his life. He felt God wanted him to become a hymn writer. So in 1892 Mr. Miles left his job as a pharmacist and began to write hymns. (Show Flash Card)

Mr. Miles' greatest desire was that he able to use his life to produce sweet fruit for God. He once said, "It is as a writer of gospel songs I am proud to be known, for in that way I may be of the most use to my Master, whom I serve willingly."

Over the rest of his lifetime he wrote many hymns. Some of them we still sing today. One of his most beloved songs is called, "In The Garden."

Listen to C. Austin Miles' own words as he describes how he came to write this beautiful hymn.

“One day in April, 1912, I was seated in the dark room where I kept my photographic equipment and organ. I drew my Bible toward me; it opened at my favorite chapter, John 20 - whether by chance or inspiration, let each reader decide. That meeting of Jesus and Mary had lost none of its power and charm.

As I read it that day, I seemed to be part of the scene. I became a silent witness to that dramatic moment in Mary’s life when she knelt before her Lord, and cried, ‘Rabboni!’

My hands were resting on the Bible while I stared at the light blue wall. As the light faded, I seemed to be standing at the entrance of a garden, looking down a gently winding path, shaded by olive branches. A woman in white, with head bowed, hand clasping her throat, as if to choke back her sobs, walked slowly into the shadows. It was Mary. As she came to the tomb, upon which she placed her hand, she bent over to look in, and hurried away.

John, in flowing robe, appeared, looking at the tomb; then came Peter, who entered the tomb, followed slowly by John.

As they departed, Mary reappeared; leaning her head upon her arm at the tomb, she wept. Turning herself, she saw Jesus standing. So did I. I knew it was He. She knelt before Him, with arms outstretched and looking into His face cried, ‘Rabboni!’

I awakened in sunlight, gripping the Bible, with muscles tense and nerves vibrating. Under the inspiration of this vision I wrote as quickly as the words could be formed the poem exactly as it has since appeared. That same evening I wrote the music.”

I come to the garden alone  
While the dew is still on the roses  
And the voice I hear falling on my ear  
The Son of God discloses.

He speaks, and the sound of His voice,  
Is so sweet the birds hush their singing,  
And the melody that He gave to me  
Within my heart is ringing.

I'd stay in the garden with Him  
Though the night around me be falling,  
But He bids me go; through the voice of woe  
His voice to me is calling.

And He walks with me, and He talks with me,  
And He tells me I am His own;  
And the joy we share as we tarry there,  
None other has ever known.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

First start by telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Since this is such a short verse, you could discuss ways to keep your mind and body pure for God.

### VERSE

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

Galatians 5:22-23

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Genesis 2:16-17, 4:1-5

### LESSON

#### **LOTS OF FRUIT**

Fruit is mentioned so many times in the Bible. Sometimes the fruit is good and sweet and desirable. But sometimes the fruit mentioned is bitter and undesirable and leads to destruction.

The first fruit that is mentioned in the Bible is the fruit that hung on the trees in the Garden of Eden. There were many different fruits, but there was only one fruit God asked Adam and Eve not to eat. What was the name of that tree? Right. It was the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Genesis 2:16-17 says, *And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:*

*But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

We all know that the fruit that God told Adam and Eve to not eat was the very same fruit they couldn't resist. They ate of the fruit of the tree and a terrible thing happened. Just as God had told them, they died. They didn't die physically on that very day, but they died Spiritually. That very day they sinned against God and their sin separated them from God.

God put Adam and Eve out of the garden so they would not eat from another tree. God didn't want them to eat from the Tree of Life. If they ate that fruit they would live eternally in their sinful condition. So they had to leave the Garden.

## **TWO BROTHERS, TWO SACRIFICES**

The next time that we see fruit in the Bible brings us to the story of Cain and Abel. They were the sons of Adam and Eve.

Genesis chapter four tells us a little bit about Cain and Abel. Abel was a shepherd. He cared for sheep for his living. Cain chose a different profession. He became a farmer. He raised fruit and vegetables.

Genesis 4:2b says, *And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.*

Both of Cain and Abel worked very hard to make a living for themselves and for their families. Both had good honest jobs. When the time came for them to offer a sacrifice to God as a covering for their sin, both men brought a sacrifice. But both men did not offer the right sacrifice. Only one man obeyed God.

Abel brought a lamb to offer as a sacrifice to God just as God had instructed. But Cain decided to bring of the fruit of the ground. He brought the fruit which he had grown himself. He thought that his fruit was a wonderful sacrifice. He thought he could please God in his own way. He chose to disobey God's commands to him.

## **GOD REJECTS CAIN'S OFFERING**

Was God happy with the sacrifice that Cain brought? No. We know that God was not happy at all. God rejected Cain's fruit. And when God rejected Cain's offering of fruit, Cain became very angry.

Genesis 4:3-5 says, *And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.*

*And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.*

Why did God reject Cain's fruit that he had worked so hard to grow? Was it bad to be a farmer? No. Farming is honest work and necessary to survival.

Do you think that perhaps Cain brought rotten, spoiled fruit that angered God? No. I think Cain brought the firmest, ripest, sweetest most beautiful fruit he had grown. He was proud of his work and proud of his fruit.

### **THE WRONG SACRIFICE**

Then why did God reject Cain's fruit? God rejected it because it was the wrong sacrifice. You see, back when God killed the lamb to make clothes to cover Adam and Eve's nakedness, we believe it was then that God taught them how to make sacrifices to cover their sin. The blood of the lamb could not take away their sin, but it looked forward to the time when Jesus, the Lamb of God, would shed His blood, not just to cover sin, but to completely take away sin.

Cain knew what to sacrifice. God had been very clear that He wanted a lamb. Cain even knew why God wanted the blood sacrifice. He knew that fruit could not shed blood to cover his sin. But Cain was full of pride and self-importance. He had a rebellious, disobedient heart. He didn't want to listen to or obey God's instructions. Cain brought the wrong fruit and he learned a bitter lesson as a result.

Cain's anger caused him to kill Abel in a jealous rage. And when God saw what Cain had done to his brother, God sent Cain away.

Genesis 4:11-12 says, *And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;*

*When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.*

### **THE RIGHT SACRIFICE**

Sometimes we bring the wrong fruit to God also. We try to impress God with our own good works. But God is not impressed.

Titus 3:5a says, *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.*

God wants to produce sweet fruit in our lives, but it must be the right fruit that is pleasing to Him.

So what is the right fruit to bring to God? What kind of fruit does God want you to have in your life so you can show God and others how much you love Him?

Galatians 5:22-23 tells us what kind of fruit you should have in your life. Let's read it. *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

That's the kind of fruit God wants in your life. And God wants to produce the fruit of obedience. Cain brought his own fruit, but that was not pleasing to God because his was the fruit of disobedience. Make sure that the fruit you bring to God is the fruit that comes from being obedient to Him!

### **GOD PROVIDES THE SACRIFICE**

If Cain would have had a heart that was willing to obey God, then he would never have considered bringing the wrong fruit. He would have wanted to bring the right sacrifice to God.

Have a willing heart, read God's Word, spend time in prayer, and I promise you that you will produce the right fruit in your life.

Just as Cain and Abel could not take away their own sins except by bringing a sacrifice that was acceptable in God's eyes, you and I must also have a sacrifice to take away our sins. The lamb that Abel brought was killed and its blood covered his sins before God.

We also need a Lamb to shed His blood for our sins. But we do not have a lamb like Abel brought. Instead God provided the perfect Lamb, Jesus Christ to take away our sins.

John 1:29b says, *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*

Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, died on the cross to take away our sins. Jesus was perfect. He had never sinned, but He died so that you and I would not need to die.

Romans 6:23 says, *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Our sin demands death, but God loves us so much that He sent Jesus to die in our place. Because of what Jesus did on the cross, we can have our sins forgiven. We can be saved and spend all eternity in Heaven with God.

God has provided the sacrifice for your sin. Jesus died for you. Have you accepted His sacrifice? Have you asked Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your life? You can!

If you have never asked Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your life, then God cannot produce the right kind of fruit in your life. First you need to be saved.

Would you like to ask Jesus to become your Savior today?

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

I challenge you to spend some time this week reading and thinking about our memory verse, Galatians 5:22-23. Ask God to produce good fruit in your life.

Maybe there is one fruit that you just have a really hard time producing. Maybe you have a hard time loving someone in your school. Maybe you have a hard time showing joy because it is easier to moan and complain every time you have to do something that you don't want to do. Maybe every day you can ask the Lord to work on a different fruit, so that when others look at your life they will see God producing good fruit in you.

Ask God to help you to be especially willing for the Spirit to work on that area of your life. It is only with the help of the Holy Spirit that you can produce sweet fruit. Daily remember that it is the fruit of the Spirit, not your own fruit!

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to produce sweet fruit in your life.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. What did Abel do for a living?
2. What did Cain do for a living?
3. What did Abel offer as a sacrifice to God?
4. Quote today's Bible verse.
5. What did Cain offer as a sacrifice to God?
6. Why did God reject Cain's sacrifice?
7. Name a fruit that God wants to produce in your life.
8. What is the reference for the verses that tells us the fruit of the Spirit.
9. Name another fruit God wants to produce in your life.
10. Name another fruit God wants to produce in your life.

# The Fruit of Obedience



But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy,  
 peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,  
 meekness, temperance: against such there is  
 no law.  
 Galatians 5:22-23

I will let God  
 produce sweet fruit in my life.

- Abel
- Acceptable
- Animal
- Attitude
- Cain
- Cover
- Farmer
- Fruit
- Lamb
- Obey
- Rebel
- Sacrifice
- Shepherd
- Sin
- Slay
- Willing
- Worship

G	V	E	D	U	T	I	T	T	A	W	I	O	S	F
X	S	A	C	R	I	F	I	C	E	B	J	U	B	O
W	Z	H	G	S	V	E	C	O	D	Z	E	T	B	D
L	E	B	E	R	X	E	H	V	F	H	I	L	O	Y
A	G	D	D	P	P	M	M	E	A	U	Y	G	B	T
M	N	L	G	T	H	I	H	R	R	G	L	X	E	S
B	I	G	A	Y	V	E	H	F	M	D	Y	R	Y	H
M	L	B	S	M	L	N	R	S	E	P	U	G	Y	Z
S	L	A	Y	S	I	N	Q	D	R	S	W	B	V	Z
E	I	Y	F	A	M	N	Z	U	G	O	R	L	Q	R
I	W	J	C	K	E	Y	A	V	R	H	W	B	V	O



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LESSON 4

SPIRITUAL FRUIT

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Acts 1:1-14, 23-26, 2:1-4

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

The Holy Spirit  
helps me produce godly fruit.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*

Galatians 5:25



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

God wants you and me to produce Spiritual fruit. Those fruits are the fruit that we learned about in our Bible verses for the past couple of Sundays in Galatians 5:22-23. Things like love, joy, peace, and all the others.

God also knew that we would need help producing those fruits in our life so He gave us someone to help us. God gave to us the Holy Spirit. It is through the Holy Spirit that you and I can produce Spiritual fruit that is pleasing to God.

Today's Life Lesson is: The Holy Spirit helps me produce godly fruit.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### STOLEN FRUIT

Obtain Flash Card

### STORY

Justin and Zach walked slowly home from school. Neither one was very anxious to get home because they would only have to start doing homework. It seemed like their teachers gave them tons of homework these days.

Didn't the teachers realize, that they had little league practice after school? Then only a few minutes of daylight left to just relax? The walk home was the only time of the day, that didn't seem to be packed with something to do.

Zach and Justin were neighbors and had been friends since they were little. They spent a lot of time together. Justin went to church and had gotten saved when he was in the second grade. Zach would go to church with Justin sometimes, but his parents never went. When something else was going on, Zach didn't go either.

Somehow, no matter how much Justin talked to him about the Lord, Zach had never accepted Jesus Christ. He always had an excuse. Sometimes he said he just wasn't ready to get saved. Sometimes he would laugh at Justin and tell him, that he took life too seriously.

But Justin wasn't about to give up. Every chance he got, he would invite Zach to church. He often talked about God, and what God was doing in his life. In fact, just that afternoon he had invited Zach to a youth meeting at his church that weekend. They were having a special meeting for the teens. Maybe, Zach would finally accept Christ. He hadn't said no yet.

It had been hot at ball practice today. Justin and Zach had decided to cut through the little town they lived in to grab a Coke at the convenience store.

In front of the little store were all sorts of boxes of fresh fruit and vegetables that the owner displayed to entice people to buy from him. The boxes were tilted up to show the bright juicy oranges and sweet, red apples. (Show Flash Card)

“Those apples sure look good,” remarked Zach.

“Yeah, but I don’t have any money. How about you?” Justin asked.

“Nah. I’m always broke. Could barely afford the Coke.”

The boys walked toward home. After a few minutes, Zach pulled an apple out of his coat pocket and took a bite. Then he pulled out another one and started to hand it to Justin.

“Where did you get that?” Justin asked. He was surprised to see the apples. He knew Zach hadn’t bought them.

“Take a wild guess!” Zach said, holding out the second apple to Justin.

“I can’t believe you did that! I don’t want it.”

“Oh, come on. Don’t be so goody-goody. Take it.”

“No thanks, it’s stolen.”

“You didn’t steal it. You didn’t do anything wrong. Come on. It’s really good!” said Zach.

The apple did look good. But Justin knew he couldn’t take it. It just wouldn’t be right. And besides, Justin knew he had been trying to witness to Zach for a long time. What would that do to his testimony?

“It’s true that I wasn’t the one who stole it, but it’s stolen just the same. I don’t want it.”

“You’re no fun. You have no sense of adventure. It’s just a stupid apple,” protested Zach.

“I don’t want it.”

“Yeah, well, we’re home now. I gotta lot of homework. See ya later,” said Zach.

“Can you come with me to the youth meeting on Saturday?” Justin asked.

“Naw, I don’t think so. Sounds boring,” Zach said as he headed into his house.

Justin stood and stared at Zach’s back. He was pretty discouraged. He had done the right thing by not taking the apple, but now Zach didn’t want to go to the youth meeting at church because he was angry with him.

“Should I have taken the apple? What if Zach never goes to church with me again?” Justin wondered. But Justin knew in his heart, he had done what God would have wanted him to do. He would just have to leave the rest up to God.

“I guess I’ll just have to pray harder for Zach. Maybe someday he’ll get saved,” Justin thought as he turned and headed into his house.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.* Galatians 5:25

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER’S STUDY TEXT

Acts 1:1-14, 23-26, 2:1-4

### NOT ALONE

For forty days after Jesus rose alive from the grave, He walked the earth. He showed Himself to many people. He made sure that His followers completely understood what He had been teaching them all along about the Kingdom of Heaven. He made sure they understood why He died on the cross and rose from the grave.

But Jesus could not stay on earth for long. His earthly ministry was completed and He was going back to Heaven. In His place He was leaving eleven men to carry on His work and grow His church. He knew they would not be carrying on the work alone for long.

As Jesus was going up in the clouds to return to Heaven, He gave His disciples one last command. He told them to return to Jerusalem and stay together until God sent to them a helper. This helper was the Holy Spirit. This helper would dwell inside of them and go with them wherever they went. Never again would they be alone. Never again would they lack the presence and power of God. The Holy Spirit would be with them always!

Acts 1:1-5 says, *The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,*

*Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:*

*To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:*

*And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.*

*For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.*

### **Now?**

The disciples could hardly believe that Jesus would leave them so soon after He had returned. They wanted to hold onto Him forever. They didn't want Him to leave. In fact, they still held hopes that Jesus had come back to restore the kingdom to earth.

But the Lord told them that they would not know the time when the kingdom would be restored, but they would be given power from God to obey. Jesus told them that the Holy Spirit would come on them and that with the power of the Holy Spirit they would be mighty witnesses for Him in Jerusalem and in all the world.

Then Jesus was caught up in the clouds and the men stared up into the sky. They did not want to see Jesus go and they could hardly believe their eyes.

As they stared, two angels stood by them and asked, "Why do you stand and gaze into heaven? This Jesus, which was taken up into Heaven will come again in the same way some day."

The disciples did not know when Jesus would return. Maybe it would be soon. All they knew was that they should obey the command Jesus had given them to return to Jerusalem and wait for God to send the Holy Spirit to them. So they obeyed and headed back to Jerusalem.

Acts 1:6-11 says, *When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*

*And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.*

*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon **You**: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

*And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.*

*And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;*

*Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*

## **UPPER ROOM**

For ten days the disciples gathered in the upper room. Other followers of Jesus gathered with them also. Together they waited for the thing that Jesus had told them would happen. They probably did not know what to expect, but they believed Jesus. Their days of unbelief were past. Now they had settled in their hearts and minds the fact that Jesus was God. They had settled the fact that they would give everything they had to continue to follow Jesus for the rest of their lives.

All who were gathered in that upper room had a long, fervent prayer meeting. For ten days they waited. For ten days they prayed. They did not give up and go home. They were confident that something important was about to happen and this time they intended to be ready.

*Acts 1:12-14 says, Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.*

*And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.*

*These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.*

While the disciples and other followers waited, they knew they should pick one more man to join the disciples so there would be twelve men as Jesus had started out with in His ministry. Judas had betrayed the Lord and he was gone. Now they found two godly men named Justus and Matthias. They prayed that the Lord would show them which of the two should join their group. They asked God to search the hearts of these two men and show them the man that should be selected.

The heart of each person is what determines what they do and what they say. God searches the heart of each one of us. He knows what is in your heart. He knows if you love Him and desire to serve Him.

The Lord showed them that Matthias should be the man to join the twelve apostles.

When Jesus was on the earth His chosen followers were called disciples. Now the Bible begins to call them Apostles. An Apostle was one who was trained personally by the Lord and was witness to His resurrected body. They were not men who had only heard about Jesus and believe He was God. They were men who had personally experienced His life, death, and resurrection. So, Matthias was chosen for the job.

*Acts 1:23-26 says, And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.*

*And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen,*

*That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.*

*And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.*

## **A FULFILLED PROMISE**

Passover is the feast where the Jews celebrate the fact that they were rescued from the bondage of slavery in Egypt. A lamb was slain and its blood protected them from the death angel who killed all the first born who did not have the blood of the lamb on their door. Every year, even now, the Jews celebrate this wonderful day when God delivered them.

Every year, from the day of Passover to the day of the Pentecost, it is exactly fifty days. (Leviticus 23:15-16, 21. You can figure out the exact day of Pentecost by finding out the current Jewish day for Passover and counting 50 days. That will be the day of Pentecost.)

Pentecost is the celebration to God for the bountiful crops He has given to them. It is also a celebration of the day when God gave the ten commandments to Moses. God gave the law to guide His people. On this Pentecost day, God was about to give the Holy Spirit to His people. Just as God gave the law on the day of Pentecost long ago, now God gave the Holy Spirit on this Pentecost as a guide to His people.

The disciples waited the final ten days till Pentecost in the upper room as they had been told. Then on the fiftieth day, Jesus' promise to send the Holy Spirit to them was fulfilled.

A sound from Heaven like a mighty, rushing wind filled the upper room. Everyone present heard and felt it. This was the time when Jesus' promise to them was fulfilled. Above the head of each one in the room there was a fire. It settled on them all. In this wind and fire, the Lord sent the Holy Spirit. And with the Holy Spirit came a new and amazing power. The Holy Spirit allowed these men of God to boldly speak the words that God wanted them to speak and the Spirit allowed those listening to hear what God was saying to them in their own language.

Acts 2:1-4 says, *And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.*

*And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.*

*And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.*

*And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

## 50 DAYS

From the days of Moses in the Old Testament to this present day, the Jewish people celebrate first Passover and then 50 days later they celebrate Pentecost. Unfortunately they do not see the marvelous connection to the day we celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus and then the day, 50 days later, when He sent the Holy Spirit to earth to live in us.

Jesus Christ was truly the perfect Passover lamb. He gave His life and shed His blood so that we could be freed from the bondage of sin. Just as the first Passover set the Jewish people free from the bondage of slavery in Egypt, so the sacrifice of Jesus, the Lamb of God, sets us free from the bondage of sin.

God commanded Moses to tell the people to celebrate the Passover. He also commanded us to celebrate the Passover time when Jesus became our sacrificial lamb. And the real victory was won on Resurrection Sunday when Jesus arose alive from the grave!

Then on Pentecost, 50 days later, we were given not the Law but Grace. We were given the Holy Spirit to live within each of us!

It is through the help of the Holy Spirit that every Christian is enabled to live a life that is godly. The Holy Spirit helps us to produce Spiritual fruit. Without Him, we could not produce that fruit on our own.

Maybe you are not a Christian. Maybe you have never admitted that you are a sinner and that you need a Savior. You cannot save yourself from sin, but Jesus Christ died on the cross to take away your sin. Today you can ask Jesus to forgive you sin and come into your life. If you do that, then the Holy Spirit will come to live inside of you and He will help you daily to produce godly fruit for God. Would you like to have your sin forgiven? We can show you how.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to allow the Holy Spirit to guide you.

Jesus did not return to earth again a few days after He ascended to Heaven in front of the disciples. He did not return in their lifetime. He has not returned yet over two thousand years later. But in the perfect time Jesus will return. He said He would and He never lies. He will return!

Some day Jesus will return to take you to be with Him. In the meantime, you are to do as Jesus commanded the disciples on the day He was taken up into Heaven. You are to go and tell the world the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ. You are also supposed to produce Spiritual fruit in your life.

Fortunately, you do not have to obey that command alone. If you are a Christian, then the Holy Spirit lives inside of you. He is always with you. He gives you the power to obey Jesus' commands. He helps you and guides you each day. He helps you to produce Spiritual fruit.

How wonderful to have the Holy Spirit as your personal guide!

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit and obey as He guides you.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. What did Jesus tell His disciples to do after He left?
2. Recite today's memory verse.
3. Who appeared to Jesus' disciples after He went up into Heaven?
4. What did the disciples and other followers do while they waited in the upper room?
5. Name the man who was selected to be the new twelfth Apostle.
6. What does the Passover celebrate?
7. What does Pentecost celebrate?
8. How many days after Passover does Pentecost occur?
9. What happened in the upper room on Pentecost?
10. Name one way the Holy Spirit helps you.

# Spiritual Fruit

If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Galatians 5:25



The Holy Spirit helps me produce godly fruit.

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Start with the letter I. Write every other letter, in order, on the blanks in the box. Find out the secret message.



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LESSON 5

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Acts 2:5-13

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

The Holy Spirit  
helps me produce godly fruit.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.* Galatians 5:25



## OPEN IN PRAYER

## INTRODUCTION

No matter how hard you try, you cannot produce the fruit of the Spirit by yourself. You can try and try, but it is useless. The only way you can produce the fruit of the Spirit in your life is by allowing the Holy Spirit to do the job for you!

Today we will be talking about allowing the Holy Spirit to produce those fruits in your life.

Today's Life Lesson is: The Holy Spirit helps me produce godly fruit.

## SONG TIME

## SUPPORTING STORY

### FROM SEED TO SUNFLOWER

Obtain Flash Card

Optional: Bring in a few sunflower seeds.

Matt was excited. Today his dad had promised that he could help plant sunflowers in the garden.

Last week Dad had prepared the soil for planting. He had taken his garden tiller and walked up and down the rows of dirt breaking up the hard patches and tossing out weeds that were trying to grow. When he finished the job, the ground looked soft and ready for planting.

The next Saturday Matt and his dad gathered their tools. They took a garden spade for digging, gloves to protect their hands, and sunflower seeds. Out they went into the garden.

Dad picked a row where the seeds would get plenty of sunshine. They started at one end of the row and began to work. Dad would dig a small hole and Matt would drop a few seeds into the hole. Then Matt would push some dirt over the top of the seeds to fill the hole. He would gently pat the earth into place.

Again and again Matt and Dad would dig a hole, drop in seeds, and pull the dirt over the top. As the sun rode higher in the sky it became warm and Matt got a smudge of dirt on his face when he wiped the sweat from his forehead. It was hard work, but Matt and Dad did not complain. They just kept working until the entire row had been planted.

At the end of the row, Matt and Dad stood up and stretched. Their backs were a bit sore from bending so low to plant the seeds, but Matt did not care. He was thinking of the beautiful sunflowers that would grow soon.

Matt looked at the row they had planted with pride. Right now it didn't look like anything at all. It only looked like a plain old row of dirt, but he knew that because of the work he and Dad had done, soon they would have a row of beautiful sunflowers to enjoy. Not only would they be able to enjoy looking at the sunflowers, but they would also be able to enjoy all the seeds the sunflowers would produce.

Mom would toast some of the seeds and they would be able to eat them. Those seeds were so yummy! Some of the seeds would be used to feed the birds and squirrels that came to their yard. And some of the seeds would be saved to plant for next year's crop of sunflowers.

Your life is a lot like those sunflowers. Right now, you are like these tiny seeds. (Show sunflower seeds.) But you won't always be young. You will grow up and if you grow in the Lord, He can make something beautiful and useful of your life. (Show Flash Card)

Let me tell you how. Let's think about what it takes for this seed to be able to grow into a beautiful sunflower.

First, the soil must be prepared. Matt's dad needed to take his garden tiller and make the dirt ready, didn't he? The same is true for your heart and life. Your heart is the soil that needs to be prepared in order for God to grow something in you. Your heart must be ready to accept the things God wants to place within you.

Like Matt's dad had to break up the hard soil and toss out the weeds, you need to let God break up your hard heart and toss out the sin that would keep you from growing in the Lord. The only way God can plant good things in your life is to let Him come into your heart and take away your sin. Have you done that?

Secondly, Matt and his dad had to plant the seeds. Nothing can grow if nothing is planted! God wants to plant good things in your life. He wants to prepare your heart by planting His Word. The Bible is the seed that needs to be planted deep in your heart. When you listen to the Pastor preach and to your Sunday School and Children's Church teachers teach, the Word is being planted. As you listen and obey your parents day by day, the Word is being planted. If you can read, you need to be reading God's Word, the Bible, so that it will be planted deep within your heart. When it is planted there, then it can begin to grow.

Thirdly, once Matt and his dad had finished planting, they could only wait for the seeds to grow. They could water the plants. That was important, but only God could send the sunshine and only God could make a miracle happen over time that would cause the plants to grow.

The same is true with you. You can help things along by continuing to water your life with God's Word and by doing all you can to help good things grow in your life, but it is really a

miracle of God that shines down on you to make something productive and beautiful of your life. You can pray and ask God to be working in your life and He certainly will!

Finally the day came when the sunflowers bloomed in Matt's garden. He and everyone who looked enjoyed the beautiful flowers. The family enjoyed the seeds that mom toasted. The birds and squirrels enjoyed eating the seeds. And there were seeds left over to be used to keep producing more and more sunflowers.

As you grow older, if you have allowed God to plant good things in your heart and life, you will one day enjoy the fruit that is planted right now. So will others. Your life will be beautiful for God. As others look at you they will see the beauty of the Lord shine through you. Your life will produce good things that will be a blessing to everyone you meet. And you will continue to produce good fruit for the Lord for your entire life!

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.* Galatians 5:25

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Acts 2:5-13

### LESSON

#### A MIRACLE

During the celebration of Pentecost in Jerusalem the city streets were crowded with Jewish people. There were all the people who normally lived there. There were Jewish people from far away who had come to celebrate. Some of the people came from distant lands to celebrate. The streets were full!

The Apostles didn't waste a minute. After the Holy Spirit had come they rushed out into the streets and began to preach about Jesus Christ. Normally only the people in Jerusalem and nearby would have been able to understand the Apostles. Those who could not speak Hebrew would not have understood a word the Apostles were saying. But the Holy Spirit performed a miracle and each person who listened to the Apostles were able to understand the message being preached to them. The Apostles spoke in Hebrew and the Holy Spirit made each man to hear and understand in his own language!

The crowd continued to build bigger and bigger as word got out that the Apostles were preaching and every man could understand regardless of his language. Everyone was amazed. They asked, "How can it be that these men from Galilee speak and we all hear in our own language? What do you think it means?"

A few of the people even thought the Apostles were drunk. But they were not drunk. They were just allowing the Holy Spirit to use them to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

*Acts 2:5-13 says, And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.*

*Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.*

*And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?*

*And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?*

*Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,*

*Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,*

*Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.*

*And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?*

*Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.*

#### **WHAT A DIFFERENCE!**

Think about the amazing difference in the men who now stood boldly and preached to everyone about Jesus Christ. Before Jesus arose from the dead and God sent the Holy Spirit, they had been confused about Jesus' message. They thought He was going to lead them in defeating the Romans. They were confused about who Jesus was. They did not totally understand that He was indeed God the Son. And when Jesus had been taken prisoner and put to death, they ran to hide like frightened rabbits.

Now things were totally different. These twelve Apostles completely understood what Jesus had come to earth to do. They knew He came to tell the world how to get to the Kingdom of Heaven. They knew that Jesus was God the Son and had died on the cross and risen so that all could be saved from sin. They no longer ran and hid in fear. They boldly went to the streets and preached for all to hear. They were no longer afraid or confused. They were changed men!

What changed them? Simple. The Holy Spirit lived inside of them and He gave them the understanding they needed. He gave them the ability to speak out for God. And He gave them the boldness to stand fearlessly and proclaim that Jesus was the Messiah sent from God to save the world from sin!

The Holy Spirit taught, enabled, and used these men so that daily they were producing Spiritual fruit. It seemed like an impossible thing just weeks before, yet with the Holy Spirit guiding them, nothing was impossible.

Do you know what? The Holy Spirit who guided and empowered the Apostles on the day of Pentecost is the same Holy Spirit who lives in you. He can guide and empower you if you will let Him! He can make the same amazing change in your life too.

### **THE HOLY SPIRIT IN YOU!**

Who is the Holy Spirit? He is a part of what we call the Trinity. We believe there is one God but that God is made up of three parts. Those three parts are God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The word “tri” means three. We believe God has those three parts. God the Father and God the Son are in Heaven now. God the Holy Spirit is on earth living in the hearts and lives of Christians.

It may be hard to understand how God can be one and yet also three, but it is something we don't need to understand. We just need to have the faith to believe that if God has told us that is the case, then it is true.

These days you may hear people, even unsaved people, say that they are “spiritual.” They think that if they think good thoughts and do good things they are spiritual. They think if they believe in God or some greater being then they are spiritual. They are wrong.

What does it mean to be spiritual? You can only be spiritual if you are controlled by the Holy Spirit of God. If the Spirit lives in you and you allow Him to work in your heart, then you are spiritual. If not, then you are not spiritual.

1 Corinthians 2:12 says, *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.*

Unfortunately even some Christians are not spiritual. They are carnal. What does that mean? Carnal means fleshly. A carnal Christian is controlled by their flesh. They are controlled by the things that feel good and seem good to their bodies. They do not allow the Holy Spirit to control them. That is sad!

Galatians 5:25 says, *If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*

God sent the Holy Spirit for a very specific reason. The Holy Spirit's job is to guide and lead you through this life on earth so that you will be doing the will of God.

Let me tell you a few things that the Holy Spirit can do in your life if you allow Him to.

1. First, the Holy Spirit was sent to live inside of each Christian. Even a Christian who refuses to listen to the Holy Spirit is still indwelt with Him. But it is a wonderful thing to have the Holy Spirit of God living inside of you each day.

1 Corinthians 3:16 says, *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*

2. Secondly, the Holy Spirit's job is to convict you of sin. When you are not pleasing to God, if you are a Christian, there is a little voice in your heart and mind that warns you to stay away from sin. That same little voice scolds you when you have sinned. That is the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Why does the Holy Spirit convict you of sin? So that you can get that sin out of your life and restore you to a close relationship with God.

John 16:8 says, *And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.*

3. Thirdly, the Holy Spirit's job is to give you power to serve and obey God. On our own, we don't always make the smartest and best decisions, but God gave you the Holy Spirit to help you make wise decisions and to give you the power to act on those decisions.

Jesus told His followers to go tell all the world about the good news of salvation. That is a very big task and on your own you would have a hard time doing that. But the Holy Spirit gives you the ability and power to obey Jesus' command.

Acts 1:8 says, *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon **You**: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

### **GALATIANS 5:22-23**

Let's take a moment here to say our memory verse that we worked on a few weeks ago from Galatians 5:22-23. (Say verse with children.)

Galatians 5:22-23, *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

When you read this verse in Galatians, don't miss one of the most important things about it. That is that it is the fruit "of the Spirit." That means that the Holy Spirit, who lives in you, if you are a Christian, is the one who actually produces all these good fruits in your life. It is not you who produces the right fruit. It is God.

Imagine we are looking at an apple tree. If the tree were to produce some apples, does the tree have to strain and push and sweat and grunt to cause an apple to appear on its limb? No, the fruit just grows naturally. The water and nutrition from the soil go up into the roots to feed the trunk and limbs and buds. The sun shines on the tree. Time passes, and eventually, apples appear.

It is the same with you. In order to have love, joy, peace, and the other fruit, you might try to force them to appear in your life. You try really, really hard. You think about it and wish you could do it, but you know, it is the fruit of the SPIRIT. God is the One who produces fruit in your life. He is the One who can cause love and joy to flow out of you and on to others.

No matter how hard you try to produce your own fruit, you are still only a human. You can't do it on your own. But God can and will help you to produce the right kind of fruit. How?

First, you must be willing to allow God to produce fruit in your life. If you are constantly ignoring God or fighting Him away, then you will be unfruitful. God won't force you to bear fruit. You have to be willing.

Secondly, you must fertilize and nourish your heart and mind with God's Word. The Bible is God's way to help you grow as a Christian. It is our instruction manual on raising good fruit.

Thirdly, you need lots of Sonshine. That's spelled, S - O - N - shine. In other words, you need to be connected to Jesus Christ, the Son, through prayer. You need to be talking to God every day.

#### **THE HOLY SPIRIT IN YOU**

Without the Holy Spirit guiding and convicting, we would find it difficult to know what God wants us to do. We can read the Bible and it will guide us, but God wanted us to have a guide inside of us at all times who constantly reminds us to obey Him.

It is a very special thing that we have the Holy Spirit living in our hearts. What a privilege to have a personal guide who wants to help us to obey God and who gives us the power to do what God asks us to do. If we will only listen to the Holy Spirit we will always be able to please God and do what is best for us.

#### **WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

Are you a child of God? Does the Holy Spirit live in your heart? The Bible says that if we are Spirit controlled, then we know it. The Spirit lets us know that we are the children of God.

Romans 8:16 says, *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.*

Are you a child of God? The only way to become a Christian is by asking Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your heart. Then you will be a Christian and then the Holy Spirit will live within you, helping you each day to live for God.

If you have never been forgiven of your sin, would you like to do that today? You can. We can show you how.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to allow the Holy Spirit to guide you and to produce Spiritual fruit in you life. How? Here are some suggestions.

1. Ask God to help you to be willing to listen to the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit cannot speak to someone with a stubborn, rejecting heart. You must be willing to listen when He speaks.

2. Ask God to help you to recognize the Spirit's voice when He speaks to you.

There are lots of voices around you each day. Satan is constantly urging you to disobey God. Your own sinful nature urges you to do things your own way. How can you recognize the Spirit's voice? It will be the voice that urges you to stay away from sin and to do what is right!

3. When you do know that the Spirit is speaking to you, obey.

God wants to speak to your heart through the Holy Spirit. As you read your Bible and as the Spirit urges you to obey, you have a choice. You can shut your eyes and ears and ignore the Spirit, or you can listen and obey. It is always, 100 percent of the time, the best thing for you to listen and obey!

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to listen and obey when the Holy Spirit speaks to you.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Why were the streets of Jerusalem filled with so many people?
2. What is being celebrated at Pentecost?
3. What did God give to Christians at that Pentecost?
4. What were the disciples like before they were given the Holy Spirit?
5. What were the disciples like after they were given the Holy Spirit?
6. What miracle happened when the Apostles went out to preach?
7. Who made this miracle happen?
8. What is a Christian called who allows his flesh to control him?
9. Name one way to allow the Holy Spirit to control you.
10. Recite today's memory verse.



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LESSON 6

LOVE: PERFECT LOVE

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Luke 23:26-28, John 19:16-22,  
Matthew 27:39-43

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

God is love.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*      1 John 4:8



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

Today we are going to begin talking about the very first fruit of the Spirit. Who knows what that fruit is? That's right. The first fruit of the Spirit is love.

The Bible tells us a lot about love. There are many types of love. It can be a strong affection for a person or thing. It can be a gushy feeling we have in our hearts. But the type of love we will talk about today is the perfect love that God has for you and me.

Today's Life Lesson is: God is love.

### SONG TIME

### SUPPORTING STORY

#### CHOSEN!

#### Obtain Flash Card

Justin was pretty excited. Today he would go pick out a new dog. He had a dog when he was in grade school, but when it died, mom said it was too much trouble to start again with a new dog. She decided they needed a break from pets. Finally, after years of dropping hints, mom had agreed to a new dog.

Justin decided to go to the local animal shelter. The dogs there really needed a home.

One glance at the filled cages told Justin that he would have his pick of a wide selection of breeds. There was a pudgy, young yellow lab whose entire body wiggled as he wagged his tail. There was a Jack Russell that was so excited it looked like he was shooting straight up into the air from the floor.

"Wish I could have that much hang-time when I'm on the court!" Justin thought.

Countless dogs that could only be described as mutts yipped and wagged and looked so cute. All the dogs rushed to the fronts of their cages, barking and eagerly vying for Justin's attention.

All but one. One dog stayed huddled in the back of his cage. He didn't even lift his eyes as Justin passed his cage. (Show Flash Card)

"What's wrong with that dog?" Justin asked.

“Poor guy. He’s feeling pretty rejected right now. He just got returned yesterday.”

“Returned? What’s the story on that?” Justin questioned.

“Guess he was too much trouble. The guy who brought him back said he wet on his carpet and chewed his shoes. He said the mutt was a troublemaker.”

Justin eyed the dog. “Maybe the guy just didn’t take the time to train him.”

“Maybe. Anyway, ever since he’s been back, that’s how he’s been. Kind of like he’s embarrassed or heartbroken.”

Justin took a closer look at the mutt. He looked like a good enough dog. Maybe just what he had been looking for.

“Can I see if he’ll come to me? Will you open the cage?” Justin asked.

“Sure.” The keeper swung open the door and Justin stepped just inside. For the first time the dog lifted his eyes and fixed his wary gaze directly on Justin.

“Come here, boy.”

Justin squatted down and held out a hand. The mutt looked like he was debating, trying to decide if Justin really wanted him to come.

“Come on,” Justin coaxed as he leaned a bit closer.

“Good boy.”

The mutt got up and inched just close enough to sniff Justin’s hand.

“Good boy. How would you like to be my dog?”

Justin slowly moved closer and gave the mutt a scratch behind the ear. The mutt looked into Justin’s eyes again and seemed to decide he liked what he saw because slowly his tail began to wag.

“I’ll take him,” Justin said with a smile as he scooped the mutt into his arms. “This is the dog I want!”

Did you know that you and I are a bit like that mutt? The Bible says that we are all sinners. We are born in sin, so we sin. Because of our sin, we are pretty unlovable, just like the naughty mutt.

But John 3:16 says that God loves us anyway.

That mutt made such a nuisance of himself that the first owner returned him, but Justin took pity on him.

We are sinful and must be pretty hard to love also. But God still loves us. He loves us so much that He sent His own Son, Jesus Christ, to pay the penalty for our sin. Romans 3:23 says, *For the wages (or payment) of sin is death.* Jesus died on the cross. He paid the penalty for our sin. Now all we need to do is ask Jesus to forgive our sin. And He will!

If you ask forgiveness and accept God's love, then you can go from being sinful and unlovable to being a child of the King of Kings.

I think that mutt felt pretty loved and special as it was carried home in Justin's arms. And you can feel just as loved and special if you become a child of God.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Be sure to explain words like benefits to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*

1 John 4:8

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Luke 23:26-28, John 19:16-22, Matthew 27:39-43

### LESSON

#### HOW IMPORTANT IS LOVE?

Love is very important to God. How important? Well, the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 13:13, *And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.* The word charity is the same word for love. God says there of the three great virtues which are faith, hope, and love, love is the greatest.

Faith and hope are very important things in God's eyes. The Bible tells us that without faith we cannot please God. So faith is important. Hope is important to God also. The Bible tells us that our hope of eternal life is in what Jesus Christ did for us when He died on the cross for us. So that's very important too!

But the Bible says that of the three, love is the greatest. The Bible tells us that God is love. And that is true. Love is the sweetest fruit of the Spirit.

John 3:16 says, *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

God loves you and me with a perfect love!

### **GUILTY!**

God not only feels love for us, He IS love. It is hard for us to even understand what that means. But God's love for us is so great that even while we were lost in sin He loved us and was working out a plan so that we could have our sin forgiven and spend all eternity with Him in Heaven.

Romans 5:8 says, *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

How terrible it must have been for Jesus when the time came for Him to go to Calvary. He had spent most of the night agonizing in prayer. Then in the dark, early morning hours one of His own men betrayed Him and ran away in fear. He was bound and led away in the cold morning to hear the religious leaders tell terrible lies about Him. He was pushed from place to place. He was beaten, spit on, and mocked. And all the while He stood alone.

I imagine that the physical and mental agony was terrible, but Jesus endured it bravely. And all the while Jesus knew that the worst lay ahead. He knew that soon He would hang on a cross and shed His blood for the sins of the world.

Pilate had said, "I find no fault in this man." Yet Jesus had been proclaimed guilty and He was led away to be crucified.

### **GOLGOTHA**

The angry mob pushed along closely behind as the Roman soldiers roughly shoved Jesus and forced Him to take up the heavy wooden cross and head up the hill to a place called Golgotha, which means, The place of the Skull.

Jesus was tired and weak. Despite the fact that He was having a difficult time carrying the cross, the soldiers wanted to hurry things along. They grabbed a man from the crowd named Simon and ordered him to carry the cross for Jesus.

Closely behind there followed those who had known and loved Jesus. Many of the women who had fixed meals for Jesus and His disciples came to watch. Even Mary, Jesus' mother, could not turn away but stayed close by. What sorrow they felt as they watched how cruelly Jesus was being treated.

Luke 23:26-28 says, *And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.*

*And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.*

*But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.*

When they got to the place where the crucifixion was to take place, the soldiers told Simon to lay the cross on the ground. They stretched Jesus on top of it. They took long spikes and nailed His hands and His feet to the cross. Then they lifted the cross up and dropped it into the hole that had been prepared. Jesus did not call out in pain or anger. He silently let them nail Him to the cross because He knew that this was God's plan for our salvation.

There, on that terrible cross, Jesus hung.

Jesus hung between two men. They were criminals and they were being crucified for crimes they had committed. On each side hung a guilty sinner, but in the center hung Jesus Christ, the perfect, sinless Son of God.

John 19:16-18 says, *Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.*

*And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:*

*Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.*

Pilate took a paper and wrote a sign that he ordered to be placed on the cross above the head of Jesus. The sign said, "Jesus of Nazareth. The King of the Jews."

When the chief priests saw what was written on the sign, they were furious. They didn't want anyone to think that Jesus was their King! They demanded that Pilate remove the sign or at least write that Jesus just claimed to be the King of the Jews. They didn't want it to look like Jesus was in fact the King of the Jews. But Pilate refused to change a thing. He told them, "What I have written, I have written!"

As much as the religious leaders refused to believe that Jesus was the King of the Jews, we know that Jesus was truly the King of the Jews. He is King of the Universe.

There on that cruel cross hung the great King of kings and He did it for love!

John 19:19-22 says, *And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.*

*This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.*

*Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.*

*Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.*

## **THE MOCKERS**

The Roman soldiers and the angry Jews that had demanded Jesus' death stood under the cross and they began to mock Jesus and to shout terrible things at Him. They yelled at Him, "You said you would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days! Ha! You can't save yourself, how can you do that?" Others shouted, "If you are the Son of God, as you claim, come down from the cross!"

The religious leaders milled about beneath the cross. They could barely contain their glee. They had longed to see Jesus put to death and finally it was happening! They mocked Jesus saying, "He saved others, but He can't save Himself! If He is the King of Israel, let Him come down from the cross, then we'll believe in Him!"

They shouted, "He trusted in God. Let God deliver Him now! He claimed to be the Son of God, but look at Him now!"

Those foolish men could not understand that Jesus was indeed the Son of God and He hung on that cross for our sins, not for His sins. He would not come down from the cross so that we could have our sins forgiven. They were totally blind spiritually!

Matthew 27:39-43 says, *And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,*

*And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.*

*Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said,*

*He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.*

*He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.*

## **THE TEMPLE**

At an earlier time Jesus had told His followers that the temple would be destroyed and He would rebuild it in three days. What they didn't understand was that He was talking about His

body. There on the cross His body would be destroyed. But in three days Jesus would raise Himself from the dead. He would not stay dead. He would rise from the dead!

But it was first necessary to allow His body to be destroyed. Jesus needed to die on the cross. Why? So that He could take our punishment for sin. The wages or punishment of sin is death and Jesus died to take our punishment. Jesus could not save Himself if He intended to save us!

Oh, how much Jesus loved you and me!

### **GREATER LOVE**

Jesus loves you so very much! He loves you so much that He was willing to die for you. That is perfect love!

John 15:13 says, *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

Jesus died so you could be saved from your sins. But it is not something that happens automatically. In order for you to be saved from your sins and on your way to Heaven, you must ask Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your life. You can do that today. We can have someone take a Bible and show you exactly how you can do that. Would you like to?

### INVITATION

### CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to remember all week long how much Jesus loves you. Sometimes we forget how much Jesus really loves us. If things go wrong, we think Jesus doesn't care. When we get sick or have problems we think He doesn't love us. When those we love have problems we wonder if Jesus loves us.

Don't ever wonder again. Jesus proved His great love for you when He died on the cross. God proved His great love for you when He sent Jesus to earth to die in your place.

Jesus loves you and knowing that can help you to live for Him. It can help you to be encouraged every day when you remember! It can also help you to show the love of God to others. So, don't forget. Jesus loves you!

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to remember that Jesus loves you.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Who did Jesus stand before in the great hall?
2. What did Pilate tell the people he thought of Jesus?
3. Who carried the cross for Jesus when He could not?
4. What did Pilate write on the sign that was posted on the cross?
4. Who mocked Jesus as He hung on the cross?
5. Recite today's memory verse.
6. What did Jesus mean when He said He would destroy and rebuild the temple?
7. Why did Jesus need to die on the cross?
8. Name one thing the soldiers did to Jesus.
9. Name another thing the soldiers did to Jesus.
10. Who was the perfect Lamb of God?

# Love: Perfect Love

He that loveth not knoweth not  
God; for God is love. 1 John 4:8



God is love.

Write the letter on the top line that follows the one given below  
the line to crack the code. Example:

$\frac{J}{I}$

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z A

$\frac{T}{S}$   $\frac{\quad}{G}$   $\frac{\quad}{D}$   $\frac{\quad}{R}$   $\frac{\quad}{H}$   $\frac{\quad}{M}$   $\frac{\quad}{K}$   $\frac{\quad}{D}$   $\frac{\quad}{R}$   $\frac{\quad}{R}$

$\frac{\quad}{K}$   $\frac{\quad}{Z}$   $\frac{\quad}{L}$   $\frac{\quad}{A}$   $\frac{\quad}{N}$   $\frac{\quad}{E}$   $\frac{\quad}{F}$   $\frac{\quad}{N}$   $\frac{\quad}{C}$

$\frac{\quad}{C}$   $\frac{\quad}{H}$   $\frac{\quad}{D}$   $\frac{\quad}{C}$   $\frac{\quad}{E}$   $\frac{\quad}{N}$   $\frac{\quad}{Q}$   $\frac{\quad}{L}$   $\frac{\quad}{X}$

$\frac{\quad}{R}$   $\frac{\quad}{H}$   $\frac{\quad}{M}$   $\frac{\quad}{R}$  .



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LESSON 7

LOVE: LOVE FOR OTHERS

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction

Song Time

Supporting Story

Memory Verse Time

Bible Lesson Time / Invitation

Challenge / Quiet Time

Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Luke 2:41-52

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

God is love.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God  
love his brother also.*

1 John 4:20



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

It is easy to love ourselves. God didn't have to command us to love ourselves. We do that naturally. But it can be very hard to love others.

Today we will be talking about loving others and hearing a story about two women who did not love each other on little bit!

Today's Life Lesson is: God is love.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### WILLIAM CAREY: THE FATHER OF MISSIONS

Obtain Flash Card

A large world map hung on the wall over William Carey's rough and worn workbench. The bench was laden with the tools and leather necessary to make new shoes and to repair old, worn out shoes. The shop smelled of leather, shoe wax, and glue. It was dusty and dirty. It was the shop of a man who worked hard with his hands.

As William cut, stitched, and hammered away on a pair of shoes, he would gaze at the different countries on the map. His body was in the shoe repair shop, but his mind was far away. He would think of what life would be like in a foreign land, not because he wanted to explore, but because he truly was concerned for the souls of the millions of people in each country. (Show Flash Card)

William looked at the countries and thought of the lost souls each one represented. There were so many people who had never heard that Jesus loved them so much that He came to die on a cross for their sins. So many people had never even heard the name Jesus before.

William began to pray for the people in those countries who had never heard the Gospel. He knew praying was something he could do even as he stood in his shop in England and repaired shoes.

William worked on shoes and prayed for souls day after day. And as he prayed, his love for those lost people began to grow. He had never met them, but he truly loved them.

One day as he was praying for the lost, he began to feel God's prompting to do more. He had a strong feeling that God wanted him to do more than just pray. But what could he do? He

was just a shoemaker. He wasn't a preacher. But William could not deny that God was speaking to his heart. Eventually the shoemaker surrendered to God's call and became a Baptist minister.

Week after week, William preached to the people in his church about going to tell the lost about Christ. He would share his great burden for the people who did not know Christ and would never know if someone did not go to tell them the Gospel. He pleaded with his people in hopes of persuading them to go to tell the unsaved about Jesus Christ.

Many of the people in Williams congregation jeered and ridiculed him. Why should they leave their comfortable homes, their families, and their jobs? Why should they love or even care about people they had never seen or met?

William refused to be silent. He knew there were so many people who needed to hear about Jesus. He continued to present the need in hopes that someone would catch his vision. He hoped that someone would begin to love those lost people the way he did.

Daily William pleaded with the Lord in prayer to send workers into the world. Then a strange thing happened. The Lord began to work in his own heart. William began to realize that it was no longer enough to tell others of the need to go spread the Gospel. God laid it on his own heart to put his prayers into action. The Lord let William know that he should put his love into action. He needed to go spread the Gospel himself!

Soon William Carey surrendered to God's calling. He boarded a ship and sailed to India. There he began to spread tell everyone he met about God's great love. It was a hard ministry. India was a heathen land and they had many false beliefs, but God gave him wisdom and strength to serve. God gave him a deep love for those people.

Soon after William Carey went to minister, he was followed by other men and women who also felt the call of God to foreign missions. They finally caught his vision of telling others about Jesus. But it was William Carey who was the first to answer the call. He is known as the Father of Modern Missions. Through his life and ministry many were won to Christ and many Christians also felt called to missions. Because of his great love for the people he had never even seen, many others also learned to love those lost in sin.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.*

1 John 4:21

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Luke 2:41-52

### LESSON

#### **TWO WOMEN WHO DID NOT LOVE**

God loves us and He tells us in the Bible that we should love each other. In fact, our Bible verse tells us that if we love God we should also love our brother. In other words, if we love God that we will love other people.

But that's not always the case, is it? No. We often find it quite hard to love other people. In today's lesson we find two women who lived together, yet they did not love each other in the least. And their lack of love caused big troubles!

#### **SARAH DECIDES NOT TO WAIT**

God had told Abraham that one day he and his wife, Sarah would have a child. That was wonderful news for Abraham because he and Sarah wanted a child very much.

After God had talked to Abraham and assured him that there would indeed be a child that was his own as his heir, he believed God. He probably went to Sarah and told her all that had been said about how his descendents would be greater in number than the stars.

Sarah must have listened quietly and then she went alone to think. She wasn't quite so trusting as Abraham. She decided to come up with a plan to help God along.

Sarah went to Abraham and suggested that he take her maid, Hagar, and make her his wife. We can't imagine having two wives, but in those days it was a common practice among ungodly people. It wasn't God's plan for Abraham to take a second wife, but they did not ask God if it was a good plan. They just went ahead and did it.

#### **HAGAR'S PROBLEMS**

We don't know much about Sarah's maid. This we do know, her name was Hagar and she was an Egyptian that had become a maid to Sarah during the years they had lived in Egypt.

Hagar had no choice in the matter. When Sarah explained that she was to marry Abraham so that she could give them a child, she obeyed. She was a servant. A slave. She did what she was told.

Part of Sarah's plan worked. Soon Hagar knew that she was going to have a child. Part of Sarah's plan back fired. Hagar began to hate Sarah as soon as she knew that she was going to have a child because she felt she was better than Sarah. Sarah could not have a child, but she could! Now Hagar began to hate Sarah. These women had no love for each other. They only felt hate.

Hagar felt superior to Sarah and she let it show. Boy did that upset Sarah. How dare Hagar act superior to her? She was still her maid! Sarah was furious and anger and hate began to grow in her heart. Every time Sarah saw Hagar, she would be mean to her. She never had a nice word to say to her. Sarah made Hagar's life miserable.

And Hagar felt the same anger and bitterness toward Sarah. Even if she was not brave enough to talk back to her mistress, she would give Sarah angry looks and she was slow to obey the commands that Sarah gave to her.

Oh, these two women were so miserable and hateful that I'm sure everyone around them was miserable too!

Sarah would march over to Abraham and pick a fight. She told him it was his fault that Hagar was so mean. She wanted him to do something about it.

So Abraham told Sarah that she could do as she pleased with Hagar. He said, "Don't blame me. Hagar is your maid. If you aren't happy with her, you take care of her. Do what you want to her."

To Sarah's shame, she began to treat Hagar very badly. She spoke harshly to her, she may even have beaten her. Every chance Sarah got, she would make things miserable for Hagar. Whatever she did, it was bad enough that Hagar decided to run away.

Genesis 16:6 says, *But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face.*

They weren't near a city or near Hagar's home country. They were out in the desert, far from any other people or any type of civilization. When Hagar ran, she had nowhere to go. But she was so afraid of Sarah that she decided to take her chances and go anyway.

### **GOD COMFORTS HAGAR**

I am sure that when Hagar was far from everyone and alone in the dark night, that she was frightened. She may have cried and wondered if she would even live to see this baby born. She probably shed many tears of sorrow. What a mess this was, and it wasn't her fault.

While Hagar sat next to a spring of water in the wilderness, the Lord appeared to her. He began to talk to her.

"Hagar, where did you come from and where do you intend to flee to?" the Lord asked.

Hagar explained that she was running from her mistress who had treated her so unkindly.

The Lord gave Hagar some advise and then He also gave her a promise.

The Lord told Hagar that she should go back to Sarah and humbly submit to her mistress. He probably gave her a few words of advise on how to act so that Sarah wouldn't be so angry with her.

Genesis 16:9 tells us, *And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.*

Then the Lord told Hagar that her son should be named Ishmael which means "God hears" because the Lord heard and paid attention to Hagar's cry. The Lord said that Ishmael would be a wild man, full of war against others. Her child would be the father of a great nation also.

God had told Hagar the truth. Just as Isaac, Abraham and Sarah's son, became the father of the Jewish people, Ishmael would become the father of the Arabic people.

So Hagar believed and obeyed the Lord. She got up and headed back determined to get along with Sarah. Now she knew that the God of Abraham was also with her.

Although Sarah and Hagar did not show each other any love, God loved both of them very much. I know that God would have been pleased if they had shown love to each other instead of acting the way they did.

## **LOVE ONE ANOTHER**

God loves us and His plan is for us to love each other.

In Matthew 22:37-39 Jesus was talking to a man who was a lawyer. The man asked Jesus, "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?"

Jesus clearly answered that man that the greatest commandment was to love God. We all kind of know that we should love God. But Jesus did not stop there. Jesus told the man that there was a second commandment that was also very important. Jesus said that we should love others as we love ourselves.

The verses say, *Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*

*This is the first and great commandment.*

*And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

It is easy to love ourselves. We are quick to think of ways to make ourselves happy and comfortable. But loving others the same way that we love ourselves is not always so easy. Certainly Sarah and Hagar had a very difficult time loving each other. But they were not very pleasing to God, were they?

God wants you to love other people and sometimes the hardest people to love are those people who we live with and who we see each day. Why? Because they don't always do things the way we want them to do things. They sometimes say things that hurt our feelings or make us angry. They sometimes get us in trouble. They sometimes seem selfish to us.

But God says that we are to love others, regardless of how they treat us. We are to show love for others even when it is not easy.

Love is a fruit of the Spirit and many times we need to ask the Holy Spirit to help us love others. It is only through the Spirit that we can truly show the love of God. Remember, it is the fruit of the Spirit, not the fruit of you!

Perhaps you are not a child of God. You do not know God as your personal Savior. The Bible says that Jesus Christ came to earth to die on the cross for your sins. Jesus loved you so much that He was willing to take your place and suffer for your sins.

What do you need to do? The Bible says you need to confess or admit your sin and ask Jesus to forgive you and come into your heart and life. Today you can do that. Today we can take a Bible and show you how you can be saved. Would you like to do that? You can!

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

I challenge you to love others as God has instructed you to do.

1 John 4:11 says, *Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.*

How can you show love for others? Here are some ways.

First, be kind. A loving person is not unkind. A loving person is loving and forgiving. Kindness shows that you care. You cannot be kind to a person for whom you do not have affection. Kindness flows out from a loving heart.

Ephesians 4:13 says, *And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*

Secondly, be helpful. Do things that demonstrate your love. Jesus loved you enough to die for you. Because of Jesus' love you can spend eternity in Heaven. Now pass on the spirit of doing things for others so that they will see the love of God in you.

If you have a hard time showing God's love to others, then don't give up. Instead ask God to help you. The Holy Spirit, who lives in you, wants to help you to show love to others.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to love others.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Recite today's memory verse.
2. Who decided to come up with a plan to help God give Abraham a son?
3. What was Sarah's plan?
4. What country was Hagar from?
5. After Hagar found she was going to have a child, how did she feel about Sarah?
6. What did Sarah do to Hagar?
7. What did Hagar do when Sarah mistreated her?
8. Who came to talk to Hagar in the wilderness?
9. What did God tell Hagar to name her son?
10. What else did God tell Hagar to do?

# Love: Love for Others



And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.  
1 John 4:21

God is love.

U	T	M	E	O	R	Z	V	U	M	J	O	N	M	S
B	N	W	C	H	Z	U	Q	E	P	P	O	I	X	B
I	E	D	N	T	V	E	R	G	A	I	V	Y	Z	U
C	M	L	E	M	E	C	N	E	T	I	S	V	U	K
Z	E	G	I	R	Y	N	O	C	I	S	Z	H	D	L
R	G	L	D	A	S	A	E	A	E	S	K	F	P	F
L	A	S	E	W	E	T	D	E	N	E	J	V	R	A
K	R	I	B	V	O	P	A	P	C	N	H	I	N	M
L	U	P	O	R	S	E	J	N	E	D	E	G	Y	I
V	O	L	P	C	S	C	Q	G	D	N	N	G	C	L
A	C	S	O	P	V	C	H	Q	D	I	Y	U	A	Y
M	N	X	Y	C	E	A	S	S	K	K	N	U	J	J
J	E	F	D	F	U	D	N	L	J	Z	G	G	W	E
P	G	V	D	J	M	X	A	H	G	H	B	J	U	A
J	R	Z	E	X	D	T	T	I	S	A	X	T	A	F

ACCEPTANCE  
ENCOURAGEMENT  
FAMILY  
FRIENDS

JOY  
KINDNESS  
LAUGHS  
LOVE

MERCY  
OBEDIENCE  
PATIENCE  
PEACE

PROTECTION  
TALKING  
UNDERSTANDING  
WARMTH

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LESSON 8

LOVE: LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Genesis 21:1-19

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

God is love.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.*

1 John 4:21



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

It is easy to love people who love you. But how about people who treat you badly? Is it easy to love them? No. It can be very hard to show love to those who are mean to you.

But God wants you to love others, even people who do not love you! In fact, the Bible says that you are supposed to love your enemies. That is a hard thing, but it is what God wants and God can help you to do just that!

Today's Life Lesson is: God is love.

### SONG TIME

### SUPPORTING STORY

#### OLD MAN CLINE

Obtain Flash Card (First show the picture of Old Man Cline frowning. When he gets saved turn the flash card upside down to show him smiling.)

Old man Cline stared out the window of his house. He was keeping a sharp eye out for those pesky kids who lived in his neighborhood. They were such a nuisance. If he had his way all children would be kept inside until they were no longer children. (Show Flash Card)

Through the years he had noticed that the children became more aggressive. They would ride their bikes past his old, run down, two story house and toss rocks and other things into his yard. One boy had come close to breaking a front window. That made him very angry!

Sometimes at dusk, just as the sun was setting and the darkness was closing in, he would hear excited but hushed voices. Out he would go to run off the foolish kids who were trying to sneak up close enough to get a glimpse into his house.

Often he heard the children taunts as they rushed by. They shouted things like, "Hey, Old Man Cline, what are you doing in there all alone? Why are you so grumpy?" Or some such nonsense. After awhile he began to think of himself as Old Man Cline. But of course, his name was George.

Those annoying trouble makers were too young to know that he was in the two story house all by himself because his wife had died long ago. He had no other family. And he wasn't in the best of health, so the lawn was unkempt and the house looked more unkempt every year.

The children just knew the place looked creepy and Old Man Cline was not a nice man. They knew enough to keep their distance which was fine with him.

Or at least, most of them kept their distance. Old Man Cline thought of the children who lived next door. They were especially annoying. It wasn't that they were destructive or mean like some of the other children in the neighborhood. And they never called him Old Man Cline, instead they spoke with a respectful tone and called him Mr. Cline.

But they had this annoying habit of smiling and waving every time he went out into his yard. He especially dreaded when they would run to his fence and call for him to come near. Then they had the nerve to invite him to their church.

Old Man Cline hated church. No, that wasn't right. Old Man Cline hated God! What had God ever done for him? He wasn't a church going man, but when his wife was dying he had gone so far as to kneel by her bed and beg God to save his wife. But she died anyway.

God had never done a single thing for him. God didn't care about him. So he wanted nothing to do with the children next door or their God.

One day he heard a sound outside. "What is it now?" he wondered crossly. Peering out his window he could see those pesky kids on their swing set. They were swinging away and singing at the top of their lungs.

What was it they were singing? Out of curiosity Old Man Cline stepped outside and listened. He could just barely make out the words and he couldn't believe what they were singing.

"Jesus died for Old Man Cline," they sang. He had heard it wrong. The children were actually singing, "Jesus died for all mankind," but he thought he heard it the other way and God began to work on his heart.

"What on earth?" he thought. He huffed back into the house, but the words would not leave his mind.

"Jesus died for Old Man Cline," the words echoed. Everywhere he went, "Jesus died for Old Man Cline."

It made him angry that they would be singing about him. "What has God ever done for me?" he would think in anger. Then the words would come to his mind, "Jesus died for Old Man Cline."

"Jesus died for me?" he wondered. "Well, I guess if that's true, I can't say he never did anything for me," he admitted.

Finally he could stand it no longer, so he decided to go next door and talk to Jim, the children's father. Jim answered on the first knock.

Old Man Cline wasn't sure where to start, but he finally blurted out, "Is it true?"

"Is what true?" Jim asked.

"That Jesus died for Old Man Cline?" he questioned. "I heard the children on the swing set singing those words. Is it true?"

"Yes!" Jim said with a smile. "Jesus DID die for Old Man Cline! Come in and let me tell you about it." And Jim told Mr. Cline that Jesus loved him so much that He had died for his sins. (ShowFlash Card turned upside down)

From that day on George Cline was a changed man. Now he had a smile on his face. His bitterness against God was gone. Now he knew that God loved him and Jesus died for him.

With the help of Jim, he fixed up the house and yard. He began to make it a point to be out front to welcome the neighborhood children so he could tell them as they headed home from school that Jesus died for Old Man Cline, and Jesus died for them.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.*

1 John 4:21

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Genesis 21:1-19

### LESSON

#### A FAMILY WITHOUT LOVE

Do you remember from our story last week that God had promised a son to Abraham? Sarah had not been able to have a son so she gave her maid, Hagar, to be a wife for Abraham. When Hagar found out she was going to have a child, she began to hate Sarah and Sarah began to hate Hagar.

There was constant fighting and strife between the two women. At one point Sarah even threw Hagar out into the wilderness. But God told Hagar to return and make some peace with Sarah.

The two women got along only because they were forced to be together. But there was no love between them. What a sad family situation that was!

Every day Sarah mourned the fact that she could not have a child. When Hagar's child was born, Sarah was not happy for Hagar, instead she was very jealous.

By now, Abraham was 99 years old. Sarah was 89 years old. Abraham could not believe his ears as God once again renewed His promise. He had anxiously waited for a son. He had trusted that God would keep His promise. But I suspect that so far it had been a long, hard wait.

Once again in Genesis chapter 17 the Lord came to talk to Abraham. Genesis 17:2 says, *And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.*

Abraham must have wondered if God had forgotten His promise. But here was God, renewing the promise again. Do you know what Abraham did when God renewed the promise this time? He laughed! He fell down on the ground and had a big belly laugh right in front of God.

Abraham must have thought, "God is talking about the impossible! Very funny. I'm almost 100 years old and Sarah's almost 90 years old. How could God be so wrong?"

But God sternly told Abraham that he was not joking. Sarah would have a son.

A short while later, God came back to talk with Abraham. This time three men, probably angels, came with the Lord. When Abraham saw all of them, he ran to tell Sarah to fix something to eat. He wanted to be polite to his company.

Sarah knew there were visitors and I'm sure she knew one of them was the Lord. She was probably curious, like most women would be, about what the men were discussing. She may have been fixing some cakes, but she was also keeping an ear open to listen. What she heard surprised her. They were talking about her! The Lord even told Abraham that by the following year she would have a child.

Sarah laughed within herself. She did not laugh from joy; she laughed from unbelief. The Lord had to be wrong. In her heart, Sarah felt the Lord was wrong. The Lord knew that Sarah felt that He was wrong. The Lord had not heard Sarah laugh, because she had only laughed in herself, but the Lord still knew it. The Lord turned to Abraham and answered Sarah's heart question.

He said in Genesis 18:14 *Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.*

### **SARAH'S SON**

The Lord was right. At 90 years of age, Sarah gave birth to a son. They named him Isaac. Do you know what the name Isaac means? It means laughter. Now Sarah's heart was again full of laughter, but this time it was a laughter of joy!

Genesis 21:6 says, *And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me.*

God had finally kept His promise. Abraham and Sarah had a son!

### **ISHMAEL TEASES ISAAC**

Ishmael was 14 years old when Isaac was born. The Bible says that when Isaac was weaned that Abraham threw a big party for Isaac. We don't know for sure, but Isaac was probably about 3 years old by now. Just a toddler.

The Bible doesn't say how Ishmael felt about Isaac. He was his half brother. They lived in a compound of tents out in the wilderness. He had watched Isaac grow.

I suspect that there may have been some jealousy in the situation. Ishmael was much older than Isaac and probably did not spend much time with him because of Sarah's and Hagar's hatred for each other. The two boys wouldn't have had much in common with the age difference. And Ishmael may have felt jealous. He would have wanted his father to pay more attention to him since he was older.

When Ishmael saw that his father threw a big party for a three year old, he might have thought, "Why on earth does he throw a party for that little twerp? He's too young to even care. And besides, he never throws parties for me!"

## **SARAH TAKES REVENGE**

Whatever Ishmael felt, we see that shortly afterwards, he began to mock and make fun of his younger brother. It may have just been some teasing, but it was not a nice thing for a seventeen year old to do to a three year old.

It sounds like the hatred that Sarah and Hagar felt for each other was being passed down to their sons, doesn't it? What a shame they could not have passed down love instead!

Ishmael did not know it, but someone was watching him. He may have thought he could taunt the little boy with no one knowing it, but Sarah kept a very close eye on her precious son.

Sarah saw Ishmael, Isaac's older half brother, mocking the young boy. Ishmael was 14 years older than Isaac, so he was probably just teasing the little boy, but it made Sarah very angry. How dare he even speak to her son in such a way!

So Sarah ran and complained to Abraham. She demanded that Abraham throw Hagar and Ishmael out of their compound. Sarah said, "Toss them into the wilderness. I don't care what happens to them. He can't insult my son like that!"

Sarah demanded that he throw Ishmael and Hagar out of the camp. She didn't care what happened to them. They just had to leave!

This grieved Abraham's heart. He loved Isaac, but he loved Ishmael also. Ishmael was his son. But he saw that he would have no peace in his home until he had done as Sarah wanted. What was he to do?

God came to Abraham and set his mind at ease. He told Abraham to do as Sarah had said. He again told Abraham that Ishmael would become the head of great nation.

So he cast out Hagar and Ishmael. He trusted God to do what was right.

## **HAGAR AND ISHMAEL CAST OUT**

This was the second time into the wilderness for Hagar and she may have suspected that it would not end as it had the last time. Before God had come to tell her to go back to Sarah and ask forgiveness.

This time, Hagar knew that Sarah would not take her or her son back. They were stranded in the desert. What a terrible plight. Abraham had given them some bread and a bottle of water and sent them away.

Hagar and Ishmael wandered aimlessly in the wilderness. She didn't know where she was or where she should go. How frightening it must have been.

Soon the bread was eaten and the water was gone. Now Hagar was sure they would die. She had lived in the desert long enough to know that you could not survive long without water. It just was not possible.

So Hagar told Ishmael to lie down a distance from her. She could not bear to watch her son die. Then she laid down and wept. But God was faithful to care for them, even out in the wilderness. He heard Hagar's cry. He saw their dilemma.

Genesis 21:17 says, *And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? Fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is.*

God told Hagar to go to Ishmael and then God opened Hagar's eyes so that she saw a well of water nearby. God continued to protect and guide Hagar and Ishmael. He eventually kept his promise that Ishmael would be the father of a great nation.

### **AN UNHAPPY FAMILY**

What an unhappy family they were! They had anger, jealousy, fear. The thing they needed most they did not have. They did not have love for each other. Instead, they were enemies!

Sometimes you may find that you have enemies that make your life miserable also. It may be in your family, it may be a school. Wherever it is, it is a terrible thing to be surrounded by people who do not like you. But you should not respond by being mean and hateful in return. Instead you should respond with love.

That is not an easy thing to do. Is it? Ask for God's help. Ask God to help you guard your words to keep them sweet. Ask God to give you the right attitude of cooperation and love toward others.

It is not an easy thing to love those who cause you trouble and grief, but that is what God wants you to do.

Matthew 5:44 says, *But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.*

Love is very important to God. Remember, God is love. If you are a child of God, then His love should be in your life. Even when it is hard to love those who are not nice to you, you need to ask the Holy Spirit to help you love anyway. Love is a fruit of the Spirit and the Holy Spirit can help you to love even your enemies!

One of the most amazing things that the Bible tells us is that God loved us enough to send Jesus to die for our sins while we were enemies to Him.

Romans 5:8-10 says, *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

*Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.*

*For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.*

If you have never asked Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your life, you can know that God loves you and wants to save you from your sin. Would you like for us to take the Bible and show you how you can have your sin forgiven? You can become a beloved child of God. Would you like to do that today? You can!

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to love those around you, even people who appear to be your enemies.

Matthew 5:44 says, *But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.*

How can you love your enemies? Do as this verse tells you. Do good to them. Pray for them. Be kind to them. And do you know what? Not only will you please the Lord if you do, you may even find that you have turned your enemies into friends! When you treat someone with love and kindness, then they will often respond by being kind back. But even if they don't you will still know that you are doing what God would want you to do.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to love even your enemies!

## BIBLE QUIZ

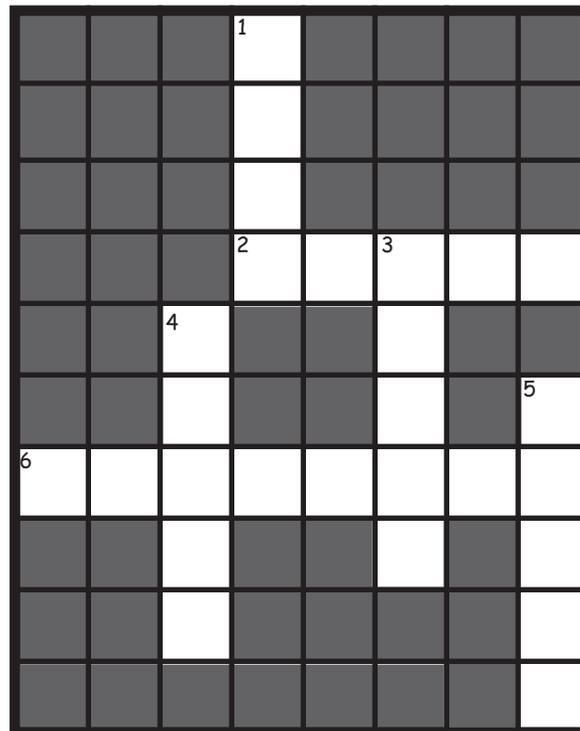
1. How old was Ishmael when Isaac was born?
2. About how old was Ishmael when Isaac was given a big party?
3. Recite today's memory verse.
4. What did Sarah see that made her so angry?
5. What did Sarah insist that Abraham do to Hagar and Ishmael?
6. What did Abraham give to Hagar before they left?
7. What did Hagar do when they ran out of water?
8. Who came to talk with Hagar?
9. What did God tell Hagar?
10. What did God provide for Hagar and Ishmael?

# Love: Love Your Enemies

And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.  
1 John 4:21



God is love.



### Across

2. What Ishmael did to Isaac.
6. Ishmael's age when Isaac was born.

### Down

1. What Sarah and Abraham lived in.
3. Came to visit Abraham.
4. What Sarah did when the angel told of a child.
5. How Sarah felt after Ishmael acted badly.

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LESSON 9

LOVE: LOVE GOD

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Exodus 20

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

God is love.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*

Deuteronomy 6:5



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

There may be days when you feel like the whole world is against you. You may think that no one loves you. The truth is that there is One who always loves you, no matter what you do, where you go, what you say. That One is God.

God is love and He always loves you. He may not love the things you say and do, if they are not pleasing to God. God hates sin, but He loves you.

It's wonderful to know that God loves you. And God's great desire is for you to love Him!

Today's Life Lesson is: God is love.

### SONG TIME

### SUPPORTING STORY

#### THE MOST TOYS

Obtain Flash Card

There is a saying you may have seen on bumper stickers. It goes like this: "The man who dies with the most toys wins." (Show Flash Card)

You may have seen that bumper sticker or heard that saying, but you probably don't know anything about the man who first said that saying. The man was named Malcomb Forbes. That name may not mean anything to you, but he was once a very famous man. Malcomb Forbes was an extremely rich man. His total focus in life was to make as much money as he could possibly make. Malcomb Forbes was a billionaire.

One year Malcomb decided to throw himself a birthday party. He threw the party for himself because no one else could afford to do it up as big or spend as much money as he could. He wanted everything to be done just right and it didn't matter to him how much money he spent because he had lots of money to spare.

Malcomb hired a famous Hollywood actress to act as his hostess for the day. He flew in all his millionaire friends so they could attend the party.

On the grounds of his large estate he hired people to set up large tents for where the guests would eat the finest foods and be entertained by top name entertainers. All the tables were covered with fine linens. Beautiful flower arrangements graced every table. The lawn was trimmed perfectly and flower beds were overflowing with beautiful blooms. On every table there were gifts for everyone in attendance.

All evening long the people laughed, ate scrumptious food, listened to entertainment, and enjoyed themselves. Malcomb was very pleased with his party.

At the end of the evening Malcomb called for everyone's attention. He held up a check and presented it to the actress who had acted as his hostess. Malcomb gave the actress a check for one million dollars just for being there!

Malcomb's millionaire friends were very impressed. They had lots of money, but not enough to throw such an elaborate party. Malcomb had outdone them all!

Malcomb Forbes was truly the man with the most toys. That was why he said, "The man with the most toys wins." I guess he thought he won something special for being the richest man alive!

But one day, Malcomb Forbes died. If he had never asked Jesus Christ to forgive his sin, then today Malcomb Forbes is in Hell. What good do any of his toys do him? What did he win?

Can you name some toys that people of all ages desire to have? (Take answers.) For many people, it seems like their goal in life is to get things. Toys. They want bigger houses, faster cars, designer clothes, and every electronic gadget they can possibly own.

Is it wrong to have "toys" or material things that you can enjoy in life? No, in fact, God may allow you to have money and nice things, but making and spending money should never be your main focus.

God wants us to focus on loving Him. Our time on earth is very limited. And God put us on earth for a specific purpose. That purpose is to love and glorify God.

Deuteronomy 6:5 says, *And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*

If we spend all our time focused on getting things, then we cannot spend our time fulfilling our Spiritual purpose of loving and glorifying God. God loves each of us so very much. We need to love God for all His blessings to us!

It's too bad that Malcomb Forbes didn't learn in life that the man who dies with his sin forgiven and his heart set on loving God wins!

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul,  
and with all thy might.* Deuteronomy 6:5

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Exodus 20

### LESSON

#### DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS

God wanted His special people to live in such a way that when He looked at them, their lives would please and honor Him. The Israelites were representatives of God. All the people in the other nations that surrounded them knew that the Israelites claimed to serve and worship the one true God. The other nations watched the Israelites. They wanted to see if God made a difference in how they acted and the things they said.

If you saw someone that claimed to be a special child of God, and yet they never acted like they loved God or never wanted to obey God, would you think they really loved their God? No.

Not only that, you might say, "If their God is so great, then why don't they want to love and obey their God? Maybe their God isn't so great."

There were times when other nations looked at the way the Israelites acted and thought that their God wasn't so great. Because the Israelites were acting so sinfully, they mocked God. That was a shame to God's name. God is great and worthy of love and praise, but because of the way they acted, many did not believe that God was great.

But that was never God's intention. God loves His children. He wants His children to obey Him so that they can avoid the sin that destroys their lives. He wants them to obey Him so that they can be at peace with Him.

## WHAT THE COMMANDMENTS MEAN

The first four commandments tell us how we can live peaceably with God. All of these commandments refer to how we show respect and honor toward God. If we keep these commandments, we will be at peace with God.

- 1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*
- 2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:*
- 3. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*
- 4. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.*

The last six commandments tell us how we can live peaceable with other men. All of these commandments deal with how we should treat other people. If we obey these commands, then we can be at peace with others.

- 5. Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.*
- 6. Thou shalt not kill.*
- 7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.*
- 8. Thou shalt not steal.*
- 9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.*
- 10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.*

## YESTERDAY AND TODAY

In the Old Testament, people who loved God tried to keep the ten commandments. But the people could not be good enough to always obey. They often broke one of God's commandments. Then they were in trouble with God.

So the people had to sacrifice animals as a covering for their sins. The blood of the lamb acted as a covering for their sin. But it did not take away their sin. Over and over, throughout their lifetime, the people had to offer a sacrifice for their sins.

But we do not offer animal sacrifices any more. The reason we no longer have to offer a sacrifice to cover our sin is that Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, came down to earth to offer Himself as a sacrifice for our sin. Jesus died on the cross. He shed His blood. And the blood of Jesus does not just cover our sin, it completely takes it away. That is because Jesus was the perfect sacrifice

for our sin. If we ask Jesus to forgive our sin, He will. Then we can know that our sins have been forgiven forever.

So now, in New Testament times, even though trying to keep the ten commandments is a good thing to do, Jesus gave new commandments when He spoke with a Pharisee who asked Him what the greatest commandment was.

This is what Jesus said in Matthew 22:37-40, *Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.*

*And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*

All of our love and devotion should be given to God. Everything we have, heart, soul, and mind, should be devoted to loving God.

Then we should love others also. It is easy to love ourselves. Sometimes it is hard to love others. But that is what God commands us to do.

Now, we should still try to obey God's ten commandments. They are good rules for our lives. But if we break one, we can know that God is willing to forgive us and help us to do better. We can ask for forgiveness and we will be forgiven.

In the new commandments that Jesus gave, He really sums up all the ten commandments from the Old Testament. If we love God and we love others, then we won't want to break any of the ten commandments. We won't want to do anything that would displease God or hurt others.

How about you? Have you accepted the gift of eternal life that is offered to you by the perfect sacrifice of Jesus on the cross? Have you accepted Jesus as your Savior?

God hates sin because sin causes death and separation from God. And the Bible says that we are all sinners.

Romans 3:23 says, *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*

The Bible also says that God loves you so much that He sent His own son to earth to die for your sins.

John 3:16 says, *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

It's not a hard thing to have your sin forgiven. You simply need to confess or tell Jesus you know you are a sinner. Then you need to tell Him you believe He died on the cross for you sin and that you believe He rose again three days later from the tomb. Ask Him to forgive you and come into your heart and life.

Would you like to do that? We can show you how today!

Maybe you are saved, do you obey the commandments that Jesus gave to us when He told us to love God with everything that we have and to love others as we love ourselves? That is what God wants you to do.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to remember the two commandments that Jesus gave us. It should be easy to remember. There are just two.

1. Love God with all your heart, soul, and mind.
2. Love others as you love yourself.

If you work on those two commandments this week, then God will be pleased with you.

How can you love God and others?

Show God love by spending time with Him. Read your Bible. Pray. God loves it when you talk to Him and let Him talk to you.

Show love to others by kind words, doing helpful deeds, showing mercy, being patient, and sharing what you have. There are so many ways to show love to others. See how many different ways you can find to show your love.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to love Him with all of your heart!

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Recite today's memory verse.
2. Why did God want the Israelites to live a holy life?
3. How do you treat someone you love?
4. How can you show God's love to others?
5. How can you show your love to God?
6. Name one of the ten commandments.
7. Name another of the ten commandments.
8. Name another of the ten commandments.
9. Why did God give the ten commandments to the people?
10. What two commandments did Jesus give?

# Love: Love God

And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with  
all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with  
all thy might. Deuteronomy 6:5



God is love.

## God Loves Me and I Love God.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

How many new words can you make from the words:  
**God Loves Me and I Love God.**

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LESSON 10

LOVE: WHAT NOT TO LOVE

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Genesis 13,18,19

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

God is love.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.*  
1 John 2:15a



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

“I love ice cream!”

“I love watching baseball games.”

“I love playing soccer!”

There are lots of things we love to do. There are lots of things we love with all of our hearts. The Bible tells us to love God with all our heart. But the Bible also tells us that there are some things we should not love. Really?

If you love God, then you should not love the World and worldly things that displease God. Today we will talk about what not to love.

Today’s Life Lesson is: God is love.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### WHAT DO YOU LOVE?

Obtain Flash Card

Jessica loved shopping. She loved the mall because there were so many great stores where she could look at all the latest fashions. There were racks and racks of cool clothes that she loved to try on to see how they fit. She loved to feel the materials. She just loved being near it all!

What Jessica did not love was the fact that she couldn’t afford to buy all the wonderful new clothing she longed for. Sure, every now and then her parents would buy her a new outfit, but the fashions changed so quickly and her parents insisted that they could not spend the money needed to keep her up on all the new styles. When she insisted that she needed more money, they told her to get a job if she wanted more money to spend. And not only that, they said she had to save some of the money she earned. They said she couldn’t spend all the money she made on clothing. Jessica thought that was totally unfair!

Jessica loved money. She loved the things money could buy. She hated being poor. (Show Flash Card and point to money)

Do you know what? Jessica is a servant to money.

Andrew was a good basketball player. He was built just right. He was tall and he was fast. He could reach his long arm around a guy from the opposing team and snatch the ball away

before he knew what happened. Then he could dribble it down court at top speeds, so fast the other players could hardly keep up. He was also dead on when it came to sinking a basket. The coach said he had a real future in the sport. Already the college coaches were coming to watch him play. He was sure to get into a great school. He was sure it wouldn't be long before the pros began to take notice of him.

Andrew loved sports. He loved the game. He loved the way everyone looked up to him and respected him because he was so good at basketball. He loved the idea that his talent would someday make him rich and famous. (Show Flash Card and point to basketball player)

Andrew hated it when his parents rode him about paying more attention to his studies. He felt that practice was what he should be doing. Everything else was a waste of his time.

Do you know what? Andrew is a servant to fame.

Emily liked to have everything go her way. She wanted her friends to agree with all of her opinions. When she didn't like someone, she wanted her friends to dislike that person too. When Emily wanted to go somewhere, she wanted her friends to go along and not make other suggestions.

Emily liked it when her parents gave her things, but she didn't want to help around the house. She felt like housework was her mom's job and yard work was her dad's job. Emily felt like her parents owed her the nice clothing and good food she enjoyed.

It made Emily angry when others didn't do things her way. It made her angry when she had to do things that bored her or took up her time. (Show Flash Card and point to girl)

Do you know what? Emily is a servant to her own self.

We all serve someone or something in this life. That is a fact. Some people serve money, some serve power, some serve fame, some serve self. What foolish things to serve! Not one of those things lasts or is of any true value. Money can go away quickly and no one ever seems to have enough. Power can disappear in a flash leaving one powerless. Fame only lasts for a short time and then everyone forgets who you are.

And serving self is just plain selfish. But we are all tempted to serve self at one time or another. We all have a natural tendency to serve self. We like things to go our way. We like to keep the best for ourselves. We like to be first in line.

The thing we love most is the thing we will serve in life. The Bible says that we need to guard our hearts and minds from loving and serving idols of any kind.

Deuteronomy 11:16 says, *Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them.*

Matthew 6:24 says, *No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

A wise person will choose to love and serve God instead of all the other things in life that we might serve instead. God will not share his glory with anyone or anything else. He wants to have first place in your heart and mind. He wants you to love and serve Him more than you serve money, or fame, or power, or even your own self. He wants you to put Him first.

If you love anything or anyone instead of God, it is a sin. It also will lead you the wrong direction in life. But it is a wise decision to love God the most of all. You will never regret a moment of loving and serving God. He is the great Creator. He made you, He loves you, and He only wants the best for you. And God makes the promise to those who do serve Him that it will be well with them and that they will live long on the earth.

Deuteronomy 5:32-33 says, *Ye shall observe to do therefore as the LORD your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.*

*Ye shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess.*

Serving the things of this world and serving self is foolish. It won't bring you happiness. It will only bring you ruin. That is the way with all sin. It leads to ruin. But when you submit yourself to be God's servant, then you will enjoy his blessings. And God's blessings are valuable and they last for eternity.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.*

1 John 2:15a

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Genesis 13, 18,19

### LESSON

#### LOT CHOSE THE WORLDLY THING

Lot was Abraham's nephew. When Abraham obeyed God to go look for a new land, Lot must have decided that he also wanted to go along. Maybe he wanted to see the world.

Both Lot and Abraham had large herds of cattle and flocks of sheep when they left Haran. In addition to the animals, they also took many servants along to help feed, care for, and move the animals. Along the way, as they traveled, the herds became larger. The animals multiplied on their own. And we know they were given more animals by the Pharaoh.

Things got pretty crowded. Soon the men that cared for Lot's cattle and the men who cared for Abraham's cattle began to fight. They fought about who would get the best grazing land. They fought about who should get the best watering holes. They fought about who had the prettiest cows! All they did was fight.

Soon it became very clear to Abraham that he and Lot would have to split up. If they could go to different areas, then the men and the cattle could live in peace. Everyone listening to them fight could live in peace. It was time for Lot and Abraham to go their separate ways.

Genesis 13:7 tells us, *And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.*

So Abraham went to his nephew, Lot. He told Lot that he didn't want any trouble. They were family and he didn't want all the arguing to destroy the relationship. Abraham knew that family should love one another.

Abraham explained to Lot that there was plenty of land and water for all of them if they just put a little distance between them. Abraham generously told Lot that he could have first pick of whatever land he wanted. Abraham said, "If you go to your left, I'll go to the right. If you go to the right, I'll go to the left."

Genesis 13:10 tells us that Lot made his choice. *And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.*

Lot took one look at the plain of Jordan and he saw that it had the richest soil for crops, the wealthiest cities, and the greenest grass. So he decided to take the best for himself.

### **LOOKS CAN BE DECEIVING**

Now, we all know that looks can be deceiving. We sometimes think something looks great but it isn't long before we find out that it really isn't so great.

Lot eventually found that out that his choice was a very bad one!

Have you ever noticed when you watch a program on TV and there is something really bad about to happen that they play scary music. They do that so you will get a sense of coming trouble. It builds the mood. Well, the scriptures give us a sense of coming trouble by what Genesis 13:13 says, *But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.*

Oh, oh! Big trouble! Doesn't sound good to me! Lot got sucked in by looks. He was in for some major trouble in the days to come!

Lot was fooled by how good the land of Sodom looked. We can be just like Lot. We can be fooled into thinking that worldly things look good. They look fun. But looks can be deceiving!

Do you want everything that looks good on the outside without taking the time to think about what the consequences of your choices will be?

Maybe you have a desire to have lots of clothes or toys or jewelry or sports equipment. Maybe you have the desire to do things in the World that look fun and exciting.

Our eyes can deceive us easily. It isn't hard to be fooled by the world and all it has to offer. But the Bible warns us that we should beware because those things are of the world and not of God. The Bible tells us not to love the things of the World because they may look good on the outside but on the inside they only bring sorrow and destruction.

### **OUR LAST LOOK AT LOT**

For our last look at Lot, we see that God has decided to do something about the wickedness of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah where Lot had chosen to live. In Noah's day God had seen the wickedness of man and decided to destroy the entire earth. But God spared Noah and his family because they were righteous. They loved and followed God.

The Lord himself was having a talk with Abraham one day. The Lord told Abraham that He was going to destroy the wicked cities. Their sin was so great that they had to be punished.

Genesis 18:20-21 says, *And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me.*

Abraham pleaded with the Lord to spare the cities. Abraham probably thought of his nephew, Lot, and his family. He knew they lived there. The Lord said he would spare the cities if he could find ten righteous people.

There were more than ten in Lot's family and household. Abraham must have hoped that even though Lot and his people were living in Sodom, hopefully they were not a part of the wickedness that took place there.

The Lord sent two angels to warn Lot. They went to Lot's house to tell him that he had to leave the city. They asked Lot if he had sons or daughters or sons-in-law who he could also convince to leave the city with him.

So Lot went out to speak to his children who no longer lived at home. They listened to Lot telling them that God was going to destroy the city and that they need to get out now. They laughed at Lot. They made fun of him for believing that such a thing would happen. They would not listen to a word Lot said.

So Lot returned home and in the morning the angels hurried Lot, his wife, and his two unmarried daughters out of the house and out of the city. Lot didn't have time to pack his clothes or his other belongings. Lot didn't want to leave everything behind, but the angels took the four of them by the hand and pulled them out of the city.

Then the angels warned the group to keep walking and not to look back. But when they had gone just a short way, Lot's wife was so upset at having to leave the city that meant more to her than anything else, she disobeyed the angels. She looked back. She must have seen that the city was on fire because the Lord rained down brimstone and fire from heaven. And because of her disobedience, she was turned into a pillar of salt.

Lot's wife didn't want to leave the city and all the things she had gotten there. She loved her home and her pretty things. She loved the wealth she enjoyed. She loved her ungodly activities. Sadly, she didn't love God. Her things were more important to her than God. How sad!

Lot was a righteous man. He knew and believed in the living God. The New Testament tells us that Lot believed in God. It says in II Peter 2:8 *For that righteous man (Lot) dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds.*

Daily he was upset by the sin around him in the city of Sodom. But there wasn't much Lot could do about it. It was his own choice to live in the wickedness around him. He moved in and he didn't move out.

Lot was more interested in everything he thought he was going to gain by living in that wicked, worldly city. Even though Lot was a righteous man, he did not love God more than he loved things.

## LOT LOST A LOT

Lot lost everything of any true importance to him. And he lost it long before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Lot lost his integrity. No one would listen to Lot. If Lot did try to say anything about their sin, the people probably scorned him and told him that if he didn't like it, he could leave. The people of the city would not listen. They didn't want anything to do with God.

Lot lost his influence on his family and servants. When he tried to warn them of their sin, they ignored him. In the end, when he tried to warn them of their destruction, they made fun of him.

Lot lost his loved ones. Most of his children died in the destruction. Even Lot's wife could not leave the wicked city behind her.

## WHAT DO YOU CHOOSE IN LIFE?

The world we live in offers fun and money and excitement. But the world is fake. Nothing it has to offer is real or of lasting value. Fun can stop abruptly. Money can run out quickly. Excitement can go flat. And in the end, those who chase after the world and worldly things are destined for eternal destruction. We should never love Worldly things!

Romans 6:23 tells us, *For the wages (or payment) of sin is death.* And pay day will come some day. That is for certain.

If you love God, then you will not love the World or worldly things.

Maybe you are enticed by all the wonderful things the world seems to offer. You are like Lot's family, wanting all the money and shiny things the world dangles before your nose.

Maybe you're like Lot. You know you shouldn't love the World, but you still want to get as close to the world as you possibly can. If you can't listen to rock, you listen to "Christian" rock. If you can't say curse words, you say slang words that sound similar. If you can't dress like the latest hot rock star, you dress as closely as you can. You come as close to the fire as you can without burning yourself.

Be warned. One day, you will be deeply sorry. You can't play with sin and not be affected by it.

Instead determine that you will not love the World. Determine to love God and godly things!

Maybe you are not a Christian. Do you know where you will spend eternity? There are only two places: Heaven or Hell. What you do here on earth will decide where you spend eternity. To spend it in Heaven you need to ask Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your heart. Would you like to do that? Today we can take a Bible and show you how to accept Jesus as your Savior.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

There are many things that God wants you to love. He wants you to love Him above all else. He wants you to love others. He even wants you to love your enemies. But God very clearly says, "Love not the world, neither the the things that are in the world."

Check your heart and life. Do the things you say and do show that you love God or the world? Do the things you value and spend your time and money on show that you love God or the world? You can say you love God, but if you would rather do worldly things, than do you really love God?

I challenge you this week to love God and not worldly things!

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. God kept His promise to you when He sent Jesus to this earth. He deserves your love and obedience. I am going to ask God to help you to love God so much that you will avoid worldly things.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Beside Sarah and his servants, who else traveled with Abraham?
2. How was Lot related to Abraham?
3. What land did they travel to after Egypt?
4. What problem came up in Bethel?
5. What did Abraham decide to do to solve the problem?
6. What did Lot choose?
7. What did Lot's married children do when he tried to warn them?
8. Who in Lot's family left with the two angels?
9. What did the Lord use to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah?
10. Recite today's memory verse.



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LESSON 11

LOVE: THE FRUIT OF LOVE

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

John 3:1-21

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

God is love.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*We love him, because he first loved us.*

1 John 4:19



## OPEN IN PRAYER

## INTRODUCTION

Today is our last day to talk about the first fruit of the Spirit. Who can tell me what that first fruit is? That's right. Love!

Love is one of the most wonderful things God gives to us and it is one of the most wonderful things we can offer to God. God desires to be loved by us. Do you love God?

God loved us before we were ever born. We should have a heart full of love for Him!

Today's Life Lesson is: God is love.

## SONG TIME

## SUPPORTING STORY

### THE COMMAND

Obtain Flash Card

The king looked over his vast kingdom from the high window in his palace. His heart was filled with pride. (Show Flash Card) Everything he could ever want, he already possessed. For many years he had hoarded all he could put his hands on and had mercilessly collected taxes from his people to amass his great wealth. He was the ruler of the wealthiest, strongest kingdom in the land.

He owned the best of everything. His palace was filled with the finest pieces of furniture, the silkiest silks and softest linens, the most beautiful treasures from all around the world.

At every meal the most succulent foods were spread as a banquet before the king. Every delicious and exotic food was there to be eaten. He could always eat his fill.

His wife was a greedy thing. She spent all her time having her maids comb her hair and adorn her body in the finest clothing that could be found in the world. She was constantly looking for expensive and glittering jewels. The king rarely saw her for she was so preoccupied with her own selfish needs.

Servants stood waiting to fulfill the King's least little command. They would hustle off on any errand they were sent to perform. Never would they think of questioning the king.

One day, as the king pondered all that he possessed, he couldn't quite decide what was

wrong, but somehow he knew that something was missing. What could it be? He owned everything he had ever wanted. And all that he owned was the very finest. Still, something was amiss.

As he stood by the window, he noted a young peasant boy walking in the courtyard below him. The boy was walking with his elderly father and the king could hear the boy laugh. Clearly the young man loved his father and enjoyed spending time with him. He could see the joy the two took in just being with each other.

It was then that the king realized what was missing. He had servants, but he had no friends. He was constantly busy making laws and collecting taxes and supervising the affairs of the kingdom. He was surrounded by servants and advisors, yet he never had time to spend with those who truly loved and cared for him. In fact, he realized, no one did truly love or care for him. His wife had no time for him. His advisors merely tolerated him. His subjects feared and hated him.

What was he to do? Then an idea flashed into his mind. He came up with quite a simple plan. He would command that his subjects love him. If everyone in his kingdom loved him, then he would never be lonely again.

So the king called in his advisors. He issued the command that all his subjects should love him. Then he waited as the command was written on many parchments and delivered throughout the kingdom in the same manner that he delivered each order when he wanted to raise the taxes of his people.

When a bit of time had passed, he once again stood looking down on his kingdom. Who should pass below his window but the young man whom he had observed earlier with his father?

The king quickly ordered that the young man be brought to him. The king waited nervously on his throne as a servant went to fetch the young man to him so that he could question him.

When the young man appeared, the king saw fear and caution in his eyes. That was not good. So he quickly assured the young man that he had nothing to fear. He simply wanted to know if the people loved him.

The young man looked the king in the eye and shook his head as he began to speak. "Sir, if you allow me to speak the truth, then I will tell you that your people do not love you."

"But why?" demanded the king. "I have commanded that they love me."

"You cannot command love. What have you ever done to deserve their love? You take their money for taxes to buy all that you own. You take the best of their cattle and crops for your own food. You take their young men to serve you. Yet not once have you ever given anything in return."

"So if I give them something, then they will love me?" the king questioned.

But the young man looked at the king with sad eyes. "No, your majesty. That would not

gain the love of your people, though they certainly would appreciate it. The one thing that would gain their love, you have never given to them. It is simply that you love them.”

There you have it. If the king had loved his people, then they would have returned his love. And if the king had loved his people, rather than constantly taking from them, he would instead have given to them. Not just things, but mostly his love.

God is the great King of kings. Because He is so wise, He has given His love to everyone. Not because we deserve it, but just because He is a God of love. Love flows out of the heart of God. And His greatest desire is that we return His love.

The Bible says in I John 4:19 *We love him, because he first loved us.*

God asks for our love. It is even something that He commands of us, but it is something that He first gave to us in abundance. God loved us so much that He sent His only Son to die in our place. How can we not love such a wonderful God?

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*We love him, because he first loved us.* 1 John 4:19

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

John 3:1-21

### LESSON

#### THE FRUIT OF LOVE

The first and possibly most important fruit of the Spirit is love. God loves us. God commands us to love Him and to love others. God also lets us know that if we have the fruit of love in our lives, we will never regret it. Love brings many joys and benefits!

Love is not just a mushy feeling that we feel toward one another. Love is a strong, true thing that causes us to be obedient to God and to be kind and helpful to others.

Love is a wonderful thing and how blessed we are to have a God who is love!

Proverbs 8:17 says, *I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.*

### **GOD'S GREAT LOVE**

God wants us to have love for Him and for others, but He first set the example for us.

Our Bible verse today tell us, *We love him, because he first loved us.*

Before we were at all lovable God loved us!

How do I know? God shows His love for us in so many ways. Let's talk about some of the ways God shows His love toward us.

### **GOD IS OUR CREATOR**

In the Bible God tells us much about Himself. For one thing, God says He is our Creator. Genesis 1:1 says, *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*

Genesis 1:27 says, *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*

God created the heaven, the earth, the animals, the plants, the stars, moon and sun. God created people.

The Bible tell us that God created each one of us to be a special individual. Before you were born God planned exactly how you would look and act. He planned your eye color and your hair color. He planned how tall you would be and how you would laugh.

Psalms 139:14 says, *I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.*

### **GOD IS OUR FATHER**

When Jesus was on the earth He prayed, "Our Father." Jesus didn't say, "My Father," He said "OUR Father." Jesus included us as sons and daughters of God.

A Father is a special person. His job is to protect his children. That is what God does for His children. First of all, He provides for our needs. He gives us our daily physical needs like parents to love us and care for us, and food to eat, and a place to live. He does this because He loves us!

God also provides us with our spiritual needs. Our bodies are only one small part of us. God created us to need Him. He created us to have souls that will live eternally. Did you know your soul will live eternally? You will either live forever in Heaven with God; or, if you reject

God, you will live eternally in Hell.

God doesn't want you to live forever in Hell. So God provided a way that you could live with Him in Heaven.

God also shows His love toward us by wanting to spend all eternity with us in Heaven. Even though you and I are only sinful human beings, God loves us so much that He will take us to be with Him in Heaven. How wonderful that will be!

2 Corinthians 5:1 says, *For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

### **GOD IS OUR SAVIOR**

God also showed His great love for you by providing Salvation for you. You and I are lost sinners. We cannot save ourselves. But God loves us so much that He sent Jesus to die in our place for our sins.

Isaiah 38:17b *But thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.*

Jesus did not have to come to earth to die for our sins. He could have stayed in Heaven. But He did come and He did die. And on the third day Jesus rose alive from the grave. Only God could do that and only God can save you from your sins.

John 3:16 tells us, *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

### **GOD IS OUR FRIEND**

It is nice to have friends. In fact, we all like having a special best friend. It feels good to know there is someone who you can laugh with and spend time with. It feels good to know that someone special cares about you and listens to you.

God is the best friend you will ever have. In fact, God will be your best friend for your entire life. God is always there to listen when you talk to Him. He loves you and cares about what is happening in your life. He is always right there to go through the hard times in your life with you.

### **GOD'S PLAN FOR YOU**

God has a plan for your life.

Genesis 1:26 says, *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

God has big plans for you. There is a reason you were born. I don't know what God is plan-

ning for your life, but He knows. If you are willing to follow and obey, God will eventually show you what His plan is for you.

One thing I do know that God wants for you is that He wants you to live for Him.

When you have a friend, you enjoy talking to him, you enjoy spending time with him, you like doing things together, don't you? God, our Creator, our Father, and our Friend wants you to spend time with Him. He wants you to love Him.

When Jesus was on earth, He said this in Mark 12:30, *And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.*

We need to love God with everything we have!

Some people say they love God, but nothing in their life shows a love for God. They don't like to pray or read the Bible. They don't like to go to church to worship God. They don't like other Christians.

I wonder if they really love God? How about you? Are you real or are you just pretending?

Have you ever heard of Cubic Zirconium? What does it look like? Cubic Zirconium looks just like a diamond. It is a brilliant white stone that sparkles. It can be cut and placed in a ring. It looks so pretty, but it is fake.

Cubic Zirconium has no real value. It fades in beauty as it gets older. It is never set in an expensive gold ring because it would wear out before the ring did.

If I offered you the choice between a diamond and a Cubic Zirconium ring, which would you choose? Everyone would pick the diamond. The value of a diamond does not go down. The diamond will always sparkle and be beautiful even after years of wear. A diamond will always be cherished. It has true value.

## **LOVING GOD**

God loves you. Do you love Him? God wants you to love Him with all of your heart, soul, strength, and might! He doesn't want you to pretend to love Him. You might fool others, but you will never fool God.

After all the wonderful things God has done for you, it should be easy to love Him!

So, how can you show your love for God? One of the best ways to show God that you love Him is to obey Him!

As we learned in Romans 12:1, we are to be a living sacrifice. *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

A Living Sacrifice! That means that our lives are to be offered to God on a daily basis. God wants you to daily offer your thoughts and words and actions to Him. Everything you think and say and do should be pleasing to God.

Every day when you wake up, you should say, "Lord, help me to think what You want me to think. Help me to say what You want me to say. Help me to do what You want me to do."

But that's not all God wants! There's more? Yes. Even more than obeying, God wants you to obey with a willing heart and a happy attitude.

God wants more than obedience. He wants obedience that comes from a heart of love toward Him.

Suppose your mom asked you to clean your room. If you scrunched up your face into a sour look and dragged slowly off to your room, how do you think your mom would feel? But you did obey, right? Sure, but not because you wanted to obey.

Suppose when your mom asked you to clean your room, instead you said, "Sure, mom. I'll get right on it." And you said it with a smile. Besides being astonished, how do you think your mom would feel?

God loves it when you obey with a good attitude. That's one excellent way to let God know you love Him.

Sometimes, it is a sacrifice to obey God. It is not always easy to reject sin and the things that the world has to offer. It's not easy to tell your friends that there are things you won't do because you are a Christian. It's not easy to obey with a good attitude. It is a sacrifice. But it is a sacrifice that God finds good and acceptable.

The first thing that God wants you to offer Him is your heart. Have you ever asked Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your heart? You can do that today. We can have someone take the Bible and show you from God's Word how you can accept Christ into your heart.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to allow the Holy Spirit to grow the fruit of love in your life. Love God by obeying Him and His Word. Love others by helping them and being kind. Love your family and do all you can to show them your love!

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to love God and the things that are pleasing to God.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. What fruit of the Spirit are we talking about today?
2. Recite today's memory verse.
3. Fill in the blank. God our \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Fill in the blank. God our \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Fill in the blank. God our \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Fill in the blank. God our \_\_\_\_\_.
7. What does a Cubic Zirconium stone look like?
8. Which is more valuable the diamond or the Cubic Zirconium?
9. Name a way you can show God you love Him.
10. What kind of attitude does God want you to have?

# Love: The Fruit of Love

We love him, because he first loved us.  
1 John 4:19



God is love.

Write the letter of the alphabet that follows the one given.

Example:  $\frac{G}{F}$

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z A

$\frac{I}{H}$     $\frac{\quad}{K}$     $\frac{\quad}{N}$     $\frac{\quad}{U}$     $\frac{\quad}{D}$     $\frac{\quad}{F}$     $\frac{\quad}{N}$     $\frac{\quad}{C}$  .

$\frac{\quad}{G}$     $\frac{\quad}{D}$     $\frac{\quad}{V}$     $\frac{\quad}{Z}$     $\frac{\quad}{M}$     $\frac{\quad}{S}$     $\frac{\quad}{R}$     $\frac{\quad}{V}$     $\frac{\quad}{G}$     $\frac{\quad}{Z}$     $\frac{\quad}{S}$     $\frac{\quad}{R}$

$\frac{\quad}{A}$     $\frac{\quad}{D}$     $\frac{\quad}{R}$     $\frac{\quad}{S}$     $\frac{\quad}{E}$     $\frac{\quad}{N}$     $\frac{\quad}{Q}$     $\frac{\quad}{L}$     $\frac{\quad}{D}$  .



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LESSON 12

JOY: JOY IN SERVING

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction

Song Time

Supporting Story

Memory Verse Time

Bible Lesson Time / Invitation

Challenge / Quiet Time

Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Text: Numbers 1,3

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

I find joy in serving the Lord.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*The joy of the LORD is your strength.*

Nehemiah 8:10b



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

What makes you happy?

The second fruit of the Spirit is joy and we are going to spend a couple of weeks looking at how we can have true joy in life.

Today's Life Lesson is: I find joy in serving the Lord.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### THERE IS JOY IN SERVING JESUS

Obtain Flash Card

Oswald J. Smith was born in 1889 and he lived for ninety-six years. Most of those years were devoted to serving the Lord with his writing of Gospel hymns and poems. During Dr. Smith's lifetime he wrote over 1200 hymns and poems for the Lord. (Show Flash Card)

When Oswald was 16 years old, he went to an evangelistic meeting to hear the famous R. A. Torrey preach. Oswald's heart was touch by the Gospel message and he accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior. From that day forward he began to use his natural talent of making music for the Lord.

In 1917 he wrote a hymn that he calls his testimony hymn. Listen to the words from a couple of the stanzas of the song. Notice how much joy Dr. Smith expresses about being forgiven of his sin and knowing Christ as his Savior.

Saved! Saved! Saved! My sins are all forgiv'n;

Christ is mine! I'm on my way to heav'n;

Once a guilty sinner, lost, undone,

Now a child of God, saved thro' His Son.

Saved! Saved! Saved! Oh, joy beyond compare!  
Christ my life, and I His constant care;  
Yielding all and trusting Him alone,  
Living now each moment as His own.

From the day Oswald Smith got saved until the day he died, he faithfully served the Lord with great joy. The joy of salvation compelled him to yield his whole life to the Savior.

Dr. Smith had a close walk with God during his many years on earth. Every morning, before he met the rest of the world, he would spend the very first hour of the day reading his Bible and talking with God. That sweet fellowship with God created a true joy in his heart.

One of his songs that was very well known and we still sing today is called, "There is Joy in Serving Jesus." Joy truly oozes out of this song. Can you hear the joy?

There is joy in serving Jesus,  
As I journey on my way,  
Joy that fills my heart with praises,  
Every hour and every day.

There is joy in serving Jesus,  
Joy; that triumphs over pain;  
Fills my heart with heaven's music,  
Till I join the glad refrain.

There is joy in serving Jesus,  
As I walk alone with God;  
'Tis the joy of Christ my Saviour,  
Who the path of suffering trod.

There is joy in serving Jesus,  
Joy amid the darkest night,  
For I've learned the wondrous secret,  
And I'm walking in the light.

There is joy, joy,  
Joy in serving Jesus,  
Joy that throbs within my heart;  
Every moment, every hour,  
As I draw upon His power  
There is joy, joy,  
Joy that never shall depart.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*The joy of the LORD is your strength.*

Nehemiah 8:10b

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Numbers 1,3

### LESSON

#### **THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL**

God delivered the Israelites out of Egypt. He took them across the Red Sea. He gave them the ten commandments to tell them how to be obedient.

Now God wanted to number and divide the Israelites so they would be able to travel and govern themselves in the best possible manner. God intended that Moses would still be the leader and He wanted Moses to have a fast way to know who belonged to whom.

The Israelites were divided according to the family they had been born into. Jacob had 12 sons. They each had children. Over the years each son's family had grown and grown. Now there were millions of Israelites. But each Israelite knew from which tribe they had descended. They knew from which son of Jacob they had descended

#### **LOTS OF PEOPLE**

God told Moses to number the men in each tribe. Each tribe was to count how many men were in their tribe. They were to count the men who were ages twenty years old and up. These were the men from each tribe who were able to go to war. If these men were not able bodied or strong, then they were not numbered. Only those able to fight.

So the numbering began. Each tribe reported back to Moses telling him exactly how many men their tribe contained that were twenty years or older and fit to fight.

Do you know how many men there were in the 11 tribes? There were 603,550. That's over half a million men. And that didn't count the women or children under the age of twenty or those men unable to fight! Wow! That's a lot of people!

#### **THE TRIBE OF LEVI**

Wait a minute! Did you notice I said that was how many were in the 11 tribes? But weren't there 12 tribes? Yes. But the twelfth tribe, the tribe of Levi, was to be different.

God told Moses not to number the tribe of Levi with the other tribes. Later, and separately, the tribe of Levi was numbered by themselves.

Instead of numbering the Levites with the other tribes, God had a very special job for the tribe of Levi. They were to care for the Tabernacle. This was an extremely important job, one that

God took very seriously. After all, the tabernacle was the earthly dwelling place for God. It was a holy place. So God appointed special men to care for the tabernacle.

The Levites were to safely transport the tabernacle from place to place as the Children of Israel traveled in the wilderness. When it was time to travel, they were to take the tabernacle down and prepare it for travel. They were to carry it to the next location. When they got to a spot where God wanted the Israelites to stop, they were to set up the tabernacle. They were to take care of the vessels and objects that were inside the tabernacle. They were the keepers of God's dwelling place. They were special servants of the Lord.

At night the 11 tribes of Israel would camp out with their own tribe. They pitched their tents and built their campfires together. But the tribe of Levi pitched their tents around the tabernacle. They carefully kept an eye on God's house both day and night.

What a joy it must have been for these men to serve God!

Numbers 1:50 says, *But thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of testimony, and over all the vessels thereof, and over all things that belong to it: they shall bear the tabernacle, and all the vessels thereof; and they shall minister unto it, and shall encamp round about the tabernacle.*

#### **GOD'S SERVANTS**

Earlier God told Moses to appoint Aaron and his sons to be the priests. They would offer the sacrifices for the forgiveness of sins and the sacrifices of worship to God. They served the Lord in the tabernacle. They were holy men. They were also of the tribe of Levi.

Then God told Moses to bring the rest of the Levites to Aaron and the priests. Aaron and the other priests only needed to tell the Levites what they needed and the Levites took care of their needs.

You see, the priests did not have the time to set up camp or gather and prepare food, or other such tasks. They devoted all their time to serving the Lord in the tabernacle. But someone had to care for their daily needs. They were human. They needed to eat. They needed to have all the regular tasks taken care of that everyone else in camp had the time to do for themselves.

So God provided for the priests by giving them the Levites. It was their job to care for the needs of the priests. Any job that needed doing for the priests or any job that needed to be done around the tabernacle, the Levites did that job.

Numbers 3:6 tells us that God told Moses, *Bring the tribe of Levi near, and present them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister unto him.*

You may think it sounds like the Levites were the slaves of the priests. In a way they were. But do you know what? It was a very special joy and honor for the Levites to be able to care for the needs of the priests.

In fact, by caring for the priests, they were actually caring for the needs of God. You see, by doing these jobs, the Levites were also special servants of God. They served the Lord by serving the priests and caring for the tabernacle. I believe the Levites were glad and thankful for the opportunity to serve God in such a manner.

God made sure the needs of the Levites were met. He knew they would be busy tending to the tabernacle and the needs of the priests. God knew the Levites wouldn't have lots of spare time to tend to the needs in their own lives. God also didn't want the Levites to be more concerned with their land and their possessions than they were with the things of God, so God provided for them in other ways.

The Bible tells us in Deuteronomy 12:19, *Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite as long as thou livest upon the earth.*

God instructed the other Israelites to give a tenth of their increase or of what they made and obtained to the Levites. This was just enough food and land to provide for their needs, yet they would never be rich. Instead of setting their hearts on riches, they could totally set their hearts on serving God.

#### **SET ASIDE TO SERVE**

The Levites had been set aside by God to be special servants of His.

Not many people today like to be considered a servant. We would rather be masters. We want to be the master of our own lives. We would love to be the master of others, if possible. That is our natural feeling. No one wants to be a servant.

But as Christians, we look at life differently from the way the people of the world look at life. We know we are not the master. Instead God, the creator, the Savior, the great King of kings, is our master. We are merely his servants. We are his slaves.

But that's not so bad. Why not? We serve God because of all the wonderful things He has done for us. We serve God because we love Him. It is wonderful to be able to serve God. It brings great joy!

The Bible says in Psalm 100:2, *Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.*

We were lost in sin. There was absolutely no way to save ourselves from our sin. But Jesus Christ came down from Heaven to earth to die on the cross in our place. If we have accepted what Jesus did for us and have asked Him to forgive our sin and come into our lives, then we will someday spend all eternity in Heaven.

Jesus so humbly became a man and died for us. He loves us so much. We should be thrilled to find a way to serve Him! We should love to serve Him with a good attitude and a willing

heart. How joyful we should be to serve the Lord in any way that He allows!

Deuteronomy 11:13b says, *Hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul.*

It was an honor and a privilege for the Levites to be set aside by God to serve. It is also an honor and a privilege for you to be set aside to serve God. God asks you to be His servants. He has a special job for each one of you to do. You should be honored and grateful to serve God. You should be grateful to be considered a servant of God.

Our fleshly selves want to be the master, but our spiritual selves realize God is the true master and we are His loving servants. Anything we can do to please and serve Him is an honor. We should be eager to be servants of God.

God is such a kind, loving master. He only gives us rules in His Word so we will know how to live in a way that is pleasing to Him. He gives us rules for our benefit. He always does what is best for us. He loves us.

#### **ARE YOU A JOYFUL SERVANT?**

Right now I would like you to take a moment to examine your own heart. Do you have a joyful servant's heart? Are you like the Levites who were glad and thankful they could serve the Lord?

Maybe you have never asked Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your heart. You cannot serve God until you are His child. Would you like to have someone show you today how you can become a child of God?

Maybe you are a child of God, but as you search your heart you know you have not been a servant. You would much rather have everyone else serve you. Today you can ask God to change your heart and make you a true servant of His.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to develop a servant's heart. Ask God to help you to look for ways to serve. Ask God to help you to serve with a glad spirit.

Maybe you can start today.

1. Serve God by worshipping Him.

Take some time this afternoon to worship God by thanking Him for all the blessings He has brought into your life.

2. Serve God by praying.

Spend some time talking to God.

3. Serve God by reading God's Word.

Spend some time reading a verse or two of the Bible.

4. Serve God by supporting your church.

Spend some time praying for our church and our pastor.

5. Serve God by serving others.

When you get home today, instead of taking the biggest piece of dessert, offer it to your brother or sister. Instead of rushing off after dinner, ask your mom if there is some way you can help her clean up. Tomorrow when you wake up, make your bed without being told and straighten up your room. You will find joy in serving the Lord!

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about today's challenge. How can you put it into action in your life?

(Give the children a few seconds to think.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you to accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to give you a joyful servant's heart.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Who had God appointed to be the main leader of the Israelites?
2. Recite today's memory verse.
3. Which tribe did God say was not to be numbered?
4. Name one job the Levites did for the priests.
5. Name another job that God appointed the Levites to do.
6. How did the Levites feel about being the servants to the priests?
7. Besides the priests, who else were the Levites to serve?
8. What kind of servants should we be?
9. Name one way you can serve God with your life.
10. Name another way you can serve God with your life.

# Joy: Joy in Serving

The joy of the LORD is your strength.  
Nehemiah 8:10b



I find joy in serving the Lord.

P	S	I	F	R	E	T	U	E	R	H	L
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
P	V	A	L	A	E	H	O	R	G	E	F
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
E	O	A	J	T	D	R	O	O	W	T	Y
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

Write all the number 1 letters in order on the lines below. Then write all the number 2 letters in order. Then the number 3 letters, and so on.

P

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LESSON 13

JOY: JOY IN GOOD TIMES

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction

Song Time

Supporting Story

Memory Verse Time

Bible Lesson Time / Invitation

Challenge / Quiet Time

Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

2 Kings 4:8-37

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

God gives me great joy.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*The joy of the LORD is your strength.*

Nehemiah 8:10b



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

If you are a child of God, you can have a heart filled with joy. Why? Because you have a great God who loves you and takes care of you every day!

It is a joy to be a Christian. God loves you and daily He heaps good things on you. Every good thing you have is from God. He created you. He provides for you. He guides you. He saved you from sin. And someday He will take you to Heaven.

What a cause for joy!

Today's Life Lesson is: God gives me great joy.

### SONG TIME

### SUPPORTING STORY

#### THE MAGIC GENII

Obtain Flash Card 13A

Imagine that you are walking down a sandy beach.

As you walk along you can hear the surf rolling in and out. You can feel the warm sand on your feet. You can feel the warm sun on your face and you can smell the sea water. Seagulls cry out all around.

As you walk along, you notice something ahead in the sand. It gives off just a slight glint of light that shines on top of the sand as if there were something shiny below the surface.

Your curiosity causes you to walk over to it and, sure enough, there is something there. You can't quite make it out because it is almost totally buried in the sand. You kneel down and begin to dig. Soon a shape begins to emerge and you can feel something hard and smooth. It appears that there is some sort of a bottle buried there. It has an unusual shape, so you continue to dig.

Finally you pull the bottle completely free from the sand. You carefully wipe the sand off of the bottle. It is a beautiful blue colored glass with a sleek and unique shape. How pretty it is!

You notice that there is a cork in the bottle and something cloudy seems to be inside. You give it a shake, but you can't feel anything, so you twist on the cork until it finally pops open.

With a big swooshing sound out comes a thin wisp of smoke. Then right before your eyes, a genii appears. The genii tells you, "I have the power to grant you one, and only one, wish. (Show Flash Card 13A)

What would you wish for? (Take answers.)

That question was once posed to a group of young people about your age. Do you know what they said? One young man said he would wish that all his other wishes would come true. Another young man said that he would wish for wishes into infinity. But the answer that was given most was that they would wish for lots and lots of money.

Most people think that if they had all the money they could ever want, then they would always be happy. They would never have to worry about bills. They could buy anything they desired. They could go places, do things, and never have to worry about the cost. They are sure that money would buy them happiness.

Do you think money can buy happiness? Can it buy true joy?

The answer to those questions is no! Money does not buy joy. Owning lots of expensive things will not bring you joy. It seems that what is truly important in life cannot be bought with money.

Sure, money can buy you things, but things get old. They wear out. They even get boring! Things are not important like people or God. There's an old saying: Some people love things and use people instead of using things and loving people.

You can't buy anyone's love. If someone says they love you because of what you can buy them, then they love your money, not you. True love is given freely.

You can't buy a clear conscience. That only comes from being honest and blameless and doesn't cost a dime.

You cannot buy joy. True joy comes from God alone and it is a free gift from Him.

You can't buy forgiveness of sin and eternity in Heaven. God offers that as a free gift and the poorest person on earth can have it.

You know, the really important things in life seem to be given freely. So, what would you wish for?

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*The joy of the LORD is your strength.*

Nehemiah 8:10b

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

II Kings 4:8-37

Obtain Flash Card 13B

### LESSON

#### **GREAT JOY!**

Joy is a wonderful thing! We would all love to be joyful at all times. No one wants hard times or sadness. We all want joy!

A person who has joy in their heart will just naturally bubble over with joy in the things they say and do. The same is true for a person who has no joy. Everything they say and do is filled with sadness or anger.

God is the giver of joy. Without Him no real joy exists.

Psalm 5:11 says, *But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.*

#### **THE UNNAMED WOMAN**

The Old Testament tells us an interesting story about a woman but it never tells us what this woman's name is. The Bible only says that she was a great woman. That is quite an honor for God's Word to call this woman a great woman.

II Kings 4:8 says, *And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman.*

Why did the Bible call this woman great? If we look at her actions we can tell why God considered her great.

During this time in Old Testament history, God used special men whom He would speak through to let his people know what He wanted them to do. This was before they had the entire Bible. These men were called prophets.

Elisha was a prophet of God. He didn't raise crops or herd sheep to make a living. He wasn't a rich man. Instead, as he traveled telling others what God wanted them to know, the people of God would give him a meal or a bed to sleep on. Daily God provided for Elisha's needs.

This woman from Shunem knew that Elisha was a man of God. She knew that he didn't have a fancy home to go to as he traveled. He probably couldn't even afford to spend the night in the local inn. Most likely he would have to sleep outside on the hard ground most nights.

When the woman began to think of Elisha and how he served the Lord, it was her desire to do something to help him.

I believe that this woman must have loved God very much to want to help the man of God. I also believe that she was a woman whose heart was overflowing with love and joy. Her greatest desire was to help this man of God. People who are hateful and angry aren't very interested in helping others. They only seem to worry about themselves. But this woman was thinking of how she could help Elisha.

#### **THE WOMAN MEETS A NEED**

One day the Shunammite woman spoke with her husband. She must have said, "Husband, we have been so blessed by Elisha, the man of God. So often he comes to tell us what God wants us to know. He is a faithful servant of God. And yet, he doesn't even have a place to rest or sleep when he is here. We need to do something about that! Wouldn't it be so wonderful if we could make his life a little bit easier? Let's do what we can for him!"

The woman saw that Elisha had a need and she met his need. She set up a room where he could rest and study any time he passed by. The woman fixed up the room with a bed, a table and chair, a lamp. It may not have been a fancy room with fancy curtains and rugs, but I think it was a joy to this woman to be able to provide a clean room with a soft bed on which Elisha could sleep.

How wonderful that must have been for him! Every time Elisha traveled nearby, he knew that he had a safe, clean, and comfortable place to stop and rest.

And how joyful it must have made this woman feel to know she could do something for Elisha and for God! (Show Flash Card 13B)

II Kings 4:9-10 says, *And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither.*

## THE REWARD

I think the woman waited with excitement for Elisha and his servant to come see the room she had prepared. She must have been all smiles as she told him that she had a special room where he could rest and enjoy a good meal to eat.

After Elisha had enjoyed the comforts of the room and good food, he was very thankful. He decided to do something for the woman to repay her kindness. He sent his servant to speak with the woman.

II Kings 4:11-12 says, *And it fell on a day, that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there.*

*And he said to Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he had called her, she stood before him.*

When the servant asked the woman what Elisha could do for her, she said that she did not expect any reward. She was a simple woman and even though Elisha knew great people like the king of Israel and could have gotten her a great reward for doing such a kind thing, the woman did not want a reward. She had never once thought that she would get something in return for this kindness. Instead it had given her great joy to just be helping. She told Elisha's servant that she did not want to be rewarded by the king or the captain of the host.

II Kings 4: 13-14 tells us what Elisha decided to do.

*And he said unto him, Say now unto her, Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care; what is to be done for thee? wouldst thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host? And she answered, I dwell among mine own people. And he said, What then is to be done for her? And Gehazi answered, Verily she hath no child, and her husband is old.*

Elisha was still so thankful that the woman had taken such good care of his needs that he asked his servant what he thought could be done for the woman. Surely there was some way to repay her kindness, even if in some little way.

The servant had noticed that the woman had no child. Even though this woman was a very joyful woman, I think the one sorrow in her life was that she had no children. Most women long to have children they can hold and love. This servant was a wise man to think of such a wonderful way to reward the woman!

So Elisha called the woman to come to him. He told her that God would give her a child. Can you imagine what great joy must have filled her heart? What a wonderful thing Elisha was going to arrange for her! I imagine she was overjoyed! I also think she was astonished and amazed!

II Kings 4:15-16 says, *And he said, Call her. And when he had called her, she stood in the door.*

*And he said, About this season, according to the time of life, thou shalt embrace a son. And she said, Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie unto thine handmaid.*

And so it was as Elisha had said. By the next year, the woman had given birth to a son. She had not provided a room and food for Elisha in order to receive anything, but how thankful she was when she did receive a son from God. What great joy!

### **THE JOY OF THE LORD**

This woman found joy in taking care of a need that the man of God had. She did not think of herself. She did not desire to hoard all the things she had to be enjoyed only by herself and her husband. Instead she gave willingly. And do you know what? She found real joy in giving what she had to give.

Giving is one way to find joy in life. We find joy in the good things that God gives to us, don't we? We can also find joy in giving good things to God and to others.

What can you give? You may not have much money. You are only a child. But there are things you can give to God and to others. What?

Give a smile. A joyful person has a smile on his face. And do you know what? It makes other people feel good when you smile at them. There may be someone who needs to see your smile this week!

Give a kind word. It doesn't cost anything to be kind to someone else. A kind word shows others that you care about them. It shows them the joy that is in your heart.

Give obedience. People with angry, sour hearts do not like to obey. They want everything to be done their way. They only want to do what they want to do. They hate to obey. But an obedient person has a joyful heart because they know they are being pleasing to God and to those in authority over them. Show your joy by cheerfully obeying.

Give help. Giving a helping hand make take some effort, but it can be fun to help too! Maybe you can help your mom around the house. It will bring a smile to her face if you do! Maybe you can help someone at school. Maybe you can help a little brother or sister with a task they have to do. A helping hand is always appreciated and it will make you joyful to be helpful!

Give your heart. The most important thing you can give to God is your heart. God loves you very much and He wants you to love Him in return. There is great joy in giving your heart to God!

Have you given your heart to God? If you have never asked Jesus Christ to forgive your sin and come into your heart, then you are not a child of God. You have not given your heart to God.

Jesus loves you so much that He died on the cross to take away your sins. All you need to do is ask Jesus to forgive your sins and come into your heart. Would you like to do that today? You can. We can help you.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

I challenge you to give with a heart of joy. The Bible tells us that God loves it when we do and give cheerfully.

2 Corinthians 9:7b says, *God loveth a cheerful giver.*

It gives God joy when you give cheerfully! And do you know what? It will give you joy too!

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to rejoice in the good things God does for you!

## BIBLE QUIZ

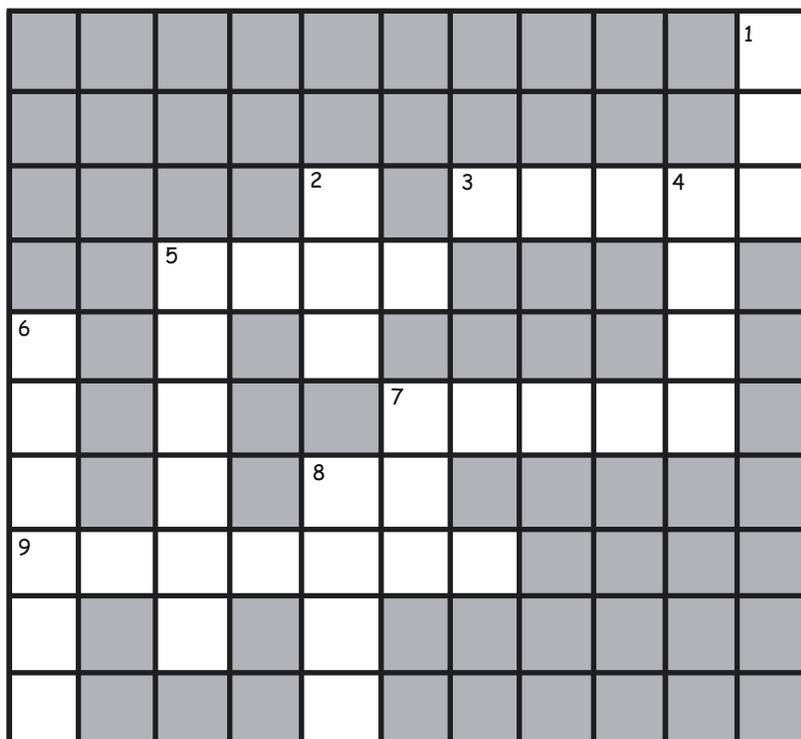
1. What was the name of the Shunammite woman?
2. What prophet of God did she want to help
3. What did she suggest to her husband that they do for Elisha?
4. Recite today's memory verse.
5. Name one thing she did for Elisha.
6. Name another thing she did for Elisha.
7. Who did Elisha offer to speak about her to so she could be rewarded?
8. What did the woman say about Elisha's offer?
9. What reward did God give her in return for her kindness to Elisha?
10. Who suggested she might want a child?

# Joy: Joy in Good Times

The joy of the LORD is your strength.  
Nehemiah 8:10b



God gives me great joy.



### Across

3. The servant knew the woman did not have a \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The Shunammite woman built a special \_\_\_\_\_ for Elisha.
7. Elisha stopped at the room to \_\_\_\_\_ when he traveled.
8. The woman wanted \_\_\_\_\_ reward.
9. Elisha sent his \_\_\_\_\_ to see what reward he could give the woman.

### Down

1. Elisha told the woman \_\_\_\_\_ would give her a child.
2. The child brought the woman \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The woman put a bed, table, chair and a \_\_\_\_\_ in the room.
5. Elisha wanted to give the woman a \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The woman helped \_\_\_\_\_.
7. God gave the woman a \_\_\_\_\_.
8. The Bible does not tell us the Shunammite woman's \_\_\_\_\_.



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LESSON 14

JOY: JOY IN THE HARD TIMES

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction

Song Time

Supporting Story

Memory Verse Time

Bible Lesson Time / Invitation

Challenge / Quiet Time

Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

2 Kings 4:8-30

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

God gives joy in spite of sorrow.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.*

Psalm 30:5b



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

Have you ever had anything really sad happen in your life? We all have sad things happen. But do you know what? Even in sad and hard times, God loves you and He wants to help you.

Some people think that if God really loved them that nothing bad would ever happen to them. But that is not true. Hard things, sad things can happen to God's people. The one thing that gives joy in those hard times is knowing that God loves you and never allows anything to happen that is not best for you. When hard times come, it is a joy to know that God is right beside you and He will help you!

Today's Life Lesson is: God gives joy in spite of sorrow.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### THE WOMAN WITH ETERNAL EYESIGHT

Obtain Flash Card 14A

Fanny Crosby was born with normal eyesight, but she developed an infection so her parents called a doctor. The doctor must not have known what he was doing, because at only six weeks of age, little Fanny became completely blind. She spent the remaining ninety six years of her life in total darkness. (Show Flash Card 14A)

When Fanny was young, her grandmother decided that since Fanny had no eyes, she would become Fanny's eyes. She would carefully explain the world around them in great detail to Fanny. She described the beautiful sunsets and brilliant sunrises. She explained how the petals of delicate flowers looked. She carefully explained in detail the other wonders of God. It was said that Fanny was better at describing a sunset than any person with normal eyesight.

Fanny often said that she looked forward to going to Heaven because there she knew that she would have her eyesight restored and the first person she would see would be her blessed Savior.

Blindness must have been a test of faith for Fanny. She easily could have grown bitter and angry. She could have blamed God for allowing her to be blinded at such a young age. But instead she was a blessing to everyone around her. She could have shaken a fist in the face of God. Instead she wrote poems and songs for God's glory. Fanny's joy shined out for all to see!

Fanny wrote over 8,000 poems during her life. Her goal was to bring glory to God and to draw others to God. Today we have many of her poems in our hymn books. Next time you're in church, flip through the song book and see how many hymns you can find that are written by Fanny.

Here are the names of just a few of Fanny's songs: Praise Him, Praise Him, To God Be The Glory, All The Way My Savior Leads Me, I Shall Know Him, Near The Cross. Song after song, she wrote for the praise and glory of God. Song after song reflected the joy in her heart that came from loving God.

Listen to a poem that Fanny wrote when she was only eight years old. It is a simple poem, but it shows us that at a very young age, the age of some of you, that Fanny had already determined not to worry and moan about her problems but to overcome them with joy.

Oh what a happy soul am I!

Although I cannot see,

I am resolved that in this world

Contented I will be.

How many blessings I enjoy,

That other people don't.

To weep and sigh because I'm blind,

I cannot, and I won't.

Fanny did not concentrate on her handicap. She did not concentrate on the sorrows in her life. Instead she concentrated on all the wonderful things that God had done for her. She concentrated on the joy that God gave her. She was a woman who had eternal eyesight!

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.*

Psalm 30:5b

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

II Kings 4:8-30

Obtain Flash Cards 14B, 14C

### LESSON

#### **THE GREAT WOMAN**

Last week we started a story about a woman in the Old Testament. We don't know what her name was, but the Bible calls her a great woman.

II Kings 4:8 says, *And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman.*

The Bible calls this woman great because of her great big heart! She noticed that whenever Elisha, the prophet of God, would come to her town, he had no place to stay. He didn't wear fancy clothing. He didn't travel in a fancy chariot. No. He walked wherever he had to go and when he was not at home he often slept on the hard ground.

The woman went to her husband and requested that she be allowed to do something to help Elisha. Quickly she went to work making a comfortable room for him where he would stay whenever he came to town. She placed a bed with clean sheets there. She also put in a table, chair, and light. Every need that Elisha had, she met.

It made this woman very joyful that she could do such a kind thing for God's prophet. And Elisha was so grateful that he wanted to find some way to reward her. When the woman turned down his offer to speak kindly to the king about her, his servant suggested that the thing that would be most highly prized by her was to ask God to give her a son. The woman had no son and what joy it would give her to have one!

Elisha spoke to God about the woman and what she had done for him. I know that God was also pleased with the woman's gift because God blessed her with a son.

II Kings 4:17 says, *And the woman conceived, and bare a son at that season that Elisha had said unto her, according to the time of life.*

What joy that boy must have been to his mother and father! When he was little I imagine that the woman held him close and told him about God and how God had given him as a special gift. As the boy got older he would go out and help his father around the farm. What a blessing the child was to this couple!

### **THE WOMAN TRUSTS IN GOD**

One day the boy was in the field working with his father. The woman was probably in the house fixing a good lunch for her husband and son. The sun was shining and when the father looked over to see how the boy was coming with his work, he noticed that the boy did not look good. In fact, he was sitting down in the dirt of the field holding his head. The father rushed over to see what was the matter. When he got close he could see that the boy was very ill.

Quickly the father called a serving man to carry the boy back to his house. The woman rushed up to take her son in her arms and try to comfort him. No matter what she did, the boy only got sicker. Cool water on his head did not help. There was no medicine that she could give him that would help. The boy was crying and his head hurt him terribly. Finally the boy died.

II Kings 4:18-19 says, *And when the child was grown, it fell on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers.*

*And he said unto his father, My head, my head. And he said to a lad, Carry him to his mother, but nothing anyone did could help him. The boy died.*

Oh, my! What great sorrow must have flooded this woman's heart! Since the time that she had been given this son, she had only known joy! But now she had great sorrow!

The woman gently carried her dear son up to the room she had prepared for Elisha. She laid the boy on the bed. Then she quickly turned and left. She knew exactly what she was going to do.

Right away the woman called her husband. She asked him to prepare a servant and a donkey because she was going to go see Elisha.

"Why are you going to see him?" her husband asked. He didn't see what use it was to go to Elisha. The boy was dead. What could Elisha do?

But the woman was not discouraged. She wasn't about to waste any time on weeping. Away she went at top speed to find Elisha. She urgently instructed the servant to drive at top speed and not to slow up for anything!

II Kings 4:20-24 says, *And when he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then died.*

*And she went up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him, and went out.*

*And she called unto her husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come again.*

*And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to day? it is neither new moon, nor sabbath. And she said, It shall be well.*

*Then she saddled an ass, and said to her servant, Drive, and go forward; slack not thy riding for me, except I bid thee.*

From a great distance Elisha saw a cloud of dust. He could tell someone was coming to see him. Then he recognized the woman. He told his servant to quickly go to the woman and see if everything was okay.

He said, “Ask her, Is it well with thee? Is it well with they husband? Is it is well with the child?”

The woman looked at the servant as he asked the questions. Quietly she answered him. “It is well.” (Show Flash Card 14B)

II Kings 4:25-26 continues, *So she went and came unto the man of God to mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, yonder is that Shunammite:*

*Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well.*

Certainly this woman was a great woman! She had so much trust in God. I would have shouted, “NO! It’s not well! My child is dead!” But instead she answered, “It is well.” She trusted God to do what was right.

When the Shunammite woman reached Elisha she threw herself at his feet and grabbed his ankles. The servant went to thrust her away from his master, but Elisha stopped him. He could see that the woman was in great agony and sorrow.

The woman looked up as Elisha and reminded him that she had not asked for the child. The boy had been a gift from God. She had faith that God would not take this gift away from her.

II Kings 4:27-28 says, *And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught him by the feet: but Gehazi came near to thrust her away. And the man of God said, Let her alone; for her soul is vexed within her: and the LORD hath hid it from me, and hath not told me.*

*Then she said, Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me?*

#### **THE WOMAN PLEADS WITH THE MAN OF GOD**

When Elisha heard what had happened, he was going to send his servant to the child, but that's not what happened. The woman refused to let go of Elisha's feet. She refused to leave without Elisha himself. So Elisha followed the woman to her home. (Show Flash Card 14C)

Then in II Kings 4:29-30 *Then he said to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and lay my staff upon the face of the child.*

*And the mother of the child said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And he arose, and followed her.*

#### **JOY AND SADNESS**

This woman could have wept and mourned her child. She could have become very depressed and discouraged. It is easy to do that when things go wrong in life. Often when hard times come in our lives we lose our joy. We blame God. We turn away from God in sorrow.

This woman was wise. When great sorrow came to her, instead of turning away from God, she turned to God. She knew that the only true place of comfort and help was with the man of God.

We all have hard times in life. You are young, so perhaps you haven't had too many hard times, but I want to tell you something that you need to remember when hard times come into your life. Do not turn away from God in hard times. He wants to help you. He may not always make the hard times go away, but He will always be with you and always help you through the hard times.

God wants you to trust Him enough to know that whatever God allows is best. When this woman faced the death of her son, she said, "It is well." I am sure that she wasn't feeling very happy at the time, but she still had the joy of know that she had a God who she could turn to for help.

God will do the same for you! Even in times of sorrow, if you are a Christian, you can have the joy of knowing that you have a God who is always there for you!

If you are not a Christian, then you do not know that is the case. But you can become a Christian and you can have God to help you in your times of need. If you have never asked Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your life, you can do that today. We can show you how.

#### **INVITATION**

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to trust God even in your hard times. Do like this great woman did. When you have a need, turn to God, not away from Him. Ask Him to help you. Then trust that God will do what is right for you.

Even in hard times we can have the joy of knowing that God is with us and that He loves us and only allows what is best for us.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to trust in Him when life gets hard.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. What was the name of the woman in our story?
2. Recite today's memory verse.
3. Who was the prophet who came to her house?
4. What did the woman do for Elisha?
5. What was the reward that the woman was given?
6. What happened to her son when he was older?
6. What was the first thing the Shunammite woman did?
9. What did the woman say when asked if all was well?
10. Where did the woman want Elisha to go?

# Joy: Joy in Hard Times

Weeping may endure for a night,  
but joy cometh in the morning.  
Psalm 30:5b



God gives joy  
in spite of sorrow.

Find the words below. Look forward, backwards, up, down and diagonally.

H	O	L	D	B	G	N	I	P	E	E	W	S	G	X
T	B	T	N	A	V	R	E	S	D	L	I	H	C	L
S	B	K	R	E	H	T	O	M	R	F	L	U	B	E
U	S	E	M	I	T	D	R	A	H	L	U	N	S	V
R	E	W	A	R	D	K	I	K	E	W	H	A	W	A
T	R	E	H	T	A	F	C	W	O	R	N	M	O	R
H	D	E	I	D	I	I	S	L	O	K	A	M	R	T
J	O	Y	A	H	S	I	L	E	L	D	M	I	R	S
B	M	O	O	R	T	O	J	E	M	F	O	T	O	A
W	O	R	K	I	F	H	S	N	P	E	W	E	S	F

ANKLES  
CHILD  
DIED  
ELISHA  
FAST  
FATHER

FOLLOW  
HARD TIMES  
HOLD  
IT IS WELL  
JOY  
MOTHER

REWARD  
ROOM  
SERVANT  
SHUNAMMITE  
SICK  
SORROW

TRAVEL  
TRUST  
WEEPING  
WOMAN  
WORK

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LESSON 15

JOY: THE LACK OF JOY

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction

Song Time

Supporting Story

Memory Verse Time

Bible Lesson Time / Invitation

Challenge / Quiet Time

Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

2 Kings 4:8-37

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

God gives joy in spite of sorrow.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.*

Psalm 30:5b



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

Life can be a lot of fun. You probably have friends who you enjoy being with. You laugh together and play. Joy is an important thing. God wants us to have joy.

But sometimes life can have sorrow too. In the hard times you may find that you just don't have very much joy. You may find that your life lacks joy.

God wants to give you joy. He won't always take away hard times, but He wants you to trust Him to be doing what is best for you. It is a joy to know that even in hard times, God loves you and is doing what is best.

Today's Life Lesson is: God gives joy in spite of sorrow.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### SAD TIMES

You: I've brought a friend today. Let me get him. (Get Andy) Hi, Andy. How are you today?

Andy: (Very sad.) Oh, not too good.

You: You look so sad.

Andy: I am sad.

You: Do you want to tell me about it?

Andy: I don't think you can help any.

You: Maybe not, but sometimes it helps just to talk to someone about what's making you sad.

Andy: My grandpa is very sick.

You: I'm sorry.

Andy: We used to have so much fun together. After school I would go to his house and he would help me practice my pitching and catching. He's pretty good at baseball, you know.

You: That sounds like fun.

Andy: It is! I love spending time with Grandpa. He's never too busy to play with me. And lots of times we just sit and talk. He really understands me.

You: So your grandpa hasn't been able to spend time with you lately?

Andy: No. He was in the hospital for awhile and now he's home, but he has to rest. I miss playing ball with him, but most of all, I just miss spending time with him!

You: I can see why you are sad.

Andy: I know. It feels like my heart will never be happy again.

You: I've felt that way before.

Andy: You have?

You: Yes. It's not a good feeling. In fact, it hurts.

Andy: Exactly.

You: Have you tried praying about it?

Andy: I asked God to make my grandpa better. But he's still sick!

You: Sometimes God doesn't answer our prayers the way we want Him to. Sometimes God asks us to be patient and wait awhile. But God is always listening.

Andy: You think God heard my prayer?

You: I'm sure He did. It was very wise to go to God when you have a need. And when you are sad, it's good to tell Him about it. God may not take away the thing that is making you sad, but you can know that He cares about you and He is always with you. You can trust God to do what is best for you. He can help you make it through the sad times.

Andy: So, even if I'm not happy for awhile, God still cares?

You: He sure does!

Andy: That makes me feel better! I still miss my grandpa, but I know that God is with me and He's with my grandpa too!

You: Yes, Andy. God is with you both!

Andy: You were right. Talking about it made me feel better.

You: And don't forget that talking about it with God is the very best thing you can do. Time for you to go now. Good bye, Andy.

Andy: Okay. Good bye, everyone.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.*

Psalm 30:5b

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

2 Kings 4:8-37

Obtain Flash Card

### LESSON

#### **THE GREAT WOMAN**

Last two weeks we have been hearing a story about a woman in the Old Testament. We don't know what her name was, but the Bible calls her a great woman.

II Kings 4:8 says, *And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman.*

The Bible calls this woman great because of her great big heart! She noticed that whenever Elisha, the prophet of God, would come to her town, he had no place to stay. He didn't wear fancy clothing. He didn't travel in a fancy chariot. No. He walked wherever he had to go and when he was not at home he often slept on the hard ground.

The woman went to her husband and requested that she be allowed to do something to help Elisha. Quickly she went to work making a comfortable room for him where he would stay whenever he came to town. She placed a bed with clean sheets there. She also put in a table, chair, and light. Every need that Elisha had, she met.

It made this woman very joyful that she could do such a kind thing for God's prophet. And Elisha was so grateful that he wanted to find some way to reward her. When the woman turned down his offer to speak kindly to the king about her, his servant suggested that the thing that would be most highly prized by her was to ask God to give her a son. The woman had no son and what joy it would give her to have one!

Elisha spoke to God about the woman and what she had done for him. I know that God was also pleased with the woman's gift because God blessed her with a son.

What joy that boy must have been to his mother and father! When he was little I imagine that the woman held him close and told him about God and how God had given him as a special gift. As the boy got older he would go out and help his father around the farm. What a blessing the child was to this couple!

One day the boy was out helping his father when he became very ill. The boy was carried to his mother, but as much as she tried to help him, the boy died anyway.

How sorrowful the woman must have been, but the woman did not waste any time weeping. Instead she went right away to where she knew the prophet of God was staying. She trusted God to the right thing so much that when she was asked if all was well, she replied, "It is well." But then she told Elisha that her son had died. She told him that she would not leave him until he returned home with her.

#### **THE WOMAN WAITS ON GOD'S ANSWER**

Elisha's servant ran ahead to the woman's house. When he got to the house, he found the child dead just as the woman had said. Soon Elisha and the woman also arrived.

II Kings 4:30-31 says, *And Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but there was neither voice, nor hearing. Wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, saying, The child is not awaked.*

*And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed.*

Elisha went alone into the room where the child lay. He knew that he had no power to raise the child from the dead. Elisha was a great prophet of God, but he was only a man. He could not

raise people from the dead. Yet Elisha knew that he served the a great God. He knew that if God chose to do so, the child could be brought back to life.

So Elisha prayed to God. Then he did something that seems strange to us, but God must have put it in his heart to do this. Elisha stretched himself out over the child's body. The heat from Elisha's body warmed the child, but still the child did not come to life.

So Elisha got up and paced back and forth for awhile. Again Elisha went to the child and stretched himself on top of the child. This time a miracle of God happened. The child began to sneeze. He sneezed seven times and then opened his eyes. The child was alive!

II Kings 4:33-35 says, *He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the LORD.*

*And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm.*

*Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.*

#### **THE WOMAN WAS THANKFUL**

Quickly Elisha called to his servant to tell the woman that her child was alive. The woman rushed into the room and there stood her precious son! Her heart must have been filled with great joy!

Elisha told the woman to take her son. If that had been my child, the first thing I would have done would be to grab him in my arms and hug him tight. Then maybe I'd take him to get something to eat.

But that was not what the Shunammite woman did. The very first thing she did was to go before Elisha and bow down to thank him. I'm sure she was also thanking God! Then she took her son and went out. (Show Flash Card)

What a wise woman. She remembered to give thanks to God first! That is why God called her a great woman!

II Kings 4:36-37 says, *And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her.*

*And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son. Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out.*

#### **BE THANKFUL**

This unnamed woman was an ordinary woman. She was normal just like you are. But she had some great qualities that warranted her mention in the Bible. I think one of her greatest qualities was that she was thankful.

When she first held her son in her arms, I am positive that she often praised and thanked God that He had given her such a precious gift. Then when her son died, she still trusted God to do what was right.

When her son came back to life, she must have been more thankful than she had ever been in her life. When she remembered to bow and thank Elisha and God before she took her son, she was showing a truly thankful heart.

We need to remember to be thankful because a big part of joy is being thankful for all the good things God does for us each day. A joyful heart is a thankful heart!

Daily God does so many wonderful things for us. We should take time to remember what God has done. We should take time to let God know how thankful we are to Him. God has given each of us a body with breath to breathe. He has given us someone to care for us. He has given us His Son, Jesus Christ to provide salvation for us, and someday He will give us an eternity in Heaven. That should give you joy and that should make you thankful!

Have you accepted God's gift of Salvation through Jesus Christ? God was willing to give up His only Son to die on the cross for you. You are a sinner and you have no way to take away your own sins. The Bible says we are all born in sin.

The Bible also says that God loves you so much that He sent Jesus to die on the cross for your sins. Jesus died so that you could have eternal life. That is a joyful thing! But it is not enough that Jesus died. Each person must accept what Jesus did for them personally. You must ask Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your heart and life. You can do that today.

Would you like to accept Jesus into your life? We can show you how.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to be a thankful person. A joyful person is always a thankful person. It is impossible to not appreciate the things God does for you and still have joy. If you are not thankful, then you simply don't have joy in your heart.

Some people expect to be given things and have things done for them but they don't think they need to say, "Thank you!" They think others owe them everything. Those people are wrong. Every good thing that we have is a wonderful gift from God and we need to be so thankful because God would not have to do wonderful things for us. He does wonderful things because He loves us not because we deserve it.

The least we can do is to have a thankful heart. And when we have a truly thankful heart, then we are also given the additional gift of joy!

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to find joy in God.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. What was the name of the woman in our story?
2. Recite today's memory verse.
3. Who was the prophet who came to her house?
4. What did the woman do for Elisha?
5. What was the reward that the woman was given?
6. What happened to her son when he was older?
7. What was the first thing Elisha did when he was alone with the boy?
8. What did Elisha do after he prayed?
9. How many times did Elisha stretch himself on the boy?
10. Recite today's memory verse.

# Joy: The Lack of Joy

Weeping may endure for a night,  
but joy cometh in the morning.  
Psalm 30:5b



God gives joy  
in spite of sorrow.

Find the words below. Look forward, backwards, up, down and diagonally.

J	D	I	T	I	S	W	E	L	L	W	M	Y	P	R
T	E	Q	B	I	C	A	U	H	F	L	E	F	G	E
H	G	S	Y	O	S	A	L	V	A	T	I	O	N	M
A	C	P	U	F	O	G	N	J	O	Y	F	U	L	E
N	Q	G	U	S	N	W	P	R	A	Y	E	D	V	M
K	C	O	L	N	C	T	E	D	W	X	F	I	U	B
F	D	D	L	O	E	H	E	Y	X	O	L	P	Y	E
U	M	D	I	H	Q	H	R	E	W	A	R	D	O	R
L	U	Z	P	E	C	F	G	I	W	M	F	K	Z	E
P	Z	O	I	T	D	W	C	V	S	N	Y	V	I	D
I	R	V	E	H	A	W	K	F	A	T	H	E	R	X
P	T	R	X	Y	P	U	F	K	G	W	O	M	A	N
L	T	E	L	I	S	H	A	X	H	D	R	O	O	M
S	H	U	N	A	M	M	I	T	E	Q	S	O	C	F

SHUNAMMITE  
WOMAN  
WORK  
THANKFUL  
DIED

REMEMBERED  
ROOM  
IT IS WELL  
SALVATION  
ELISHA

PROPHET  
JESUS CHRIST  
REWARD  
PRAYED  
JOYFUL

SON  
STRETCHED  
FATHER  
ALIVE

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LESSON 16

PEACE: PEACE IN THE STORM

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction

Song Time

Supporting Story

Memory Verse Time

Bible Lesson Time / Invitation

Challenge / Quiet Time

Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Genesis 7:17-24

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

God gives me peace,  
even in hard times.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only  
makest me dwell in safety.*

Psalm 4:8



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

Have you ever been in a terrible lightning storm where the wind was howling, the thunder was rumbling, and the lightning was cracking? It can be very frightening, can't it?

Sometimes in life, we face storms. Those storms may come in the form of all sorts of problems and trials that we have neither prepared for nor asked for. But still they come.

When the storms of life come, we don't need to hide our heads and shake in fear because we have a strong and mighty God who watches out for each one of us. Today we'll be talking about going through the storms with peace in our hearts.

Today's Life Lesson is: God gives me peace, even in hard times.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### NO PEACE FOR JOHN

Obtain Flash Card

Life on a ship back in the 1700's was no place for a boy. It was a hard, tough life, but John Newton's dad had no choice. His wife had died when John was only seven years old and was sent for a short while to a boarding school. His father was the captain of a ship and could not take John with him.

Finally when John was only eleven years old his father took John out of the school and decided that there was nothing to do but take John with him.

"The best thing for him is to apprentice on a ship. He needs to learn a trade," John's father decided. "It will toughen him up. A boy with no mother and no wealth has to learn to make his way in the world."

So John went to sea at a very young age. What a change from the peaceful days he had spent at his mother's knee listening to her read her Bible and recount the stories about God. Now he only heard the rough language of the sailors on the ship. It wasn't long until John was just like them. He talked and acted like the roughest sailor. (Show Flash Card)

John was a quick learner and he soon learned to handle a ship like an experienced sailor.

He worked his way up from a deck hand and eventually he became captain of his own ship. But John was not a good man. He was a cruel and vile man. His own men hated him because he was meaner than most captains. He was a hard-hearted man who had no peace in his soul.

John ran a slave ship. Below the deck of his ship he carried human cargo. He would transport slaves to sell like animals to anyone interested in paying the price. The conditions in his ship were appalling. Many slaves were sick and dying but John closed his eyes and ears to the terrible suffering and death that came to the people chained in the dark belly of his ship.

One day, everything changed. In the early morning hours of March 10, 1748, a terrible storm came up on the sea. The wind was stronger than any John had ever experienced in all his years at sea. Enormous waves crashed over the deck and the ship was tossed about like a toy. John's heart was filled with fear and he was certain the ship and his entire crew were destined for destruction.

As John desperately tried to save the ship he knew his life was poised on the brink of eternity. John knew that if he died he would certainly spend eternity in Hell. In spite of his great fear, all the teachings of his mother came back to his mind and John called out to God to have mercy on his soul.

God did have mercy on John and the ship survived. The storm had left John a completely changed man. As the wind and waves settled down at last, a great peace washed over John's soul. John had asked God for forgiveness and he had committed his life to serving Him.

John found that he could no longer ignore the suffering of the poor slaves. At first he tried to make conditions better for them by giving them fresh air, cleaner quarters, and good food, but he knew that was not enough. Eventually John left the slave trade and he sold his ship.

John became a preacher. Constantly John told others of how God could take a vile sinner and change his life completely. He never tired of telling others about the peace only God can give. Every chance John Newton had, he shared his testimony of what God had done for him.

We have all heard and sung a song that John wrote. "Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see!"

John never tired of bringing glory to the name of Jesus. John's last peaceful words that he uttered before going to meet Jesus Christ in eternity were, "I am a great sinner . . . and Christ is a great Saviour!"

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.*

Psalm 4:8

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Genesis 7:17-24

### LESSON

#### **THE ROAR OF THE STORM**

Do you remember the story of when God told Noah to build an ark? We are going to be talking about the terrible storm that came while Noah and his family were in the ark and the wind and rain that beat on the outside of the ark. It could have been a very frightening time for them, but I think they had a peace in their hearts in spite of the storm because they knew that God was with them, even in the storm.

After Noah and his family had gone onto the ark, God closed the door. For six days nothing happened. Perhaps they could hear the people outside the ark as they laughed at them and made fun of them.

Noah's family must have listened and watched carefully for any signs that God would actually do what He had said He would do. They looked for that first drop of rain to fall.

For six days, nothing. Then on the seventh day, the heavens opened and water gushed from above. From below the crust of the earth was broken up and water came gushing up.

Genesis 7:17-19 says, *And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth.*

*And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters.*

*And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered.*

The worst storm the world had ever seen or ever would see had begun. For forty days and nights the water poured onto the earth's surface from above and below. The wind howled. The entire earth was ripped into pieces. There was nowhere to hide outside the ark. Nothing and no one survived.

Noah, his family, and the animals in the ark were the only living creations that survived the storm.

Genesis 7:23 says, *And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.*

Can you imagine what it must have been like on the ark when the rain began to pour? The people outside realized that Noah had been telling the truth. They must have been terrified and may have begun to pound on the ark begging to be let in. But it was too late. There was no way to help them. The door to the ark was closed fast and they had been too foolish to believe God when they had a chance to get on the ark!

But Noah and his family were safe inside. The storm could not harm them in any way. They had listened to God and they had built and gone into the ark. As the rain beat down, I think they felt a great peace in their hearts because they knew they were safe in spite of the terrible storm that raged outside.

There are times when life gives us storms. I'm not talking about a storm with rain and wind. I'm talking about a storm with frightening things going on in your life that you have no control over. Maybe you or someone you love is sick. Maybe your family is having troubles getting along. Maybe you are having problems at school. Those are storm times. When those hard times come, it can be a frightening thing. But if you have God in your life, you can know that He loves you very much and He will never leave you. He may not take away the hard times, but He will go with you through them. That gives you a real peace in your heart to know God is with you and cares about you!

The ark must have rocked and tossed in the waves that were created by the water gushing forth from both the earth and the sky. But we know that the ark did not tip over. It didn't even come close to tipping. God had told Noah the perfect dimensions for building the ark so it could withstand the worst storm of all time. God was taking good care of Noah and his family.

It rained and rained and rained. Can you imagine it raining for forty days straight? That would be almost a month and a half of constant rain! The water continued until it rose above the highest mountain.

Genesis 7:19 says, *And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered.*

### **FORGOTTEN IN THE STORM**

After the 40 days everything got quiet. The rain stopped and there were no more voices of people to be heard. All the people who had refused to come into the ark were now gone.

The ark floated peacefully. Maybe after all the noise was finished, the quiet was a bit eerie also.

Those in the ark may have wondered when the rain would ever stop. Then when all was quiet, they had time to reflect on what the world would look like when they finally went back outside. They could tell by the violence of the storm that nothing would be like they had left it. Their entire world would be changed forever.

The ark floated for about five months. Maybe after a month or two of silence Noah and his family may have wondered if God had forgotten them. After all, the storm was done, why hadn't God let them go out yet?

They may have also wondered what the world would be like when they did finally leave the ark. The world they had known would be gone. Everything would be changed.

Sometimes you may wonder if God forgets about you. He doesn't! God had not forgotten Noah and his family. God was still watching out for them. God does not forget about you. As you go through hard times God is watching out for you, even when you don't realize it.

### **YOUR STORMS IN LIFE**

You may be going through a storm in your life. And like Noah and his family, you may feel forgotten in the storm. You may wonder if God remembers you, if He cares about what is happening to you.

Storms do come into everyone's life.

You may have a family storm. There may be problems in your home such as fighting with your brothers or sisters. Or maybe your parents are having problems or you are coping with a divorce. Maybe someone you love is sick.

You may have school storms. Maybe you're having a tough time with a certain subject and no matter how hard you study you just can't seem to understand how to do the work.

You may have friend storms. Maybe a close friend has made you angry or there is jealousy about something.

There are lots of storms in life. And the storms can come at all different ages. It can be scary when a storm comes into your life. You don't know how things will turn out. You wonder when it will end.

## **GOD WAS WATCHING**

Noah and his family were not alone in the storm. God was with them. He was watching over them. Not for one minute did God forget them.

Genesis 8:1 says, *And God remembered Noah.*

God didn't forget about the ark. He remembered that Noah, his family, and all the animals were floating on the waters. He knew their needs. He knew their worries. He cared about them and He was busy working out everything for the time when they would finally walk out onto the dry land.

God didn't prevent the storm. God allowed the storm and He allowed them to go through it. But God controlled the storm. And God protected them in the storm. He never abandoned them for even one second. He was with them every second.

## **GOD IS WITH YOU IN YOUR STORMS**

The same is true of the storms in your life. Whenever you go through a hard time, you can be sure that God is right there with you every minute. God watches over you. Knowing that can give you real peace.

This world is filled with sin, just like in Noah's day. Sometimes the sin of others can hurt us. Sometimes our own sin causes us problems. And sometimes problems just come for apparently no reason.

God won't magically cause all the storms in your life to disappear. He won't make all the hard times go away. Often when people go through storms they get angry at God. They wonder why God would allow anything bad to happen to them. They think that if God loved them that He would take away all their problems.

But just because you have problems in your life does not mean that God does not love you. God often allows storms to come into our lives for our own good.

During the storms in life we can learn a lot of important things if we are willing to listen to God's voice. We can learn that God is sufficient for us. He is all that we need, even when storms come. He is our strength and help. We can learn to be closer to God. We can learn to trust God which gives us a real peace in our hearts.

No, God doesn't prevent the storms from coming into our lives, but He does control them. Nothing can happen to you that God does not allow and control. And if God controls our problems, then we can know that whatever happens is what is best for us.

Romans 8:28 tells us, *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.*

That doesn't mean all things ARE good. It does mean that all things will eventually fit together the way that God planned it. And that they will fit together for good. God is always working for your good. God can turn bad into good.

God will never leave you. He will never forsake you. That is a promise from God, and God always keeps His promises.

How are you weathering the storms?

So, how do you face your storms? Of course, no one says, "Oh, goody! I have a big problem!" But what do you do? Here are some things you can do that will help.

1. Pray. Stay close to God. Talk to Him. Ask Him for help.
2. Read His Word. Find out what the Bible has to say about problems. Psalms is a great book to read. See what King David did when he had problems.
3. Talk to your pastor or teacher at church. They can often help you and pray with you.
4. Determine to trust God. In your heart, determine to trust God to work out everything for your own good.

If you have already asked Jesus to come into your life, you can know that God loves you and that He only wants the best for you each day. Ask Him to give you peace during your hard times.

But maybe you are not a child of God. When the storms of life come along, you are all alone. That doesn't have to be the case. You can ask Jesus to forgive your sin and become a part of your life. Then when you go through life's problems, you can know that God will be right with you. Have you ever done that? Would you like to? You can today.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

Hopefully things are good in your life right now. Hopefully there are no storms. But would you be ready if one came up? Would you have the peace in your heart that God wants to give you?

I challenge you this week to make a plan. Make up your mind right now what you will do. Here are the things we talked about.

1. Pray. Stay close to God. Talk to Him. Ask Him for help.
2. Read His Word. Find out what the Bible has to say about problems. Psalms is a great book to read. Start reading now. Be prepared.
3. Talk to your pastor or teacher at church. If a problem does come, get some help.
4. Determine to trust God. Right now, determine to trust God to work out everything for your own good. Trusting God during the storm times of life can give true peace.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to have peace, even in life's storms.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Who closed the door of the ark?
2. How many days were Noah and his family in the ark before it started to rain?
3. Recite today's memory verse.
4. How long did the rain come down?
5. How long were Noah and his family in the ark all together?
6. From what direction did the water come?
7. What did the ark do in the storm?
8. What happened to everything outside of the ark?
9. How high did the waters go?
10. Name something you can do when you go through a storm or problem in your life.

# Peace: Peace in the Storm

*I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou,  
LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.*

Psalm 4:8



God gives me peace even  
in hard times.

Where can I go during the storms in my life?

Write all the number 1 letters in order on the lines below. Then write all the  
number 2 letters in order. Then the number 3 letters, and so on.

<u>G</u>	<u>T</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>T</u>
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2
<u>L</u>	<u>T</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>T</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>U</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>S</u>
3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

G \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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LESSON 17

PEACE: A PEACEFUL HEART I

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Acts 6, 7

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

God gives me peace  
when I'm focused on Him.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee:  
because he trusteth in thee.*  
Isaiah 26:3



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

Do you know that what you focus on can determine the condition of your heart? If you focus on everything that is going wrong, then you will have a very troubled heart. Your mind will be filled with all your problems.

On the other hand, if you focus on God and the fact that He loves and cares for you, then you will have a peaceful heart. If you occupy your mind with God and God's Word, then the Bible promises that your heart will be peaceful. Isn't that wonderful?

Today's Life Lesson is: God gives me peace when I'm focused on Him.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### PEACE FOR SARAH - PART I

CHERYL REID

Obtain Flash Card.

Sarah ran down the hallway and slammed the door to the bedroom she was using at Grandma's house. She threw herself onto the bed, and sobbed into her pillow.

"It isn't fair!" she said over and over. "Mom and Dad promised me that I could spend the entire summer here in Colorado with Grandpa and Grandma. I don't want to go home!"

Sarah's summer plans, however, had collapsed in the time it took to receive one phone call. When Grandpa called Sarah to come inside, she knew by the look on his face that he did not have good news. She went over the conversation in her mind now as she lay on the bed.

"Sarah, I'm afraid you aren't going to be happy with what I have to tell you. Your dad has been laid off from his job back east. This means that your mom will need to find a temporary job for the summer while your dad looks for work, and they need you to come home and take care of your sister while they are gone each day. I know that you were excited about being here with us, but this will be a great way for you to help your parents. We'll try to do this again next year, once your dad gets settled into a new job."

Grandma knocked softly on the door.

“Sarah,” she said as she sat on the bed, “I’m so sorry. I know how much you wanted to be here. I see how you love the horses, and you’re learning how to handle them very well. But your family is more important than our summer plans.”

“It’s so unfair! Why can’t they just get a baby-sitter for Allie? Why do I have to be cooped up inside that house all summer with my baby sister? It’s so beautiful here, with the mountains and the creek and the riding trails. The houses in my subdivision are so close together! It’s horrible! I hate it!” Sarah angrily turned away from her grandma and began to cry again.

“You know, Sarah, God doesn’t make mistakes. This happened for a reason, and you are needed at home. I hope you will accept this and be ready to help at home.”

When Sarah didn’t answer, Grandma quietly closed the door to Sarah’s room and went outside to find Grandpa.

“Let’s pray for her,” Grandpa suggested. “I’m not sure that Sarah has accepted Jesus as her Savior. Let’s pray that she will want to know Him, and she will see that God had a reason for this to happen in her life right now. Only God can give her real peace.”

Inside the house, Sarah thought about what her grandma had said about God not making mistakes. “I think He made one this time,” she thought. “God must not care about me at all, since He’s messing up all my plans. I’ll show everybody that this whole idea is a big mistake.”

And then she began to formulate a plan in her mind that would keep her from having to go back home.

During the next few days, Sarah went about life as usual. She helped Grandpa feed and water the horses. Each afternoon she saddled up Starlight, her favorite horse, and went for a long ride down the trail that led to the foot of Thunder Mountain. As she crossed the creek, Sarah allowed Starlight to get a long drink from the cold water. Sarah loved to ride, and Starlight seemed to enjoy the trail, too. (Show Flash Card)

The next morning, the news came. “Sarah,” Grandpa announced, “Your parents are sending a plane ticket for you to fly home on Friday.”

“But that’s only two days away!” Sarah cried.

“I know you want to stay here, Sarah, but there will be other summers to spend here on the ranch,” Grandpa said, as he put his arm around Sarah’s shoulders and gave her a hug. “I wish you could trust God for this and find peace in your heart. God loves you and wants the best for you.”

The hug didn’t help; Sarah only felt angrier with God for allowing her dad to lose his job. “If I’m going to stay here, then I have to do something soon!” she thought.

Sarah had found a trail leading up Thunder Mountain on her last long ride. “If I take the trail up the mountain on Friday morning, they won’t find me for several hours, and I’ll miss my flight. Then they’ll have to let me stay!”

Early Friday morning, Sarah put a sweatshirt and a couple of snacks into her backpack and quietly slipped out of the house. When Sarah reached the trail, she tried to walk on the leaves so that there would be no footprints behind her. “They won’t find me for a long time,” she smiled.

After Sarah had walked for a couple of hours, she noticed that the trail was getting narrower and rougher; soon it was hardly visible. “This is great!” she said to herself, and kept walking further into the woods.

A sudden noise caught Sarah by surprise and she quickly turned around to see what caused the sound, but as she did, she stepped into a small hole and twisted her foot badly. She immediately fell to the ground and noticed that her ankle was already beginning to swell.

“Ouch!” she cried, but no one heard her. She stood slowly and tried to walk, but her ankle hurt terribly! She hobbled to a nearby tree and carefully sat down. As she leaned against the rough bark of the tree, she wondered if her idea to run away was a smart one after all.

All of a sudden, Sarah shivered. She wasn’t sure if it was because she was hurt, or because the weather was getting colder. She knew only one thing for sure: she needed help, and there was no one there.

Next week we will continue our story.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*

Isaiah 26:3

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Acts 6:8-15, 7:51-60

### LESSON

#### A FAITHFUL MAN

The New Testament tells us about a man named Stephen. Stephen was one of the seven men chosen to help the Apostles to care for the needs of the new believers. The Apostles asked the believers to look for seven men who were of an honest report, full of the Holy Spirit, and full of wisdom. Certainly Stephen had all of these qualities in his life. But the Bible goes on to tell us a bit more about Stephen than it does about the other six men. Stephen must have stood out among the group.

The Bible says that Stephen was also “full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.” What a great man of God Stephen must have been! Let’s think just a minute about what we know about Stephen.

He was full of faith. He was full of power. Stephen drew his authority to speak out and act from Jesus Christ and from the Holy Spirit.

He was full of the Holy Spirit. Stephen allowed the Spirit to guide him and to control his life. That means that Stephen trusted God completely. He did not waste his time worrying about things, he just trusted that God would do what was best. He was a man with a truly peaceful heart.

Acts 6:8 says, *And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.*

#### TROUBLE MAKERS

In the temple there was a group of Jewish people called Libertines. They were from countries of Greek culture. These Jews were more open-minded than the Jews in Jerusalem, but still they did not believe that Jesus Christ was God. These men began to debate with Stephen when he began to teach in the temple. They wanted to argue with the things he was teaching about Jesus Christ. They wanted to cause trouble.

Stephen was willing to talk to these men. He eagerly told them about Jesus and how He died for the sins of mankind on the cross and that on the third day Jesus rose from the grave. Even though these men did not believe Stephen, he spoke with such wisdom from God that they could not find a good argument against him. They were silenced.

Acts 6:9-10 says, *Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen.*

*And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.*

### **MORE TROUBLE**

When the Libertines were unable to find anything wrong with what Stephen was saying, they became very angry and began to stir up trouble. They were so angry that they hired men to lie about what Stephen had said. They said, “We heard Stephen speak blasphemy against Moses and against God.”

Of course, this was not true. Stephen spoke for God not against God! But soon all the people and religious leaders were quite stirred up. They believed the lies and they were quick to grab Stephen and drag him away to stand in judgement before the council.

Acts 6:11-12 says, *Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God.*

*And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council.*

### **PARTLY CORRECT**

As soon as the council of religious leaders had gathered, Stephen was shoved before the group. The false witnesses began to tell their lies. One man said, “He said Jesus will destroy this place!” Another claimed, “He said they will change the customs of Moses!”

They didn’t understand what Stephen meant when he was talking. The truth was that Stephen had been talking about what had happened as a result of Jesus’ death and resurrection. Jesus’ body was destroyed, but it rose again in three days. And Moses’ law was still a good guide but now God’s grace had opened up salvation to all who would believe, not just to those who tried to keep the Law of Moses.

### **INNOCENT**

After the men told their lies, everyone looked at Stephen. They were amazed that he stood so calmly and peacefully. He had his face turned up toward Heaven. His face had such a sweet, peaceful look on it that he looked a bit like an angel.

Acts 6:15 says, *And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.*

Stephen took this opportunity to speak to these men about Jesus. He had some harsh words and some cold hard facts to share with them, yet he spoke to them in love and mercy. He was telling them the truth in hopes that they would see their sin and turn to Jesus for salvation.

Stephen said, “You are so stiffnecked.” He meant they were too stubborn to listen and learn. They had made up their minds that Jesus was not the Messiah. They refused to listen to reason.

“You are always resisting the Holy Spirit. Your ancient fathers did the same. They persecuted and killed the prophets when they spoke the truth from God. You have resisted and rejected Jesus in the same way. You killed the Messiah who came and you would not accept Him!”

Acts 7:51-53 says, *Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.*

*Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:*

*Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.*

### CONDEMNED!

Stephen was speaking the truth in love, but the men listening were not happy to hear what he had to say. They felt so angry that they grabbed Stephen and most likely shook him.

Stephen did not cower in fear. Instead he looked peacefully up to Heaven. There must have been a huge smile on his face and great peace in his heart because as he looked up he saw the glory of God. He saw Jesus standing on the right hand of God. What an amazing thing! (Show Flash Card)

“Look!” Stephen said in awe. “I see the heavens opened and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God!”

That really worked the men up into a frenzy. They didn’t want to hear what Stephen was saying so they covered their ears and shouted that he was speaking blasphemy. Then they all ran as a group to grab Stephen. They dragged him outside of the city and they began to stone him.

Acts 7:54-58a says, *When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.*

*But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,*

*And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.*

*Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,*

*And cast him out of the city, and stoned him.*

## CONSENTING

As the men of the council were running to gather stones and rocks to throw at Stephen, they threw off their overgarments and asked a young man named Saul to watch out for their coats. Saul was happy to help the men as they went after Stephen.

Then these men ran at Stephen and stoned him to death. Stephen knelt in the middle of the angry circle, but he wasn't paying attention to them. Instead he had his heart and mind focused on God. He began to speak to the Lord.

Stephen said, "Lord, don't lay this sin to their charge." Then he closed his eyes and the Lord took Stephen home to Heaven. What a godly man Stephen was!

*Acts 7:58b-60 says, And the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.*

*And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.*

*And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.*

Now look around and see the men who were holding the stones. Look and see the young man who watched the coats. There were looks of anger and hatred. These men had no peace because there is no peace in anger.

Here we see two young men. Stephen and Saul.

What a contrast between the young man who knelt and prayed for mercy for his killers and the young man who watched the coats and cheered the angry mob on all the more!

This scene etched itself into the heart and mind of Saul. He would never forget Stephen's peaceful face and the words Stephen spoke as he looked to Heaven and went to join his Lord. From this day until the day Saul died, he remembered!

Jesus' followers realized that they were no longer safe in Jerusalem. Stephen had died for his belief in Jesus Christ, but Jesus had also given the command to go and tell all the world. So they knew that they should not all stay and face death. Rather they should leave Jerusalem and begin to spread the Gospel to other cities and lands.

*Acts 8:1a says, And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.*

## A PEACEFUL HEART

Stephen was truly a godly man with a peaceful heart!

Stephen was a unique man. He loved truth more than comfortable lies. He spoke the truth in love, yet he spoke the truth regardless of the outcome. But in spite of the angry men and the death he faced he was able to have a peaceful heart. Why? Because he fixed his focus on God.

Isaiah 26:3 says, *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*

When your heart and mind is “stayed” on God, that means that your heart and mind is fixed or focused on God. When you are “stayed” on God, then you can have true peace. Why? Because you realize, as Stephen did, that no matter what happens on earth, God is with you and someday you eternal home will be in Heaven. That gives a peaceful heart!

Let me ask you, are you sure you are going to enter Heaven someday when you die? You can be sure. The Bible tells us in 1 John 5:13, *These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*

You are a sinner and you cannot go to Heaven with sin in your life. But Jesus died on the cross to take away your sin. You need to ask Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your heart. Would you like to do that today? We can show you how.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

Today I challenge you to be like Stephen. Like him, fix your focus on God. A fixed focus on God will give you a heart full of peace.

Remember what Isaiah 26:3 says. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*

Perfect peace comes from a heart and mind that is “stayed” on God!

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to fix your heart and mind on God.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Name one thing the Bible says Stephen was full of.
2. Name another thing the Bible says Stephen was full of.
3. Who did Stephen meet in the temple?
4. Who gave Stephen the wisdom to speak so wisely?
5. How did the Libertines react to Stephen?
6. What did Stephen's face look like to the angry men?
7. Who did Stephen tell them they were acting like?
8. What did the men do after Stephen preached to them?
9. Recite today's memory verse.
10. What did Stephen see as the men began to stone him?

# Peace: A Peaceful Heart

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

Isaiah 26:3



God gives me peace,  
when I'm focused on Him.

## A Peaceful Heart

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

How many new words can you make from the words:  
**A Peaceful Heart?**

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LESSON 18

PEACE: A PEACEFUL HEART II

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Acts 9:1-22

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

God gives me peace  
when I'm focused on Him.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*  
Isaiah 26:3



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

The old saying goes: Seeing is believing. Today we are going to be talking about a man who believed because he lost his eyesight.

But more important than his eyesight, was the condition of his heart. This man went from a very troubled heart to one that was filled with peace.

Today's Life Lesson is: God gives me peace when I'm focused on Him.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### PEACE FOR SARAH - PART II

CHERYL REID

#### Obtain Flash Card

Remember, that last week Sarah had gotten word that because of a family problem, she would have to leave her grandparents' ranch and go back home for the summer. Sarah didn't want to go home, instead, she took off down a trail that lead onto Thunder Mountain. As the trail got smaller and rougher, she stepped into a small hole and sprained her ankle. Now she was all alone with no one to help her.

Sarah looked down at her swollen ankle. "I can't even ask God for help," she thought. "I told Grandma that He had made a mistake, and that He didn't care anything about me. I really know that He does care; it's just that I never thought I needed God before."

Looking up into the sky, Sarah noticed that gray clouds were forming overhead. It looked as if it might rain, or worse. It was not unusual to have a freak snowstorm in the Colorado mountains even in early June.

Sarah remembered her sweatshirt and pulled it out of her backpack. She sat for what seemed like hours. The sun went down, and the weather turned very cool. Earlier in the day, she had eaten one of her snacks, but she was feeling hungry, so she ate the other one.

"I wish I had packed a bottle of water," Sarah thought, feeling foolish for the situation she found herself in. Foolish and afraid.

Then Sarah felt a deep need to talk to God. “God, I know you love me, and You died for my sins. I’m sorry that I said those things about you. I really need your help. No one knows where I am, and I can’t walk back because my foot is hurt, and I don’t think I could find my way. Please forgive me for the things I said. I know that I really do need you. Please forgive me and save me, and please send someone to find me. Amen”

When Sarah opened her eyes, she knew that something was different. She knew that God wasn’t angry with her, and she felt something she hadn’t felt before. There was a calmness and peace in her heart that she could not explain. She was lost, hurt, and cold; yet she knew that God was with her. What a difference that made!

The sounds of the night became louder. The wind became stronger and stirred the heavy branches of the surrounding trees. The low limbs on the tree where Sarah sat sheltered her from the heavy gusts. (Show Flash Card)

“I know Grandpa will find me tomorrow,” Sarah assured herself, as she lay her head on her backpack and drifted off to sleep.

Hours later, Sarah awoke with a jerk! She quickly sat up when she realized that a thunderstorm had developed over the mountain. The wind whipped the trees, causing limbs to crack and fall to the forest floor. Sarah’s ankle throbbed as she hugged her knees to her chest and huddled as close to the tree trunk as she could get. She knew that if the lightning got any closer, she would have to leave the shelter of her tree. But where could she go? A lightning strike could cause a forest fire, and that would mean death to anyone who couldn’t outrun the flames.

As Sarah sat out the storm, she thought of her parents back east. They would be so worried. Sarah felt badly for being angry with them. Dad couldn’t help being let go from his job. It wasn’t his fault. Sarah suddenly realized that her selfishness had created a nightmare for her parents and her grandparents. Not only that, but she had also put her own life in danger!

Still she knew that God was with her and that she could trust Him through this terrible situation she had gotten herself into. “Dear God,” she prayed, “I’m so sorry for this mess. Please help someone find me so that my family can stop worrying. Please give me a chance to tell them all how sorry I am for being so selfish. And please let them know that I love them. Amen”

Just after sunrise the next morning, Sarah awoke, still hugging her knees to her chest. The storm had not been a bad one, and Sarah could see patches of sky.

“Thank you, God,” Sarah whispered. “You protected me, even if I didn’t deserve it. Please let someone find me today. I want to go home and help my parents. I want to do the right thing.”

About an hour later, Sarah thought she heard someone yell. After a few minutes she heard it again. “Here I am!” she yelled at the top of her lungs.

“Sarah!” a voice yelled, closer this time.

“Here!” Sarah yelled back as she crawled out from under the tree into sunlight. And there she saw her grandfather running toward her, arms outstretched, and tears streaming down his face.

He fell to the ground and scooped her into his arms. “Sarah! Are you alright? We were so worried! How did you get halfway up the mountain, and so far off the trail? Thank the Lord, I’ve found you!”

Sarah cried on her Grandpa’s shoulder. “I’m so sorry! I was so angry, but then I asked God to forgive me, and I know He did. Now I need to ask you the same thing. Grandpa, will you forgive me for being so selfish and for running away?”

Grandpa smiled through his tears. “If this is what it took for you to find out how much you needed God’s forgiveness and love, then it was worth it. I can see that you are finally at peace with God. Grandma will be so pleased! Let’s go home and tell her.”

Then Grandpa noticed Sarah’s swollen ankle. He quickly wrapped it with his handkerchief and made a crutch from one of the fallen limbs for Sarah to use. Together, they slowly walked back to the trail and down the mountain. When Sarah could see the house and barn in the distance, she smiled. “Someday I’ll be able to come back. But for now, my parents need me at home. And that’s where I want to be.”

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*

Isaiah 26:3

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Acts 9:1-22

### LESSON

#### **HE THOUGHT WRONG!**

As Stephen knelt and looked toward Heaven, the religious leaders stoned him to death. A young man stood by and watched. Saul held the coats of the religious leaders and he thought that they were doing the right thing. Saul thought God would be pleased that they were getting rid of a believer who claimed that Jesus was the Messiah. He thought that was blasphemy against God!

Acts 7:58b says, *And the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.*

Acts 8:1a says, *And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.*

From that point on, Saul devoted himself to putting a stop to the believers in Jesus. He would even go from door to door searching for believers. When he found some he would drag them to prison. He was very devoted to stopping belief in Jesus Christ.

Acts 8:3 says, *As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.*

#### **A TERRIBLE TASK**

When Saul heard that many of the new believers were fleeing to other cities, he decided to follow them and stop them even in other cities. He went to the high priest and asked permission to hunt down and capture these blasphemers.

The high priest granted permission and Saul prepared to go. He took letters from the high priest to show to the leaders in the synagogue in Damascus. It would introduce him and tell about his purpose so that he would not be stopped. When he found men and women who were believers in Jesus, he was determined to haul them back to Jerusalem and put them in prison.

The religious leaders in Jerusalem must have been pleased with Saul. He was such a determined young man who totally devoted himself to following their wishes. But God was not pleased with Saul. God was grieved as He looked deep into Saul sinful heart.

Acts 9:1-2 says, *And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,*

*And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.*

### **A LIGHTED PATH**

Saul and a couple other men quickly headed toward Damascus. Suddenly there was a bright light from Heaven. It beamed down on Saul so brightly that he couldn't see a thing. In fear and from blindness Saul fell to the ground. He must have been totally bewildered and very troubled in his heart.

Then an even more amazing thing happened. A voice from Heaven spoke to Saul. "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

"Who, who, who are you, Lord?" Saul stammered in fear.

"I am Jesus whom thou persecutest," the voice from Heaven responded.

It couldn't have been clearer than that! Jesus Christ Himself was speaking to Saul from Heaven and He was letting Saul know that by hurting the believers he was hurting Jesus Himself.

Hearing Jesus speak from Heaven also let Saul know another important fact that he had not believed before. That fact was that Jesus is indeed the Messiah. Jesus is God. Everything the Apostles and new believers were teaching was completely true! They were not speaking blasphemy when they claimed that Jesus was God.

"Lord," Saul asked. "What do you want me to do?"

"Arise," spoke the Lord. "Go into the city and it shall be told thee what thou must do."

The men traveling with Saul did not see the light. They did not see Jesus. But they heard the voice from Heaven. They did not doubt that something amazing had just happened to Saul. They quickly rushed to Saul's side.

Saul tried to get up, but when his eyes were fully opened he discovered that he could not see. He was blind. Each of his friends had to take an arm and lead Saul the rest of the way into Damascus. When he got there he could not see for three days. And for three days he did not eat or drink. Instead he must have spent some serious time thinking and praying for God to show him what to do. He most likely spent time wondering if God was going to punish him for all the terrible things he had done to the believers. His heart must have grieved him to realize how wrong he had been! Surely he prayed and asked God to forgive him.

Acts 9:3-9 says, *And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:*

*And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*

*And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.*

*And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.*

*And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.*

*And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.*

*And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.*

### **AN OBEDIENT DISCIPLE**

While Saul sat in his blindness and wondered what would happen next, God was at work. The Lord spoke to a disciple named Ananias. He told Ananias exactly where to find Saul. He told him that he should put his hands on Saul's eyes so he would receive his sight again.

"Lord," Ananias said. "I have heard of this man. He has done much evil to the believers. He has come here to harm us also!" Ananias was afraid!

"Go thy way," the Lord told Ananias. "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."

It took courage, but Ananias got up and did exactly what the Lord had told him to do. He found Saul.

"Brother Saul," he said. "The Lord sent me to you. He will give you back your sight and fill you with the Holy Spirit."

The instant Ananias spoke those words Saul got his sight back. And with his physical sight had come spiritual sight. Saul had been blind spiritually. He had not known who Jesus was. But now he knew that Jesus was the Messiah sent from God. Now Saul knew Jesus as his personal Savior and now he could see spiritually. Saul was saved, filled with the Holy Spirit, and immediately he wanted to be baptized so that all would know that he too was a follower of Jesus Christ.

I imagine that great peace flooded Saul's heart. He must have been so troubled to realized that everything he had believed and had done was so wrong. He must have worried that God would never forgive him. But God did forgive Saul. And God gave Saul a new peace in his heart!

Then Saul went to the local Synagogue and began to preach to others about Jesus. Everyone listening was amazed. Their jaws dropped open in surprise. Was this the same man who had only days before been totally determined to capture and imprison all who believed in Jesus? They couldn't believe their eyes and ears!

Acts 9:20-22 *And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.*

*But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?*

*But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.*

### **BLIND EYES SEE!**

The people were amazed to hear Saul preach that Jesus was the Messiah. They couldn't believe it was the same man. But, indeed, it was the same man. But a huge change had taken place in his heart. All the anger toward the believers in Jesus Christ had gone and it was replaced by the knowledge that now he was truly serving God. What great peace that must have brought to Saul's heart!

The truth that Saul began to preach is still true today. Jesus Christ is God and He came to earth to die on the cross and then rise from the dead so that He can take away our sin. We cannot take away our own sin. Nothing we can do is good enough to do that. But God loved you so much that He sent Jesus to do it for you.

John 3:16-17 says, *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

*For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*

Take a minute to examine your own heart. Have you ever had your sin forgiven by Jesus Christ? Are you a true believer who has a heart full of peace? If you aren't a Christian, we can have someone take a Bible and show you today how you can be saved.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

Saul had a heart filled with anger and hatred at the beginning of our story, but when he met Jesus face to face, he learned the truth. Soon his heart was filled with peace.

How is your heart? I hope that you know for certain that you are a true follower of Jesus Christ and that your heart is full of peace.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to have a heart that is filled with peace.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Who was persecuting the Apostles and new believers?
2. Why did Saul want to go to Damascus?
3. What stopped Saul as he was walking to Damascus?
4. Who was speaking to Saul from Heaven?
5. Recite today's memory verse.
6. What did Jesus tell Saul to do?
7. What problem did Saul have when he stood up?
8. Who did God tell to go to Saul?
9. What did Ananias say?
10. What happened when Saul got his eyesight back?

# Peace: A Peaceful Heart

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

Isaiah 26:3



God gives me peace,  
when I'm focused on Him.

B	L	A	S	P	H	E	M	E	R	S	N	N	T	E
G	R	E	W	O	L	L	O	F	O	B	E	Y	S	I
H	A	I	S	S	E	M	S	J	D	Y	H	Y	I	J
P	X	A	G	D	E	H	C	A	E	R	P	B	G	M
R	T	N	U	H	Y	X	M	S	U	S	E	J	H	P
I	H	A	N	O	T	A	T	D	B	L	T	J	T	E
S	E	N	O	T	S	L	R	L	I	W	S	M	U	A
O	A	I	G	C	H	F	I	E	G	A	R	U	O	C
N	V	A	U	Q	L	N	V	G	E	C	I	O	V	E
A	E	S	Y	A	D	E	E	R	H	T	R	U	E	R
H	N	D	P	E	R	S	E	C	U	T	E	D	D	H
R	O	A	D	S	W	Q	T	I	E	T	L	E	Y	F

ANANIAS  
BELEIVER  
BLASPHEMERS  
BLINDED  
BRIGHT LIGHT

COURAGE  
DAMASCUS  
DEVOUT  
FOLLOWER  
HEAVEN

HUNT  
JESUS  
MESSIAH  
OBEY  
PEACE

PERSECUTE  
PREACHED  
PRISON  
ROAD  
SAUL

SIGHT  
STEPHEN  
STONES  
THREE DAYS  
VOICE



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LESSON 19

PEACE: A PEACEFUL HEART III

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction

Song Time

Supporting Story

Memory Verse Time

Bible Lesson Time / Invitation

Challenge / Quiet Time

Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Acts 12:1-17

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

God gives me peace  
when I'm focused on Him.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee:  
because he trusteth in thee.*

Isaiah 26:3



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

No matter how bad things might get in your life, you can be at peace in your heart. When you focus on God and stay in close contact with Him in prayer, then you can have peace.

Our story today is about the peace that comes when you stay in close contact with God through prayer.

Today's Life Lesson is: God gives me peace when I'm focused on Him.

### SONG TIME

### SUPPORTING STORY

#### PROMISES TO KEEP

Obtain Flash Card

"But mom, it's not every day I get a chance to go to Sandalwood. It's the coolest amusement park and Zach's parents said they would pay my way too, if I could go."

"Justin, you promised Mrs. Hodges that you would help her with her yard work this Saturday."

Justin thought for a few minutes. There had to be some way he could work this out. He wanted to go to Sandalwood with Zach and his family so badly.

"How about if I go work on her lawn tomorrow night?"

Justin's mother looked at him with a stern look. "Justin. You know it's an all day job. And you promised Mrs. Hodges that you would help her."

Justin had promised. He felt sorry for Mrs. Hodges. She had a hard time getting around and she just couldn't do all the work around her place since her husband died last fall.

Mrs. Hodges had approached Justin last weekend. He thought about what she had said.

"Justin, I was wondering if you would be willing to come help me next Saturday with my lawn work. It is just too big a job for me now that Henry is gone. In fact, the whole place is too big. I've decided to sell and the real estate agent suggested I get the place gussied up a bit."

"Sure, Mrs. Hodges. I'd be happy to help you."

“Well, there would be some mowing and a bit of touch up on the paint around the porch. And the hedges need trimming. I’d pay you.”

“Oh no, Mrs. Hodges. You have always been so nice to me. I’d like to do it as a favor. Besides, if you are moving this would be the last favor I could do for you!”

“Justin, you are just the nicest boy. Thank you so much!”

Justin knew that Mrs. Hodges didn’t have much money. And she had always been a good neighbor who smiled and waved and offered fresh baked cookies now and then. Justin was glad he could do something to help Mrs. Hodges. (Show flashcard.)

But this was different. He had never been to Sandalwood and all the guys at school talked about all the fun they had on the roller coasters and other rides. And now he had a chance to go with his best friend for free!

“Aw, Mom, this is no fair. Why did both things have to happen this weekend?”

“I know son, but that’s just the way life goes sometimes. I guess the thing you have to decide is what you need to do. I won’t force you to do Mrs. Hodges’ yard work. You could go tell her you can’t. I’ll leave it up to you.”

Justin watched his mom turn and start making a salad. He trudged out of the kitchen and plopped down on the couch. He supposed he could tell Mrs. Hodges he’d come help the next weekend. One week probably wouldn’t make that much of a difference.

But in his heart, Justin knew that he couldn’t do that. He had made a promise and the Bible lesson from last week in Sunday School kept coming to mind. What was that Bible verse the teacher had used?

Justin grabbed his Bible and began flipping. It was somewhere in Psalms he knew. There it was.

Psalm 15:4b *He honoureth them that fear the LORD. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.*

The teacher had been talking about the idea that when you make a promise God expects you to keep it, even if it turns out to be to your “own hurt.” In other words, even if things don’t work out the way you planned, you still keep your promises. God always keeps His promises. God expects us to keep ours.

On Saturday Justin watched Zach and his family pull out and drive away as he pushed Mrs. Hodges lawn mower. It made him feel a twinge of disappointment, but he was surprised that deep inside he really felt a deep peace in his heart because he had kept his promise. And he knew that God would be pleased too.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*

Isaiah 26:3

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Acts 12:1-17

### LESSON

#### **A WICKED KING**

After Saul saw the great light from the Lord on the road to Damascus, He accepted that Jesus was the Messiah. Of course, he stopped persecuting the Believers. Things settled down for the believers in Jerusalem. Saul had joined their side and things were more peaceful. But not for long!

Shortly after the religious leaders stopped persecuting the believers, King Herod began to do the same. Herod was a very wicked man and he came from a long line of wicked kings. He followed in the footsteps of his father and grandfather. He began to persecute the believers.

King Herod took the Apostle James, and he had him killed by the sword. When the king saw that the Jewish leaders were pleased with what he had done to James, he thought he'd keep going. Next he had his men capture Peter.

Peter waited in the dirty, dark prison and wondered if he too would soon lose his head to the king's sword. Surrounding him were four of the king's biggest, meanest guards. They chained Peter up and placed two guards at the door of his cell and two of the guards sat right next to him. They treated Peter as if he were a dangerous, hardened criminal. But Peter's only crime was that he preached to others about salvation through Jesus Christ.

The king was determined to kill Peter but first he had to wait until after that year's Passover had been completed. He didn't want to cause trouble during Passover.

Acts 12:1-4 says, *Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church.*

*And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.*

*And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.)*

*And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.*

### **A PRAYING CHURCH**

It didn't take long for word to spread that Peter was in prison. I imagine the early believers kept close track of each other and when something happened the word spread from believer to believer like wild fire. Within a short time all the believers knew that Peter had been captured and they all clearly remembered what had happened to James.

I am sure they were very worried, but they did the smart thing. Instead of sitting around weeping and wringing their hands in fear, they went right to God in prayer. They knew that a peaceful heart came from being in close contact with God.

The believers gathered at the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark, and began to pray that God would somehow spare the life of Peter. They prayed around the clock without taking a break.

Praying is a wise thing to do when you have a need, whether it be something big like what was happening to Peter or even something small. When you have a need, the wise thing to do is to go to God in prayer. Tell Him your need. Then trust God to work things out in the best way.

We always want God to do things in such a way that we are happy with how it works out. We want God to keep anything bad from happening, but sometimes God allows things to happen that we don't understand. When that happens, that is the time to trust that God knows and does what is best. We may not understand, but we can trust God to be working out His perfect plan. Trusting God brings a peaceful heart.

Right then the believers were helpless, but they knew that God could help. So they prayed.

Acts 12:5 says, *Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.*

### **A PEACEFUL PETER**

There sat Peter, chained between two guards with two others nearby. I think Peter may have chuckled to think that the king thought he needed so many big, strong men to keep him in prison.

Whether or not Peter thought it was amusing that the king was so worried about his escape that four men were assigned to watch him, I don't know. But I do know that Peter was not worried. Instead Peter was at peace.

How do I know that Peter was peaceful and not full of fear? Simple. The Bible says that Peter went fast asleep.

What usually happens when you crawl in bed and you are afraid or worried about some big problem? You fret and stew and review the problem over and over in your mind. Don't you? You do everything but sleep!

But Peter was sound asleep between those guards. The chains did not keep him awake. The guards did not keep him awake. Fear did not keep him awake.

I think Peter must have prayed, "Lord, if I die, then I will go to Heaven to be with You. If not, then You will get me out of here. Either way, I'll trust You to do what is best." Then Peter closed his eyes and had a very peaceful sleep.

Acts 12:6 says, *And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison.*

#### **DELIVERANCE**

The two guards chained to Peter were supposed to stay awake and guard Peter all night long, but I suspect they thought, "This man is no threat! He's chained and surrounded by the king's best men. He'll never get away. And besides, look at him! He's sound asleep. We might as well get a little shut eye too!" So the guards also went to sleep.

As Peter slept, something happened. The angel of the Lord came to the prison. A great light shined around the angel. Peter was sleeping so soundly that the bright light did not wake him up. He slept on. So the angel had to reach down and give Peter a hard shake. The Bible says that the angel "smote" or hit Peter. He must have been in a very deep sleep!

When Peter's heavy eyelids opened, he saw the angel, but he thought he was dreaming or having a vision. Peter obeyed when the angel told him to get up and put his shoes and coat on. Peter did what he was told because he thought he was having a very, very good dream!

Then the angel told Peter to follow him. As he stood the chains fell off. Then he began to walk and the gates swung open, first the inner gate, then the next, and the next. Peter just walked through the prison and as he walked through each gate he must have thought, "I really like this dream!"

Finally Peter and the angel got outside and stood in the street. The angel left and Peter stood in the cool, fresh air wondering what would happen next in his dream. Slowly it dawned on Peter that this was no dream! He was actually standing outside in the street! Peter realized that the angel of the Lord had actually come to rescue him from prison and from the hand of the king!

Acts 12:7-11 says, *And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands.*

*And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.*

*And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision.*

*When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him.*

*And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.*

#### **ASTONISHED**

Peter thought about what he should do. Where should he go? He knew he had to get out of the street or someone would find him and throw him back in prison. So Peter decided to go to Mary's house. He didn't know it, but that was where all the other believers were gathered to pray.

Peter knocked on the door. Everyone was so busy praying that they sent a young girl named Rhoda to see who was at the door.

Well, when Rhoda heard Peter's voice she instantly recognized who it was. She'd know his voice anywhere. She had heard him preach and teach many times. Rhoda was so excited that instead of opening the door, she ran back inside the house.

"Hey, everyone!" she cried in excitement. "Peter is outside!" Everyone thought she was crazy! But Rhoda kept insisting it was Peter!

Peter kept knocking and knocking on the gate. He was hoping someone would come and let him in. The believers finally decided to go see who was knocking so hard at their door. They all rushed to the door and when they opened it, there stood Peter. He was out of prison!

The believers were so astonished that Peter had been rescued from prison. God had answered their prayers! Amazing! They couldn't believe it. But even though their faith in God had been small, God had still heard their prayers and God answered them!

Acts 12:12-16 says, *And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying.*

*And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda.*

*And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate.*

*And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel.*

*But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished.*

## **HOW DO YOU PRAY?**

God doesn't always answer our prayers the way we want Him to. There are times when God has different plans. There are times when God's ways are different from our ways. But God always does what is best. He knows what has to happen in order for His will to come about. But when we pray, we can be at peace in our hearts that God will do what is right.

God wants us to pray. He wants us to spend time telling Him about the problems we face. He wants us to ask for help. He wants us to ask Him to do what is best.

Let me ask you, are you on praying ground? Can God hear your prayers? The Bible says that if you have sin in your life God does not hear you. That means two things. Number one, if you are a born again Christian, then you need to pray and confess your sin and deny your sin so that God can hear your prayers. If your heart is right with God, then your heart can be filled with the peace of knowing that God can be trusted.

Number two, if you are not a Christian and God has not saved you from your sin, then the only prayer God hears from you is the prayer when you ask Him to forgive your sin and come into your life. God will gladly forgive you! Have you prayed that prayer yet? Would you like to? You can do that today. We can show you how.

## **INVITATION**

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to stay on praying ground. If you are a Christian, you need to keep your life free of sin so that God will hear your prayers. Let me tell you some conditions for getting your prayers answered.

### 1. Pray in obedience.

This means that your life is right with God. A Christian who allows sin to remain in their life is not on praying ground. They are not going to get their prayers answered. But when you confess your sin and put it out of your life, then you are right with God and He will hear your prayers.

### 2. Pray in faith.

You need to trust that God does hear your prayers and that He will answer them in the best way. God's way may not always be the way you would choose, but God does answer prayer.

### 3. Pray in Jesus name.

You also need to pray in Jesus name. It is because of what Jesus did for us on the cross that God is willing to hear our prayers. The Bible tells us that Jesus is in Heaven, standing before God, praying for believers. He is praying for you and me. Through Jesus Christ we have direct access to God. Isn't that wonderful? So we need to pray through Jesus and in Him name.

### 4. Pray in God's will.

Prayer should not be a selfish thing to get everything you want or desire. God is not a magic genie. We should pray that God's will be done. We should pray that God work things out the way He knows is best for us.

### 5. Pray with persistence.

We need to be persistent in prayer. Those early believers gathered and prayed without ceasing. They didn't say a quick prayer for Peter and then go their way. They kept praying until God answered them.

We can't always be on our knees, but we can spend time in prayer and we can have an attitude of prayer as we go through our days. When the Bible says "Pray without ceasing" it means that we should live in a way that our lives are honoring to God at all times.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to remember to pray when you have a problem. Then trust with a peaceful heart that God will do what is best.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Who had James put to death?
2. Who did King Herod capture next?
3. What did the king do to ensure that Peter would not escape?
4. What did Peter do that shows he was at peace?
5. What did the church do when they heard about Peter's arrest?
6. What did the angel of the Lord have to do to wake Peter?
7. What did Peter think was happening at first?
8. Where did Peter go when he realized he wasn't having a dream?
9. What did the believers think when Rhoda said Peter was outside?
10. Recite today's memory verse.

# Peace: A Peaceful Heart

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

Isaiah 26:3



God gives me peace,  
when I'm focused on Him.

Write all the letters with the number 1 under them, in order, on the lines below. Then write all the letters with the number 2, in order, under them. Then the 3 letters and so on until you get a hidden message.

I	O	S	E	K	D	W	A	N	L	H	K	O	I	E	T
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
W	S	N	O	M	T	I	H	Y	E	S	I	G	N	P	M
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

I    \_ \_ \_ \_    \_ \_ \_ \_    \_ \_ \_ \_    \_ \_ \_ \_

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LESSON 20

**LONGSUFFERING:  
PATIENCE WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE**

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Genesis 37:1-36

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

I will be patient with others.  
God is patient with me.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression.*  
Numbers 14:18a



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

It's hard to be patient. It's hard to be patient with people who treat you badly. It's hard to be patient with situations in life that are difficult. We want things to work out right and we want them to work out right NOW!

Our next few lessons are about a young man who patiently waited on the Lord to work out a perfect plan for his life. All along the way things seemed to go wrong, but this young man never lost his patience. He calmly waited for God's timing.

Being patient or longsuffering is an important fruit of the Spirit. God wants us to learn to calmly, quietly wait on Him and on others even when life makes us feel very impatient!

Today's Life Lesson is: I will be patient with others. God is patient with me.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### THE CANDY JAR

Obtain Flash Card

(Note: All "Wendy" stories in these lessons are true. The writer of these children's church materials, Wendy Collins, shares with us from her own life experiences. Wendy and Gary Collins lived in an Airstream and traveled across the United States in full-time evangelism for 30 years. This story took place during a period of time when Wendy had returned to Bob Jones University and her daughter was attending the elementary school on campus. During the summer, when school was out, Wendy and Rynda would travel with Gary.)

Wendy's daughter, Rynda, was 9 years old when she began taking piano lessons. The lessons were almost free to the children of students at the university which Wendy attended. She was excited that Rynda would have the chance to take lessons.

Rynda enjoyed the lessons. Maybe she wasn't the best player in the class, but the piano made sense to her, just as math made sense to her. She understood the methods and theory behind it. She loved it when she played the notes and a beautiful song was produced.

But practicing was no fun! Practice was something Rynda did because she was forced to do it. She was like any 9 year old. She would much rather have been outside playing with the other children instead of being inside practicing, but Wendy was insistent that Rynda put in at least a half hour each day.

Since Wendy was in college at the same time, Rynda watched her mom studying her books and writing her papers. She saw how serious she was about getting good grades and learning all she could. She saw that her mom wanted to do the best she could, so it made her want to study harder and do her best also.

So Rynda didn't complain too loudly about the piano practice. Besides, she really did like playing the piano. She just wished she could sound great without all the time it took to practice.

The year Rynda turned 11, she got a new piano teacher. This teacher was quite stern. She listened critically to each lesson and when Rynda made a mistake, she would slap the piano bench with all her might. The loud smack would make Rynda jump with fright. Then Rynda would have to repeat the song until the teacher was satisfied.

This wasn't Rynda's favorite teacher, but there was one thing about this teacher that she found compelling. At the beginning of the year the teacher picked up the jar full of candy that sat on the piano. She explained she would award a piece of candy to Rynda if she did an extra good job. But the candy would not be awarded unless the teacher thought she truly earned it. (Show Flash Card)

That seemed fair enough to Rynda. She would just have to practice even harder and the rewards would be sweet!

Every week Rynda eyed the jar. She knew her best friend had earned a piece a few weeks before, but so far, she had not been awarded a single piece. How frustrating that was. But it caused her to put in the extra time learning her pieces. At the beginning of each new week she would determine that this would be the week she would earn a piece of candy.

Month after month went by. But the candy jar remained sealed. It seemed that no matter what Rynda did, she was never good enough in the teacher's eyes to earn a piece of candy. But Rynda kept patiently trying to please the teacher. Even when the teacher slapped the piano stool, Rynda would try to remember that the teacher was trying to help her improve.

At times, as the year wore on, the sight of the candy jar became an object of despair. She was frustrated because she knew she was trying her best, but no matter how much she practiced and no matter how hard she tried, she just wasn't good enough for the teacher's standards.

But Rynda wouldn't give up. She kept faithfully practicing and doing her best. Eventually it became more than a piece of candy to her. It started to be a contest to see if there was anything she could do to please this teacher. She wouldn't give up hope of one day being able to reach her hand into that jar to grasp a piece of candy that signified she had done a good job.

Wendy was also keeping close track of things. She was angry that the teacher never seemed satisfied with the progress Rynda was making. Wendy didn't have much patience with the difficult teacher. She wanted to go out and buy Rynda a whole box of candy, but she knew it would not be the same. The candy that came from her would not hold the same honor as that one simple piece that would come from the candy jar on top of the piano.

Finally the year ended and no candy was ever earned. Not one piece!

But Rynda had not given up. She knew she would never please that teacher, and she knew she would never get a piece of the candy from that jar, but she also knew by then that she truly liked playing the piano. In fact, she had decided that when she got to college, she would major in piano.

And that's what she did. She kept faithfully practicing the piano. When Wendy graduated from college, the family began to travel together again. Rynda traveled with her parents so she had to practice on her own with only an occasional lesson from piano players in the churches where she spent the week during her dad's evangelistic meetings. From eighth grade through twelfth grade, she worked on her own.

Finally the day came when she enrolled at the university as a piano teaching major. After a couple of years she did student teaching. That meant she was now the teacher and she had students to teach.

She decided the candy jar was a good idea. But she decided every one of her students would be given a fair chance to take some candy whenever they showed improvement. They didn't have to be perfect to get a piece. They just had to be faithful in practicing and doing their best.

When Rynda was taking piano lessons in grade school she never earned a single piece of candy, but God valued her faithful practicing and her patience with the teacher who was so difficult to be around. It took years, but she finally had her reward, not a piece of candy, but her reward was becoming a pianist who was able to share her skills and training with others. That was a lasting reward.

You may be trying your best to please and obey God by speaking kindly to others, including your mean brother, your bossy sister, or any other difficult person who you have a hard time getting along with. You may be treating someone kindly who doesn't treat you kindly. Yet, no one seems to have noticed. Maybe you are tempted to quit trying. Don't! Just keep having patience with that difficult person.

Sometimes we may think God doesn't notice. But He does. He sees all. He makes a note. He values your patience. And someday He will reward you. So be patient!

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression.*  
Numbers 14:18a

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Genesis 37:1-36

### LESSON

#### **ANGER AND JEALOUSY**

The Bible tells us in Genesis 37:3, *Now Israel (or Jacob) loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age.*

Jacob loved his other children, but not the way he loved Joseph. To show Joseph his special affection, Jacob made a special coat for Joseph to wear. This was a beautiful coat that contained many colors and beautiful fabric.

How do you suppose Joseph's brothers felt about the fact that their father clearly showed them and the whole world that he loved Joseph the most? They looked at Joseph and all they could see was that fancy-schmancy coat that proved that he was their father's favorite. His pet.

Oh, how they hated Joseph! They hated him so much that they couldn't say a single nice word to him. There was never any peace between them. They were all miserable.

#### **JOSEPH'S DREAMS**

In Bible times God often gave dreams that had meanings. The person would have a dream that was a symbol or picture of something that was actually going to happen.

One night, Joseph had a dream. When he got to the field to care for the sheep, the dream just would not leave his thoughts. So Joseph told his dream to his brothers. He told his brothers that he had dreamed that they were binding or tying up sheaves of grain from a field. He said he saw his sheaf rise up and stand upright. Then the sheaves of his brothers stood around his and bowed down to him.

Well! Now the brothers were even more angry with Joseph. How dare he imply that as the youngest he would one day be greater than they? He was crazy if he thought they would ever bow down before him! Genesis 37:5 says, *And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.*

Then Joseph had another dream. Again he told his dream to his brothers and also to his father. In this dream, he saw the sun and the moon and eleven stars bow down before him. His brothers were furious and even his father was a bit upset. The dream implied that not only would his brothers pay him honor, but his father and mother would also.

How jealous the brothers were. But Jacob held his peace. He must have realized that God had given the dream to Joseph. He pondered on it. What could it mean?

#### **HATEFUL FEELINGS TURN TO HATEFUL ACTIONS**

All of a sudden, being angry with Joseph wasn't enough for his brothers. Now they wanted to punish him. They would show him who would bow down to whom. They would make him sorry he had dared to act so high and mighty. Their anger and jealousy was about to turn into hateful actions.

One day, Jacob called Joseph. He had stayed home, but Jacob wanted him to go to the fields and help his brothers care for the sheep. When we think of farming, we think of having a house with a barn nearby and the animals in a field out behind the barn. This was not the case in Canaan. The large flocks of sheep would eat much grass and grain. If they had stayed in one area, the land would soon be gone. So the shepherds would take the animals to different fields to feed. Sometimes the shepherds traveled far from their homes and have to spend weeks or months in the fields with the animals. Joseph went to find his brothers.

In the distance the brothers noticed Joseph approaching. He was the last person they wanted to see.

“Oh great! Here comes the dreamer. The master of dreams!” They mocked him. Their hatred grew. Then the brothers realized that they were far from home and their Father wasn't around to protect his precious, favorite son. Now would be the time to get their revenge. The brothers hatched a plan.

In Genesis 37:20 Joseph's brothers said, *Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.*

## **EVIL INTENTIONS, GOOD INTENTIONS**

The brothers decided that they would kill Joseph. Then they would throw him in a pit and tell their father that a wild animal had eaten him. It was the perfect plan.

Reuben was away when his brothers began to plot against Joseph. When he came on the scene, the brothers were all worked up. They were angry and ready to rid themselves of Joseph once and for all.

Reuben spoke up and because he was the oldest, the others listened to him. He spoke in Joseph's defense. He told the brothers to just throw Joseph in a pit.

Genesis 37:21 says, *And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him.*

There was probably some grumbling and groaning. The brothers really had their heart set on doing away with Joseph. He was nothing but a thorn in their side. They wanted to be rid of him. But they listened to Reuben.

They took Joseph and ripped his beautiful coat off of him. That must have made them feel good. What a delightful revenge to be able to take away the coat that showed how much their father loved him.

Joseph may have tried to fight back. He was a strong 17 year old. But he was no match for nine grown men who were used to hard work. They easily overpowered him.

They took Joseph and threw him down into a pit in the ground that was used as a well. But the well was dry. There was no water in it. There Joseph lay. He may have been slightly hurt from being roughed up and from the fall into the pit.

The brothers were happy with themselves. It didn't bother them at all that they had just humiliated and harmed their younger brother. They sat down and ate lunch.

When you are upset or worried or sad about something, do you feel like eating? Probably not. But Joseph's brothers weren't upset at all about the terrible thing they had just done. They sat down and laughed and relived the event as they ate.

Reuben either had business somewhere else, or he wasn't feeling so good about what happened, because he left his brothers as they ate lunch and went somewhere else.

## **THE PLOT THICKENS**

As the brothers were eating they saw a cloud of dust far off in the distance. They could tell a large caravan of Ishmeelites from Gilead was coming their way. There were many camels carrying all sorts of spices and herbs. They would pass right by them on their way to Egypt.

Judah got a bright idea. "Hey, if we leave Joseph in the pit, what will we get out of it? Nothing! But if we sell him we'll make some money, and we won't have to feel guilty that we killed him."

It sounded like a good idea to the brothers. So they fished Joseph up out of the pit and waited for the caravan to reach them.

Back then, people were often taken and sold on the market to people who were willing to give good money for a slave. The brothers knew that the men of the caravan would buy Joseph. When they got to Egypt, they could sell him for a good price. They all agreed.

Genesis 37:27 says, *Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content.*

### **SUCH SADNESS**

After awhile, Reuben must have checked to make sure his brothers had left the area where the pit was located. Then he returned. He planned to pull Joseph out of the pit and return him to his father. All along, when he had talked his brothers out of killing Joseph, he had planned to rescue him.

But something had gone terribly wrong! Reuben did not know his brothers had sold Joseph into slavery. All he knew was that the pit was empty. He feared the worst. Either his brothers had changed their minds and killed him after all, or some wild animal had actually killed Joseph. Either way, Reuben was fearful and heartbroken. Reuben showed his terrible sadness by tearing his clothing. It was a sign of extreme grief and sadness.

Reuben wasn't the only heartbroken one. When the brothers got near to home, they killed a goat and dipped Joseph's prize coat into the blood. Then they sent the coat to their father.

What cowards! They didn't want to face their father in person, so they sent a servant to give the coat to their father. They also sent a message. They said they had found the coat with blood and wanted to know if their father thought it was Joseph's coat.

Of course Jacob recognized the special coat that he had made especially for his beloved son. In his hands he held the blood stained coat.

What terrible grief Jacob experienced when he thought his son was dead. He tore his clothes and wept. No matter what anyone said to him, he found no comfort. All of his children tried to comfort him, but Jacob vowed to mourn for his son until the day he died.

Genesis 37:35 says, *And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him.*

That must have caused Joseph's conniving brothers to feel ashamed of themselves. Sure they had done away with Joseph, but look at the great heartache they had caused their own father. It must have made them feel guilty, if not sad, that they had caused their father such grief.

Maybe at that moment they began to realize what a foolish, wicked thing they had done. But there was nothing they could do to undo their sin.

### **SUCH PATIENCE!**

For a minute, let's think about this story from Joseph's point of view. This must have been a very sad and painful experience for him. He hadn't done anything wrong, yet his brothers hated him enough to be willing to kill him. They had roughed him up and threw him in a pit. Then they sold him into slavery!

Joseph could have been very angry and bitter about all his brothers had done to him. He could have been very angry at God for allowing such a thing to happen.

But Joseph was not angry. Not at his brothers and not at God. I don't imagine he was very happy with his brothers, but he wasn't angry. Somehow Joseph found it in his heart to be patient with them. He also found a way to trust God during all these frightening things that were happening to him.

Joseph must have been a remarkable young man. But mostly, he must have been a godly young man who firmly believed that everything that happened in his life was happening for a reason. He must have believed that God was in control and he could trust God!

It can be very difficult to be patient with people who try to make our lives miserable. It's easy to get angry. It's easy to think that God is out of control. But God wants us to be like Joseph. God wants us to be patient with the difficult things that happen in our lives.

The word longsuffering means patient. The Bible says that God is longsuffering. He is very patient with us. We often sin against God. We often disobey. Yet God is quick to forgive us if we ask Him to. So, if God is patient, you need to ask Him to help you to be patient too!

God showed His great longsuffering love for us especially before we were saved. We are all born in sin and God hates sin, but because God is patient He sent Jesus Christ to earth to take our punishment for sin. Jesus died in our place. If we ask Jesus to forgive our sin, He will.

Have you ever done that? You can today. We can take a Bible and show you how you can accept Jesus.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to be patient towards people who treat you unfairly. Joseph's brothers were very unfair to him, weren't they? But we will find out that Joseph did not hate his brothers for what they did. Instead he was patient and forgiving with them.

God honored Joseph for being so patient. God will also honor you if you can remember to be patient with those who cause you grief.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to be patient, even when others are difficult.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Who was Jacob's favorite son?
2. How did Jacob show everyone that Joseph was his favorite son?
3. Where did the brothers throw Joseph?
4. What did the brothers do after they threw Joseph in the pit?
5. Where was the caravan going that Joseph was sold into?
6. What was going to happen to Joseph when he got to Egypt?
7. How much did the brothers receive for selling Joseph?
8. What possession of Joseph's did the brothers keep?
9. What did the brothers do with Joseph's coat?
10. Recite today's memory verse.

# Longsuffering: Patience with Difficult People



The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy,  
forgiving iniquity and transgression.

Numbers 14:18a

I will be patient with others.  
God is patient with me.

Find the words below. Look forward, backwards, up, down and diagonally.

S	Y	H	F	A	F	X	X	E	R	V	Q	O	I	K
I	R	P	A	H	S	Y	V	J	H	T	S	U	R	T
J	A	E	T	H	K	I	A	C	A	H	C	C	E	H
S	C	S	H	X	L	D	S	T	T	C	X	W	V	T
N	C	O	E	T	E	U	W	E	E	A	O	I	L	U
N	A	J	R	X	O	D	W	S	N	R	V	B	I	P
Y	J	V	V	L	W	R	O	D	R	E	A	M	S	O
K	R	N	A	L	D	L	B	O	K	E	G	K	K	B
X	B	E	E	R	D	N	S	K	G	T	K	Z	U	Z
X	J	B	V	G	A	P	U	P	D	L	T	D	C	A
K	B	U	R	A	V	C	Z	J	U	D	T	O	L	F
N	L	R	I	J	L	A	Y	H	P	Q	X	L	E	Y
F	V	Y	C	I	R	S	L	U	L	R	C	L	L	U

BROTHERS  
CARAVAN  
DREAMS  
EVIL  
FATHER

GENESIS  
GOOD  
HATE  
JACOB

JEALOUS  
JOSEPH  
RUBEN  
SILVER

SLAVERY  
SOLD  
SORROW  
TRUST

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LESSON 21

LONGSUFFERING:  
PATIENCE IN UNFAIRNESS

LESSON ORDER

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



BIBLE TEXT

Genesis 39:1-20

CHARACTER TRAIT

I will be patient with others.  
God is patient with me.

MEMORY VERSE

*The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression.*  
Numbers 14:18a



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

“That’s no fair!”

Have you ever said those words? No one likes to be treated unfairly. We think that life should always be fair.

But life isn’t always fair. Honest people can be accused of doing wrong things. Good intentions can be misunderstood. Friends can say and do unkind things. Good people die. Yes, life can be unfair.

In today’s story we are going to see someone who was stretched to the very limits of unfairness and yet, even when he was being treated the most unfairly, he was still patient and he still trusted God.

Today’s Life Lesson is: I will be patient with others. God is patient with me.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### THAT’S NOT FAIR!

You: I brought Andy to see us today. Let me get him. (Get Andy out.) Hi, Andy. How are you today.

Andy: I’m angry. That’s how I am!

You: Angry? That doesn’t sound good. What’s wrong?

Andy: Do you remember that I was telling you how hard I have been practicing for ball season this year?

You: Sure. You said that every day you were spending time practicing your pitching and your catching.

Andy: Yep. My grandpa helps me almost every day. On the weekends my dad helps me practice. I’ve gotten to be very good, especially at pitching!

You: That’s great!

Andy: In fact, I've worked so hard that I'm the best pitcher on the team! When we practice at school all the other guys said I was the best one too!

You: That's great!

Andy: (dejected) Not so great.

You: No? Why not?

Andy: Apparently the Coach doesn't care that I'm the best pitcher.

You: What happened.

Andy: At practice me and a couple of other guys were trying out for team pitcher. There's really only one other guy named Jamie who does nearly as good as me, but he's not as good! Even Coach said my pitches were the best.

You: That's nice.

Andy: Yeah, but Coach didn't pick me to be the team pitcher. He picked Jamie.

You: Oh!

Andy: That's just not fair at all! I'm the best. Coach should have picked me!

You: Maybe the Coach had a good reason for picking Jamie. And maybe he has another position he'd rather have you play.

Andy: It's still NO FAIR!

You: Well, Andy. Not everything in life is fair. In fact, all of your life you will be finding that people aren't always fair.

Andy: No?

You: No. And not only that, the things that happen to you in life won't always be fair.

Andy: Why doesn't God make things fair?

You: That's a big question, Andy. And there might be several answers to that question. I think that one reason God allows unfair things to happen is to teach us patience.

Andy: Patience?

You: The Bible calls patience Longsuffering. God wants us to be longsuffering toward others. When we are patient toward others, we are showing them God's love. God is patient with us, you know.

Andy: He is?

You: Yes. We are all sinners, yet God was longsuffering enough to make a way for us to get rid of our sin through Jesus Christ.

Andy: That's true.

You: And every day we still sin and do things that are disobedient to God, yet God is longsuffering and willing to forgive us if we ask Him to.

Andy: That's true.

You: Life isn't always fair. But a Christian should look at the unfair things as a way to practice patience. It is a way to show God and others that we are longsuffering.

Andy: So, even though Jamie got the position I really wanted, I should be nice to him. And I should still listen to the Coach. Right?

You: Right! That is what would truly please God!

Andy: I guess I'll try to be longsuffering, even if it is no fair!

You: That makes me feel good to hear you say that. And I know it makes God feel good too!

Andy: It's time for me to go now. Good bye, everyone.

You: Good bye, Andy.

## MEMORY VERSE

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression.*

Numbers 14:18a

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Mark 4:35-41

### LESSON

Genesis 39:1-20

### LESSON

#### **THE LORD WAS WITH JOSEPH**

How would you feel if your older brothers hated you so much that they faked your death and then sold you into slavery? It's hard to imagine how terrible that must have been for Joseph.

He was just 17 years old and he was being transported like an animal to some foreign country to be sold to the highest bidder. He had no way of knowing who would buy him or how he would be treated. Perhaps his new owner would be a cruel person. Perhaps he would be forced to work hard in the fields doing the work of plow oxen. All he did know was that there was no hope of rescue.

Joseph did not know what lay ahead. But God's hand was on Joseph even in this terrible situation. Apparently Joseph determined to trust God to care for him regardless of what lay ahead. He determined to patiently wait for God to work out the best plan for his life.

The man who bought Joseph was an Egyptian. He was a very powerful man. He was the Captain of the guard in Pharaoh's army. That was a high position. His name was Potiphar.

Potiphar must have seen the potential in Joseph when he went to the slave market to buy a slave. The men who sold Joseph would have pointed out the fact that not only was Joseph a strong, young fellow, but he also was well educated. That would have been a rare thing back in those days. So, Joseph was a good investment for Potiphar.

Joseph worked hard to do a good job for Potiphar. Some people would have thought, "God has forsaken me. I'm not going to do my best. Why should I? I'm just a slave. I'll just do only what I absolutely have to do to get by without getting beaten."

But Joseph gave it his best. He worked hard. He was trustworthy. He was diligent. And because Joseph was the right kind of young man, God blessed him. God was with Joseph. He had not abandoned Joseph. All of this was in God's plan and God was with him every step of the way.

Sometimes when things don't go the way we think they should, or when life gets very hard, we think God has abandoned us. We think God isn't in control. But God never leaves us and He is always in control. We need to remember to patiently wait on God's plan when times get hard.

Potiphar watched Joseph. He noticed that everything he did, he did well. He noticed that Joseph had a good attitude. He noticed that all that he did prospered. Potiphar knew that God was blessing Joseph and causing everything he touched to come out well.

As a result, Potiphar, who was a busy man, decided to place Joseph in charge of everything in his household. He trusted Joseph to care for his concerns. It is most likely that there were other servants who had served in Potiphar's house for many years. He could have given the job to them, but he chose Joseph.

How good God was to Joseph, even in what must have been a hard situation for him. Joseph must have missed his father. He must have missed his home country and friends. But God was his best friend and God never left him.

Genesis 39:5 tells us, *And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field.*

#### **A WICKED WIFE**

Now things were rolling along fine for Joseph. He was keeping very busy overseeing both the household and the crops that belonged to Potiphar. He never even noticed that someone in the house had begun to watch him.

Potiphar had a wife. She was probably a very beautiful woman. She was probably also a very bored woman. She didn't have to work hard to keep house or make meals or wash the clothing. She had servants to do everything that needed doing in the house. She probably didn't have much company either. Her husband was a busy man. He most likely wasn't home very much. So Potiphar's wife was alone and bored. And she had a wicked heart.

Mrs. Potiphar noticed Joseph. He was a good looking young man. Strong and handsome. He was intelligent. Yes, he was very interesting to her.

At first, she began to request that Joseph do jobs for her. She didn't want the other servants to do the jobs, she insisted that Joseph personally do the job. She would watch him. If he glanced at her, she would smile warmly at him. Maybe she made small talk.

Joseph was probably a bit annoyed with her. He was a very busy man and here he was having to do small jobs around the house that any servant could do. But Mrs. Potiphar was the boss' wife. What could he do?

Then Mrs. Potiphar went way too far. She began to flirt with Joseph. But Joseph did not fall for her trap. He flat out told her that he didn't want anything to do with her. He told her that it would be wickedness against Potiphar and sin against God.

Genesis 39:8-9 says, *But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand;*

*There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*

### THE BADGERING CONTINUES

Joseph felt he had been very clear. He wanted nothing to do with Mrs. Potiphar. But that was just more of a challenge to her. This was making her game even more interesting and exciting. She was not about to give up. Besides, she was a woman who was used to getting her way.

Day after day she kept at Joseph. She flirted. She begged. She teased. She was sure that Joseph was just playing hard to get. She was sure that eventually he would see what a beautiful woman she was. She was sure he would eventually give in and she would win.

Joseph went about his work as best he could. He avoided her. But one day, he was in the house doing some work for his master. He must not have realized it, but there were no other servants in the house. He was alone with Mrs. Potiphar.

Mrs. Potiphar saw her chance. She boldly grabbed Joseph. As fast as a jack rabbit, Joseph squirmed out of his coat and ran. He left her there holding his coat.

Boy was she angry! In fact, she was so angry that her only thought was to destroy Joseph. So she began to scream. When the men of the household rushed in to see what was the matter, Mrs. Potiphar went into her act. She began to cry hysterically. She held up Joseph's coat and told the men that Joseph had tried to attack her and do improper things. She had his coat as proof.

As soon as Potiphar got home, she went into her act again. She told her husband all the lies she had told the other servants. She wept and acted so upset.

Genesis 39:17-18 says, *And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me:*

*And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out.*

Now, any normal man would be upset if he thought someone had attacked his wife. Potiphar apparently didn't know his wife well. He believed her and he trusted her word. So he became very upset with Joseph. He was so upset that not only did he no longer trust Joseph to run his house, he had Joseph thrown in prison.

### JOSEPH'S REACTION

So how did Joseph react? The Bible does not tell us how Joseph felt. However, by seeing how Joseph reacted, we have a very good idea how he felt.

Was he full of anger? After all he not only didn't do anything wrong, he did everything right. He had caused Potiphar's house and business to prosper. He had resisted the advances of Potiphar's wife. He had not sinned against God.

Joseph had every reason to shake his fist at God in anger. So is that what Joseph did? No. I don't believe Joseph reacted with anger.

OK. Was he depressed and discouraged? He certainly had much to be depressed about. He found himself sitting in a dank, dark prison in a foreign country. He had been betrayed by his own brothers. He had been sold into slavery. He had done a good deed and been accused of doing a wicked thing.

Talk about unfair! Everything in the past several years or so of Joseph's life had been totally unfair!

He certainly had a good basis for being depressed. But Joseph did not react by being depressed either.

Because of God's reaction to Joseph, I believe Joseph's reaction was one of trust. The Bible doesn't say how Joseph felt or reacted, but it tells us what God did.

It says in Genesis 39: 21, *But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.*

If Joseph had sat in his cell and shook his fist at God in anger, or if he had curled up in a ball and had a big pity party, I do not believe God would have showed him mercy and caused him to have favor in the prison keeper's eyes.

I believe Joseph's reaction was one of trust. He knew he had done what was right in God's eyes. He probably wasn't overjoyed to be in prison. He may have even felt some fear and confusion. But he never shouted, "You're unfair to me, God!"

Instead I imagine he humbly knelt before God and said something that sounded more like this: "God, here I am in prison. I don't know why you have allowed this to happen. You know I only did what was right in your eyes. But I trust you, God. You have a plan and this must be a part of your plan. Help me to do the right thing, even here in prison."

#### **POSITION OF TRUST**

Joseph trusted God to do what was best. He patiently waited for God to work out His plan. God caused the prison keeper to trust Joseph and to place him in a position of great responsibility in the prison.

Genesis 39:22 tells us, *And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.*

*The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper.*

## PATIENCE

Could you patiently wait on God to work out a plan for your life when so many unfair things were happening in your life? It would be hard. But if you learn to wait on God, you will know that you can trust Him to be doing what is best for you.

God loves you and He has a perfect plan for your life. You don't have any way of knowing ahead of time what that plan is, but if you wait patiently, He will show you some day.

Ask the Lord to give you a longsuffering attitude even when things in life seem totally unfair. Trust God to be working for your good.

Maybe you are not a child of God. Joseph had a very hard time of things, but no matter what he faced, he knew that God was with him. If you have never asked Jesus to forgive your sin then you are not a child of God. You do not have someone who will go with you through the unfair times in life. But it doesn't have to be that way. God loves you and He wants you to become His child.

How? We can take the Bible and show you exactly how you can become a child of God!

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to trust God when something unfair happens in your life. It may be that someone falsely accuses you of something you did not do. It may be that someone thinks your intentions are not pure when you tried to do the right thing. It may be that some unfair circumstances come into your life.

Whatever the case, when your first thought is, "That's unfair," then let your next thought be, "Maybe God is going to use this to work out His plan for my life. I will trust God to do what is right."

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to have patience even when things are unfair.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. What country was Joseph taken to as a captive?
2. Who bought Joseph?
3. What job did Potiphar hold?
4. Why did Potiphar make Joseph the head of all his house and business?
5. Recite today's memory verse.
6. Who became a big problem for Joseph?
7. How do you think Joseph reacted to being sent to prison?
8. Name one way Joseph did not react to being sent to prison?
9. What did the prison keeper do with Joseph?
10. Why did the prison keeper have such trust in Joseph?

# Longsuffering: Patience in Unfairness



I will be patient with others.  
God is patient with me.

The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy,  
forgiving iniquity and transgression.  
Numbers 14:18a

Find the words below. Look forward, backwards, up, down and diagonally.

E	C	N	E	I	T	A	P	L	A	N	Q	I	X	M
W	H	Z	I	W	D	O	G	T	S	R	U	T	E	W
A	Z	B	P	C	T	E	L	B	U	O	R	T	W	A
G	N	I	R	E	F	F	U	S	G	N	O	L	P	I
P	D	E	F	I	W	Q	O	R	B	L	W	T	J	T
R	E	S	P	O	N	S	I	B	I	L	I	T	Y	K
O	Z	K	H	L	O	H	P	E	S	O	J	E	M	K
F	B	P	V	N	O	S	I	R	P	P	X	Q	N	W
A	R	A	H	P	I	T	O	P	D	E	K	C	I	W
V	T	E	M	P	T	I	Q	Y	U	N	F	A	I	R
O	R	X	T	L	S	R	E	H	T	O	R	B	N	N
R	S	J	T	I	Z	T	R	U	S	T	D	L	O	S
E	S	U	O	H	P	J	N	X	B	T	P	Y	G	E

EGYPT  
FAVOR  
HOUSE  
JOSEPH

LIE  
PLAN  
POTIP-  
HAZR

PRISON  
RESPONSIBILITY  
SOLD  
SUFFER

TEMPT  
TROUBLE  
TRUST  
UNFAIR

WAIT  
WICKED  
WIFE

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LESSON 22

**LONGSUFFERING:  
PATIENCE IN TRIALS**

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Genesis 40, 41

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

I will be patient with others.  
God is patient with me.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity  
and transgression.* Numbers 14:18a



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

Has anyone ever promised to do something for you or with you and then forgotten all about their promise? How do you feel when that happens? Probably disgusted or angry. Maybe even hurt.

Can you imagine asking someone to make a promise to remember something that was really and truly important to you, and then they forgot all about the promise? It's not fun to be forgotten, is it?

Today we will be hearing about a very important promise that was broken because someone forgot. But we will also hear how God worked everything out exactly as planned because someone else was willing to wait patiently.

Today's Life Lesson is: I will patient with others. God is patient with me.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### JESUS NEVER FAILS

In church we sing hymns. They help us prepare our hearts to worship God. I think it is always interesting to learn a little bit about the person who wrote the hymn and why they wrote it. Often some event in their life caused them to write the words of a song we now sing.

A man by the name of Art Luther was a pianist for a traveling evangelistic team. The team was from New York and they had been invited to minister in a small country church in Kentucky. The church was way up in the mountains and was not very easy to reach. In fact, the only way to reach the church was to travel on a train that ran up to the little town only once a week.

This seems strange to us now since we can get to even remote areas of our country with SUV's and sports vehicles. There are good roads in most back woods areas now. But this was in the 1920's and things were not so accessible back then. The team knew that once they had reached the church, they would be there for the entire week, no matter what happened. And they knew that there was no way to communicate with their families back home except by telegraph. They didn't have cell phones. They didn't even have a regular phone.

Shortly after the team had reached the church, Art got word through a telegraph that his son was terribly sick and had been rushed to the hospital. Poor Art didn't know what to do. He longed to be by his son's bedside and to be with his family. But that was not possible. The train would not be running again for almost a week.

How helpless and discouraged Art felt. There was nothing he could do but wait. It was hard to patient when he knew his son needed him. But he also knew the Lord was still in control.

So Art went to the piano and sat down to pray. He asked the Lord to help his son since he could not help in any way.

A thought came to Art's mind. He thought, "Jesus Never Fails." Then Art knew that he should turn the words into a song. He began to put music to the words that were forming. First he wrote the chorus and then he began on words for a verse. Soon he had written out a whole stanza.

After Art had completely finished the song, he felt a peace come into his soul that had not been there before. He felt assured that whatever happened, God was in control. He knew that he if he just waited on God then God would never fail him.

Just then there was a knock on the door. A telegraph had come in and someone had rushed over with the news that Art's son was doing much better and was expected to make a full recovery.

Over the years, the words to "Jesus Never Fails" have been of comfort and encouragement to many people. Jesus did not fail Art Luther and Jesus will never fail you! Just remember to be willing to patiently wait for the Lord.

#### Jesus Never Fails

Earthly friends may prove untrue, Doubts and fears assail;

One still loves and cares for you, One who will not fail.

Tho the sky be dark and drear, Fierce and strong the gale,

Just remember He is near, And He will not fail.

In life's dark and bitter hour Love will still prevail:

Trust His everlasting power - Jesus will not fail.

Jesus never fails, Jesus never fails;

Heaven and earth may pass away, But Jesus never fails.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression.*  
Numbers 14:18a

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Genesis 40:1-23, 41:1-41

Obtain Flash Card

### LESSON

#### **PALACE PRISONERS**

In Egypt, the Pharaoh was an all-powerful king. He held absolute power, so whatever he said was obeyed. For some reason both the King's butler and his baker offended him. An important king like the Pharaoh would have had many bakers to cook for him and many butlers to care for his rooms and clothing and personal care. It tells us here in Genesis 40:9 and 40:16 that these two men were the heads of their departments. They were the chiefs in charge of making sure everything was exactly the way the King liked things. Perhaps, they didn't do anything wrong personally. Perhaps one of the men who served under them did something wrong. But they were the chiefs so they were the responsible parties. (Show Flash Card)

Whatever the reason, Pharaoh was extremely angry at them. So he had them thrown in prison.

Now Joseph had been serving in the prison for some time. He was no longer a seventeen year old youth. Now he was 30 years old. For 13 years he had been a slave and prisoner in a foreign land. But God favored him so that he held a place of responsibility in the prison. When the chief of the King's bakers and the chief of the King's butlers were thrown into prison, the jail keeper assigned Joseph to look after them. Because of the high ranking positions of these two men they were given a bit better treatment than a common criminal from off the streets. Joseph cared for their daily needs.

One night each of these men had a dream.

Now we need to stop the story here for just a bit so I can explain something about dreams. You remember that in Bible times God often gave dreams to people. Back then many dreams had an important meaning. Let's go back to our story.

## TWO DREAMS

The next morning two men were sitting in their cells looking very dejected. When Joseph came to bring them their breakfast, they were sitting with their elbows on their knees and their heads in their hands. "What's wrong?" Joseph asked. So the men told Joseph that they each had a dream the night before. The dreams were vivid and they felt for sure that they had a meaning. But there was no one to interpret what their dreams meant.

It just so happened that Joseph knew someone who could interpret their dreams. Guess who? Not him. God. But Joseph knew that God would give him the interpretations. And Joseph was quick to tell the men that the interpretations came from God.

Genesis 40:8b says that Joseph said to them, *Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you.*

So first the chief butler told Joseph his dream. He had seen a vine. On the vine were three branches. All of a sudden the branches budded and blossoms burst from the buds. Then came a cluster of beautiful, ripe grapes. So the butler took the grapes and squeezed them into juice in the Pharaoh's cup. He then gave the juice to Pharaoh to drink.

Joseph knew what the dream meant immediately. He told the butler that the three branches meant in three days time the Pharaoh would bring him up out of prison and restore his job to him.

Then Joseph asked the butler to please remember him when he was restored to his position with the king so that he might be released from prison also.

In Genesis 40:14-15 Joseph said to the butler, *But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house: For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.*

The baker said he had dreamed he had three white baskets on his head. In the top basket were all sorts of cakes. The birds came and ate the cakes in the basket.

Joseph told him that in three days time the Pharaoh would have him brought out of prison and have him beheaded and hung on a tree. The birds would come and eat his flesh.

Three days later the Pharaoh called for the two men. It happened just as Joseph said. The butler was forgiven and given his job back while the poor baker was hanged. But as soon as the butler was restored to his previous position, he promptly forgot all about Joseph.

## **THE BUTLER FORGOT. GOD DIDN'T.**

People may have good intentions, but they often forget to keep their promises. The Butler didn't keep his promise. He probably really meant to keep the promise. So, Joseph sat in the jail for another two years.

The butler forgot, but God didn't. God remembered that Joseph was still in prison. God still planned on blessing Joseph, but He would do it in His own time. Joseph just had to be patient and wait on God.

You may have had someone break a promise to you. But God never breaks a promise.

In Hebrews 13:5b God makes a promise to you. He says, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*

## **A ROYAL DREAM**

For two long years after Joseph had interpreted the Butler's dream, he still remained in prison. I'm sure he had completely given up on the idea that the Butler would remember his promise to remember him to the Pharaoh. But I am also sure that Joseph had not given up his hope that somehow, even if he couldn't imagine how, God was still working out everything for his good. And God was.

One night the Pharaoh had two dreams. In the morning he was certain that the dreams must be important. The Pharaoh was so upset about the dreams that he couldn't think of anything else. So the Pharaoh called in all his wise men. He explained the dreams to them, but they just looked at each other in confusion. They had no idea what the dreams meant. They couldn't interpret the dreams.

## **A SPARK OF MEMORY**

Then the butler, who had probably been standing nearby waiting for a way to serve the Pharaoh, had a flash of memory. The butler said something like this to the Pharaoh, "Sir, do you remember the time when both the chief baker and I did something to upset you? You had us both thrown into prison. Well, one night we each had a dream. It was a vivid dream, like you had last night. There was a Hebrew slave who was also in prison. He was the helper of the prison guard. He told us what our dreams meant. Maybe he could help you."

## **PHARAOH CALLS FOR JOSEPH**

This caught Pharaoh's attention. So Pharaoh called for Joseph to be brought up from prison.

Joseph was apparently a brave man. He was also a wise man. He could see that God was working things out for him. When Joseph got the summons to appear before the Pharaoh, he quickly shaved his face and changed into clean clothing. He combed his hair. He was ready to meet the king.

When the Pharaoh saw Joseph, he told Joseph that he had two dreams. No one could interpret the dreams but he had heard that Joseph was able to help him. Joseph told the Pharaoh very clearly that it was God, not him, who gave him the interpretations for the dreams.

Genesis 41:16 says, *And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.*

So Pharaoh told Joseph about his dreams. In the first dream he dreamed he stood on the bank of a river. Up out of the river came seven well-fed, strong cows. They began to eat in the grass. Just then, seven more cows came, but these cows were weak, ill-fed, and puny. Amazingly, the seven weak, puny cows ate the seven strong cows. Instead of becoming strong, they were still weak and puny. Then he woke up.

In his second dream seven ears of corn grew on one stalk. And they were strong and good. Then seven weak, withered, and thin ears grew up. Again, the thin, weak ears devoured the strong ears. What could it mean?

Joseph listened carefully. Then, before he began to tell Pharaoh what the dream meant, he again gave God the credit.

Genesis 41:25 tells us, *And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh is one: God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do.*

Joseph told the Pharaoh that the dream was God's way of showing Pharaoh that He was in control of everything. Not only did the dream show Pharaoh that God knew the future, it showed Pharaoh that God controls the future.

Joseph said that the two dreams were the same. Both the strong, healthy cows and the strong healthy corn represented seven years of prosperity for Egypt. The crops would grow and there would be abundance. But after that, there would be seven years of hunger and famine. The crops would not grow. No matter what the farmers tried to do, they would not be able to grow anything. It would be a terrible time for Egypt.

Then Joseph explained that God had sent Pharaoh the dream twice to indicate that the dream would come true very soon. He had no time to delay.

Joseph, with God's leading, advised Pharaoh how to handle the situation. He told him to find men to take control of the land. They should be careful during the seven years of plenty to set aside enough food to last during the seven years of famine. They needed to gather enough food and grain to set aside for the entire country.

Now that was a big task. We aren't just talking about putting a few extra cans of food on the shelf. Joseph was advising the Pharaoh to set aside enough of everything to last an entire country for seven long years.

## GOOD PLAN

Pharaoh saw the wisdom in Joseph's plan, and so did all of his wise men. And I doubt that they ever all agreed on anything. But they agreed on this. But this would be a huge job! Who could coordinate such a large operation? Pharaoh realized that since God had sent him the dream and the interpretation, then it was a man of God that they needed to head up the operation. But who?

Well, there was only one man of God that Pharaoh knew. It was Joseph!

Genesis 41:39-41 says, *And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art: Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.*

Wow! Not only did Pharaoh release Joseph from prison, he gave him the second most powerful job in the nation. It was literally like going from being a nobody in prison to being the Vice President. Only Joseph had more power than any Vice President has ever had. He was in complete control of the country of Egypt and he only had to answer to the Pharaoh himself.

## PUZZLE PIECES

All along through the many years of slavery and imprisonment, God was planning this for Joseph. It must have seemed like a long wait for Joseph. It must have felt like God forgot all about him at times, but God always remembered Joseph every day. God's timing is always perfect. God led Joseph through each step from his home land to the palace of Pharaoh for a specific purpose. And this was it. Joseph's patience was finally paying off!

You never know what God is planning for your life. And to get to where the Lord wants you to be, you may have to go through some hard times and difficult people to get there. The Lord wants you to patiently trust that He is continually working in your life. Are you willing to do that?

God can't work in your life if you are not His child. Some people think that everyone is a child of God, but that is not true. The Bible says that we are all born in sin. We are all sinners.

Romans 3:23 says, *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*

The Bible also says that sin causes death, spiritual death. But we can have eternal life in Heaven because of what Jesus Christ did for us.

Romans 6:23 says, *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Jesus Christ took your sin on Himself when He died on the cross. Then three days later He rose alive from the grave. He could do that because He is God. Jesus can forgive your sin and take you to Heaven someday. But you must ask Him to do that.

I John 1:9 says, *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

Would you like to ask Jesus to forgive your sin and make you a child of God? We can do that today and then you will know that God is working in your life to bring about His master plan for you!

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

Often difficult people and unfair situations come into your life. You may feel very frustrated that you have to go through such hard times. When that happens, remember Joseph. He didn't know how God was going to work for good in his life either, but he patiently waited on the Lord.

This week I challenge you to determine to wait patiently on the Lord. Remember He has a master plan for your life and day by day He is working out that plan. He remembers you all the time.

You may not understand what God's plan is or how He will bring it about. It will take patience on your part, but it is worth the wait.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to patiently wait on God as He works things out in your life.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. How many years did Joseph spend in the prison after the butler was released?
2. Who had a dream?
3. Who did Pharaoh first ask to interpret his dream?
4. How did Pharaoh find out Joseph could interpret dreams?
5. What was Pharaoh's first dream about?
6. What was Pharaoh's second dream about?
7. What did Joseph do first when he was called before Pharaoh?
8. What did Joseph make clear to Pharaoh before he interpreted the dream?
9. Recite today's memory verse.
10. What did the two dreams mean?

# Longsuffering: Patience in Trials



I will be patient with others.  
God is patient with me.

The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy,  
forgiving iniquity and transgression.  
Numbers 14:18a

Write all the number 1 letters, in order, on the lines below. Then write all the number 2 letters in order. Then the 3 letters and so on until you get a hidden message.

<u>G</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>E</u>
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2
<u>G</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>V</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>E</u>
3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

G    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_\_\_

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LESSON 23

**LONGSUFFERING:  
THE PATIENCE TO WAIT**

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction

Song Time

Supporting Story

Memory Verse Time

Bible Lesson Time / Invitation

Challenge / Quiet Time

Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Genesis 41, 42, 43

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

I will be patient with others.  
God is patient with me.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity  
and transgression.* Numbers 14:18a



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

We like to plan things out in our minds. We decide what would be the best way for everything to happen. But God doesn't always do things the way we think He should. But do you know what? God is far wiser than we will ever be. He knows exactly what should happen in your life. And He knows exactly when and how it should happen.

Things may not go the way you plan, but they will go the way God plans if you let Him have control. And when God is in control then everything will work out for the best.

God wants you to learn to wait patiently on His plans. Today we will talk about that.

Today's Life Lesson is: I will be patient with others. God is patient with me.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### THE TEACUP

Obtain Flash Card

One day as a woman walked down the street of a city she was visiting, she passed a little china shop. In the window was a single little teacup that caught her eye. She went in to take a closer look. As she reached to pick up the beautiful cup, suddenly it spoke to her! (Show Flash Card)

**Teacup:** Do you know that I haven't always been a teacup? There was a time when I was an old lump of clay. The potter took me out of a pit and washed and cleaned me. Then he began to work with me in his hands. This was not a pleasant process and I called out to him to leave me alone. But he only smiled and said, "Wait. Not yet!"

Then he placed me on a potter's wheel. I was spun around and around as his hand gently but firmly pulled me to the center of the wheel. It took so much pressure to get me into the exact center, but finally it was so.

The potter molded me on the wheel until I stood in the shape you see me now. Finally I thought he would leave me in peace. But again the potter said, "Wait. Not yet."

He put me in a hot, fiery oven. The heat was so intense and I only wished to be out of there. The potter would peek through a small opening. He watched me constantly. I looked into his eyes to plead to be taken from the fire, but again he shook his head, "Wait. Not yet."

When the door opened, the potter gently lifted me out and began to paint details onto my surface. Then again he placed me into the fire. Again he watched me. Again he said, "Wait. Not yet."

I had almost given up hope when the fire cooled and the master potter took me out. And then I saw myself. I was no longer an ugly lump of clay. Instead I was a beautiful, delicate teacup!

Then the master gently spoke to me.

**Master:** "I know it hurt you as I lifted you out of the clay and cleaned you. It was not easy to be centered on my wheel. But that is the only way I could work with you to form you into the shape I had purposed. The fire was difficult, but each time you came out of the fire you were more beautiful than before you had gone in. Now you are my finished masterpiece. You are exactly what I had in mind when I reached down into the pit and brought you out. Now you are both beautiful and useful."

So the woman gently lifted the teacup from the shelf and gladly paid for the lovely cup.

God knows exactly what He wants to make of your life. God wants to take you out of the pit and wash away your sin. It can be a slow and sometimes painful process to become the vessel that God wants us to be. It can take a lot of patience to wait as God is working on our lives. But God knows what is best. It may take patience to wait on Him, but God is forming your life into a vessel that is both valuable and useful to Him.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression.*  
Numbers

14:18a

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Genesis 41:33-57, 42:1-38, 43:1-14

### LESSON

#### FOLLOWING GOD'S PLAN

Joseph's years of faithfully trusting God to work things out for his good had paid off. Joseph never lost faith that even when things didn't look good, and even when things were not going the way he would have liked, God was still in control. God could be trusted to work His perfect plan.

From the day Joseph was appointed by Pharaoh, he began to work. He figured out ways to set aside food and grain from the abundant crops that the fields were producing. He built safe and sturdy buildings to store everything in. He traveled throughout the country telling the farmers about his plans of how to save. He planned. He worked hard. He did the best job he could. God gave Joseph the wisdom to know how to best carry out his plan. He put his plan into action.

As the seven years progressed, true to God's word, the fields yielded abundantly. The people had never seen such wonderful crops. They may have been tempted to waste the excess, but Joseph was right there to instruct them on how to store the excess. Soon there was so much stored away in granaries that even Joseph lost count of the amount that was put away for later.

Genesis 41:49 tells us, *And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number.*

#### FROM FEAST TO FAMINE

Finally the seven years of abundance came to an end. Just as God had told Joseph in the dreams, the famine began. No matter how much the farmers tried to fertilize and water their crops, nothing would grow. Soon the people ran out of food. They were hungry. The people went to Pharaoh and presented their needs. They told him their crops were failing and there was nothing to eat. They had no grains to make bread. But they did not have to panic. Because of Joseph's careful planning, there was plenty of food and grain to go around. The people in the countryside as well as in the city could go to the granaries and buy what they needed.

Genesis 41:54 says, *And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said: and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.*

## HELP ME!

The Bible tells us that the famine was not limited to the land of Egypt. All the surrounding lands were in trouble also. They had probably also had the seven years of abundance, but since they had not known about the famine to come, they had not saved for the days ahead. Soon people from other lands came to Egypt to buy food.

Genesis 41:57 says, *And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands.*

Joseph's family, back in the land where they lived, was also experiencing famine. One day, word came that there was food in Egypt. Jacob hated to send his sons to that far away land, but he had no choice. That was the only place to find food. And they needed food!

After they had held out as long as possible, Jacob told his sons to go to Egypt. But he made the decision not to send his youngest son, Benjamin. Benjamin was Joseph's full brother. And Jacob was afraid that something might happen to him just as it had to Joseph. He knew that if anything happened to Benjamin he would surely die of a broken heart.

Genesis 42:5 tells us, *And the sons of Israel came to buy corn among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan.*

## SURPRISE VISIT

Joseph's brothers made the journey to Egypt. They most likely did not want to go all the way to Egypt to purchase grain. It was a long hard trip. And when they got to that foreign land, they knew they would have to pay a steep price for the grain. But they had no choice.

Now as soon as Joseph laid eyes on his brothers, he recognized them. But they did not recognize him. And that suited Joseph just fine.

In Genesis 42:6-7 it tells us, *And Joseph was the governor over the land, and he it was that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth. And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them.*

How could Joseph's own brothers not recognize him? Not in their wildest dreams could the brothers have guessed that Joseph was now the second most powerful man in all of Egypt! So the last person they were expecting to see was Joseph. Also Joseph was 20 years older. He was dressed in the manner of the Egyptian rulers and he was in a position that the brothers would never suspect that Joseph could hold.

This was fine with Joseph. He didn't want his brothers to recognize him.

## I DON'T TRUST YOU

Why didn't Joseph want his brothers to recognize him? He wanted to know if they had changed. He wanted to know if he could trust them now. Joseph decided to put his brothers to

the test. First he spoke roughly to them. He wasn't doing it to be mean. He was just convincing them that he was the important foreign leader who could care less about them and their lack of food. He wanted them to believe he was a stranger to them.

Immediately, as his brothers bowed down before him to beg for grain, he remembered the dreams he had dreamed 20 or more years before. Do you remember? He had dreamed that his brothers would one day bow before him. Now the dream had come true. God had known this day would come. He had let Joseph see that day, even though at the time Joseph had no way of knowing what the dream really meant.

Joseph began to question and accuse his brothers. He asked them where they came from. They told him they were from Canaan. He roughly accused them of being spies come to do harm to Egypt.

The brothers trembled with fright. They quickly denied that they had come to spy. They pleaded that they were simply twelve brothers, the son of a man from Canaan. They told Joseph that one of the brothers had stayed home and one was dead or gone.

Joseph insisted that they were spies. Then he put a test to them. He told them that if they were telling the truth, they should produce the youngest brother who had stayed at home. Then Joseph had all his brothers thrown in prison. For three days they sat in the prison. But three days was nothing compared to what they had done to Joseph.

After three days Joseph called for the brothers. He told them that they were all free to go except one brother. That brother would remain in prison until they had returned with the youngest brother. Then he would believe they were not spies. He told them he would sell them corn also.

The ten brothers made a huddle to discuss what they should do. Their guilty consciences were coming out. They were positive that they were being punished for what they had done to Joseph many years before. Basically they said, "Finally we are being punished for what we did to Joseph. Now we are paying for our sin!"

As they talked away in their own language, they did not realize that Joseph could understand every single word they said. They just assumed he could only speak Egyptian. But Joseph listened carefully.

Genesis 42:23 tells us, *And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter.*

When Joseph heard what his brothers were saying, he turned away so they could not see him. He was broken-hearted. Here were the brothers he had loved. Now he listened to all they said about the terrible thing they had done to him. Joseph cried. Then Joseph dried his eyes and turned back to talk to them.

Joseph called a guard to take Simeon and tie him up. He told the others they were free to go but that Simeon would remain in prison until they returned with the youngest brother to prove they were not spies.

When the brothers were preparing to leave, Joseph called a servant aside to give him special instructions for the grain he was sending with his brothers. He ordered that the sacks be filled with grain and also inside each sack was his brothers' money. He also ordered that food for the journey be provided for them.

So the brothers began to prepare for the journey home. They loaded down each donkey with the precious grain that would keep them and their families alive in the days to come. When the brothers stopped for the night one of the brothers opened his sack of grain and he saw the coins he had paid for the grain. He quickly ran to his brothers and showed them the money.

Genesis 42:28 says, *And he said unto his brethren, My money is restored; and, lo, it is even in my sack: and their heart failed them, and they were afraid, saying one to another, What is this that God hath done unto us?*

All the brothers looked at each other in fear. I don't imagine that any of them slept very well that night.

While Joseph was willing to forgive his brothers, and I am sure that Joseph longed to believe that his brothers had changed, he had to be sure. I'm sure he wanted to believe they would never hurt Benjamin, but he had to be sure. So he determined to carry out his test. But his test was going to take some time.

#### **BAD NEWS**

When the brothers got home they began to tell their father all that had happened in Egypt. They told their father that the lord of the land in Egypt had not been very nice to them. In fact, he had accused them of being spies. Of course, they had tried to tell him that was not true but he didn't seem to believe them.

Then they paused. I'm sure they dreaded to tell their father that the mean Egyptian man had kept Simeon as a prisoner and also that he wanted them to take Benjamin back to Egypt with them the next time they came.

They opened their grain sacks to show the grain to their father. And they were all in for another big shock. There at the top of every single bag was a small sack with the money they had paid for the grain.

I'm sure you could have seen the sweat running down each man's forehead as they realized that it looked like they had stolen the grain. Even Jacob was frightened. He began to mourn. He had lost Joseph. Now he had lost Simeon. And not only that, they wanted to take Benjamin away from him also! What if the Egyptian accused all his sons of being thieves? What if he killed or captured Benjamin?

Reuben pleaded with his father to let them take Benjamin. He swore that he would protect Benjamin and not let anything happen to him. But Jacob refused to let them take Benjamin.

So the days went by. The families tried to ration the grain. They wanted it to last as long as possible because they didn't know when or if they would get more. There were quite a few people

depending on the grain the brothers had brought back. Most likely the older brothers were all married and had several children. They also had people who worked for them. And they had animals. It would have taken quite a bit of food to feed such a group as large as they were.

### **CAN'T WAIT ANY LONGER**

The day came when the grain was gone. They couldn't put it off any longer. So Jacob told his sons to go get a little more grain. Judah stepped up. He reminded his father that the Egyptian lord had told them not to show their faces in Egypt again without Benjamin. He pleaded with his father to let Benjamin go with them. He earnestly promised his father that they would not let anything happen to Benjamin.

Finally Jacob relented. But he had a plan. Jacob figured that if he sent back all the money from the first time, plus the money for the next time, plus a few goodies like honey, spices, and nuts, then they could butter up the Egyptian.

Genesis 43:11-12 tells us that Jacob gave them specific instructions on what to do. *And their father Israel said unto them, If it must be so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down to the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds: And take double money in your hand; and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand; peradventure it was an oversight: Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man: And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.*

### **THE PATIENCE TO WAIT**

Joseph must have longed to be with his father and brothers once again, yet he had the patience to wait a while longer to see if his brothers had changed. It must have been very hard to be so close to having his family back, but he waited a bit longer.

God wants us to be patient too. We like to rush ahead and do things right away. We want everything now. But sometimes God wants us to have the patience to wait. God has a plan for your life, but He knows the perfect time for everything to happen. We don't know the perfect time but God does.

Are you patient when God asks you to wait? When you pray, do you wait patiently for God to answer in His own way? God wants you to pray about things, but He wants you to wait on His answer. God wants you to prepare for life, but He wants you to wait for Him to send along the perfect answer. Are you willing to be longsuffering and wait? Waiting can be hard, but you can ask God to make you patient.

Maybe you are not a child of God. God has a plan for your life too, but first you must give your life to Him. You must ask Him to forgive your sin and come into your life. Jesus loves you so much that He died on the cross for your sins. Jesus can forgive your sins, but you must ask Him to do that.

Would you like to ask Jesus to forgive your sins and make you a child of God? You can do that today. We can show you how.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to have the patience to wait on God's ways. God has a perfect plan for you, but He doesn't always show us His plan right away. Sometimes God leads us through life step by step. As you take one step that God tells you to take, then you will be ready for the next step in good time.

Every time you feel anxious to hurry things along this week, stop and ask God to make you patient. Ask Him to show you each step that you should take and then take that one step without being impatient to take the next step.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want everyone to bow their head and close their eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given to you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you to accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to wait patiently as God works.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. What did Joseph tell Pharaoh would happen for 14 years?
2. Recite today's memory verse.
3. What did Joseph do to prepare for the seven years of famine?
4. How did Joseph get the wisdom to make such a smart plan?
5. What countries were affected by the famine?
6. Who sent his sons to Egypt to get food?
7. What son did Jacob not allow to go to Egypt?
8. Who did the brothers have to deal with in order to buy grain?
9. What did Joseph accuse his brother of being?
10. What did the brothers think they were being punished for?

# Longsuffering: The Patience to Wait



The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy,  
forgiving iniquity and transgression.

Numbers 14:18a

I will be patient with others.  
God is patient with me.

NEMYO

\_\_\_\_\_

KASC

\_\_\_\_\_

GNARI

\_\_\_\_\_

AFER

\_\_\_\_\_

JIMBNEAN

\_\_\_\_\_

PGYET

\_\_\_\_\_

Can you unscramble these words that remind  
you of Joseph's brothers?

Here are the answers but not all of the words are used:  
Hatred, Famine, Money, Pit, Sack, Sold, Grain, Travel, Fear, Brothers,  
Benjamin, Egypt



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LESSON 24

LONGSUFFERING:  
GODLY PATIENCE

LESSON ORDER

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



BIBLE TEXT

Genesis 43:15-34, 44:1-34,  
45:1-15

CHARACTER TRAIT

I will be patient with others.  
God is patient with me.

MEMORY VERSE

*The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression.*  
Numbers 14:18a



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

There is a saying you may have heard or read on bumper stickers. It says, "I don't get angry. I get even."

Do you know what? That may sound funny or cool, but it is the total opposite of how a Christian should react to someone who has wronged them. A Christian's bumper sticker should read, "I don't get angry. I forgive others."

When someone treats you wrongly, what do you feel like doing? Most times we want revenge. We want to be mean back. But that is not how God wants us to treat others, not even someone who has wronged us. God wants us to forgive. It's hard to forgive, isn't it? Very hard. But God can help us to forgive. He can help us to be longsuffering.

Today's Life Lesson is: I will be patient with others. God is patient with me.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### A HOUSE OR A HOME?

Obtain Flash Card

For just a minute lets take the time to think about something very important. Do you live in a house or do you live in a home? (Show Flash Card)

Wait a minute, you say, what's the difference? Aren't they the same thing? No. They aren't the same thing.

Let me explain:

A house has walls and a roof to protect you. A home has acceptance to protect you.

A house has heat to warm you. A home has love to warm you.

A house has a floor to hold you up. A home has emotional support to uphold you.

A house has people living inside. A home has a family living inside.

A house has windows to look through. A home has family and friends to look to.

A house has furniture to rest on. A home has understanding to rest on.

In other words, a house is a building with walls, a roof and windows. It is made of wood, and glass, and metal. It's just a place for your furniture. It's just a place to eat and sleep. It's just a place to keep your things.

A home is all the good things inside of a house. It is a family that talks to each other, laughs together, plays together, forgives each other, accepts each other, and loves each other.

A home is filled with warmth, with friends, with encouragement, with understanding, and with love.

A home is place where you can talk with someone about the things that are important to you. It is a place where you can laugh with someone about the funny things in life. It is a place where you can work out problems with the people who live with you.

Unfortunately, most people have a house, but not everyone has a home. Not everyone has a safe place where they can go to be loved, and accepted, and helped. We've been talking about Joseph in our Bible story for the past few weeks, and sadly, Joseph did not have a warm, accepting home. He and his brothers did not get along and they did not have a deep love for each other. That is a sad thing.

So, how do you help to make a house into a home? Every home has a few problems. No one feels like cleaning or taking out trash. Brothers and sisters can seem very annoying. Arguments can happen. That's life.

But you can do your part to make your house into a place where everyone feels at home. Remember to love your mom, dad, brothers, and sisters - no matter how they act. Treat everyone in your family with respect in the way you speak and act toward them. Obey your parents with a good attitude - surprise them by doing things you have been asked to do with a cheerful attitude. Take the time to talk to your family and friends when you are home. Share your needs, your hopes, and your problems with your family. Then remember to take the time to listen to your loved ones when they need to talk to you. Always be ready to lend a hand when your family can use your help.

You can't always do everything the right way, but you can always do your very best. And you can always love your family. Then you will be helping to make your house into a home!

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression.*  
Numbers

14:18a

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Genesis 43:15-34, 44:1-34, 45:1-15

### LESSON

#### **THE DREADED TRIP**

The grain that Joseph's ten brothers had brought from the land of Egypt was gone. Without food, they would all die. The brothers had no choice. They had to go back to buy more food. Jacob was not anxious for them to take Benjamin but Judah pleaded with his father to let him go with them. He promised sincerely that he would bring the boy back or else he would take the blame. So Jacob relented.

The brothers left with dread in their hearts and knots in their stomachs. They were not certain they would be able to get food. In fact, they feared that the Egyptian lord, who had treated them so roughly and even imprisoned one of their brothers, would do the same to them.

They took gifts that they hoped would be useful in buying the favor of the Egyptian ruler. It was all they could do. I imagine that as they trudged toward Egypt they had heavy, troubled hearts.

#### **THE FEAST**

Finally they arrived in Egypt. When Joseph saw that Benjamin had come along with his brothers he was overjoyed. I am sure Joseph wanted to run up and hug Benjamin but he re-

strained himself because he was not through testing his brothers. He wanted to make sure that they had truly changed both their actions and their heart attitudes.

Joseph ordered his servant to prepare a great feast. He told the servant to bring his brothers to his house for a meal. When the brothers found out that Joseph wanted them to come to his house to eat, they worried that it was a trap. Surely the Egyptian was planning on accusing them of being thieves. What should they do?

Genesis 43:18 says, *And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses.*

So they went to the steward who worked for the Egyptian. They told him about what had happened with the money being in each man's bag when they returned home the last time. They assured him they had not stolen the money. The steward told them their God must have given them the money because he had their money. Then he brought Simeon out to join his brothers. I am sure they were all relieved to see Simeon.

When Joseph entered his home, he began to question his brothers. He asked them how their father was. They quickly assured him that their father was in good health. They bowed themselves low before Joseph.

As Joseph looked at them bowing before him, he took a long look at Benjamin. Oh, how he had longed for the day when he would see his young brother once again. Joseph asked, "Is this your brother?" They assured him it was.

Joseph was overcome by emotion. He couldn't control himself any longer. He excused himself and went to his bedroom. There he cried, both in sorrow and in joy. He must have experienced sorrow for the many years he had been separated from his family. But he was overcome with joy at seeing his brother alive.

Joseph washed his face and went out to talk with his brothers once again. He called for dinner to be served. The brothers were seated in order from the oldest to the youngest. The brothers were amazed the servants knew how to seat them in the exact order of their ages. It must have been a frightening feeling to know that these Egyptians knew so much about them without their having told anyone this information.

Joseph began to set plates of food in front of each of his brothers. In the end, when he came to Benjamin, not only did he set a plate full of food, he also gave Benjamin five times the food he had given to each brother. Then Joseph watched. Would the brothers be jealous because their younger brother had gotten more? They did not seem jealous. Instead, as they ate they began to talk to Joseph. They relaxed and enjoyed the food and the conversation.

## THE FINAL TEST

Finally the meal ended and the men made ready to head home. They went out to prepare their donkeys. Joseph pulled his steward aside and gave him special orders to fill each man's sack as full as possible and then put their money back in each sack. When he filled Benjamin's sack, he was instructed him to put the money as well as Joseph's silver cup into the sack.

Away the brothers went. They left Egypt with plenty of grain. They had Simeon and Benjamin. How happy they were. But it wasn't long before they heard a noise behind them. There was the Egyptian's steward racing toward them calling for them to halt. The steward said exactly what Joseph had instructed him to say.

Genesis 44:4b says that the steward said, *Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?*

The brothers looked at each other. What was this man talking about? They told him to search each sack and if he found the silver cup he should kill the one who stole it and the rest of them would all become servants to the Egyptian.

The steward searched the sacks. He started at the oldest brother's sack. Finally he came to Benjamin's sack. Sure enough, there in the sack was the silver cup. They were horrified. How could this be? They had no choice but to turn back and return to Egypt.

When Joseph came out to see them, they threw themselves on the ground and pleaded for mercy. Judah told him they would all remain as his servants. But Joseph quickly told them, "No." Instead, only Benjamin would be kept as his servant. The rest of them were free to return to their homes.

Judah spoke up for Benjamin. He knew he couldn't leave Benjamin behind. He begged for mercy since Benjamin was the youngest and the dearest to his father. Surely his father would die of heartbreak if they returned without Benjamin. Then Judah did a very selfless thing. He offered to stay as a servant in Benjamin's place.

In Genesis 44:33 Judah said, *Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren.*

## CHANGED HEARTS

The test Joseph had set for his brothers was to see if they had changed. He knew they had once been angry, jealous men. They had been capable of doing very cruel things in order to get vengeance. It hadn't mattered to them that they had hurt their father. It hadn't mattered that Joseph would be killed.

Joseph must have wondered if they hated Benjamin as they had hated him. If he threatened to make Benjamin a slave, would they be happy to get their grain and go tell their father there had been nothing they could do to save him?

So Joseph wondered, had they changed? Had they learned to love their brother and father? Were they sorry for the evil they had committed to him? Now Joseph had his answer. They had changed their attitudes and actions. They were changed men.

### **THE BIG REVEAL**

Joseph could control himself no longer. He had to tell them he was not some strange Egyptian lord, but instead he was their brother whom they thought was dead.

Joseph looked up and saw his steward and many other servants watching to see what would happen. Joseph all the others to go outside, except for his eleven brothers. Then Joseph told his brothers who he was.

Genesis 45:3 says, *And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live?*

### **THE FEAR FACTOR**

Can you imagine what the brothers were feeling when they realized that Joseph was alive and was now such a powerful man? The Bible doesn't make us wonder about that. It tells us exactly what they felt. They were afraid!

Genesis 45:4 says, *And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence.*

They were so afraid they couldn't speak. I am sure that every brother, except Benjamin, instantly thought back to the day they took him and stripped him of the precious coat his father had given to him. They pictured how they had roughed him up and threatened to kill him. They threw him in a pit to let him die or be killed by a wild animal. And finally they had sold him as a slave.

Oh my, now they were sure they would pay for their terrible sin! They never expected forgiveness. They would not have forgiven anyone who did such terrible things to them! Joseph had a lot to forgive. He had every reason not to forgive. But the brothers were in for a big surprise!

### **FORGIVEN**

Genesis 45:4-5 tells us, *And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.*

Genesis 50:19-20a says, *And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God?*

*But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good.*

Joseph explained to them that God had allowed all of the terrible things they had done to him for their own good.

Joseph forgave them. He could hold himself back no longer. He ran and hugged Benjamin and cried on his shoulder. Then he turned with tears in his eyes and hugged each of his other brothers. He let them know that his forgiveness was genuine and complete. He loved them. He forgave them. He wanted to be with them.

Genesis 45:15 says, *Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.*

What great relief and joy must have washed over each brother's heart and mind as they realized that Joseph had forgiven them! I don't think they were happy just because this meant that their lives were not in danger. I believe it was a great joy to them to be restored in love to Joseph.

Gone was the guilt of what they had done. Gone was the guilt for the terrible grief that their father had experienced. Gone was the guilt for the pain and agony that they had put Joseph through. They must have felt clean. They must have been amazed that they could get a second chance to love the brother that they had so terribly wronged. What a happy reunion they had! The Bible tells us that their crying and the rejoicing was so loud that the servants outside the room could hear what was going on and they reported it to all of Pharaoh's household.

### **WHY SHOULD YOU FORGIVE?**

The Bible tells us that we also need to be forgiving. Joseph is such a good example for us to follow.

Why should you forgive? Here are several reasons to forgive.

1. Forgive because it is good for your heart and soul.

When you do not forgive, your heart is filled with anger and bitterness. You are not happy or at peace. In fact, you are hurting yourself more than you are hurting the person you refuse to forgive. But when true forgiveness occurs, you get rid of all those ugly feelings. When you forgive someone, you are bringing peace and joy to your own life.

2. Forgive because God commands you to forgive others.

Forgiveness is not just a good idea, it is a command from God.

Matthew 6:14-15 says, *For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

If you harbor an unforgiving spirit in your heart, God will not be willing to forgive you. Forgiving others is a way of showing God that we love Him and want to obey him.

3. Forgive because God forgave you.

You have sinned against God but He loves you and He is willing to forgive you. He will forgive you because Jesus Christ came to earth to die on the cross for you. Oh how much God loves you. You need to show that love to others by having a forgiving attitude.

## ARE YOU FORGIVEN?

The question I want to ask you now is this, Have you ever had your sin forgiven? Jesus Christ died on the cross so you could have your sin forgiven. He wants to forgive you. Have you asked Him to forgive you?

You can. Today we can have someone show you how you can ask Jesus to forgive your sins and come into your life.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

Forgiveness is a form of longsuffering. It's a form of patience. Longsuffering is an important fruit that you need to allow the Holy Spirit to develop in your life. I challenge you to be forgiving this week. Forgive in one of two ways:

1. Forgive someone who has already made you angry.
2. Forgive someone who makes you angry or hurts you this week.

I challenge you to spend some time alone this afternoon. Search your heart. Is there someone who needs your forgiveness? If so, then ask the Lord to help you forgive them.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to be a patient, forgiving person.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Why were Joseph's brothers taken back to Egypt?
2. What did Joseph tell the brothers they could do if they left Benjamin behind to be his servant?
3. Who offered to stay in Egypt as a servant in place of Benjamin?
4. What did Joseph do after he told all of his servants to leave the room?
5. Recite today's memory verse.
6. What was the brothers' reaction when they found out the Egyptian was Joseph?
7. Why did Joseph tell his brothers not to worry about what had happened to him?
8. What did Joseph do after he had revealed who he was?
9. Name a reason why we should forgive others.
10. What happens to you when you forgive?

# Longsuffering: Godly Patience



The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy,  
forgiving iniquity and transgression.  
Numbers 14:18a

I will be patient with others.  
God is patient with me.

Write the letter on the top line that follows the one given below  
the line to crack the code. Example:

$\frac{J}{I}$

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z A

$\frac{J}{I}$     $\frac{\quad}{N}$     $\frac{\quad}{R}$     $\frac{\quad}{D}$     $\frac{\quad}{O}$     $\frac{\quad}{G}$     $\frac{\quad}{E}$     $\frac{\quad}{N}$     $\frac{\quad}{Q}$     $\frac{\quad}{F}$     $\frac{\quad}{Z}$     $\frac{\quad}{U}$     $\frac{\quad}{D}$

$\frac{\quad}{G}$     $\frac{\quad}{H}$     $\frac{\quad}{R}$     $\frac{\quad}{A}$     $\frac{\quad}{Q}$     $\frac{\quad}{N}$     $\frac{\quad}{S}$     $\frac{\quad}{G}$     $\frac{\quad}{D}$     $\frac{\quad}{Q}$     $\frac{\quad}{R}$

$\frac{\quad}{D}$     $\frac{\quad}{U}$     $\frac{\quad}{D}$     $\frac{\quad}{M}$     $\frac{\quad}{S}$     $\frac{\quad}{G}$     $\frac{\quad}{N}$     $\frac{\quad}{T}$     $\frac{\quad}{F}$     $\frac{\quad}{G}$

$\frac{\quad}{S}$     $\frac{\quad}{G}$     $\frac{\quad}{D}$     $\frac{\quad}{X}$     $\frac{\quad}{S}$     $\frac{\quad}{Q}$     $\frac{\quad}{D}$     $\frac{\quad}{Z}$     $\frac{\quad}{S}$     $\frac{\quad}{D}$     $\frac{\quad}{C}$

$\frac{\quad}{G}$     $\frac{\quad}{H}$     $\frac{\quad}{L}$     $\frac{\quad}{V}$     $\frac{\quad}{Q}$     $\frac{\quad}{N}$     $\frac{\quad}{M}$     $\frac{\quad}{F}$  .

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LESSON 25

**GENTLENESS:  
GENTLENESS TOWARD OTHERS**

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Ruth 1:1-18

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

God wants me to have a  
gentle spirit toward others.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men.*  
2 Timothy 2:24a



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

Today we are going to begin to learn about a new fruit of the Spirit that God wants you to have in your life. It is Gentleness.

God wants you to have a gentle spirit. He wants you to speak words that show gentleness toward others. He wants you to act in a gentle manner toward others.

God is gentle with you! He gently calls you to be His child. He gently guides you each day. He gently shows His love for you in so many ways. Your goal should be to be gentle like the Lord.

Today's Life Lesson is: God wants me to have a gentle spirit toward others.

### SONG TIME

### SUPPORTING STORY

#### THE RELUCTANT PUP

Obtain Flash Card

Dad shoved the last sleeping bag into the trunk of the car. Both the trunk and the roof carrier were crammed full. There was the tent and the small cook stove, the sleeping bags, and a cooler full of food. There were small duffel bags of sweat pants, towels, bathing suits, and everything else they would need to wear for a week of camping out at the state park.

Every year the family went to a state park. It was right on the coast of Lake Michigan and Tracy thought it was so much fun. When they got to the park Dad would select just the right spot that had a high, level spot for the tent, a clean fire pit, and a good, sturdy picnic table.

When Dad had selected just the right spot - hopefully one with a good view of Lake Michigan - then the whole family would help with the set up. First a plastic tarp would be thrown down to keep the damp ground off the bottom of the tent. Then Tracy, her brother, Mom, and Dad would begin to assemble the tent. The poles and canvas would be put in place and some would pull while others drove stakes into the ground and tied ropes.

Then everyone would stand back and grin with pleasure and a sense of fulfillment that they had actually remembered how to put up the tent. Mom would set about making everything seem as cozy and homelike as she could. The cook stove would be set up on the picnic table and she always spread a plastic table cloth with red and white squares on top. Then she arranged four chairs around the fire pit. When everything was just right, she would bring out a special snack she had made at home for them to eat when all was done, because she knew everyone would be starved and wouldn't want to wait for her to cook dinner.

One of Tracy's favorite parts was when Dad would take the small row boat to the boat launch to put it in the water. He would wait in line for his turn. Then he would carefully back down the ramp. Soon the tires of the boat trailer would roll right into the water. Before they had completely disappeared, Dad would put the car in park and jump out to untie the boat. He would gently allow it to ease backwards into the water. Mom would hang on to a rope holding the boat while Dad got back in the car to pull it out of the way so the next boat could be launched. All week long the family would enjoy rowing the boat out into a small cove just off of Lake Michigan where the water was calm. There they would fish. They never caught much, but it didn't matter to them. They just enjoyed the water and the boat.

Every night, after a long day of fishing, swimming, and walking on the trails, they would sit around the blazing fire and cook hot dogs and roast marshmallows. They would discuss the fish that got away and the clams and tiny shells they had found on the beach. They would laugh and talk until the last log had burned out and everyone was sleepy and ready to crawl into their sleeping bags to get a good night's sleep.

One night, just as they were holding sticks in the fire to cook their hot dogs, Tracy caught a glimpse of movement out of the corner of her eye. There, in the dark shadows, was a dog. It stood quietly watching the family and it was especially eyeing the hot dogs. It had a look of longing in its eyes. (Show Flash Card)

"Mom," Tracy asked. "Look how that poor dog is watching us. Can I give her a hot dog? She looks hungry."

"Sure," Mom said, "But I'm not sure how close she'll let you get. She looks frightened."

Tracy held the hot dog out to the poor mangy mutt that stood on the edge of their camp site.

When Tracy saw the dog, she immediately wanted to make friends with it. She loved dogs. But the dog hung back. It didn't want to come very close. Tracy could tell by the hungry look in its eyes and the fact that she could see the dog's ribs that the poor thing was hungry.

"Why won't she come get the hot dog?" Tracy asked her parents.

"She probably doesn't trust you. She looks like she's a stray. I'm sure she has learned not all people would welcome her like you do. Most people probably throw rocks or other things at her and yell to chase her away. They probably don't treat her very kindly."

So Tracy gently tossed the hot dog close to the poor pup and stayed back as she watched her gobble it down in a few seconds. Then it turned and disappeared into the dark night as quickly as it had come.

That puppy had learned that it couldn't place its trust in most people. It had learned it needed to be cautious. It was a pretty smart dog. Not everyone was kind and gentle.

Life is like that, but there is one place where you can be sure you will always be treated with gentle love. That is in God. God loves you completely and He will always treat you gently 100 percent of the time. He wants only the best for you. You can trust God.

God also wants you to treat others gently. He wants you to keep your words and your actions gentle so that others can see the love of God in your life. So search your heart. Are you a gentle person?

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men. 2 Timothy 2:24a*

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Ruth 1:1-18

### LESSON

#### **MOVE TO MOAB**

During the days of the judges, there was a famine in the land of Israel. The Israelite people were unable to raise food for themselves and their animals. Some stayed and struggled to make a living on what little they could eke out of the land but others decided to go to other lands. There they were able to raise crops and did not have to worry about how to feed their families.

A man named Elimelech and his wife, Naomi, decided they would leave the land of Judah near Bethlehem and travel to the country of Moab where they could be sure of surviving. It must have been a hard choice to leave the land they owned, but they did.

Ruth 1:1-2 says, *Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehemjudah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.*

*And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehemjudah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.*

Elimelech took his wife and two young sons and headed out. They found a suitable place to live in the new land of Moab. They began to start a new life. But something happened after the family moved to Moab. Elimelech died. This left Naomi to raise her two sons and try to make a living all by herself.

Both of Naomi's sons were young men by this time and they both chose to marry women from the country of Moab. The women of Moab were not Israelite women. They were Moabites. They were Gentile women.

The Israelites were a special people chosen of God. Other names used for the Children of Israel are Israelites, Hebrews, and Jews. All those names are used to mean the people who descended from Abraham and Isaac. The people who descended from Abraham's other son, Ishmael, are now Arabs. All the rest of the people on earth are referred to as Gentiles. In Old Testament times the Gentiles were not people who believed in the God of Israel. But after Jesus Christ died on the cross, it was made clear that salvation was made available to anyone who would accept God's gift, including the Gentiles. Now many Gentiles love and worship the true God.

But in Naomi's day, Gentiles were looked down on by Israelites. In Moab, the Gentiles worshipped false gods. They did not know the true God. But since the family had moved to Moab, Naomi must have felt she could not protest when her sons married women who were Gentiles. Who else could they marry?

#### **TRAGEDY STRIKES**

One son married a woman named Orpah and the other married a woman named Ruth. These two sons must have faithfully helped their mother for she would have been helpless to make her own living. For about ten years they lived and worked in Moab.

Then something terrible happened. Both of Naomi's sons died.

Ruth 1:3-5 says, *And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons.*

*And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years.*

*And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.*

Poor Naomi. She was far from her home land in Israel. She was far away in the land of Moab and her two sons married Moabite women. Then both sons died. She must have been full of grief and also very frightened about what her future would hold.

## RETURN TO JUDAH

There was nothing left for Naomi in the country of Moab, so she made a decision. She would return to her homeland of Bethlehem in Judah. At least she had some family there who could help her. And she heard that the famine was over.

So Naomi called her two daughter's-in-law to her side. She explained to Orpah and Ruth that she was going to return to her homeland. The three women set off for Israel. But they had not gotten very far when Naomi began to think. She must have thought something like this. "Why am I taking my two daughters-in-law with me? Bethlehem is my home, not theirs. They should go home to their families and try to find new husbands in their own land. My life is over, but theirs is not."

Naomi told Orpah and Ruth to return to their own families so that they could once more find suitable husbands. They were still young women. They had their whole lives ahead of them.

Naomi must have been a kind, gentle woman who loved her sons' wives. When Naomi told Orpah and Ruth to return home they did not say, "Well, it's been nice knowing you, Naomi. Send us a postcard when you get to Judah."

No, as Naomi gave each a kiss, they began to cry. They had each learned to love their mother-in-law in the years they had been together and they did not want to leave her. They loved her very much. So each of the young women told Naomi they wanted to stay with her.

Ruth 1:8-10 says, *And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.*

*The LORD grant you that ye may find rest, each [of you] in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept.*

*And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.*

All three women stood there and had a good cry. They did not want to say good-bye to each other. But Naomi was insistent that they return to their parent's homes and to the gods they worshipped to begin new lives for themselves. She argued that she no longer had sons to give to them. They were too young to be widows.

Orpah kissed Naomi then turned with tears in her eyes and headed back to her parent's home to begin a new life.

But Ruth would not leave Naomi. She hung on to her and began to plead with her. Naomi told her to go back with Orpah, but Ruth would not go back. She then spoke some of the most beautiful, gentle words of love and devotion that were ever recorded in the Bible.

It says in Ruth 1:16-17, *And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:*

*Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.*

Orpah went back to her old life. But Ruth wanted to stay with Naomi. She was willing to leave her family and the land she knew. More importantly, she was willing to leave behind her worship of the false gods and instead turn to the one true God.

Even though Naomi had gone to live in a heathen land where the people worshipped false gods, Naomi must have determined to continue to worship and serve the one true God. As her Gentile daughters-in-law lived with her and watched her life, they saw that Naomi worshipped and loved God. It must have made quite an impact on them.

It must have been a big decision for Ruth to change to worship the God of Israel, but she had been watching Naomi for years and she knew about God. She must have been persuaded that the God of Israel was indeed the one true God. She was ready to follow God with her whole heart.

Since Ruth was so insistent to follow, Naomi gladly welcomed Ruth to come with her and to begin life as one who accepted the God of Israel. So the two women continued on together to look for a new life in Bethlehem of Judah.

Ruth did not know what life in Judah would hold for her. For all she knew she would end up living with Naomi and never remarrying again. She might become an old widow all alone in a foreign land.

But that did not stop Ruth. She had the faith to believe that the God who took care of Naomi would also be kind and merciful to take care of her. She was willing to leave behind her old life to begin a new life with God.

Both Ruth and Naomi showed a gentle spirit in the way they spoke to each other and in the way they acted toward each other. God is also a gentle God and He wants you to have gentleness in your life. How do you speak to others? Do you speak with gentleness? How do you act toward others? Do you act with gentleness?

When you speak and act with gentleness toward those around you, you are reflecting God's gentleness. It should always be your goal to act like a godly person! That is how you show the love and kindness of God to the people who live around you!

Maybe you are not a child of God. You have never asked Jesus to forgive and take away your sin.

God will gladly open His gentle arms in welcome to anyone who is willing to leave behind their sinful lives and come to Him. He will forgive and save any who come to Him.

What about you? Have you ever realized that there is a true God who deserves your love and devotion? Have you ever come to God and asked Him to forgive your sins and accept you into His family? You can do that today. We can show you how.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to show a gentle spirit toward the people around you. They might be surprised when you are gentle in the way you speak and act. Won't that be a wonderful surprise?

If someone is mean to you, treat them gently in return. If someone needs a friend, act gently toward that person so they know you will be a friend. If someone is hurting, gently offer to comfort or help.

A gently attitude toward others is pleasing to God.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about today's challenge. How can you put it into action in your life?

(Give the children a few seconds to think.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you to speak and act toward others in a gentle manner.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. What was the name of Elimelech's wife?
2. Why did Naomi and her family leave Judah?
3. Name one of Naomi's daughters-in-law.
4. Name another of Naomi's daughters-in-law.
5. What happened to make Naomi decide to return to her homeland?
6. What city in Judah was Naomi from?
7. What did Naomi tell Ruth and Orpah when they started out on their journey?
8. Who decided to go on with Naomi?
9. What big decision did Ruth make when she decided to go with Naomi?
10. Recite today's memory verse.

# Gentleness: Gentleness toward Others



And the servant of the Lord must  
not strive; but be gentle unto all men.  
2 Timothy 2:24a

God wants me to  
have a gentle spirit  
toward others.

- Bethlehem
- Cry
- Decision
- Elimelech
- Faithful
- False gods
- Famine
- Grief
- In-laws
- Judah
- Kin
- Leads
- Love
- Moab
- Naomi
- New life
- Obey
- Old life
- Orpah
- Ruth
- Serve
- Sons
- Travel
- True God
- Welcome

P	B	F	X	N	M	D	K	B	I	F	H	O	R	T
Z	H	X	S	D	O	G	E	S	L	A	F	C	V	L
R	S	C	Y	G	X	T	O	D	N	I	Q	S	H	O
L	S	R	E	D	H	N	N	A	E	T	O	I	B	V
E	E	U	S	L	S	E	O	E	P	H	J	E	G	E
T	R	T	E	M	E	M	I	L	R	F	Y	N	F	T
T	V	H	O	B	I	M	S	U	D	U	W	I	L	M
R	E	A	S	N	J	D	I	Q	B	L	L	M	D	F
M	B	D	W	E	M	O	C	L	E	W	I	A	T	R
E	J	U	Q	Q	N	R	E	Z	E	Q	N	F	C	H
B	R	J	P	X	Y	P	D	N	O	V	L	E	E	R
N	C	F	D	W	K	A	H	I	V	K	A	I	T	S
I	Y	O	S	D	X	H	P	K	I	X	W	R	Y	I
V	G	J	A	I	K	H	Z	I	C	P	S	G	T	T



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LESSON 26

**GENTLENESS:  
GENTLENESS TOWARD THOSE IN NEED**

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Ruth 1:19-22, 2:1-20a

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

God wants me to have a  
gentle spirit toward others.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men.*  
2 Timothy 2:24a



## OPEN IN PRAYER

## INTRODUCTION

God is so kind and gentle toward us. Daily He does so many things that shows His tender care, His kindness, and His provision for all our needs.

Just as God is gentle toward us, we ought also to be gentle toward others. When we treat others with gentleness, then we are acting like our God.

Today's Life Lesson is: God wants me to have a gentle spirit toward others.

## SONG TIME

## SUPPORTING STORY

### RESCUED!

Obtain Flash Card

The little calico kitten huddled under the covered grill on the back porch. She looked lost and hungry. She looked afraid. The grill provided a little protection. By the look of caution in her eyes as she glanced around, she apparently hadn't been welcomed to the property by the resident cats. (Show Flash Card)

When Wendy stepped out onto the back porch she didn't see the kitten at first, but she heard her. As soon as the kitten saw Wendy she began to cry. She left her place of safety and ran to Wendy's feet. There she stood, crying as loudly and pitifully as she could.

"Meow, meow, meow, meow," the kitten desperately repeated over and over in its most pitiful voice. Wendy could tell it was pleading with her to give her some help.

Wendy was surprised to see this cat. It was a stray and she could tell it was lost or had been dropped off by someone who didn't want her anymore. The little kitten was a sight to behold. It didn't look like it had eaten lately. It sounded frantic.

Wendy knelt to take a closer look at the poor thing and was surprised when it eagerly jumped into her arms and began to purr contentedly as if it had waited all its life to be with her. Wendy stood up and looked the kitten over carefully.

"Where did you come from? You look hungry. Did someone drop you off by the road?"

The kitten couldn't answer, but it looked deeply in Wendy's eyes and clearly communicated that she wished to stay right where she was.

Fluffy, the mother cat who had lived on the property for several years, wandered up to stand beside Wendy. She glared up at the intruder who nestled in Wendy's arms and gave a curt meow that sounded like she was saying, "Put that dirty thing down! Don't worry. I'll run it off for you!"

Wendy was surprised to realize that Fluffy was upset at the presence of this newcomer. Fluffy was clearly hostile and Wendy realized that the kitten had been hiding under the grill cover to get away from Fluffy and the other two cats who lived on the property. She clearly was not welcomed.

When Wendy knelt to put the kitten down, the kitten clung to her as Fluffy's hair rose on her back. Fluffy was showing, in no uncertain terms, that she was not happy to have this ragged little kitten anywhere near her home. She fully intended to run her off. No wonder the kitten had been hiding.

But it also surprised Wendy that the kitten had come to her so quickly. Obviously this cat was used to being around people. It was someone's cat. But whoever had owned the kitten didn't want it anymore. They had most likely dropped it near several houses in hopes that the kitten would find someone who wanted it.

Wendy's husband, Gary, came out on the porch and eyed the kitten with a look of scorn. The look in his eyes was similar to the look in Fluffy's eyes.

"Where did that thing come from? The last thing we need is another cat."

He was right. They didn't need the cat. But the cat needed them!

"She's homeless," Wendy pleaded as she gently petted the kitten.

"It costs too much to keep her. She'll need her shots and she'll need to be spayed. The last thing we need here is another cat to start having litters of kittens."

Wendy knew he was right, but she had a weakness for cats. Especially strays. When she was a little girl she had lived in the country. Quite often she would see a stray cat walking past in the field behind her house. She wouldn't waste any time as she grabbed a bowl, filled it with milk, and raced to greet the cat before it could wander away.

The stray cat would drink the milk, bask in the lavish attention given by Wendy, and decide it had just found its new home. Wendy never lacked for a cat at her home. Most often she had several at one time. She loved cats.

Her parents didn't know it, but she did this every time she saw a stray cat. Her mother wasn't a cat person and whenever a new cat would show up to stay, she would say, "O great, another cat. Why do they always come here? That's all we need is another cat!"

So now, Wendy's heart had already melted. The instant the kitten had jumped into her arms, both she and the kitten knew it had found a home.

“I know just the place to take the kitten to get it’s shots and they’ll spay her really cheap too. If I don’t have to spend lots on her, we can keep her. Right?”

Gary had already been beaten. He knew it. He nodded in resignation as Wendy announced, “Her name is Zoe.” And it didn’t take long for Gary’s heart to soften when Zoe climbed into his lap and curled up. He was smitten with the little kitten.

That was how Zoe came to live with Wendy and Gary.

Now most people would have given the straggly little stray a kick and sent it on it’s way. But Wendy loved cats and she had great mercy for the poor little things that had no one to care for and feed them. No one to love them. She loved to show those poor cats gentleness.

God is like that with us. We are all lost. We are dirty in the miry pit of sin. We are helpless and can’t save ourselves. But God looks down and sees us. His heart is touched by our needs. He has such great mercy on us.

God doesn’t need us, but we certainly need Him!

In gentle mercy He reaches out to us. He reaches down into the pit of sin, and if we are willing to run to Him and cling to Him, then he pulls us up out of the pit. He cleans us, He holds us in His care, and He welcomes us into His family. We become His, precious in His sight and loved by Him.

What great gentle mercy He has. There is nothing lovable about us while we are lost in our sin. Anyone else would say, “Oh great, another dirty, miserable human being. Make them go away!” But not God. His heart is tender towards us.

Aren’t you glad that when you came to God in your sin, instead of turning you away, He loved you enough to lift you up out of the miry clay, forgive your sin, and make you His own special child? What a gentle God we serve!

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men.*

2 Timothy 2:24a

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Ruth 1:19-22, 2:1-20a

### LESSON

#### BACK IN BETHLEHEM

Ruth and Naomi headed back to Judah to try to find a way to make a living in the land where Naomi had been raised. I don't know how long of a trip the women had to make to get to Judah, but it must have taken a while. They couldn't take a train or a car or a bus. They most likely walked there. Perhaps they had a donkey to pull a cart filled with their belongings. But Naomi was a poor widow, so she did not have much to take with her.

When Naomi and Ruth arrived in Bethlehem, they caused quite a stir. Everyone began to whisper to each other and ask their neighbors, "Is that Naomi? The one who left with her husband so long ago?"

Naomi was quick to tell them that it was her, but she told them that they should no longer call her Naomi. Instead she wanted to be called Mara. The name Mara means bitter. She told them that the Lord had dealt bitterly with her. When she left Judah, many years before, she had a husband and two sons. Now she returns without any of them. She was a very sad woman. She felt God had neglected her, but she was soon to find out that God never neglects any of His children. God's gentleness extended toward Naomi even when she felt most neglected.

Ruth 1:19-21 says, *So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi?*

*And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.*

*I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?*

#### HARVEST TIME

The two women had arrived in Bethlehem right at barley harvest time. That was the time when the people would go out into the fields and harvest the barley grain to use for flour and to feed their animals.

In order to live, Ruth suggested to Naomi that she go to one of the fields nearby and pick up some of the grain so they would have something to eat. The two women had no other means of taking care of themselves. Ruth was hoping that a stranger would take pity on her and allow

her to gather a bit of grain from his field. She would only take what the harvesters had dropped onto the ground. The leftovers.

Ruth was willing to do what she could to help. She wasn't afraid to do some hard work to help out. So Naomi agreed.

Ruth did not know if the owner of the field might tell her to leave, but she decided that if someone was kind enough to allow her to pick up what was left behind, then that is where she would glean grain.

Ruth 1:2 says, *And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.*

So Ruth started out early the next morning. She selected a field that looked like it had an abundant crop of barley and corn. She most likely entered the field quietly and humbly and followed after those who were harvesting grain. When she saw that some grain had been dropped and left on the ground, then she would pick it up and place it in her bag.

That day the owner of the field came to see how the harvest was coming along. He watched awhile as his workers harvested grain. Then he noticed the young woman who followed after his workers. He saw that she patiently and diligently bent to pick the leftover grain from the ground. He could tell she was a hard worker.

The man's name was Boaz and he was a very wealthy man. He owned many fields and had other wealth as well.

Boaz called for his servant. He asked who the maiden was who followed his workers around. He could have told the servant to send her away, but instead when Ruth realized that the owner was there, she went and asked permission to glean in his field. Boaz kindly granted permission. Boaz acted toward Ruth in a gentle manner.

The next morning, Ruth returned. Boaz was impressed that she would work so hard to gather grain to help her mother-in-law. By now Boaz had learned that Ruth was the daughter-in-law of Naomi. Ruth did not know it, but Boaz was a close relative of Naomi. He was related to Naomi's husband. Boaz was a kinsman or relative of Naomi.

So Boaz called Ruth over to talk with him. They had a very interesting conversation. He told Ruth that from then on she was to come to his field and gather grain and not go anywhere else. He told her to follow after the reapers. He assured her she would be safe and that she could also go drink water with his workers when she was thirsty.

How grateful Ruth was that this rich and very handsome man had shown such great kindness and care for her even though she was from a foreign land. Ruth bowed down to Boaz and thanked him. She was very impressed by him and his kindness to a stranger.

Boaz responded by telling her he knew she had come with Naomi from a foreign land. He knew of her kindness to her mother-in-law. He said the Lord would reward her for what she had done.

Ruth 2:8-12 says, *Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens:*

*Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn.*

*Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?*

*And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore.*

*The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.*

Ruth was humbled that such a great man would take his time to care for her needs. How gentle he was to her. At mealtime Boaz again showed kindness by asking her to join them. She ate just enough to be satisfied. The rest of the food she had been given she wrapped carefully to take home so Naomi would also have a good meal that day. Then she immediately went back to work.

Boaz ordered his reapers to allow a bit extra of the grain to fall on purpose so Ruth would be able to gather more grain to take home. When she left that evening, her bag was full!

### **LOOK WHAT I HAVE!**

Ruth could hardly wait to rush home and tell Naomi how the gentle rich man had not only allowed her to stay and glean in his field, but he had promised protection, provided a meal, and invited her to come back for as long as the harvest lasted.

Ruth 2:17-18 says, *So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley.*

*And she took it up, and went into the city: and her mother in law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed.*

Ruth was so happy God had provided for them in such a wonderful way. Naomi was excited also. She wanted all the details. She asked where she had gone to glean. Ruth excitedly told her that the owner of the field was named Boaz.

I imagine that a big smile came to Naomi's face then. She knew that name! Boaz was her kinsman. She realized instantly that God had directed Ruth to go to the exact field where it was best for her to go. She could see God was at work to help them. God had not forsaken her after all. God was showing His love and gentle care to them. Naomi gave praise to God.

Ruth 2:19 says, *And her mother in law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to day? and where wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee. And she shewed her mother in law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I wrought to day is Boaz.*

*And Naomi said unto her daughter in law, Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead.*

### **GOD'S GENTLENESS**

Ruth and Boaz were two very interesting and amazing people. Ruth was gentle and loving toward her mother-in-law. She left everything she had to go to a strange land with her. She did everything she could to help support Naomi. She shared all she had with her, including not eating her entire lunch so she could take some home to share.

Boaz was a rich man who could have kicked Ruth off his land, but instead he showed gentleness to her by protecting her, ordering that more grain be left for her, and even offering her lunch.

Both Ruth and Boaz were giving people. Both were gentle people. They remind me of how giving and gentle God is to us.

We are all born sinners. We are foreigners to God. But in His gentleness, He is willing to take us into His family. God protects and provides for us. He gives us what we need and often what we want in life.

God has a gentle and loving heart. He freely offers us forgiveness for sin. He provided forgiveness by sending His own Son, Jesus Christ, to come die on the cross in our place. The punishment for sin is death and Jesus died for us. He took our punishment.

God offers forgiveness to us, we just need to accept His forgiveness and accept what Jesus did for us. Have you done that? You can do it today. We can show you how.

Maybe you are already saved, but sometimes you forget how gentle God is to you.

Isaiah 54:10a says, *For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee.*

What an amazing verse! God is kind and gentle to us always and He will be gentle forever. The mountains and hills can go away, but even in all the time it would take for that to happen, God's kindness and gentleness to us would still remain.

We have so many blessings for which we can praise the Lord. Just as Naomi praised the Lord for His gentleness toward her and Ruth, so we can praise God for His gentleness toward us.

### **INVITATION**

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to look for the gentleness of the Lord in your life. Too often we take all that the Lord does for us for granted. Make this week different.

Who can name a way that the Lord has shown His gentleness toward you? (Take answers. There are so many things we can be thankful for in life.)

All week long I want you to look for gentleness from God. Every time you see some way the Lord has blessed you or done something good for you, stop right then and praise Him. Take the time to say “Thank you, Lord.”

Then look for ways you can pass on God’s gentleness to others.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about today’s challenge. How can you put it into action in your life?

(Give the children a few seconds to think.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you to accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to thank God for all the things we have just mentioned. God is so kind and gentle to us. We need to remember to thank Him always and to be gentle toward others.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. What town in Judah did Ruth and Naomi return to?
2. What was happening just as the women returned?
3. Recite today's memory verse.
4. What did Ruth offer to do to help the women get something to eat?
5. Who came to the field while Ruth gleaned?
6. What did Boaz tell Ruth to do?
7. What did Ruth do with part of the lunch that was given to her?
8. What instruction did Boaz give to his gleaners?
9. What did Boaz and Naomi know that Ruth did not know?
10. What reason did Boaz give to Ruth when she asked why he was being so gentle to her?

# Gentleness: Gentleness toward those in need

And the servant of the Lord must  
not strive; but be gentle unto all men.  
2 Timothy 2:24a



God wants me to  
have a gentle spirit  
toward others.



## THE KIND KINSMAN

1. Naomi lost her husband and two \_\_\_\_\_ . NSOS
2. The name Mara means \_\_\_\_\_ . TRBITE
3. Naomi's daughter-in-law, \_\_\_\_\_ , went back to Bethlehem with her. HTUR
4. Ruth went to the fields to harvest \_\_\_\_\_ . RAGIN
5. Ruth gathered grain in the fields of \_\_\_\_\_. OZAB
6. Boaz offered food, water, and \_\_\_\_\_ to Ruth. STAFYE
7. Ruth rushed \_\_\_\_\_ to tell Naomi. EMOH
8. Boaz was a \_\_\_\_\_ to Naomi. NKISNAM

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LESSON 27

GENTLENESS:  
ACTS OF GENTLENESS I

LESSON ORDER

Prayer / Introduction

Song Time

Supporting Story

Memory Verse Time

Bible Lesson Time / Invitation

Challenge / Quiet Time

Bible Quiz



BIBLE TEXT

Ruth 2:19- 4:22

CHARACTER TRAIT

God wants me to have a  
gentle spirit toward others.

MEMORY VERSE

*And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men.*  
2 Timothy 2:24a



## OPEN IN PRAYER

## INTRODUCTION

We have an amazingly gentle God who daily shows His love and care for us. The most amazing thing God did for us was to send Jesus to pay for our sins on the cross. Jesus redeemed us, or bought us, with His own blood.

Today's story is about a gentle man who redeemed a gentle woman to be his wife. What a great act of gentleness. If you are a Christian, then God has redeemed you! One of the best ways to show how thankful you are, pass on God's gentle love and care to others. Be sure your life is also filled with acts of gentleness!

Today's Life Lesson is: God wants me to have a gentle spirit toward others.

## SONG TIME

## SUPPORTING STORY

### THE NEW KID

#### Obtain Flash Card

Justin dreaded going to school. At least he dreaded it today. It wasn't that Justin didn't like school. Actually he did like school. He didn't love all the homework, but he liked being with his friends and he even liked learning new and interesting things. Some of his teachers worked hard to make the subjects fun and informative.

What Justin dreaded was the new kid in school. His first day in school the new kid had told everyone to call him Hal. That was right after the teacher, Mr. Samuels, had introduced him as Howard and everyone had snickered. But they all stopped snickering when Howard had gotten an angry, mean look on his face and looked straight at Mr. Samuels and proclaimed, "Hal! Call me Hal!"

So everyone had called him Hal. No one, not even the teacher had dared to call him Howard again. Then the teacher had directed Hal to the empty desk right next to Justin. Every time Justin glanced his way, Hal gave him an angry look that said, "What's your problem?" So Justin stopped looking. (Show Flash Card)

After home room class, Mr. Samuels had asked both Hal and Justin to stay after for a minute. He said, "Justin, I was wondering if you would do me a favor? Hal is new in school and he needs someone to kind of show him the ropes. You know, show him where his classes meet and the lunchroom and such. Could you do that for the next few days?"

Then the teacher gave Justin a look that said, “I know that Hal’s not the nicest kid, but would you do this for me? Please?”

Justin had swallowed hard and looked over at Hal. Hal had a sneer on his face and looked like he could care less if he ever found his next class or not.

“Sure,” Justin said weakly. “I’ll be glad to help.”

When the two boys got out into the hallway, Justin asked Hal what his next class was. Instead of answering, Hal pulled a sheet of paper from his notebook and shoved it at Justin as he looked the other way.

This was not going to be easy! But quickly Justin looked at the sheet. He was actually relieved to see their classes were in opposite directions. So he quickly told Hal where to find his class. Then he explained where the lunchroom was.

“Whatever,” Hal said with a disgusted look.

Justin guessed Hal wasn’t into making new friends. He must have liked being on his own. A loner, maybe. Whatever he was, he made Justin feel very uncomfortable!

Today, Hal would be sitting right beside him. Justin had seen that they had English together today and he knew he really should make sure that Hal got settled there and met a few of the other guys.

He guessed that Mr. Samuels had asked him because he was a Christian. They went to the same church and Mr. Samuels was a great teacher. Justin was excited he had gotten him for home room and for math. He knew Mr. Samuels cared about his students and that he shared the Gospel every chance he got.

Justin guessed Mr. Samuels hoped he would share the Gospel with Hal too. Mr. Samuels knew Justin wasn’t afraid to let others know he was a Christian and that he often invited his un-saved friends to church activities. He even shared the Gospel when he could.

But Justin wasn’t so sure about Hal. He didn’t seem like he would be at all interested in going to church or in hearing about Jesus Christ. Justin had the feeling that Hal would either laugh at him or pop him in the nose if he said anything. Normally he didn’t have a hard time being a witness, but Hal was different!

So Justin decided to pray about it. “Lord, you know Hal kind of gives me the creeps. He just isn’t very nice and I don’t think he likes me. I don’t think he likes anyone. But help me to do what You would want me to do. Help me to be kind and gentle with Hal, even if he is hard to like!”

Somehow Justin made it through the next few days. He took every chance to speak to Hal and to point out classes and to tell him things he needed to know. But he just couldn’t work himself up to speaking to Hal about the Lord. He was sure Hal would laugh in his face.

It was Friday afternoon and classes were over. Everyone was heading out of the school and looking forward to a weekend of freedom. Justin headed for the ball field when he saw Hal sitting on a picnic table by the field. He was all alone and didn't seem to be doing anything except watching everyone walk by.

Justin almost walked right by Hal too. After all, Hal never seemed to want to talk to him. He figured that he would just be bothering Hal. But at the last minute he decided to stop and talk.

"Hey, Hal," Justin said as he sat down quietly. "Do you like sports?"

"Yeah," Hal said cautiously. "I'm pretty good at baseball."

"Did you play on the team at your last school?" Justin asked eagerly. Finally he found something they had in common. Maybe this would be the break through he was looking for.

"Nah," Hal said with a frown. "We never stay anywhere long enough for me to join a team. I just like to play when I can."

Justin sat next to Hal and they began to talk. Justin couldn't believe it, but they actually had a conversation. A normal conversation! Justin found out Hal's dad worked for a company that moved him quite often, sometimes every few months. Justin supposed that was why Hal kept everyone at arm's length. It probably wasn't worth the effort to make friends when you were just going to move again in a few months. Hal really wasn't so bad when he let down his defenses.

"Hey, Hal," Justin said, "I know the coach is looking for someone to play second base. The kid who played that position just moved. I bet he'd be happy to have you play. Come on, I'll introduce you to the coach. He's a great guy."

Justin could see the struggle going on inside of Hal by the expression on his face. He was trying to decide whether to make friends with Justin or to just shrug and tell him he wasn't interested.

"Come on," Justin gently urged. "And after practice you can come meet my best friend, Zach. My mom just baked some cookies. We can mooch a few of those!"

For the first time in a week a smile spread across Hal's face. Justin decided the invitation to church could wait till he got home and they were eating cookies. He could see the Lord was really working on Hal.

"Thank you, Lord," Justin thought. "I was too afraid to talk to Hal about You. I almost gave up. Thanks for giving me the wisdom to stop and talk to him today!"

Hal had been very hard to reach, but Justin found that a quiet, gentle attitude and a little bit of friendliness had done the trick.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men.*

2 Timothy 2:24a

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Ruth 2:19 - 4:22

### LESSON

#### NAOMI'S PLAN

Ruth was excited as she hurried home to tell her mother-in-law, Naomi, about the wonderful good fortune she had that day as she gleaned. She showed her the generous amount of barley grain she gathered during the day. She told her of the gentle man who owned the field and had welcomed her and allowed her to pick in his field. Then she unwrapped the portion of her lunch she had saved to bring so Naomi could also enjoy some of the food.

Naomi asked where this field was and who owned it. When Naomi heard the gentle man was named Boaz, she praised God. Boaz was a close relative of her husband. She thanked God that Boaz had shown such kindness and gentleness.

Ruth 2:19-20 says, *And her mother in law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to day? and where wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee. And she shewed her mother in law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I wrought to day is Boaz.*

*And Naomi said unto her daughter in law, Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen.*

So every day Ruth returned to the field of Boaz. She remained close to the other maidens who were harvesting in the field. This assured her safety and protection as she worked.

Ruth worked until the barley harvest was completed. All the while she kept to herself and lived with her mother-in-law, making sure all her needs were met. She was a good daughter-in-law to Naomi.

While Ruth was out working, Naomi was at home hatching a plan to help Ruth. One night Naomi spoke to Ruth about her plan. She explained that the Israelites had a tradition. If a woman lost her husband, the next of kin had the duty to marry the widow and make a home for her. It was also a tradition that the woman had the right to speak to a man about her desire for marriage.

It may seem strange to us what Naomi told Ruth to do, but it was not uncommon in Israel. Naomi told Ruth her plan and it was agreed between the two women that it would be done.

### **A PLAN IN ACTION**

The barley harvest was complete so the workers went to an area where the barley grain would be threshed. The workers would beat the grain to remove the outside shells or husks from it. This is called threshing.

Boaz made a feast for his workers. Ruth washed and put on her best clothes. She went quietly to the feast and kept back so that few noticed her presence. She was waiting for just the right time.

At the end of the evening, Boaz lay down on the threshing floor to sleep for the night. After all was quiet and all were asleep, Ruth quietly went and laid at Boaz's feet and covered herself with the end of his blanket.

At midnight, Boaz awakened from sleep. He had the strange feeling he was not alone. He looked at his feet, and there was Ruth.

"Who are you? What are you doing here?" Boaz asked Ruth.

Ruth explained who she was. She told Boaz she was his near kin. Shyly she was reminding him that he had a duty to redeem or claim her as his wife.

Ruth 3:7-9 says, *And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.*

*And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself: and, behold, a woman lay at his feet.*

*And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman.*

Boaz had noticed Ruth. In fact, he had been paying careful attention to this gentle young lady. Boaz told Ruth he had noticed that instead of trying to find a new husband the whole time

she had been in Bethlehem, she had worked hard to care for Naomi. He admired that fact. He told her everyone in the city had taken note of the fact that she was a woman of virtue and courage.

Boaz told her he would be happy to claim her as his bride, however, there was one problem. He was not the nearest of kin. There was one man who was a nearer kin to Ruth. But Boaz promised to speak with the man the very next morning.

How excited Ruth must have been. Excited and nervous. What if the other kinsman decided to claim her? That would be terrible because I am sure by this time Ruth was in love with Boaz.

Early the next morning, before any other workers had awakened, Ruth rose and went home to report to her mother-in-law. So the two women waited to find out what would happen.

### **A WISE REDEEMER**

The very next morning Boaz went to the city gate where the men of the city all gathered to talk and transact business. Sure enough, the other kinsman was there. Boaz asked ten of the men of the city to act as witnesses to the business he wanted to discuss with his kinsman.

Boaz was a shrewd businessman. He knew how to present a deal to make it turn out in his favor. He wanted very much to marry Ruth. He most likely didn't care if he got the land Naomi owned. After all, he was very rich and owned quite a bit of land already. But he knew he had to find a way to keep the other kinsman from wanting the land. And he wanted it to seem like the other man's idea.

Boaz explained that Naomi had returned from Moab and she wanted to sell the land that had belonged to her husband. He wanted to give the man first chance to buy the land. The man jumped at the chance. He certainly wanted the land. He would redeem it from Naomi.

The land was very important to the Israelites. It was given to them by God and each tribe owned certain portions of it. A family liked to keep the land in their own possession. So the kinsman was happy to add the family land to his holdings.

Then quickly, Boaz added, in an offhanded manner. "Of course, you know that with the land comes the hand of Ruth, the widow. You must marry her as well."

The kinsman began to sputter and fret. What? In order to get the land he wanted, he had to marry a woman? But he was already married! He couldn't marry Ruth! He turned to Boaz and insisted that Boaz redeem the land and the widow. Then, as was the custom, he pulled off his shoe and handed it to Boaz. It meant he wanted nothing to do with the land or Ruth. He was willingly giving Boaz the right to redeem both the land and Ruth.

Ruth 4:5-6 says, *Then said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.*

*And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it.*

So Boaz smiled and agreed to buy the land and to take Ruth as his wife. He called on all the men gathered there to act as witnesses that the deal had been sealed. He wanted them to know he would buy the land and he intended to marry Ruth.

Boaz was pleased. He was in love with Ruth and now she could be his wife. He would redeem her for his own.

So Ruth and Boaz were married. Naomi was no longer a poor widow whom God had forsaken. In fact, God took perfect care of both Ruth and Naomi because of their faithfulness to Him. Naomi was no longer a bitter lonely woman. She now had a loving family to care for her.

Isn't it wonderful how God had so faithfully cared for those two women?

### **WE ARE REDEEMED**

Just as Boaz was Ruth's redeemer who bought her for a price so he could show his gentle love and protection for her, Jesus Christ is our redeemer.

God created mankind. He made Adam and Eve because He wanted to have fellowship with them. But they sinned and their sin separated them from God. Even though God had created them and they belonged to Him, their sin made it so they no longer belonged to God.

Because Adam is the father of the human race, we all inherited his sin nature. We were born in sin. Because we are born in sin, we are sinners. We are separated from God.

That is an extremely sad and tragic thing. But God determined to buy us back. He determined to redeem His creation. So He did.

God sent His own Son, Jesus Christ, to earth. Jesus came to redeem mankind.

Romans 5:18 says, *Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.*

Wow! That's a long verse with a lot of complicated words in it. Let me give you the simple meaning of that verse. It means this: Because of the sin of one man, Adam, we all became sinners headed for Hell. But because Jesus, the perfect Son of God, came to die for us, we can have salvation from sin as a free gift.

Isaiah 47:4 says, *As for our redeemer, the LORD of hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel.*

Jesus Christ redeemed us on the cross. His blood paid the price for our sin. His blood bought us. His blood redeemed us.

Just as Boaz paid money to buy the land so he could redeem Ruth as his wife, so Jesus paid the price for your salvation from sin. But Jesus did not redeem you, or pay for you with money, Jesus paid for you with his blood on the cross.

I Peter 1:18-19 says, *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;*

*But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*

In Old Testament days people had to kill a lamb as a sacrifice to God for their sins. The blood of the lamb did not take away their sins, it only covered their sins. But Jesus is called the lamb of God. He is the Perfect Lamb whose blood not only covers your sin, but completely takes it away.

Have you had your sins taken away? Have you been bought with the blood of Jesus Christ? Jesus died for your sins. He wants you to ask Him for forgiveness. Would you like to do that today? We can show you how.

If you have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus, you need to thank God for all He did to redeem you.

Psalm 71:23 says, *My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and my soul, which thou hast redeemed.*

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to thank our gentle God for redeeming you.

You have so much to be thankful to God for. Make sure you take time to thank God for redeeming your soul.

The fact that Jesus redeemed you means that Jesus bought you with His own blood. You have been forgiven of your sins. He will guide you, protect you, and love you every day of your life. Then you will spend all of eternity in Heaven with Him.

I challenge you to thank God for your redemption every day this week when you pray. Also spend some time asking God to help you to show His gentle love to everyone you meet this week.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about today's challenge. How can you put it into action in your life?

(Give the children a few seconds to think.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you to accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to give you a thankful heart for the fact that you are redeemed. I am also going to ask Him to help you to be a gentle person who shows the love of God to others.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Recite today's memory verse.
2. What does it mean to thresh grain?
3. Who's idea was it for Ruth to go to Boaz the night of the threshing feast?
4. What did Ruth do that night?
5. Why was Boaz startled in the night?
6. What did Boaz tell Ruth he had noticed about her?
7. What stood in the way of Boaz marrying Ruth?
8. What was the first thing Boaz offered to the man who was next of kin to Ruth?
9. Why did the kinsman turn down the deal to buy Naomi's land?
10. What did the kinsman do to show he had made a deal with Boaz?

# Gentleness: Acts of Gentleness

And the servant of the Lord must  
not strive; but be gentle unto all men.  
2 Timothy 2:24a



God wants me to  
have a gentle spirit  
toward others.

## Christ has redeemed me!

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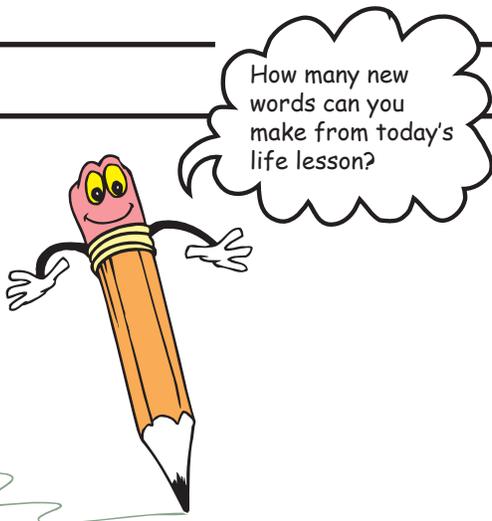
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LESSON 28

GENTLENESS:  
ACTS OF GENTLENESS II

LESSON ORDER

Prayer / Introduction

Song Time

Supporting Story

Memory Verse Time

Bible Lesson Time / Invitation

Challenge / Quiet Time

Bible Quiz



BIBLE TEXT

Ruth 4:13-17

CHARACTER TRAIT

God wants me to have a  
gentle spirit toward others.

MEMORY VERSE

*And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men.*  
2 Timothy 2:24a



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

God is constantly showing His kindness and gentleness to you. He cares tenderly for you each moment. Even when you are not thinking about Him, He is thinking about you!

Gentleness is a fruit of the Spirit that we should be cultivating in our lives. It might not always be easy to speak gently to others when they are not speaking gently to us. It might not always be easy to act gently toward others when they are not at all acting gently toward us. But don't worry about how others speak and act. Just be concerned about yourself and do everything you can to have the fruit of gentleness in your life.

Today's Life Lesson is: God wants me to have a gentle spirit toward others..

### SONG TIME

### SUPPORTING STORY

#### THE MOTTO

Obtain Flash Card

Mom looked around Sam's room. It was a mess. She shook her head sadly.

Just then Sam ran into the house. He called out for Mom. He was hungry and he wanted a snack. Sam looked in the kitchen, but she wasn't there. And worse than that, there was no plate of cookies or brownies. No glass of milk waiting for him.

Sam ran for his room to toss his book bag on the floor. He'd just have to fix his own snack. But Sam stopped short when he saw Mom standing in the doorway to his room.

"Oh, no," Sam thought. "I forgot to clean my room."

Mom turned as she heard Sam. One look at her face made Sam wish he had done what Mom had asked sooner.

"Sam," Mom said. "I asked you to clean your room last Friday. You had all weekend to do the job."

"I know, but I was busy. Besides, I will get around to doing it. I promise."

"Yes, Sam," Mom said. "You will clean your room. And you will do it right now."

"OK," Sam reluctantly replied, "right after my snack."

“No,” Mom replied. “You will clean it now. You can eat at supper time.” And Mom turned and headed for the kitchen.

“In trouble with Mom?” Sam’s older sister Julie asked as she poked her head out the door of her room.

“Yeah,” Sam replied as he hung his head. He felt badly that he had put off obeying his mom. And not just because he was going to miss his snack. He knew his mom worked hard at her part-time job and at home. He felt badly that he had disappointed her.

“Come on,” Julie said as she went into Sam’s room. “You don’t deserve it, but I’ll help you.”

“You will?” Sam asked in amazement. His sister had never helped him with any of his jobs before.

“Wow!” said Julie as she looked around at the room. “This place is a mess! I can see we’ll need some reinforcements if we plan to finish sometime this century!”

Sam looked at his sister with a puzzled look on his face. “Reinforcements?” Sam questioned. “Like what?”

“Something to cheer us on to work harder. You know, ‘Whistle while you work’ type of thing,” Julie said with a laugh. “Let’s try a cheer. How about ‘I’ll obey. No delay!’”

Sam thought Julie was crazy, but he wasn’t about to say that to her. After all, she was offering to help. He wasn’t going to turn down help. So he joined in with Julie and they cheered while they worked. (Show Flash Card.)

“I’ll obey. No delay! I’ll obey. No delay!”

Soon both Sam and Julie were laughing while they cleaned and chanted their new motto.

“This is helping,” Sam told Julie. It was amazing, but the room was actually getting cleaner at a much faster rate than it ever had before. And they were both having fun at the same time. Sam was very grateful that his sister was taking the time to help him. It was a pretty great thing for her to do.

“Thanks for helping me, Julie” Sam said. Julie gave him a sweet smile and a gentle punch on the shoulder. Sam could tell she really loved him.

It wasn’t long before Mom came to see what all the laughing and cheering and other noises were about. Her frown turned into a look of astonishment as she saw that the room was almost clean.

Sam looked up and saw Mom standing in the doorway. She was smiling. That made Sam feel like smiling too!

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men.*

*2 Timothy 2:24a*

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Ruth 4:13-17

### LESSON

#### **A BEAUTIFUL STORY**

There are many beautiful books in the Bible. Psalms has such beautiful poetry. Proverbs has wise sayings with beautiful language. But the book of Ruth is one of the most beautiful, sweet, and gentle love stories in the Bible.

But Ruth is so much more than just a beautiful love story. It is also a story of redemption. There are so many lessons we can learn about love and faith and about God's redemption of our souls. Let's look at a few lessons we learn from the story of Ruth.

#### **GOD WORKS IN HIS OWN TIME AND WAY**

There was a time in Naomi's life when she felt God had abandoned her. She thought that because there were hard times in her life God had forsaken her.

But as we listen to the story told in Ruth, we realize God had not forsaken her at all. Instead God was working for her good all the time. She just couldn't see that at first.

When we have hard times in our lives we often think God has forgotten all about us. We think God has forsaken us. But just as God was working all the time to bring good to Naomi, God is also working to bring good into our lives. We just have to wait on God to work things out in His own time.

That is an important lesson to learn. God works in His own way and in His own time. We need to be patient and wait on God.

### **GOD REWARDS FAITHFULNESS**

We also see that God rewards faithfulness.

Ruth was a faithful person. When Ruth married Naomi's son, she moved to her home and saw Naomi worship the true God. She may not have accepted Him at first, but by the time her husband died and she was heading back to Judah with Naomi, Ruth was eager to accept God as her God.

So Ruth became faithful to God.

Ruth was also faithful to Naomi. She stayed with her even though it meant leaving behind her family and her home land. She faithfully did what she could to provide for Naomi by going out to work in the fields. It was not an easy job to bend down all day to pick up grain from the ground, but she did it gladly.

She was faithful to her mother-in-law.

God saw Ruth. He saw how faithful she was to both Him and to Naomi. So he rewarded her by giving her a husband who loved her and could provide well for her. God was faithful to Ruth.

God watches you. He sees how you do things. He sees if you are faithful to make your best effort to complete each job you are given. It may seem like you have a lot of little jobs, like chores at home or work at school, but God sees you. He sees your work. He sees whether or not you are faithful to always do your best.

God will reward you for your faithfulness. You may not see an instant reward, but eventually, God will reward you. And it will be worth the wait.

### **GOD REWARDS FAITH**

Another important lesson is that God is a gentle Father who always does what is best for us. In this story we saw how Naomi's gentle love for her God impressed her daughter-in-law, Ruth, so much that Ruth wanted to make the God of Israel her own God.

We saw how Ruth's gentle care of her mother-in-law caused her to stand out and take the notice of Boaz. Had Ruth not been such a gentle, kind woman, Boaz probably wouldn't have given her a second look.

We see how Boaz gently cared for Ruth by providing her with the grain she needed. He also took such great care to win her as his wife.

Most of all, through all the things that would have appeared to be bad things throughout this story, God was gently working for everyone's good.

## **DID YOU KNOW?**

Here is an interesting fact about one way God rewarded Ruth's faith and her faithfulness long after she was no longer living on this earth.

The Book of Ruth tells us that after Ruth and Boaz were married, they had a child. Through that child they would become the great grandparents to King David. And the line of David went all the way to Jesus Christ. What a great honor that is to them.

Ruth 4:13-17 says, *So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son.*

*And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed be the LORD, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel.*

*And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter in law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath born him.*

*And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it.*

*And the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David.*

Another interesting fact is that Rahab was the mother of Boaz. Do you remember Rahab? Of course. She was the Gentile woman in the city of Jericho who was saved because of her faith in God.

It is interesting to realize that two Gentile women were in the line of Jesus Christ. The Jewish people were expecting a Messiah, a Savior, to come deliver them from their problems.

Jesus was that Messiah. He was the one who came to save them. But Jesus didn't come just to save the Jewish people, he also came to save the Gentiles. And He didn't come just to save His people from the foreign nations that were oppressing them. He came to save anyone who will turn to Him and ask for forgiveness. He came to save us from the oppression of sin.

The Jewish people were looking for a physical Savior. They wanted someone who would be their Savior by defeating their enemies. But Jesus is so much more than just a physical Savior. He is our spiritual Savior. He came to defeat our greatest enemies and those enemies are sin and Satan.

Two Gentile women played an important role in the history of Jesus' family. God loves the Jewish people very much. They are His chosen people. But God also loves the Gentiles. He has enough love for everyone who wants Him.

## **LOVE AND REDEMPTION**

The story of Ruth is a beautiful story of love and redemption. But the story of what Jesus did for each one of us on the cross of Calvary is an even greater story of love and redemption. Because of Jesus' great love for us, He came to redeem us. He came to pay the price for our sins.

Romans 5:8 tells us, *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

We are sinners. And our sin is not lovable. God loved us in spite of our sin. But because of our sin, He could not be close to us. So Jesus Christ came to redeem us. He paid the price for our salvation with His own blood. Jesus bought us because He loved us.

Isn't that wonderful?

Have you ever accepted Jesus as your Savior? Have you ever asked Him to come into your life and forgive your sin? You can do that today. We can show you how.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

The lesson we want to remember the most this week is the lesson about gentleness. Gentleness is one of the fruit of the Spirit. The Holy spirit wants to help you to be gentle.

Gentleness is showing love and concern and kindness in the words you speak and the things you do. This week I challenge you to cultivate the spirit of gentleness in your life.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about today's challenge. How can you put it into action in your life?

(Give the children a few seconds to think.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you to accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to be a gentle child of God.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. What was the name of Naomi's daughter-in-law who traveled to Judah with her?
2. Recite today's memory verse.
3. Not only is God our Creator, He is also our \_\_\_\_\_. (Redeemer)
4. Why did Naomi and her husband leave Judah and go to Moab?
5. What name did Naomi ask everyone to call her when she returned to Judah?
6. What did Ruth do to help out when the women got to Judah?
7. What city in Judah did Naomi live in?
8. Who was a near kinsman to Naomi and Ruth?
9. What did Ruth do to let Boaz know she wanted to be redeemed by him?
10. What did Boaz do to redeem Ruth?

# Gentleness: Acts of Gentleness



And the servant of the Lord must  
not strive; but be gentle unto all men.  
2 Timothy 2:24a

God wants me to  
have a gentle spirit  
toward others.

- Beautiful
- Believe
- Boaz
- Faith
- Faithful
- Gentiles
- Hard times
- Jesus Christ
- King David
- Love
- Loyal
- Messiah
- Naomi
- Rahab
- Redeem
- Reward
- Ruth
- Savior
- Trust
- Worship

T	L	U	F	H	T	I	A	F	T	K	E	Y	J	B
S	S	U	A	A	U	D	J	M	A	O	D	O	E	W
I	D	R	F	W	A	T	M	F	A	B	G	E	O	L
R	D	I	E	I	O	N	L	A	Y	O	L	X	T	T
H	L	S	V	W	T	R	O	I	V	A	S	N	Y	D
C	M	O	E	A	A	U	S	T	B	Z	H	T	U	R
S	E	M	I	T	D	R	A	H	G	A	A	D	A	F
U	N	Y	L	C	Q	G	D	E	I	B	H	E	Z	N
S	M	E	E	D	E	R	N	S	B	P	H	A	Z	H
E	M	C	B	U	X	T	S	I	T	U	R	F	R	Q
J	I	T	E	U	I	E	L	C	K	G	R	E	S	A
C	R	R	E	L	M	X	I	D	T	Z	S	N	D	W
S	S	U	E	G	O	S	U	V	O	H	T	F	P	C
Z	L	S	I	U	A	V	T	T	K	X	H	S	R	D
C	D	T	Y	N	N	M	E	C	H	G	L	B	W	F

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LESSON 29

**GOODNESS:  
LACKING IN GOODNESS**

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

I Samuel 25:1-13

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

I will show godly  
goodness to others.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them  
that fear thee.*  
Psalm 31:19a



## OPEN IN PRAYER

## INTRODUCTION

Goodness is a fruit of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit wants to help you to be good and to do good works. One man in our story today was seriously lacking in goodness. What a sad thing!

Hopefully you can learn for this man who had no goodness how you can have goodness! Let's talk about goodness.

Today's Life Lesson is: I will show godly goodness to others.

## SONG TIME

## SUPPORTING STORY

### THE CONTEST

Obtain Flash Card

Justin couldn't believe it. No matter how hard he worked, Lucas always seemed to be one step ahead of him.

"I'm a better salesman than you, Justin! You can't beat me." Lucas taunted.

"It's not over yet. I've got one more day." Justin replied. But deep in his heart, no matter how much Justin wanted to win the contest at school for selling the most magazines, he knew that it might be over. He was going to lose the contest!

Justin had covered every person within blocks of his neighborhood. More than half the time Lucas had already been there first and made the sale. But Justin had made quite a few sales too. It was so close and that was part of what made it all so frustrating. Who was going to win? It was so close that he really couldn't tell.

First prize was a awesome mountain bike. Justin had wanted one for so long and he knew it would take an awful long time to save up enough money to buy one for himself. He really wanted to win! (Show Flash Card)

But so did Lucas! Justin had never seen Lucas work so hard for anything before in his life. Usually Lucas was too busy goofing off to work for money or to spend time at his school work. But he guessed working for this mountain bike was different.

After school Justin saw Lucas head out in a hurry. He was heading for a part of town that neither one of them had hit yet. Justin tried to think of how he could get ahead of Lucas without him seeing?

Justin walked a safe distance behind. He decided to wait for the next time Lucas got invited into one of the homes. Then he would pass him up and get several houses ahead.

Lucas was turned down at several homes and was approaching another when Justin noticed that Lucas had dropped something from his book bag as he was going up the walk

When Lucas was invited inside, Justin scooted up the sidewalk and grabbed the envelope Lucas had dropped. Then he went on ahead around the corner. Justin stopped to see what was in the envelope.

Justin couldn't believe what he saw. It was a bunch of orders that Lucas hadn't turned in at school yet towards the contest. There were seven, eight, nine, ten whole orders! Enough to win the contest for Lucas.

Or . . . enough to win the contest for him!

Without letting himself think too much, Justin stuffed the envelope in his own book bag and headed to the next house. After he had made a couple of sales he headed home.

Justin ate dinner fast. He told his mom he had a lot of homework when she gave him a funny look and asked if there was anything wrong. Justin didn't want to think too much about what he was going to do with those orders. He didn't feel very good about what he was doing. Instead he worked hard all evening and then went to bed early.

The next morning he went straight to turn in all his orders - and Lucas' orders too. He felt a little upset in his stomach, but he ignored it.

As the day went by he felt worse and worse. And when it was time to announce the winner at the school assembly at the end of the day, he really felt sick.

Justin thought he would feel joy when he was announced the winner of the contest, but when they called his name he actually wished he had lost. Everyone was cheering and clapping as he walked to the front to accept the mountain bike.

Justin started to sweat as he stood next to the principle. He couldn't even listen as the principle talked about all the time and hard work that had gone into winning the contest. Instead he miserably looked out at everyone else and thought of how he had cheated in order to win.

Justin looked around. There was Zach grinning at him. He also spotted Lucas in the audience. He could see him glaring angrily at him and he knew that Lucas had guessed what happened.

Shame washed over Justin. How could he have been so stupid? How could he have done such a mean-hearted thing to Lucas? Why hadn't he just done his best and let whatever was going to happen, happen?

The principle grabbed the handle bars and wheeled the bike over to Justin. Everything was completely silent and Justin swallowed hard. He couldn't force himself to take the handles. He didn't want to touch the bike.

"Sir, I can't take it. I didn't win. Lucas did. Some of the orders were his. He really should get the bike." After blurting out the whole story, Justin turned and quickly headed for the bathroom. He didn't want to see anyone he was so humiliated and ashamed of himself.

After a few minutes, Justin decided that turning down the bike wasn't quite enough. He had to make things right. He went looking for Lucas. Finally he found him.

"Lucas, I'm so sorry I stole your orders and turned them in. But you did win the bike and they will give it to you. Will you forgive me?"

Lucas narrowed his eyes as he stared at Justin.

"Yeah, I guess so." Lucas reluctantly said. "But I thought you were different. You're always talking about God and all."

"I am different. But I still do a lot of things wrong. I'm not always good like I should be. This was really wrong. I should have acted differently." Justin answered.

"Well, it took a lot of courage to do what you did." Lucas admitted as he walked off.

Justin knew that he had hurt his testimony. Being a Christian doesn't mean that you always do everything right. But our lives should be different. We need to think carefully about the things we say and do because they affect our testimony in the world. We need to make sure our words and our actions reflect the goodness of God.

It took courage for Justin to confess his sin and ask forgiveness. That is exactly what we need to do when we sin. First we need to confess and ask forgiveness from God. Then sometimes we need to make things right with the people we have sinned against. When you do, you will be good, and you will feel good!

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee.*

Psalm 31:19a

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

I Samuel 25:1-13

### LESSON

#### **DAVID'S NEED**

Our Bible story today starts with David before he was the king. Saul was the king of Israel and Saul was far from God. He had refused to do things God's way and it had caused Saul to be very troubled in his mind. At first David had played his harp for Saul and that had brought the king some comfort, but eventually David became loved by the people of Israel which caused Saul to become very jealous of David. As a result, Saul decided he wanted to have David killed.

David had to run and hide from Saul continually. Even though Samuel had told David he would one day be the king, David had to wait on God's perfect timing. In the meantime, David and the men who followed him were constantly trying to find a safe place hide and enough food to eat. That wasn't an easy thing when the king was trying to find David.

#### **NABAL'S WEALTH**

In the land to which David and his men fled, there lived a very wealthy man by the name of Nabal. Today we measure wealth by money. If a man has a million dollars, he is rich. If he has several million dollars, he is very rich. One of the ways that wealth was determined way back in Bible days was according to the size of a man's herds and flocks of animals. The more livestock a man owned, the richer he was. Nabal had 3000 sheep and 1000 goats. That was a lot of animals to own. And I am sure his flocks grew larger each year.

Now Nabal was not a good man. He did not use his wealth to help the less fortunate. He did not give to charity. He did not offer help to his own family most likely. Nabal selfishly kept his wealth to himself.

Not only was Nabal selfish, he was also wicked and mean. He may have gathered and increased his flocks by means that were either dishonest or in the least, dishonorable. I doubt that Nabal had very many friends. The name Nabal means, "fool." A person who is not good is truly a foolish person.

On the other hand, Nabal was married to a woman named Abigail. She was very beautiful. Not only was she beautiful on the outside she was also very beautiful on the inside. She was lovely to look at and she was lovely to be around. She was a wise, kind, and good woman. She had a beautiful face and a beautiful spirit. Her name meant, "joy of her father." Her parents must have loved her dearly.

Why would such a beautiful and kind woman marry a mean, greedy man such as Nabal? Most likely she had no say in who she married. Nowadays we marry a person because we fall in love with them. In those days the father and the husband-to-be would arrange the marriage. Nabal had most likely gone to Abigail's father and offered him lots of money to be given Abigail as his wife. The father must have realized that Nabal was a mean man and even though he loved his daughter he was more impressed with Nabal's great wealth. He probably thought the man's money would bring happiness to his daughter. So poor Abigail ended up married to such a terrible husband.

I Samuel 25:2-3 says, *And there was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel; and the man was very great, and he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats: and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel.*

*Now the name of the man was Nabal; and the name of his wife Abigail: and she was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man was churlish and evil in his doings; and he was of the house of Caleb.*

#### **DAVID'S REQUEST**

David and his men had taken refuge on the outskirts of Nabal's land. For months they had watched the flocks of Nabal. But they had done so much more than just watch Nabal's flocks. When wandering strangers from other areas came and tried to steal Nabal's animals, David and his men would fight them off. Not only didn't David's men steal any sheep for food for themselves, but they made sure no one else stole any of Nabal's animals either. David and his men were good men.

It must have been quite evident to Nabal that something strange was happening. Each year when his flocks were counted there would always be a certain amount of sheep and goats that went missing. Nabal's shepherds did their best to find sheep that had wandered away and to fend off men who came to rob the sheep, but no matter how hard they tried, there were always missing sheep and goats. But this year it was different. Not one sheep had gone missing. Not one sheep or goat had been stolen. Nabal didn't know it but David and his men were faithfully watching over Nabal's animals to keep them safe. They didn't have to watch Nabal's sheep and goats, they just did it out of the goodness of their hearts.

The day came when David and his men were in need of food. They could easily have taken what they wanted from Nabal's sheep, but David would never allow that. That would have been stealing and David was a man of honor. David was a good man who would never take anything in a dishonest manner.

Instead David sent ten of his men to go speak with Nabal. He told them to humbly request that Nabal share some of his sheep with them. After all, they had been acting as a guard service for him for a long time. They had done a great service to Nabal free of charge. David hoped he would be kind enough to return the favor.

I Samuel 25:4-8 says, *And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal did shear his sheep.*

*And David sent out ten young men, and David said unto the young men, Get you up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name:*

*And thus shall ye say to him that liveth in prosperity, Peace be both to thee, and peace be to thine house, and peace be unto all that thou hast.*

*And now I have heard that thou hast shearers: now thy shepherds which were with us, we hurt them not, neither was there ought missing unto them, all the while they were in Carmel.*

*Ask thy young men, and they will shew thee. Wherefore let the young men find favour in thine eyes: for we come in a good day: give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand unto thy servants, and to thy son David.*

### **NABAL'S REFUSAL**

David may have thought that Nabal would be kind enough to provide a little food for him and his men, but David did not know what an evil and selfish man Nabal really was.

Nabal lived up to his name. He foolishly and flatly refused to give any food to David. Not only that, he began to insult David. He basically said that David was a nobody who had no right to ask for anything. He said that there were lots of servants who tried to take their master's place. Nabal was accusing David of trying to steal the throne from Saul. He did not acknowledge that God had taken the throne away from Saul and had given it to David because of Saul's disobedience.

I Samuel 25:9-12 says, *And when David's young men came, they spake to Nabal according to all those words in the name of David, and ceased.*

*And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? there be many servants now a days that break away every man from his master.*

*Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men, whom I know not whence they be?*

*So David's young men turned their way, and went again, and came and told him all those sayings.*

Now that wasn't very smart. David may have been in hiding at the time, but one day David would become the richest and most powerful man in all the land. One day David would become king. And the people of Israel knew that by now. How foolish it was for Nabal to speak so roughly and act so meanly toward David. He truly was living up to his name, "foolish!"

### **LACKING IN GOODNESS**

Nabal was not a good man. He was seriously lacking in goodness! David and his men had been good to Nabal, but Nabal was not good in return.

Why was Nabal not good? Goodness comes from the heart. A person with a good heart has a strong desire to do what is right. Good people are generous and enjoy giving to others. Good people are helpful when they can be. Good people just aren't selfish.

Nabal was not good because he had a rotten, sinful heart.

The same is true of all of us. Before we are saved, our hearts are filled with sin. We are not good before Jesus has forgiven and taken away our sin. Instead we are selfish and would rather greedily keep everything for ourselves than to share with others. We don't care about others and do not want to help them. We are just plain selfish!

But when Jesus comes into our lives, He makes some big changes! Jesus and the Holy Spirit, who dwells within us, causes us to become good. They help us to be generous, helpful, caring, and unselfish. They help us to be good so that we love and care for others.

Matthew 12:35 says, *A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.*

The Bible tells us that we are not born with goodness inside of us. We are not naturally good. In fact, we are naturally selfish and sinful.

Romans 3:12 says, *They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*

We are not good. We are born sinners. But God loves us so much that He sent Jesus Christ to die for our sins. Because of what Jesus did, we can become good.

3 John 11 says, *Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God.*

Nabal was not good. He followed that which was evil, but if you have accepted Jesus as your Savior and He has taken away your sin, then you can be good. You can follow after goodness. It pleases God when you do good things. God is good and He wants you to act like Him! When you do good things, you are acting like your Heavenly Father.

### **ARE YOU GOOD?**

Let me ask you, are you good? Have you had your sin forgiven by Jesus Christ? That is the only way you can be good. You have no natural goodness in your own heart, but God can place His goodness there. Would you like to become a child of God? Today we can take a Bible and show you how you can do that.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to show the goodness of Jesus Christ in your life. Goodness is both an attitude of the heart and an action. To be a good person, you must desire in your heart to be good. You must have a good heart attitude. To be good you must also do good works. Doing good works is an action.

Goodness starts in your heart and is demonstrated in your actions.

A person who is good, first desires in their heart to be generous in, then they give. They first desire in their heart to be helpful, then they help. They first desire in their heart not to be selfish, then they act selflessly.

I challenge you this week to be good.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to have the goodness of God in your heart and life.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Why were David and his men in hiding?
2. Recite today's memory verse.
3. Why was Nabal considered a wealthy man?
4. What had David and his men been doing that was good Nabal?
5. What favor did David ask of Nabal?
6. How did Nabal react when David asked for some food?
7. What does the name Nabal mean?
8. Who does the Bible say is born good? (No one - except Jesus)
9. Goodness starts in the heart and is demonstrated how?
10. What was the name of Nabal's wife?

# Goodness: Lacking in Goodness

Oh how great is thy goodness, which  
thou hast laid up for them that fear thee.  
Psalm 31:19a



I will show  
godly goodness to others.

Find the words below. Look forward, backwards, up, down and diagonally.

Y	H	T	L	A	E	W	K	M	Z	J	S	B	D	H
E	F	G	S	K	W	R	R	Z	Z	U	E	D	D	J
P	B	L	Q	I	H	A	B	X	O	A	E	A	P	M
F	F	H	J	N	H	X	X	L	U	N	V	L	R	K
O	V	C	R	G	Z	D	A	T	Y	I	D	U	O	H
O	J	B	T	S	V	E	I	N	D	R	I	J	T	A
D	O	D	B	A	J	F	C	S	X	P	V	O	E	R
N	L	G	A	U	U	X	M	V	T	Y	A	Y	C	P
J	A	P	T	L	J	E	M	C	M	Y	D	N	T	N
X	B	E	L	T	N	E	G	G	O	A	T	S	I	U
Q	A	E	F	O	O	L	A	B	I	G	A	I	L	Y
G	N	H	M	O	E	A	F	L	E	E	M	R	P	F
D	M	S	O	Q	E	H	I	D	E	L	P	X	N	L

DAVID  
FOOL  
ABIGAIL  
KING SAUL  
WEALTHY

JOY  
HARP  
SHEEP  
BEAUTIFUL  
JEALOUS

GOATS  
GENTLE  
HARM  
DAVIDS MEN  
FLEE

PROTECT  
HIDE  
DENY  
NABAL  
FOOD

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LESSON 30

GOODNESS:  
EXCELLING IN GOODNESS

LESSON ORDER

Prayer / Introduction

Song Time

Supporting Story

Memory Verse Time

Bible Lesson Time / Invitation

Challenge / Quiet Time

Bible Quiz



BIBLE TEXT

I Samuel 25:14-44

CHARACTER TRAIT

I will show godly  
goodness to others.

MEMORY VERSE

*Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them  
that fear thee.*

Psalm 31:19a



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

Last week we talked about a man named Nabal who was terribly lacking in goodness. Today we are going to be talking about a woman who excelled in goodness.

Goodness starts in the heart and is demonstrated in ones actions. But remember, only a person who has had their heart changed by Jesus Christ can have a good heart. Then they can do good works.

Last week we learned about one man who had no goodness in his heart or works. This week let's learn from one who had goodness of both heart and actions.

Today's Life Lesson is: I will show godly goodness to others.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY GOOD, PERFECT, AND ACCEPTABLE

You can use three people or the teacher can act out all the parts. If the teacher is doing all the parts, use different voices and be animated. The camera can be imaginary.

**Narrator:** Imagine with me that you go into a Wal-Mart store. You want to buy a new camera. You go to the electronics department.

Next you find a knowledgeable clerk to help you with your careful selection. You look over each camera on display. You carefully note the special features on each camera. Some cameras are digital and some still use film. You are having a hard time deciding which camera is the best for you. Look, I think the clerk has found something!

**Clerk:** Here's the camera for you!

**You:** Oh? Why that one?

**Clerk:** It's cheap.

**You:** OK, but is it a good camera?

**Clerk:** What do you mean by good?

**You:** Well, what kind of film does it take?

**Clerk:** Let's see. Ah. It takes 32 mm film.

**You:** 32 mm? I've never heard of that. I thought it was supposed to be 35 mm?

**Clerk:** Sure, most other cameras use 35 mm. But this takes 32.

**You:** I've never heard of it. Do you carry 32 mm film?

**Clerk:** No. But what you need to do is get 35 mm film and cut 3 mm off?

**You:** OK, is the lens adjustable?

**Clerk:** No, but that's no big deal. Just make sure you are always exactly 4 feet 7 and 13/16 inches from your subject. You could buy a tape measure and duct tape it to the front of your camera. Have the person you are taking the picture of hold the tape measure to be sure you are at that exact distance. Then the picture shouldn't turn out too bad.

**You:** Too bad? What about perfect?

**Clerk:** Not for this price, buddy (lady.)

**You:** OK. But wait! This looks like there's a chunk of plastic missing from the side. What happened?

**Clerk:** Oh, that little imperfection? The last guy dropped it and it broke off. But I'm pretty sure it still works. It's nothing a piece of chewing gum can't fix. Just keep your sales receipt!

**You:** This is a piece of junk! It's not good! I don't care how cheap it is. I'm not wasting my money on this!

**Narrator:** When you buy a product you want value for your money. You wouldn't pay for something that is bad, imperfect, or unacceptable. You want something that is good!

If you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior, He bought you. He purchased you with His blood.

Romans 12:1 says that we should present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God. And this is only our reasonable sacrifice. Jesus sacrificed His life for you. It is only reasonable that you should be willing to make a few sacrifices for Him.

Jesus Christ was so good to you! You should want to give all your goodness to Him. He wants you to present your heart and mind and body to Him to use. He deserves your best. He deserves good and perfect and acceptable!

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee.*

Psalm 31:19a

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

I Samuel 25:14-44

### LESSON

#### LACKING IN GOODNESS

Last week we met mean old, selfish Nabal. When David and his men requested that Nabal give them some food that they needed, Nabal flatly refused. He had even said some terrible things about David. How ungrateful Nabal was to David and his men for watching over his sheep and goats while they camped nearby. You would think he would have gladly shared food with David for all the good that David had done for him.

The name Nabal means “foolish” and Nabal was truly a foolish man. On the other hand, Nabal had a beautiful wife named Abigail. The name Abigail means “joy of her father” and Abigail was truly a joy to be around. She was a good and kind woman both in her heart and in her actions.

For as bad as Nabal was, Abigail was equally as good!

#### SOME QUICK THINKING

David was not pleased when his men reported that Nabal refused to give them food. They also told David all that he had said. So David decided that Nabal needed to be punished.

One of Nabal's servants had heard his master declining to give David food. He realized how foolish and selfish his master was but he also knew how good his mistress was. The servant

quickly went to Abigail. He told her of all the times that David and his men had watched over Nabal's flocks. He told her that not once had David taken anything from them, but instead had protected the flocks. The servant told her that David and his men had been like a "wall" between them and the outside world all the time they had been there.

Then the servant told Abigail what her husband, Nabal, had said in reply. He told her how rude he had been and that he had refused to give the men a single thing.

Abigail was swift to make things right. She commanded her servants to begin gathering goods and foods to deliver to David. She gave them 200 loaves of bread, two casks of wine, five sheep that were cleaned and ready to cook, five packages of dried corn, 100 clusters of raisins, and 200 cakes of figs.

Quickly she instructed the servants to load everything onto as many donkeys as it would take to carry all the food. Then she got herself got ready for a ride to see David. She did not tell her husband what she was planning to do. She knew him well enough to know that he would stop her from giving anything to David. Instead, she just did what she knew was the right and good thing to do.

Abigail was a good woman just as the Bible says she was. Her goodness was demonstrated in the good things she said and in the good things she did.

I Samuel 25:14-19 says, *But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he railed on them.*

*But the men were very good unto us, and we were not hurt, neither missed we any thing, as long as we were conversant with them, when we were in the fields:*

*They were a wall unto us both by night and day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep.*

*Now therefore know and consider what thou wilt do; for evil is determined against our master, and against all his household: for he is such a son of Belial, that a man cannot speak to him.*

*Then Abigail made haste, and took two hundred loaves, and two bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched corn, and an hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on asses.*

*And she said unto her servants, Go on before me; behold, I come after you. But she told not her husband Nabal.*

#### **ABIGAIL'S PLEA**

David was very upset with Nabal. The man had not only declined to share some food with them while they were hungry and in need, but he had also insulted David. He had shown himself for the cruel and selfish man that he was. David decided that he would take 400 of his men and go destroy all the men in Nabal's household.

As David and his army approached Nabal's land they saw some servants with donkeys heading their way. They could see that the donkeys were laden with food. In front of the servants rode a woman. David must have wondered what the woman wanted.

As soon as Abigail saw David, she got off her donkey and she ran to David. She fell down on her knees and bowed to him. She was showing her respect for David. She knew what a great man David was. She had heard how he had killed the giant and had led Saul's army. She knew that David was destined to become the next king of Israel. She knew that David deserved her respect.

Immediately Abigail began to beg forgiveness of David for the way her husband had treated David. She told David that her husband's name meant folly and that he indeed was a foolish man. She begged David to spare the men of her household and offered all the food she had brought to give to David.

I Samuel 25:23-28 says, *And when Abigail saw David, she hastened, and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground,*

*And fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be: and let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine audience, and hear the words of thine handmaid.*

*Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, even Nabal: for as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him: but I thine handmaid saw not the young men of my lord, whom thou didst send.*

*Now therefore, my lord, as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, seeing the LORD hath withholden thee from coming to shed blood, and from avenging thyself with thine own hand, now let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal.*

*And now this blessing which thine handmaid hath brought unto my lord, let it even be given unto the young men that follow my lord.*

*I pray thee, forgive the trespass of thine handmaid: for the LORD will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fighteth the battles of the LORD, and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days.*

#### **ABIGAIL'S REWARD**

David told Abigail all that he had planned to do to Nabal and the men of their household. Then he granted Abigail forgiveness and accepted the food she had brought. How thankful Abigail was that she had made the decision to be good to David. Her kindness and generosity had saved the day!

I Samuel 25:32-34 says, *And David said to Abigail, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me:*

*And blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand.*

*For in very deed, as the LORD God of Israel liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hastened and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto Nabal by the morning light.*

David noted what a good woman Abigail was. He would remember her kindness to him. Her swift actions had brought peace out of a bad situation.

Proverbs 21:14 says, *A gift in secret pacifieth anger: and a reward in the bosom strong wrath.*

When Abigail got home, she went to tell her husband what had happened, but when she found him he was drunk with too much eating and drinking. She knew that it would be useless to try to speak to him since he was drunk. So Abigail quietly left him alone.

The next morning when Nabal had sobered up, Abigail went to have a talk with him. She told him what David had planned to do. She let Nabal know that by that morning he and all the men who worked for them would have been dead. Then she told him of how she had offered food and kindness and David had been grateful.

Nabal must have broken out in a cold sweat when he realized how close he had come to dying. He became extremely frightened when he realized how foolish he had been. The Bible says, "his heart died within him." That means he was so distressed and frightened that he was totally sick at heart. For ten days Nabal lay as a dead man. Then the Lord killed Nabal for his foolishness and his wickedness.

I Samuel 25:36-38a says, *And Abigail came to Nabal; and, behold, he held a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; and Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken: wherefore she told him nothing, less or more, until the morning light.*

*But it came to pass in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his wife had told him these things, that his heart died within him, and he became as a stone.*

*And it came to pass about ten days after, that the LORD smote Nabal, that he died.*

Abigail was now a widow. I doubt that she missed Nabal for he had been mean and wicked. But now she was without a husband and a protector. That was not a good thing for women in those days.

David heard what the Lord had done to Nabal. How thankful he must have been that Abigail had come to stop him from doing harm to Nabal and his household. David again realized that God would care for him. If there was revenge to be had, David was not to take his own revenge. Instead he should look to God to do what was right. And God did take vengeance on Nabal for treating his servant so badly. Because of the goodness of Abigail, David had not done something he would live to regret.

David was very impressed with the goodness and wisdom of Abigail. When he heard she had no husband, he asked her if she would be his wife. David's wife, Michal, had been taken away from him by Saul. When he had fled the palace, Saul had given Michal to another man to be his wife. So now David took Abigail to be his wife.

*I Samuel 25:39 says, And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, Blessed be the LORD, that hath pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his servant from evil: for the LORD hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head. And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife.*

What a wonderful way God blessed and rewarded Abigail for her good deed and wise actions. God always rewards those who do what is right. He may not give you money or some material thing, but God's rewards are always of great value.

We should always do our best to do and say things that are good and right in God's eyes. We shouldn't do it for reward. Abigail did not expect a reward from David. She only wanted to right the wrong her husband had done. But look at what a great reward she was given. She became the wife of the future king of Israel.

When you say and do what is right in God's eyes, then you will reap great rewards. But foolish words and actions will always bring bad results. So remember to trust God to do what is best for you.

The first thing you should do is to ask Jesus Christ to be your personal Savior. The Bible says that we are all born sinners and sin separates us from God. But Jesus Christ came to earth to die for our sins. When Jesus died on the cross, He took our punishment for us. Now all you need to do is ask Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your heart.

That would be the wisest thing you could do. Have you done that? Would you like to do it? We can show you how.

Most of you have already asked Jesus to come into your life and forgive your sin. You are already a Christian. But how do you talk and act? Are the things you say and do pleasing to God? Are you good in the way you talk to others and in the actions you take?

You can be. You can ask God to help you to be a good person. We are not good on our own. The Bible says that goodness comes from God. He is the one who will help you to be good.

Ask the Lord to give you goodness. Ask Him to help you to be good in all your say and do.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to show godly goodness to others around you. Other people are not always good to you, are they? But you should always be good to them, even when they are not good to you.

Romans 12:21 says, *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*

Abigail certainly overcame the evil her husband, Nabal had done by doing good for David and his men. You can do the same in your life. With God's help, you can have a heart that desires to do good and the you can do good works to show others that you love them and God.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to have a good heart and good actions.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Who treated David badly?
2. What does the name Nabal mean?
3. What kind of man was Nabal?
4. What does the name Abigail mean?
5. What kind of woman was Abigail?
6. What did David ask of Nabal?
7. Recite today's memory verse.
8. What was Nabal's answer to David?
9. What good thing did Abigail do?
10. How did God reward Abigail for her goodness?

# Goodness: Excelling in Goodness

Oh how great is thy goodness, which  
thou hast laid up for them that fear thee.  
Psalm 31:19a



I will show  
godly goodness to others.

Write the letter on the top line that follows the one given below  
the line to crack the code. Example:  $\frac{I}{H}$

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z A

$\frac{G}{F}$   $\frac{N}{C}$   $\frac{V}{Z}$   $\frac{M}{S}$   $\frac{R}{L}$   $\frac{D}{H}$

$\frac{S}{N}$   $\frac{D}{W}$   $\frac{B}{D}$   $\frac{K}{K}$   $\frac{H}{M}$

$\frac{F}{N}$   $\frac{N}{C}$   $\frac{M}{D}$   $\frac{R}{R}$  .



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LESSON 31

**GOODNESS:  
TOWARD THE NOT SO GOOD**

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

OT - NT Overview

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

I will show godly  
goodness to others.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them  
that fear thee.*  
Psalm 31:19a



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

Goodness starts in the heart and is demonstrated in ones actions. Do you know who showed the greatest goodness ever? It was God when He sent Jesus to earth to make a way for us to have our sins forgiven and for us to spend all eternity in Heaven.

God is good and from the goodness of His heart He demonstrated His love by doing something wonderful for us!

We are born in sin and we have no goodness in us, but because of God's good gift of salvation we can become good.

Today's Life Lesson is: I will show godly goodness to others.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### A MULTITUDE OF SINS

Obtain Flash Card

Wendy and Gary were looking for things to buy for Christmas gifts at the Craft Fair. Wendy thought for sure she would find some great gifts there. Little did she know she was about to get a wonderful gift for herself!

Each booth was filled with handmade items and there were people crowded around looking and touching and buying those items. There were booths with wooden toys, booths with hand sewn clothing, booths with pottery. Then Wendy came to a booth that surprised her. Instead of having merchandise for sale, the booth was filled with small cages and in the cages were kittens - small, cuddly, cute kittens!

One kitten in particular drew Wendy's eye. It was just a little thing. His fur was white with big splotches of black here and there. On his nose was a big splotch of black that looked like he needed someone to clean it off for him. He gazed calmly at Wendy with a look that seemed to say to her, "Hello. I like you!"

A lady in the booth had been watching Wendy and she came right up and wanted to know if Wendy was interested in a kitten. They had kittens for sale and they had kittens that just needed a foster home until a permanent home could be found. Wendy had never thought of being a foster parent for a kitten. She had been interested in getting a new kitten. Her beloved cat, Zoe, had disappeared a few months before and she really missed her. Another cat would be wonderful.

When Wendy turned around to ask Gary if he liked any of the kittens, there he was with a kitten cuddled in his arms. It was the very same kitten that had caught her attention as she entered the booth. The little guy was so at home that he had curled up and fallen sound asleep.

The little guy was so cute and he felt right at home with Gary. The other kittens were jumping around and begging to be taken out and held. They loudly meowed to show their disapproval at being caged up. But this little guy had been so quiet and as soon as someone had handed him to Gary, he made himself at home and went to sleep.

“Do you want him?” Gary asked. Oh, yes! Wendy certainly wanted him!

The lady began to tell Gary and Wendy about the kitten’s history. It had a been a rough one. When it was just a day or two old someone had abandoned him and two of his brothers in an alley behind a store. The kittens had been scooped up and kept alive, but this little guy was the runt of the litter. His two older and bigger brothers had found a home quickly but he had gone into foster care for six months. No one wanted to take a chance on this little runt. They thought he might not be a good cat.

Wendy could see that he had an eye infection so he would need a trip to the vet. The vet also said he had a slight heart murmur. But that didn’t seem to slow him down. He was a skinny little cat that looked about 4 months younger than he really was, but that didn’t stop him one bit. He was spunky.

Gary and Wendy took him home and named him Alakazam. They called him Alakz (Alex) for short. They worried that their older cat, Bella, would be mean to him, but even Bella was won over by him. Within a few minutes they were chasing each other around and playing.

Alakz may have been a skinny little runt with a heart murmur, but you would never know there was anything wrong with him. That pesky little guy sweetly terrorized the entire family! He would pounce on feet that were tucked under the covers at night. He would use his sharp claws to climb from the floor up the side of the unsuspecting person’s body to get into their arms. Even Grandpa, who was 90 years old, would have to keep a close eye out for Alakz so he didn’t get pounced on. Everyone in the family was covered with tiny claw marks.

Bella and Alakz were not allowed in the kitchen and it didn’t take long for Alakz to learn the rules. He would sit by the kitchen door and wait for someone to join him in the living room. Wendy was amazed at how quickly Alakz learned not to enter that room. But she also found out that when she wasn’t looking, Alakz would sneak in and take a look around. He also used the furniture to sharpen his claws. And if she walked too close to the bed, out would dart a paw with sharp claws to attack her feet. (Show Flash Card)

Alakz was quite a stinker! Sometimes he wasn’t so very good!

But do you know what? Wendy did not take him back. She did not tell the lady, “I don’t want this cat. He isn’t the healthiest cat in the world. He’s so skinny. And not only that, He frequently misbehaves. He claws us and the furniture! Take him away!”

No. Wendy did not do that. Why? Because Wendy loves Alakz. He cuddles close to her at every chance he gets. After he is done running around with Bella at night, he quietly crawls into bed and snuggles up close to her. When Wendy enters the room where Alakz is, he runs to greet her and rubs against her legs. He knows how to melt Wendy's heart!

Alakz may be a naughty kitten sometimes, but because Wendy loves him, she is willing to forgive him of all of his transgressions.

That reminds me of what we must seem like to God. Only we are much worse! We are born sinners. We are separated from God and we are hopelessly lost. We have no redeeming qualities about us. We are definitely not good!

But God looks down on us and He loves us! He is willing to forgive us when we sin.

In 1 Peter 4:8 it says, *And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.*

The word charity means love. So the verse is saying, "Love shall cover a multitude of sins."

God loves you so much that He is willing to forgive your sins. How do I know that? Because the Bible tells us so in John 3:16. That's a familiar verse. Let's say it together, and as we say it, think about what the verse means.

John 3:16 *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

God's goodness and love for you is evident because He is willing to say, "I know you are a sinner, but I love you anyway. If you will accept what My Son, Jesus Christ, did for you on the cross of Calvary and ask Him to forgive your sins, then your sins will be forgiven. It doesn't matter how sinful and naughty you have been. I am willing to forgive you. Why? Because I love you!"

Isn't it wonderful that God is so good to love you like that?

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee.*

Psalm 31:19a

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Overview of Old Testament - New Testament

### LESSON

#### **HOW DOES GOD SHOW HIS LOVE TO ME?**

God loves you very much. That is a fact! Even though you are not always good, God always loves you!

How do I know that God loves you? Today's lesson is all about how God shows His love to each one of us even though we are not good and we do not deserve God's love.

There are so many ways that God shows His love. God created the earth and all that is in it for humans to enjoy. God created you and placed you on this earth. God gave you food to eat and shelter to protect you. God gave you so many good things that show His love.

But God did not stop there. God loved you so much that He made a way to communicate with you. He didn't want you to wonder about Him and about His love. He wanted you to be certain of His love. That is why God spoke to man.

In the Garden of Eden, when God created Adam and Eve, He would come to the garden and personally speak with them. Can you imagine what it would be like to talk to God face to face? Adam and Eve did that every day.

But one day, Adam and Eve sinned against God. They rejected what God told them and they decided to do things their own way. And their sin changed everything. You see, sin separates the sinner from God. God hates sin and He cannot tolerate sin. God cannot look on sin. So when they sinned, they separated themselves from God. From that day forward their fellowship with God was never the same again. God still loved them, but their sin kept God at a distance.

In the Old Testament, at first God still came and talked with men and women when He had something to tell them. But the communication between God and humans was never as close again as it had been in the garden of Eden.

Eventually, as man became more sinful and less interested in talking to God, God became more and more distant in His means of communication with man. No longer would He come face to face. Instead He spoke to His people through the judges and the prophets.

By the end of the Old Testament, the people of God hardly ever took the time to listen to God at all. They ignored God. They openly disobeyed God. They didn't want to talk to God.

Instead of obeying and loving God, the Bible says in Judges 21:25, *In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*

But do you know what? God still loved them and He still wanted to talk to them. He still wanted to find a way to be close to His people. And since God is God and nothing is impossible with God, He did find a way to communicate His love to everyone!

### **A NEW CONTRACT**

Let's switch gears for a minute. Let me ask you, "What does the word 'Testament' mean?" (Take answers.)

A testament is a covenant or a contract. A contract is an agreement between two people. As long as the two people keep the agreement, then it is good.

God made two different contracts with man. We find them both in the Bible. The first contract is called the Old Testament and the second is called the New Testament. The Old Testament is made up of 39 books. The New Testament is made up of 27 books.

The Old Testament, the first contract, was made between Abraham and God. God promised Abraham He would carry out a very special plan in his life and in the lives of his children to come. God promised to take them to a special land. He promised to personally govern and guide them. He promised to love them and protect them. In exchange, God asked Abraham and his children to love and serve Him. That was the contract God made with Abraham.

As a part of the contract, God clearly laid out the rules of the contract. Some of those rules are found in the ten commandments. There are also many other commandments in the Old Testament.

For example, God's people were to love God with all their hearts. They were not to worship any other god. They were not to lie, cheat, steal, or murder.

It wasn't long before man had broken his contract with God. Man was constantly breaking the rules. God forgave His people over and over, yet they kept breaking His rules. They kept breaking the contract. God knew He would need to make a new contract with man. But this contract would not depend on man keeping all the rules all the time.

The second contract God made with man is called the New Testament. It is a very different contract than the one He made with Abraham.

### **WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?**

So, what is the difference between the old and the new contracts?

One difference is the PEOPLE the contracts are for.

The old contract, The Old Testament, was given to Abraham and to all his descendants, or all his children and his children's children. God's special people have had several different names

through the years. They have been called the Children of Israel, The Israelites, The Hebrews, and The Jews.

God still loves the Jewish people very much, but His new contract is not just for them alone. God's new contract, The New Testament, tells us that God has opened His arms wide and now includes anyone who wants to be included. God's new special people are called Christians.

If you have asked Jesus Christ for forgive your sin and come into your heart, then you are a Christian. The new contract is for you!

Another difference between the old contract and the new contract is the PURPOSE for each contract.

Both the Old and New Testaments are very important. They are God's written Word to us. Both Testaments show us something important that God wants us to know about Him and about ourselves.

The Old Testament shows how God worked with His people and how His people often rejected and disobeyed Him. The Old Testament shows us God's holiness and our sinfulness. The Old Testament gave the Law that man struggled to keep and yet never could.

The New Testament shows us how God made a plan to take away our sin and prepare us to meet Him in Heaven face to face. The New Testament shows how God carried out His plan to save His people. The New Testament shows how, through Jesus Christ's sacrifice on Calvary, we no longer need to struggle to please God, but instead can be totally accepted by Him through Jesus' blood.

So, both the Old and New Testaments are very important for us to read and understand.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*

*That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

## **DO YOU HAVE A CONTRACT WITH GOD?**

Let's talk a little bit about contracts.

Suppose you had a job. Before you went to work, you would need a contract with your new boss. You both want something. Your boss wants you to work hard and do the job he hired you to do. You want to be paid for doing the job. In order for everyone to know exactly what needs to happen, you and your new boss would sign a contract.

The contract might say, "If you work every day for eight hours and do a good job, then I will pay you \$10.00 an hour."

Your boss would be obligated to pay you each week. You would be obligated to do a good job for eight hours a day. If both of you kept up your end of the contract, then everyone would be happy.

But suppose that one week you worked very hard and when the time came to draw your paycheck, your boss said, "I don't think I'll pay you this week."

What would you do? Probably quit! You deserve to be paid for the work you do. Your boss has just broken the contract.

On the other hand, suppose your boss pays you \$10.00 an hour, but you goof off every time the boss isn't around. You play games on your phone, you talk to your friends, you do everything except work. You have cheated your boss and you have broken your contract.

The Children of Israel broke their contract with God many times. They couldn't and wouldn't obey God's rules. But do you know what? God never once broke His contract with them. He always kept His promises.

In Old Testament days when the people sinned, they had to bring a lamb to offer as a sacrifice to God. The blood of that lamb covered the people's sin. Again and again they would offer a sacrifice to God because again and again they broke their contract with God.

In the new contract God put the entire burden on Himself! Jesus Christ, God the Son, came to earth to be our perfect lamb who would completely take away our sin.

John 1:29b says, *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*

You see, we still need our sin forgiven, but when Jesus Christ died on the cross of Calvary as a perfect lamb, His blood doesn't just cover our sin. No, Jesus' blood completely takes our sin away! Once Jesus has taken away your sin, you don't have to keep going back again and again.

Now, when you commit a sin, you can know that you are still God's child. You need to ask forgiveness to stay close to God, but never again will you need to worry that the contract has been broken, or that you will be separated from God, or lose your salvation. You will always be God's dear child!

Romans 5:8 says, *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

You have salvation from sin and eternal life in Heaven, not because you keep God's rules, but because of what Jesus Christ did for you on Calvary. If you were given salvation because you are so good and always keep the rules of God, then your salvation would come from your own good works. The Old Testament proved we can never be good enough to keep all the rules. That is why Jesus died to give us the gift of salvation. Not one of us can point at our own goodness and say, "See, I am a Christian because I never sin. I am saved by my good works!"

No. We are all saved the same way. We are saved by Jesus Christ and His shed blood on Calvary.

Ephesians 2:8-9 says, *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

*Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

Never, never will God break His contract with us. Isn't that wonderful to know? God is not a sinful human. He never goes against His Word. When you made a contract with God and became a Christian, you are His forgiven child. He loves you very much!

Maybe you have never made a contract with God. You have never told God that you believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross for your sins. You have never asked Him to forgive your sin and come into your heart.

If you haven't you are not God's child. You are not saved. You don't have a contract with Him.

But God loves you very much and He wants you to be His child. He wants to forgive your sin and come into your heart. Today you can do that. Today we can have someone show you from God's Word how you can have your sin forgiven and be on your way to Heaven.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to take the time to think about the contract you made with God when you accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior.

1. Think about how God never breaks His contract with you.
2. Think about ways you may have sinned against God. Even though you are still saved if you sin, you can't have a close loving relationship with God if there is sin in your life. If you can think of ways you have sinned, then you need to do something about it. Ask God to forgive you. Ask God to help you to put that sin out of your life.
3. Think about the fact that you cannot do good works to earn salvation because it is a free gift from God. But you should do good works after you are saved. Why? To show God how much you love Him and how much you appreciate all He does for you. When you do good for others, you are really doing good for God!

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to show your love for God by doing good for Him and for others.

## BIBLE QUIZ

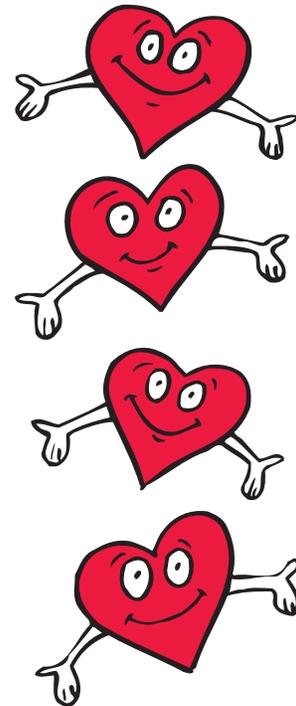
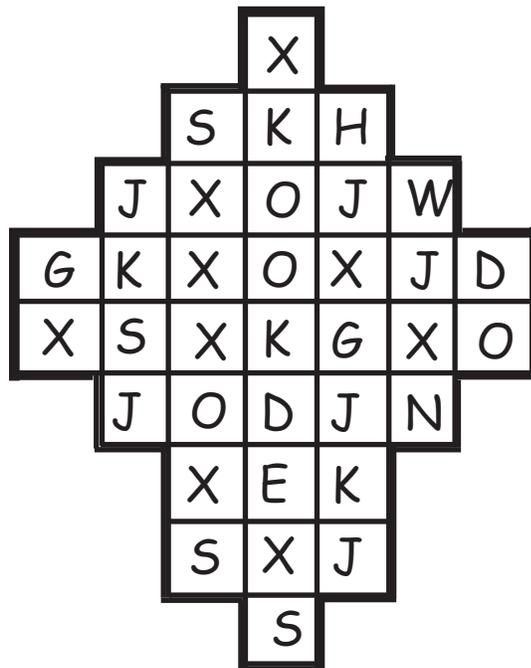
1. How many books are there in the New Testament?
2. Recite today's memory verse.
3. What does the word "testament" mean?
4. How many books are there in the Old Testament?
5. How many people are involved in a contract?
6. Whom did God make His first contract with?
7. What are some of the names given for God's special people in the Old Testament?
8. What is the name of the people God makes a contract with in the New Testament?
9. How did the Children of Israel cover their sins?
10. How can we have our sins taken away completely?

# Goodness: Goodness toward the Not So Good

Oh how great is thy goodness, which  
thou hast laid up for them that fear thee.  
Psalm 31:19a



I will show  
godly goodness to others.



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Color the squares with the letters that occur 5 times or more. Then write the remaining letters, in order, on the lines provided to find the hidden message.

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LESSON 32

GOODNESS:  
THE GOOD SAMARITIAN

LESSON ORDER

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



BIBLE TEXT

Luke 10:25-37

CHARACTER TRAIT

I will show godly  
goodness toward others.

MEMORY VERSE

*Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee.*  
Psalm 31:19a



## OPEN IN PRAYER

## INTRODUCTION

Goodness starts in the heart and is demonstrated in ones actions. In our story today, we learn about a man who showed goodness to someone who most likely would not have done the same if he were the one needing goodness shown to him.

There are times when the people around us need a helping hand. They need us to show some kindness and goodness to them. As we hear our story today, think about your own heart and life. Are you the type of person who would show goodness to someone in need?

Today's Life Lesson is: I will show godly goodness to others.

## SONG TIME

## SUPPORTING STORY

### THE GIFT

Obtain Flash Card

It was Passover week, and it had been a long, hard day at the inn in Emmaus. Since early morning Martha had run here and there under the sharp commands from her mistress, Abigail, and the quick blows from Jonas, her cruel husband.

In spite of the hard work and the unkind treatment, Martha had moved as if in a happy dream. She had scarcely seen the faces of the strangers as they passed by on the street, for she too, was planning a pilgrimage.

In the evening, when her work was finished, she slipped out to the garden. She stood under the olive tree to relive the wonderful hour when, on her first trip to Jerusalem, she had met the Master, Jesus Christ. And He was her Master now. He had been so good to her and He had changed her life!

That day not so long ago, the same rocky road lay ahead; the same harsh Jonas and Abigail waited at the end of it; the same inn with its hard duties from daylight till dark; but it was not the same Martha that returned. The Master had called her a disciple. His hands had laid tenderly on her head in blessing. His goodness had flowed through to her. She had been changed!

In the days after that, one thought had gradually risen above all others. She longed to make Him a gift — something to show Him how much she loved Him. Something to pay back some

of His goodness to her. At first the idea brought only a sense of helplessness and despair. What did she, a mere servant, have that she could give?

Then, as she sat beside the mill in the morning, grinding the wheat and barley, an idea came. He had looked hungry and tired. She could take Him some bread. She would bake perfect loaves from the finest of the wheat she ground. And she would go again to Jerusalem as soon as the Passover week was over. She would personally place the loaves in His hands. (Show flashcard.)

The next few days flew by quickly. On the first day of the week she awoke extra early as she prayed she might. She set about the work of making the loaves. Finally when everything was finished, she caught up a fresh napkin and spread it in a basket. Upon it she laid the little loaves. Then she fled out of the inn door and along the street in the direction of the city.

When Emmaus was left well behind and she started up the first long hill she stopped running. She drew a long breath of relief. She was safely on her way. Jonas and Abigail could not stop her now.

Her plan had been quite simple. She would find the Master near the Temple where He had been before. She would wait with the crowd and listen as long as He taught. Then when the others were gone she would give Him the loaves.

At last she came in sight of the Temple. There were several groups of people in the street. She approached each group and scanned it carefully before going on to the next. After a second patient searching, the fearful certainty came that He was not there. Two soldiers passed by.

“Sirs, do you know where the Rabbi, Jesus, is?” the maid asked. “They call Him the Christ.”

“Where have you been? Haven’t you heard of His death? He was crucified three days ago on Golgotha’s Hill. Devils they were who ordered it, but so it fell,” the soldiers replied.

The men passed on. Martha leaned, sick and fainting, against the wall. Crucified? Dead? And in her basket were the little white loaves for Him and He would never know.

At last she roused herself. She dragged wearily toward the Joppa gate. A woman was sitting in a doorway, Martha halted to make one more inquiry. Perhaps the soldiers had been mistaken.

“Have you heard anything about Jesus?”

“I had trusted that He was the Redeemer of Israel but they crucified Him!” the woman cried. “I have heard some say that He is alive again, risen, but it is only an idle tale. For I saw Him die.”

Martha moved slowly on. It must be true. The way back seemed endless. Now there was no hope.

When she reached the inn it was late afternoon. She was about to enter the main door. But no, she could not surrender the basket of bread to Jonas and Abigail. How could she give the bread meant for her Lord to these cruel people? Gently she set the basket down beside the eastern door since Abigail rarely went out that way. Then she went to the front of the inn.

With angry shouts they were both upon her. The blows came, as she knew they would. She lay where she had fallen, too upset and discouraged to even get up. Night came on.

From a distance the maid heard footsteps along the street. Voices were talking earnestly. She recognized one of them. It was that of Cleopas, a kindly man who often stopped at the inn on his trips to and from Jerusalem.

He and his brother and a stranger entered the dimly lit inn. Martha pulled herself to her feet with infinite pain and set about placing food upon the table. She brought barley cakes and oil and raisins. The meal was simple. Then she thought about the little loaves, the gift of love that had never been given. Here were three men, weary and hungry from their journey. They would enjoy the bread. She struggled with her disappointment, but it was brief. She opened the door and lifted the basket. She took the four loaves and placed them before the stranger who sat in the shadows at the head of the table. She raised her eyes to the stranger's face, then uttered a cry. The face, but not that of a stranger, appeared.

The Master gazed steadfastly upon the little loaves. He touched them, broke them, extended them, and raised His eyes to heaven in thanksgiving.

Cleopas and Simon were leaning forward, breathless, transfixed. Martha had crept closer and knelt within the dim circle of light cast from the small lamp upon the table. She silently whispered his name.

“Master!”

He turned and looked at her. Then softly as the sunset had gone, He also vanished. The Master's chair was empty. On the table lay the little white loaves, uneaten, but received and blessed. Joy flooded the maid's soul as she realized that her goodness to the Master had been accepted.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee.*

Psalm 31:19a

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Luke 10:25-37

### LESSON

#### TRYING TO TRIP JESUS

One day a lawyer came to Jesus. He acted like he was interested in Jesus' opinion. What he really wanted to do was to catch Jesus saying something wrong. This lawyer was not a good man.

This lawyer was not what we think of as a lawyer who defends people in court. Rather he studied the law of Moses. He knew exactly what God told Moses in the Old Testament. He wanted to see if Jesus would say something different.

So the lawyer asked, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

That was really an excellent question. It is a question each one of us should ask ourselves. But the lawyer was not asking so that Jesus could point him to eternal life. He just wanted to trick Jesus.

Luke 10:25 says, *And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?*

#### JESUS' WISE ANSWER

Jesus answered the lawyer very wisely. Jesus asked the lawyer what the Old Testament Law had to say about it. That was a smart approach. Jesus said, "You tell me what the Law has to say about it."

Luke 10:26 says, *He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?*

The lawyer quickly answered Jesus, “The Law of Moses says that we should love God with all our heart, and soul, and strength, and mind. And to love our neighbor as ourself.”

Jesus nodded. Yes, that was exactly true. He told the man that if he did as the Scripture instructed, then he would inherit eternal life. Sadly, because of this Lawyer’s wicked heart, he did not love God or others. He would not inherit eternal life.

Luke 10:27-28 says, *And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.*

*And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.*

### **TRY AGAIN**

The man may have been disappointed. Jesus had not made a mistake in His answer. He had not said anything contrary to the law. In fact, He had used the law to give His answer. So, the lawyer decided to try again.

“Okay,” the lawyer said. “But who exactly is my neighbor?” He thought that was a tricky question. Was it the guy who lived next door? Or the guy on the next block? Or in his town or country? How would Jesus define a neighbor?

The Jewish people in Bible times were not very neighborly to people who were not Jews. They scorned people who did not keep the Law as they did or did not worship as they did. They did not want anything to do with others who were not exactly like they were. They believed that God only loved a very select few people. Not many people qualified to be their neighbors. There were only a few who deserved their goodness they thought.

Who would Jesus say was his neighbor?

Luke 10:29 says, *But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?*

### **JESUS’ STORY**

Before Jesus answered the man’s question, He began to tell a story.

Jesus said, “A certain Jewish man went from Jerusalem to Jericho. On the way he was attacked by thieves. They stole his clothing and beat him up. Then they left the man half dead by the side of the road.”

“In a while a Jewish priest came along the road. He saw the poor man, but he crossed the road to the other side and did not even stop to help. Shortly a Levite came by. He saw the man, but he also crossed the road to avoid getting too close and he went on his way.”

“Finally a Samaritan man came along. When he saw the injured man he felt sorry for him. He cleaned his wounds with oil and wine and then carefully dressed his wounds. He put the man on his beast and took him to an inn. There he cared for the man all night long. The next day, when he had to leave, he gave money to the innkeeper to continue the man’s care. He promised to repay the innkeeper any extra money he spent when he returned.”

There are a couple of unusual things about Jesus’ story. First, the two men who walked on by without stopping to help, the priest and the Levite, were the two you would have thought would stop to help. They were men who taught others about God. They were supposed to be men of God. They were expected to be good to others! They should have helped!

On the other hand, the Samaritan was under no obligation to stop and help the Jewish man who was in trouble. You see, the Jews hated the Samaritans. The Jewish man would not have stopped to help the Samaritan man. So, the Samaritan man could have said, “He would never stop to help me. Why should I stop to help him?”

But the Samaritan man had a good heart which was demonstrated in his good actions.

Luke 10:30-35 says, *And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.*

*And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.*

*And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.*

*But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,*

*And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.*

*And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.*

### **WHICH WAS THE NEIGHBOR?**

Now Jesus was about to get to the point of the story and answer the lawyer’s question. Again Jesus asked a question that the lawyer needed to answer. Jesus asked, “Who do you think was the real neighbor to the man who was beaten and robbed?”

The lawyer quickly answered, “Why, the man who showed mercy!”

Jesus must have smiled then. “Exactly! Go and do likewise!”

Luke 10:36-37 says, *Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?*

*And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.*

Everyone around you is your neighbor. When you show goodness and mercy to others, then you are obeying God's command to love your neighbor.

If you love God with all of your heart, and soul, and mind, and strength, in other words, with everything you have, then you will automatically begin to love others as God loves them.

So, who is your neighbor? The answer is, everyone God brings into your life is your neighbor. Look around. When you see a need, do you do your best to meet it? When you are able to show God's love to someone, do it! Look with eyes of compassion on others and don't be guilty of crossing the road to avoid others. Do good whenever you can!

James 4:17 says, *Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.*

#### **DO YOU HAVE ETERNAL LIFE?**

God loves everyone of us here on earth. If you are His child, then He wants you to love others as He loves them. God does not love a select few. He loves all. And He shows His goodness to all.

Just as that Samaritan man showed compassion on the poor man that was beaten and robbed, God loves you the same way. God can see that you are lost in sin and cannot do a thing to help yourself. So God did something to help you. He sent Jesus to die on the cross for your sins. Jesus took your place.

John 3:16 tells us that God loves you so much that He was willing to sacrifice His own Son, Jesus Christ, so that you could inherit eternal life.

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

If you are not a child of God, you have never asked Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your heart, then you need to give your heart to Jesus. Think about how much God loves you. Today we can show you from the Bible how you can know that you will inherit eternal life.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to love others as God loves you. That means that you should show love and goodness to everyone else, regardless of how they treat you. That sounds like a very big order. It is, but with God's help you can obey His command to "love thy neighbor as thyself."

Luke 6:35 says, *But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.*

The first step toward loving others as God loves them is to love God with everything you have. When you love God with your whole heart, and mind, and soul, then it is easy to obey His command to love others. If you love God completely, then you will want to obey Him. It will be a joy to obey Him.

God loves you. Do you love God enough to show His love and goodness to others?

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to love others as He loves them.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Recite today's memory verse.
2. What question did the Lawyer ask Jesus?
3. How did Jesus answer the lawyer?
4. In Jesus' story, what happened to the first man who was traveling?
5. Who passed by the poor man and did not stop to help?
6. Who stopped to help the beaten man?
7. What did the Samaritan do for the man?
8. How does God say that we should love our neighbors?
9. Who is our neighbor?
10. Why was it unusual for the Samaritan to stop to help?

# Goodness: The Good Samaritan

Oh how great is thy goodness, which  
thou hast laid up for them that fear thee.  
Psalm 31:19a



I will show  
godly goodness to others.

V	F	E	L	Y	Y	T	W	H	X	C	F	I	N	N
B	L	T	S	L	J	W	O	L	E	O	H	I	G	X
J	S	E	A	E	X	S	U	A	X	M	I	I	O	V
X	K	R	M	V	E	L	N	W	H	P	N	U	O	I
U	S	N	A	I	M	O	D	Y	I	A	E	J	D	G
R	G	A	R	T	A	V	S	E	H	S	I	E	H	N
O	O	L	I	E	N	E	P	R	I	S	G	S	E	O
B	O	L	T	Y	A	G	R	R	B	I	H	U	A	R
B	D	I	A	D	T	O	I	C	F	O	B	S	R	E
E	N	F	N	G	T	D	E	H	L	N	O	T	T	D
R	E	E	U	W	A	I	S	N	D	E	R	I	L	M
S	S	W	U	U	C	D	T	B	F	H	A	D	A	Y
T	S	L	H	G	K	M	E	R	C	Y	U	N	Y	H
U	G	D	P	G	E	H	K	P	T	R	A	V	E	L
P	O	U	P	F	D	W	E	P	M	O	N	E	Y	D

CLEANED  
COMPASSION  
ETERNAL LIFE  
GOOD HEART  
GOODNESS

IGNORED  
INN  
JESUS  
LAWYER  
LEVITE

LOVE GOD  
MAN ATTACKED  
MERCY  
MONEY  
NEIGHBOR

PRIEST  
ROBBERS  
SAMARITAN  
TRAVEL  
WOUNDS

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LESSON 33

GOODNESS:  
THE GOOD SHEPHERD

LESSON ORDER

Prayer / Introduction

Song Time

Supporting Story

Memory Verse Time

Bible Lesson Time / Invitation

Challenge / Quiet Time

Bible Quiz



BIBLE TEXT

John 10:1-33

CHARACTER TRAIT

I will show godly  
goodness toward others.

MEMORY VERSE

*Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee.*  
Psalm 31:19a



## OPEN IN PRAYER

## INTRODUCTION

Goodness starts in the heart and is demonstrated in ones actions. The One who demonstrated His great love and goodness for you in a very special way was Jesus Christ. Jesus did for you what you or no one else could do. He died to take your sins away. You could not take them away. Another human could not take them away. Only Jesus could do that.

How much Jesus, the good shepherd, loves you!

Today's Life Lesson is: I will show godly goodness to others.

## SONG TIME

## SUPPORTING STORY

### GOODNESS ME!

You: Hold on one minute while I get our friend, Andy, out. (Get Andy out) Hi, Andy.

Andy: Hello, hello, hello!

You: You sure are in a good mood today!

Andy: Yep! I'm in a good mood because something really good happened today!

You: Really? Tell me about it.

Andy: Do you remember my friend, Jamie?

You: Yes. Isn't he the young man who your Coach picked to be the team pitcher?

Andy: That's him! At first I didn't like him too much because he got the position I wanted, but I decided to wait and see why God had allowed that to happen.

You: That sounds very wise.

Andy: The more time I spent with Jamie, the more I liked him and we got to be good friends. I really don't mind anymore that he got to be team pitcher.

You: I'm glad.

Andy: Jamie isn't a Christian so I decided to start telling him about Jesus.

You: Wonderful! God wants us to tell others about Him.

Andy: I was afraid to tell him about Jesus and invite him to church at first, but I prayed and asked God to give me the courage I needed.

You: Did God give you courage?

Andy: He did! Last week I told Jamie that I was a Christian and I asked him to come to church. Do you know what he said?

You: What?

Andy: He said that he wouldn't have gone to church with anyone else, but he would go with me. And do you know why he said he'd go with me?

You: No. Why?

Andy: Jamie said he knew that I really wanted to be the team pitcher. He said he could tell I was upset and very disappointed when Coach picked him.

You: Right.

Andy: Jamie said he thought I would be really angry with him and either ignore him or treat him like an enemy. He said he was surprised when I treated him like a friend! That's why he was willing to go to church with me. He said he could tell I was different and maybe it was Jesus who made the difference!

You: Wow! What a good testimony you had by showing kindness to Jamie even when you were treated unfairly!

Andy: The best part is that when Jamie came to church, he heard the teacher tell about how Jesus is our Good Shepherd and He loves us and cares for us. Jamie asked Jesus to be his Savior! Isn't that great!

You: It certainly is! How happy you must be to know that because you showed goodness to Jamie, he learned about the goodness of God!

Andy: Yep! It sure is exciting!

You: I agree! It makes me want to make sure I am showing God's goodness to others by the way I talk and the way I act too! Well, it's time for you to go now, Andy. Say good bye.

Andy: Good bye, everyone!

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee.*

Psalm 31:19a

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

John 10:1-33

### LESSON

#### **THE SHEEPFOLD**

The Pharisees were the Jewish religious leaders in Jesus' day and they jealously guarded the people they taught. It aggravated them to see their people follow Jesus. They watched the Jewish people flock to hear Jesus preach. They saw the miracles He performed when He healed the sick, cast out demons, and made the blind to see. But all of this did not convince them that Jesus was the Messiah sent from God. In fact, they were quite upset that Jesus was getting so much attention.

The Pharisees felt they were the ones who should lead their people. They did not want the people to follow Jesus. So Jesus told them a story.

Jesus said that there was a shepherd, some sheep, and robbers and thieves who want to steal the sheep. Jesus told them that only the shepherd enters the sheepfold through the door. The robbers and thieves try to sneak in to steal the sheep by climbing over the walls. They would be caught and carted away if they tried to enter by the door. But the shepherd never needs to climb over the walls to enter the area where the sheep stay. He can freely walk in and out through the door because he owns the sheep and he loves the sheep.

John 10:1-2 says, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.*

*But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.*

### **THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE**

Then Jesus said that the shepherd knows each one of his sheep by name and he personally leads them. A good shepherd does not confuse one sheep with the other. He is familiar with each individual sheep. A good shepherd also takes the time and energy to personally guide his sheep. He doesn't leave the job to someone else. Instead he is willing to spend his own life caring for the sheep.

In turn, the sheep get to know their shepherd personally. They recognize his voice and he is the only one they trust. They will not follow a stranger. Instead, when they hear a stranger's voice, they run the other way.

John 10:3-5 says, *To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.*

*And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.*

*And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.*

### **WHAT'S IT MEAN?**

The Pharisees did not understand what Jesus was trying to tell them. The story made no sense to them. Jesus tried to explain to them what He meant, but they could not make any sense out of it. They were so blind spiritually that they could not see that Jesus was telling them that He was the good shepherd for those who believe in God.

Quite simply Jesus was saying, "I am the Good Shepherd. Those who believe and follow Me are my sheep. You Pharisees are the thieves and robbers who try to sneak in and destroy my sheep."

Jesus said, "I am the door to the sheepfold. I am the only way to eternal life." The only way the sheep can get into the safety of the sheepfold is to pass by the shepherd. In the same way, the only way we can get into the safety of God's family and spend eternity in Heaven is to go through Jesus Christ. He is the door. He is the only way into God's family and into Heaven.

Then Jesus boldly stated that the thieves and robbers turned the people's hearts away from God. They stole away the hearts of the people from God. They took the people farther away from God, not closer to Him. Even when Jesus so clearly referred to the Pharisees, they still did not understand what He was saying. They did not understand that Jesus was saying that they were leading the people away from God, not closer to God. They were doing spiritual harm to the people.

John 10:6-10 says, *This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.*

*Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.*

*All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.*

*I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.*

*The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*

Jesus clearly said, "I am the Good Shepherd. I give my life for the sheep." He was referring to when He would die on the cross, like a sacrificial lamb, to save the sheep from eternal death. Through His death on the cross He would give His sheep eternal life.

John 10:11 says, *I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.*

Then Jesus said something that would have really riled up the Pharisees, if they had understood Him. But they didn't. Jesus said that He had other sheep besides the Jews. He was referring to the Gentile people who were willing to follow Him. Jesus planned to open the door of the sheepfold wide open for those other sheep also. In other words, Jesus was planning on offering salvation to the Gentiles also. Soon, in God's eyes, Jew and Gentile would all be the same. Anyone who was willing to accept Jesus and follow Him would be a part of His sheepfold.

John 10:16 says, *And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*

#### **CONTROVERSY**

Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is insane! He has a devil. Why should we listen to Him?" But others said, "I don't think He is insane. He doesn't sounds like a man possessed of a devil. Can a devil do the miracles He has done?"

So they were divided and could not decide whether to consider the things He was teaching or to get rid of Him. There was great controversy amongst the religious leaders.

John 10:20-21 says, *And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?*

*Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?*

#### **ARE YOU THE MESSIAH?**

Later the Pharisees came back to badger Jesus some more. He must have been discouraged to see how hateful and ignorant these men were. Jesus tried to tell them He was the Messiah sent from God. They were the religious leaders. They should have been the first to understand the truth, yet they did not. They were so blind spiritually.

The Pharisees asked Jesus, “Come on. Be plain. Are you the Messiah?”

Jesus shook His head in dismay. They would never understand. “I have told you, but you won’t believe me. You can see the good works I do in My Father’s name. You still don’t believe. Of course, you don’t believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep know my voice and they follow me. And what great rewards they will have! I will give them eternal life. They will live forever and no one can take that away from them. No one can take them away from me!”

Then Jesus boldly said, “I and My Father are one!”

John 10:24-30 says, *Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.*

*Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father’s name, they bear witness of me.*

*But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.*

*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:*

*And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*

*My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.*

*I and my Father are one.*

They didn’t understand most of what Jesus said, but they did know that they wanted to destroy Him. So they took stones and were about to stone Him.

Jesus sadly shook His head again. “Tell me which good works you are going to kill me for. I have only done good from My Father and you want to kill me.”

“We aren’t stoning you for any good works!” The Pharisees hissed. “We are stoning you because you are trying to act like you are God!”

John 10:31-33 says, *Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.*

*Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?*

*The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.*

## **JESUS IS GOD!**

The Pharisees were furious that Jesus claimed to do good works by the power of God. They were furious that Jesus said He and His Father were one. They did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God. They thought He was speaking blasphemy.

But Jesus was speaking the truth. Jesus is the Son of God! He came to earth and lived in a human body. He came to teach and preach about repentance of sin. He came to preach about God's love. But mostly He came to die on the cross.

You see, we are all born sinners and there is nothing we can do to get rid of our own sin. The Bible says that God hates sin and sin must be punished. The Bible says that blood must be shed to get rid of sin.

In the Old Testament days the Jews killed lambs and the blood of the lamb would cover their sin. When Jesus came, He came as the perfect Lamb of God. He had no sin, but He willingly died shed His blood on the cross for our sins. His blood can take away our sins. There is no other way to have your sins forgiven.

But Jesus did not die and stay dead. He also rose again the third day. Jesus is God and He gave His life for us and then He took His life back up again. Today Jesus is in Heaven and He wants you to spend all eternity there with Him.

How can you do that? You can tell Jesus you know you are sinner. Tell Him you believe He died on the cross for your sin in your place. Ask Him to forgive your sin.

We can have someone take the Bible and show you exactly how you can be saved.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to show the goodness and love of God to someone you know. Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He daily cares for, protects, guides, and loves you. Wouldn't it be wonderful if everyone knew how good God is?

The only way others will know how good God really is, is if you take the time and effort to tell them. Someone was good enough to share the good news of salvation with you. Will you do the same?

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to tell others about the good shepherd's love and care for them.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Who is the Good Shepherd?
2. Recite today's memory verse.
3. Who were the thieves and robbers in Jesus' story?
4. Who are the sheep?
5. What do the sheep do when they hear their shepherd's voice?
6. What do the sheep do when they hear a stranger's voice?
7. Who are the "other" sheep Jesus was talking about?
8. Who is the door to the sheepfold?
9. What did the Pharisees refuse to believe?
10. Why did Jesus come to earth?





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LESSON 34

FAITH: HAVING FAITH - I

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction

Song Time

Supporting Story

Memory Verse Time

Bible Lesson Time / Invitation

Challenge / Quiet Time

Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

John 4:46-53

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

Jesus wants me to have faith.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*For we walk by faith, not by sight.*

2 Corinthians 5:7



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

What is faith? For one thing, it is believing in something you can't see. When you walk into a room and flip on the switch, you have faith that a light will go on. You can't see the electricity that flows into your home to that light, but you have faith that it is so. When you get on an airplane and it begins to taxi down the runway, you have faith that the plane will lift off the runway and soon be soaring into the air. You can't see the air currents that hold up the plane and keep it in the sky, but you have faith that it is so.

You can't see Jesus Christ. You can't see Heaven. But every day, if you are a Christian of faith, you have faith that He is with you and He is working in your life. You can't see Him, but you have faith that everything He says is so.

Jesus Christ values your faith. It pleases Him when He sees that you are exercising faith. Sometimes you need to work on your faith. But faith is one of the fruit of the Spirit and the Holy Spirit will help you to have faith.

Today's Life Lesson is: Jesus wants me to have faith.

### SONG TIME

### SUPPORTING STORY

#### BOTH SIDES

Obtain 2 Flash Cards. (Or, if you can, bring a piece of cross stitch or needle work. The messier it is on the underside, the better!)

Susan tossed her cross stitch piece on the chair and headed to the kitchen to start supper. The hour was getting late and soon her husband and two sons would be home. And they would all be hungry!

Susan did not feel like fixing dinner. Her heart was very heavy and all day long she had been dragging around. She had finally settled on a comfortable chair and picked up her cross stitch to work. It kept her hands busy, but her mind would not stop spinning. She couldn't stop thinking of how much she missed her sweet young daughter, Missy, who had gone home to be with the Lord just the year before. It would be Missy's birthday soon and as the day got closer she couldn't stop thinking about her.

As Susan shoved a casserole in the oven, she tried to focus her mind on what else she should fix for dinner. Should she fix corn or peas? Should she make muffins? Somehow, dinner didn't seem very important. She kept thinking, "Why did You take Missy, Lord? She was so young. Why did this happen? It doesn't make sense to me!"

Susan missed her daughter so much and she couldn't think of any good reason that the Lord would take her daughter away from her.

Finally the table was set, the food was cooking, and everything was ready for when the rest of the family would get home. Susan went back to the living room and reached down to pick up her hand work. Just as she reached down, she stopped and took a hard look at her piece of cross stitch. When she tossed it down, it had landed upside down. The underside of the piece faced her.

(Show Flash Card A. Or show the underside of the piece you brought.)

Threads went this way and that. They crossed over each other in odd ways and everything seemed to be going in the wrong directions. There was no pattern to it. It looked like a big, ugly mess! If she were to frame this side of the piece for everyone to see, they would wonder, "Why would someone create such a thing? What purpose does it have?"

Susan's mind began to race. It was as if the Lord was speaking to her hurting heart. "Susan, this piece of needlework looks terrible from the underside. It looks a lot like your life right now. It all seems so jumbled and terrible right now. But turn it over! Look at the top side!"

Susan turned the piece over. There she saw a stunning work of art that she had spent many, many hours creating. The flowers and stems in their intricate design were amazing. How beautiful it looked!

(Show Flash Card B. Or show the topside of your piece.)

"Susan, I have a plan for your life. As I work out that plan, you cannot see what it is. You cannot understand it. You are only looking at the under side. It makes no sense from the under side. It seems like a big, ugly mess! But from my point of view, I can see what I intend to create. I know what I want to do in your life and in the lives of those around you. Right now you can only see the underside of my plan, but someday you will see the topside and it will be beautiful! Then you will understand!"

Sometimes in our lives the Lord is working and we just don't understand what He is doing. We don't understand why He has chosen to do things the way He has. It seems confusing to us. It seems a mess! But God sees our lives and all that goes on in this world from a very different perspective from me and you. He sees what He is going to accomplish in the end. We see the underside, He sees the topside. The underside may seem like a confused mess, but when God reveals the topside to us, it will all make sense. Each thread, whether of dark sorrow or bright with joy, will blend together perfectly to create something amazing and beautiful!

While the work is in progress in our life, we must have the faith to trust Jesus Christ to be doing what is best. We must have the faith to wait on His timing. Just remember that He is trustworthy. Your faith will be rewarded!

Listen to a poem that was written long ago about having the faith to trust God to do what is best for you.

My life is but a weaving between my God and me,  
I do not choose the colors, He worketh steadily.  
Oftimes He weaveth sorrow, and I in foolish pride,  
Forget He sees the upper, and I the underside.

Not till the loom is silent, and shuttles cease to fly,  
Will God unroll the canvas and explain the reason why.  
The dark threads are as needful in the skillful Weaver's hand  
As the threads of gold and silver in the pattern He has planned.

Author Unknown

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*For we walk by faith, not by sight.*                      2 Corinthians 5:7

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

John 4:46-53

### LESSON

#### **JESUS' FAME SPREADS**

After Jesus began His public ministry it didn't take long for His fame to spread. After all, He didn't just travel around preaching, He also was performing miracles. When blind people were given sight and when the lame were made to walk, it caused people to talk! The people who witnessed those miracles recounted what happened to their friends and family. Everyone knew what Jesus was doing.

Can you imagine sitting in on a conversation that took place after someone had seen a miracle?

"But it's true! I was there! Jesus was preaching from the book of Isaiah when a man who had been crippled all his life was brought to Him. I'll tell you, we all watched carefully to see what would happen next! Jesus just spoke to the man and reached out a hand and the man leaped up and began praising God! It was no trick!"

The news traveled quickly and everyone hoped that Jesus would come to their town or to a town nearby so they could go hear Him preach and hopefully He would heal someone.

The very first miracle Jesus performed was to turn water into wine at a wedding He was attending in Cana. I am sure that was the most talked about wedding that town had ever witnessed! So when Jesus crossed through Samaria back into Galilee, to the town of Cana, I am sure the town was buzzing with excitement.

John 4:46a says, *So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine.*

#### **NOBLEMAN WITH A PROBLEM**

When the word spread that Jesus was returning to Cana, there was one man who was very interested in seeing Jesus. He was not just curious to see Jesus perform a miracle. He wasn't looking for entertainment. He had a serious situation in his life and He realized that there was only one man who could help him.

A rich Nobleman, who lived in the city of Capernaum, had a problem. His son was very, very ill. He loved his son very much and I am sure that this rich ruler had consulted with all the best doctors in his town and all the surrounding towns. Apparently the doctors had tried every-

thing. No expense was spared. But there was nothing more they could do. The man's son was on the point of death and without a miracle, he would not recover.

It must have been good news when the rich man got word that Jesus was in Cana. Although the town was about 15 miles away, he did not hesitate to travel the distance to seek Jesus. He had most certainly heard that Jesus could perform miracles and he needed a miracle!

The man did not send a servant on the errand. He went himself and he found Jesus as quickly as he could. Then he begged Jesus to come with him to heal his son. I don't suppose a rich nobleman ever begged others to do much of anything. Most of his life he had ordered others to do things and whatever he ordered got done. People listened to him and they obeyed him. But this man did not order Jesus to heal his son. He knew he was at Jesus' mercy. He begged for the life of his precious son.

John 4:46b-47 says, *And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.*

*When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.*

#### **SIGNS AND WONDERS**

Jesus did not immediately follow the Nobleman. Instead He said something that may seem strange to us. Jesus said, "Except you see signs and wonders, you won't believe."

Why did Jesus say that? Did He think the man only wanted to see a miracle? Perhaps Jesus was testing the man's faith. Certainly Jesus was talking to more than just the Nobleman. Jesus knew that the crowd gathered around Him was listening to every word. He knew that many of the people who came were only curious to see a miracle. They may not have been willing to believe a word He said unless they saw Him do a miracle. Many of them had to see proof that Jesus could do miracles in order to believe that He was not just an ordinary man. They would not take His word that He was the Messiah sent from God. Many of them said, "I'll believe He is God's Son when I see what He can do - not before!"

The nobleman was desperate. He did not want to lose his son and he was willing to beg a second time for Jesus to come heal his son. What the man did not realize is that Jesus did not have to travel all the way to Capernaum to heal his boy. Jesus could merely speak the word and it would be accomplished. Jesus told the man that he should head home with the assurance that his son had been healed.

The man had great faith. He not only believed Jesus could heal his son, but when Jesus told him that his son was already healed, he believed Jesus. He started home right away. He didn't say, "Are you absolutely sure my boy is well again?" Instead, he headed home to give his healed son a big hug!

That nobleman took Jesus at His word. He did not demand a sign to believe that Jesus had indeed performed a miracle 15 miles away in his own home. He had faith!

John 4:48-50 says, *Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.*

*The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.*

*Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.*

### **HE LIVES!**

As the Nobleman was heading home, one of his servants ran to meet him. He was probably out of breath from running as quickly as he could to reach his master with his news. As soon as he saw his master, he blurted out, “Your son is alive!”

The son had not been dead when the Nobleman left his house, so what the servant was really saying to his master is, “Your son is well and healthy again!”

“When did the change occur? When was the exact hour that the boy was healed?” the Nobleman asked eagerly. He wanted to know if the boy had begun to get better before he spoke to Jesus or if it had happened as Jesus spoke.

“It was the seventh hour that the fever left him,” the servant replied.

Without a doubt the Nobleman knew that it was Jesus’ word that had healed his son because it was at the exact time that Jesus said he would be healed, at the seventh hour, that the boy became well!

That man went home, rejoicing all the way. He now knew for certain that Jesus was indeed the Son of God. He gathered his entire household of family and servants together and told them exactly what happened. As the man stood with his arm around his healthy son, everyone in the Nobleman’s household believed in Jesus.

John 4:51-53 says, *And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.*

*Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.*

*So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.*

### **NO SIGNS!**

There are people today who don’t believe that Jesus is God the Son. They don’t believe God’s Word, the Bible. They refuse to believe what the Bible teaches. They may think that if God is real then He has to somehow prove Himself to them. They want to see signs and wonders. They want miracles.

There are people today who say they believe Jesus is the Son of God, they may even be Christians, but they have a terrible time having the faith to believe they can trust God to do what is best in their life.

The Bible tells us that even one of Jesus' own disciples had a very hard time having the faith to believe that Jesus rose from the dead. Thomas had traveled with Jesus for his entire ministry, yet when Jesus died on the cross, Thomas gave up hope. When he heard that Jesus had risen from the dead, he did not believe.

In order for Thomas to believe, he demanded to see Jesus first. And Jesus graciously appeared to Thomas and offered to let him touch the holes the nails had made in his hands. Then Thomas believed.

Jesus said, "Thomas, you only believed because you could see the truth. How blessed and happy are those who believe in me and what I have done even though they have not seen!"

John 20:29 says, *Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*

God values our faith and He wants us to have the faith to believe His Word. He wants us to have the faith to believe that what He says is true even though we can't see Him and even when we can't always see what He is doing in our lives.

God wants us to have faith in Him even when we don't understand all that He is doing. He is so much higher and wiser than we are. He works in ways that we don't always understand. But God doesn't demand that we always understand what He is doing. What God does want from us is for us to always have the faith to trust Him to be doing what is best. He wants us to have faith in Him even when we don't understand Him.

God wants us to have faith even when there are no signs and wonders.

Mark 11:22 says, *And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.*

### **HOW IS YOUR FAITH?**

How is your faith? Are you a Christian who has to see something to believe it? Are you a Christian who struggles to have faith without seeing signs and wonders?

The key to faith in God is to learn to trust Him completely. It is not something you can figure out in your head. It is something you do in your heart. You must come to the place where you say to God, "I may not be able to see You. I may not be able to understand all that You do. But I trust You. I have faith in You!"

In order for you to be saved from your sin, you need faith to believe that Jesus Christ is God. You need to have the faith to believe that He came to earth to die and then rise from the dead to pay the price for your sins. Do you have that type of faith?

Would you be willing to say to Jesus, “Jesus, I know that you died for my sins. I believe you rose again from the dead and that you live today in Heaven. I believe that you can take away my sins and someday take me to Heaven.

Would you like to do that? You can.

Romans 5:1 says, *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to have faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus was talking about you and me when he said, *Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*

You can't see Jesus. You can't hear His voice. You don't see miracles around you like seeing people being healed. But God wants you to have the faith to believe that Jesus Christ is God the Son. He wants you to have the faith to believe that He is always working in your life for your good and His glory.

How can you have faith?

1. Get to know God.

You can't have faith in someone you don't know. You don't have faith in a stranger, do you? But you do have faith to trust people you know who have been honest and good to you. The same is true with God. The more you know Him, the easier it will be to trust Him.

You get to know God by reading His Word, by thinking about His Word, and by praying and talking to Him.

2. Determine in your heart to trust God.

Trust and faith are heart issues. The head is great for thinking and God gave you a brain so you could think. But God also gave you a heart. Sometimes you need to trust your heart more than your brain. Your brain may be saying, “Don't trust God until He has proved Himself. Demand proof. Demand signs and wonders.” But the heart says, “I know God. He loves me and I love Him. I will trust His Word even when I can't see any proof! I'll have faith.”

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to have faith in Him.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. What city did Jesus visit in our story today?
2. Recite today's memory verse.
3. Who came in desperate need of Jesus?
4. What did the Nobleman want Jesus to do?
5. Where did the Nobleman live?
6. What did Jesus say that many people wanted from Him?
7. What was Jesus' answer to the Nobleman?
8. Who came to meet the Nobleman and what news did he bring?
9. When had the Nobleman's son begun to get well?
10. What happened to the Nobleman's household?

# Faith: Having Faith

For we walk by faith, not by sight.  
2 Corinthians 5:7



Jesus wants me to have faith.

Find the words below. Look forward, backwards, up, down and diagonally.

H	Z	Z	J	F	U	U	M	H	O	X	Y	V	U	O
O	M	R	E	J	O	I	C	E	S	K	S	Q	V	C
Q	N	S	G	S	R	E	D	N	O	W	M	B	P	L
N	O	B	J	A	S	U	G	E	L	B	I	B	M	Y
O	B	E	C	H	T	I	A	F	Z	Z	M	P	Q	L
S	L	L	A	R	S	S	C	Q	E	A	R	R	A	T
U	E	I	N	I	O	E	U	K	U	O	M	E	R	N
S	M	E	A	X	Q	W	T	R	O	I	H	A	Y	V
E	A	V	A	O	Y	L	D	F	T	J	E	C	V	M
J	N	E	C	B	A	W	F	X	F	H	Q	H	K	V

MIRACLES  
SIGNS  
NOBLEMAN  
SON  
SICK

CROWD  
AMAZED  
JESUS  
PREACH  
CANA

HEAL  
FAITH  
REJOICE  
BIBLE  
BELIEVE

TRUST  
WONDERS  
HEART  
PROOF

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LESSON 35

FAITH: HAVING FAITH - II

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Luke 7:1-10, Matthew 8:5-13

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

Jesus wants me to have faith.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*For we walk by faith, not by sight.*      2 Corinthians 5:7



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

The old saying goes: Seeing is believing.

(Show a flashlight.)

What you see, you can easily believe. It's right in front of your eyes.

If I say to you, "When I push this switch, a light will come on." (Turn on flashlight. If you forget to bring a flashlight, you can use the light switch on the wall and change the illustration a bit.)

You have all seen a flashlight before, so you knew the light would come on. But suppose you had never had seen a flashlight before in your life. If this were the year 1550 and flashlights did not exist nor had they been invented, then you would not believe me when I held this up and said, "When I push this switch a light will come on."

If you did believe me, then it would take faith for you to believe that what I was saying was true! Faith is believing something is true without proof. It is believing without seeing.

There are a lot of things about God that we must take by faith. We can't see everything that God tells us about Himself and about Heaven, but God loves it when we will have faith to believe Him!

Today's Life Lesson is: Jesus wants me to have faith.

## SONG TIME

### SUPPORTING STORY

#### THE "SHOW-ME" STATE

The state of Missouri has been nick-named the "Show-Me" state. What kind of a nickname is that? What are they talking about?

No one is exactly sure how Missouri became known as the "show-me" state, but here are a couple of the legends that have gone around and you can pick the one you like the best.

One legend says that in the 1890's there was a very successful mine in the town of Leadville, Colorado. One day the regular miners went on strike. They refused to work. The owners of the mine did not want to shut down production, so they decided to bring in miners from other states to cross the picket lines and do the work. A group of miners from Joplin, Missouri, came to work, but they were very unfamiliar with how the mine in Colorado ran. The Missouri miners were constantly asking the pit bosses how they should do things.

"Show me how you do this," "Show me how you do that," the men asked.

Soon the pit bosses were fed up with having to teach the Missouri men how to do the job. The pit bosses began to say to each other, "Those men are from Missouri, you'll have to show them how to do the job!"

Another legend says that the phrase was coined by Missouri's U.S. Congressman, Willard D. Vandiver. He served from 1897 to 1903. One day he stood to give a speech at a naval banquet in Philadelphia, PA. He said, "I come from a state that raises corn and cotton and cockleburs and Democrats, and frothy eloquence neither convinces nor satisfies me. I am from Missouri. You have got to show me!"

The people of Missouri don't take much on faith. They are practical minded. They want to see proof. They say, "I'll believe it when I see it!" They say, "Prove it to me!"

Now sometimes, it is smart to test things out. You can't believe everyone or everything. It's fine to not believe everything you hear. It's fine to want some proof you can see. The world is full of liars. The world is full of deception. And Satan is the biggest liar around! He lies to people all the time. Don't be deceived by Him!

But in the Christian life, we must take some things by faith. What are those things? Well, there are many I could mention, but here are a few important things we need to take by faith.

1. Have faith that Jesus is the Son of God.

It takes faith to believe Jesus is truly the Son of God. Not everyone believes in Him. But the Bible says that He is just what He says He is.

John 20:31 says, *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

2. Have faith that Jesus died on the cross for your sins.

You could not take away your own sins. You could not do enough good works to get rid of your sin. Only Jesus Christ, the perfect Lamb of God, could take away your sin. He did that because He loves you.

Hebrews 9:28a says, *So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.*

Romans 5:8 says, *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

3. Have faith that God will guide you through His Word.

Walking by faith isn't always easy, but if you let God's Word guide you, you will never fail. You will never run off the path.

John 17:17b says, *Thy word is truth.*

Psalms 119:105 says, *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*

4. Have faith that someday God will take you to Heaven to be with Him.

You can't see Heaven, but it is very real. Jesus even talked about it. He said in John 14:2, *In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*

So, have a little faith. Don't be like the "Show-Me" state!

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*For we walk by faith, not by sight.*                      2 Corinthians 5:7

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Luke 7:1-10, Matthew 8:5-13

Obtain Flash Card

### LESSON

#### THE CENTURION'S SERVANT

In the city of Capernaum there lived a Roman soldier. The Bible doesn't tell us his name, but it does tell us that he was a Centurion. A Centurion was an officer in the Roman army. He would have entered the Roman army when he was about 16 years old and worked his way up through the ranks to his current position. It was required that a Centurion be at least 30 years of

age before they could hold that office. They would be in command of a large group of men, usually 80 to 100 men. (Show Flash Card)

A Centurion was required to have an education. They must be able to read and write. That was something that most common people could not do in Jesus' day. A Centurion would be a member of a higher class of people because of their education and their position.

Centurions were brave men who had proven themselves in battle and continued to fight side by side with their men, even after they had obtained their high position.

There is one other thing we know for certain about this Centurion in our story. He was a kind man. He had a servant whom he greatly valued because of his faithful service. He also had developed a friendship with his servant. When the servant became extremely ill, the Centurion was greatly distressed.

The servant is not named either, but we know he must have been a faithful servant. His master valued him greatly.

Luke 7:2 says, *And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.*

#### **A CALL FOR HELP**

It so happened that just as the servant lay near death that Jesus came to the city of Capernaum. The Centurion heard that Jesus was in the city. Because of his position in the Roman army, he most likely heard all the rumors about what was happening in his town and possibly the Roman guard had been put on alert in case the crowds that followed Jesus were to cause any trouble.

So, the Centurion went to find Jesus. When he found the Lord, he told Jesus about his servant.

"Lord," the Centurion said, "My servant is gravely ill and paralyzed. He is in great pain."

Matthew 8:5-6 says, *And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him,*

*And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.*

Now, it is strange that the Centurion came to Jesus for one reason. You see, Jesus was a Jew and the Centurion was a Gentile. And more than that, the Centurion was a member of the Roman army. It was no secret that the Jews hated the Romans.

But Jesus did not react the way the other Jewish leaders would have reacted had a Roman Centurion come seeking their help. He did not ignore the man or push him aside. Instead, Jesus immediately said He would go to the servant and heal him. Whenever anyone went to Jesus seeking His help and mercy, they always got it. It did not matter to Jesus who the person was or what they were like.

When we come to Jesus to ask for Salvation, He never will turn us away. We are wicked sinners, yet Jesus does not turn away. He shows us mercy and love, just as he did with that Centurion.

The Centurion was surely happy that Jesus was going to help him, but before Jesus could take one step toward the man's house, he said something that surprised even Jesus. He said, "Lord, I am not worthy of your presence in my home. But I know that if you just speak the word, my servant will be healed. I am in authority over many men and when I say to a soldier, 'Go,' he goes. When I say, 'Come,' he comes. You can do the same."

This Gentile man recognized that Jesus had the authority to heal, even from a distance, if He merely spoke the word. The Centurion did not expect Jesus to take His time to go to his house. He just humbly asked if Jesus could use His authority to heal his servant.

Matthew 8:7-9 says, *And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.*

*The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.*

*For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.*

### **SO GREAT FAITH**

Jesus was amazed when he heard what the Centurion had to say. Jesus realized that the man knew that He had power and authority from God. Jesus also knew that the Centurion had great faith to believe in Him. Most of the Jewish people did not believe Jesus was God the Son. Most of them would not believe unless they saw with their own eyes and even then some of them refused to believe. But this Gentile man displayed a very great faith. He had the faith to believe Jesus could heal even without seeing it happen.

Jesus looked around at the people who came to hear Him teach and He praised the man. He said, "I have not found such great faith, not anywhere in Israel!"

Matthew 8:10 says, *When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.*

Then Jesus said something that must have greatly shocked the Jews that were there. He praised the Gentile man and shamed the Jewish people.

He told them, "There will be many in the Kingdom of Heaven who will come from the east and west. They will enjoy Heaven with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But sadly, the true Children of Israel will be cast into outer darkness. Instead of enjoying Heaven with us, they will be punished in Hell."

Those were strong and shocking words! The Jews thought the Gentiles would have no place in the Kingdom of Heaven. But now Jesus was saying that not only would the Gentiles be included in His Kingdom, but many of the Jews would not! Why? Because they did not have the

faith to believe Jesus was the Son of God. Jesus loved the Jewish people very much. He was determined to give them every chance to believe on Him. But many of them refused. Anyone who refuses to believe will not share in the Kingdom of Heaven. But those who believe, no matter who they are, will be included.

Matthew 8:11-12 says, *And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.*

*But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Jesus turned to the Centurion and spoke. "Go. You have the faith to believe in me. Because of that faith, your servant will be healed." And when the Centurion returned home, he got the news that at the exact time Jesus spoke the words, the servant was indeed restored to health.

Matthew 8:13 says, *And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.*

### **HOW'S YOUR FAITH?**

How about you? Do you have the faith to believe without seeing, as the Centurion did? Or must you see in order to believe.

Just as Jesus told the crowd of people way back in Bible days, those who believe will see the Kingdom of Heaven. Those who refuse to believe will not. What a sad thing to think that anyone would refuse to believe in Jesus Christ. He is the Son of God and He deserves our faith.

Faith is simply believing without seeing. If you see something, then you don't need very much faith to believe your own eyes. But those who believe without seeing must exercise faith. Do you exercise your faith?

We may not have Jesus here on earth with us, but we do have God's Word the Bible. The Bible tells us that Jesus came to die for our sins. He came to pay the price for sin.

If you have asked Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your heart, then you will spend eternity in the Kingdom of Heaven. Have you done that? Do you have the faith to believe? Today we can take the Bible and show you exactly how you can accept Jesus as your Savior.

## **INVITATION**

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to have faith without seeing.

Most likely you won't see many miracles in your lifetime. You will see wonderful answers to prayer. You will see things that only God can do for you, but you won't see Jesus walk on this earth and reach out His hand to heal a paralyzed man or make a blind man see. You won't see anyone raised up from the dead.

Instead, you must have the faith to believe that Jesus is the Son of God. You must have the faith to believe that although He has the power to do miraculous things, He chooses for you to have faith without seeing.

When you accept what Jesus did for you on the Cross, then you are exercising your faith. You did not see that event happen, you just believe it did happen. When you read your Bible and obey it, you are having the faith to believe the Bible is God's Word and you must obey.

So, have faith. And know that one day you will be rewarded in the Kingdom of Heaven for your faith!

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to have the faith to believe Jesus without having seen Him.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. What army did the Centurion serve in?
2. What problem did the Centurion have?
3. Why was it unusual for the Centurion to ask Jesus to heal his servant?
4. What surprised Jesus?
5. What did Jesus say that made the Jews so angry?
6. When was the Centurion's servant healed?
7. What did Jesus say the Centurion had?
8. Recite today's memory verse.
9. About how many men served under a Centurion?
10. What were the Centurion's feelings toward his servant?

# Faith: Having Faith

For we walk by faith, not by sight.  
2 Corinthians 5:7



Jesus wants me to have faith.

Write the letter on the top line that follows the one given below  
the line to crack the code. Example:

$\frac{T}{S}$

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z A

$\frac{F}{E}$     $\frac{\quad}{Z}$     $\frac{\quad}{H}$     $\frac{\quad}{S}$     $\frac{\quad}{G}$     $\frac{\quad}{H}$     $\frac{\quad}{R}$     $\frac{\quad}{A}$     $\frac{\quad}{D}$     $\frac{\quad}{K}$     $\frac{\quad}{H}$     $\frac{\quad}{D}$     $\frac{\quad}{E}$

$\frac{\quad}{V}$     $\frac{\quad}{H}$     $\frac{\quad}{S}$     $\frac{\quad}{G}$     $\frac{\quad}{N}$     $\frac{\quad}{T}$     $\frac{\quad}{S}$

$\frac{\quad}{R}$     $\frac{\quad}{D}$     $\frac{\quad}{D}$     $\frac{\quad}{H}$     $\frac{\quad}{M}$     $\frac{\quad}{F}$    .



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LESSON 36

FAITH: A FAITHFUL SERVANT

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Genesis 24:1-9

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

Jesus wants me to have faith.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*For we walk by faith, not by sight.*      2 Corinthians 5:7



## OPEN IN PRAYER

## INTRODUCTION

When someone has an important task to be done, they want someone they can count on to do the job and do it well. They want a faithful person that they can trust.

Today's lesson is about a servant who was sent to do an extremely important task. His master totally counted on him and had true faith in his servant. We'll see how the servant did with his task.

Today's Life Lesson is: Jesus wants me to have faith.

## SONG TIME

## SUPPORTING STORY

What Is A Missionary?

Obtain Flash Card

What is a missionary? We all know that a missionary is someone who serves God by telling others about Jesus Christ. A missionary can be a man or a woman. They can be young or old. They can serve God here in America or far away in another country. (Show Flash Card)

What you may not know is that not everyone can be a missionary. What? Aren't we all supposed to be missionaries for God? Well, yes. But not everyone wants to be a missionary. You see, to be a true missionary, when God calls a person to serve Him, that person must be willing to say "yes" to God. That person must be willing to be faithful to God.

Saying "yes" to God can be very hard for some people. There are many things a person must consider when he decides whether to say "yes" or "no" when God calls him to be a missionary. Maybe someday God will call you to be a missionary. He may have a special job that only you can do. But you must make the decision of whether or not you will serve God, because God does not force anyone to serve Him. God wants his children to serve Him with a willing heart. It is not enough to just obey God, we need to obey willingly and faithfully. The Bible says that God loves a cheerful giver. That isn't only referring to money. God also loves a person who cheerfully gives their time, energy, and talents to Him.

So why is it so hard for some people to say “yes” and serve God cheerfully? One reason is that they have never learned to obey. To them obey is a dirty word. They don’t like to obey their Mom and Dad. They don’t like to obey their teachers. They don’t like to obey God either. But did you know, that if a person learns to obey cheerfully that they are really happier than if they whine and complain every time they are told to do something? Obedience is a way of showing someone you love them and it makes you feel good inside to be obedient. Right now you need to learn to obey your parents so that if God ever calls you, you will know how to obey Him.

Another reason a person may not want to become a missionary is that he may have to leave his family. Many missionaries go to places that are far away. They don’t get to go home very often. That can be hard, but you know what? If they do obey God’s call to be a missionary, God will reward them for their sacrifice. And God is always with them. They may have to leave family, but they never have to leave God. God never leaves them.

Some people find it hard to willingly become a missionary because it means they will not have much money. They may not have the comforts they want in life. Missionaries do not make much money. They depend on God and other Christians to help them make a living. They spend their time serving God instead of making money. Money is very important to some people. They find it hard to give it up for God. How about you? Would you be willing to tell God that He is more important to you than all the money in the world?

Have you ever been afraid of the dark or afraid because you were all alone? Many people are afraid to become missionaries. They are afraid that God will send them to some place that is too dangerous. But do you know what? If God calls you someplace to serve, He will give you a love for that place. In fact, if you couldn’t go there, you would be very miserable. You see, a person with a faithful heart wants to serve God in the exact place where God has called them, no matter what the danger. And God will be with them. God knows every danger they face, but they do not face it alone. God is with them. And God protects His servants.

Do you love God enough to say to Him that you will faithfully serve Him everyday with a willing heart, even if you have to leave your family someday, even if you won’t ever get rich, even if you must face danger? Many men and women have done just that and God has blessed them because of it.

It makes the heart of God happy when we serve Him with a willing heart. God may not call you to be a missionary to a far away land. You may not have to give up your family or home. You may never face danger as you serve Him. He may want you to serve Him right here in our home town. Are you willing to obey God and serve Him wherever He wants?

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*For we walk by faith, not by sight.*                      2 Corinthians 5:7

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Genesis 24:1-9

### LESSON

#### **AN IMPORTANT TASK**

The Bible tells us that God told Abraham to leave his family and country and travel to a special place that God had picked out. Abraham did not know where God was sending him. He did not get to see a travel brochure before he headed out. All Abraham could do was to determine to have the faith to go where God wanted him to go. So, Abraham went.

All through his journeys, Abraham kept his faith in God. There were times when Abraham wondered what God was doing and what would happen, but through everything that happened, Abraham had faith. When Abraham was an old man God told him he would have a son. It was hard to believe that could happen. It took faith for Abraham to believe what God said would happen. But sure enough, God did give Abraham and Sarah a son named Isaac. They were rewarded for their faith.

The day came when Abraham decided that Isaac needed a wife. The problem was that they were camped in the land of the Canaanites. This was the land that God had promised to give to Abraham and to Isaac, but there were no suitable wives to be found. The women of Canaan were pagans and they worshipped false gods.

That would not do for Isaac. Abraham knew that in order for his son to worship and obey God, he would need a wife who also loved God. He needed a wife who would fit into God's plan for Isaac.

We can learn an important principle from that. It is the same for a Christian. We are not to fall in love and marry a person who does not share our faith in God. There is only trouble and sorrow ahead for someone who does. A Christian who marries an unbeliever will never be able to fully serve God if they are unequally yoked to an unbeliever. But just as Abraham had faith that God would provide the right wife for Isaac, so you can have the faith that someday, if you are willing to wait on God, He will provide just the right person for you too!

Abraham knew that a godly wife must be found. But Abraham was too old to begin the search on his own. Instead he called his most trusted servant to have a talk with him.

Eliezar had been Abraham's faithful servant since he had left Ur of Haran many, many years before. Eliezar cared for the business of his master and he must have been quite trustworthy. He was a faithful man and Abraham knew he could place his faith in Eliezar. Abraham trusted him enough to send him on a very important mission. That was an honor and a privilege for Eliezar to be so trusted by his master.

Abraham asked Eliezar to place his hand under his thigh. This sounds like a strange thing, but apparently this was a way of making a solemn oath or promise. It was Abraham's way of letting Eliezar know that he meant business.

Abraham told Eliezar that he wanted to find a wife for Isaac, but it was very important to him that it not be a Canaanite woman. Instead Abraham wanted to send Eliezar back to his home country. There he was to look for a woman among Abraham's own relatives. There he could find a woman who would love and serve God just like Isaac did.

#### **ELIEZAR CLARIFIES HIS MISSION**

Abraham had made many requests of Eliezar in his lifetime, but this one must have filled the servant with a bit of apprehension. What a big and important request! What a tremendous amount of faith his master had placed in him!

So Eliezar asked his master a question. He wanted to be sure he perfectly understood what Abraham wanted from him.

"What if the woman won't come back to this land with me? Would you want me to take Isaac back with me to your old country and your relatives to find him a wife?"

This was definitely not what Abraham had in mind. He did not want to take the chance that Isaac might go back to the land he had left and find a wife and then settle down there. That was not God's plan. It was important that Isaac stay in the land of Canaan which had been promised to Isaac. Abraham intended to stay there in Canaan so that one day Isaac and his descendants could claim the land.

*Genesis 24:6-7 And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again. The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence.*

Abraham told his servant that if the woman did not choose to follow him and return to Canaan, then he was freed from his oath. So Eliezar promised Abraham to faithfully do as he had been instructed.

I believe that Eliezar must have also been a man of faith in God. He had lived for many years with Abraham. He had seen the miracles God had performed for Abraham and Sarah. He knew that God was mighty. He also knew that God had big plans for Isaac. He did not say to Abraham, "How do you know that I will be able to find a suitable wife for Isaac among your brethren? Maybe there is no one suitable there. Do you really think your God can do this?"

Instead, he said, "What if she won't come with me?" He never doubted that God would have prepared a woman for Isaac. He had faith that God would help him find a suitable wife for Isaac.

### **A GREAT TRUST**

Abraham trusted his servant Eliezar with everything he had. He trusted him to care for his wealth. And Abraham was a very wealthy man. He trusted him to care for finding a wife for his son. What a great responsibility. What great faith.

God does the same with us. We are God's servants and God has given us a great task. God has great faith in us that we will be faithful to Him in all we say and do.

What is the task God has given to us? He wants us to Tell and to Teach.

Matthew 28:19 says, *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations.*

Jesus' last instructions to his followers were that we were to go to tell others about Jesus and what He did for them. And then they were to teach them about how to be saved, and how to live for God.

That is what God wants you to do. And it is a great honor to be able to represent God to the World.

"Wait a minute. I'm just a kid! What can I do?" you may say. You can do a lot. You can invite someone to Sunday School and church. You can tell someone that God loves them and that Jesus died for them. You can live the way a Christian should so that your life will be a testimony.

It is a very important task to tell and teach others about Christ. But God trusts you to do it. Are you a faithful servant or steward who will be faithful to obey God? Are you willing to be a witness for God?

Maybe you have never asked Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your heart. You are not faithful to God because He is not your Heavenly Father.

The Bible tells us that God loved you so much that He sent Jesus Christ to earth to die on the cross for your sins. Sin separates you from God and God wants to have a close relationship with you. God loves you and wants to spend eternity with you. Sin makes that impossible.

But the good news is that because Jesus Christ died to take away your sins, you can have your sin forgiven. You can have a close relationship with God.

If you ask Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your heart, He will. You need to do that. Today would be a good day. We can take a Bible and show you how.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to serve God faithfully.

What does God want you to do? Obey Him. Tell others about Him. You can do that if you choose to. Will you?

Ask God to help you to be a faithful servant who gladly serves and obeys. Ask Him to give you the faith to be obedient every day.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to have the faith to obey and serve God faithfully.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. What was the name of Abraham's servant?
2. What did Abraham want the servant to do?
3. Where did Abraham say he didn't want a wife for Isaac to come from?
4. Where did Abraham say he wanted Eliezar to go to find a wife?
5. If Abraham did not want just any wife from Haran, where did he specifically say Eliezar should go to get a wife?
6. What did Eliezar ask Abraham?
7. Where did Abraham put Eliezar's hand when he made his oath?
8. Why didn't Abraham want Isaac to go back to the land with the servant?
9. Recite today's memory verse.
10. What important task does God ask Christians today to do?

# Faith: A Faithful Servant

For we walk by faith, not by sight.  
2 Corinthians 5:7



Jesus wants me to have faith.

## A Test Of Faith

C	A	X	K	B	I
R	K	A	C	X	H
A	M	X	T	I	R
I	U	C	S	K	T
E	X	K	D	I	G
C	I	O	D	X	C

COLOR THE SPACES IN THE BOX OF THE LETTERS THAT ARE FOUND 4 TIMES OR MORE. WRITE THE UNCOLORED LETTERS ON THE BLANKS TO SOLVE THE PUZZLE.

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LESSON 37

FAITH: A FAITHFUL SAVIOR

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Luke 23, Matthew 27, John 19

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

Jesus is faithful to me.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.*  
II Thessalonians 3:3



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

Faith is a fruit of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit will help us to have faith in God and in God's Word the Bible. But Holy Spirit will also help us to be faithful to God.

God is faithful to us. He has done so much for us. The most wonderful thing God has done for us to provide a way for us to be saved from our sins. We cannot save our selves. We must have a Savior. Jesus Christ left Heaven to come to earth to become our Savior. Through all the terrible things He faced at the cross, He was faithful to us. He willingly gave Himself to save our sins.

What a faithful Savior is our Lord Jesus Christ!

Today's Life Lesson is: Jesus is faithful to me.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### AMAZING GRACE - THE LOST IS FOUND

Obtain Flash Card

John Newton was lost!

Now, John didn't really think he was lost. At least he didn't spend much time worrying about it. John had more important things to do. After all, he was the captain of a ship. He had control of many men who worked for him. He had to chart the course his ship would sail when he would pick up slaves in one country and carry them to the place where they would be sold.

Being the captain of a slave ship was not a pleasant job, but John closed his heart and mind to the misery that was going on below the deck of his ship. All he cared about was getting his cargo to its destination and getting paid handsomely for that delivery!

John thought that in order to run a tight ship and keep his men in line he had to keep up a fierce front. He would gruffly order the men around and call them down if they made mistakes. He spoke with a vile mouth and the language that came out of him shocked even the most seasoned and rough men who worked on his ship.

The men hated John. He never had a kind word for any of them. He didn't treat them like humans. He was rough and cruel and he didn't care that no one liked him. He only cared that he got a decent day's work out of them. Other men could use flowery words. Not John Newton!

One day the ship set sail. It was a day like any other, but it would not end like any other day for John. The ship was far out to sea and John could tell that a storm was brewing. He ordered the men to secure the riggings and prepare as best they could. But the storm was the fieriest that John had ever encountered. Soon the ship was listing so far to the side as the wind blew and the waves slammed into it that John began to wonder if they would ride out this storm or end up on the floor of the ocean.

As the men worked hard to keep the vessel afloat, John held on to the ship's wheel and tried to keep from being swept overboard. His exhausted mind began to think back over his childhood years. He remembered that after his dear mother, whom he had loved very much, had died, his father had sent him to apprentice on a ship very much like this one. He had been a young boy and had learned that he had to be tough to survive such a hard existence. John had become tough in body as well as in manner. He knew he wasn't a nice man. He knew his men hated him. He wondered if he would go to his grave as such a terrible man.

Then John's mind went back further to the days before his mother had died. John had loved her so much. He remembered sitting close beside her knee and listening as she read to him. John remembered that his mother had read him the Bible. She told her son that he was a lost sinner and he needed to be saved.

Too soon John's mother died and he had not been saved. Now he wondered if it was too late for him. John knew that if he was going to be saved, it had better be right then. He might not live long enough to have another chance. So John called out for God to save his soul. And God did just that!

God also saved John's ship. The storm finally calmed and when the ship finally limped back into the harbor, John stepped off its deck a different man. He soon got out of the slaving business. Eventually John became a great preacher. He told others not to put off being saved. He pleaded with others to accept the Lord as their Savior. (Show Flash Card)

John never forgot what a vile sinner he had been. His final words on earth before he died were, "I am a great sinner and Christ is a great Savior!"

Listen to the words of a song that John Newton wrote. These words are written from his heart. He was a lost sinner, just as we all are, but one day God found him. How thankful he was that he had called out to God that stormy day!

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch like me.  
I once was lost but now am found,  
Was blind, but now I see.

T'was Grace that taught my heart to fear.  
And Grace, my fears relieved.  
How precious did that Grace appear  
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares  
I have already come;  
'Tis Grace that brought me safe thus far  
And Grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me.  
His word my hope secures.  
He will my shield and portion be,  
As long as life endures.

Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,  
And mortal life shall cease,  
I shall possess within the veil,  
A life of joy and peace.

When we've been there ten thousand years  
Bright shining as the sun.  
We've no less days to sing God's praise  
Than when we've first begun.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.*

II Thessalonians 3:3

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Luke 23, John 19, Matthew 27

### LESSON

#### **GUILTY!**

What a terrible night and day it must have been for Jesus when the time came for Him to go to Calvary. He had spent most of the night agonizing in prayer. Then in the dark, early morning hours one of His own men betrayed Him and ran away in fear. He was bound and led away in the cold morning to hear the religious leaders tell terrible lies about Him. He was pushed from place to place. He was beaten, spit on, and mocked. And all the while He stood alone.

I imagine that the physical and mental agony was terrible, but Jesus endured it bravely. And all the while Jesus knew that the worst lay ahead. He knew that soon He would hang on a cross and shed His blood for the sins of the world.

Pilate had said, "I find no fault in this man." Yet Jesus had been proclaimed guilty and He was led away to be crucified.

#### **GOLGOTHA**

The angry mob pushed along closely behind as the Roman soldiers roughly shoved Jesus and forced Him to take up the heavy wooden cross and head up the hill to a place called Golgotha, which means, The place of the Skull.

Jesus was tired and weak. Despite the fact that He was having a difficult time carrying the cross, the soldiers wanted to hurry things along. They grabbed a man from the crowd named Simon and ordered him to carry the cross for Jesus.

Closely behind there followed those who had known and loved Jesus. Many of the women who had fixed meals for Jesus and His disciples came to watch. Even Mary, Jesus' mother, could not turn away but stayed close by. What sorrow they felt as they watched how cruelly Jesus was being treated.

Luke 23:26-28 says, *And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.*

*And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.*

*But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.*

When they got to the place where the crucifixion was to take place, the soldiers stretched Jesus on top of the cross. They took long spikes and nailed His hands and His feet to the cross. Then they lifted the cross up and dropped it into the hole that had been prepared. Jesus did not called out in pain or anger. He silently let them nail Him to the cross because He knew that this was God's plan for our salvation and He faithfully carried out God's plan.

There, on that terrible cross, Jesus hung.

Jesus hung between two men. They were criminals and they were being crucified for crimes they had committed. On each side hung a guilty sinner, but in the center hung Jesus Christ, the perfect, sinless Son of God.

John 19:16-18 says, *Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.*

*And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:*

*Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.*

Pilate took a paper and wrote a sign that he ordered to be placed on the cross above the head of Jesus. The sign said, "Jesus of Nazareth. The King of the Jews."

When the chief priests saw what was written on the sign, they were furious. They didn't want anyone to think that Jesus was their King! They demanded that Pilate remove the sign or at least write that Jesus just claimed to be the King of the Jews. But Pilate refused to change a thing. He told them, "What I have written, I have written!"

As much as the religious leaders refused to believe that Jesus was the King of the Jews, we know that Jesus was truly the King of the Jews. He is King of the Universe. There on that cruel cross hung the great King of kings!

John 19:19-22 says, *And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.*

*This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.*

*Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.*

*Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.*

### **THE MOCKERS**

The Roman soldiers and the angry Jews that had demanded Jesus' death stood under the cross. They began to mock Jesus and to shout terrible things at Him. They yelled at Him, "You said you would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days! Ha! You can't save yourself, how can you do that?" Others shouted, "If you are the Son of God, as you claim, come down from the cross!"

The religious leaders milled about beneath the cross. They could barely contain their glee. They had longed to see Jesus put to death and finally it was happening! They mocked Jesus saying, "He saved others, but He can't save Himself! If He is the King of Israel, let Him come down from the cross, then we'll believe in Him!"

They shouted, "He trusted in God. Let God deliver Him now! He claimed to be the Son of God, but look at Him now!"

Those foolish men could not understand that Jesus was indeed the Son of God and He hung on that cross for our sins, not for His sins. He would not come down from the cross so that we could have our sins forgiven. What a faithful Savior He was!

Matthew 27:39-43 says, *And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,*

*And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.*

*Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said,*

*He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.*

*He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.*

### **THE POWER OF THE CROSS**

Even as Jesus was dying on the cross, He demonstrated His great mercy and His great power: His mercy for helpless sinners and His power to save. The power of the cross is the fact

that only at the cross can anyone be saved from sin. There is no other way to be saved but to come to the cross!

John 17:1-3 says, *These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:*

*As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.*

*And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

At the cross Jesus Christ shed His blood so that we can have salvation. Nothing but the blood of Jesus can save you from sin. You can't be saved by being good. You can't be saved by going to church or being baptized. You can't be saved by all the good things you do. The only way to be saved is to come to the cross and ask the Savior, Jesus Christ, to forgive your sin and save you. His death on the cross bought you salvation. What a faithful Savior!

Romans 1:16 says, *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

### **IT IS FINISHED!**

Finally, the time had come when Jesus had completed all that He had been sent to earth to do on the cross. The price for sin had been paid. Jesus had finished His task and He cried out in a loud voice, "It is finished."

They seem like such sad words, but for us they are words filled with hope and joy! If Jesus had not died on that cross in our place, we would be hopelessly lost! There would be no way for our sin to be forgiven. There would be no way for us to be close to God. There would be no way for us to go to Heaven.

But when Jesus cried, "It is finished!" our salvation was complete! What a faithful Savior!

Jesus let His life go from Him. He simply allowed Himself to die. No man can do that. Only God has that kind of power of life and death.

John 19:30 says, *When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.*

Matthew 27:50 says, *Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.*

### **JESUS DIED FOR YOU!**

Jesus died on that cross for you! He was not forced to come to earth as a baby. He was not forced to teach us the way of salvation. He was not forced to go to the that cross and die. He willingly came to be our Savior. He could have refused. But what a terrible thing that would have been for us!

We are lost sinners and we can't take away our own sin. We can't do anything good enough to pay for our sins and buy our way into Heaven.

But Jesus came willingly to earth. He came to die on the cross and shed His blood. Jesus is the perfect Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the World.

In the Old Testament the prophet Isaiah said this about the Messiah in Isaiah 53:5, *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*

Jesus was wounded for your sins. He was bruised for your iniquities. And with His shed blood and death we are healed. We are saved!

If you could save yourself, then Jesus would not have needed to come to earth to die for you. If you could save yourself, then you would not need Jesus as your Savior. But you cannot save yourself. You cannot take away your own sins. Only Jesus Christ can do that for you.

Have you asked Jesus to take away your sins? Have you asked for forgiveness? You can do that. Today we can have someone take a Bible and show you verses that will tell you exactly how you can be forgiven of your sin. You can do that today.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to spend some time thinking about how Jesus faithfully died on the cross so He could be your Savior.

We often think of Jesus' death when it is Easter time, but the rest of the year we kind of put it in the back of our minds and forget it. Tell Jesus how thankful you are that He paid the price for your sin on Calvary.

Jesus' death is the most important thing that has ever happened on this earth in the entire history of the World. We need to remember often all that Jesus did for us. And we need to thank Him for it too! How wonderful to know that Jesus died for me! What a faithful Savior!

Jesus was faithful to you. Now He wants you to be faithful to Him. Determine in your heart that you will be faithful to your faithful Savior!

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to remember that Jesus died for you personally.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Recite today's memory verse.
2. What happened during after Pilate pronounced Jesus guilty?
3. Who helped to carry Jesus' cross?
4. What did the religious leaders do as Jesus hung on the cross?
5. What did the sign say that Pilate wrote of the cross?
6. What was the religious leaders reaction to the sign?
7. What was the last thing that Jesus said on the cross?
8. What had Jesus finished?
9. Why did Jesus come to earth?
10. What is the most important thing that has ever happened on this earth?



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LESSON 38

**FAITH:  
GOD'S WORD IS FAITHFUL**

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Exodus 20:1-20, 31:18,  
Matthew 22:37-40

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

Jesus is faithful to me.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.*  
II Thessalonians 3:3



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

God gave us a faithful Savior who came to die for our sins. God also gave us His Word which tells us all that He wants us to know. God is so faithful to us in giving us His Word!

The Bible says that it is very important that you learn how to obey God. In the Bible God has told us some very specific things that we should do and some very specific things that we shouldn't do. These are God's commands to us. The Bible tells us how we can be saved from our sin and have eternal life.

The Bible tells us that we are to have faith, but it also tells us that God is faithful to us. How wonderful!

Today's Life Lesson is: Jesus is faithful to me.

### SONG TIME

### SUPPORTING STORY

#### BABY FOOD

Obtain Flash Card

Carrie was very excited about her new baby sister. She had a four year old brother, but she had been too young when he was born to help too much with him. But now that she was ten years old, her mom had said she could learn to do some things to help with the new Baby.

Carrie loved to hold Baby Annie and give her a bottle. Sometimes Annie would drink the milk as if she were starving. Sometimes, if she was really tired, she would drift off to sleep while she was drinking. Carrie loved to watch Annie sleep. She looked so peaceful and innocent.

"Mom," Carrie asked one day. "How come we don't feed Annie some food? All she does is drink milk. Isn't she going to get hungry?" (Show Flash Card)

"No," Mom answered. "Annie is too young for food yet. Her body can't digest solid foods yet."

"So how long will it be until we can feed her real food?" Carrie asked.

"Well, let's see," Mom said. "Annie will drink only milk until she's about four months old. Then we can start to give her some other foods that have been liquefied."

“What’s that mean?”

“It means that I will take foods like fruit or vegetables and put them in the blender. I’ll make them into a liquid for her to eat.”

“You mean all mushed up? Yuck!” Carrie asked with a look of distaste on her face.

“Yes,” laughed Mom. “It’s not so bad. You liked it when you were a baby. We won’t be able to feed her real solid foods till she’s at least eight months old.”

“Poor thing,” Carrie said as she looked down at Annie.

“That’s just the way God made our bodies. When we are first born, we can only have milk, but as we get older, then we can eat more and more. The day finally comes when we can eat a steak if we want to. But Annie doesn’t even have any teeth yet, she wouldn’t even be able to chew a solid food yet.”

“That reminds me of a Bible verse we learned last Sunday,” Carrie said.

“Oh?” said Mom. “Tell me the verse.”

Carrie had to think for just a moment. She went over the verse in her mind to make sure she had it just right. Then she told her mom the verse.

“I Peter 2:2, *As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.*”

“That’s a great verse. Just as Annie needs milk to help her body grow, while you are a new Christian, you need the milk of God’s Word to help you grow in the Lord. But someday you will be able to take in more than just the simple things from God’s Word.”

“Really?” said Carrie.

“Yes. There’s another verse in the Bible that talks about new Christians needing milk, but when they get to be more mature in the Lord, then they can begin to eat the ‘meat’ of God’s Word. Let me read it for you,” Mom said as she went to get her Bible and began to flip through the pages.

“Here it is. Hebrews 5:13-14 says, *For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.*

*But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil,*” Mom read.

“So, when I get older in the Lord, then I will be able to understand more about the Bible?” Carrie asked.

“Yes,” Mom said. “Just as Annie will be able to eat more solid foods when she is older in her body, you will be able to understand more and more about God’s Word too. But it is so important that you drink in the milk of God’s Word even now. You are still young, but you can read the Bible and learn many things.”

“That’s what my Children’s Church teacher said too. She said the more we read the Bible, the more we will understand what it’s talking about,” said Carrie.

Boys and girls, the same is true for you. You may still be young, but you are not too young to begin learning about God. You are not too young to begin reading God’s Word. Every day you need to read your Bible. You can take a few minutes a day, maybe in the morning when you wake up or at night before you go to bed. First pray and ask God to help you to understand what you are reading. Ask Him to help you to grow in the Lord. Then read a verse or two from your Bible. The book of John is a good place to start. Put a book mark where you are reading so you won’t lose your place.

After you read a verse or two, take the time to think about what it says. What is God trying to teach you in that verse? Is there a command He wants you to obey? Is there a promise He makes to you?

God so faithfully gave you the Bible and He wants to speak to you through His Word. The more time you spend reading God’s Word, the more you will mature. At first it will be like drinking milk, but the more time you spend reading and thinking about the Bible, the more you will understand. Soon you will be able to eat the meat of God’s Word. That will help you to grow into a strong Christian!

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.*

II Thessalonians 3:3

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Exodus 20:1-20, 31:18, Matthew 22:37-40

### LESSON

#### THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

In Old Testament days God told Moses to prepare the people of Israel for a very important meeting with Him. The people had washed and cleaned themselves and their clothing. They came and stood near the foot of Mount Sinai. God was on the mountain and it was a holy place.

God told Moses that if the people would agree to keep His commandments then they would be a special people to God, a treasure above all other people on earth. The people agreed. They said they would keep the commandments that God gave to them.

The mountain began to shake and fire and smoke came on the mountain. A trumpet sounded and became louder and louder. Then the voice of God spoke so that all the people heard God speak.

The voice of God boomed from the mountain and God told the people His commandments. It was a frightening thing for the people to hear. They begged Moses to go up onto the mountain and speak to God in their place. They were frightened to hear God speak directly to them.

Exodus 20:18-20 says, *And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off.*

*And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.*

*And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.*

So Moses went up into the mountain to meet with God. Aaron went up onto the mountain a short distance, but Moses continued on alone to get the commandments that God had for the people.

Actually, Moses spent quite a bit of time on the mountain listening to all that God wanted to teach the people of Israel. God spent time carefully explaining what each of the commandments meant. God also explained to Moses how the people should offer sacrifices to cover sin

and to offer praise to God. He told the people what was clean to eat and what wasn't. He told Moses many things to help the people live in a way that would please God.

The Bible tells us that God Himself took two stone slabs and with His own finger God wrote out the ten commandments so that Moses would have them to read to the people. The people would be able to see and read the exact words that God had spoken to Moses and to them.

Exodus 31:18 says, *And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.*

### **WHAT THE COMMANDMENTS MEAN**

The first four commandments tell us how we can live peaceably with God. All of these commandments refer to how we show respect and honor toward God. If we keep these commandments, we will be at peace with God.

*1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

*2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:*

*3. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*

*4. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.*

The last six commandments tell us how we can live peaceable with other men. All of these commandments deal with how we should treat other people. If we obey these commands, then we can be at peace with others.

*5. Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.*

*6. Thou shalt not kill.*

*7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.*

*8. Thou shalt not steal.*

*9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.*

*10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.*

## THAT YE SIN NOT

The big question is, why did God give the ten commandments? Did He do it so that He could boss everyone around?

No. God is the creator. He is the King of kings. He is already in control of everything.

The Bible tells us that God gave the commandments so the people would know how to live in such a manner that they could be pure and clean before God. God gave His commands so the people would know what sin was and how to avoid it.

Exodus 20:20 says, *And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.*

God hates sin. God wants us to put sin out of our lives and live in a manner that is honoring and pleasing to Him.

But the only way we can avoid sin is to know what sin is.

Did you know that if God had not told us what sin is, we would have no idea what sin is? We only know what sin is because the Bible tells us what it is. We only know how to avoid sin, because the Bible tells us how. We only know that there is only one way to have sin forgiven, because the Bible tells us how to have our sin forgiven.

In lands where people do not have the Bible, they do not know what sin is. They do not know how to get rid of their sin. They only know there is a God of some sort.

The Bible tells us that nature has its own way of letting people know that there is a God who created everything. And we all have a conscience inside of us that tells us right from wrong. But heathen people worship all sorts of false gods. They try to do things to please their gods. They do not know the true God. They think they are doing all they can to please their gods.

They do not know the truth, because they have never heard God's Word. That is why we send missionaries, so that they can also hear the truth about God and salvation.

How fortunate we are that any time we want to know what God has to say about something, we can pick up our Bible and read exactly what God says. That's why it is so important to daily read God's Word.

So God gave the ten commandments to His people so that they would know how to avoid sin.

## YESTERDAY AND TODAY

In the Old Testament, people who loved God tried to keep the ten commandments. But the people could not be good enough to always obey. They often broke one of God's commandments. Then they were in trouble with God.

So the people had to sacrifice animals as a covering for their sins. The blood of the lamb acted as a covering for their sin. But it did not take away their sin. Over and over, throughout their lifetime, the people had to offer a sacrifice for their sins.

But we do not offer animal sacrifices any more. The reason we no longer have to offer a sacrifice to cover our sin is that Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, came down to earth to offer Himself as a sacrifice for our sin. Jesus died on the cross. He shed His blood. And the blood of Jesus does not just cover our sin, it completely takes it away. That is because Jesus was the perfect sacrifice for our sin. If we ask Jesus to forgive our sin, He will. Then we can know that our sins have been forgiven forever.

So now, in New Testament times, even though trying to keep the ten commandments is a good thing to do, Jesus gave new commandments when He spoke with a Pharisee who asked Him what the greatest commandment was.

This is what Jesus said in Matthew 22:37-40, *Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.*

*And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*

All of our love and devotion should be given to God. Everything we have, heart, soul, and mind should be devoted to loving God.

Then we should love others also. It is easy to love ourselves. Sometimes it is hard to love others. But that is what God commands us to do.

Now, we should still try to obey God's ten commandments. They are good rules for our lives. But if we break one, we can know that God is willing to forgive us and help us to do better. We can ask for forgiveness and we will be forgiven.

In the new commandments that Jesus gave, He really sums up all the ten commandments from the Old Testament. If we love God and we love others, then we won't want to break any of the ten commandments.

How about you? Have you accepted the gift of eternal life that is offered to you by the perfect sacrifice of Jesus on the cross? Have you accepted Jesus as your Savior? You can today.

Maybe you are saved, do you obey the commandments that Jesus gave to us when He told us to love God with everything that we have and to love others as we love ourselves? That is what God wants you to do.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

God's Word is true and faithful. God speaks to us through His Word and we can know for certain that every word He speaks is faithful!

This week I challenge you to firmly believe in your heart and mind that God's Word, the Bible, is the truth. God gave us the truth and we are very privileged to have that truth with us. Any time we want we can pick up our Bibles and read what God has written to us. We can learn more about Him. We can learn truth.

I also challenge you this week to spend time reading God's Word every day. The only way you can know the truth that God wants you to know is by reading His Word. If you don't read it, you won't know.

You don't have to read lots at a time. Just pick a book like John and read a few verses a day. Then take the time to think about what God is saying in those verses. And don't forget to ask God to help you to understand what you have read.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to remember that God's Word is faithful.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. What did the people do to get ready to hear from God?
2. Recite today's memory verse.
3. What happened that frightened the people?
4. What did the people tell Moses to do?
5. Name one of the ten commandments.
6. Name another of the ten commandments.
7. Name another of the ten commandments.
8. Name another of the ten commandments.
9. Why did God say He gave the ten commandments to the people?
10. What two commandments did Jesus give?

# Faith: God's Word is Faithful

But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish  
you, and keep you from evil.  
II Thessalonians 3:3



Jesus is faithful to me.

What does God want you to be?

\_\_\_\_\_

M	O	S	B	M	E	K	D	S	G
K	G	W	S	C	O	M	G	C	G
W	C	F	K	S	A	D	I	K	O
K	S	M	T	O	H	M	G	D	W
D	O	F	D	U	S	L	K	W	G
C	W	D	G	O	M	C	W	G	C

Color the spaces with the letters that are found 6 times  
or more. The letters that remain will fill in the blanks  
above to find the answer.

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LESSON 39

**MEEKNESS:  
MEEK, NOT WEAK**

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction

Song Time

Supporting Story

Memory Verse Time

Bible Lesson Time / Invitation

Challenge / Quiet Time

Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Numbers 12:1-15

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

I will display  
a spirit of meekness.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever.*  
Psalm 22:26



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

“Stand up for yourself! Don’t let anyone push you around! You have to look out for Number One!” Have you ever heard anyone say that? You may not have heard someone say those exact words, but that is the way most people in our world today feel.

Everyone is very concerned about taking care of themselves. They figure if they don’t stand up and take care of themselves, then no one will. They figure they are number one and they need to put themselves first before everyone else.

In today’s story we learn about a man who was so meek that he didn’t stand up to defend himself when he was treated wrongly, but guess what? God stood up for him!

God valued the fact that the man didn’t stand up for himself. God didn’t say to the man, “What kind of wimp are you? Why on earth don’t you tell those people off? Why do you spend so much time taking care of everyone else, but don’t take care of yourself?”

No. God not only stood up for this man, God valued the fact that this man was so meek despite the way he was mistreated. Meekness is a fruit of the Spirit that God wants you to have in your life.

Today’s Life Lesson is: I will display a spirit of meekness.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### FLUFFY TAKES A STAND

Obtain Flash Card

Fluffy stood tensely in the driveway with her back arched. Her four paws were firmly placed on the ground. Every hair on her back was standing straight up in the air. From deep in her throat a rumbling growl was sounding. One glance at her would tell anyone looking that she was taking a stand and she was ready for action.

Wendy looked out her dining room window. She had seen a little kitten whisk down the driveway as fast as it’s little feet could carry it. It was headed for the garage to find a hiding place in a big hurry. Wendy looked farther down the driveway and there stood Fluffy, standing in a fierce, defensive position. She was facing a big, mean, angry looking dog. The dog gave a deep growl but Fluffy wasn’t budging an inch.

Fluffy was normally a quiet, gentle cat, but this was different. Now she was protecting her kittens. All the little ones had retreated quickly to the garage and Fluffy had no intention of allowing the strange dog to take a single step closer to her little family.

There was no doubt about it. The dog was clearly larger and stronger than Fluffy was. It didn't appear that this would be a fair fight at all. The dog very obviously had the advantage. And even though the dog had been stopped for the moment by the angry cat, it didn't seem to worry about being able to do exactly what it intended to do. It was out to grab one of those kittens!

Before Wendy had the chance to move and shoo the dog away, the dog took one step forward. Fluffy did not back down. She did not turn to run for safety. Instead, she gave a loud hiss and out shot one of her paws, claws extended. She gave the dog a mighty swipe and her claws sank deep into the dog's nose.

The dog gave Fluffy one startled look. Then it turned and ran with all the speed it could gather as it yelped in pain and defeat. It would be a while before the scratch on its nose healed and it would never come near Fluffy or her kittens again. (Show Flash Card)

Fluffy had shown tremendous strength and courage. She had bravely faced a much larger and stronger enemy. She dug down deep inside of herself and found the ability to do something she would not have normally done. She did it for the kittens she loved. This meek, loving mother cat had done something that was totally against her nature. But she had done it for the kittens she loved.

God wants us to be meek. Meekness is strength under control. Sometimes God wants us to use our strength to stand up and do what is right. Even when it may seem scary. He asks us to show some strength and courage in our lives. But He wants us to do it in a meek manner.

Meekness is not weakness. A meek person has the ability to do what needs to be done, but they don't just go around pushing others around. Fluffy was normally very gentle and meek, but when she needed to protect her kittens, she used her strength wisely.

There are times we must face enemies or situations that seem bigger and stronger than we are. But God wants us to wisely use our strength to stand up to things that are wrong. At the same time, God wants us to keep ourselves under control. He wants us to display a meek spirit towards others.

So remember, meekness is not weakness. It is keeping the strength God has given to us under control in a meek manner.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever.*  
Psalm 22:26

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Numbers 12:1-15

### LESSON

#### **FAMILY PROBLEMS**

You would think the people you can trust most are your own family members. And for the most part, it is true that when no one else will stand with you or for you, your family will be there for you. But often a family will stand up to outsiders for a family member, but when it comes how they treat that member, that's a different story.

If you have a brother or sister you probably know what it is like to feel angry if someone else picks on them, but you feel it is fine for you to pick on them. That must be how Aaron and Miriam felt about Moses.

Moses was their little brother. They protected him as a baby. Aaron went with him to confront Pharaoh. They stood by him as he led the Israelites out of Egypt. Miriam had watched over Moses when he was a baby and as an adult she led the Israelites in singing praises to God. They had been there for their brother.

But one day they turned on Moses. Why did they do that?

They claimed they were angry at Moses about his choice in a wife. Most likely they got along with Moses, but they didn't get along with his wife. They didn't like her. But it is also quite possible they were angry at Moses for other things also. It is very possible they were jealous of Moses. They just used Moses' wife as an excuse to complain against Moses.

So Aaron and Miriam began to complain to each other about Moses' foolish choice in picking a wife. They also started to complain about the fact that Moses had been chosen as the leader of the Israelites. They may have said something like this:

"You know, if Moses is so smart that he can lead all these people, why wasn't he smart enough to pick a better wife."

"Yeah! Who does he think he is? Why does he think he's so much better than we are? Who made him the boss around here anyway?"

"Yeah, he's just our baby brother. Why should we listen to him? The Lord speaks to us also. Why shouldn't we be the leaders?"

Numbers 12:1-2 *And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman.*

*And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it.*

It must have hurt Moses to hear the things Aaron and Miriam were saying. Often it hurts more when someone you love attacks you than when an enemy attacks you. After all, you expect an enemy to attack you and you really don't care too much what they think about you, but you do care what people you love think and say about you.

But Moses didn't fight back. When Moses heard what his brother and sister were saying against him he did not rush over to them to straighten them out or defend himself. Why not? The Bible says Moses was very meek.

Numbers 12:3 says, *(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)*

Now we don't often think of Moses as a meek or timid man. He boldly stood before the Pharaoh and told him what God wanted him to do. He led the vast crowd of Israelites. He judged the people. He stood strong and true for God and God's commandments. He didn't seem meek and mild. The truth is, Moses was meek, but he wasn't weak! He was a strong leader, but he was also a meek leader.

There was a big difference in Moses' mind between standing up for God and standing up for himself.

We live in a world where we are told to stand up for yourself. Don't let anyone use you as a doormat. Don't let anyone push you around. We are told to look out for number one. Look out for yourself!

But Moses wasn't worried about looking out for his own well being. He wasn't quick to worry about what others thought about him. He didn't want everyone to treat him special.

Instead, Moses wanted the people he led through the desert to love and obey God. He was more interested in serving God and serving the people God had entrusted into his care. He faithfully served God and others. Moses was both meek and faithful.

God greatly valued those qualities in Moses. God valued those qualities so much that He stood up to Miriam and Aaron and spoke for Moses.

### **GOD CALLS A MEETING**

Moses may not have been willing to punish or even speak against his brother and sister for what they were saying behind his back, but God was. Aaron and Miriam said, “Who made him the leader?” So God called a meeting with Moses, Aaron, and Miriam to plainly tell them who made Moses the leader.

The three of them went before the tabernacle door. God’s presence came down in a pillar of cloud and filled the door. He began to speak. God told Miriam and Aaron in clear terms that He had chosen Moses. He told them they should be afraid to speak against His chosen man.

Numbers 12:5-9 says, *And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth.*

*And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, [and] will speak unto him in a dream.*

*My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?*

*And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed.*

God was very angry with them. He departed from the door of the tabernacle and when Miriam looked down at her skin on her arms and hands, she was horrified to see she had become a leper.

Numbers 12:10 tells us, *And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.*

Leprosy was a terrible disease that would eat away at the flesh of a person. It would eventually kill the person.

One of Aaron’s jobs as a priest was to look at the skin of the people when they thought they might have leprosy. If he declared they had the dreaded disease, then they were declared unclean. So Aaron knew what Leprosy looked like.

Sure enough, Miriam’s body was covered with the terrible disease that eats away the skin. Leprosy was a greatly feared thing. People who had it could count on dying a slow painful death. And even worse than that, because others did not want to also become infected, the leper was denied access to the tabernacle where they worshipped. They were thrown outside of the camp and

not allowed to have contact with anyone. If anyone started to get too close to them, they needed to warn others that they had leprosy, so they would shout out, “Unclean, unclean.” Then people would turn and quickly go in another direction.

Lepers were shunned and became an outcast from their community. What a sad, painful, lonely life a leper led. They lost their health, their homes, their families and their friends. They lost all usefulness in life.

Miriam knew she was being punished for her sin of jealousy and complaining. She was surely sorry now for the way she had treated Moses.

Why did God punish Miriam and not Aaron? Most likely Miriam was the one who started all the trouble. She stirred up Aaron to join her in speaking out against Moses. It seems God punished Miriam and not Aaron because he had not thought up the trouble. Miriam began complaining and caused her jealousy to spread to Aaron. So the greatest punishment went to Miriam.

Aaron did not suffer from leprosy, but he must also have felt frightened and ashamed and guilty. He had taken part in the sin they had committed against Moses. Aaron seemed to be easily swayed. We learn that from this story and also from the story of how Aaron had allowed the people to sin by building the golden calf. It was easy for his sister to talk him into joining her in her sin.

Sometimes it is that way in our homes. One will think up something wrong to do and the other will follow. They didn't both think up the mischief, but they both will gladly participate. You need to be careful not to go along with the sin that someone you know wants to commit.

#### **A PLEA FOR MERCY**

When God punished Miriam severely, Aaron felt guilty. He went to Moses and begged him to go to God and ask that Miriam be healed. He took responsibility for his sin. He admitted he had done wrong.

Numbers 12:11-12a says, *And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned. Let her not be as one dead.*

So Moses went to God. He asked God to heal Miriam. Do you realize Moses could have said to Aaron, “It serves her right! She started this great sin. And you got off easy. You could be a leper now too. You both got what you deserved! Live with it!”

But Moses didn't say that. Again his meek and humble spirit showed. He forgave his brother and sister. Then he went to speak to God on behalf of his sister. He begged God to heal Miriam.

God told Moses Miriam would have to remain a leper for seven days. Then she would be healed and be allowed to return to the camp. God showed true mercy to Miriam.

So for seven days Miriam remained outside of the camp and looked at her leprous skin. She had seven days to think about her jealous feelings and actions. Aaron also had seven days to think

of what he had done. I'm sure that at the end of the seven days, as the children of Israel packed up their tents and prepared to move on again, both Miriam and Aaron were different people. I think they may have determined to develop more of a meek and mild spirit like their brother Moses had.

### DEVELOP GODLY QUALITIES

Moses was meek. The Bible says so. That is a godly quality. Moses was also faithful. The Bible says that also. That is another godly quality. And both meekness and faith are fruit of the Spirit.

Numbers 12:3 says, *(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)*

Numbers 12:7 *My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.*

When God takes the time to mention a special quality about someone in the Bible, then we know it is a very important thing. We know that if God valued meekness and faithfulness in Moses, then He will also value those qualities in us.

Meekness and faithfulness are two good qualities for all of us to copy.

1. What does it mean to be meek?

The dictionary says to be meek is to be “patient, mild, and submissive.” Meekness means we don't think of ourselves as better than others. It means we don't always want our way. We don't put ourselves first.

Moses didn't think more highly of himself than he should. The Bible tells us we should not think more highly of ourselves than we should. That doesn't mean we should dislike ourselves or put ourselves down, it just means we should realize that others are important too. We should think highly of others. We should be patient with others.

Romans 12:3 says, *For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*

It also means we should think highly of God and put Him first in our hearts and minds. Instead of putting ourselves first, we should put God and others first. We should be submissive to God.

Have you every heard the song that goes like this?

Jesus and others and You. What a wonderful way to spell JOY.

Jesus and others and you, in the life of each girl and each boy.

J is for Jesus for He has first place,

O is for others we meet face to face.

Y is for you in whatever you do. Put yourself third and spell JOY!

Most people think if they put themselves first it will make them happy. The truth is if we put God and others first, then we will have true happiness.

2. What does it mean to be faithful?

The dictionary says to be faithful is to be “loyal, sincere, and honest.” God knew He could trust Moses to guide and lead the Israelites because he was loyal to God from the very beginning.

Do you remember that Moses was raised in the Pharaoh’s palace? He had a very easy life when he was young. He had the best food, clothing, and education. He was treated like the son of a king. But when Moses looked at the Israelites in their slavery, he knew he couldn’t stay in the king’s palace and live a cushy life. Instead, he was loyal to his own people.

When God called Moses to lead the people, Moses often felt he couldn’t do a very good job, but he always did his best to obey and serve God. Even though it was hard for Moses to be a leader, he sincerely and honestly did his best. He was loyal to God in all that he did.

God wants us to be faithful. You may be young and maybe God hasn’t given you some big job to perform, but if you are faithful in the little things He gives you to do, then God will see you are loyal, sincere and honest. God will know you are faithful.

Maybe you are not one of God’s children. You have never asked Jesus to forgive your sin. You have never accepted God into your life. The first thing God wants you to do is to humbly, meekly ask for forgiveness of your sins. Ask God to make you His child.

Then you can meekly and faithfully serve God each day of your life. Today you can do that. We can show you how.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to be meek and faithful. Meekness is not a sign of weakness. Faithfulness is not a thing to be dreaded. Both of these qualities show that you love God and want to be obedient to Him.

Just as God could see what was in Miriam and Aaron's hearts, and could see what was in Moses' heart, He can see what is in your heart. What does God see?

How can you demonstrate both of these qualities in your life? How can you have these qualities so that your life will be pleasing to God?

### 1. Demonstrate a meek spirit.

When someone wrongs you, don't be so quick to defend your self. When you speak to your brother or sister, treat them with love and respect. Don't always demand to be number one. Don't always insist everything be done your way. Put God and others first.

### 2. Demonstrate a faithful spirit.

Obey with gladness. Obey right away. Obey by doing the best job you can. Be dependable and loyal. Don't wait to be told what to do, instead, look for ways to help at home and at school. Do jobs without being told to do them. Volunteer to help and then make sure you follow through and do a good job.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about today's challenge. How can you put it into action in your life?

(Give the children a few seconds to think.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you to accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to find a way to be meek and faithful this very week. I'm going to ask Him to help you to be meek.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Who started trouble for Moses?
2. Recite today's memory verse.
3. What was the first thing Miriam and Aaron said they were angry about?
4. Then what did they complain about?
5. Did Moses try to defend himself to Miriam and Aaron?
6. Who heard what Miriam and Aaron were saying?
7. How did God appear to Miriam, Aaron and Moses?
8. What did God do as a punishment?
9. How long did Miriam suffer from leprosy?
10. What two character qualities did God value in Moses?

# Meekness: Meek, Not Weak

The meek shall eat and be satisfied:  
they shall praise the LORD that seek him:  
your heart shall live for ever.

Psalm 22:26



I will display  
a spirit of meekness.

- Aaron
- Anger
- Brother
- Complain
- Egypt
- Faithful
- Humble
- Israel
- Jealous
- Leprosy
- Loyal
- Meek
- Mercy
- Mild
- Miriam
- Moses
- Outcast
- Punish
- Rebellion
- Reward
- Sister
- Tabernacle
- Value
- Wife

T	L	R	Z	X	T	A	M	H	H	K	Y	W	V	L
A	N	O	I	P	U	E	U	J	F	Q	O	X	M	B
B	N	I	Y	F	D	W	E	U	Y	C	R	E	E	K
E	R	G	A	A	A	A	I	S	R	A	E	L	O	R
R	E	B	E	L	L	I	O	N	A	K	T	F	H	G
N	H	D	N	O	P	R	T	R	L	M	S	S	I	Y
A	T	R	U	V	P	M	O	H	V	X	I	B	K	W
C	O	S	Y	E	A	N	O	K	F	N	S	L	D	Y
L	R	E	L	B	M	U	H	C	U	U	R	R	D	O
E	B	G	M	M	T	M	W	P	E	U	L	A	V	L
O	Q	O	E	C	S	I	Z	Q	I	P	S	Q	Q	X
P	D	R	A	W	E	R	Z	I	Q	R	B	O	H	E
Q	C	S	I	Z	S	I	Z	K	Q	M	M	Y	F	F
Y	T	C	X	C	O	A	N	G	E	R	N	L	V	H
W	W	U	K	G	M	M	G	Y	L	P	G	C	Z	E



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LESSON 40

**MEEKNESS:  
MEEK, NOT PROUD**

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction

Song Time

Supporting Story

Memory Verse Time

Bible Lesson Time / Invitation

Challenge / Quiet Time

Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

I Samuel 13:1-14

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

I will display  
a spirit of meekness.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever.*  
Psalm 22:26



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

Most people are very proud. They are proud of the things they can do. They are proud of the things they own. They like to show off to others. But God is not pleased with a proud heart. God wants us to have a meek heart that submits willingly to God's will and way.

Today we will talk about a proud man who lost everything he had because his pride caused him to sin against God.

Today's Life Lesson is: I will display a spirit of meekness.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### LOOK AT ME!

**You:** I brought a friend with me today. It's Andy. Let me get him. (Get Andy out.) Hi Andy, how are you today?

**Andy:** Oh, I'm just great. Couldn't be better. In fact, I'm extra especially great!

**You:** Really? Why are you feeling so great today?

**Andy:** Well, just take a look at me.

**You:** (Look him over good.) Okay.

**Andy:** (Proudly) Well? Don't I look good? Don't I look especially handsome!

**You:** For a puppet, you are nice looking.

**Andy:** For a puppet! Nice looking!

**You:** Right?

**Andy:** How can you insult me like that?

**You:** I didn't mean to insult you. I said you were nice looking.

**Andy:** (Proudly) Nice doesn't even begin to describe me! Nice is so blah!

**You:** How would you describe yourself?

**Andy:** I've already said I'm Especially Handsome.

**You:** Okay.

**Andy:** But that's not all.

**You:** No?

**Andy:** Oh, no! I'm Immensely witty!

**You:** Immensely?

**Andy:** Yes. And I'm a Superb specimen of health!

**You:** Superb?

**Andy:** And I'm Astoundingly intelligent!

**You:** Astoundingly?

**Andy:** I'm so glad you agree.

**You:** I'm not so sure I agree. But I must say I'm Astoundingly Shocked!

**Andy:** Astoundingly Shocked? At what?

**You:** At your extremely high opinion of yourself! You don't sound like a very meek person to me!  
In fact, you sound full of pride!

**Andy:** It's hard to be humble when you are a great as I am!

**You:** (Sadly) Andy, I think you need to learn a lesson on being humble and meek. Do you know that the Bible says in 1 Peter chapter 5 that God resisteth the proud but gives grace to the humble.

**Andy:** But, but . . .

**You:** God doesn't want us to be so proud of ourselves that we stick our noses in the air and think we are better than everyone else and better than God.

**Andy:** No. I guess He doesn't.

**You:** When we are proud we think we don't think we need God to help us. We think we can do things all by ourselves.

**Andy:** But we do need God, don't we?

**You:** We sure do. Do you know that everything you mentioned, your good looks, your intelligence, and your health, all come from God. You didn't have a single thing to do with any of that. God made you the way you are.

**Andy:** That's true.

**You:** Andy, God loves us all. And He made us all to be very special. But instead of being proud of ourselves, we should be humbled by all God has done for us. We should meekly be willing to love and serve God!

**Andy:** You're right! Instead of wanting others to look at me because I'm so special, I should want people to see Jesus in me because He's so special!

**You:** Exactly! Now you've got it right! Well, Andy. It's time for you to go now. Say good bye to everyone.

**Andy:** Good bye, everyone!

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever.*  
Psalm 22:26

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

I Samuel 13:1-14

### LESSON

#### SAUL THE MAN, THE KING

Saul was forty years old when he became the king of Israel. He was a married man with children. He had three sons and two daughters. His oldest son was named Jonathan.

A king's job includes many things. A king must govern his people. That means he makes laws for the people to live by. He also must enforce those laws. He must make sure the people obey the laws of the land. Saul already had a set of rules to live by. Those rules were the com-

mandments and laws that God had given to Moses long ago. It was Saul's job to make sure the people lived according to God's laws.

A king's job is also to protect his people and his land. Saul formed an army of men to protect Israel.

Saul was the first king of Israel. With God's blessings and Samuel's guidance, Saul could have created a wonderful government for his people. He could have reigned as one of the greatest kings of Israel. Yet, you will see as we learn about Saul that he failed miserably. Instead of being the godly, meek king that looked to God for guidance and wisdom, Saul was filled with pride and his pride destroyed him.

### **THE BRAGGER**

In the second year that Saul was king, he decided to go to battle with the Philistines. The Philistines had troubled the people of Israel for many years. Everyone wanted the Philistines to be defeated so they could once again be at peace. So Saul decided the time had come to fight the Philistines. Apparently Saul did not ask Samuel to ask God what he should do. Saul should have meekly approached God and asked what he should do. Instead Saul decided that since he was the king, he would make his own decisions. That was Saul's pride showing.

Saul took two thousand men with him and he sent one thousand men to follow his son Jonathan. The rest of the men of Israel were sent home to care for their homes and crops.

The army of Israel went to fight the Philistines. They went against a garrison of the enemy and they won! Saul was so excited and so proud of himself that he immediately spread the news to the rest of Israel of his victory. He was feeling pretty brave right now. He was bragging about his victory. Unfortunately, he began to brag too soon.

*I Samuel 13:2-4 says, Saul chose him three thousand men of Israel; whereof two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in mount Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin: and the rest of the people he sent every man to his tent.*

*And Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines that was in Geba, and the Philistines heard of it. And Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, Let the Hebrews hear.*

*And all Israel heard say that Saul had smitten a garrison of the Philistines, and that Israel also was had in abomination with the Philistines. And the people were called together after Saul to Gilgal.*

### **BIG TROUBLE**

Saul was so confident after his first battle victory that he called more men to join his army. Many men of Israel came. But now the Philistines were angry. They were not at all happy with Israel for standing up to them and defeating a part of their army. So the Philistines came out in full battle array. They brought more men and 30,000 chariots and 6,000 horsemen. And there were more foot soldiers than could be counted.

I Samuel 13:5 says, *And the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and people as the sand which is on the sea shore in multitude: and they came up, and pitched in Michmash, eastward from Bethaven.*

When the men of Israel looked out at the vast army of Philistines, they were frightened! They weren't so sure they wanted to join Saul's army. Instead, they began to hide themselves. They didn't want the enemy to attack them and they didn't want Saul to find them. Many of Saul's own men deserted him. Many of the men he called refused to come.

I Samuel 13:6-7 says, *When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait, (for the people were distressed,) then the people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits.*

*And some of the Hebrews went over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. As for Saul, he was yet in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling.*

Things were looking bad for Saul. His own army did not want to follow him. For seven days Saul waited for Samuel to come and bless the army. Since the enemy looked so enormous and strong, Saul must have decided that he had better get God to help him after all. Before Saul hadn't bothered to ask for God's help. He was confident in his own power. What a terrible mistake.

When the people of Israel saw that Samuel was not with Saul, they realized that God wasn't with him either. They did not want to follow Saul's leadership if God was not with Saul. That was wise.

Saul was not a patient man. He was not a humble or meek man either. When the people refused to follow him into battle because Samuel had not come to bless them, Saul was angry. He decided to do things his own way. He decided he didn't need to wait for Samuel. Instead, Saul decided to offer a sacrifice to God on his own.

Now Saul was not a priest of God. Remember, Saul was of the tribe of Benjamin. Only the priests of the tribe of Levi could offer sacrifices to God. What Saul was doing was very wrong. And Saul knew it was wrong. He knew it was a sin against God, but he did it anyway.

I Samuel 13: 8-9 says, *And he tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel had appointed: but Samuel came not to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him.*

*And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings. And he offered the burnt offering.*

### **WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?**

No sooner had Saul completed the offering, then Samuel came. Samuel glared at Saul and demanded, "What have you done?"

Instead of taking responsibility, Saul blamed everyone else for his sin. Saul blamed Samuel for being late. He blamed the people for being frightened. He refused to see that he had done anything wrong. He claimed he hadn't wanted to do wrong, but he forced himself to do it for the people.

*I Samuel 13:10-12 And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him.*

*And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash;*

*Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the LORD: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering.*

How foolish Saul was. He did the wrong thing and said he did it so God would be with him when he went to face the enemy. Didn't Saul know good things never come from doing wrong? I guess he didn't.

When we do things that are wrong, we often try to pass the blame onto someone else. We say they made us do wrong or we did wrong because someone else wanted us to. How it must hurt God when we do wrong and then blame others.

God was not happy with Saul for the terrible thing he had done. God gave Samuel a message to give to Saul. It wasn't a pleasant message. Samuel told Saul, "God had intended to establish your kingdom over Israel forever. You and your sons, and your son's sons would have reigned forever. But because you have disobeyed God, you and your family will be cut off. Because you are not a man whose heart seeks after God, you have been rejected by God to be king!"

*I Samuel 13:13-14 says, And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever.*

*But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.*

What a crushing blow that must have been to Saul! He had hoped that his oldest son, Jonathan, would go on to reign as king after him. And then his grandsons would also be kings. But that was not to happen. What a humiliating thing for a proud man like Saul.

It was a sin for Saul to rush ahead of God and go to battle. It was a sin for Saul to rush ahead of God and offer a sacrifice when he shouldn't have done it. It was a sin to blame others for his own mistakes. But Saul's greatest sin against God was that he did not have a meek heart that was turned toward God.

Whenever Saul had a decision to make, instead of asking God what to do, he made his own decisions. Instead of wanting to please God, Saul wanted to please himself. Saul's heart was not meek before God. Saul was not a man after God's own heart. Saul had a proud heart, not a meek heart.

Because Saul rejected God, God rejected Saul.

### **A MEEK HEART**

What about you? How is your heart? Do you have a proud heart like Saul, or do you have a meek heart that is pleasing to God?

God wants you to be meek. It saddened God that Saul's pride caused him to sin. God wanted Saul to be a meek king who would love Him and serve Him. God wants you to put away pride and put on meekness so that God can work His will in your life.

The Bible says that we are all selfish, proud sinners, just like Saul was. But the Bible says that because God loved us so much, He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to come to earth to take the punishment for our sin. Jesus died on the cross in your place. He took your punishment. Now, all you have to do is ask Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your heart. Would you like to do that today?

After you have accepted God's gift of salvation, then you are His child. But God will not force you to be meek. Instead, God wants you to make the decision to put away pride and have a meek spirit.

It is natural to love ourselves and be proud of ourselves. It is natural to want to do things our own way. How it pleases God when we decide not to love ourselves the most, but instead to put God first in our hearts. It pleases God when we set our heart to love God and to do His will!

### INVITATION

### CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to display a meek spirit in all you say and do. Determine not to make the same prideful mistakes that Saul made.

It's not natural to want to put God first. It is natural and easy to be filled with pride. We need help to be meek. We need to ask God to help us to set our hearts and minds on Him.

Psalm 86:11-12 says, *Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.*

*I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore.*

God is happy to teach us His way. He will help us to walk in truth and unite our heart with His. We just need to stay close to Him and be willing to humble ourselves.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to always display a meek and humble spirit in your life.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Recite today's memory verse.
2. How old was Saul when he became king?
3. How many sons did Saul have?
4. How many daughters did Saul have?
5. Who was Saul's oldest son?
6. How many men went to fight with Saul and Jonathan?
7. How many Philistine chariots came against Israel?
8. What did Saul do when Samuel had not come after seven days?
9. How did the people of Israel feel about following Saul?
10. Why did Samuel say God had rejected Saul to be king?

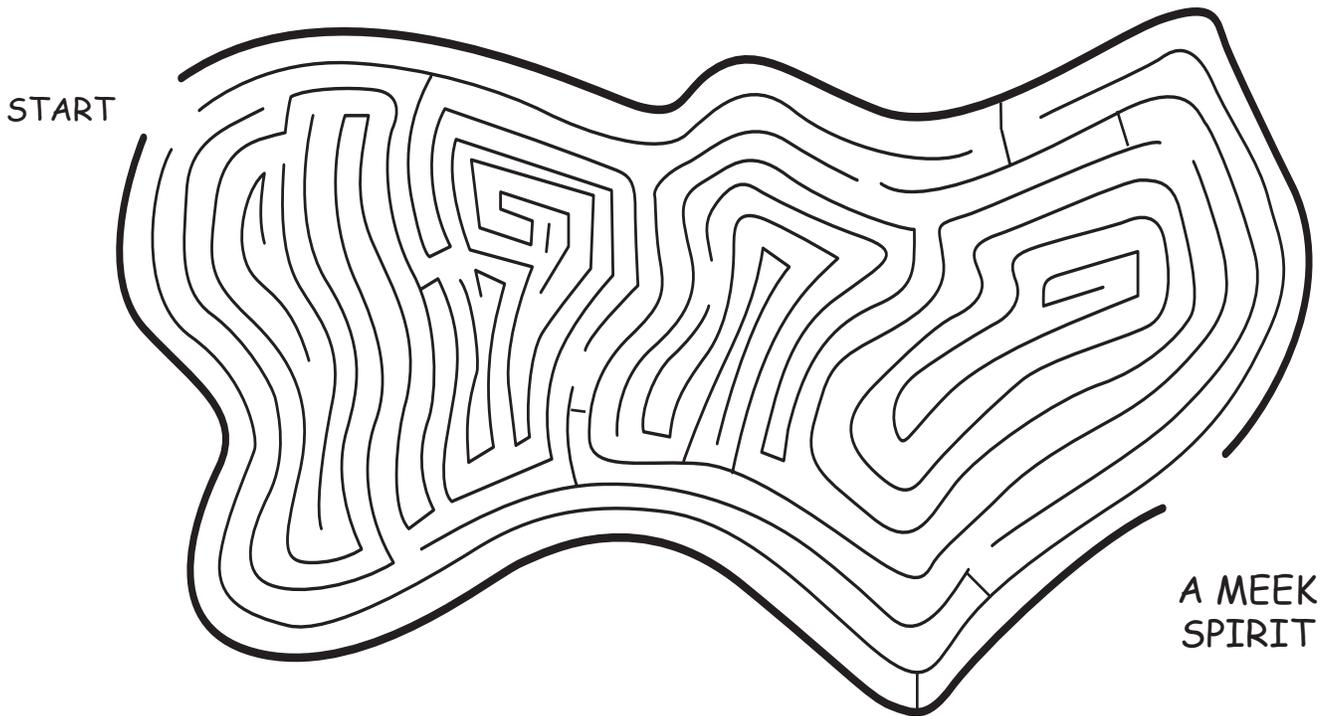
# Meekness: Meek, Not Proud

The meek shall eat and be satisfied:  
they shall praise the LORD that seek him:  
your heart shall live for ever.

Psalm 22:26



I will display  
a spirit of meekness.



SAUL KEPT TURNING THE WRONG WAY. CAN YOU MAKE THE  
RIGHT TURNS TO LEARN A MEEK SPIRIT?



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LESSON 41

**MEEKNESS:  
GODLY MEEKNESS**

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

I Samuel 13, 14

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

I will display  
a spirit of meekness.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek  
with salvation.*

Psalm 149:4



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

It is easy to be proud. Anything you do on your own only displays pride. When you do things on your own, it says that you don't think you need God to help you.

It is much more difficult to be meek and humble. But if you rely on God to help you to be meek, He will help you. God should be your source of meekness.

Today's Life Lesson is: I will display a spirit of meekness.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY WEAK ANKLES AND A COLD NOSE

Obtain Flash Card

Winter time in southern Michigan could get very cold. By November the weather was truly getting cold. Wendy always hoped for a snowfall by her birthday on November 13th. Sometimes she got her wish. And when the first snow fell, it rarely warmed up again. Most winters, when it started to snow, the ground would take on a cover of white that would not leave until the following Spring. From then on each new snow would simply fall on top of the last one causing the white stuff to get deeper and deeper.

When Wendy was little her mother would bundle her up to go out to play. First would come all the normal clothing. Then she would begin to layer on thick sweaters and a scarf around Wendy's neck. Two pairs of socks would go on her feet. Then the outer layer finished the job with a heavy coat, a hat and scarf, mittens, and boots. By the time her mother was finished, Wendy felt like she could barely move.

Winter days were always so beautiful when the sun was shining. The snow would glisten as if it were made of millions of tiny diamonds. Wendy loved to lay flat on her back and stretch out her arms and then begin to swish her arms and legs in a semi-circle to make snow angels. What she didn't like was when the snow went down the back of her neck and down her boots. It could get very cold when that happened.

Across the road, right behind her best friend's house, there was a Mill pond. The pond looked like a small lake to Wendy. It wasn't very deep and there were houses all around three sides of it. On the fourth side was the little town of Brighton. A whole row of businesses backed onto the pond. In the summer time Wendy wasn't allowed to go near the pond, but it was dif-

ferent in the winter. Since the pond was so shallow, it would freeze over completely when the temperatures dipped very low and it would stay frozen all winter. It was safe for children to play on the pond.

Her best friend's house had a big hill that went down to the pond. All the kids would gather with their toboggans and slide down the hill and out onto the pond. It was such fun to go sliding way out onto the frozen icy surface of the pond.

One thing Wendy had always thought looked like lots of fun, but she had never done was to go ice skating. Every day the pond would be filled with skaters. They would glide along so gracefully. They looked beautiful. Wendy wished she could go skating. (Show Flash Card)

Then one day an amazing thing happened. Wendy's dad brought two pairs of skates home with him. He was a shoe repair man and he would sell used skates in his repair shop. On this night, her dad had borrowed two pairs. He had one pair that fit him and one pair that fit Wendy perfectly.

Boy was she excited! She could hardly wait to bundle up and head for the pond. She could just picture herself gliding along on the ice as gracefully as a swan. She was sure she would look beautiful like all the others she had watched as they skated. How splendid she would seem to everyone watching.

When Wendy and her dad got to the edge of the pond, her dad took off her boots and put the skates on her feet. He laced them up snugly. When he had his skates on his feet, they stepped out onto the ice. Wendy tried to take a step so she could begin to glide gracefully, but instead, her feet shot out in two totally different directions and down she went. She fell hard on the ice.

Well! That hadn't gone so well. It really bruised Wendy quite a bit, but it didn't bruise her body as much as it bruised her pride!

Wendy's dad helped her get up and she was certain that this time things would go more smoothly. But it didn't. Every time she tried to move her feet, they stubbornly went in a different direction. Down she would go with a smack. Wendy was amazed and a bit humbled. This slick ice was not easy to move on. How had everyone else made it look so easy? They could glide gracefully along on the ice, but she couldn't even stand up on it.

With a smile her dad reached out a helping hand and she got to her feet again. But this time her dad didn't let go. Instead he firmly gripped her by the elbow and he began to skate towards the center of the pond. Wendy didn't fall again, but her little ankles could barely hold her up. Even with her dad holding on, if he loosened his grip a bit to see if she could stand upright, her ankles twisted sideways and she would find herself almost falling. Then her dad would tighten his grip and she could stand on the blades. Soon she just let her dad do the work. He held tightly to her arm and the two of them went skating gracefully around the pond. Anyone watching would have thought how graceful they looked. Wendy knew that on her own, she

wouldn't be able to even stand, but with her strong father holding on and keeping her upright, she was able to skate.

Did you know that on your own, you can't do much either? We are not as smart or as wonderful as we like to think we are. We have no power to control what others say and do. We often can't do the things we want to do ourselves. In fact, we can't even take a breath on our own. Everything you are and everything you do, you can thank God for. God is the one who holds you upright in life.

You need to be meek and humble enough to allow your loving heavenly Father to come along side of you to hold you up and keep you from falling. He is the one who helps you every single day to do what you should do. He is the one who gives you each victory in life. On your own, you would be pretty helpless. You do not have the ability to do what is right all by yourself. You must depend on God to help you.

So the next time you find that life is too slippery for you to handle and you fear you cannot do the right thing, turn to God with a meek spirit and ask for His help.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation.*  
Psalm 149:4

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

I Samuel 13:15-23, 14:1-23

### LESSON

#### NO WEAPONS, NO ARMY

For years the Philistines had dominated Israel. They caused lots of trouble for them. From the time of Samson to Saul's day, the Philistines were strong and constant enemies of Israel.

One thing that the Philistines made sure of was that there was no metal worker in the land of Israel. That meant there was no one to make swords and shields and spears. The Philistines did not want the men of Israel to have those weapons and Saul had not done anything at the beginning of his reign to rebuild the strength of Israel. So when the men of Israel went to fight, they took farm implements instead. They took things such as an ax, a club, or a pitchfork. Basically, they were unarmed and helpless. Only Saul and his son Jonathan had a sword and spear.

After Samuel left Saul with the terrible message that God had rejected him as the king of Israel, Saul looked around. Only 600 men remained to help him fight. On the other hand, the Philistines swarmed in and began to take over land that belonged to Israel. Now Israel was in worse shape than ever before. Saul and his men were outnumbered and underarmed. They didn't stand a chance against the Philistines.

I Samuel 13: 19-22 says, *Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears:*

*But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock.*

*Yet they had a file for the mattocks, and for the coulters, and for the forks, and for the axes, and to sharpen the goads.*

*So it came to pass in the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan: but with Saul and with Jonathan his son was there found.*

In the face of such a great and mighty enemy, the men of Israel cowered in caves and hid anywhere they could find. They were not about to join Saul. They had totally lost confidence in him. And they were right to feel that way. Saul had not placed his confidence in God. Saul had insisted on doing things his own way. As a result, Israel could only lose. Had Saul meekly turned to God for help in the first place and had he done things in God's way, then Israel would have been assured victory. But that was not the case now.

## A WISE SON

Saul had three sons. His oldest son was named Jonathan. Jonathan was already a grown man by now. He had a family and he stood by his father's side when they went to battle. But Jonathan was nothing like his father. Saul was a proud man who ignored God's ways and did things his own way. Jonathan was the opposite. He must have seen the mistakes and sins of his father and decided he would be different. Jonathan was a man who meekly followed God. And God blessed Jonathan as a result.

One day as Saul was feverishly trying to decide what to do about the fact that the Philistines were taking over his country, Jonathan took action. He wisely did not tell his father but instead went to do what he felt God wanted him to do without his father's knowledge. Jonathan and his sword bearer slipped unnoticed out of the camp. They came to a place where there were two steep cliffs on either side. On the opposite side the enemy camped in great numbers.

*I Samuel 14:1 says, Now it came to pass upon a day, that Jonathan the son of Saul said unto the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over to the Philistines' garrison, that is on the other side. But he told not his father.*

Jonathan came up with a plan as he watched the enemy camp. He told his sword bearer, "Let's stand where the enemy can see us. If they tell us to stop and stay where we are, then we will know we should return to camp and not do anything. But if they tell us to come get them, then it will be a sign that God will give us victory against them."

Jonathan knew that if they gained victory over the enemy, it would be because God gave them the victory, not because they were so mighty. After all, there were only two men against a mighty army!

*I Samuel 14: 6-10 say, And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the LORD will work for us: for there is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few.*

*And his armourbearer said unto him, Do all that is in thine heart: turn thee; behold, I am with thee according to thy heart.*

*Then said Jonathan, Behold, we will pass over unto these men, and we will discover ourselves unto them.*

*If they say thus unto us, Tarry until we come to you; then we will stand still in our place, and will not go up unto them.*

*But if they say thus, Come up unto us; then we will go up: for the LORD hath delivered them into our hand: and this shall be a sign unto us.*

Picture this in your mind. Jonathan and his sword bearer quietly sneaked up the cliff and then stood up where the Philistines could see them in plain daylight. When the enemy saw them,

they began to make fun of them. They called for them to come up to fight them. That was the sign! Jonathan knew that it was God's way of telling him they would be given the victory that day.

Jonathan and his man ran up and began to fight the enemy fearlessly. They knew God was with them. And sure enough, God helped them. They fought and the enemy fell before them. Then God sent another amazing miracle that helped them even more. First the enemy was startled to be so boldly attacked by Jonathan, then, as they saw men falling before him, something else scared them even more. God caused the earth to quake.

I Samuel 14: 11-15 says, *And both of them discovered themselves unto the garrison of the Philistines: and the Philistines said, Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of the holes where they had hid themselves.*

*And the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armourbearer, and said, Come up to us, and we will shew you a thing. And Jonathan said unto his armourbearer, Come up after me: for the LORD hath delivered them into the hand of Israel.*

*And Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and his armourbearer after him: and they fell before Jonathan; and his armourbearer slew after him.*

*And that first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armourbearer made, was about twenty men, within as it were an half acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plow.*

*And there was trembling in the host, in the field, and among all the people: the garrison, and the spoilers, they also trembled, and the earth quaked: so it was a very great trembling.*

When the earth began to shake, this did two things. It scared the enemy into being so confused that they began to fight amongst themselves, and it also caused the men who were back in the camp of Israel to notice that something strange was happening. When Saul and his men in camp saw the enemy falling back, they did a quick check to see who was missing. When they found that it was Jonathan and his armourbearer, they knew it must be them fighting the enemy and they realized God was there helping them.

I Samuel 14:16-17 says, *And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked; and, behold, the multitude melted away, and they went on beating down one another.*

*Then said Saul unto the people that were with him, Number now, and see who is gone from us. And when they had numbered, behold, Jonathan and his armourbearer were not there.*

Saul and the army of Israel could see that even though there were only two men, Jonathan and his sword bearer, yet they were boldly fighting and winning against the enemy. This gave the men of Israel courage and hope. Now they were more than happy to go join Jonathan and help fight against the enemy. They knew God was fighting for them. So the men who had been hiding in fear came out to join Jonathan in battle.

I Samuel 14:20-23a says, *And Saul and all the people that were with him assembled themselves, and they came to the battle: and, behold, every man's sword was against his fellow, and there was a very great discomfiture.*

*Moreover the Hebrews that were with the Philistines before that time, which went up with them into the camp from the country round about, even they also turned to be with the Israelites that were with Saul and Jonathan.*

*Likewise all the men of Israel which had hid themselves in mount Ephraim, when they heard that the Philistines fled, even they also followed hard after them in the battle.*

*So the LORD saved Israel that day.*

God gave Israel the victory that day. It started with one man who was willing to meekly obey God. But Jonathan did not just rush off to fight the enemy with a heart full of pride, instead he decided to do what he thought was right, but he also said, "Let's see what God wants me to do. If God wants me to fight the enemy, then He will show me. If he doesn't want us to fight, then we will turn back."

Jonathan had the meekness to do what God wanted him to do, so God gave him victory.

## **HOW TO HAVE VICTORY**

God has a plan for your life too. And God will give you victory. But you need to be meek like Jonathan. Don't just rush ahead and do what you think is best. That was the way Saul did things. Instead, ask God to show you what is best for your life. Ask God to show you His will. Then, when God shows you, you can know you will have victory.

So, how do you have victory in your life?

1. Ask God to show you His will for you.

God speaks to us today in different ways than He spoke in Old Testament days. Today God speaks through His Word. If you read the Bible, you can know what God wants. God also speaks through His servants. Your pastor has wise words for you to follow. And God speaks through His Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit lives in the hearts of Christians. He warns against sin. He guides your thoughts and actions, if you let Him.

2. Obey God's will.

When God shows you what to do, do it. Don't make excuses not to obey God. Don't do things your own way. Instead, carefully follow what God shows you is right for your life. As a young person, one big job that God has given to you is to learn to be obedient. God wants you to obey your parents now so that you will know how to obey God when He speaks to you. If you resist doing what you are told to do now, when God speaks to you, you will resist then. But if you learn to obey in the little things of life, then when God shows you His will for your life, you will know how to follow.

Let me ask you a question. Have you ever accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior? You cannot meekly follow God if you are not His child.

The Bible says that you were born in sin. But you can have victory over sin by believing in Jesus Christ. Have you done that? Would you like to? We can show you how.

Maybe you have asked Jesus to come into your life and take away your sin. The next step is to give your life completely to God. Many Christians believe in God, but they are not willing to give their whole life to God. Saul was like that. He did what God wanted him to do if it pleased him. But he was not consistently obedient to God. Instead, Saul's pride caused him to do things his own way. In order for you to be pleasing to God, you must let God completely control your life. You must be willing to meekly do things God's way, not your way.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to have a meek spirit. How can you have a meek spirit? Here are a few simple ways.

1. Ask God to show you His will.

Remember, victory in the Christian life means that you are doing what God wants you to do not what you want to do. God will show you what He wants you to do if you search for His will. The Bible is the best place to begin your search.

2. Do God's will when He shows you.

If you do what God asks you to do, then He will give you the victory. Disobedience leads to defeat. Obedience always leads to victory.

This week, take the time to ask God to help you to be meek. God blesses the meek but he puts down the proud.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to have a meek spirit.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. What didn't the army of Israel have?
2. Who were the only ones to have swords and spears?
3. How many men stayed to fight with Saul?
4. Recite today's memory verse.
5. What were the men who would not fight with Saul doing?
6. How was Jonathan different from his father?
7. What sign did Jonathan say would let him know that they should fight the Philistines?
8. What did Saul do when he saw there was something going on in the enemy camp?
9. What did God do to help Jonathan and his armor bearer?
10. Name a way that you can know God's will for your life.

# Meekness: Godly Meekness

For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people:  
he will beautify the meek with salvation. Psalm 149:4



I will display  
a spirit of meekness.

Find the words below. Look forward, backwards, up, down and diagonally.

Y	Y	W	E	A	P	O	N	L	E	S	S	A	I	O
E	F	E	A	R	F	U	L	S	R	E	I	P	S	C
B	D	U	O	R	P	C	V	B	E	R	T	N	S	Q
O	V	E	N	U	R	B	F	I	G	H	T	M	E	G
Y	S	W	O	R	D	B	E	A	R	E	R	G	N	I
L	S	A	U	L	G	B	R	O	T	H	E	E	K	R
K	S	E	N	E	M	Y	M	R	A	E	F	K	E	Q
E	T	D	S	I	G	N	I	R	L	S	D	A	E	B
E	T	F	G	F	W	H	B	K	X	D	P	U	M	S
M	S	E	N	I	T	S	I	L	I	H	P	Q	S	P
A	Z	W	H	J	R	R	L	A	A	U	Y	H	P	Q
K	N	A	H	T	A	N	O	J	V	F	T	T	Y	X
N	N	E	Z	V	I	C	T	O	R	Y	E	R	E	U
L	D	J	E	D	I	H	V	C	R	D	N	A	V	E
Z	W	G	O	D	S	W	I	L	L	C	S	E	A	A

ARMY  
EARTHQUAKE  
ENEMY  
FEARFUL  
FIGHT

GOD'S WILL  
HIDE  
JONATHAN  
MEEKLY OBEY  
MEEKNESS

PHILISTINES  
PROUD  
RUN  
SAUL  
SIGN

SPY  
SWORD BEARER  
VICTORY  
WEAPONLESS  
WIN

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LESSON 42

**MEEKNESS:  
YOUR SOURCE OF MEEKNESS**

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

II Samuel 16:1-13

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

I will display  
a spirit of meekness.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek  
with salvation.*

Psalm 149:4



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

Some people are very proud of how meek and humble they are. But if they are proud of their meekness, then they really aren't meek, are they? No.

So how can you be meek? The only way to be truly meek and humble is to not depend on yourself but instead depend on God. God wants to help you in all that you do each day. God wants to guide you. If you allow God to have control of your life, then He will help you to be meek. God will be your source of meekness.

Today's Life Lesson is: I will display a spirit of meekness.

### SONG TIME

### SUPPORTING STORY

#### HERE AND BEYOND

#### SET UP

You can have three different people do this skit. You don't need any props. The interviewers can be women. Also, if need be, turn the richest "man" into the richest woman. Of course, you really only need one person do all three parts.

Whether you do the skit alone or with three people, you will need to act out the parts. Try to be each character by giving them different voices and character traits.

Style the interviewers after the ones you see on interview type shows. You can pretend to hold a microphone. Don't be afraid to be a bit hooky. You (or each person in the skit) can hold a clipboard with the script so you can glance at it. Have the rich man plea for his life with real feeling. He should be intent on stating his case.

#### STORY

**Interviewer #1:** Hello, and welcome to "Here and Beyond." This is the show where we travel the universe, and beyond, to bring you the scoop on the latest from the rich, the famous, and the infamous.

Today we have the rare privilege of interviewing the richest man in the entire world. To give you an idea of just how rich this man is, let me describe to you the palatial estate in which I am now standing.

This house is so big that it is unbelievable. In fact, it's not a house, it's not even a mansion. What the richest man has done is to buy New York City. He built a wall around it and put a roof over the entire city.

He cleaned out all the filth and built homes for all the former residents in upstate New York so that he can have the entire city to himself. The streets and buildings have all been renovated. The estate is so large that he has a chauffeur driven limousine to drive him from room to room.

He turned all the restaurants into his kitchens and dining rooms. He turned all the hotels into his bedrooms and living rooms. He turned all the clothing stores into his closets.

The living room I am standing in has exquisite marble floors. The chandelier is made of diamonds. The sweeping staircase is three stories high and we are waiting now for the owner to descend.

Yes, there he is now. The richest man in the world just appeared at the head of the stairs. He is wearing a suit of fine linen. He has rings on every finger. His hair is styled by the best hairstylist in the world. What a privilege this interview will be!

Wait a minute. The richest man in the world just got a pained look on his face. He has slumped to the floor. His doctors are around him now. We should get word on his condition soon.

What? (Pause, hold ear as if getting information through an earpiece.) Ladies and gentlemen, I have just gotten word that the richest man in the world had a heart attack and died. We won't be able to do the interview from here, however, we do have a reporter from "Here and Beyond" in eternity. Come in, please.

**Interviewer #2:** Yes, this is your "Here and Beyond" reporter here in eternity. We truly will go everywhere to get our story!

The richest man in the world just entered eternity a few minutes ago. At first he was disoriented and tried to boss others around, but Michael the Arch Angel quickly put him in his place. He was always a prideful man on earth, but things are different here!

We won't be able to talk to him, but in a moment he will plead his case before God. Let's listen now.

**Richest man:** God, you know I am a good person. I was probably the best person on earth. I was the richest man on earth, but I wasn't greedy. I used my money to help others. I built hospitals for the sick. I built homes for the homeless. I built libraries and schools to educate people. I did so many good things! I'm very proud of that!

**Interviewer #2:** They are going to bring out his good works now to see if they are enough to buy his way into heaven. Here they come now and there is a whole pile of good works here.

**Richest man:** Wait a minute! Those stink. There must be some mistake. Those can't be my good works! That is a pile of dirty, filthy, rotten rags!

**Interviewer #2:** No, there is no mistake. Those are his good works. The Bible says, *All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.*

**Richest man:** But I was a good person!

**Interviewer #2:** The Bible says *There is none good, no not one.*

**Richest man:** But isn't there any way I can go to Heaven? Surely I belong in Heaven!

**Interviewer #2:** There is one more thing that could allow the richest man into Heaven. The Bible says that if he has ever asked Jesus Christ to forgive his sins that his name will be written in the "Lamb's Book of Life."

**Richest man:** I never asked Jesus into my heart! I was able to get anything I needed with all my money. I didn't need God!

**Interviewer #2:** The recording angel is turning page after page looking for his name. Now he's slowly closing the book and shaking his head no. His name isn't there. He will not spend eternity in Heaven. He'll have to spend eternity in Hell. The richest man on earth is now the poorest man in eternity! He is hanging his head in sorrow and shame. He's not a proud man anymore!

The Bible says, *What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?* And that's the way it's going be!

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation.*

Psalm 149:4

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

I Samuel 16:1-13

### LESSON

#### **GOD'S CHOICE**

Saul, the first king, was selected to be a ruler who would appeal to the people of Israel. He was tall and handsome. He looked like a king. He was the people's choice. Yet he turned out to be a very bad choice. Instead of leading the Israelites to obey God, Saul led the people farther away from God. Saul was a bad example for the people because he was so full of pride that he did not obey God. The people's choice had been a bad one.

Now it was God's turn to select a king and God would pick a king who might not have been the people's first choice, but he was a man after God's own heart. His name was David and he would come to be known as the greatest king of Israel. How did God know how to pick just the right man? God knew because he was able to look in this man's heart. God could see that David truly loved Him and wanted to obey Him. God could see that David had a meek spirit.

Saul had sinned against God, so God spoke to Samuel. Apparently Samuel went home after his last meeting with Saul and he was feeling so sad because Saul had turned out to be such a bad king. But God did not want Samuel to sit around and mope about Saul. God was ready to make His next move. God was ready to select a new king for Israel.

I Samuel 16:1 says, *And the LORD said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.*

However, Samuel was afraid to go anoint a new king. Saul was still on the throne of Israel and Saul had not repented and turned back to God after he found out he would not be king much longer. No. Instead Saul had hardened his heart and became a wicked king. The Spirit of the Lord no longer came on Saul and now Saul had totally turned to his own way. He no longer even tried to serve and obey God.

Samuel was afraid that if Saul heard he was going to anoint a new king to take his place, then Saul would do him great harm. So God told Samuel to go to the town of Bethlehem with a heifer. Saul would think he was just going there to offer a sacrifice and he wouldn't bother him.

I Samuel 16: 2-3 *And Samuel said, How can I go? if Saul hear it, he will kill me. And the LORD said, Take an heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice to the LORD.*

*And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will shew thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me him whom I name unto thee.*

It wasn't that God was afraid something would happen to Samuel. God certainly could have protected Samuel whatever Saul tried to do. But God was not ready for anyone else to know who He would appoint to be the next king. The time was not right.

### **A VISIT TO BETHLEHEM**

So Samuel went to the town of Bethlehem where the new king would be found. As Samuel entered the city, he caused quite a stir. Everyone knew that Samuel was a prophet who spoke for God. The people began to whisper amongst themselves, "Why would Samuel be coming to our humble town," they wondered. "Is God angry with something we have done?"

Everyone rushed out to meet Samuel. They must have all looked very worried. "Do you come in peace?" they asked anxiously.

The people were afraid because often the news the prophet carried from God was not good news. Sometimes God sent His prophet to tell the people they had sinned. So everyone was nervous. But Samuel assured everyone that he came in peace. He told the people he came to worship with them by offering a sacrifice.

I Samuel 16:4-5a says, *And Samuel did that which the LORD spake, and came to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, Comest thou peaceably?*

*And he said, Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto the LORD: sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice.*

### **PROCESS OF ELIMINATION**

Samuel told a man named Jesse that he especially was invited to the sacrifice because he had come on a very special mission for God. Most likely Samuel went to the home of Jesse and spoke to him privately before the sacrifice began. Samuel asked to see Jesse's sons. God had told Samuel the next king would be among them.

So Jesse brought in his oldest son. As soon as Samuel saw Jesse's oldest son, it seemed reasonable to him that this was the man to be the next king. He was tall and handsome. And he was the oldest son. He held the position of honor in his family. But God thought differently. Somehow God let Samuel know this was not the man He had selected to be the next king.

Samuel was surprised because Jesse's oldest son was a handsome man. Surely he would make a good king! God told Samuel that he shouldn't look on the outward appearance. He told Samuel He was interested in what was in the heart. God was looking for a man would have a heart full of meekness instead of a heart full of selfish pride.

I Samuel 16:5b-7 says, *And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.*

*And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the LORD'S anointed is before him.*

*But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.*

So Jesse called his second son into the room. Again God said, “No.”

This process went on as Samuel looked at each of Jesse’s sons. One, two, three, four, and on to son number seven. Each time God said, “No. This is not the man.” Samuel would shake his head and the next son would be brought in. But now, seven sons had been rejected. None of these men were chosen of God to be king.

How strange. Jesse must have felt frustrated and confused as the seventh son was rejected. He may have thought, “Well, what now?” So Samuel asked Jesse if these seven were all of his sons. Jesse was bewildered. He did have one more son, but David was his youngest. He wasn’t even close at hand. Young David was out in the field caring for the sheep. Surely David couldn’t be the one!

Samuel insisted that the young man, David, be called to the house. They all waited as David was summoned to come. Everyone, including Samuel was thinking, “Surely God has not chosen the youngest shepherd boy to be the next king.”

I Samuel 16:8-11 says, *Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this.*

*Then Jesse made Shammah to pass by. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this.*

*Again, Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The LORD hath not chosen these.*

*And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.*

## **A NEW KING**

Finally David arrived from the fields from caring for his father’s sheep. He wasn’t dressed up fancy to greet the prophet of God. Instead he wore the rough clothing of a man who lived in the fields and cared for animals. David’s complexion was ruddy. That meant he had a healthy glow that people get from being outside in the wind and sunshine. He wasn’t a terribly impressive young man. He wasn’t a full grown man yet. Most likely David was in his teens or early twenties. David had a fresh, sweet look. He wasn’t extremely handsome, but he was honest and wholesome looking.

This was not what Samuel expected a king to look like. But God said, “Yes. That is the man who I chose to be the king of Israel.”

So Samuel took a container of oil and he poured it over David's head as a symbol that he was being anointed to be the king. Immediately the Spirit of God came on David and filled him. From that day on the Spirit of the Lord was with David. The Spirit controlled David's life and helped him to rule as a good king. The Spirit helped David to make wise decisions. The Spirit was David's source of meekness and humility.

I Samuel 16:12-13 says, *And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.*

*Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.*

### **THE GOOD SHEPHERD**

One interesting thing about David was that he was a shepherd. He spent many years caring for his father's sheep. David wasn't the only man of God who was a shepherd. Abraham was a shepherd. He was a wealthy man who owned many sheep and had many men work with him caring for the sheep. Moses was a shepherd. He spent many years caring for his father-in-law's sheep. Now we see that David is a shepherd.

God often prepared His servants to humbly serve Him by letting them train to be shepherds. By learning how to love and care for sheep, they were learning how to love and care for the people God would entrust to them. They would learn how to guide, how to nourish, and how to protect God's people.

A Shepherd's job was to watch and protect the sheep making sure that nothing harmed them. His job was to guide the sheep to places that were safe. His job was to take the sheep to places where they could be fed and where they could safely rest.

In the New Testament Jesus Christ calls Himself the good Shepherd. He says that we are His sheep. Jesus does all the things for us that a shepherd in Old Testament days did for his sheep. Jesus guides us in the right way to go. He leads us to His Word, the Bible, where our spirits and souls can be fed with spiritual food. He protects us from the sins of this world and from the harm that Satan wants to do to us. But like sheep, we can so easily wander away from our shepherd. Isn't it wonderful that even when we are like silly sheep and wander far from the Lord, He is always coming to bring us back to Himself? He is always ready to forgive and take us back. He loves us so much.

### **THE SPIRIT WITHIN**

The Bible tells us that from the time Samuel anointed David with oil to signify he was to be the next king of Israel, the Spirit of the Lord came on David. In Old Testament days, the Holy Spirit of God did not live inside of men. Instead God would send the Spirit when a special task needed to be accomplished. The Spirit would help the man do the job God wanted him to do.

In New Testament days, which means from the time Christ went to heaven after His death and resurrection, God has sent the Holy Spirit to live in everyone who believes on Jesus Christ as their Savior. If you are a Christian, then the Holy Spirit lives inside of you every single day. Every day the Holy Spirit wants to help you to make wise decisions. He wants to guide you and warn you to stay away from sin. He will be your source of meekness. How fortunate we are to have the Holy Spirit to help us each day!

Have you ever accepted Jesus as your Savior? Does the Holy Spirit live inside of you, helping you and guiding you each day? Today you can have your sins forgiven. Today the Holy Spirit can come live in your heart. In just a little bit I will give you a chance to do that.

Maybe you are a Christian. The Holy Spirit lives inside of you. Maybe today the Spirit is speaking to your heart. He is telling you that like a sheep who has wandered far from his shepherd, you have wandered far from God. He is telling you that you need to ask forgiveness of your sins and come back to the good Shepherd. You need to let Jesus guide and lead and protect you every single day. Would you like to do that? Right now you can pray and ask Jesus to forgive you for getting so far away from Him. Ask Him to help you to stay close by His side.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to have a meek heart that is pleasing to God. David wasn't the most handsome man in Israel. He wasn't even the most handsome of Jesse's sons, but David had a meek and humble heart. And that's what mattered to God.

God looks beyond what is on the outside and He looks into the heart. He can tell what you are like on the inside. He knows exactly what is going on inside your heart and mind.

What are you like on the inside? On the outside you might be fooling everyone else. You may speak respectfully to your parents, but maybe on the inside you resent having to obey them. You may sit sweetly in church but on the inside you wish you didn't have to be here.

Even though you are not perfect, do you have a heart that is pleasing to God? Does God look at your heart and see that you love Him very much? Does God see that even though you still sin, you really wish you didn't sin? In your heart do you want to do the things that are right and good in God's eyes?

You can have a heart like David had. You can be a boy or girl after God's own heart. When God looks at your heart, hopefully He can see a heart full of love for Him. Hopefully He can see a heart that wants to obey Him.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about today's challenge. How can you put it into action in your life?

(Give the children a few seconds to think.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you to accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to give you a meek and humble spirit that is pleasing to God.

## BIBLE QUIZ

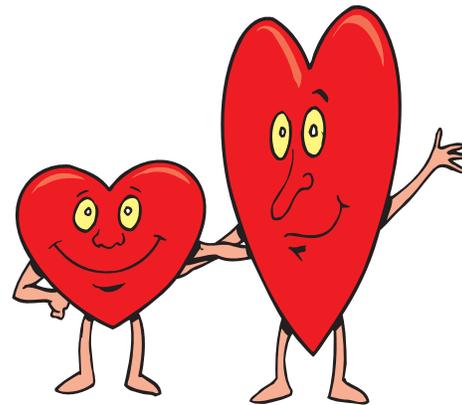
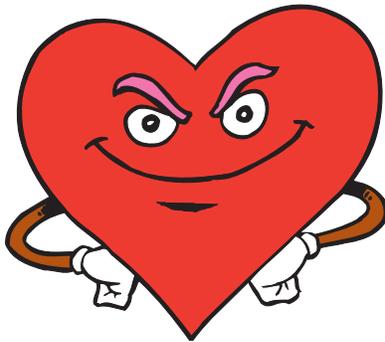
1. What did Saul look like on the outside?
2. Recite today's memory verse.
3. Why did God reject Saul from being king?
4. What was Samuel afraid of?
5. What town did God tell Samuel to go to?
6. How many sons of Jesse stood before Samuel when God said, "No, this is not the man?"
7. Where was David when Samuel was looking over his brothers?
8. What did Samuel do to signify that David was he next king of Israel?
9. What did David look like?
10. Tell me something a shepherd does for his sheep.

# Meekness: Your Source Of Meekness

For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people:  
he will beautify the meek with salvation. Psalm 149:4



I will display  
a spirit of meekness.



It is easy to fool others by pretending to be someone your are not, but you can't fool God. He can look inside and see your heart. He can see the real you. What are you really like - on the inside? What does God see when He looks at your heart?

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z A

<u>        </u>									
G	F	N	C	R	D	D	R	L	X
<u>        </u>									
G	D	A	Z	Q	S	.			
G	D	Z	Q	S					

Look at the letter under the line, then write the letter that comes after it, in the alphabet, on the line above it. Find out the secret message.

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LESSON 43

TEMPERANCE:  
CONTROLLING MY ACTIONS

LESSON ORDER

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



BIBLE TEXT

I Samuel 15:1-26

CHARACTER TRAIT

I will let  
God control my life.

MEMORY VERSE

*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

Proverbs 3:5-6



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

God wants complete and total control of your life. Why? Because God has a perfect plan for your life and if He doesn't have control, then you will not let God do what is best in your life.

One of the best ways to give God control of your life is to give Him control of your actions. Give Him control of all the things you do. Do you know what a simple word for letting God control your life is? It is the word obedience. When you obey God, you are allowing Him to control your actions.

Temperance is the last fruit of the Spirit. Temperance means to have self-control and be God-controlled. Let's learn about Temperance. Today's Life Lesson is: I will let God control my life.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### OBEDY. OKAY?

Obtain Flash Cards

How are your obedience skills?

What are obedience skills? Obedience skills have to do with the way you obey. True and complete obedience is more than just doing what you are forced to do. True and complete obedience involves using all of your obedience skills. Let me explain.

Here are a few kids whose obedience skills are not so good.

Sam put the trash in the trash can. Then he rushed back inside to finish his video game. The next morning his dad was very upset. The trash truck had already gone by and the trash can still sat by the back door completely full. Sam was in such a hurry to get back to his game that he hadn't listened when his dad asked him to take out the trash and also to put the can by the road. He'd only done half the job. (Show Flash Card A)

Sam didn't listen to what he had been told to do.

"I'll go take a bath as soon as my show is done," Greg called. Then he turned around and kept watching TV. Greg intended to obey his mom, but he wanted to obey when he felt like obeying. He didn't want to obey as soon as he was told to do something. (Show Flash Card B)

Greg didn't obey right away.

Debbie pouted the whole time she was washing the dishes. Instead of spending time talking to her mom and catching up on all the things that had happened at school that day, she stared at the dish water and burned with anger. She was obeying, but she had a terrible attitude while she was obeying. (Show Flash Card C)

Debbie didn't have a good attitude as she obeyed.

"Monica," Mom called. "Finish your homework before you go out to play." "Sure, Mom," Monica called. She did her math homework and slammed her book shut. She still had an English paper to write, but it was an easy assignment and she decided to finish it on the bus on the way to school the next morning. So Monica put away her books and went out to play with her friends. (Show Flash Card D)

Monica didn't obey completely.

Can I tell you a secret? It's not always easy to obey. If you find it hard to obey, you are not the only one. Everyone struggles with obedience now and then. Everyone struggles with letting God control their life. But you can learn to be obedient. You can work at learning how to be obedient. You can practice brushing up on your obedience skills. And the more you practice obeying in the right way, the easier it will get.

God wants you to brush up on your obedience skills. He wants you to learn how to obey. When you practice good obedience skills as a child, God knows you will become an adult who is good at obeying Him also.

So here are some good obedience skills to work on this week. (Write on board.)

1. Listen carefully to what you are told to do.

Take the time to listen carefully and completely to what you are supposed to do. Don't just assume you know what you should do.

2. Obey right away.

Don't put off obeying till a later time. Instead get right up and go do what you are supposed to do. Then you will be free to do other things that you want to do.

3. Obey with a good attitude.

Instead of pouting and groaning the whole time you obey, decide to keep a good attitude. Do what you have been told to do with a smile. That should shock everyone!

4. Obey completely.

Don't do half a job. Instead do each job completely and to the best of your ability. When you obey, obey all the way!

When you practice good obedience skills, it pleases God. He will help you to continue to be obedient at each new task you are given. He will help you to obey completely and that will bring you joy.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.* Proverbs 3:5-6

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

I Samuel 15:1-26

### LESSON

#### **WAR EVERYWHERE**

Saul's entire reign over Israel was full of war. There was no peace during his time. The Philistines troubled Israel continually. But that wasn't the only enemy. Moab, Ammon, Edom, and Zobah also made war with Saul.

So Saul did everything he could to fight back. Saul's uncle Abner became his commander over the army.

Anytime Saul noticed that there was a man who was a good warrior or who was good at war strategy, Saul would enlist him in the army. It didn't matter if the man wanted to be in the army. He had no choice. The king took whatever he wanted, even men.

#### **A MISSION FOR SAUL**

The day came when God decided that He wanted to punish the wicked Amalekites for the evil they had done to Israel. So God told Samuel to go speak to Saul. God had a special task for Saul to perform and God wanted to see if Saul would obey or if he would insist on doing things his own way.

Samuel took Saul God's message. God said that Israel was supposed to go destroy the Amalekites completely. They were to destroy all the people and all the animals.

I Samuel 15:1-3 says, *Samuel also said unto Saul, The LORD sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the LORD.*

*Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt.*

*Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.*

So Saul gathered the army to go fight against the Amalekites. 210,000 men came ready to fight. The army marched to the city of Amalek. There the army of Israelites began to do as God had instructed them. They began to destroy the sinful people of Amalek.

But Saul did not obey God commands completely. When Saul came to King Agag, instead of destroying him, Saul took him as a captive. And when the time came to kill all the sheep and oxen, Saul commanded that the best be saved and only the worthless animals be killed.

I Samuel 15:7-9 says, *And Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah until thou comest to Shur, that is over against Egypt.*

*And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.*

*But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly.*

#### **MISSION FAILED**

The Lord spoke to Samuel. He was very angry that Saul had disobeyed His orders. He told Samuel that He was sorry He made Saul the king. God could see that Saul would never be obedient to Him. Saul would never be a good king for Israel because if the king was not willing to obey God, then the people would follow the king. They would soon be disobedient to God also. So God had to do something about it. He had to remove Saul as the king.

This grieved Samuel. He must have felt close to Saul. When Saul became king, Samuel felt very loyal to Saul. All night long Samuel stewed and fretted about what God had said to him. He dreaded going to Saul and telling him what God had said. But he knew he must.

I Samuel 15:10-12 says, *Then came the word of the LORD unto Samuel, saying,*

*It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night.*

*And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel, and, behold, he set him up a place, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.*

The next morning when Samuel went to confront Saul about his disobedience to God, he found that Saul had set up a place of honor to himself. Saul was, quite foolishly, proud of himself and his rebellious actions. So Samuel went on to find Saul. The two of them needed to have a little talk.

### **I OBEYED, KIND OF**

As soon as Saul saw Samuel, he rushed forward and said, “I have done everything the Lord wanted me to do. Isn’t that wonderful of me?”

Samuel was astounded that Saul would tell such a lie. Samuel said, “If you did everything exactly as God instructed, then what is that sound of sheep bleating and oxen lowing that I hear? Where did those animals come from if you completely destroyed everything?”

“Oh, that,” Saul said. “Well, the people disobeyed, I guess. But I did everything God wanted, kind of.”

I Samuel 15:13-15 says, *And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the LORD: I have performed the commandment of the LORD.*

*And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?*

*And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.*

Samuel couldn’t believe what he was hearing. Saul was lying to him and he was trying to say that he had obeyed God when clearly he hadn’t. So Samuel told Saul what God had said.

“Let me tell you what God told me. He said he made you king when you were nobody. He gave you a job to do, and you have decided that instead of obeying God, you can do things your way. Why didn’t you obey? Why did you take what you weren’t supposed to take?”

Saul again passed the blame off on the people. He never was willing to accept any responsibility for his actions. “I did obey,” Saul insisted. “I saved King Agag but I destroyed everything else. Well, almost everything, except the good animals which the people wanted to keep. But we kept them so we could offer them as a sacrifice to God! We disobeyed so we could sacrifice to God! We did it for God!”

I Samuel 15:16-21 says, *Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on.*

*And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?*

*And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed.*

*Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD?*

*And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.*

*But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal.*

You can't obey God, kind of. If you don't do all God says, exactly as He says, then you have disobeyed. You can't honor God through disobedience. If you go against what God wants, then you can never bring honor to Him.

Samuel was very blunt with Saul. Samuel told Saul, "Do you think God would rather have a sacrifice than your obedience? How can you think disobedient actions can ever please God? Your rebellion against God is as bad as the wicked sin of witchcraft. Your stubbornness to not obey is a great sin like worshipping idols."

Then Samuel gave Saul the really bad news. "Because you have rejected God's word, God has rejected you from being the king."

From that point on, Saul knew for certain that he would not be king much longer. He knew his sons would never sit on the throne of Israel.

I Samuel 15:22-26 says, *And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.*

*For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.*

*And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.*

*Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD.*

*And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.*

### **BETTER THAN SACRIFICE**

Samuel was using some very strong words when he told Saul what disobedience is like in God's eyes. God sees disobedient actions as being as bad as witchcraft and idol worship. And

God hates both of those things. The very first commandment God gave to Israel in the ten commandments was that they were never to have any other false god before them. They were not to bow down to or worship false gods. That was a great sin against God. When we don't have self-control, we sin against God.

God hates disobedience. It's that simple. God gave us the Bible so we could know how to obey Him. He gave us the Bible so we would know how to control our words and actions. But so often we either ignore God and don't take the time to learn what He wants us to do, or we know what we need to do, yet we willingly chose to disobey. Disobedient actions are a great sin against God.

Sometimes we think that we can disobey and then make it up to God by doing something good. That was what Saul thought. He thought if he offered some of those animals as a sacrifice, then God would look down and say, "Oh, you didn't do as I told you, but you did offer a sacrifice to Me. I guess I can overlook it this time."

But God cannot overlook sin. Disobedience is sin. And we are all sinners. We have all disobeyed God.

The Bible says in Romans 6:23, *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

God hates sin and sin must be punished by death. But God loves you.

John 3:16 says, *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

Because God loves you so much, He made a way for your sin to be taken care of. Jesus Christ came to earth to die in your place. Jesus took your sin onto Himself. He died so you could have eternal life in heaven with God.

In order to be forgiven of your sin, you must accept what Jesus did for you when He died on the cross. You must ask Him to forgive your sin and come into your life. Would you like to do that today? You can.

Romans 10:13 says, *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

Maybe you have accepted Jesus as your Savior. You are a Christian. You know that you will go to heaven. But did you know that Christians still sin and they still disobey God?

The good news is that your sin is forgiven. But the bad news is that when you sin as a Christian, you separate yourself from God. You make it so that you cannot be close to God. God wants to be close to you. He wants to help you each day. He wants to hear from you. But disobedience keeps you from being close to God.

I John 1:9 says, *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

## HOW DO YOU OBEY?

The big question for you is, “How do you obey God?” Are you like Saul who said, “I obeyed, kind of. I came close to doing what God wanted me to do.”

Or do you say, “I want to do exactly what God says, not kind of what He says.”

When your mom or dad asks you to do something, what do you say? “I’ll do it later. Maybe.” or do you say, “I’ll do it right now.”

How do you obey? Do you obey cheerfully or with a grudging spirit? Do you ignore what you are told to do or do you do it right away?

You may be able to get away with lots of things with your parents and your teachers, but God sees and knows everything. He knows exactly how you obey. He knows when you disobey. He knows if you are allowing Him to control your life. Practice temperance. Let God have control of your life.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to let the Lord completely control your life. It isn’t enough to “kind of” obey God. “Kind of” obeying is really disobedience. “Kind of” obeying is really controlling your own life. Here are some pointers on obedience.

1. When God speaks, listen.

You can’t obey if you don’t know what you are supposed to do. God speaks through the Bible. Read it and listen to what God is saying to you. The same is true for the authority God has placed over you. When your mom or dad or any authority speaks, listen to them.

2. Determine to obey with a good attitude.

Don’t fuss or pout when you are asked to do something. Instead, decide that you will be obedient with a cheerful spirit. You will please God and your parents and you will enjoy life so much more if you aren’t always whining about everything you have to do. Obeying with a good attitude will give you joy and peace.

3. Obey right away.

Putting off obedience is disobedience. When God speaks, obey right away. When your authority speaks, obey right away.

4. Obey completely.

Don't be foolish like Saul was. Don't "kind of" obey. Obey completely. Do exactly what you are told to do. Let God completely control your life.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about today's challenge. How can you put it into action in your life?

(Give the children a few seconds to think.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you to accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to obey God by letting Him control your actions.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Who did God tell Saul to destroy?
2. Recite today's memory verse.
3. Name one thing that Saul did not destroy.
4. Name another thing that Saul did not destroy.
5. What made Samuel so sad?
6. What did Samuel hear that let him know Saul had disobeyed God?
7. What was Saul's excuse to Samuel?
8. What sins did Samuel compare Saul's sin of disobedience with?
9. What was God's first commandment in the Ten Commandments?
10. How does God want you to obey?

# Temperance: Controlling My Actions

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.  
Proverbs 3:5-6



I will let God control my life.

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Start with the letter I. Write every other letter, in order, on the blanks in the box. Find out the secret message.

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LESSON 44

TEMPERANCE:  
CONTROLLING MY TONGUE

LESSON ORDER

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



BIBLE TEXT

I Kings 11:1-14, 26-43,  
12:1-19, 14:21-23

CHARACTER TRAIT

I will let  
God control my life.

MEMORY VERSE

*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

Proverbs 3:5-6



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

God wants you to have self control. It's one of the fruit of the Spirit. Not only does God want you to control your actions, God also wants you to learn to control your tongue.

Our Bible story today tells us about a man who never learned to control his tongue. He used his words to lie and make excuses. What a sad end that man came to. I hope you will learn to control your tongue so that the words you say will be pleasing to God!

Today's Life Lesson is: I will let God control my life.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### Tell The Truth

Obtain Flash Card

Justin watched as Zach rode his bike up the driveway to his house.

"Hey, Justin! Wanna go to the lake with me this afternoon? It's a great day for a swim."

"Sounds great to me, but Sam already asked me if I would study for the history test with him. He's coming over soon."

"Yeah, that sounds like more fun than a dip in the lake." Zach said sarcastically. "Come on! You'd really rather study than swim?"

"Sure I'd rather swim, but not today. I told you, I promised Sam. Plus later on this afternoon I'm going to visit my grandma. She's been sick lately and we've been trying to cheer her up. There won't be any time for a swim today," Justin said.

Justin and Zach could see Sam coming down the street holding his history book. (Show Flash Card)

"Watch this," Zach said.

"What?" Justin said.

"You'll see. Just play along," Zach whispered so Sam couldn't hear as he walked up.

"Hi, Sam. What ya doing with your history book?" Zach asked.

“Justin is going to help me study for the test tomorrow. I bombed the last one. If I don’t pass this, I’ll flunk history,” Sam sighed.

“Man, that’s tough. Especially since Justin just found out his Grandma is sick. He’s got to go there today. Kinda to cheer her up. Guess you better reread that history chapter on your own. I’d help you, but I’m lousy in history too,” Zach replied.

“Zach!” Justin cut in.

“It’s OK, Justin. I understand,” said Sam as he turned and slowly headed home.

Zach grinned at Justin. “See. Now you have time to swim and you’ll still make it to your grandma’s later.”

Justin was very upset. He had been so shocked at Zach’s lie that he hadn’t been able to speak fast enough.

“I can’t believe you said that!” Justin almost shouted.

“Hey, it’s half true!” Zach defended himself.

“That’s still a lie.” Justin started off down the street after Sam.

“Hey. Where are you going?” Zach questioned.

“To catch Sam and tell him to come back,” Justin said.

“Are you crazy? I just got you out of a couple of hours of pure boredom! Besides, it’s done.” Zach exclaimed.

“No, it’s not done. If I let Sam think that what you said is true, then it would be a lie. I don’t lie! I have to catch Sam to make it right.”

“Fine. You’ll just miss a great swim at the lake. You sure are different. You’re the craziest person I know!” Zach said.

“I’m not crazy. But I am a Christian and it wouldn’t be right to let Sam believe a lie, even if it wasn’t me who lied to him. Zach, I try to always tell the truth! See you later, Zach.”

Justin broke into a run as he chased after Sam.

“Lord,” Justin prayed, “Help me to somehow get through to Zach. You know he needs to be saved. Is that ever going to happen?”

Justin knew he shouldn’t give up on Zach. Even though he never seemed to understand a single thing about being a Christian, he had to believe that some day Zach would get saved. But he would have to leave that to God. He just knew that God wanted him to be truthful in all he said and did.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.* Proverbs 3:5-6

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

I Samuel 15:23b-35

### LESSON

#### SAUL'S EXCUSES

Saul was the first king of Israel, so he could have used his influence to create a godly governing system for the people. He could have lived his life in a way that would have been a good example to his people. He could have looked to God to guide and direct him as he ruled. But he didn't. Within two years of becoming king, Saul had already rejected God's ways for his life and had chosen to go his own ways. Saul refused to let God control his life.

Saul did not have the self control to be a good leader. When the people wanted something, he did not have the courage to say, "No, God would not want us to do that." Saul did not have the moral character to do what was right, no matter what. Saul wasn't willing to take responsibility for his own actions or words. Whenever he got caught doing something he wasn't supposed to be doing, he blamed others. He never had the courage to say, "Yes, I did wrong." Instead he would say, "I wanted to do right, but the people made me do wrong."

God had told Saul to go destroy the wicked Amalekites. Saul ignored what God told him to do. Instead of destroying all of the Amalekites and everything they owned, Saul saved the king and he allowed the people to keep the best animals.

Saul sinned against God with his actions, but he also sinned against God with his tongue. When Samuel confronted Saul with his sin of not obeying God, Saul was full of excuses. Saul claimed he had obeyed God. When that feeble excuse did not hold up, because clearly he had

not obeyed, Saul went on to blame the people for his sin. He also had the nerve to say that they disobeyed so they could offer the animals to God as a sacrifice.

Saul refused to admit to Samuel and to God that he had done anything wrong.

When a person refuses to admit their own guilt, then they are quick to blame others. They start finger pointing. They say, “It wasn’t my fault. They made me do it.”

Excuses, excuses.

Saul thought he could fast talk his way out of his trouble. He thought he could fool Samuel and God. But he was wrong. You can’t fool God. You can’t make God believe a lie.

Sometimes we use excuses to try to cover for something we have done wrong. When we get caught doing something we shouldn’t have done, instead of having the courage to admit we are wrong, we make excuses. We start to point our finger at someone else and say, “I wanted to do what was right, but they made me do wrong.” How do you think that makes God feel? I know how he felt when Saul did wrong. The Bible says God was sorry he made Saul the king.

I Samuel 15:35b says, *The LORD repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.*

#### **SAUL’S SORROW**

Saul must have started sweating when he realized Samuel was not going to accept any of his excuses for his sinful actions. Samuel did not fall for any of Saul’s flimsy excuses or lies. When Saul said he had obeyed, Samuel asked Saul what the sound was that he heard. Samuel could clearly hear the sounds of the animals that the Israelites had wrongly taken.

Samuel told Saul that God would rather have obedience than a sacrifice. He told Saul that it was wrong to have disobeyed God. But that wasn’t all Samuel had to say. What came next was much worse. Samuel told Saul that God had rejected him to be the king.

I Samuel 15:23b says, *Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.*

Now Saul was sorry. But do you know what? He wasn’t sorry for the right reasons. Saul was not sorry he had disobeyed God. He was not sorry he had no self-control. Instead, Saul was sorry he got caught. Saul was sorry he had lost his kingdom.

The instant Saul knew that he had lost everything, he began to say, “I’m sorry.” But even in Saul’s apology, he still didn’t accept his fault in what had happened. Instead, he again blamed the people. I Samuel 15: 24-25 says, *And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.*

*Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD.*

After Saul's fake apology, then he asked Samuel to pardon his sin, but Samuel could not do that. Only God could pardon Saul's sin and God could not pardon his sin since Saul wasn't really sorry for his sin. God knew Saul's heart. He knew that Saul did not truly repent of his sin. He knew Saul was only sorry he had been caught. He was only sorry for what he was about to lose.

Samuel turned in sorrow to leave Saul. Saul was very upset. He did not want to lose his kingdom. He did not want the people who stood around listening to hear that he would not be their king much longer. So Saul grabbed at Samuel's robe to pull him back. As he did, the robe ripped in Saul's hands. Samuel looked at Saul with great grief and solemnly told him that just as his robe had been ripped from him, even so God had ripped the kingdom of Israel away from Saul. God would now pick someone better to rule over His people. Then he sternly told Saul that God would not change His mind.

I Samuel 15:26-29 says, *And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.*

*And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent.*

*And Samuel said unto him, The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou.*

*And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent.*

#### **SAMUEL'S SORROW**

Saul wasn't the only sorry one. Samuel was extremely sorrowful about everything also, but he was sorry for very different reasons. Samuel was sorry because of Saul's sin. He was sorry that Saul had turned against God and gone his own way. He was sorry that Saul was unfit to be the king anymore. He was sorry that Saul had such a lack of control with both his actions and his tongue.

Samuel had high hopes for Saul in the beginning. He had pictured Israel as having a king who would guide the people to love and obey God more than they had in a very long time. He hoped that the people would listen to their king. But it wasn't long before the king began to act just as wickedly as the people. Within two years of becoming king, he no longer listened to or obeyed God. That grieved Samuel.

Samuel had a godly sorrow. It didn't make Samuel sad that Saul had been caught disobeying, it made Samuel sad that Saul had disobeyed. All of Samuel's life he had loved and served God. When Samuel saw King Saul turn away from God, it made him sad. It made him sad that God had to reject Saul as king.

Since Saul had refused to kill the king of the Amalekites, Samuel ordered that the wicked King Agag be brought to him. Samuel told King Agag that because of his wicked deeds he would die by the sword just as he had used the sword to kill many innocent people. And Samuel killed Agag.

I Samuel 15:32-33 says, *Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither to me Agag the king of the Amalekites. And Agag came unto him delicately. And Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is past.*

*And Samuel said, As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal.*

After Saul's confrontation with Samuel, the two men never met again. Samuel no longer went to Saul because Samuel had nothing to say to Saul. God no longer gave Samuel any messages to take to Saul. What a sad thing that God no longer spoke to Saul. And apparently Saul became a very wicked man. We know that because Samuel mentions to God that he is afraid of Saul. And we also see how Saul tried to kill David in later times. So when God departed from Saul, Saul no longer tried to do anything that would please God.

I Samuel 15:34-35a says, *Then Samuel went to Ramah; and Saul went up to his house to Gibeah of Saul.*

*And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul.*

#### **GOD'S SORROW**

God was also sorry that Saul sinned. God was sorry that Saul did not love Him enough to obey His orders. God was also sorry He had ever selected Saul to be king. It hurt God when Saul sinned.

When you do wrong in your life, you are hurt. When you do wrong others are also hurt. Those who try to guide you are saddened and hurt that you have not chosen the wise thing to do. Your parents, your teachers at church, and your pastor are saddened. But most of all, God is hurt. It makes God feel bad when you chose to do the wrong thing. God only wants good for you. And God knows that when you make sinful decisions, then you will have bad results in your life. God knows that when you fail to control your actions and words, then terrible things will happen.

Sin always causes pain, sorrow, and problems. At first sin can seem like fun, but the fun does not last. Soon will come the results of sin. Saul found this out. His sin brought terrible results that not only saddened him, it also saddened Samuel, his spiritual leader, but mostly it saddened God.

I Samuel 15: 35b says, *And the LORD repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.*

God knows that sin causes you so much pain and trouble, that is why God wants you to stay away from sin. He wants you to obey and not sin because He knows it is for your best.

#### **WHAT KIND OF SORRY ARE YOU?**

Yes, when Saul got caught, he was extremely sorry, but he was sorry for all the wrong reasons. Sometimes we are like that. Have you ever disobeyed your mom or dad and they caught

you? Maybe you were sorry, but not because you disobeyed. Maybe you were sorry they caught you. Maybe you were sorry you would be punished. But you weren't sorry you did wrong.

That's the kind of sorrow Saul experienced. God wants you to experience godly sorrow. That kind of sorrow is actually good for you because godly sorrow will cause you to want to do the right thing in your life.

God is your King. He is the one who wants to control your life so that you will be happy and blessed. But when you chose to reject God's way and go your own way, your sin will cause everyone great sorrow. Mostly, it will cause you sorrow, and it will cause God sorrow.

It would be a terrible thing to have God depart from you like he departed from Saul. But you don't have to be like Saul. Instead of turning away from God and refusing to obey Him, you can turn to God. You can obey Him when He speaks to you through His Word. You can be the type of person God finds delight in.

I would like each one of you to examine your own heart. Have you ever asked Jesus to forgive your sin and become a part of your life? Until you have done that, you are not a child of God. In order to have God as your heavenly Father, you need to accept what Jesus did on the cross to take away your sins. You need to ask Jesus to forgive your sins. Have you done that? We can have someone take a Bible and show you exactly how you can be saved from your sin and become a child of God.

Maybe you are already saved, but you haven't been doing too good of a job of letting God control your words or actions. You know that you don't like to obey and you know that when you get caught, you are only sorry you have been caught and will be punished. You are not sorry you have sinned.

You need to change that today. Today you can ask God to help you to avoid sin whenever possible, but when you do sin, you can ask Him to help you to confess and make it right with Him.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to have a godly sorrow for your sin. Remember, we all sin, but we don't all take care of that sin in a way that would be pleasing to God.

1. Have the right kind of sorrow for sin.

Don't be sorry you were caught. Don't be sorry you are going to be punished. Be sorry you sinned against God.

2. Confess your sin.

When you do sin, remember that if you are sorry in the right way, God is willing to forgive. Just ask Him.

3. Make it right.

You can't always go back and make things right, but if possible, you should try. Doing the right things shows you are truly sorry.

4. Make a change.

Let God change your heart so that you will hate sin and love doing the right thing. Only God can make that change in your heart, but if you ask Him to, He will.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about today's challenge. How can you put it into action in your life?

(Give the children a few seconds to think.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you to accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to have a godly sorrow for your sin. I'm going to ask Him to help you to give Him control of your life.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. What command did God give to King Saul?
2. Recite today's memory verse.
3. What did Saul do instead of obeying God's command?
4. What excuse did Saul give for disobeying God?
5. What did Samuel say he heard that let him know Saul had disobeyed?
6. What message did Samuel give to Saul from God?
7. Why was Saul sorry he had disobeyed?
8. What did Saul do when Samuel turned to leave?
9. What did Samuel say it meant when Saul ripped his robe?
10. Who was hurt by Saul's sin? (You can take several answers to this question.)

# Temperance: Controlling My Tongue

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6



I will let God control my life.



R	E	J	E	C	T	E	D	E	L	I	G	H	T	U
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T	C	Q	A	H	Y	D	S	D	G	W	U	Y	G	L
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R	E	S	J	I	A	K	R	Y	B	A	E	O	C	L
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H	F	A	U	L	T	Z	G	Y	E	B	O	I	R	G
C	H	E	P	A	R	D	O	N	K	L	S	N	O	E
B	L	I	O	C	W	L	T	B	I	D	W	Y	P	D
Z	Y	J	M	Z	I	H	T	M	D	K	E	E	L	B

Blame

Caught

Character

Delight

Excuses

Fault

Hurt

Israel

King

Obey

Pardon

Rejected

Repent

Sad

Samuel

Saul

Selfish

Sin

Sorry

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LESSON 45

TEMPERANCE:  
CONTROLLING MY THOUGHTS

LESSON ORDER

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



BIBLE TEXT

I Samuel 16:14-20, 18:5-11

CHARACTER TRAIT

I will let  
God control my life.

MEMORY VERSE

*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

Proverbs 3:5-6



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

So far we have talked about allowing God to control our actions and our tongues, but there is another thing that we must allow God to control is we hope to have true self control. What? We must allow God to control our thoughts also.

If you allow God to control your mind, then it will be easy to allow Him to control your words and actions.

Today's Life Lesson is: I will let God control my life.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### GARBAGE IN, GARBAGE OUT

Obtain Flash Card

Who and what controls your life?

Imagine with me that you take your best friend out to eat at the most expensive restaurant you can afford . . . McDonalds.

You say to your friend, "Sit here. I'll go order."

So you order a Big Mac, large fries, and a large chocolate shake. You take the tray and set it on the table and say, "That's for me. I'll go get yours now."

Next you go over to the large, square container that stands by the door. It has a small hanging door on it marked "Thank You." You know the what I mean? (Show Flash Card) This is a dirty old trash can, but in McDonalds it would be a square trash container.

You flip open the big door below and pull out the large, plastic, sanitized container.

Dig around in the container and find a napkin. Refold it and put it on the tray. Dig around some more and you find half a hamburger. Put that on the tray. Dig some more and pull out a cup. That's a good start. Put it on the tray. Find another cup with some milk shake left in it. Pour that in the cup. Dig around and find another cup with some coke. Pour that on the milk shake. Dig around and find a Happy Meal. That's always good for a couple of pickles and some fries. Wipe the ketchup off the fries and put them on the tray.

Now, take the tray and set it in front of your friend. You say, “There it is! The best I could find. Eat up!”

Yuck! Your friend would think that you were crazy! He probably wouldn’t want you as a friend anymore.

“Oh,” you say, “I wouldn’t feed my best friend garbage!”

Did you know that your mind is one of the best friends you have? God made your mind to do some pretty amazing things. Your mind can do more than the most complicated, fastest running computer that exists in the world. No computer will ever be able to match your mind!

But what controls your mind? Are you careful about the things that you feed into your mind? Or do you feed your mind garbage?

Do you listen to bad music? Do you watch bad TV shows? Do you listen to dirty jokes or think about things that would not please God?

Every time you look at something that is not pleasing to God and every time you listen to things that are not pleasing to God, then you are feeding your mind garbage. If you allow things that are bad for you to come into your mind, you are feeding garbage to the best friend that God gave to you.

And the problem is that whatever you feed your mind, it eats up! Your friend in the restaurant would have gotten up and left if you brought him garbage, but your mind takes in whatever you feed it.

The Bible says in Proverbs 23:7, *For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.*

If you take in garbage again and again, pretty soon that is what fills up your heart and mind. If you take in garbage, eventually those terrible things will come out of your mouth in all you say and do.

So be careful what you feed your mind! Be careful not to allow garbage to control your mind!

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.* Proverbs 3:5-6

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

I Samuel 16:14-20, 18:5-11

### LESSON

#### **GOD DEPARTS**

Saul was alone. He wasn't alone at his palace. He was surrounded by servants. He was surrounded by advisors. No, he wasn't alone because there weren't people all around him. Saul was alone because the Lord had left him. When Saul rejected God, God rejected Saul. And now, Saul had to face each day without God.

I Samuel 16:14 says, *But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul.*

What a terribly sad thing! The worse thing in the world would be to have the Lord depart from you. You would never want to be without God! When you are alone without God, then it leads to a troubled soul and troubled thoughts.

That was what happened to Saul. Because God had departed from Saul, his soul was troubled. The Bible says that an evil spirit troubled him. That means that instead of having the peace and joy from God's presence, Saul had depression, fear, worry, and often anger. He was constantly upset.

When a person rejects God, then the only thing left to replace it is evil. When a person pushes godliness out of their life, they are opening the door for evil to enter. That is precisely what happened to Saul.

I Samuel 16:14 says, *But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him.*

*And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee.*

## FINDING HELP

Saul's soul was so troubled and depressed that everyone around him was beginning to become troubled also. His servants tried to cheer him up, but nothing they did helped Saul. There was no way they could comfort him. So his servants got together and had a brainstorming session. They said, "What can we do to help the king. He just isn't himself since the presence of the Lord left him. Every thing we do makes him angry!"

"I know," pipes up another servant. "I have heard about this young man who lives in Bethlehem who everyone loves. They say he is plays the harp beautifully. The Lord is with this young man. Maybe he could help King Saul feel better!"

In the short time that the Spirit of the Lord had come on David, his fame began to spread. Others could see the influence of God in his life. Others could see that he was a brave and honest man who stood for what was right. They could see that David was wise and a true man of God. Did you know that when you allow God to control your life, others can see God through your life? It's true. When you allow God to control the way you think and speak and act, then you will be a witness to others just by the way you live and act. When God controls you, you will be different from the rest of the world. You will stand out. The next time Saul was so troubled in his mind, his servants told him about David and Saul sent for David to come.

I Samuel 16:16-19 says, *Let our lord now command thy servants, which are before thee, to seek out a man, who is a cunning player on an harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well.*

*And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring him to me.*

*Then answered one of the servants, and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the LORD is with him.*

*Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, Send me David thy son, which is with the sheep.*

Saul had no idea that young David was the man God had chosen to take his place as king. And even though David did know God had selected him to be the next king, David humbly went to help Saul. David took his harp to play.

I Samuel 16:20 says, *And Jesse took an ass laden with bread, and a bottle of wine, and a kid, and sent them by David his son unto Saul.*

David had played the harp and written beautiful songs for God for many years. And now that the Spirit of the Lord was on David, he was even more skilled than ever. Can you picture it? Saul has a troubled look on his face. He anxiously looks at David and wonders how on earth this simple shepherd can help him in any way. But when David begins to pluck the strings of the harp, sweet, soothing sounds begin to float into Saul's ears. The music indeed calms his soul. Saul slowly relaxes and closes his eyes so that he can completely concentrate on the music. His mind and soul is calmed for the first time in a long time.

### **BELOVED**

Day after day David played for Saul. Soon Saul was completely devoted to David. He appreciated and loved this young man who could play so skillfully on the harp. Saul was grateful that David could bring such peace to his troubled mind. Soon Saul arranged for David to be his armor bearer. He wanted the young man beside him in battle and close by at night when he couldn't sleep and needed calming for sleep to come to his troubled soul.

This was surely God's plan for David. God allowed David to be called to Saul and then find favor with Saul for a reason. The simple shepherd boy would learn about life as a king. He would see how to lead in battle. He would learn how to deal with servants and advisors. He would watch Saul and learn what to do and what not to do also. God was preparing David for the day he would be the king. So David stayed on at Saul's palace for the time.

Whenever Saul would become troubled and upset, David would go play the harp and sing to him. Possibly David sang songs to him that he had written while he tended his sheep. Songs like Psalm 23. Close your eyes as I read it and think of how calming these words must have been to Saul's heart.

*Psalm 23:1-6 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.*

*He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.*

*He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*

*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*

*Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.*

*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.*

### **FESTIVAL OF JOY**

When the men of Israel would come home from battle, the people in the city anxiously waited for word on how the battle had gone. They dreaded to hear that men had been harmed or killed. They worried that the battle would go badly and the men would return defeated.

But can you imagine the great joy in the city when an advance messenger came carrying the good news that the victory had been won? First everyone breathed a big sigh of relief. Then they began to rejoice. The women who waited for their men to return stood in the streets. When they saw the men come straggling in from battle, they began to cheer and jump for joy.

Today as the men marched into the city, it was the same as always. An advance messenger had raced ahead to let the women know of the battle over the Philistines. He must have said something like this, "You should have been there! The Philistines had a giant who came to threaten us daily. There was no man who was able to fight him, not even the king. But young David came and he fearlessly faced that old giant and he won! David killed the giant. Then we all joined in. We chased the Philistines and defeated them. It will be a long time before they show their faces in Israel again!"

So the women were lining the streets as the men approached the city. Before they ever entered in, the women began to cheer. Loudly they shouted out their praise.

"Saul has killed his thousands," they chanted. Saul's heart swelled with pride. He thought about how great he was as he listened to his people calling out such words. Then he listened in amazement as they went on to say, "Saul has killed his thousands and David his ten thousands! Yea for David!"

Suddenly Saul was not so happy anymore. No. Saul was filled with a new feeling. Saul was filled with a terrible jealousy.

"How dare those women think that David is better than I am?" Saul thought in his mind. "That young man thinks he's so great. Who is he but a poor shepherd boy? The next thing you know, he'll be trying to steal my kingdom!" he fumed. The more Saul thought about it, the more jealous he became of David. From that day on Saul never liked David again. He carefully watched David looking for some reason to cause David trouble. He did everything in his power to get rid of David.

I Samuel 18:6-9 says, *And it came to pass as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of musick.*

*And the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.*

*And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom?*

*And Saul eyed David from that day and forward.*

## A TROUBLED SPIRIT

All night long Saul's thoughts must have caused him to be angry and bitter because when he woke up the next morning he was greatly troubled in his spirit. The only thing that had calmed Saul before was when David would play a soothing tune on his harp. So David was called in to play. David began his beautiful music, but as Saul looked at David he became more and more troubled. His jealousy grew.

He must have been thinking something like this, "He thinks he's such a hot shot! He can play the harp, he can kill lions and bears, and he can kill the giant everyone else was so afraid of. Now he thinks he can take care of all of my problems. I'll show him who is boss around here. I'll get rid of him once and for all!"

What hateful jealous feelings Saul was experiencing! He was so jealous of David that he just wanted to kill David. So Saul took the spear that stood by his throne and while David was playing the harp, he threw it directly at David. He intended on killing David! Twice as David played, Saul tried to kill David. But God was with David and God would not allow Saul to harm David. Both times that Saul threw the spear, David was able to dodge it and stay safe.

I Samuel 18:10-11 says, *And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house: and David played with his hand, as at other times: and there was a javelin in Saul's hand.*

*And Saul cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall with it. And David avoided out of his presence twice.*

Saul was jealous of David. Everything about David bothered him.

## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

What a difference between Saul and David. Saul's mind was filled with anger and hatred. David's mind was filled with joy, peace, and enthusiasm. What was the difference? It was God. Saul refused to allow God to control his thoughts, his words, and his actions. David willingly submitted to God. It was that simple.

What about you? Are you like Saul or David. Who controls your thoughts, words, and actions? I hope that you will let God control you!

Let me ask you, do you know God as your personal Savior? I'm not asking if you have ever heard of God. I'm not asking if you know who God is. I'm asking, have you asked God to forgive your sin and become a part of your life? Do you know God as a personal friend? Today you can do that. Today you can get to know God on a personal level. We can take Bible verses and show you how you can know God.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to let God control your thoughts. Saul had rejected God and his thoughts caused him to try to kill David. Your thoughts can cause you to say and do some terrible things if they are not controlled by God.

Our words and our actions come as a result of what is going on in our mind. If you didn't think something first, then you would never speak it or act on it. The thought comes first. That is why it is so important that you give God complete control of your thoughts. If you allow God to control your mind, then it will be easy to allow Him to control your words and actions.

Romans 12:2a says, *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.*

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about today's challenge. How can you put it into action in your life?

(Give the children a few seconds to think.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you to accept this challenge. I am going to ask God to help you to live righteously so that you can have the peace of God.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Who had departed from Saul?
2. Recite today's memory verse.
3. Why did God depart from Saul?
4. What was Saul's problem as a result of God departing from him?
5. Who came up with a solution for Saul's troubled soul?
6. What did David do to help calm Saul?
7. What was Saul's reaction to David?
8. What position did Saul give to David?
9. How did Saul feel when he heard the women praise David?
10. What did Saul do when David was playing the harp for him?

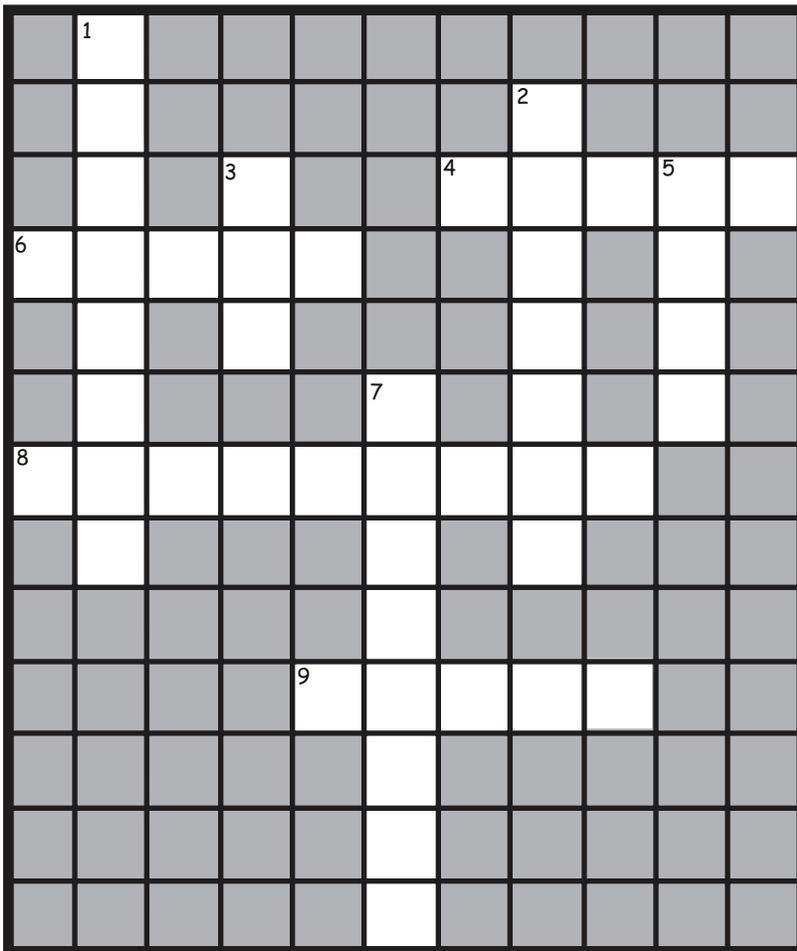
# Temperance: Controlling My Thoughts

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6



I will let God control my life.



### Across

4. He was David's father.
6. This calmed Saul's heart.
8. David was from this town.
9. He was called to help Saul.

### Down

1. Saul felt this because God left him.
2. The name "David" means this.
3. God rejected Saul because of this.
5. God rejected him.
7. They tried to cheer Saul.



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LESSON 46

TEMPERANCE:  
OUT OF CONTROL

LESSON ORDER

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



BIBLE TEXT

I Samuel 19:1-24

CHARACTER TRAIT

I will let  
God control my life.

MEMORY VERSE

*The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall  
by his own wickedness.*  
Proverbs 11:5



## OPEN IN PRAYER

## INTRODUCTION

The man in our story today was out of control. He had rejected God and he had rejected God's control. As a result he was miserable and he made everyone around him miserable too. There is also another man in our story. This man allowed God to control his life and what a difference there was between these two men!

God wants you to let Him control your heart and life. Will you do that?

Today's Life Lesson is: I will let God control my life.

## SONG TIME

## SUPPORTING STORY

### CONTROL GATES

Obtain Flash Cards

Satan wants to destroy your testimony and your Christian life. It does not please Satan when you love and serve God. Satan wants you to be distracted from doing things that are pleasing to God. He will try everything that he can to get into your heart and mind. (Show Flash Card of Heart.)

Here is a heart that will stand for your inner self. Satan knows that if he can control the things you say and do on the outside then he is also able to control you from the inside too. When he controls your inner heart and mind, then he can control you! Often Satan tries to get to your inner self through the outside gates that lead into your heart.

First, Satan will try to enter your heart through your Eye Gate. (Hold up Flash Card B)

With your eyes you see the world around you. Most of what you see is good, but there are some things out there that you should not want to look at. Satan loves it when you look at things you should not see.

What are some things that Christians should not see? There are books and pictures that a Christian should not look at. How about TV? Some of the programs on TV show all sorts of things that you should not be seeing. Even watching commercials can be bad. Like Eve, Satan will show us things that we do not have and make us desire them. Commercials can make us discontent with the things we do have. They make us always want more.

Psalm 101:3 says, *I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes.*

Second, Satan wants to enter your Ear Gate. (Point to ear.)

There are many ways that sin can enter your heart through your ear gate. Some things are good like beautiful music and words that draw us closer to God. But some things that we listen to will lead us far from God.

What kind of music do you like? Satan wants you to listen to music that is not pleasing to God. He also wants you to listen to lies and gossip. Carefully guard your ears so that you will not listen to things that will cause you to sin against God.

Proverbs 19:27 says, *Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge.*

Third, Satan wants to defile you through your Mouth Gate. (Point to mouth.)

The Bible says that out of our mouths can come things that will destroy us and those around us. We can say words that will harm us and others too. The Bible says that blessings and cursings can come out of the same mouth, but that it should not happen! Our words should be true and sweet!

There are all sorts of things that should never pass through your lips. How about alcohol, drugs, and cigarettes? Those things enter into your mouth and destroy your body. There are also plenty of things that should not pass out of your mouth. How about lies, unkind words, gossip, swearing? These are all things that hurt God and others.

We need to be very careful what we say!

Psalm 141:3 says, *Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.*

Fourth, there is the Touch Gate. (Point to hand.)

God gave us hands to do work and to fold in prayer. Our hands are a wonderful gift from God to be used to work for Him.

Satan would love to take your hands and have you use them to do things that are disobedient to God. He wants you to use your hands to hurt others, to touch things we shouldn't, and to steal.

2 Corinthians 6:17 says, *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing.*

Instead, you should ask Jesus to control your heart and mind by helping you to carefully guard your eyes, ears, mouth, and hands. (Take the heart picture from in back and place it over the other Flash Card.)

Think carefully when you use your eyes, ears, mouth, and hands. They can easily be used to defile your heart and mind. They can be used to hurt God and others. Or they can be used to

bring honor and glory to God. On your own, you will tend to use what God has given you for your own purposes and to harm yourself and others. But you can ask the Holy Spirit to control your eyes, ears, hands, and mouth. The choice is yours.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.*  
Proverbs 11:5

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

I Samuel 19:1-24

### LESSON

#### A TERRIBLE COMMAND

David had done nothing but good to Saul. He played the harp to calm his nerves. He fought valiantly for Israel. He behaved himself in a godly manner. Not once did David try to harm Saul in any way. Not once did David try to gain the throne from Saul. David patiently waited on God's timing. He knew one day God would make him the king. David did not push to become king before God was ready.

Yet still Saul hated David. He continually worried that David was stealing the hearts of his people and would eventually steal his throne. God had already clearly told Saul that he had been rejected as king but Saul did not want to accept that fact. So the mere sight of David caused great anger and jealousy in his heart.

So one day Saul spoke to his son, Jonathan, and to all his servants. He issued a command. He ordered that they should kill David.

I Samuel 19:1 says, *And Saul spake to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should kill David.*

### **JONATHAN TAKES A CHANCE**

Jonathan must have been greatly distressed by his father's command. David had never caused any harm to his father. David was innocent of any wrong doing. And more than that, Jonathan had become close friends with David. He loved David as his own brother.

But Jonathan knew that Saul hated David enough to kill him. He must have known that to speak a kind word about David would surely get him into so much trouble. But that did not stop Jonathan. He decided to try to reason with Saul about the terrible thing he intended to have done to David.

First Jonathan went to David and warned him to hide himself so that neither Saul nor his servants could find him. Then Jonathan went to his father. He carefully explained all the good things David had done. He asked his father to reconsider doing harm to a man who had only done good to him.

Jonathan must have been very persuasive because Saul agreed to not kill David. Jonathan was overjoyed. He brought David back to the palace and life seemed to go on as usual.

I Samuel 19:4-7 says, *And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works have been to thee-ward very good:*

*For he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine, and the LORD wrought a great salvation for all Israel: thou sawest it, and didst rejoice: wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause?*

*And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan: and Saul sware, As the LORD liveth, he shall not be slain.*

*And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan shewed him all those things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence, as in times past.*

### **NEW WAR, OLD JEALOUSIES**

Things were pretty much back to normal for David, at least for awhile Saul did not try to kill him. I am sure that David still kept his eyes wide open whenever he was around Saul.

Then the day came when a new war against the Philistines began. David went as one of the leaders of the army. Again David led his men in victory. And again, as the men returned to the palace, the king heard the people shout for joy. He watched with growing anger as David got the credit. How Saul hated that!

Saul was furious. He could not sleep. He didn't feel like eating. Everyone one around him was troubled with him. So they called for David to play his harp.

As David began to play, instead of being soothed, Saul began to think of how David had won in battle. He thought of how the people admired David for everything he did. He became more and more jealous as he listened to David play.

In Saul's hand he held a javelin. That was a big spear. Saul raised the javelin and gave it a mighty throw. He intended on killing David himself. But David was on the lookout. When he saw that spear hurtling through the air in his direction, he ran as fast as he could. He ran out of the palace and he didn't stop running until he was safe in his own home.

I Samuel 19:8-10 says, *And there was war again: and David went out, and fought with the Philistines, and slew them with a great slaughter; and they fled from him.*

*And the evil spirit from the LORD was upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his javelin in his hand: and David played with his hand.*

*And Saul sought to smite David even to the wall with the javelin; but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, and he smote the javelin into the wall: and David fled, and escaped that night.*

#### **MICHAL'S PLAN**

When David got home he told his wife, Michal, what her father had done. Michal knew how jealous Saul was of David. She knew that her father truly wanted to have David killed, so she warned David that he was not safe, not even in his own home. She pleaded with David to escape from the city all together.

David was not a man to run and hide, but he knew that this time Saul was serious. If he was captured then surely Saul would have him put to death. So David agreed to leave his home. Michal helped David by lowering him out the window on the wall that led to the outside of the city.

Then Michal went to work inside her own home. She wanted to make it look as if David was at home in bed. She took a wooden figure and placed it in the bed. She took a goats skin that was hairy and placed it where David's head would have been. Then she took a cover and tucked it over everything to look as if David were laying there.

The next morning King Saul sent a group of men to David's house to bring him in to be killed. Michal met the men at the door and told them that David was sick in bed. When the men returned to tell the king that David was sick, Saul commanded the men to bring David, bed and all, to him. He intended to kill David in his own bed.

When the men pulled back the covers to grab David, they found that they had been tricked. Saul was angry at his daughter. He realized that his own daughter loved David more than she loved her father. He scolded Michal but he did not harm her.

I Samuel 19:11-17 says, *Saul also sent messengers unto David's house, to watch him, and to slay him in the morning: and Michal David's wife told him, saying, If thou save not thy life to night, to morrow thou shalt be slain.*

*So Michal let David down through a window: and he went, and fled, and escaped.*

*And Michal took an image, and laid it in the bed, and put a pillow of goats' hair for his bolster, and covered it with a cloth.*

*And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, He is sick.*

*And Saul sent the messengers again to see David, saying, Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may slay him. And when the messengers were come in, behold, there was an image in the bed, with a pillow of goats' hair for his bolster.*

*And Saul said unto Michal, Why hast thou deceived me so, and sent away mine enemy, that he is escaped? And Michal answered Saul, He said unto me, Let me go; why should I kill thee?*

### **GOD'S PROTECTION**

David went to be with Samuel. He told Samuel that Saul had repeatedly tried to kill him or have someone else kill him. David knew that when he was with the man of God, he would be safe. When you go to God for protection, you are in the safest place possible for you to be.

Saul soon found out where David was. He sent servants to kill David, but when they found David and Samuel, the men could only speak good things of David. They could not do harm to David. That was the protection of God on David's life. God would not allow any harm to come to David because God had plans for David's life.

I Samuel 19:18-21 says, *So David fled, and escaped, and came to Samuel to Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth.*

*And it was told Saul, saying, Behold, David is at Naioth in Ramah.*

*And Saul sent messengers to take David: and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them, the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.*

*And when it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise. And Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they prophesied also.*

After three times of having his servants return and tell him they could not harm David, Saul decided to go kill David himself. He found Samuel and David but when he opened his mouth, only praises came out also. Just as God had prevented the servants of Saul from harming David, God also prevented Saul from harming David. In fact, only good things came out of his mouth.

I Samuel 19:22 says, *Then went he also to Ramah, and came to a great well that is in Sechu: and he asked and said, Where are Samuel and David? And one said, Behold, they be at Naioth in Ramah.*

*And he went thither to Naioth in Ramah: and the Spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on, and prophesied, until he came to Naioth in Ramah.*

Even Saul, as wicked as he had become, could not do wickedly while he was in the presence of God. When you are in the presence of God, you should have your mouth filled with praises to Him.

Did you know that God cares about everything you say and do? He cares about the words that come out of your mouth. What comes out of your mouth? Are your words filled with unkindness, lies, gossip, and complaining? Or are you so close to God that the words of your mouth are filled with kindness, truth, and praise? A person who is controlled by God will have a heart and mouth full of praise for God.

Listen to something David wrote about the type of words that should come out of our mouth and the type of things we should think about.

Psalm 19:14 says, *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.*

David said that our words and our thoughts should be pleasing to God. How about your words and actions? Are they pleasing to God? Are your words and actions kind or mean? Are they truthful or dishonest? Are they sweet or bitter? You need to be careful that all you say and do is under God's control.

The very first thing you can do to please God is to become His child. Not everyone is a child of God. In fact, everyone is born a sinner. We are all born without God. But Jesus Christ came to earth to get rid of your sin. He died on the cross to take the punishment for your sin. Now He wants you to ask Him to forgive your sin and to come into your life. Would you like to do that? You can do that today. We can show you how.

Maybe you have already asked Jesus to forgive your sin. Now you need to daily live and act in a way that is pleasing to God. Every day you need to guard your thoughts and your words and your actions. You daily need to ask God to help you to live the way He wants you to live.

Think about the words you say and the things you do. Are they pleasing to God? King Saul could have been pleasing to God, but instead he became a selfish man who only cared about pleasing himself. He was not willing to obey God and as a result he got so far away from God that everything he said and did was terrible. Saul was not pleasing to God.

David was just the opposite. Even when things didn't seem to be going well for David, he stayed close to God. He was careful about the things he said and did. He was pleasing in God's sight. And God blessed him because of it. God will bless you also if you do your best to stay close to Him and to please Him with your words and actions.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to examine your life. Are you Spirit controlled? What type of words come out of your mouth? Are they kind? Are they truthful? Or are they hurtful and dishonest? How about your actions? What kind of things do you do? Can other people tell you are a Christian by listening to your words and watching your actions? What kind of thoughts do you have? Are they pleasing to God?

On your own you can not be pleasing to God. You need God's help. You need the Holy Spirit's help. That is why it is so important to stay close to God. Take the time each day to read God's Word so you can know how he wants you to act. Pray so you can ask Him to help you to keep your words and actions pleasing to Him.

Then do your part. When you know how God wants you to act, then act that way. When you know the type of words that should come out of your mouth, then speak those words. Guard against words and actions that would be displeasing to God.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to be Spirit controlled in your thoughts, words, and actions.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. What command did King Saul give to his servants?
2. Who talked Saul into taking back his command to kill David?
3. What did Jonathan say to Saul about David?
4. What happened to make Saul angry with David again?
5. Recite today's memory verse.
6. What did Saul do while David was trying to calm him by playing the harp?
7. What did Michal do to protect David?
8. Who did David go to when he escaped his house?
9. How many groups of men did Saul send to kill David when he was with Samuel?
10. What happened each time the men came to where David and Samuel were staying?

# Temperance: Out of Control

The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.

Proverbs 11:5



I will let God control my life.

P	B	K	S	A	M	U	E	L	J	P	E	Q	Q	I
R	H	C	A	S	H	E	P	A	C	S	E	G	J	O
O	B	I	U	N	C	E	F	H	S	G	N	J	F	F
T	Q	S	L	O	K	N	P	C	V	L	A	K	X	U
E	A	R	H	I	D	A	V	I	D	V	Z	Y	R	U
C	Y	J	N	T	S	H	C	M	E	S	X	E	B	B
T	R	G	R	C	O	T	I	L	S	B	G	M	E	O
J	A	U	L	A	O	A	I	D	K	H	U	N	T	B
G	T	S	U	R	T	N	R	N	E	H	U	R	U	G
H	Q	G	Y	S	U	O	L	A	E	J	W	Y	X	O
N	E	D	P	O	W	J	L	M	R	S	M	E	J	T
L	Y	Q	E	S	H	X	A	J	N	Q	I	V	I	P
K	P	H	N	N	G	Q	W	T	P	T	E	A	U	Z
Z	D	W	W	B	N	L	D	V	W	D	A	I	R	O
M	E	S	J	F	M	P	W	H	E	M	K	O	H	P

Actions  
David  
Escape  
Hide  
Hunt

Javelin  
Jealousy  
Jonathan  
King  
Michal

Philistines  
Praise  
Protect  
Samuel  
Saul

Sick  
Trust  
Truth  
Victory  
Words

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LESSON 47

TEMPERANCE:  
OUT OF CONTROL II

LESSON ORDER

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



BIBLE TEXT

I Samuel 24:1-22

CHARACTER TRAIT

I will let  
God control my life.

MEMORY VERSE

*The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall  
by his own wickedness.*  
Proverbs 11:5



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

We have been talking about the fruit of the Spirit called Temperance. One meaning of that word is control. Some say it is self-control. Truly it is Spirit-control. God wants to control your life, but do you know what? Before God can control your life, He must first have control of your heart.

Our story today talks about two men. One allowed God to control both his heart and life. The other did not. As you listen today, think about your own heart and life. Who controls you?

Today's Life Lesson is: I will let God control my life.

### SONG TIME

### SUPPORTING STORY

#### A SPECK OR A BEAM

Obtain Flash Card

Jesus often told stories that were easy to picture in your mind. You can just visualize what he is talking about if you use your imagination. Let's read what Jesus said.

Matthew 7:3-5 says, *And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.*

Let me define a few words and then let me paint the picture for you.

The word mote means a sliver, or tiny speck of something. A beam refers to a large stick, maybe even a pole. (Show Flash Card)

Picture this. You are playing outside in your yard when suddenly something flies into your eye. It is just a speck, but you can't seem to get it out. Boy does it hurt!

So you go into the house and lean close into your mom's face and say, "Can you see anything? I've got something in my eye. Can you get it out?"

By now your eyes are watering and it is driving you crazy. Your mom looks closely and yes, she can see something. So she tries to remove it. But every time she gets near you, you blink and pull away. You just can't let her touch your eye.

“That’s OK,” your mom says. “If it hasn’t washed out by now with your tears, then it must be embedded in your eyeball. Maybe we better take you to the eye doctor!” your mom decides.

So you pile into the car and wish she would drive faster because this is really hurting. You sit in the waiting room and finally you are called in to see the eye doctor.

You enter the office and sit in the chair. The doctor is sitting across the room and is facing the other way. Then he turns around. Low and behold, he has a telephone pole sticking out of his eye!

“Hold still,” the doctor tells you. “I can’t get too close, but I have a telescope here so I can look into your eye. Let me see.” He holds up a telescope to his good eye so he can look way across the room and into your eye.

“Yep,” says the eye doctor. “I see something in there. Let’s see if I can get it out.”

“Wait one minute!” you say. “You have a telephone pole sticking out of your eye!”

“Oh, don’t worry about that. I work with it in there all the time. I hardly notice it anymore. Now back to you. I have a long handled hoe here. I can’t get very close to you so I will use this.”

“No, thanks,” you say as you jump out of the chair and decide to give your mom a second chance at getting the speck out.

Now that’s a silly picture, but it is what many people do in life. They are like the eye doctor. They have a telephone pole in their eye for so long, that they don’t notice it anymore. But at the same time, they think they can help everyone else get rid of the tiny speck in their eye.

The mote, or tiny speck stands for a problem that is small but irritating. In life, we Christians can have problems living for Jesus. We can find it hard to read the Bible and pray daily.

The beam is like a telephone pole. It stands for a large sin or problem in a person’s life. Some people are so used to living with sin that they hardly notice it. They make excuses for their sin. They just don’t think their sin is very bad.

But that same person with the large sin often looks around at others and says, “I need to take the speck out of their eye.” In other words, they want to point out what others do wrong, but they don’t want to clean up the sin in their own life.

It is easy to see the sin in everyone else’s life, while totally ignoring the sin in our own life. We can’t clean up anyone else’s life, but we can make sure that the sin in our own life is gone. You can ask God to forgive you and to daily control your life so it is pleasing to him.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.*  
Proverbs 11:5

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

I Samuel 24:1-22

### LESSON

#### IN THE CAVE

Saul was determined to kill David so he fled to the desert of Engedi. There he and his men were able to find hiding places in the rocks and caves.

Saul took an army of 3,000 men. That was a lot of men compared to the 600 men who followed David. It was nighttime so Saul found a cave to sleep in.

It wasn't by chance that Saul came to rest in the very cave where David and his men were hiding. They must have heard the army getting closer and closer. Then imagine how they felt when they realized that Saul himself had chosen their cave to bed down for the night!

I Samuel 24:1-3 says, *And it came to pass, when Saul was returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi.*

*Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats.*

*And he came to the sheepcotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet: and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave.*

David's men were excited. They thought this was the perfect chance for them to kill Saul while he was sleeping. David would be rid of Saul and he would never know what hit him! But

David had other ideas. David got up and quietly as a mouse he made his way to where Saul lay sleeping. He took a hold of Saul's robe and with a swift swipe he cut off a piece of the king's robe.

Do you know what? David felt badly that he had done even that much harm to Saul. David wouldn't harm King Saul in any way even though Saul wanted to kill him. Instead David still respected Saul as the king. He knew he would be the next king when God decided it was time, but until that time, David determined not to do any harm to Saul. He would not allow his men to harm Saul. Instead he waited on God's perfect timing.

That's a good lesson for us too. We should be careful to wait on God's timing for everything in our life. We should not try to rush ahead of God.

I Samuel 24:4-7 says, *And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the LORD said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily.*

*And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.*

*And he said unto his men, The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD.*

*So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way.*

#### **THE CONFRONTATION**

When Saul woke up and left the cave, David was waiting at a safe distance. He wanted to talk to Saul, but he didn't want to be captured. David called out to Saul. How surprised Saul must have been to hear David's voice. Saul turned around and there stood David, his enemy. David quickly bowed down before Saul to show his respect for him as the king. David was a wise man who behaved himself wisely. He was a Spirit controlled man who behaved himself in a godly manner.

David began to plead with Saul to stop trying to harm him. He mentioned to Saul that he had the perfect opportunity to kill Saul while he slept in the cave, but he didn't do him any harm. To prove his point, David held up the piece of cloth he had cut from Saul's robe. He assured Saul that he would never do him any harm. In fact, David still felt so fondly toward Saul that he called him "father."

Listen to David's words to Saul as he pleaded with him to believe that he did not need to fear that he would try to kill him in order to become king.

I Samuel 24: 9-12 says, *And David said to Saul, Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?*

*Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the LORD had delivered thee to day into mine hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the LORD'S anointed.*

*Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it.*

*The LORD judge between me and thee, and the LORD avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.*

### **SAUL'S CHANGE OF MIND**

Saul could hardly believe his ears. Here stood David before him with a piece of his robe in his hand. A cold sweat must have broken out on his forehead as he realized how close he had been to death at the hands of David. He knew that he would not have hesitated for a minute to kill David if things had been the other way around. But clearly David had shown him great love and respect. Clearly David did not want to do him any harm.

Saul didn't have much of a conscience left, but he seemed to understand that David was a better man than he was. Listen to what Saul has to say to David in response to what had just happened.

I Samuel 24:16-21 says, *And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept.*

*And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.*

*And thou hast shewed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch as when the LORD had delivered me into thine hand, thou killedst me not.*

*For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore the LORD reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day.*

*And now, behold, I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand.*

*Swear now therefore unto me by the LORD, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house.*

It was not a problem for David to swear that he would never harm Saul or anyone from his family. David had already proven he would never harm them. David was willing to wait on God's time. He was willing to let God control the situation in the best way.

It appeared that Saul had a huge change of heart. In truth, Saul had a change of mind, but he did not have a change of heart. He changed his decision to kill David for awhile. He did not

go on trying to kill David at that time. Instead he called for his army of men to follow him home to his palace.

But David did not just go home with Saul. No, David was wise enough to realize that Saul changed his mind but he hadn't changed his heart. Saul still had an angry spirit that harbored hatred and jealousy toward David. So instead of going home, David went on to find a new hiding place with his men.

I Samuel 24:22 says, *And David sware unto Saul. And Saul went home; but David and his men gat them up unto the hold.*

## WHAT NOT TO DO

King Saul was the perfect example of what not to do in life. So Let's stop, look, and listen to the lessons we can learn from Saul's mistakes.

### 1. Want God's way, not your way.

The people of Israel were selfish. Saul was selfish. Don't be like them. Instead of wanting your own way about everything, take the time to ask God what He wants. Remember, God's ways are always best. Don't be self-willed like Saul was. Let God have control.

II Samuel 22:31 says, *As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all them that trust in him.*

### 2. Be content with what God gives you.

Don't always be looking at what others have and desiring to have what they have. Don't be jealous of the good success of others. Instead be glad for what you have and be glad for others also. That is an attitude that is pleasing to God.

Hebrews 13:5a says, *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have.*

### 3. Stay close to God.

Our place of peace and safety is with God. The closer we are to God, the better we will be. Our life will be filled with joy and contentment when we are close to God. But when we wander away from God, then we allow sin to dirty our hearts and minds.

God wants you to stay close to Him. He wants you to talk to Him in prayer. He wants to talk to you through His Word, the Bible. And the closer you are to God, the better your life will be.

James 4:8 says, *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.*

#### 4. Obey God in all things.

Sometimes we just hate to obey, don't we? I know. It's hard to always do what others tell you when you have something else you would prefer to do. But obedience is so important. Obedience is our way of showing God that we love Him. Love for God changes our way of acting, thinking, and speaking. Love for God makes us want to obey.

In John 14:15 Jesus said, *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

#### **A CHANGE OF HEART**

What is the difference between a change of mind and a change of heart? You can know the facts about something in your mind. You can know what is true. But that is not the same as accepting the facts in your heart. Saul knew that David was not trying to kill him so he could become king. Saul knew that God had rejected him from being king. That was not David's fault. But knowing all those things in his mind did not change his heart. In Saul's heart he was jealous that God was with David. He was jealous that David would be the next king. He hated David even though David had done nothing wrong.

You can know the facts about something in your mind, but not accept them in your heart. David knew that the heart was very important. If you look up the word heart in the Psalms, the book that David wrote, you will find David talks about the heart over and over again. The heart is mentioned hundreds of times in the Psalms. David knew that everything that truly affects your life must first go through the heart. In order for you to let God control your life, you must first let him control your heart.

What kind of thing does God want you to have a change of heart about?

First, God wants you to have a change of heart about your sin.

The Bible says you are a sinner and that the only way for you to get rid of your sin is to ask Jesus Christ to take away your sin. Jesus came to earth to die on the cross for your sins. He took your punishment on Himself. All you need to do is admit you are a sinner and ask Jesus to forgive your sin.

Have you ever done that? Would you like to do that today? We can show you how to accept Jesus Christ into your life. That would be putting what you know in your head to work in your heart.

Second, God wants you to have a change of heart about your obedience.

You know in your mind that you need to be obedient. Your parents tell you that all the time, don't they? You need to obey your parents, your teachers, but you especially need to obey God. But knowing you need to obey and obeying from your heart are two totally different things. You know that you should do what you are told to do. You know that you shouldn't do

what you are told not to do. You know you shouldn't whine or fuss before you obey. But that can be hard to do, can't it? Sure. We all like to do things our own way. We all like to be our own boss. We like to be in control of our own life.

But doing things God's way is always best. David knew that. He was about to become the king of Israel and yet he was obedient to God. He did things God's way instead of doing things his way. David was a wise man. You can be wise also. You can do things God's way. And one thing that God asks of you is for you to be obedient.

God asks you to be obedient because He knows that is what is best for you. If you can learn to obey authority as a child, then when God asks you to obey Him as an adult, it will be much easier for you to do what God asks.

Psalm 139:23 says, *Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts.*

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to allow God to make some important changes in your heart. It is easy to understand something in your mind, but not to let it sink in to your heart. A heart change is what God is truly interested in.

God wants you to change your heart about the way you think, talk, and act. When you are asked to do something for your parents or when you know something the Bible tells you to do, how do you react?

Do you argue? Do you whine? Do you ignore what you should do? You say, "No!" to those in authority over you?

Think about how you talk and act when you are asked to obey. Think about how you think. What is your true attitude about obedience? If you only obey because you are forced to obey, then you need a change of heart.

The good news is that you can have a change of heart. God can change your heart if you let Him. Ask God to help you to change your heart. It may take time and effort to learn to obey with a true heart, but God can help you.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about today's challenge. How can you put it into action in your life?

(Give the children a few seconds to think.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you to accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to change your heart so that you obey because you want to please God.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Who wanted to kill David?
2. How many men followed David?
3. Recite today's memory verse.
4. What were David and his men forced to do because of King Saul?
5. Where were David and his men hiding the second time King Saul came to find David?
6. What did David's men want to do when they found that Saul was sleeping in their cave?
7. What did David do instead of harming Saul?
8. What was Saul's reaction when he saw the piece of his robe in David's hand?
9. What did David fondly call King Saul:
10. Did Saul have a change of mind or a change of heart?

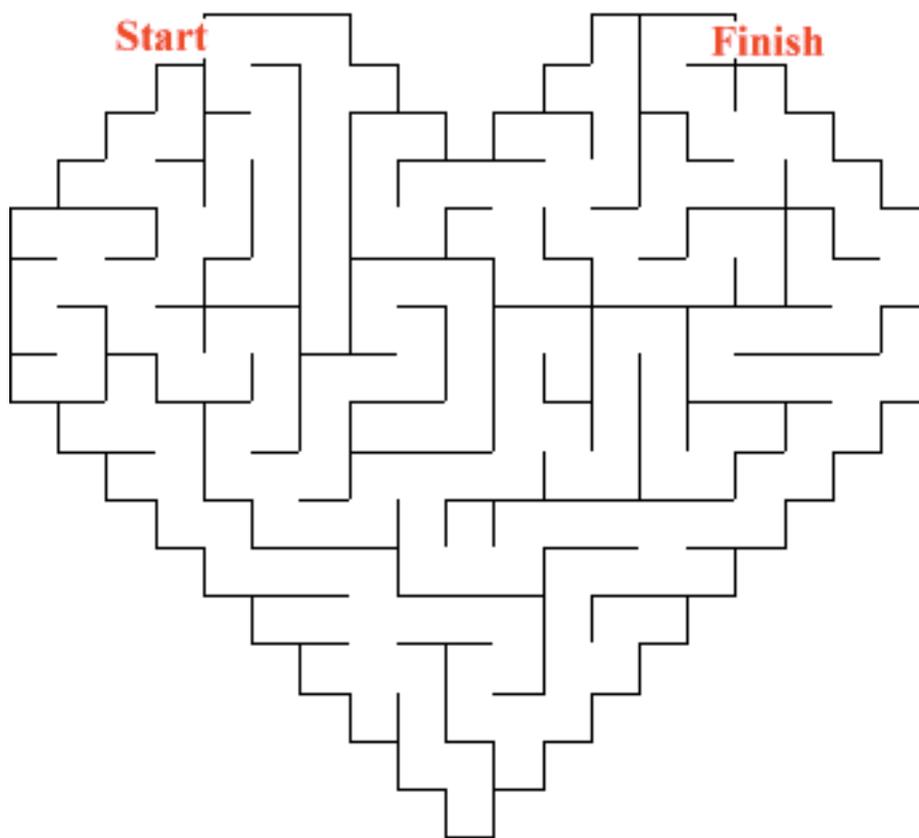
# Temperance: Out of Control

The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.

Proverbs 11:5



I will let God control my life.



Lord, control my heart and life.

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LESSON 48

TEMPERANCE:  
SPIRIT CONTROLLED

LESSON ORDER

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



BIBLE TEXT

I Samuel 18:1-4, 20:1-42

CHARACTER TRAIT

I will let  
God control my life.

MEMORY VERSE

*The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall  
by his own wickedness.*  
Proverbs 11:5



## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

Who controls your life?

Most people want to control their own life. They don't want anyone telling them what to do. But that's not a very wise thing when it comes to God. God is your Creator and He loves you very much. He knows all about you and He knows what is the very best for you life.

Temperence means self-control, but for a Chirstian it should me Spirit-controlled. A godly person allows the Holy Spirit to control his life. Be smart and let the Holy Spirit control your life.

Today's Life Lesson is: I will let God, the Holy Spirit control my life.

### SONG TIME

### SUPPORTING STORY

#### IN HIS IMAGE

Obtain Flash Card

I am going to tell you a story. It is not a true story like the Bible story we will hear later today, but if you listen carefully, I'm sure you will find it interesting.

Once upon a time in a far away kingdom, there lived a young prince. This prince was very, very unhappy. Why was he unhappy you ask? Well, I shall tell you.

This prince seemed to have everything that anyone could want to make him happy. He had many valuable and beautiful possessions for he was one of the richest princes in the land. He lived in a beautiful palace. His kingdom was known and envied throughout the known world for it's wealth and power and beauty.

The prince had a father, the King, who loved his son very much. The King wanted his son to develop into a wise and good ruler, just as he was.

One day the King decided to hire the most skilled builders in the kingdom to build a statue that looked exactly like he pictured his son to look when the prince would one day rule in the kingdom.

The workers took great care to make sure the statue looked exactly like the prince. It wore carved robes and a crown exactly like the prince's. But there was one difference, for the statue stood straight and tall. You see, the prince, though born rich and handsome, was terribly crip-

pled. His back was hunched over, and he could never stand up straight and tall. This was why the prince was so unhappy.

But when the King pictured his son, he saw only a handsome young prince that stood erect and tall. He saw only the best in his son.

After the statue was erected and revealed to the crowd of people, the prince hung his head in shame and fled to the palace to hide.

Early the next morning, before anyone had stirred from their beds, the young prince slowly made his way out to stand before the statue. He turned his head around as far as he could and he stared up a long time at the statue. How he wished that he could measure up to the statue that his father had built.

Just then a strange thought came to the prince.

“What if I stretch and stretch until eventually I can pull myself up to stand like the statue?”

So the prince stretched and stretched and stretched, and he lifted his bent over back just an inch before the poor muscles in his back would go no further. Then he relaxed back into place.

It hadn't worked, but the prince headed back into the palace with a smile on his face, for he had a plan.

Daily the prince would come to the statue early in the morning before anyone else in the Kingdom was about. The prince would walk to the image and pull himself up as far as he could. Day by day he found he could raise himself an inch, then another, then another. But he would always retreat to the castle before anyone could see him. He never told anyone his secret.

Finally, the day came when all the kingdom was called to the palace. No one knew why they had been summoned, but everyone came and stared in great curiosity.

The King came before the people and motioned for silence. Everyone gave a great gasp and watched in awe as they viewed what seemed to be a miracle: for out of the palace walked the young prince. He stood straight and tall. He stood next to the statue and he was the exact image of it. (Show Flash Card)

There was great rejoicing in the Kingdom that day.

This change had not occurred overnight. Day by day, the prince had stretched his body until the muscles in his back had grown stronger and stronger. A little at a time, the Prince was able to pull upright. Little by little, he became conformed to the image of the statue.

That's what God the Father, our King, wants from those who are His children. When you asked Jesus Christ to forgive your sin, you became a child of the King. But just being a child of the King does not mean that you always look and act like God, does it?

Even Christians sin. But God wants us to be in the exact image of himself. He created us to be in His image. The Bible says in Romans 8:29 that we are to *be conformed to the image of his son*.

How can we look more and more like Jesus Christ everyday? How can we look like the image of God? Much the same way that the Prince conformed to the image of the statue. We can become conformed to Christ's image by allowing the Holy Spirit to control our lives on a daily basis.

Daily we need to ask the Holy Spirit to help us to say the things that Jesus would say when we talk to others. Daily we need to ask the Holy Spirit to help us to do the things that Jesus would do in every situation.

It takes effort. It takes obedience to God. Daily we need to stretch our Spiritual muscles to help us to look and act more like Jesus Christ, until we are conformed to His image.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.*  
Proverbs 11:5

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

I Samuel 18:1-4, 20:1-42

### LESSON

#### THE KING'S SON

King Saul had a son named Jonathan. As the king's son, he was next in line for the throne. But sadly, because of his father's wickedness, Jonathan would never get to be the king.

You will remember that Jonathan was a man of war. He successfully led the men of Israel in battle many times. He had proven his courage on the battlefield. The Philistines had come to fight Israel and there were so many enemy soldiers on horseback and in chariots that Saul and the Israelites soldiers didn't know what to do? Most of the men ran away but Jonathan asked God to show him what to do. God rewarded his faith and Jonathan was able to gain the victory.

Not only was Jonathan a man of war, he was also a man of God. When Jonathan had a big decision to make, he turned to God to guide him. He didn't rely on his own wisdom and strength. Jonathan knew he should place his trust in God. He knew God's ways were always best. Jonathan was a man who was controlled by God.

### **A TRUE FRIEND**

The Bible tells us that a special friendship developed between David and Jonathan. Jonathan was drawn to David since he recognized him as a man who loved and obeyed God as he did. David and Jonathan felt a special bond with each other. They became special friends.

I Samuel 18:1 and 3 says, *And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.*

Jonathan did more than just love David as he loved his own life. Jonathan showed his love for David by giving to David. He gave David his own robe and other pieces of clothing. He gave David his sword, his bow and his belt.

I Samuel 18:4 *And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.*

### **A STRANGE FRIENDSHIP**

Normally the king's oldest son takes the throne when a king dies. Jonathan should have been next in line to be king. And he would have been if Saul had not sinned and caused God to reject him as king. But God told Saul that his son would not reign on the throne after him.

It was a strange situation when David, the man chosen by God to be the next king, became best friends with Jonathan. You would think that Jonathan would resent David. You would think these two men would be the last ones to become friends. But Jonathan was not like his father. He knew that if God had selected David to be king, then that was the best thing to happen. He trusted God to do what was best. Instead of worrying about all the attention David was getting, Jonathan was happy for David. He admired David for his courage and his faith in God.

### **AM I SAFE?**

Saul had promised his son, Jonathan, that he would not kill David or make any attempts to harm him. But we know that Saul broke his promise. He even went to David's house and tried to drag him from his bed to have him destroyed. But David's wife, Michal, had helped David to escape.

When David fled from Saul he was truly confused about why Saul wanted to kill him. David went to Jonathan. He began to ask him some questions about why his father was treating him so badly.

“Why is your father trying to kill me?” David asked. “What did I do wrong?”

Apparently Jonathan was surprised. The last time he had talked with him, Saul had agreed to stop his efforts to kill David. I am sure Jonathan hoped that his father would stop trying to harm his good friend. He must have loved his father and hoped that David was wrong.

Jonathan assured David that it couldn't be true. He said, “I'm sure my father no longer wants to harm you. My father hides nothing from me. He would tell me if he had changed his mind.”

“He isn't telling you what he is trying to do because he knows you are my friend. Trust me. I know my life is in danger!” David said.

I Samuel 20:1-3 says, *And David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said before Jonathan, What have I done? what is mine iniquity? and what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life?*

*And he said unto him, God forbid; thou shalt not die: behold, my father will do nothing either great or small, but that he will shew it me: and why should my father hide this thing from me? it is not so.*

*And David sware moreover, and said, Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes; and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved: but truly as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death.*

Jonathan and David decided on a plan to see what Saul was planning.

“Tomorrow is the Festival of the New Moon,” David said. “I am expected to attend. I will hide instead. If Saul asks where I am, tell him I have gone to Bethlehem to make my yearly sacrifice with my family. Then we will find out his true feelings. If he takes the news calmly, then all is well and I am safe. But if he becomes angry, then we will know that he means to do evil to me.”

Jonathan solemnly agreed to carry out David's plan. He would let David know what was in the heart of Saul.

I Samuel 20:4-7 says, *Then said Jonathan unto David, Whatsoever thy soul desireth, I will even do it for thee.*

*And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, to morrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat: but let me go, that I may hide myself in the field unto the third day at even.*

*If thy father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked leave of me that he might run to Bethlehem his city: for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family. If he say thus, It is well; thy servant shall have peace: but if he be very wroth, then be sure that evil is determined by him.*

## THE COVENANT

At an earlier time Jonathan had pledged to be a faithful friend to David. Now Jonathan asked David to pledge friendship to him and to his family, not just for his lifetime, but also for as long as David should live. Jonathan suspected that he would not live to see David become king. But Jonathan had a family and he wanted to be sure David would protect and care for them even after he was gone.

David gladly made that promise or covenant with Jonathan. He was happy to show kindness to Jonathan and his family. Jonathan had shown great kindness to him.

I Samuel 20:14-17 says, *And thou shalt not only while yet I live shew me the kindness of the LORD, that I die not:*

*But also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever: no, not when the LORD hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth.*

*So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, Let the LORD even require it at the hand of David's enemies. And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him: for he loved him as he loved his own soul.*

## THE PLAN

So the two friends devised a plan to let David know whether or not Saul still intended on killing him. Jonathan told David that in three days he and his servant would go out to the field. If Jonathan shot arrows that fell short of the servant, then David would know all was safe. But if Jonathan shot arrows that went way past the servant then David would know he should flee for his life.

So Jonathan returned to the palace and David hid himself. The first day nothing happened. Saul didn't even ask about David. The second day Saul asked Jonathan about David. Jonathan told his father that David had gone to be with his family in Bethlehem. When Saul realized David was gone, he was furious with Jonathan.

"Don't you think I know you have warned David?" Saul shouted. "Don't you know that David will some day take your throne from you? Why do you want to be friends with him?"

Jonathan tried to defend David. He asked his father what David had done. Saul was so angry that he took a javelin and threw it at Jonathan! He was so enraged that he tried to kill his own son. Jonathan ran.

I Samuel 20:24-30a says, *So David hid himself in the field: and when the new moon was come, the king sat him down to eat meat. And the king sat upon his seat, as at other times, even upon a seat by the wall: and Jonathan arose, and Abner sat by Saul's side, and David's place was empty.*

*Nevertheless Saul spake not any thing that day: for he thought, Something hath befallen him, he is not clean; surely he is not clean.*

*And it came to pass on the morrow, which was the second day of the month, that David's place was empty: and Saul said unto Jonathan his son, Wherefore cometh not the son of Jesse to meat, neither yesterday, nor to day? And Jonathan answered Saul, David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem: And he said, Let me go, I pray thee; for our family hath a sacrifice in the city; and my brother, he hath commanded me to be there: and now, if I have found favour in thine eyes, let me get away, I pray thee, and see my brethren. Therefore he cometh not unto the king's table.*

*Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan.*

### **FLEE!**

The third day came and David went to the field and hid behind a rock so no one could see him. He waited for Jonathan and the serving boy to come. Finally he heard the two approaching. Jonathan pretended to practice shooting his bow and arrows. Jonathan shot the arrows with all his might so that the arrows would land way beyond the boy. He loudly shouted, "The arrows have landed way beyond you! Run get them for me."

David knew instantly that Jonathan was warning him to flee for his life.

I Samuel 20:35-39 says, *And it came to pass in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad with him.*

*And he said unto his lad, Run, find out now the arrows which I shoot. And as the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him.*

*And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and said, Is not the arrow beyond thee?*

*And Jonathan cried after the lad, Make speed, haste, stay not. And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master.*

*But the lad knew not any thing: only Jonathan and David knew the matter.*

Jonathan told the boy to return to the palace. When he was sure they were alone David came out of hiding. The two friends knew this might be the last time they would see each other for a long time. As a sign of their friendship, they embraced and wept in sadness. Jonathan wished David safety and they left each other. Jonathan returned to his home but David went into permanent hiding. He could not return home again as long as Saul was king.

I Samuel 20: 40-42 *And Jonathan gave his artillery unto his lad, and said unto him, Go, carry them to the city.*

*And as soon as the lad was gone, David arose out of a place toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: and they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded.*

*And Jonathan said to David, Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the LORD, saying, The LORD be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever. And he arose and departed: and Jonathan went into the city.*

### **SPIRIT CONTROLLED**

Jonathan could have hated David, but because he allowed God to control his life, he felt true love toward David. Jonathan was a God-controlled man.

God wants to control your life. He knows what is best for you. Are you willing to let Him control all you think, say, and do?

Never forget that temperance is not really self-control. It is Spirit-control. If you let the Holy Spirit control your life, then you will have a life that is pleasing to God!

Let me ask you a question. Have you ever asked Jesus to come into your heart? Jesus loves you so much that He did for you what not other friend could do. He provided a way for you to spend all eternity in Heaven with Him.

The Bible says that we are all sinners and God hates sin. But God loves you. He loves you so much that Jesus Christ, God the Son, came to earth to take the punishment for you sin on Himself. Jesus died on the cross for you. He took your place. That's how much He loves you. Only a true friend would die for you.

Do you remember our memory verse for today? John 15:13 tells us, *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

Jesus had such great love for you. He lay down his life for you. He died for you.

My question to you is this, have you accepted the gift of salvation that Jesus died to give to you? In order to be forgiven of your sin and spend eternity in Heaven, you need to ask Jesus to forgive your sin. It is not enough to know that Jesus died for you. You must do something about it. You must ask for forgiveness.

I John 1:9 says, *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

Have you ever confessed your sin to Jesus? You can do that today. We can show you how.

## **INVITATION**

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to let the Holy Spirit control your life. This is our last lesson on Temperance. But I hope it is not the last time you think about how important it is to allow God to control your life. Every time you hear the story of David, Jonathan, and Saul, I hope you think of how they reacted to God's attempt to control them. David and Jonathan willingly submitted to God's control and God blessed them. Saul rejected God's control and what a sad life and death were his!

God has a perfect plan for your life. The only way He can carry out His plan is if you allow Him to control you. And the great news is that you don't have to do it alone. The Holy Spirit will help you if you ask Him.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to allow Him to control your life.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. What did David ask Jonathan?
2. Why did Jonathan think David was safe?
3. What plan did David and Jonathan come up with to determine if Saul meant him harm?
4. What festival was being celebrated?
5. How would Jonathan let David know if he was in danger?
6. What happened when Jonathan told Saul David had gone to Bethlehem?
7. What did Saul do to Jonathan?
8. What happened when Jonathan sent the servant boy back to the palace?
9. How many more times did Jonathan and David see each other after this day?
10. Recite today's memory verse.

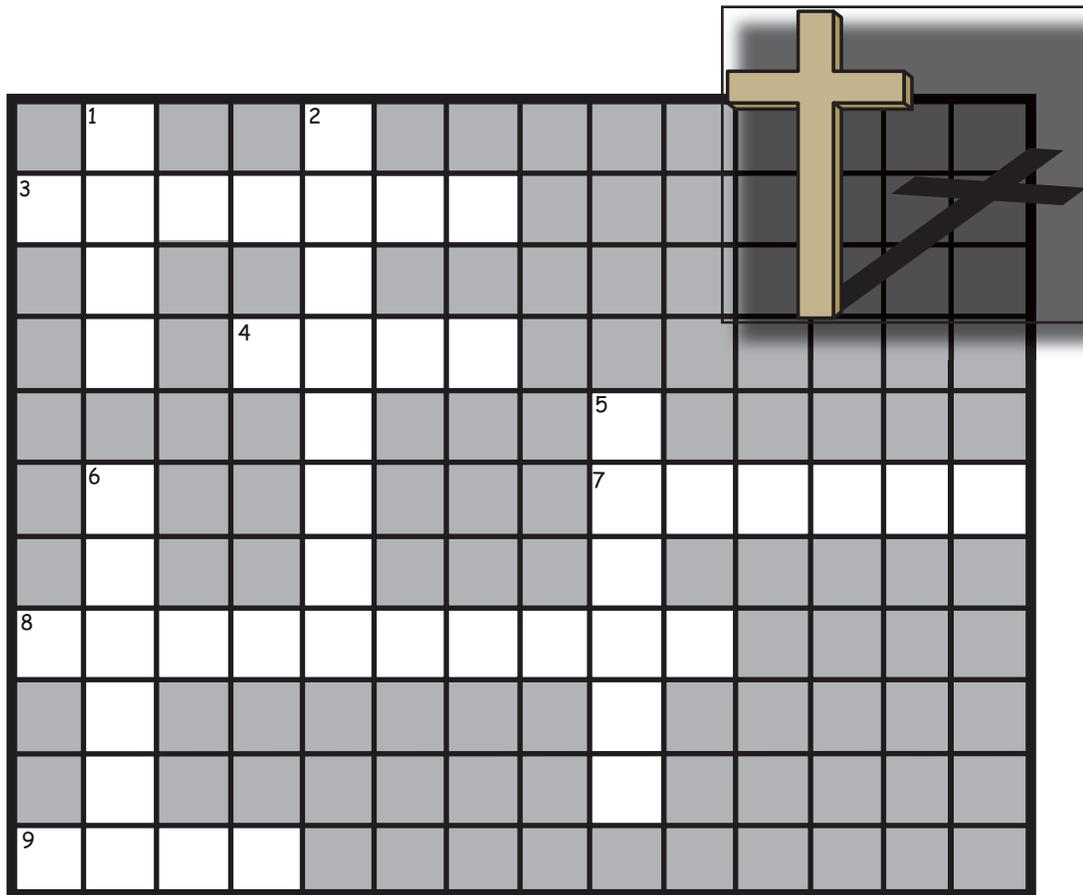
# Temperance: Spirit Controlled

The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.

Proverbs 11:5



I will let God control my life.



### Across

3. What festival was coming up?  
(Two words)
4. He wanted to kill David.
7. What was Jonathan to shoot?
8. David and Jonathan pledged this.
9. David was warned to do this.

### Down

1. David and Jonathan did this when they parted.
2. He was David's best friend.
5. Jonathan asked David to protect his what?
6. Saul ruled this country.

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EASTER LESSON

THE LAMB OF GOD

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction

Song Time

Supporting Story

Memory Verse Time

Bible Lesson Time / Invitation

Challenge / Quiet Time

Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

John 1:29, Luke 23, Mark 16

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

Christ died for me.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners,  
Christ died for us.*

Romans 5:8



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## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

If you were from another planet and came to earth to look around, what would you think the Easter holiday was all about?

As you walked through any store this week, you would surely think Easter was about Jelly Beans, colored eggs, and bunnies. You wouldn't have any real idea about what Easter really means, would you?

We know that Easter is about God's great love for man. Man is dead in sin, but Jesus Christ came to earth to die on the cross for our sins. Then on the third day He rose from the grave. He did that so we could have our sin forgiven. Jesus died so we could be alive Spiritually. Oh, how much Christ loves you and me!

Today's Life Lesson is: Christ died for me.

### SONG TIME

### SUPPORTING STORY

The Son of God

#### SET UP

You can do this alone and act out the parts with others, but it would be best to get several helpers to each take a part. You can copy the parts and give them out a week ahead to allow each player a chance to read and practice their part.

#### STORY

**Narrator:** There were many people who stood at the foot of the Cross. They were there for many different reasons. Some were there because it was their job. Some were there because they knew Jesus. Some were there just out of curiosity. But almost all walked away knowing that Jesus was the Son of God.

If we could have heard the words of those who stood at the foot of Jesus' cross, I wonder what they would say?

**Town Person:** I live in Jerusalem. I don't know why they killed Jesus. I've heard of His miracles. Then I saw Him perform one! He was a good man. No, He was more than a man, He was truly the Son of God! I saw it with my own eyes! He healed the sick and caused the blind to

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see and the lame to walk. They said He spoke blasphemy when He claimed to be the Son of God, but He spoke the truth. Only God could have done what He did!

**Mary:** I was there. They couldn't keep me away. I was Jesus mother. The hardest thing I've ever done in my life was to watch my son in such pain and agony. All the while He kept His dignity. When He saw me, His only thought was of my comfort and needs.

Do you know that before Jesus' birth an angel told me Jesus would be called the Son of God? That's why they killed Him, because they claimed He called Himself the Son of God. Why would they want to kill the Son of God?

**Centurion:** I am the Roman Centurion assigned to crucify Jesus. I'd heard of this Jesus. They made claims that He could do what no man could do. That he was the Messiah. The Son of God.

I didn't believe any of what those superstitious peasants claimed. They loved to believe such things. But I was a busy man with troops to command. I had no time for such nonsense. I am a Centurion with many responsibilities.

I was assigned to the crucifixions that day. Not a pleasant task, but it was my job. I thought it would be a good show when I heard that this Jesus was to be crucified. But Jesus was different from the beginning. Most men plead and curse as we nail them to the cross, but he did not make a sound. He said very little. But I heard Him speak like He was talking to God. He asked Him to forgive us. Can you imagine? There He was, dying, and He was forgiving us.

It takes most men days to die on the cross, but Jesus cried out with a loud, strong voice to God and then He died. He let His life go from Him. What man can do that?

Then the sun was dark and the earth shook. This was no ordinary man! Truly this was the Son of God!

**Narrator:** *Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.*

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*  
Romans 5:8

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## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

John 1:29, Luke 23:26-48, Mark 16:1-6

### LESSON

#### **THE FIRST SACRIFICE FOR SIN**

The Bible tells us that God created the world and all that is in it. He made the sky above and the oceans with all the sea life. He made the dry land and all the things that live and grow on the land. Then God created Adam and Eve. He placed them in the beautiful Garden of Eden. There they were surrounded by so much beauty. God gave them fruit to eat from all the trees except for one tree. God told them not to eat the fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. That was forbidden.

Daily God would walk and talk and close fellowship with them. How wonderful that must have been. But one day when God came to talk to Adam and Eve, they were hiding from God. They had disobeyed God and they did not want to see God. They had eaten from the forbidden tree and they had become sinners.

When Adam and Eve sinned, God could not just ignore Adam and Eve's sin. He had to punish their sin. God had warned Adam and Eve that in the day they ate from the tree they would die.

God was right. That very day Adam and Eve died spiritually. But that wasn't the only death that day. God had to take an animal and kill it so He could take its skin to make clothes to cover them. That first lamb died so that their sin could be covered.

After that God's people had to regularly sacrifice an animal, often a lamb, to show God that they were sorry for their sins. God would look at the sacrifice and it covered their sin. At least for the time.

But the death of the lamb did not take away their sin. Covering sin is not good enough. There had to be something more.

#### **A RIGHTEOUS JUDGE**

You see, God is a righteous judge and sin must be punished. God can't just sweep your sin under a rug. He can't pretend it doesn't exist. He must deal with it.

But isn't God a God of love? Shouldn't God let us all go to Heaven regardless? He can't. God is a righteous judge and sin must be punished.

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Suppose a man went into a busy store with a gun and killed 20 people. Suppose they catch the guy and they have his trial. The man admits he killed the people. He is found guilty of the crime.

Now it is time for the judge to sentence the man. What if the judge were to say, "I'm a really nice guy. And because I am such a nice guy, I'm going to let this man go free."

What would you say? You'd say, "It doesn't matter how nice the judge is! The man committed a crime, he was found guilty of the crime and now he deserves to pay the penalty for the crime. The character of the judge has no bearing on the penalty."

You would be correct. The penalty for the crime must be paid.

You and I are sinners. The Bible says in Roman 3:23 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*

Romans 6:23 tells us, *For the wages (or payment) of sin is death.*

We have committed the crime. We have been found guilty of the crime. We deserve to pay for the crime.

But God loves us. He doesn't want us to have to pay for the crime. He doesn't want us to be separated from Him in Hell for all eternity.

But God is still a righteous judge. The fact that God loves us is not enough to cancel out the fact that we are sinners.

### **JESUS' SACRIFICE FOR SIN**

So God had a plan. He sent His own Son, Jesus Christ down to earth to die on the cross in our place. Jesus paid the penalty for sin. Jesus died. Jesus took our place.

Luke 23:33-34 says, *And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.*

*Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.*

Jesus Christ is the lamb of God.

Jesus died as a lamb being sacrificed for our sin. But when Jesus died, His blood that was shed does not only cover our sin, it completely takes it away. God can forgive you because of what Jesus did on the cross.

John 1:29 says, *Behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*

Because Jesus Christ died in your place, God can offer you a pardon. All you have to do is accept what Jesus did for you.

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Have you done that?

## EASTER

But there is more to Easter than just Jesus dying on the cross for us. There is also something that happened three days later. Jesus not only died, but three days later He rose from the dead.

Mark 16:1-6 says, *And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.*

*And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.*

*And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?*

*And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.*

*And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.*

*And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.*

If Jesus had died and stayed dead, He would have been an ordinary man just like everyone else. No other person can come back from the dead, but Jesus could come alive again because Jesus is God. Only God could let His life go and only God could take it back up again whenever He pleased. Jesus is God the Son. And because Jesus died and then rose again, He can forgive your sin and give you an eternity in Heaven.

Jesus is alive again. He is in Heaven now. And He wants you to spend eternity in Heaven with Him.

Many of you have already asked Jesus to forgive your sin. You know you are forgiven. Some of you have heard me tell you about Jesus over and over, week after week. But you haven't been ready to accept Jesus. Some of you are visiting and maybe this is the first time you have heard what Easter is really all about.

The question is, would you like to ask Jesus to forgive your sin and come into your heart? You can do that today. We can show you from the Bible how you can be saved.

## INVITATION

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## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to remember that Easter isn't just about candy and Easter eggs and bunnies. It's about so much more!

Easter is really about what Jesus did when He died and then rose again. Remember to thank Him for dying for your sin. Thank Him for loving you that much. And don't forget to tell a friend that He loves them too.

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to remember that Christ died for you.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Why did God have to kill an animal in the Garden of Eden?
2. Why can't God just ignore sin?
3. Which could the blood of a lamb do, cover or take away sin?
4. Recite today's memory verse.
5. Fill in the blank. God is a righteous \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Who has committed the crime of sinning?
7. What does the righteous Judge offer us?
8. Who is the Lamb of God?
9. Why did Jesus die on the cross?
10. What day did Jesus rise from the tomb?

# The Lamb of God

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8



Christ died for me.

Find the words below. Look forward, backwards, up, down and diagonally.

S	P	I	R	I	T	U	A	L	N	J	Y	V	A	L
N	T	Y	N	E	E	S	M	O	N	E	Y	Q	Y	O
T	C	E	J	E	R	A	I	D	L	S	V	P	U	A
G	D	B	B	S	D	S	G	N	S	U	B	A	E	Y
B	J	O	P	A	I	E	M	A	K	S	S	J	E	A
M	R	S	L	C	A	L	V	A	R	Y	A	Y	C	H
N	M	I	E	E	R	T	S	E	O	D	V	C	N	T
W	V	D	F	H	A	O	I	O	W	D	E	B	D	I
E	X	W	I	B	F	V	S	C	R	P	D	N	R	Q
I	J	U	L	E	P	Y	D	S	T	A	M	S	B	M
M	L	C	K	P	D	Q	M	P	E	S	G	I	L	O
J	W	E	Y	V	E	J	J	D	R	R	D	S	N	T

ADAM  
EVE  
EDEN  
GARDEN

SIN  
DISOBEY  
DEAD  
ALIVE

TREE  
BORN  
WORKS  
MONEY

RAGS  
JESUS  
DIED  
CROSS

CALVARY  
DECISION  
ACCEPT  
REJECT

HEAVEN  
SAVED  
LIFE  
SPIRITUAL



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PATRIOTIC LESSON

FREEDOM RINGS!

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction

Song Time

Supporting Story

Memory Verse Time

Bible Lesson Time / Invitation

Challenge / Quiet Time

Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

John 8:36

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

I am free in Christ.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

John 8:32



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## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

This week we are celebrating a very important day. Who can tell me what that day is? That's right it is (Memorial Day, 4th of July.) Who can tell me why that day is important to our country?

Freedom is a word that you have all heard and will hear every time someone talks about the United States. We love freedom in our country. And we are blessed of God to live in a free country.

So today, let's start our celebration of Freedom by singing some songs that talk about our free land.

Today's Life Lesson is: I am free in Christ.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

Our National Anthem

#### SET UP

Obtain 2 Flash Cards

#### STORY

We have all sung the words to our National Anthem, The Star-Spangled Banner, but few know the story behind how the words were written.

In 1812 the war began between the United States and Briton. In 1813 the commander of Fort McHenry ordered that a special flag be made that was so big that "the British have no trouble seeing it from a distance."

Francis Scott Key was a lawyer who practiced just a few miles out of Washington D.C. He was married with 6 sons and 5 daughters.

In 1814 the capitol came under attack and President James Madison, his wife, and all those who lived in the White House fled for their lives. They had to leave so quickly that they only had time to rip the portrait of George Washington from its frame and flee to safety.

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The British set fire to many of the buildings in Washington including the Capitol and the White House. They then returned to their ships. They were headed to Baltimore to continue the attack. The flames shot high in the air and could be seen from a distance of 40 miles. Our nation's capitol was on fire! But God sent rain and the fires were quenched.

American troops in Baltimore prepared for the fierce battle that would come both by land and by sea. They braced to fight the British.

Word came to Francis Scott Key that the British had captured an old doctor by the name of Dr. William Beans. He was being held on the battleship TONNANT. In fear for the doctor's life, the people of the town asked Mr. Key if he would try to negotiate his release.

On the morning of September 3, 1814, Francis Scott Key and Col. John Skinner set sail. They found and boarded the ship where the doctor was being held captive.

The British did not want to release the doctor but Mr. Key showed them letters from wounded British soldiers commending Dr. Beans for his kind and skillful care of them when he had treated their wounds.

It was agreed that he would be released. However, while the Americans were aboard the ship they heard some of the British plans for the battle that was about to begin in Baltimore. The British would not let any of the men leave. Instead, they were transferred to another ship that stayed just behind the British fleet. Now they were all being held captive for the time being.

There was nothing the men could do but watch from the ship as the battle began. It was now September 13th. For 25 long hours the British ships hurled bombs at Fort McHenry. Even from the ship the men could see the large American flag that waved throughout the fierce battle. The British fired over 1,500 bombshells, some weighing as much as 220 pounds, at the fort.

(Show Flash Card A)

Through the pounding explosions and fearful hours the men kept an eye on the flag. As long as it flew, they knew the Americans were still fighting. The battle was not over.

Through the long night they could only see the flag for the few seconds when a bomb exploded. Then they would anxiously wait for the next bomb to see if the flag still flew.

Then, strangely, a silence fell. The bombs quit. It was deathly silent. Francis and the other Americans could not tell if the flag flew because it was still dark. The battle was over and they couldn't tell who had won.

The men waited on the deck, straining to see through the predawn light that was just emerging. Then finally, amazingly, they saw it! The flag was still there!

Francis Scott Key pulled a letter from his coat and on the back of the letter began to write the words that swelled in his heart.

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O, say can you see  
Through the dawn's early light,  
What so proudly we hail  
At the twilight's last gleaming,  
Whose broad stripes and bright stars  
Through the perilous night  
O're the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming.  
And the rockets red glare,  
The bombs bursting in air,  
Gave proof through the night  
That our flag was still there.  
O say does that Star-spangled Banner yet wave  
O're the land of the free,  
And the home of the brave.

This song became our National Anthem on March 3, 1931. (Show Flash Card B) This is a picture of the actual flag that flew over Fort McHenry that September morning as Francis Scott Key and the other men watched to see if the flag still flew.

The next time you sing that song, remember the men who fought and died so that you can salute that flag and live in a land that is free.

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*      John 8:36

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## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

John 8:36

### LESSON

#### **MEN OF FREEDOM**

Long ago there were men and women who left everything they had and everyone dear to them to travel from other lands to come to a place where they could live and worship God. They believed this new land was worth the sacrifice. That new land was the very beginnings of our country.

Then in 1776 the United States was born. It was a bold move for the men who formed the government to step out and say they wanted to be free and independent. We had once been subject to British rule. The British considered us a colony that belonged to them. They did not look kindly on the men who called for freedom and independence.

But even though freedom meant war with England, these men were willing to fight for that liberty. From the very beginning, Americans had a vision of freedom and they were willing to sacrifice for that freedom.

A patriot named Patrick Henry said it best, way back on March 23, 1775, with the famous words: *I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!*

The war for independence way back in the 1700's was not the last war that Americans would fight so that you and I could enjoy liberty. There have been many wars over the years. Many men and women have lost their lives to win that liberty.

Men like George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Ronald Reagan, and other presidents have taken a stand for freedom. Sometimes it has been freedom from other countries, sometimes freedom for the people who lived within our country. Some even have fought for freedom for people of other countries who do not know freedom and need a helping hand.

#### **THE PRICE OF FREEDOM**

Having freedom and liberty means we have peace, but peace does not always come free. Freedom is not free. It must be paid for at a great cost. Many men and women of our country have willingly paid the price with their time and many have even paid with their lives.

#### **UNKNOWN HEROES**

From little towns all over the United States, men and women have willingly gone to fight for freedom. A few are famous and you have read about them in history books, but most who

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fight for freedom are not famous. You have never heard their names. You will never see their pictures.

You have never heard of Roy Rudduck, from Milan, Michigan, who fought in World War II. He is an ordinary man who went to Germany and was wounded by a bomb shell. He lay in the snow for hours waiting for a medic to come help him. He did that so you could live in a free America.

You have not heard of most of the men and women who served in WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Iran, Afganistan, and Iraq. But because they believe in a free world, they fought. They believe in a free America. They are heroes

Even now the American military fights in other countries to win liberty for people who are the captives of tyrants who hate freedom.

There are countries where the people are not free to live life as they choose. They are not free to speak what they believe. They are not free to worship God. How terrible it would be to live in a country without liberty.

#### **CHRIST GIVES FREEDOM**

But there is one who died for the freedom of all mankind. He loves freedom. He loves you. And He made the ultimate sacrifice for your freedom.

So many people are still in chains of bondage. They do not know the freedom that He offers to them.

Some of those people that are in bondage live right here in the United States. What do I mean? What chains of bondage? We are free to live and work as we choose. Right? We are free to speak as we choose. Right?

Yes, but the Bible tells us that true freedom and liberty comes from having your sin forgiven. We are chained by the bondage of sin.

Jesus Christ was not forced to earth to die for man's sin. Jesus is God. He created the universe. When Adam and Eve sinned and became slaves to sin, He could have let them die in sin and not cared what happened to them. Or He could have destroyed them and started all over again with another man and woman.

But he didn't. Instead God chose to send His own Son, Jesus Christ, to be born on earth. Jesus became a man. He lived and then He died on the cross in your place, in my place. Jesus paid the price for our freedom.

When we ask Jesus to come into our lives, we are destroying the tyrant of sin who rules over us. Satan wants to keep us in bondage, but when we get saved, we are breaking the chains of sin that have kept us captive.

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There is only one way to have true peace and that is to make peace with God. We make peace with God by accepting what Jesus did for us on Calvary. God looks at the blood Jesus shed that takes away our sin. God sees us as spotless and clean from sin. God gives us freedom.

When you get saved, Jesus gives you the wonderful gift of freedom from your sin. Before you are saved, you are held captive by sin. You are dead in sin. And you can't save or rescue yourself. Only Jesus Christ can set you free.

John 8:36 says, *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*

There is spiritual freedom in Jesus Christ. Freedom from sin.

Salvation also gives you the freedom to live as God would want you to live every day here on earth. God has a plan for your life. But you cannot live that plan unless you are saved from sin. Once you are saved, you have freedom to serve God with your life.

Someday you will have freedom from eternal death in Hell. Instead you will be given eternal life in Heaven. There you will be with God. There all the problems of earth will be gone. There you will truly be at peace.

So, do you want freedom from sin, freedom to live for God, and freedom to enjoy eternal life in Heaven?

You can have it. It is a free gift. It is free to you. Jesus paid the price. He died for you. Will you accept His gift? We can take a Bible and show you how.

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to take a minute to think about those who have fought for your freedom. Thank the Lord that you live in a country where you are free.

Then thank the Lord for the freedom you have from sin. Thank Him for dying on the cross so that you can be free!

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## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to remember you are free in Christ.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Name one President who fought for freedom.
2. Name another President who fought for freedom.
3. Fill in the blank. Freedom is not \_\_\_\_\_.
4. What year did the United States declare their independence.
5. What country did we have to fight for our independence?
6. Who wrote our National Anthem?
7. What was the name of the doctor Mr. Key was trying to rescue?
8. Recite today's memory verse.
9. What was the name of the fort the British were bombing?
10. What did Francis Scott Key and Dr. Beans look for as the light dawned?

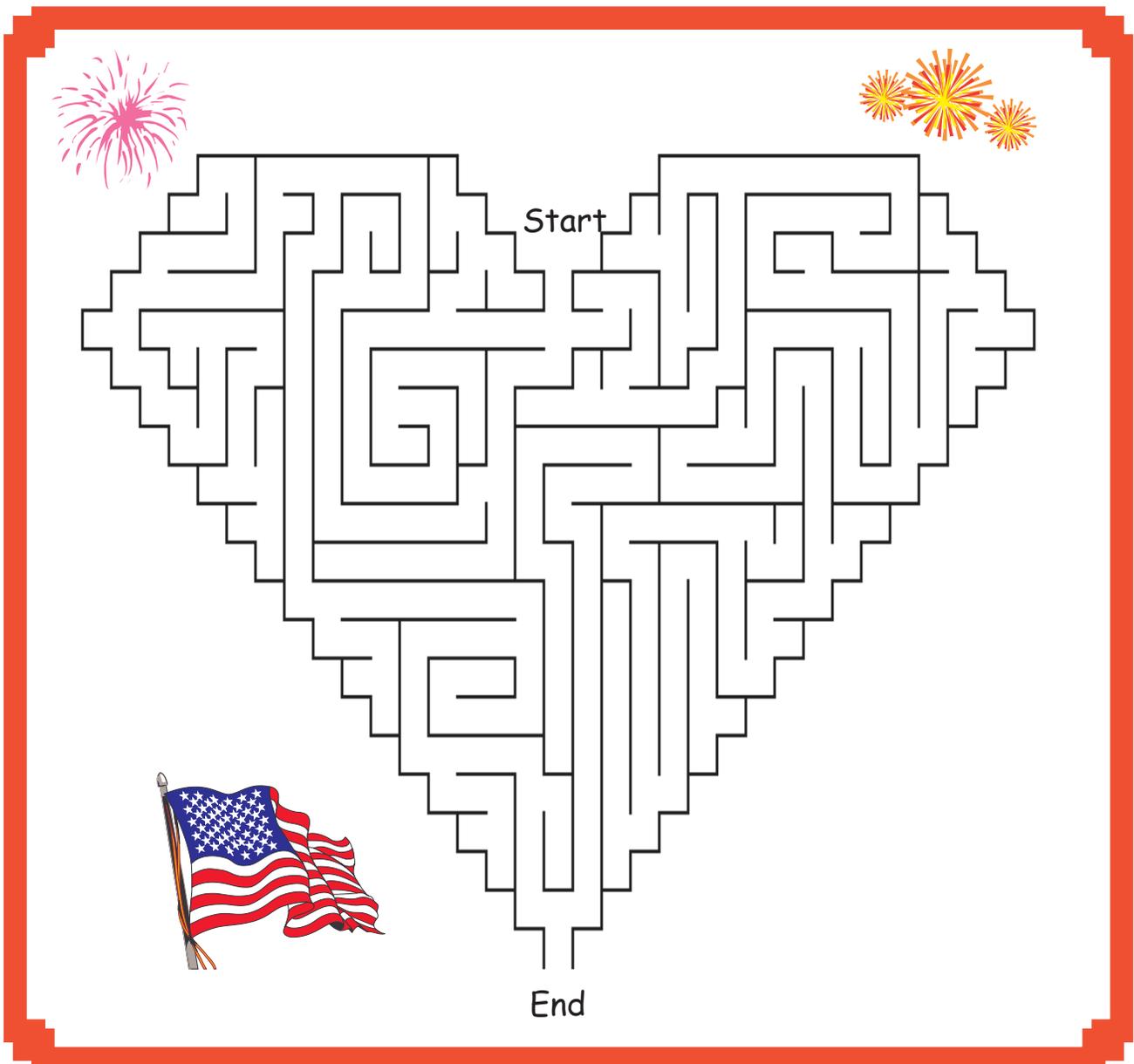
# Freedom Rings!

And ye shall know the truth, and  
the truth shall make you free.

John 8:32



I am free in Christ.



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THANKSGIVING LESSON

A THANKFUL HEART

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction  
Song Time  
Supporting Story  
Memory Verse Time  
Bible Lesson Time / Invitation  
Challenge / Quiet Time  
Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Psalms

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

I will praise God  
with a thankful heart.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all  
thy marvellous works.* Psalm 9:1



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## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

Tracy loved going with her grandpa to the seniors' home each Tuesday afternoon.

When Tracy and Grandpa walked through the door, there were always several people waiting for them. They would greet them with a smile. Then the people would begin to gather in the room and wait for her Grandpa to start the meeting. Grandpa would sing songs and play the guitar. Then he would read from the Bible and talk about God.

One day as they were walking back to the car, Tracy looked at her grandpa with a serious look on her face.

"Grandpa," Tracy said. "You know, the happiest person there is Miss Marion."

"Yes, she certainly radiates the joy of the Lord," Grandpa replied.

"But I heard the nurses say that no one ever visits her except us. And she can barely walk. She has to use that walker. Why do you suppose she's so happy?"

"Tracy, Miss Marion has a thankful heart. She may not have much going for her here on earth anymore, but she knows she has a home in Heaven. She loves the Lord. That's why she sings the loudest and praises the longest!"

Do you have a thankful heart that is filled with praise for God?

Today's Life Lesson is: I will praise God with a thankful heart.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

##### **THANKS TO GOD FOR MY REDEEMER**

In 1891 August Ludwig Storm was a young man working for The Salvation Army. He loved the Lord with all his heart and one day he decided to sit down and write out a list of all the things that he was thankful to God for. He came up with a very long list! I think that it would be a wise idea for each one of us to take the time some time this week to make a list of all that we can thank God for in our lives.

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The strange thing about Mr. Storm's list is that not everything he was thankful for was something we would think of being thankful for!

Oh, he thanked God for home and beautiful roses and Springtime. He also thanked God for Jesus' saving and guiding him. Then he thanked God for some things we might not be very thankful for. He thanked God for dark days, for tears he had cried, pain and for the thorns in life.

You see, Mr. Storm had learned that in good or bad times, in easy or hard times, God was always with him and was always working for his good. And he knew that one day he would spend all eternity in Heaven with God where there would be no more pain or sorrow. Until then he was thankful that he could trust God to be doing what was best in his life.

A few years after Mr. Storm wrote this song, he had a terrible disease in his body that took away his ability to walk. For the rest of his life he was crippled. Yet, even with that hard thing in his life, he was able to say, "Thanks to God. . ."

Here is the song Mr. Storm wrote.

Thanks to God for my Redeemer,  
Thanks for all Thou dost provide!  
Thanks for times now but a memory,  
Thanks for Jesus by my side!  
Thanks for pleasant, balmy springtime,  
Thanks for dark and dreary fall!  
Thanks for tears by now forgotten,  
Thanks for peace within my soul!

Thanks for prayers that Thou has answered,  
Thanks for what Thou dost deny!  
Thanks for storms that I have weathered,  
Thanks for all Thou dost supply!  
Thanks for pain and thanks for pleasure,  
Thanks for comfort in despair!  
Thanks for grace that none can measure,  
Thanks for love beyond compare!

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Thanks for roses by the wayside,  
Thanks for thorns their stems contain!  
Thanks for home and thanks for fireside,  
Thanks for hope, that sweet refrain!  
Thanks for joy and thanks for sorrow,  
Thanks for heavenly peace with Thee!  
Thanks for hope in the tomorrow,  
Thanks through all eternity!

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.*  
Psalm 9:1

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Psalms

Obtain Flash Card

### LESSON

#### **A MAN WITH A THANKFUL HEART**

Today we are going to talk about a man from the Bible who had a thankful heart. That man was well known to the people of his day. And I suppose that he is well known to you also. That man is King David.

David began his life as a simple shepherd. He was not born the wealthy son of a royal king. Instead he was born into the family of a humble sheep herder. David learned how to care for sheep from his father and every day he would faithfully go into the fields to watch over his sheep.

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He may have even spent the night under the stars as he kept out a sharp eye for anyone or anything that would cause harm to his sheep.

David learned about God as a young boy, and he must have learned to love and trust God then. When he was just a teenager God looked at David's heart and knew that David would love and obey Him. God knew He could trust David to lead the nation of Israel. So God selected David to be the second and greatest king that Israel would ever know.

God used David's time as a shepherd to teach him many valuable lessons that he would use as the king of Israel. As David cared for his sheep, God was training David to be a leader who would love his people as he loved his sheep. David was learning how to guide and protect his people as he had guided and protected his sheep.

God sent Samuel to anoint David to be the king, but God told David that he would have to wait until the right time when he could take the throne. David did not argue with God. He did not say, "Why should I wait? I want to be king now!" He did not say, "Why don't you remove King Saul now? I will be a better king than Saul!" No. David humbly waited on God's timing.

David often used his music and his songs to praise the Lord. He used his songs to tell of how God was working in his life. David's songs show how David was thankful to God for many things. Let's look at some of the things David was thankful for to God.

- David was thankful for God's Protection.

Over and over in the Psalms, David expresses his praise to God for the times when God saw his troubles and delivered him. David was a man who knew what it meant to have enemies chasing after him. King Saul came to hate David and he and his men often tried to kill David. For many years David had to run and hide. There were some close calls, but God always protected David. God had a plan for David and Saul would not foil God's plan.

David said in Psalm 27:5-6, *For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.*

*And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.*

Even after David was the king, there were many times when he led his men in battle against an enemy. Every time David would praise God for the victory. He never forgot that his victories came from God.

David said in Psalm 21:1, *The king shall joy in thy strength, O LORD; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!*

- David was thankful for God's presence.

When David was hiding from King Saul in a dark, cold cave, there must have been times when he felt all alone. But David knew that wherever he went, God was there with him. God's presence must have given him courage and comfort.

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David said in Psalms 16:11, *Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.*

You have God's presence with you at all times too!

- David was thankful for God's listening ear.

David knew that when he had a need or a trouble, all he had to do was call to the Lord and He would have God's ear. God was always listening for David's cry.

David said in Psalms 18:6, *In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears.*

When you call to God in your times of trouble, God is listening to you too!

- David was thankful for God's forgiveness.

There were many times when David failed God. David was human and he sinned. But when David would repent of his sin and ask forgiveness, God was quick to forgive David. How blessed David felt because God loved him enough to forgive his sin.

David said in Psalms 32:1, *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.*

God loves you the same way. When you come to God with a repentant heart and ask forgiveness, God will forgive you too!

- David was thankful for God's bounty.

God did many wonderful things for David. He gave him a kingdom. He gave him victory in battle. He gave him many things in life that he had never expected to have. God was constantly giving David the very best of everything. How grateful David was that God was so generous to him.

David said in Psalms 13:6, *I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.*

Every day God is generous to you also. He gives you so much and He will continue giving so much to you throughout all eternity!

- David was thankful for God's holiness.

The most awesome and amazing thing about God is His holiness. God never sins. He is always holy in all He does. David was thankful that such a holy God was his God. Quite often David praised God for His holiness.

David said in Psalms 33:21, *For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.*

David said in Psalms 99:9, *Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy.*

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Your God is the very same holy God that David worshipped and praised. How wonderful that you and I have such a holy God!

- David was thankful for God's salvation.

David was granted salvation from his sins just like every human on earth has ever been. David was a sinner who was saved through faith in God. How David praised God for his salvation!

David said in Psalms 40:2-3, *He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.*

*And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.*

You and I are born in sin, just like every other human. The only way to salvation is through the blood of Jesus Christ which He shed for us on the cross of Calvary. If you ask Jesus to forgive you and save your soul, then He will. Isn't that something to praise God about?

- David was thankful for God's goodness and mercy.

There were so many times in David's life when God showed His goodness and mercy to David. Over and over God blessed and provided for David. Over and over God guided David. How thankful David was for God's goodness and mercy!

David said in Psalms 118:1, *O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever.*

Over and over God shows His goodness and mercy to you too! Aren't you thankful!

#### **WHAT IT TAKES TO HAVE A THANKFUL HEART**

David had a thankful heart. His thankfulness to God poured out in the hundreds of songs he wrote to and about God. It is a thrill to read the psalms that David wrote in thankfulness to God.

So how can you have a thankful heart like David had? Let's look at some ways to have a thankful heart.

- Recognize your blessings.

Some people don't seem to realize the blessings that God has given to them. They walk around complaining if things are not exactly the way they like. They turn their noses up at the blessings that God has given to them. They just don't even recognize the many blessings in their lives.

People with thankful hearts are people who open their eyes and sees all that God has done for them. They clearly recognize the hand of God in the blessings that flow their way each day.

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From the food you eat, to the people who God places around you, to the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life, God is heaping blessing on you each day! Do you recognize that? You should. Take the time to think about what God does for you daily.

Psalms 68:19 says, *Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation.*

Psalms 103:2 says, *Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.*

- Be humble enough know blessings come from God.

Pride is present in all our hearts and pride says, “You don’t have to thank God. You worked hard for what you have. You did that on your own. You are pretty fantastic. You are number one!”

And a person with a proud heart feels no need to thank anyone else. A person with a proud heart thinks they can praise themselves.

It takes a humble heart to know that you can do nothing without God. He created you. He gave you life. He gives you daily breath. He provides for you. He gave you the talents you have. He gives you the strength to do the things you do. Without Him, you would not even exist. What do you have to be proud about?

Do you want to have a thankful heart? Then be humble enough to know that all your blessings come from God.

Psalms 34:2 says, *My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.*

- Have a heart full of praise to God.

The truly thankful person will be quick to praise God. You can’t be thankful for something and not want to say, “Thank you!”

How often do you thank God for all his blessing to you? How often do you take the time to praise God for all He has done?

Praise should be flowing out of your mouth to God. When you talk to Him in prayer, you should daily have a time of praise. You won’t always be asking for more, but you will remember to thank Him for all you already have! God loves to hear His children praise Him!

Psalms 32:11 says, *Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.*

Psalms 119:7 says, *I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments.*

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## THE RESULTS OF A THANKFUL HEART

So, what are the results of a thankful heart? Let's talk about that. (Show Flash Card.)

- Those who thank God will have a heart that trusts God.

Do you know that when you realize how much God loves you and how much He blesses you, then you will know that you can trust Him. The more you realize how wonderful God is, the more you will trust Him.

There aren't many people you can trust in this world. But God will never fail you. You can always trust God.

Psalm 34:8 says, *O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.*

- Those who thank God will have a heart that gives praise to God.

The natural result of thankfulness to God will always bring praise to God. And do you know, praise is such a wonderful thing? It is wonderful in the ears of God and it is wonderful in your own heart. Praise to God brings joy to your own heart and soul. That's a great reason to praise, isn't it?

Psalm 126:3 says, *The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.*

Psalm 33:1 says, *Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.*

- Those who thank God will have a heart that serves God.

When you are thankful to God for all He has done for you, you will want to serve Him in any way that you can.

Psalm 100:2 says, *Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.*

- Those who thank God will have a heart that tells others about God.

Finally, if you have a thankful heart to God about all He has done for you, then you will want to tell others about what a great and loving God you serve.

Psalm 126:2 says, *Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them.*

## HOW'S YOUR HEART?

How's your heart? Are you thankful to God for all He has done for you? If not, then ask God to give you a thankful heart.

Perhaps you have never asked Jesus to come into your heart and forgive your sin. You are not His child. All the things that we have just talked about can be yours. God loves you and He wants to be your God. Today we can have someone show you how you can accept Jesus as your personal Savior.

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## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to be thankful to God. This is an easy week to be reminded to think of all that God has done for you. At thanksgiving time we think of all the good things God has given to us such a family and food. Those are wonderful and we need to thank God for them.

We also need to thank God for all our spiritual blessings. Our hearts should be full and overflowing with praise to Him for loving us, for providing salvation through Jesus Christ, and for giving us a home in Heaven for all eternity!

## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to praise Him with a thankful heart.

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## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Which Old Testament king praised God with songs he wrote?
2. Recite today's memory verse.
3. What are the names of King David's songs?
4. Name something that King David was thankful for.
5. Name another thing that King David was thankful for.
6. Name another thing that King David was thankful for.
7. Name another thing that King David was thankful for.
8. What is one result of a thankful heart?
9. What do you need in order to have a thankful heart?
10. Name something you do when you are thankful to God.

# A Thankful Heart

I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

Psalm 9:1



I will praise God with a thankful heart.



Write all the letters with the number 1 under them, in order, on the lines below. Then write all the letters with the number 2, in order, under them. Then the number 3 letters and so on until you get a hidden message.

I	K	O	N	H	F	R	G	A	U	M	S	V	L	Y	F	E	H	B	R
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
A	E	L	O	T	A	E	M	H	R	S	G	A	T	S	O	N	F	I	D
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

I \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



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CHRISTMAS LESSON

ROOM IN MY HEART

**LESSON ORDER**

Prayer / Introduction

Song Time

Supporting Story

Memory Verse Time

Bible Lesson Time / Invitation

Challenge / Quiet Time

Bible Quiz



**BIBLE TEXT**

Luke 2, Matthew 2

**CHARACTER TRAIT**

I will make room for Jesus.

**MEMORY VERSE**

*And she brought her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes,  
and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.*

Luke 2:7



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## OPEN IN PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

Excuses, excuses. Everyone has an excuse for not making room for God in their life. Un-saved people may say, “I don’t believe there is a God.” That’s one excuse. Or they may say, “I don’t have time for God right now. Maybe when I get older.”

Even Christians make excuses for pushing God out of their lives. “I don’t have time to read my Bible or pray. I’m just too busy.”

Do you have room for Jesus?

Today’s Life Lesson is: I will make room for Jesus.

### SONG TIME

#### SUPPORTING STORY

No Room?

Obtain Flash Card

If we could talk to the people who were there in Jesus’ day, do you think that once they knew who Jesus was that they would have done a few things differently? (ShowFlash Card)

Let’s listen to the Inn-Keeper at Bethlehem.

#### **The Inn-Keeper Makes Excuses**

“Oh, if only I had known!”

Said the Keeper of the inn.

“But no hint to me was shown,

And I didn’t let them in.

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“Yes, a star gleamed overhead,  
But I couldn’t read the skies,  
And I’d given every bed  
To the very rich and wise.

“And she was so poorly clad,  
And he hadn’t much to say!  
But no room for them I had,  
So I ordered them away.

“She seemed tired, and it was late  
And they begged so hard, that I  
Feeling sorry for her state,  
In a stable let them lie.

“Had I turned some rich man out  
Just to make a place for them,  
‘Twould have killed, beyond a doubt,  
All my trade at Bethlehem.

“Then there came the wise men three  
To the stable, with the morn,  
Who announced they’d come to see  
The great King who had been born.

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“And they brought Him gifts of myrrh,  
Costly Frankincense and gold,  
And a great light shone on her  
In the stable, bleak and cold.

“All my patrons now are dead  
And forgotten, but today  
All the world to peace is led  
By the ones I sent away.

“It was my unlucky fate  
To be born that Inn to own,  
Against Christ I shut my gate-  
Oh, if only I had known!”

The Inn-Keeper turned Mary and Joseph away. But not everyone did. The Bible tells us that when Jesus was born the angels announced His birth to a group of shepherds. They quickly went to see the new born King.

I wonder what they said as they left the stable where Jesus was born. Let's listen as a shepherd boy tells his mother all about what he saw.

**Shepherd boy:** Mother! You won't believe it. But it's true. Ask old Eli, he was there also. All the shepherds out in the field last night can tell you that I tell the truth!

It was an ordinary night. The stars were bright and we were all sitting on the hillside listening to the lambs bleat and watching the stars. Just like every other night out with the sheep.

But all of a sudden, and this is true, the sky was filled with a bright light. It was brighter than the day sky! And there was an angel.

We were so frightened we couldn't even move. We fell to the ground. But the angel told us not to be afraid. He said he had good news of great joy. I remember exactly what he said. I'll never forget it!

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He said, *Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.*

Then all at once, the sky was full of angels. Lots and lots of angels. It was amazing. They began to sing and praise God.

Then, just as suddenly, they disappeared. So we all hurried to see the baby they had talked about.

The angels were amazing, but that was not the most amazing thing of that night. The most amazing thing was that I actually got to see with my own eyes, the Savior. The Messiah!

What an honor! Why would God come to us? We are only simple shepherds. There is certainly nothing special about us. But I think that just shows that the Savior was born for everyone. Even me!

## BIBLE MEMORY TIME

### SET UP

Choose a memory verse Game to help teach the verse. First start with telling or showing the verse to the children. Then have them say it with you several times. Then use the game.

### VERSE

*And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.* Luke 2:7

## BIBLE LESSON

### TEACHER'S STUDY TEXT

Luke 2:1-20, Matthew 2:1-12

### LESSON

#### DO YOU REJECT A GIFT?

Imagine this. Suppose this Christmas morning, when everyone in your family is gathered around to open gifts, you suddenly announced that you don't want any of your gifts. You aren't

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going to open any of them. You just look at the packages and say, “No, thanks.” Then you hand everyone their gifts back.

What do you think the others in your family would say? How would they feel if you rejected their gifts?

Or suppose when your Mom got to the gift that you have carefully selected just for her, she opens it, looks it over, and then tells you she doesn’t want it.

How would you feel?

My guess is that there would be many hurt feelings. There would also be confusion and frustration that someone had rejected a gift of love.

### **MANY REJECT GOD’S GIFT**

God sent a gift of love to the earth when He sent Jesus Christ to Bethlehem on that first Christmas morning. What a precious gift He sent. Jesus was so special. Jesus was God the Son. He was our creator. He came to be our Savior.

But many people over the years have rejected God’s gift of love.

The Inn-Keeper turned Mary and Joseph away. They had to spend that special night in a stable full of animals. If you live in the city, you may not have any idea what a barn smells like. It is full of sweaty animals and the smells are not always pleasant.

Later, King Herod rejected Jesus. When the wisemen went to Jerusalem to find the new born King, the reigning King Herod was quite upset to think there was another King somewhere that might try to steal his throne. He pretended to want to worship Jesus, but instead he tried to trick the wisemen into leading him to the child.

When King Herod realized that the wisemen were not going to come tell him where the child was living, he ordered that all the boy babies under two years old be killed. What a terrible thing to do just to try to kill Jesus. He rejected God’s gift.

After Jesus had grown and went around preaching, there were many who rejected what He had to say. Some hated Jesus very much. They hated Him so much that they put Him to death.

Why did so many reject Jesus?

Some rejected Jesus out of ignorance. They didn’t realize who they were rejecting. They didn’t know they were sinners and that Jesus was the One who could take away their sin.

Some rejected Jesus because they did not want to worship and serve Him. They knew if they accepted that Jesus was the Son of God, then they would have to obey Him. That, they did not want to do!

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## **MANY REJECT TODAY**

The same reasons exist today. Some people reject Jesus out of ignorance. They do not know that they are sinners. They do not know that salvation through Jesus Christ is the only way to be forgiven of their sin.

And some reject Jesus because, if they acknowledge that Jesus is God, they would have to admit that He is the King. They would have to obey Him instead of living life the way they want to live. They choose to serve self instead of God.

## **HOW DOES GOD FEEL?**

How do you think God feels when so many millions of people through the years have rejected His gift?

I know He must be hurt. The Bible says in John 3:16 that God sent Jesus to die on the cross because God loves the world. God loves all of us. That is why He sent Jesus. It must hurt to have anyone reject His love.

God doesn't want anyone to reject His gift out of ignorance. That is why God told His followers to go and tell everyone in the world about what Jesus did so their sin could be forgiven.

In Mark 16:15, when Jesus was getting ready to go back to Heaven, He instructed His disciples and all His followers, *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

It must hurt God even more when people hear the Gospel and then reject Him. They hear that God loves them. They hear that Jesus came to earth to die in their place, but they do not want to serve or obey anyone but themselves.

How hurt God must be!

## **MANY ACCEPT GOD'S GIFT**

Thankfully, many do accept God's gift.

The Shepherds who kept their sheep were joyful to go welcome the baby that the Angels had told them about. The Wisemen spent much time and money to find and worship Jesus. Many followed and believed Jesus as He traveled and taught of God and salvation.

Thankfully, many today also accept God's gift of salvation. Many are happy to have their sin forgiven and are willing to serve Jesus Christ.

## **WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

So, what about you? Have you ever accepted Jesus?

Every Christmas you hear the Christmas story about the Baby Jesus. You hear how God sent Jesus to earth. You hear how the shepherds and Wisemen worshipped Him.

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But do you worship Him? Have you welcomed Jesus into your life? Are you willing to worship and obey Him?

This is a very important decision. It is a decision that will change your life. When you accept what Jesus did for you on the Cross, and ask Him to forgive your sins, you are also asking Jesus to control your life.

When you become a Christian, your life should be different. You no longer belong to yourself, you now belong to Jesus. You make decisions based on what would be His will for your life. You worship Him instead of loving and worshipping only yourself. You serve Him instead of serving your own desires.

Many reject Jesus because that sounds too hard. They love themselves too much to love anyone else.

What about you? Can you give your life to Jesus and trust that He loves you so much that everything He chooses to do in your life will be for your best? Will you make room in your life for Jesus? You can do that today.

Maybe you have already accepted Jesus. Do you make room in your life daily for Jesus? Do you talk to Him? Do you let Him talk to you? Do you look for ways to serve Him?

The best gift you could give God this Christmas would be to give Him the gift of your love and your life. Will you?

## INVITATION

## CHALLENGE

This week I challenge you to make room for Jesus in your life. Take time each day to thank God for His gift of sending Jesus Christ. Take time each day to read the Christmas story. You can find it in the first one or two chapters of the books of Matthew and Luke.

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## QUIET TIME AND PRAYER

I want you to bow your head and close your eyes. I want you to think about the challenge I have just given you. Think of how you can put it into practice in your own life.

(Give the children a few seconds to think. You can change what you say in your prayer according to what the lesson and challenge for the week has been.)

Now I am going to pray and ask God to help you accept this challenge and do your best to practice it this week. I am going to ask God to help you to make room in your heart and life for Jesus.

## BIBLE QUIZ

1. Name one person who rejected Jesus.
2. Name another person in Jesus' day who rejected Jesus.
3. Name one group of people who accepted Jesus.
4. Recite today's memory verse.
5. Name another group of people who accepted Jesus.
6. What is one reason some people reject Jesus?
7. What is another reason some people reject Jesus?
8. What verse tells us why God sent Jesus to earth?
9. What verse tells us what Jesus told his followers to do after he went back to heaven?
10. Name a way you can make room for Jesus in your life.

# Room in My Heart

And she brought her firstborn son,  
and wrapped him in swaddling clothes,  
and laid him in a manger; because there  
was no room for them in the inn.

Luke 2:7



I will make  
room for Jesus.

## I Have Room For Jesus



_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
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How many new words can you make from: **I Have Room For Jesus.**

MEMORY VERSE  
GAMES

## MIXED UP MEMORY VERSE

### Supplies

One- 8 1/2 x 11 sheet of Card Stock for each word in the verse.

A 30 inch length of yarn or string piece for each card.

### Set up.

Punch 2 holes in long side of each card about 10 inches apart. Place one end of the string or yarn through one hole and tie. Place the other end of the yarn through the other hole and tie. The card can now be hung over a child's head and worn like a necklace.

Write one word from the verse on each card. Write large enough to be easily seen.

Select one child for each card. The 8-12 age range is best.

## Game

Present the verse and review it several times with the children. Have them say it along with you.

Select the needed children to come to the platform. Place the card over each child's head. Have the children stand in a row.

Explain to the children on the platform that on the count of three you want them to quietly and quickly mix themselves up to get the verse out of order. Have them return to a straight row.

Choose 1 or 2 children to come up and place everyone back into the correct order. Give them 30 seconds.

Then have the children in the audience tell you if it is correct. Place the children back in the correct order and say the verse together.

Select new children to help mix up the verse and repeat this several times.

One variation on this is to have the audience turn around and you mix up the children on the platform.

## WHICH WORD?

### Supplies

None

### Setup

Have your list of questions ready.

## Game

Present the verse. Review it several times. Have them say it along with you.

Explain that you are going to give them a clue and then they will try to guess which word is the answer to the clue.

Make it boys against the girls. Have them raise their hand if they know the answer. Select a different boy or girl each time.

If you ask a boy for clue #1 and he is incorrect, then a girl will have a chance at clue #2, etc. Keep score.

Give 5 points if they can answer clue #1 and 3 points for clue #2. The team with the most points at the end is the winner.

Have the children repeat the verse between each set of clues.

## SCRAMBLED SCRIPTURE

### Supplies

2 poster boards (11 x 14)

Marker

Music or stop watch.

### Set up

Divide the verse into 3 or 4 phrases.

Cut poster board in half.

Write each phrase on a half of the poster board. Write large so everyone in the auditorium can see.

Select 3 or 4 children to stand in front and hold out their arms like “human easels.” Music stands also work.

Have the piano player play or record 30 seconds of music. Somewhat like the Jeopardy music during the final question. If you wish, you can use a stop watch instead of music to time the 30 seconds.

## Game

Present the verse and review it several times with the children. Have them say it along with you.

Scramble the verse cards. Select a child to come to the platform. Tell them they have 30 seconds to look at the verse and decide the correct order. Before time is up, have them place the boards on the “easels” in the correct order.

Encourage the children in the audience to call out to help them as they place the boards on the easels, especially if they have placed the boards in an incorrect manner. When time is up, review the way the verse is placed and let the audience decide if the verse is correct. If not have them tell you the correct order. Say the verse together.

Select another child and repeat for the remaining time you have left.

## THE VANISHING VERSE

### Supplies

Chalk board, Marker board or Overhead

Chalk or Marker

Eraser

### Set up

Write the verse on the board in large block letters. Write large so everyone can see.

## Game

Present the verse and review it several times with the children. Have them say it along with you.

Select a child to come to the platform. Give them the eraser and tell them they should erase one word in just a moment.

First everyone in the audience must stand and turn around to face the rear of the auditorium. No peeking.

When the child has erased the word, they can return to their seat.

You will tell the audience to turn back around. Now everyone must say the verse and try to remember the missing word.

Again another child is selected to come. The audience turns around and the child quickly erases a word. Keep this moving along at a good pace.

As everyone turns around say things like, "Oh no, that was a hard one. I'm not sure you can say it this time."

As more words are erased, it becomes more difficult but the children are getting plenty of practice at saying the verse. After the verse has been said, encourage and compliment everyone on their memory.

Repeat until the entire verse is erased. Can everyone say the verse with no helps?

## **BOYS VS. GIRLS**

### **Supplies**

Chalk board, Marker board, or Overhead

Chalk or Marker

### **Set up**

None

## **Game**

Present the verse and review it several times with the children. Have them say it along with you.

Split the group into boys and girls or split the group in halves for a Red Team and Blue Team.

First pick a girl to say the verse. If she can say the verse, their team gets a point.. Then pick a boy. Continue on girl, boy, girl.

You can give one help if you wish. Let the children know if you will give a help. It is not fair to give a help to one team and not the other. If no helps are allowed, let the children know ahead of time. More than one help should not be necessary.

If both teams are having trouble with the verse, you should go back and review the verse several more times and then try the game again.

Use the board or overhead to keep score. The team to get the most points wins. You can give a small prize or piece of candy, but that is not necessary. The children will play just to win. If you don't start giving prizes, they will not expect them.

## GUESS THE WORD

### Supplies

Chalk board, Marker board

Chalk or Marker

### Set up

Have the verse written on board.

## Game

Present the verse and review it several times with the children. Have them say it along with you.

Select one child to come and stand facing away from the verse so they cannot see what word you are about to point at.

The teacher points to one word and instructs the children to say the verse but when they get to the selected word they must clap instead of saying the word.

Have the children say the verse and clap at the missing word.

Have the selected child try to guess the missing word.

Select another child and play the game again.

## GIVE ME THE WORD

### Supplies

Chalk board, Marker board, or Overhead

Chalk or Marker

### Set up

Write the first letter of each word of the verse leaving room to fill in the rest of the word.

## Game

Present the verse and review it several times with the children. Have them say it along with you.

Select one child at a time to give you a word for one of the letters. It can be any of the letters. It doesn't have to be in order.

Each child gives just one word at a time. Write in the word beside the letter as they tell it to you.

If it gets to a point where the children are stumped and cannot give you any more words, say the verse together again a couple more times. Then resume the game until all the words are completed.

# Andy Puppet

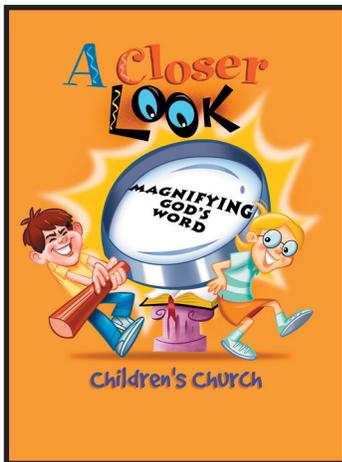
Andy is a versatile puppet that is used for the puppet skits in “Children of Character.” Andy can also be used in many other ways in your children’s ministry.

Andy is a full sized, professional puppet.

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PPT 02 Andy



## A Closer Look

Another great Children’s Church series from Quality Speech Materials is “A Closer Look.”

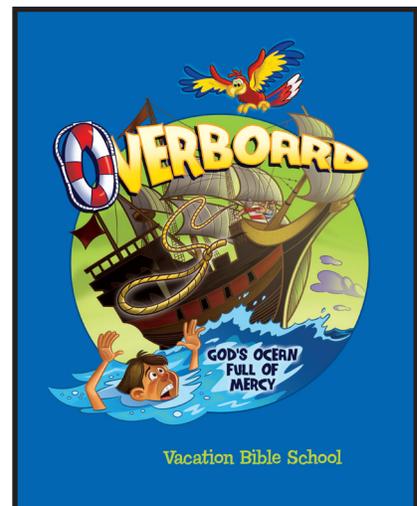
This series starts in Genesis 1 and works through the Bible to Revelations. There are seven years in this series. Years One thru Five are Old Testament. Years Six and Seven are New Testament.

Be sure to check out “A Closer Look.” Download a sample lesson on our website.

## VBS

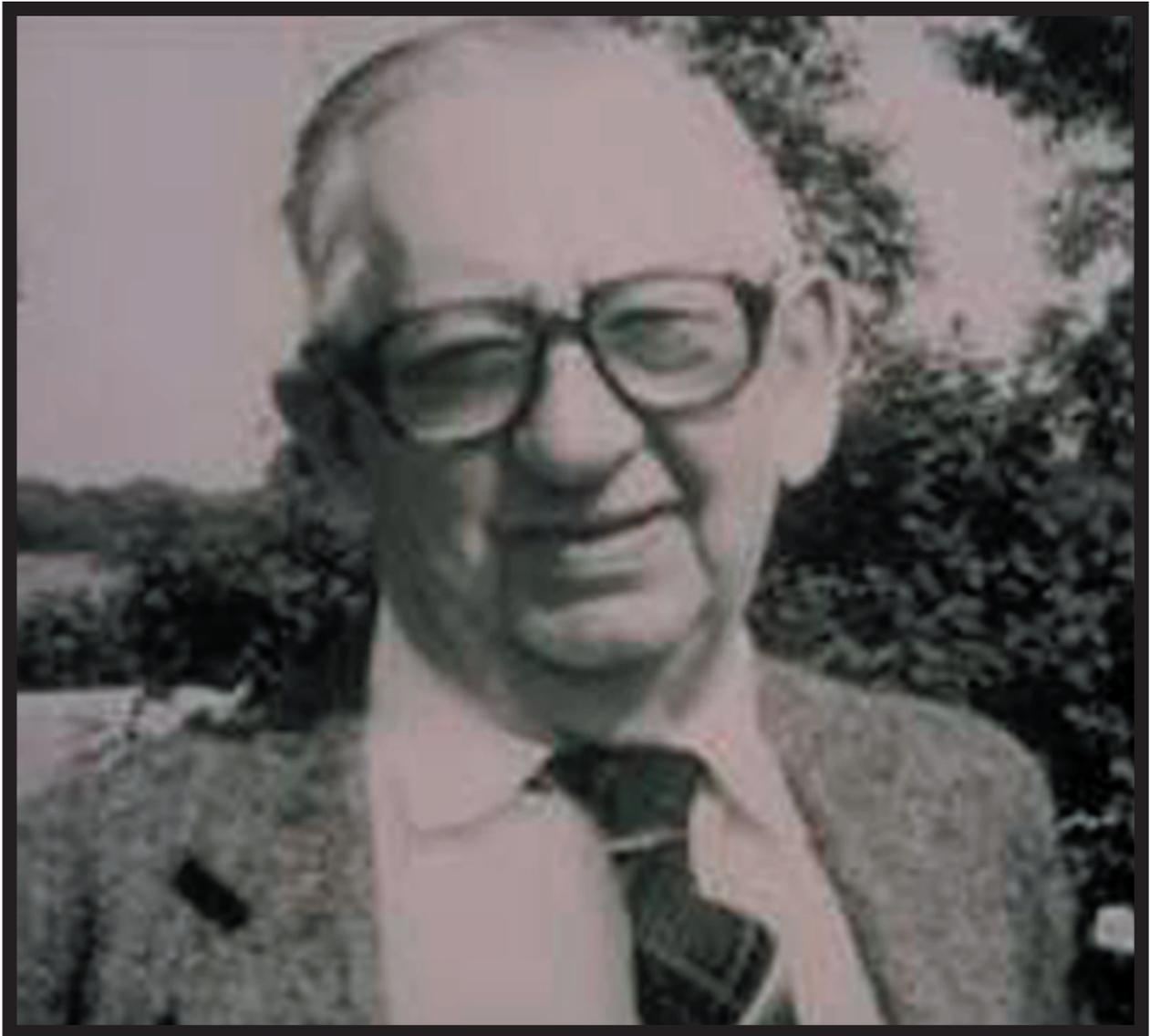
Quality Speech Materials also has great VBS materials. We offer a wide variety of themes so you can select the VBS program that is perfect for you!

Be sure to check our website to download a sample lesson.

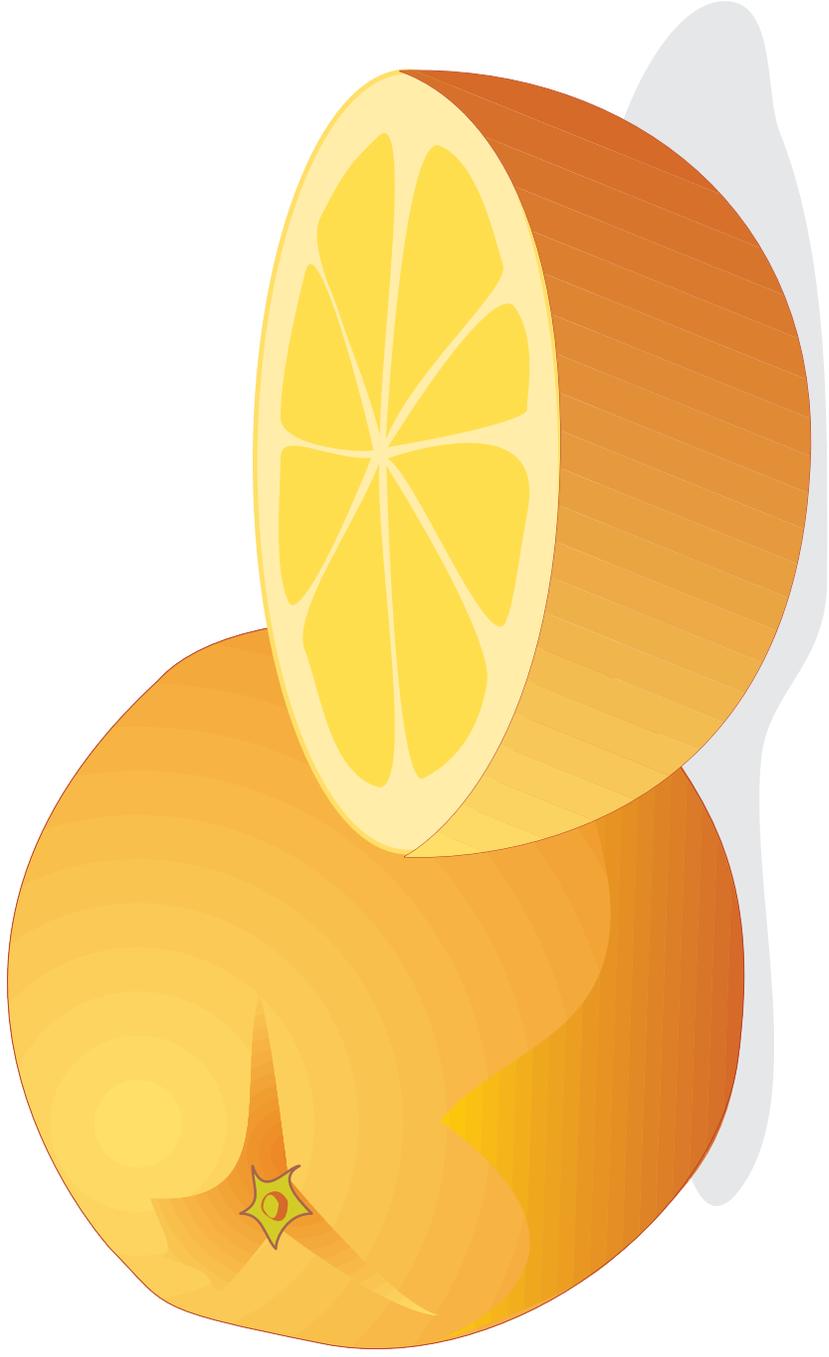




**Rev. Carl Boberg**

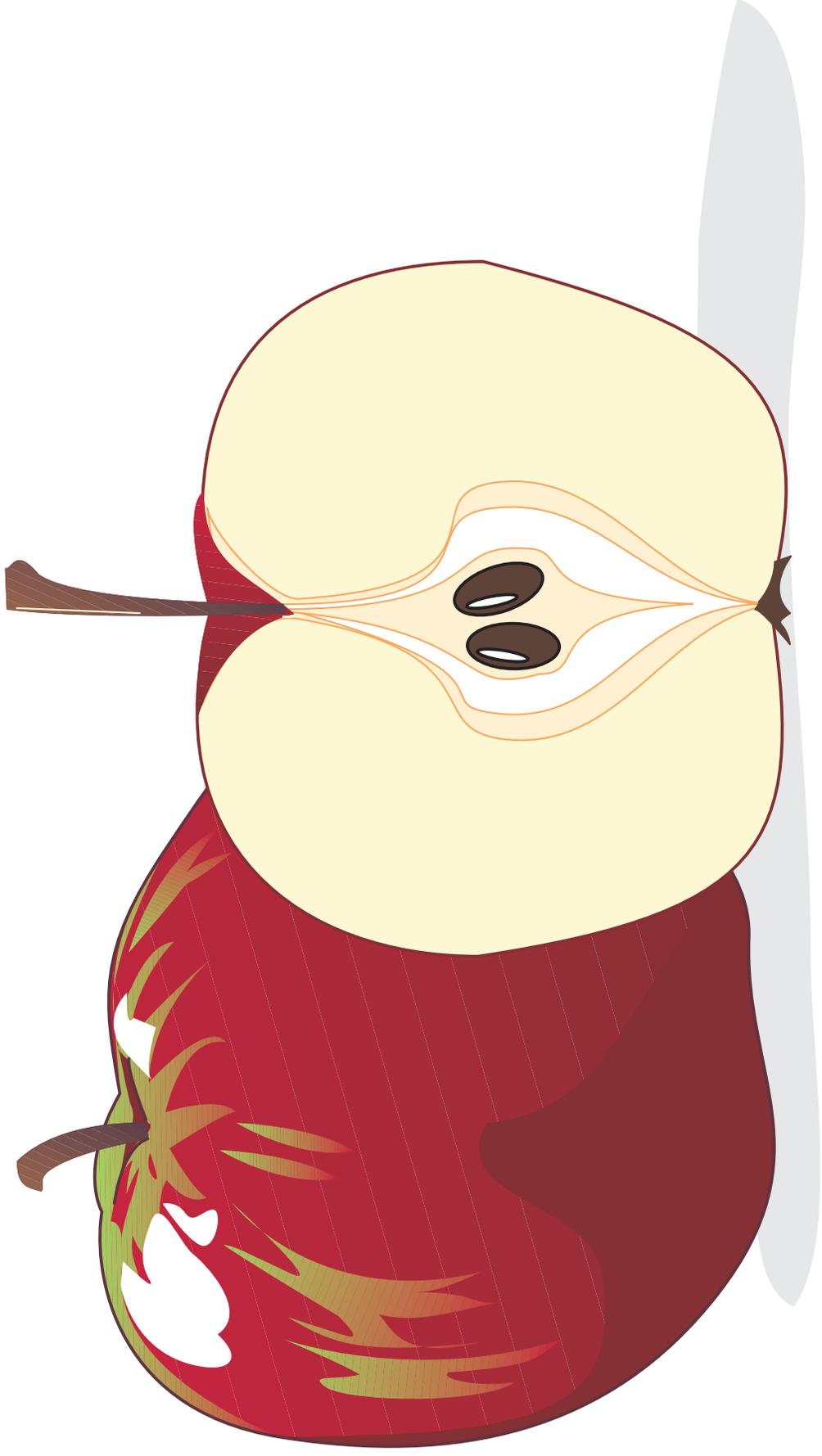


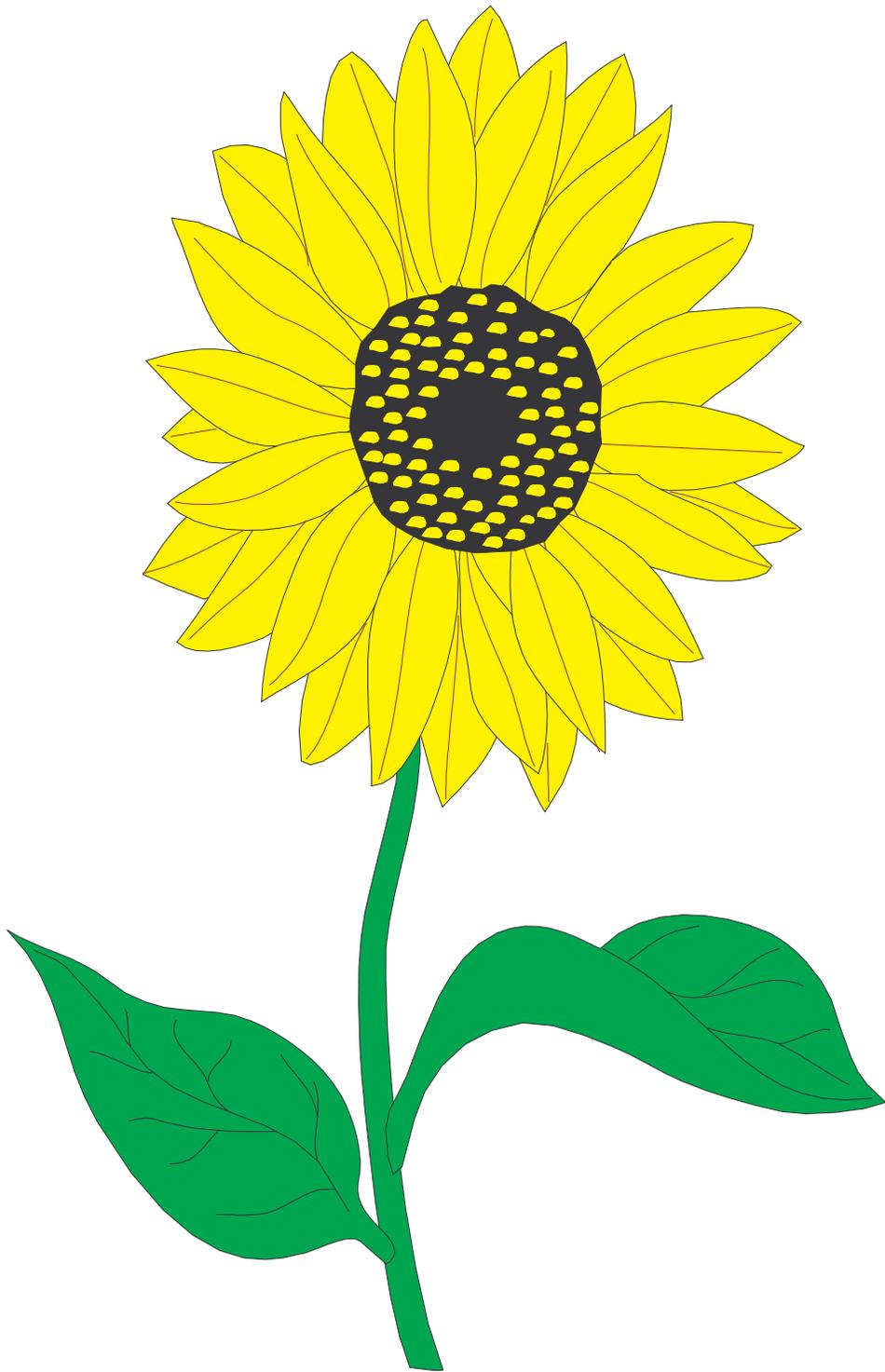
**Rev. Stuart Hine**



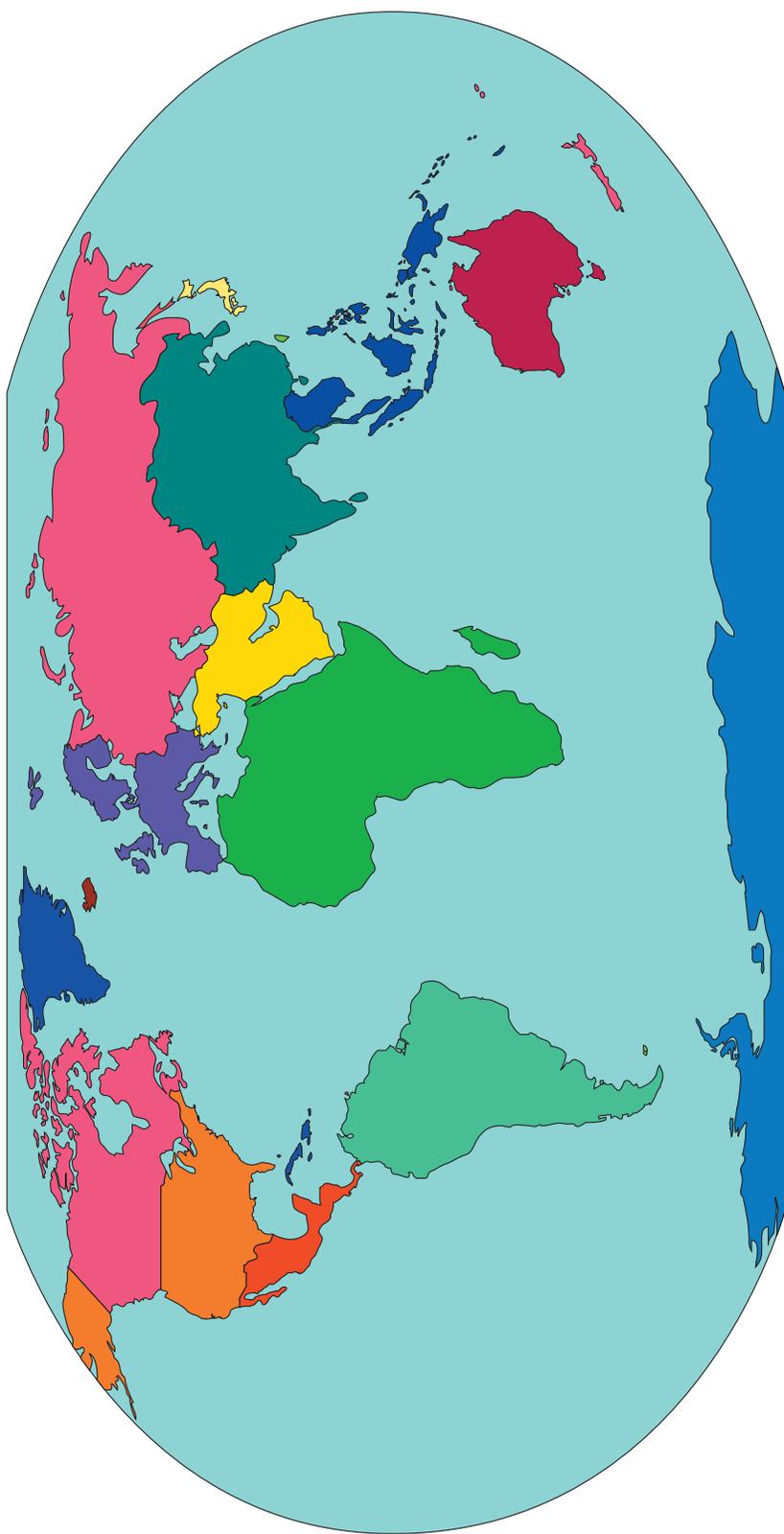


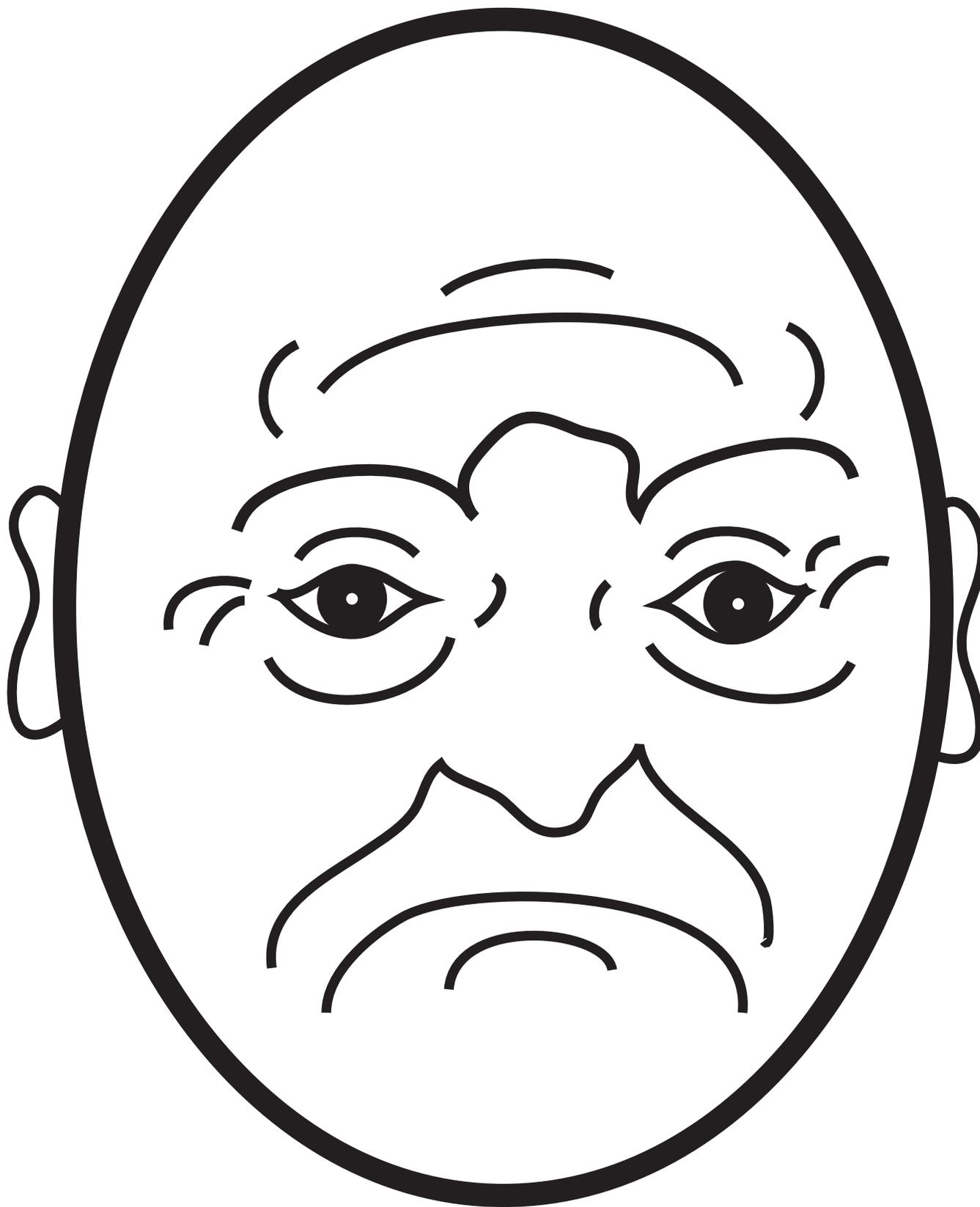
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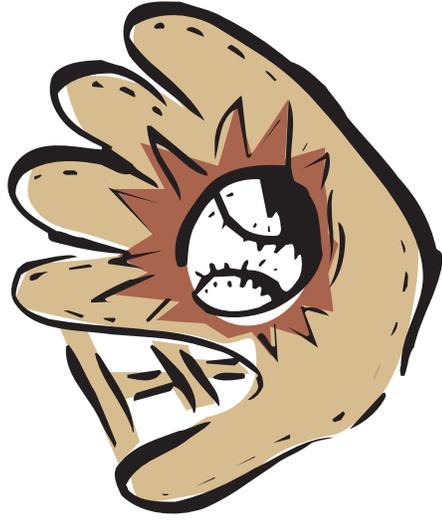




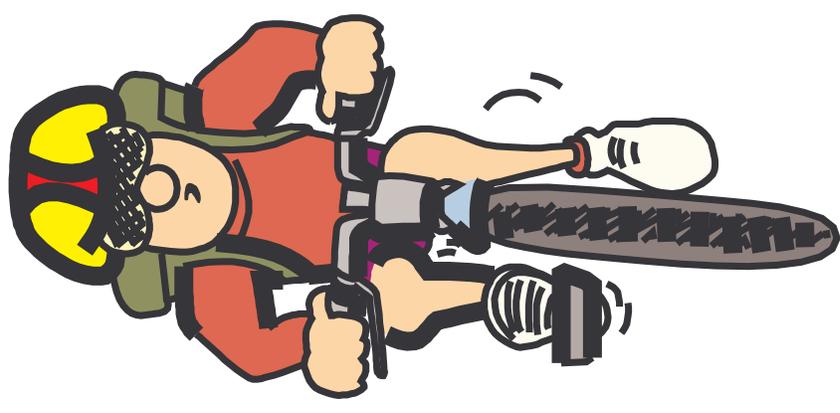
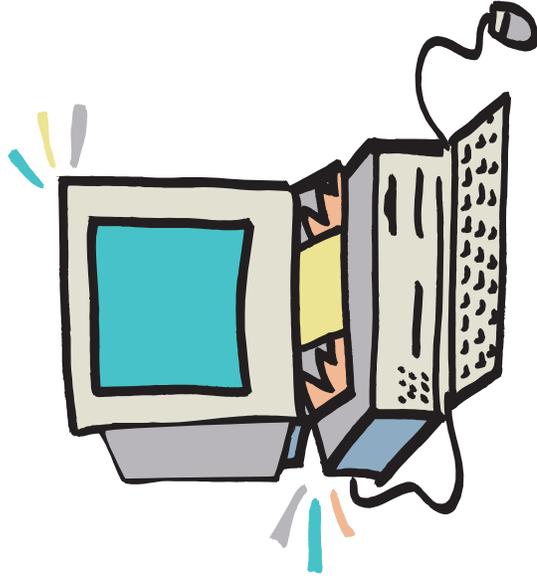






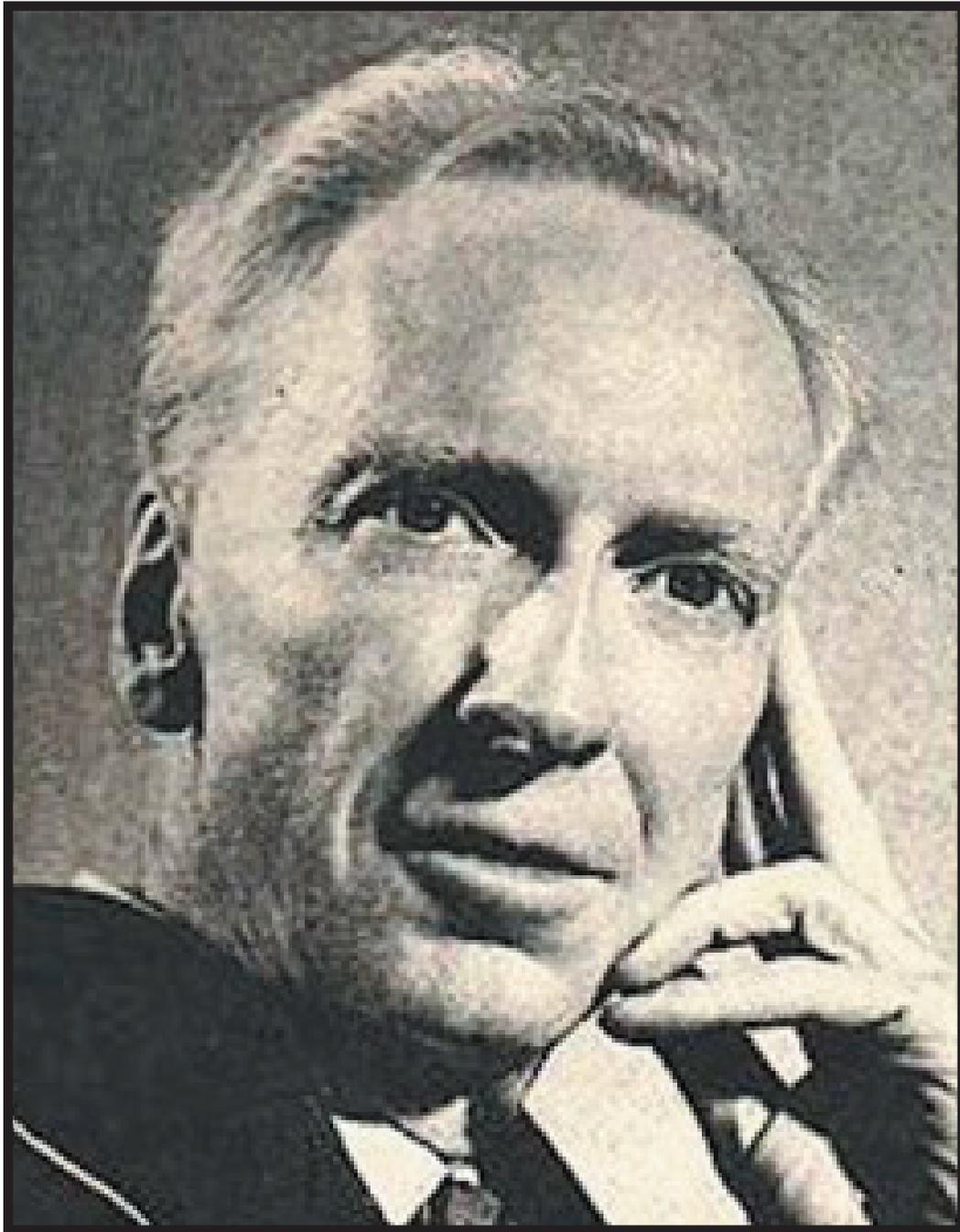


THE MAN WHO DIES  
WITH THE MOST TOYS  
WINS



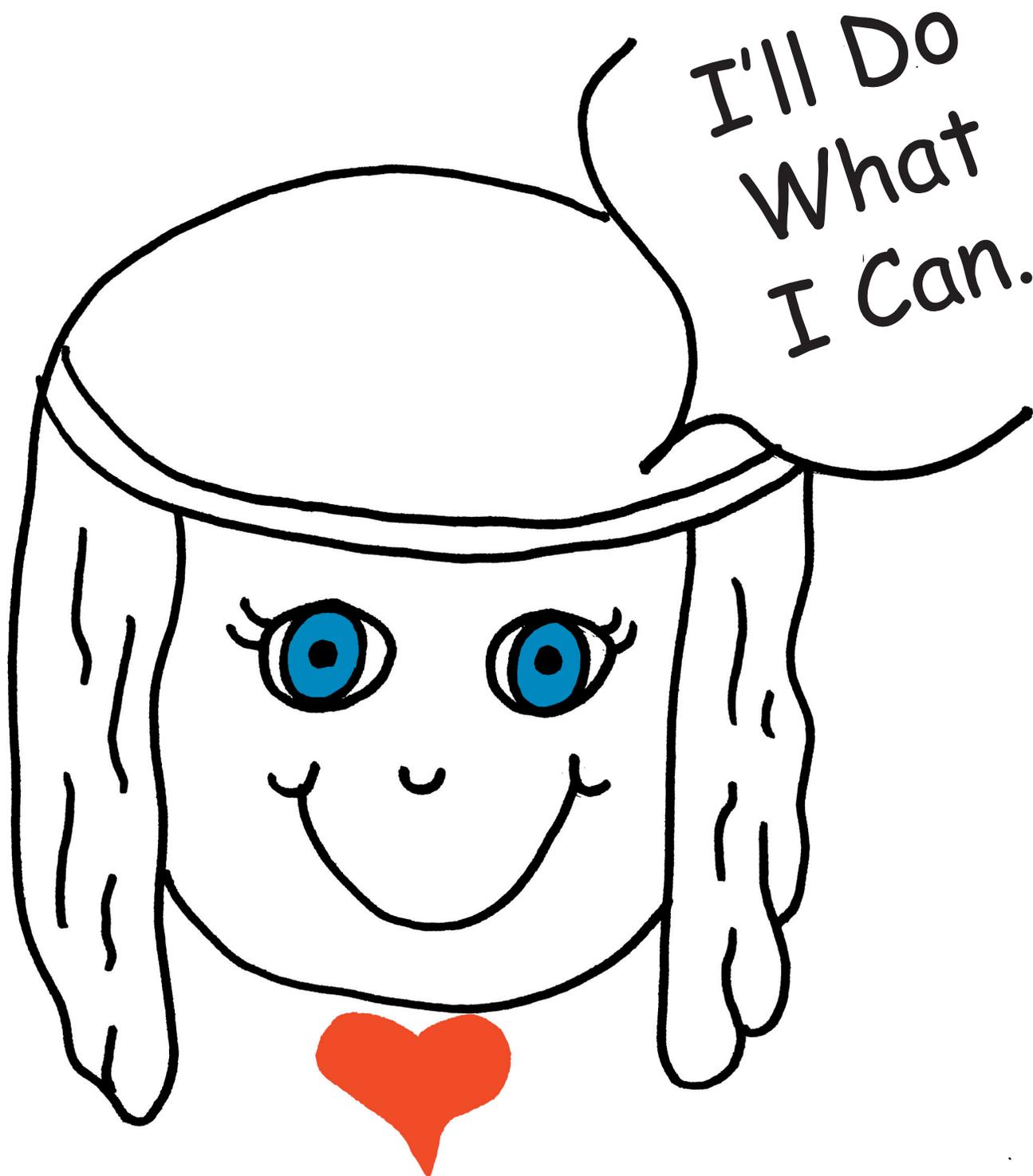






**Oswald J. Smith**







**Fanny Crosby**



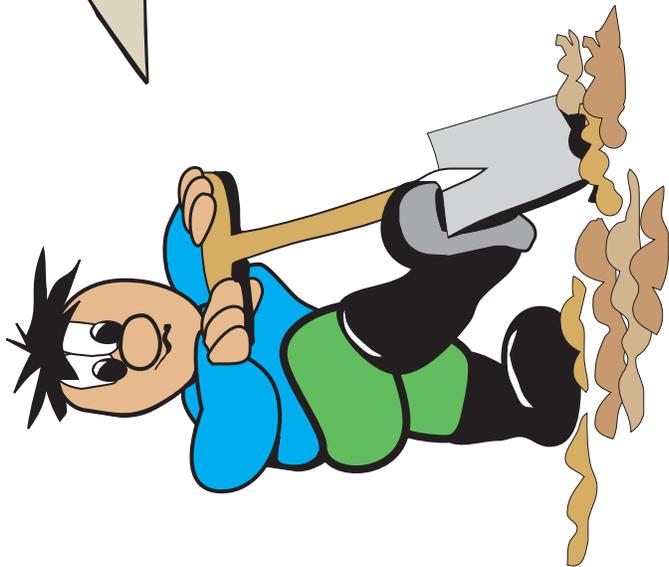
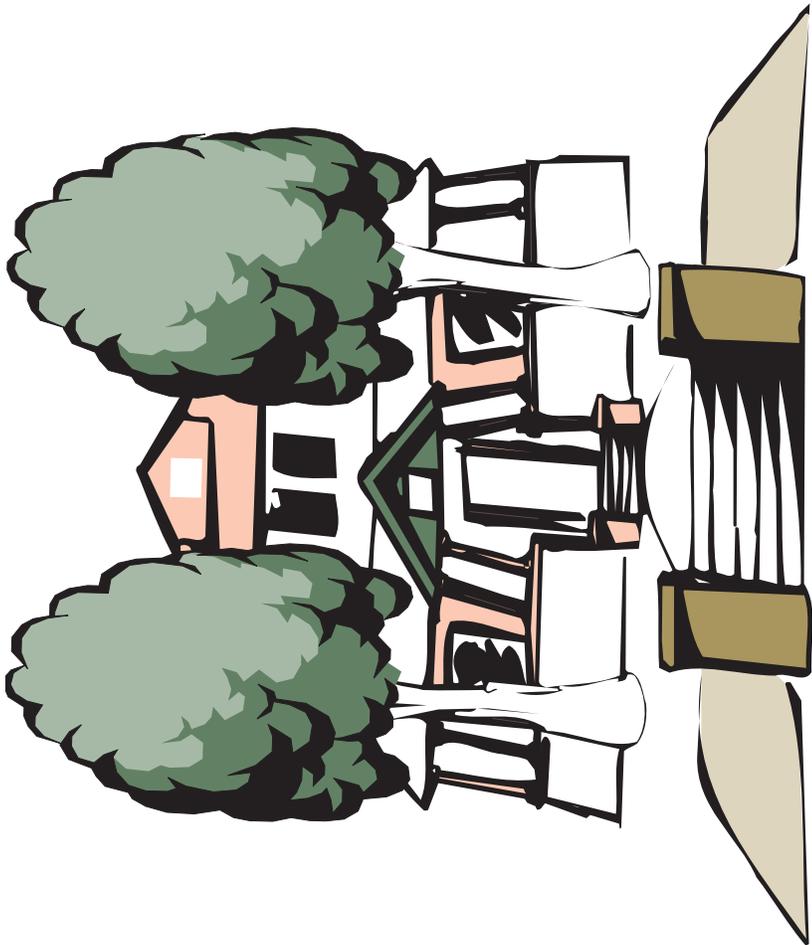










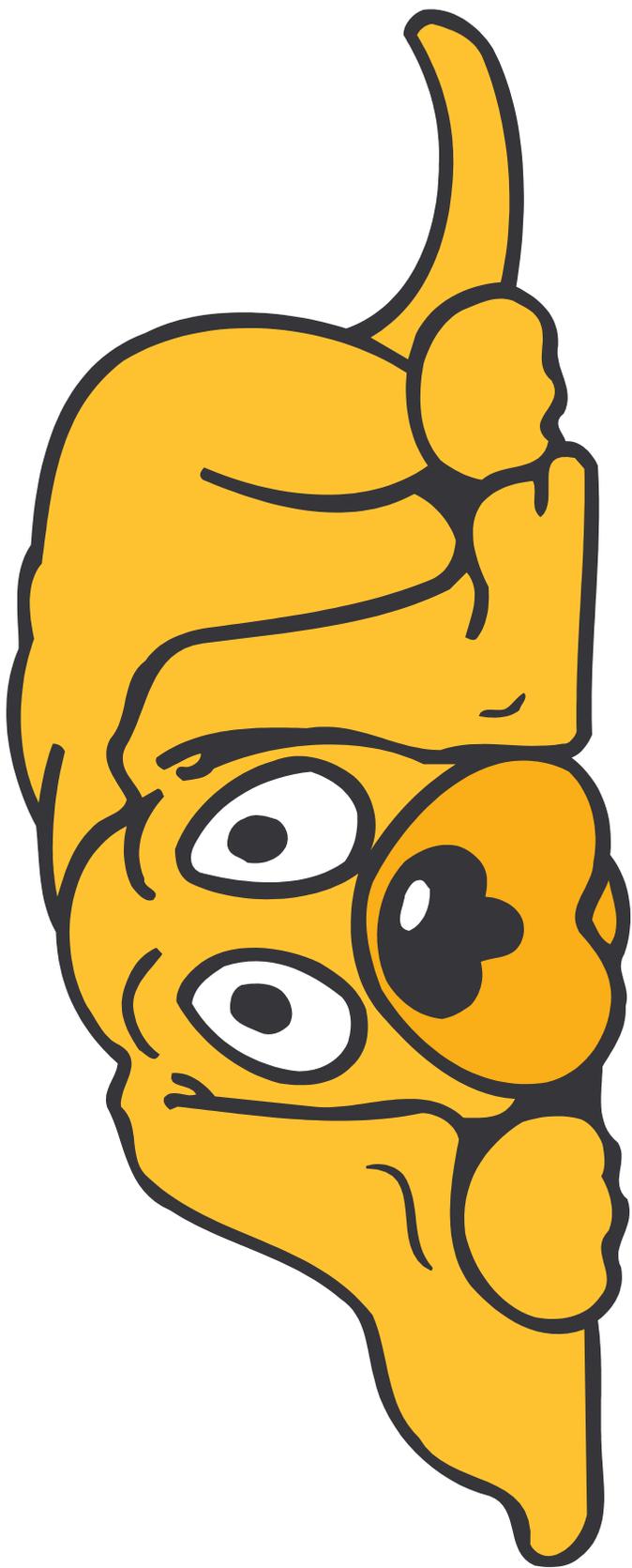






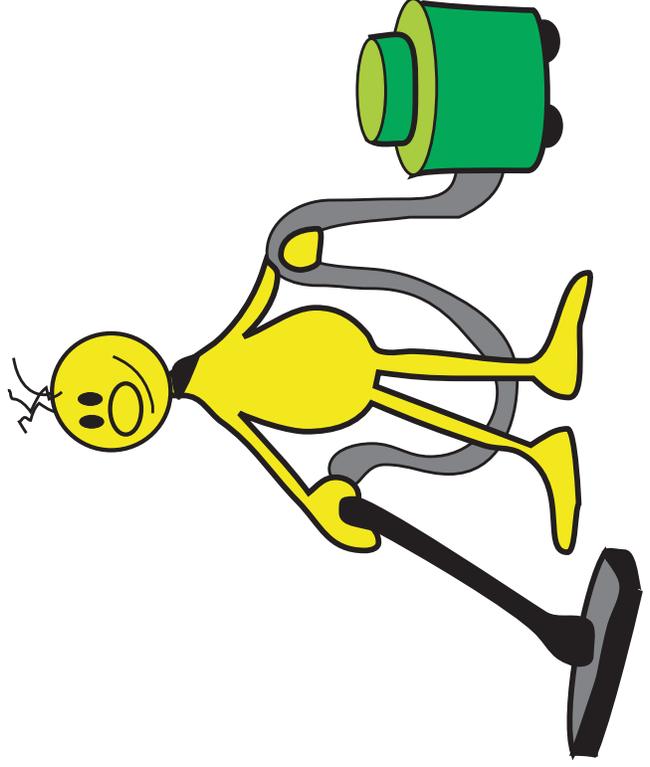
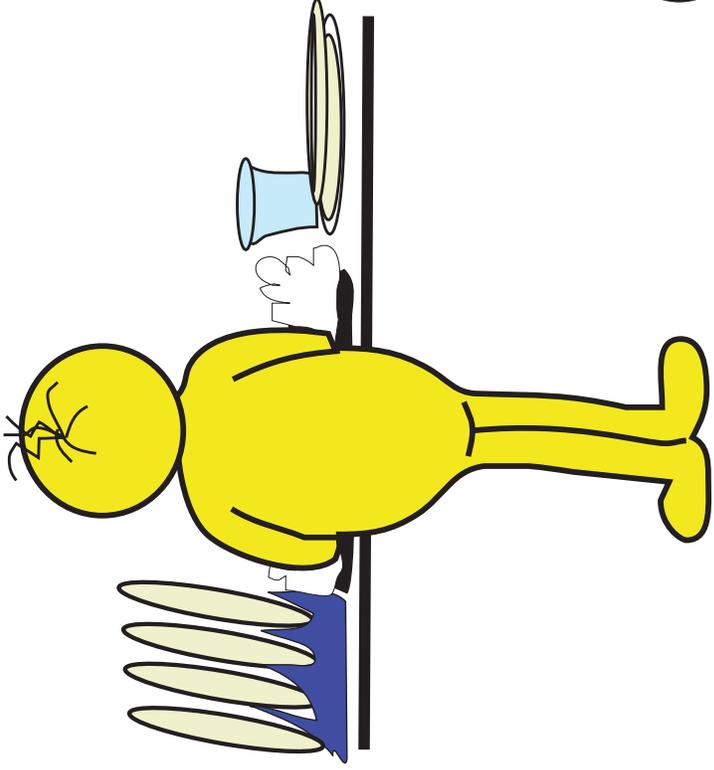






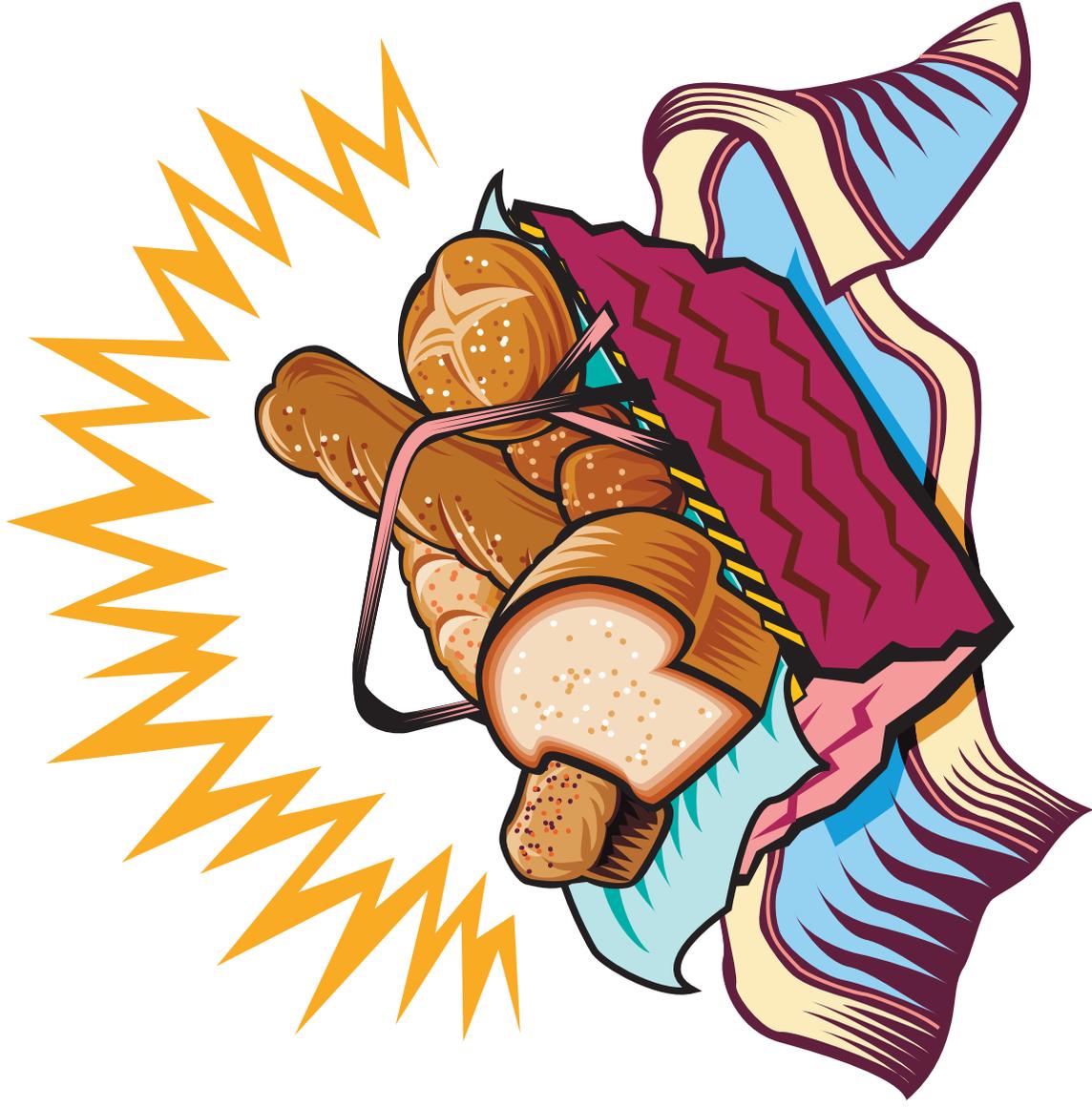








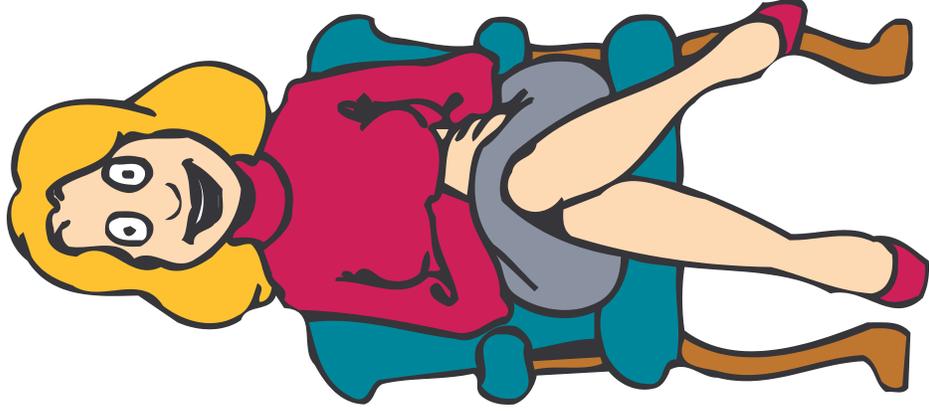
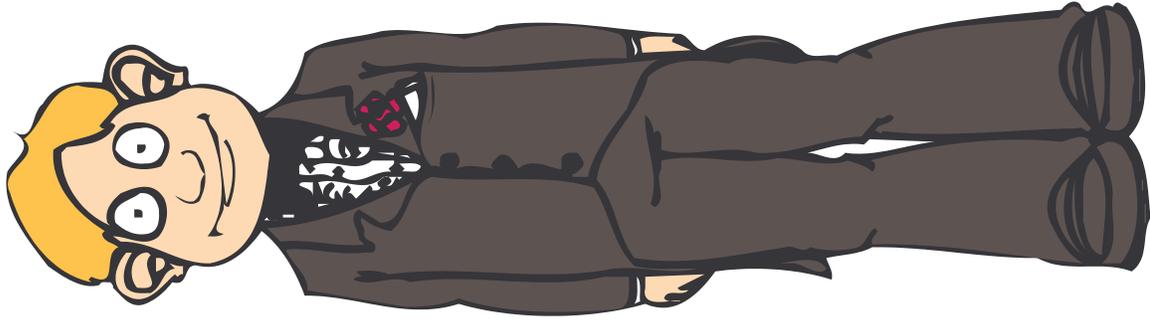


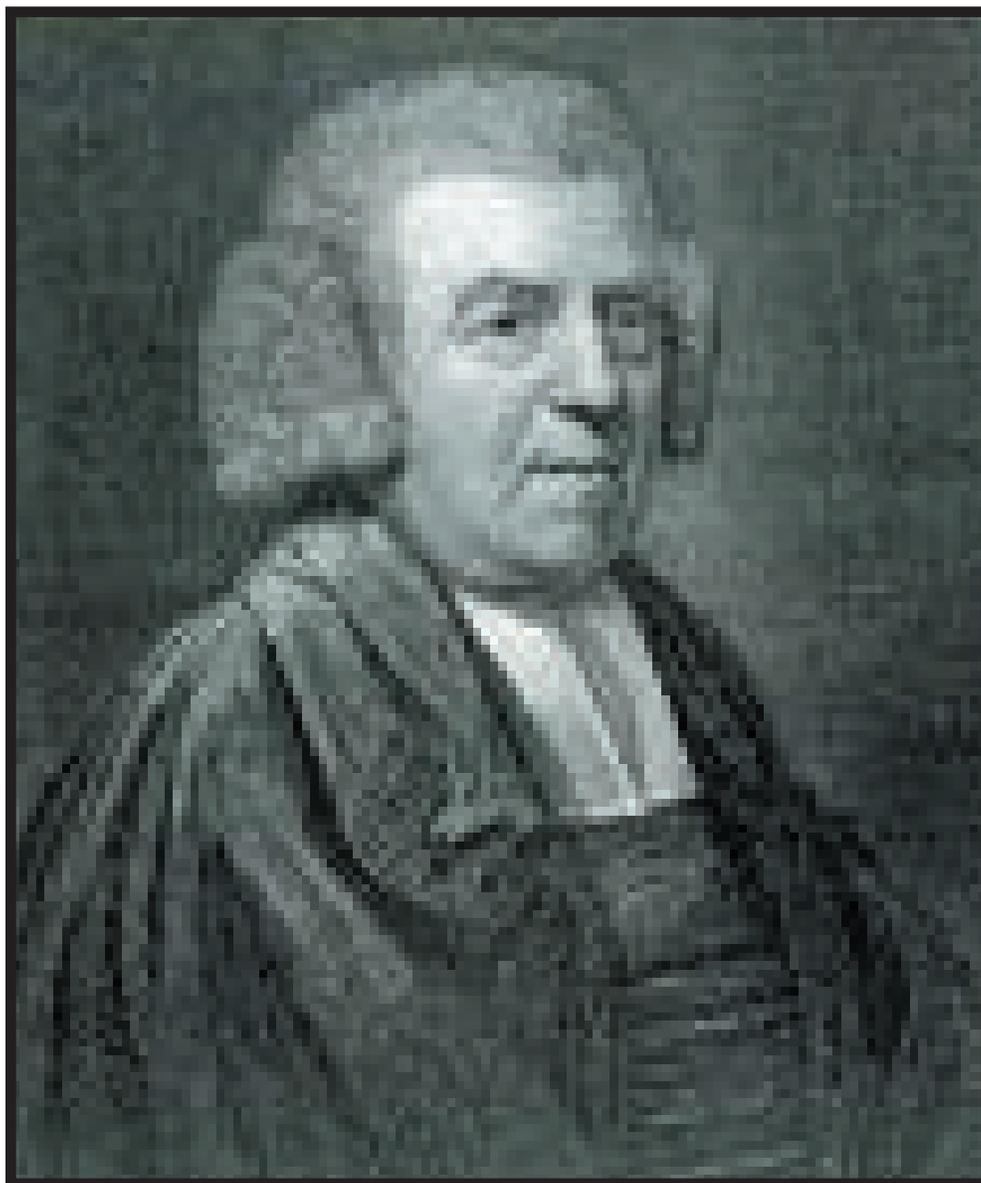




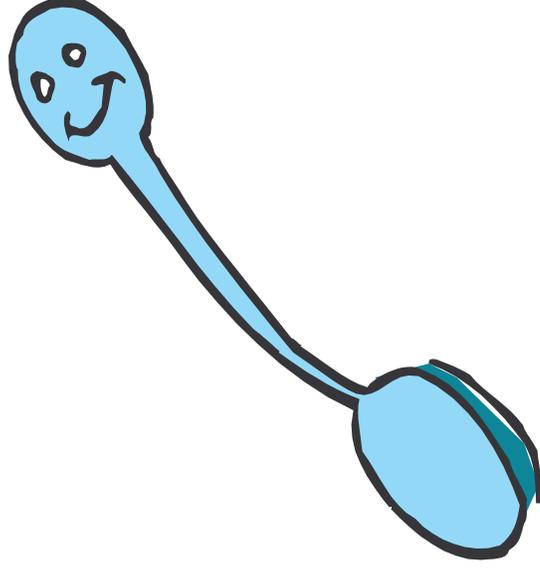
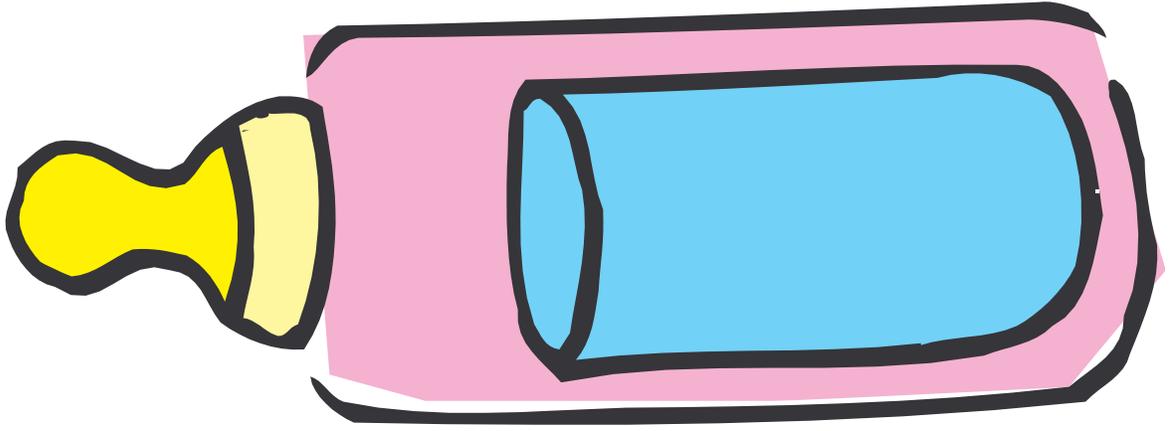


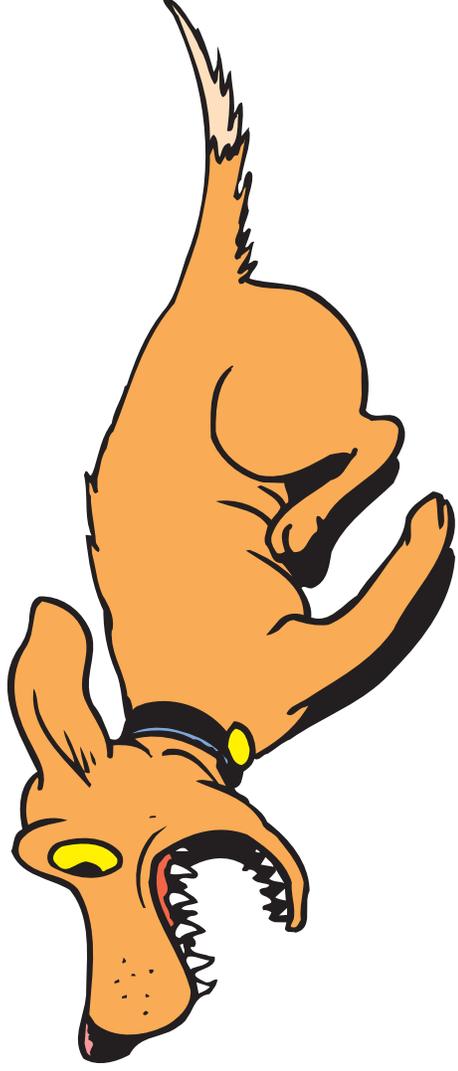






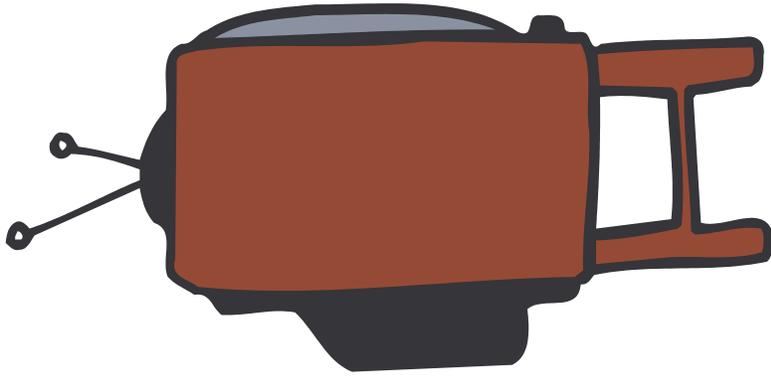
**John Newton**





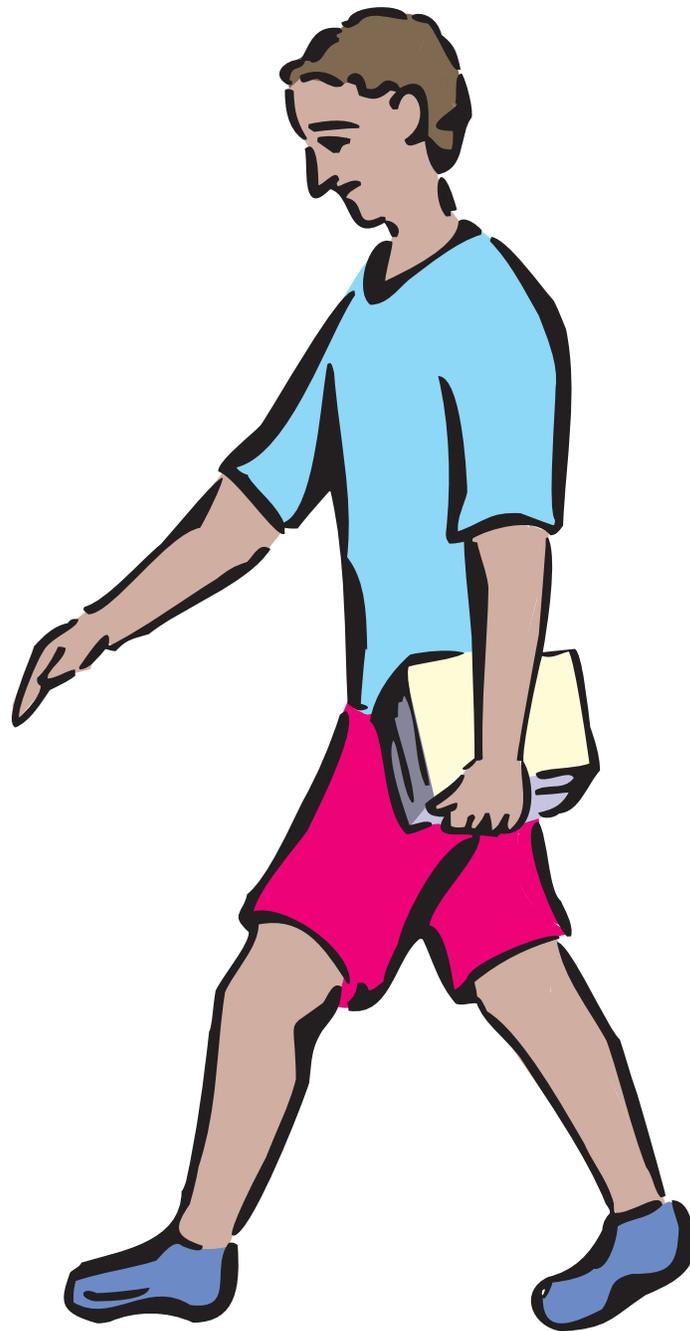




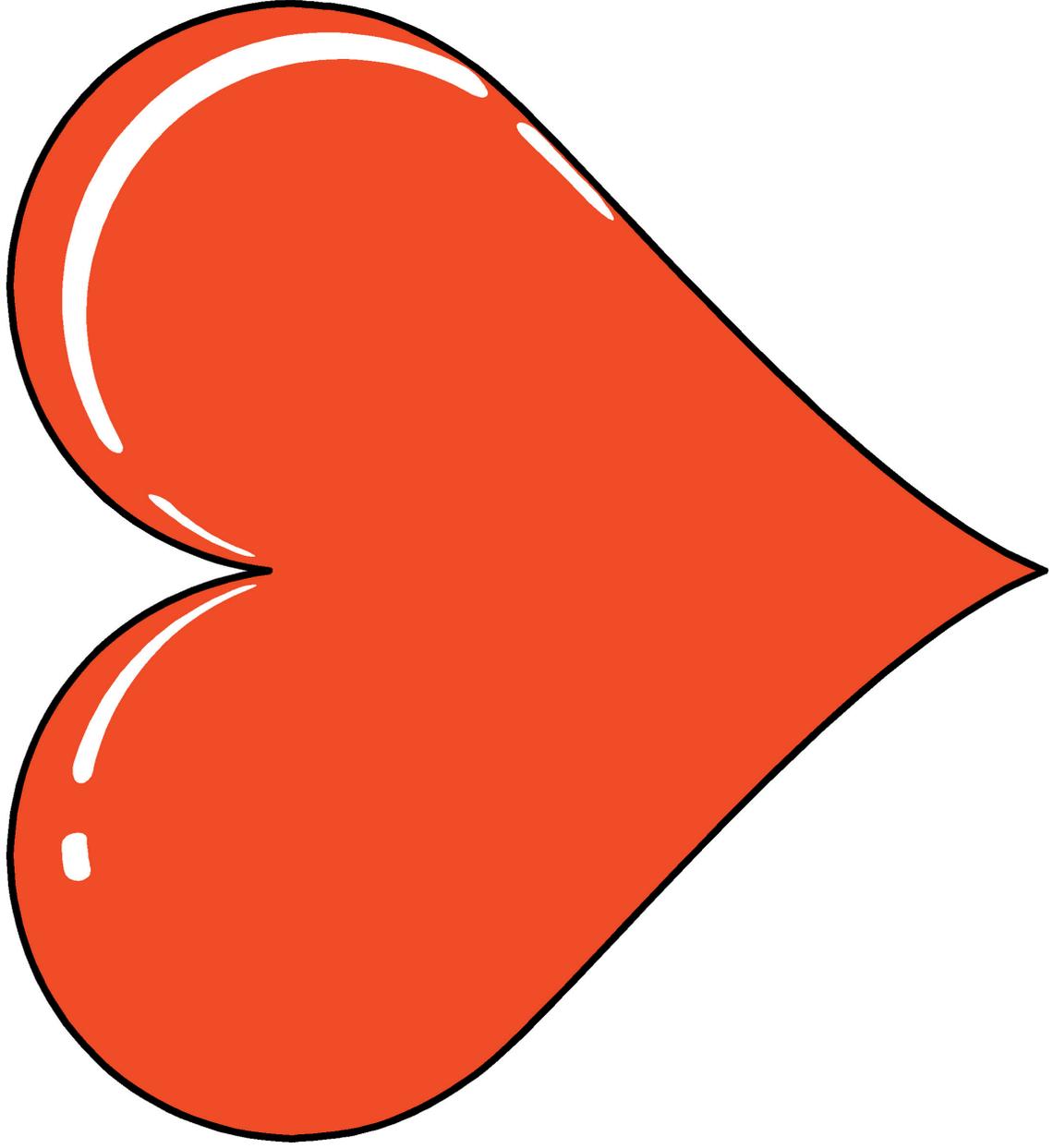


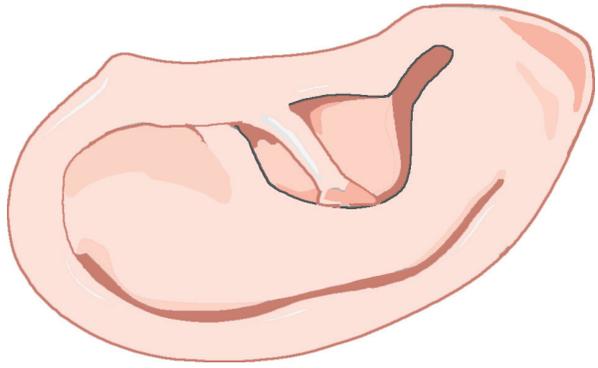
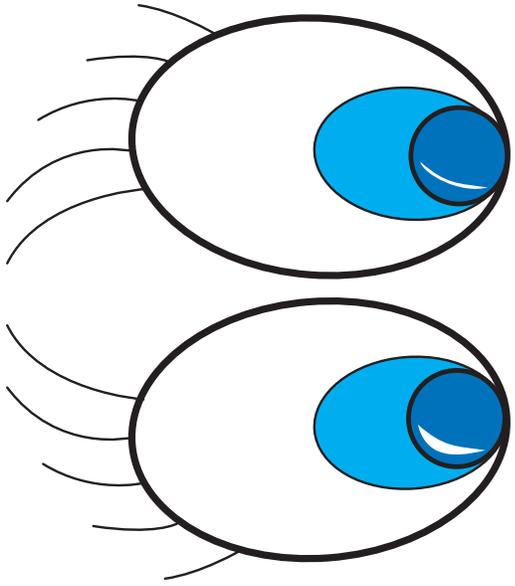




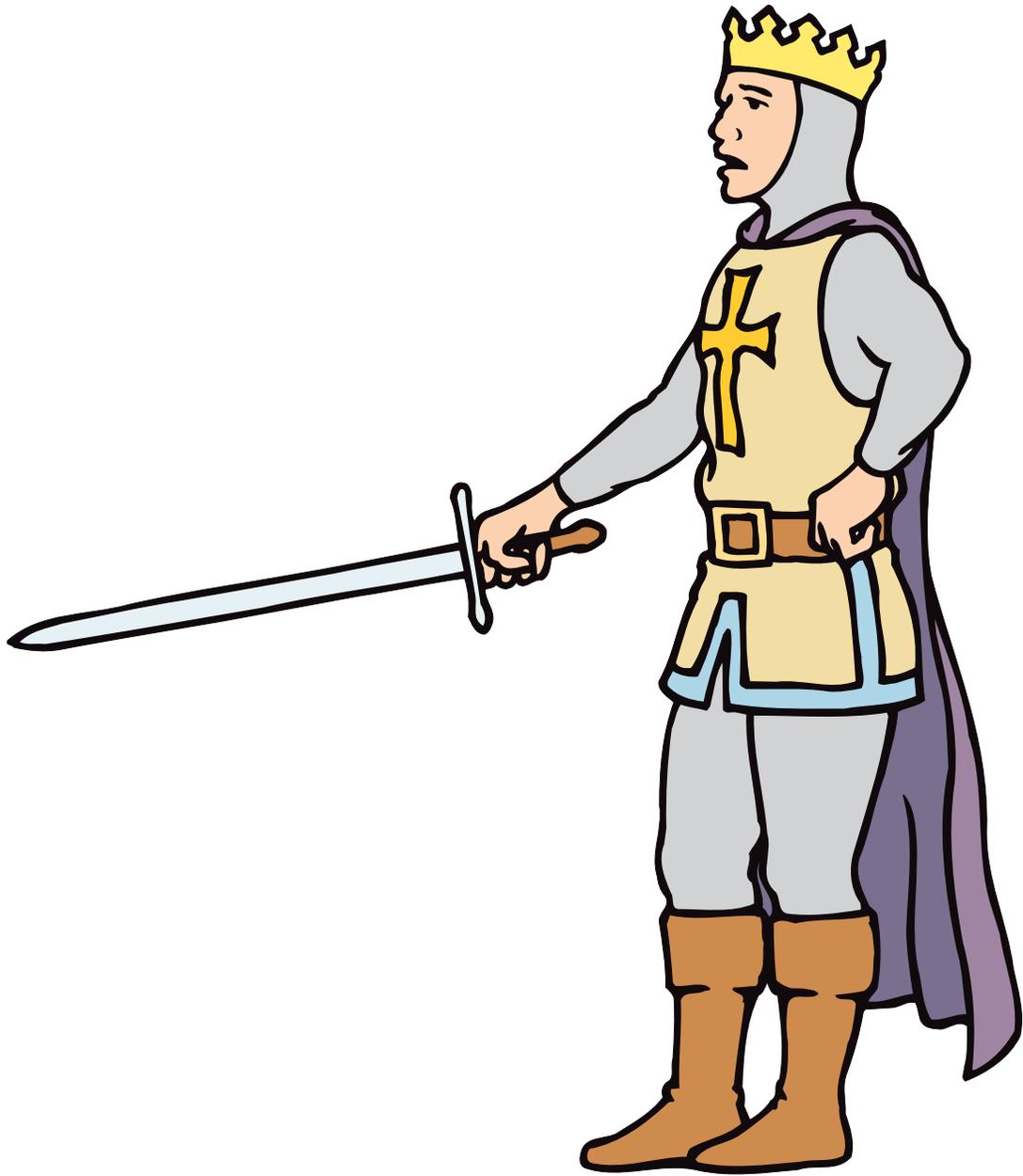


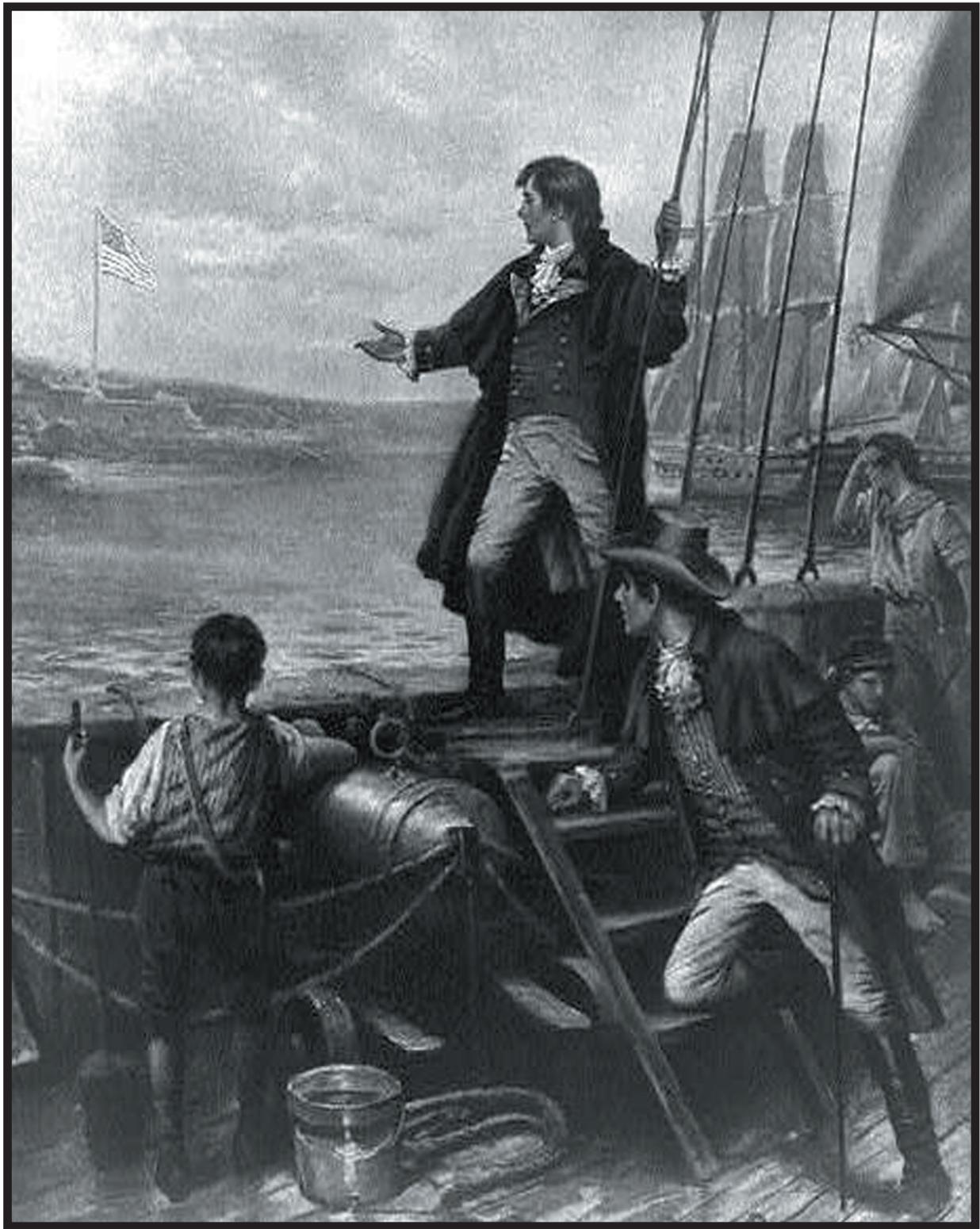


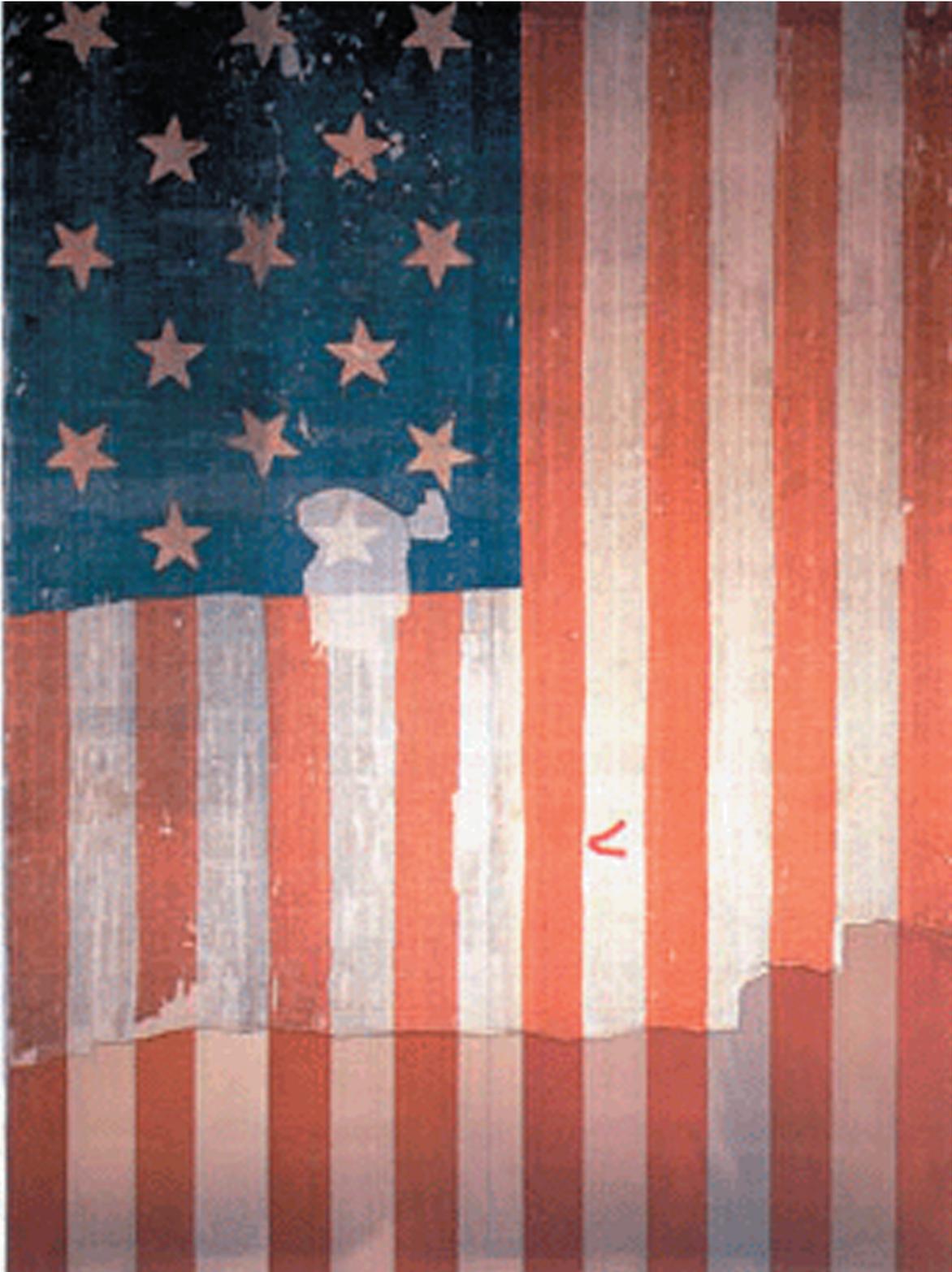












# *A Thankful Heart*

