

TOP 10 FREE

SUNDAY SCHOOL
LESSONS *FOR KIDS*

CURRICULUM PACK

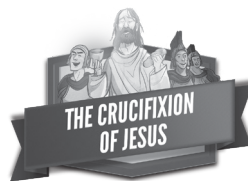


ShareFaith **KIDS**



THE CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS





THE CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS

MATTHEW 26:1-27:55, MARK 14:22-15:40,
LUKE 22:1-23:56 & JOHN 18:1-19:37

GOAL



To help children understand why Jesus died and accept His death for sins on their behalf.

CHARACTERS



Jesus: Though innocent, he died. His death was the sacrifice for our sins.

Judas: One of Jesus' disciples. Judas betrayed Jesus and helped the religious leaders arrest Jesus.

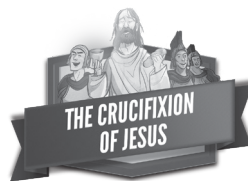
Peter: One of Jesus' disciples. Peter cut off one of an ear of one of the guards who came to arrest Jesus. Also, just as Jesus predicted, Peter denied Him three times.

Pilate: A Roman official who gave the official approval for Jesus to be killed.

MEMORY VERSE



1 Corinthians 15:3: Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures.



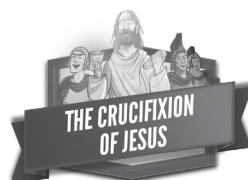
OVERVIEW

- ▶ **Read over Matthew 26:1-56:** Jesus, betrayed by one of His disciples, is arrested and tried before the religious leaders. Based on testimony of false witnesses, the religious leaders ruled to have Jesus killed. They delivered Jesus to the Roman governor, Pilate. In response to the requests of the Jewish people, Pilate ordered Jesus to be whipped and crucified. Beaten and bloodied, Jesus carried His cross to Golgotha, where His hands and feet were nailed to the cross and then lifted upright between two thieves. While hanging on the cross, the Roman soldiers and the religious leaders mocked Him. When Jesus died, the earth shook, rocks were split, tombs were opened, and the veil in the temple was torn in two. Those who were with Jesus after his death and witnessed these things were filled with awe and knew that He truly was the Son of God.
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SUGGESTIONS

- ▶ When thinking about Jesus, who was perfect and sinless, coming to die for our sins, we often feel bad. Jesus was not sad or angry that He had to do it. Before He created the universe, God knew we would need a savior, and He created us even still. From our creation to our salvation, God's plans and actions are done out of love.

To receive salvation through Jesus' death on the cross, all we need to do is accept Jesus as our Savior.



PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY

- ▷ **Gospel Treasure Hunt | Supplies:** Print pictures of the following items: a cup, a loaf of bread, praying hands, silver coins, an ear, a rooster, a gavel, a leather whip, a crown of thorns, nails, a cross, a sword, and a stone.

Split the class into teams. Tell the students that there are pictures hidden around the room, and the team to find the most wins. As you count the number of pictures for each team, explain how each pictured item relates to the lesson.

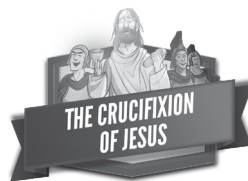
MEMORY VERSE MEANING

- ▷ **1 Corinthians 15:3:** The plan for Jesus to die for our sins was planned long ago. Prophets who lived long before Jesus' birth spoke of the coming Messiah, detailing what His life would be like, what He would be like, and what He would do. Jesus' life and death fulfilled all of these prophecies. While the Word of God is literally written by people, every word is divinely inspired. We can trust that the Bible represents God's story, and that we can use it to learn about Him and His love for us.

POST-LESSON ACTIVITY

- ▷ **Popsicle Stick Cross | Supplies:** Popsicle sticks, glue, yarn, markers, other decorative craft supplies.

Give children two popsicle sticks and have them create a cross by either gluing the sticks together or using yarn. They may decorate the crosses using whatever craft supplies are available.

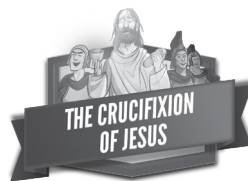


TAKE HOME



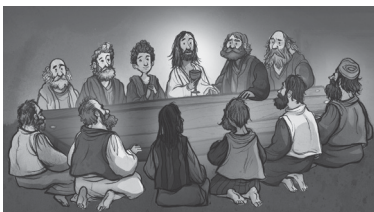
Because we love Jesus so much, it is easy to feel bad that He had to come to Earth to live as a man destined to die for something He didn't do. But we must remember that Jesus was never sad about His mission. He knew from the moment He created the universe that He would do this, and that knowledge didn't make Him change anything. His mission on Earth was done out of a love so deep, we cannot understand it. Sin had separated us from God, and Jesus' death changed all of that.

Salvation through Jesus' death is the greatest gift we've ever been given. Jesus' acts, planned before the universe was created and carried out to perfection, should be celebrated, not mourned.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 1



Q1a: The last meal Jesus had with His disciples was in celebration of what holiday?

A1: Passover

Q1b: If you knew that you would never see or speak to your best friend again, what would you say to him or her?

TN: Perhaps students would confess something, or express their gratitude for their friendship, or impart some wisdom that has helped them get through situations. As Creator of the entire universe, Jesus had quite a lot of information He could pass on to His disciples!

SLIDE 2

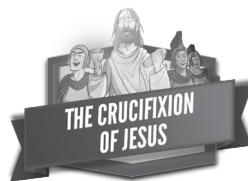


Q2a: Who dipped his food in the bowl at the same time Jesus did?

A2: Judas

Q2b: What would you do if you knew someone was going to betray you?

TN: With that kind of knowledge, our first instinct often is to do something to stop the person from causing any harm to us. Jesus knew of the coming betrayal, but He did nothing because He knew that God would use all of the terrible things that were about to occur to make something wonderful happen.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 3



Q3a: Who did the disciples learn would betray Jesus?

A3: Judas

Q3b: Who in your life would you be most surprised to find out had betrayed you?

TN: It is easy to think that people we don't like or people who don't like us could betray us, but we never suspect the people close to us. Jesus was not surprised, but Judas' fellow disciples were shocked to learn that he would do something so horrible to Jesus.

SLIDE 4

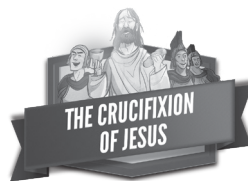


Q4a: How many times did Jesus say Peter would deny Him?

A4: Three times

Q4b: Do you know what Communion or the Lord's Supper is?

TN: Some students may have taken Communion, but they may not understand what it is. Being told that we are to remember Jesus by eating His flesh and drinking His blood is pretty confusing! Let them know that Communion is an opportunity for us to reflect on the sacrifice and suffering that Jesus went through to save us. His body was beaten and bloodied, which is symbolized by the broken bread. His blood was shed, which is symbolized by the wine.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 5



Q5a: What did Judas get for handing over Jesus to the religious leaders?

A5: A lot of money

Q5b: If you could go back in time and meet Judas, what would you say to him?

TN: It's so easy to hate Judas. He committed a horrible sin for evil reasons, but he's just a man who fell to temptation. God used Judas' sin to play out a plan that had been laid out before the universe was created—a plan to save us all from our tendency to fall to temptation and sin. When we encounter someone who has sinned, it is important to treat them with love and forgiveness, because that's what God did for us.

SLIDE 6

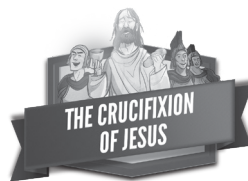


Q6a: What did Jesus do in the garden?

A6: He prayed.

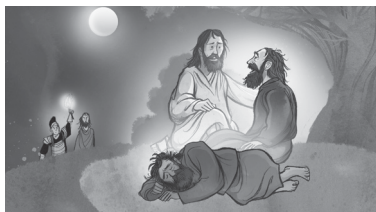
Q6b: When you have a cavity, what do you need to do?

TN: You need to go to the dentist to have it taken care of, or it will get worse. Having a cavity filled is often painful, but it is the solution to the problem. Jesus knew that the solution to the problem of sin was for Him to suffer and die. While He would have preferred not to go through the painful death He knew was coming, He submitted His life to the will of God.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 7



Q7a: What were the disciples doing while Jesus was praying?

A7: They were sleeping.

Q7b: Have you ever been unable to communicate something important to someone?

TN: Over and over again, Scriptures recount instances in which Jesus communicates something important to His disciples, and He is met with the equivalent of 12 blank stares. At times, it's hard not to think the disciples might be a little stupid. The information Jesus was giving the disciples makes sense to us because we know the whole story, but they didn't have the luxury of knowing how everything plays out. The things Jesus was telling them didn't make sense: How can a righteous man be arrested for something he hasn't done? How can a man be killed and come back to life? Jesus may as well have been speaking gibberish! We know better, though!

SLIDE 8

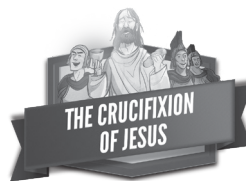


Q8a: How did Judas signal to the guards which person was Jesus?

A8: Judas kissed Jesus on the cheek.

Q8b: Do you think Jesus can relate to the problems you face in your life?

TN: Jesus lived so long ago, and He's God, so how can He possibly understand what it's like to be human today? Jesus gave up His life in heaven to live on Earth as a human man. While He may not understand what it's like to be bullied on Facebook, He does know what it is like to be persecuted, taunted, and hurt emotionally and physically. In His life on Earth, He experienced every emotion we face today, both good and bad. We can always seek comfort and guidance from Jesus in times of trouble, because He has experienced life.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 9



Q9a: Who chopped off the servant's ear?

A9: Peter

Q9b: You see someone stealing your pet. What is your first thought on how you would react?

TN: Peter loved Jesus. He saw a righteous man who had never done anything wrong get arrested for something He did not do. This was a huge injustice! He reacted without thinking and caused something horrible to happen. He didn't understand that the enemy's plan to kill Jesus would be used by God to save the world.

SLIDE 10

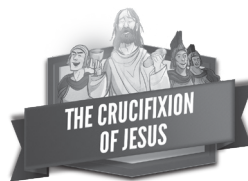


Q10a: What did Jesus do to heal the servant's ear?

A10: He touched it.

Q10b: What do you think it says about Jesus that the last miracle He performed was for an enemy?

TN: Let your students think about this and discuss it. Jesus is pure love, and love is the motivation behind everything He has ever done and will do. No matter what we've done, His thoughts toward us are good.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 11



Q11a: What did the disciples do after Jesus was arrested?

A11: They ran away.

Q11b: Which do you think is more likely: being struck by lightning or becoming an astronaut for NASA?

TN: The odds of being hit by lightning are 1 in 12,000. The odds of becoming an astronaut are about 1 in 12.1 million. The odds of one person fulfilling eight of the more than 300 Messianic prophecies is 1 in 100 quadrillion (100,000,000,000,000,000). Jesus fulfilled all of these prophecies, including those detailing the method and timing of His arrest. Some scholars say it is statistically improbable that anyone except Jesus could have fulfilled every one of these prophecies.

SLIDE 12

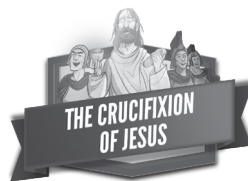


Q12a: What did Jesus say that enraged the religious leaders?

A12: Jesus said that He was the Son of God.

Q12b: Is it possible to make everyone happy?

TN: It is not possible. In Jesus' case, the fact that He is the Son of God made some people very happy; for others, that fact made them incredibly angry.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 13



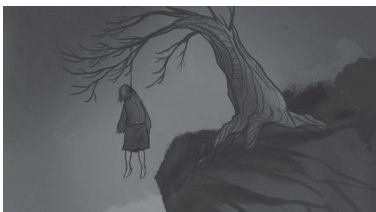
Q13a: What did Peter hear after he lied three times about being one of Jesus' disciples?

A13: A rooster crowed.

Q13b: What is your biggest pet peeve?

TN: Now ask the students if they have ever done whatever it is that they find so irritating. It happens! Sometimes, we find ourselves doing the exact thing we never could have imagined doing. This happened to Peter. He was going through a really trying time, and the only way he could think to get through it was to do something he swore he wouldn't. Like Peter, sometimes we do these things without even realizing it. Until that rooster crowed, it hadn't dawned on Peter that he had denied Jesus even once, let alone three times. This part of the story really shows how important it is to keep our minds on Jesus. He will help us get through tough times without sinning.

SLIDE 14

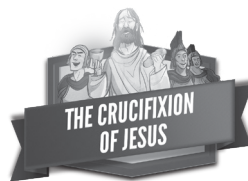


Q14a: What did Judas do before he hung himself?

A14: He went back to the priests and threw the coins on the floor.

Q14b: Was Judas' sin the worst sin ever committed?

TN: All sin is bad, but all sins can be forgiven if we believe in Jesus and the sacrifice He made for us. Once we have declared our love for Jesus, nothing can separate us from the love and forgiveness of God.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 15



Q15a: What was the name of the Roman leader?

A15: Pilate

Q15b: If nine out of ten people recommend chewing on rocks to cure a toothache, would you take their advice?

TN: No! Chewing on rocks does not sound like a good idea, no matter what people say. Based on the lies they had cooked up to get Jesus in trouble, the religious leaders had whipped the people into a frenzy. The crowd calling for Jesus' death was made up of people who believed what they had been told by someone else. It's likely that many of the people there didn't even know who Jesus was or His side of the story. These people were a part of a life and death decision, and they had no real knowledge of the situation! As Christians, we have powerful tools to help us determine whether or not something is a good idea—the Holy Spirit and the Bible. Before we make a decision or add our voice to cause, we should pray for wisdom and we should check to see if the principles behind claims are supported by Scripture.

SLIDE 16

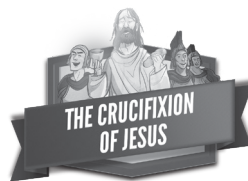


Q16a: Why did Pilate agree to have Jesus beaten and crucified?

A16: To keep the peace

Q16b: If you watch your dog dig up all the flowers in the garden, but do nothing about it, are you blameless?

TN: Just as you didn't dig up the flowers, neither did Pilate whip Jesus or nail Him to the cross. Pilate, the religious leaders, and the people in the crowd were all responsible for Jesus' death. But so too are we. Because we sin, Jesus needed to come to die for us. This sounds harsh, but there is another way to look at it. Because sin separated us from God, Jesus had a choice: Suffer and die as the sacrifice that pays for our sins, or live without us for eternity. Jesus chose to suffer for us because He wanted to live for eternity with us.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 17



Q17a: What kind of crown did the Roman soldiers put on Jesus' head?

A17: A crown of thorns

Q17b: Would throwing your best clothes in a puddle of mud get them nice and clean?

TN: That doesn't make any sense! So how can it be true that the blood of Jesus has made us white as snow? Blood causes stains, so this idea seems like nonsense—but it is true. Jesus was a pure, sinless sacrifice. His death wiped the slate clean for us. So as ridiculous as it sounds, His blood has made us clean.

SLIDE 18

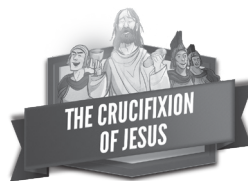


Q18a: Who helped Jesus carry His cross to the top of Golgotha?

A18: Simon of Cyrene

Q18b: Have you ever felt moved to help someone?

TN: That feeling is the Holy Spirit moving us to help others. When we acknowledge the feeling and act on it we are accomplishing both of Jesus' commandments: Love our God with all our hearts, souls, minds, and strength; and love our neighbor as ourselves.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 19



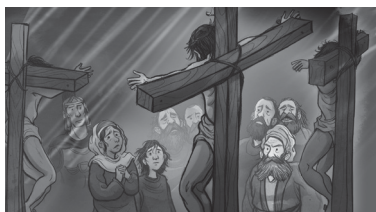
Q19a: Who was crucified beside Jesus?

A19: Two thieves.

Q19b: If someone called your best friend a nasty name, would it change your opinion of your friend?

TN: Good friends love each other despite their flaws. Insults directed at loved ones and at ourselves can be hurtful and make us sad. On top of the excruciating pain He felt physically, Jesus was in emotional agony. The people He loved so much hated Him and thought Him to be no better than a common thief. When insults are directed our way, it is important to remember that we should not find value in what others think and say about us. Our value comes from our Creator. Scripture calls us the light of the world, chosen and dearly loved, victorious, the righteousness of God, and many other wonderful things. If that is what God says we are, then that is the truth.

SLIDE 20

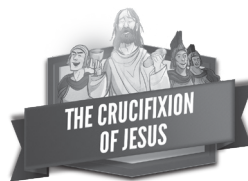


Q20a: What did the sign hung above Jesus' head say?

A20: It said "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

Q20b: What are some good excuses to get out of doing the dishes?

TN: Let the students give some excuses. Explain to the students that we are given chores to learn responsibility and to help out our families. As Jesus hung on the cross, people mocked Him and said things like, "If you're really the Son of God, save yourself!" Jesus could have done just that, but He didn't. Jesus endured torture and an incredibly long and painful death because He knew it was His job—His job was to save us.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 21

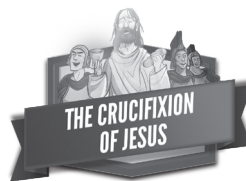


Q21a: Why were guards posted outside Jesus' tomb?

A21: To make sure no one tried to steal Jesus' body to make it look like He had risen from the dead.

Q21b: Which job sounds easier: Keeping the ocean waves from touching the beach or keeping Jesus in the tomb?

TN: Talk about impossible jobs! Knowing what we know about Jesus and how this story turns out, putting guards outside Jesus' tomb is just ridiculous! What a wonderful and powerful Savior we have!



MEMORY VERSE

- ▷ **1 Corinthians 15:3:** Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures.

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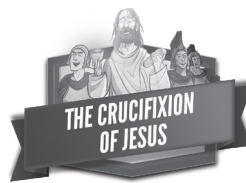
BIG IDEA

- ▷ In the ultimate act of love, Jesus died to save us from sin and death.

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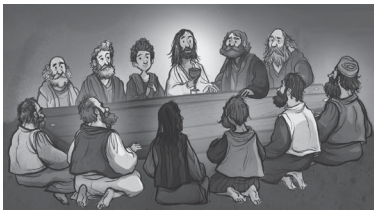
CLOSING PRAYER

- ▷ Dear God, we can't thank you enough for sending Jesus to die for our sins. May we think of this forever and live for Him each day! We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 1



It was the festival of Passover. Jesus and His twelve disciples had gathered in a room for their last supper together. Jesus knew it would be their final time to be together before He died, so He told His friends many important things. There was one very important message He had for them: One of the disciples would betray Him.

SLIDE 2



"The one who betrays me will dip his food in the bowl at the same time I do," said Jesus. And just as He said that, Judas reached over and dipped his food in the bowl. With shock and anger, Judas looked at Jesus. The Son of God knew beforehand that Judas would betray Him and deliver Him over to the chief priests and religious leaders.

SLIDE 3

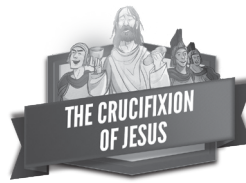


Judas shoved away from the table and scrambled for the door. He didn't look back. He scurried away to do his evil deed. All the other disciples looked on in awe. They could not believe that one of their own was a traitor.

SLIDE 4



Jesus understood that the hour was soon approaching that He would suffer and die for the sin of all mankind. He told the disciples to remember His death and to think of Him often. He took the bread, gave thanks for it, broke it, and handed it to each of them. He took the cup, gave thanks for it, and shared it with them. He told them to think of the wine as His blood and the bread as His body. The disciples did not understand what Jesus was saying. Peter, one of the disciples, said that he would never leave Jesus. But Jesus quickly told Peter that before that night was over, Peter would deny that he knew Him three times.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 5



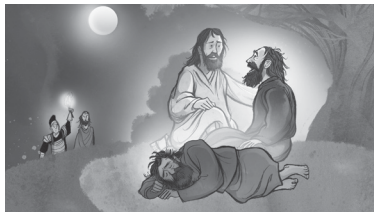
Meanwhile, with the chief priests, Judas carried out his evil deed. He agreed to hand Jesus over to the cruel leaders if they would pay him a lot of money. Of course, Judas knew it was wrong, but there was no turning back now.

SLIDE 6



By now, it was dark outside. Jesus and His disciples went to a garden. Jesus wanted to prepare for His death, so He fell to His knees, bowed His head, and poured out His heart to His heavenly Father. "Oh, God," He cried, "I don't want to suffer. But I will do what You want Me to." His prayer went on for hours.

SLIDE 7

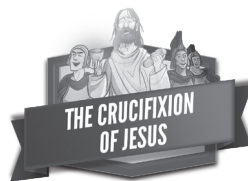


The disciples couldn't stay awake and fell asleep nearby; however, Jesus couldn't sleep, and He stayed awake in prayer. When Jesus came to His disciples, He found them asleep. Even after He woke them and encouraged them to pray, they fell asleep again. The second time, Jesus woke them and told them that the time had come for Him to be arrested. The disciples were confused and did not know what to expect.

SLIDE 8



A group of armed guards rushed up to Jesus and His disciples. Judas was with them. Judas walked over and kissed Jesus on the cheek—a sign to the soldiers that Jesus was the one they should arrest. The guards grabbed Jesus' arms.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 9



Peter wasn't about to let this happen. He was going to protect Jesus. He pulled out his own sword and slashed at the guards. In doing so, he chopped off the ear of one of the servants.

SLIDE 10



Jesus rebuked Peter gently. Jesus knew that Peter meant well, but this was all a part of God's plan. Jesus touched the man's ear and completely healed it. The guards were amazed.

SLIDE 11

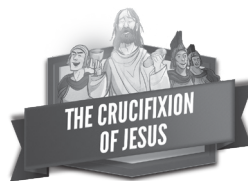


"So, have you come with swords and clubs to arrest me like a robber?" Jesus asked looking up at His attackers. The guards knew that Jesus had been preaching and teaching in public places and no one ever tried to arrest Him there. This night was different. The disciples were afraid and ran away, but Peter followed Jesus at a distance.

SLIDE 12



Jesus was led all the way from the Garden of Gethsemane through the Kidron Valley to the high priest. There He was interrogated. They were trying to find a reason to kill Him. Of course, Jesus was honest and true. He simply told them what He had always declared—He was the Son of God. This enraged the leaders. They led Him to another court to obtain permission to put Him to death.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 13



Meanwhile, Peter stood outside in the courtyard around a fire with other bystanders. He wanted to see what happened. "You're His disciple, aren't you?" a servant girl asked him. "No! I'm not!" Peter swore and became angry. "I don't even know Him!" Peter was asked if he knew Jesus three times, and all three times he lied. After Peter lied for the third time, a rooster crowed, and Peter remembered what Jesus had said. He ran away feeling horrible and weeping bitterly.

SLIDE 14



That night, after Jesus was arrested, Judas realized what he had done and was overcome with guilt. He didn't care about the money that he had earned. He ran to the priests and threw the coins on the floor. Then he ran out, tied a rope around his neck, and hung himself.

SLIDE 15

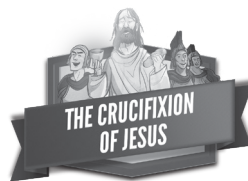


That same night Jesus was on trial before the Roman leader, Pilate. Even Pilate didn't want to kill Jesus. "He hasn't done anything to deserve death!" Pilate said, exasperated. The crowds, whipped into a frenzy by the leaders, just wanted to see some blood. "Crucify Him!" they chanted with maddening anger.

SLIDE 16



Pilate decided to give in. "I'm going to give you what you want, just to keep the peace. But I have nothing to do with this! I wash my hands of it." The cruel Roman soldiers were only too glad to oblige. Jesus was whipped mercilessly, leaving Him bleeding and wounded.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 17



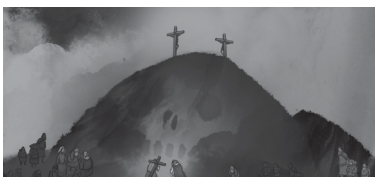
They mocked Jesus, hailing Him as a king, then they shoved a crown of thorns on His head. They spit at Him, hit Him, slapped Him, and made cruel jokes. Jesus suffered silently and did not retaliate. He knew He was the sacrifice, dying for the sins of the very people who tortured Him.

SLIDE 18



The time had come. Jesus would be nailed to a cross. He was forced to carry His own heavy cross until He fell from the pain and exhaustion. Jesus was so weak that a man named Simon of Cyrene ended up carrying His cross to Golgotha, which means Place of a Skull.

SLIDE 19

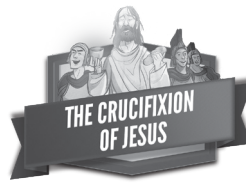


There, at the top of the hill, Jesus was crucified like a criminal. Hanging on a cross for all to see, two thieves hung beside Him. This was no place for the Son of God.

SLIDE 20



Jesus' hands and feet were nailed to the cross, and then the soldiers hoisted the cross into the air. Pilate had hung a sign above His head that read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." The religious leaders were furious about this, but Pilate refused to remove the sign. Some people mourned, some mocked, but most people felt great pity for Him. Jesus' own mother was there. Some of Jesus' disciples watched from a distance, afraid and terribly sad. As Jesus hung dying on the cross, the entire land was plunged into darkness, even though it was the middle of the day. With His last breath, Jesus cried out, "It is finished!" Jesus breathed no more. A low rumbling erupted from all around. In Jerusalem's holy temple, the mighty curtain that separated the holiest of holies was torn in half. Many knew in that instant that Jesus was truly the Son of God.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 21



Just before the Sabbath began, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for Jesus' body. He prepared it for burial and placed Jesus' body in his own new tomb. He then rolled a large stone in front of the entrance. The religious council knew Jesus said that He would rise again. To make sure no one came to steal Jesus' body to make it look like He had risen from the dead, they stationed guards outside Jesus' tomb. Jesus had to die to appease God's wrath towards sin. But this was not the end. Jesus would be resurrected after three days to defeat death and sin forever.



LOVE YOUR ENEMIES



LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

MATTHEW 5:38-48

GOAL

- ▶ **To teach children to imitate the exceptional love of Jesus Christ.** He left His glory—His position as King of the universe—not to be served, but to serve by giving up His life to rescue the world from the eternal curse of sin. He loved us while we were still enemies and haters of righteousness. This extreme love is an attribute we inherit as His children; it is proof that we belong to Him. Teach children practical ways to imitate the love of God, especially in response to their enemies.

WORDS TO KNOW

- ▶ **Love:** As in “Love your enemies.” Love is patient and kind, it is not resentful, it does not take joy in the failure or misery of others, and love believes and hopes for the best. We are called to love even our enemies —no matter how hateful or cruel —and to wish for them God’s greatest blessings.

Enemy: As in “Love your enemies.” An enemy is someone who opposes you; someone who despises you and wishes bad things to happen to you.

Persecute: To persecute is to act hatefully, or punish a person for what they believe, and to do whatever is necessary to silence them.

MEMORY VERSES

- ▶ **Matthew 5:44:** But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.
- Proverbs 25:21:** If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink.



OVERVIEW



Read Matthew 5:38-48: The law of God is perfect and exists to convert hearts and minds, promote peace, and protect from injustice and overbearing punishment. The problem with the religious leaders in Jesus' day is that they used the law for vengeance. The religious leaders used the law to control those who offended them and inflict as much pain as the law would allow. Contrary to this understanding, Jesus taught His disciples to imitate the love of God in every action, even in view of His law. Instead of looking for an opportunity to inflict harsh punishment, or return evil for evil, He told the disciples to seek a peaceable solution and to act in love and forgiveness. We are to respond as our Father in Heaven would respond. Love your enemies and do good to those who hurt you.

SUGGESTIONS



Help children to identify characteristics of the Father's love through the actions of Jesus Christ, specifically, His actions in response to His enemies.

1. Servanthood: Jesus ministered to the sick, the weak, and the helpless. Jesus said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Luke 5:31-32).

2. Sacrifice: Jesus gave up everything, including His life, to save the world from sin and eternal death. "Having loved His own, He loved them to the end" (John 13:1).

3. Friendship: When we were still enemies of God, God made a way to restore friendship and to make us His very own sons and daughters. "But God shows His love for us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:6-8).

4. Humility: The God of glory gave up His throne in Heaven to walk among mankind—to feel our pain, to understand our weakness, and to give up His life as a ransom. "And being found in human form, he humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross" (Philippians 2:15).

5. Prayer: He prayed for those who persecuted Him and blessed those who cursed Him. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

6. Salvation: God offers His gift of salvation to everyone—no one is excluded. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).



PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY



Ages 5-7 Inner Circle | Supplies: One large hula hoop for every five to six kids and large objects to prop up the hula hoops about 6 inches.

Divide the kids into teams of about five or six. On the count of three, one child at a time will step into the hula hoop without knocking it over. The team that can get the most kids into the hula hoop without disturbing it wins!

This is a game that teaches inclusion of others and making friends.

Ages 8-10 Scripture Relay | Supplies: Poster board, chalkboard, white board, or butcher paper; markers, chalk, or dry erase markers.

Select one of the memory verses to use for this game. Divide the group into two teams. If using poster board or butcher paper, secure it to a wall. Line up the two teams a good distance from the writing surface. On the word “go,” have the first child run to the board and write the first word of the memory verse, run back, hand off the pen to the next child, and go to the back of the line. The next child will write the second word of the Bible verse and go to the back of the line. This should continue until the entire Bible verse has been written. The first team to finish wins.

Ages 8-10 Friendship Chain | Supplies: Clear tape, strips of colorful construction paper, pens, and/or crayons.

Give each child two strips of paper and have them write their own name on one strip and an example of how to be a good friend on the other. While they are working on their answers, explain to them how we are to be kind to everyone, even those who are difficult to love. Using the clear tape, link the names and answers to each other, creating a colorful paper chain that can be hung in the classroom as a reminder.



MEMORY
VERSE
MEANING

▶ **Matthew 5:44:** It is easy to love someone who loves you, but the real blessing and reward is in loving the unlovable, those who hate you, those who are cruel, and those who wish you harm.

Proverbs 25:21: Instead of hurting the person who hurts you, look for ways to show him or her unexpected kindness. Hatred and revenge fuels rage, but mercy and kindness makes it possible to earn friendship.

POST-LESSON
ACTIVITY

▶ **Ages 5-7 Follow the Leader/Follow the Father**

Have everyone form a large circle. Select one child from the group to be the “guesser.” Have him or her leave the room. While out of the room, select one person to be the “leader,” then invite the guesser back and have them stand in the center of the circle. The group will throw their arms up and down three times, then the game begins. The leader will direct the rest of the group to perform other movements, which the kids in the circle will imitate, such as, waving their arms back and forth, standing up, sitting down, kicking their left foot, kicking their right foot, and so on. The center guesser must try to guess who the leader of the group is. To make it more difficult for the guesser, the children imitating the leader must do so in a way that isn't too obvious, so the guesser will not suspect. The guesser gets three chances to figure out who the leader is. If none of the guesses are correct, the round continues; if the guess is correct, the leader becomes the guesser, and the guesser joins the group. This activity helps younger children understand what the word imitate means, as in “imitate the Father's love.”

Ages 5-7 Verse Hop | Supplies: sheets of paper.

On sheets of paper write words or phrases from one of the memory verses. Place the words on the floor close enough together that children can safely hop from one word to the other. Have the kids take turns hopping from one word to the next, in order of the Bible verse. In the beginning, read each word/phrase to the kids and have them hop as you say them, toward the end of the game give the children the opportunity to hop through the verse without help.



Ages 8-10 **Heart of Love** | **Supplies:** a large heart cut from construction paper or poster board. Smaller slips of paper and items to use for decoration, such as ribbon, yarn, glitter, buttons, etc.

On small slips of paper, have children write and/or draw ideas about how to show love, even to their enemies, such as sharing, forgiveness, patience, giving, kindness, etc. Let the kids glue their various responses to the heart along with decorative items that will give it flare.

TAKE HOME



As sons and daughters of God, we are to imitate His love to others—even our enemies. Based on what we learned about our Father's love for us, how can we imitate Him in our everyday lives? Use the following to stir up conversation.

1. Jesus ministered to the sick, the weak, and the helpless. How can we ease the suffering of those who are sick or hurting?
2. Jesus gave up everything, including His life, to save the world from sin and eternal death. How can we show love and kindness to not only our friends, but also to our enemies?
3. When we were still enemies of God, He restored us to friendship and made us His very own sons and daughters. How can we promote reconciliation and peace with others? How can we promote peace and reconciliation with God?
4. The God of glory gave up His throne in Heaven to walk among us—to feel our pain, to understand our weakness, and to give up His life as a ransom for the forgiveness of sin. If God can give up His throne and His life, in what ways can we humble ourselves to forgive, show kindness, and serve the people God puts in our lives?
5. He prayed for those who persecuted Him and blessed those who cursed Him. How does the understanding of God's love change our attitude toward others? How does prayer change our attitude toward others?
6. God offers His gift of salvation to everyone—no one is excluded. What are some ways we can share the good news of God's love with others and invite them to be a part of the family of God?



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 1



Q1a: Who ruled Jerusalem during Jesus' time?

A1: The Romans ruled during Jesus' time.

Q1b: Has anyone ever bullied you?

TN: Bullying is a big issue these days, and it is likely that every student in the class has been bullied on some level. It can be a sensitive topic for some, so it's not necessary that everyone share their experiences. Being bullied is a difficult situation to handle. It's scary and discouraging to be threatened and treated poorly. Often, we are given advice on how to deal with bullies. While Jesus gave this and all other lessons more than 2,000 years ago, they all still apply to situations we face on a daily basis.

SLIDE 2



Q2a: What surprising thing did Jesus say about the Romans?

A2: Jesus said that people should love the Romans.

Q2b: Which would you rather try: jumping to the moon using only a trampoline or loving your enemies?

TN: Most of us would prefer to spend our time doing something impossible that will waste our time than confront our feelings about people who do mean things to us. Jesus asks us to love our enemies, and that is such a difficult thing to do because it means letting go of our pride. Responding to evil with love feels like we're letting someone get the best of us, and that's not easy. We can rest in this knowledge: If Jesus asks us to do it, there is a good reason and He will help us accomplish it.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 3



Q3a: What did Jesus say people should do when someone slaps them in the face?

A3: Jesus said they should let the person slap them on the other cheek, too.

Q3b: Is Jesus asking us to be weak?

TN: Not at all! Often, our first reaction to the example Jesus gave of someone slapping us across the face is to slap back, or to hurt the person in some way. Choosing to love someone who slaps you across the face requires far more strength than it does to seek revenge. It is very important to remember that God doesn't ask us to do things to put us at a disadvantage; He asks us to do these things because he has a plan. There is nothing—no action, no words, no plans—we can do that will serve justice as perfectly as God can. When we turn the other cheek, we are putting our faith in that plan.

SLIDE 4



Q4a: Poor people used their coats for what?

A4: Poor people used their coats as blankets.

Q4b: How does it make you feel to give something really nice to your best friend?

TN: Giving our best friends something really nice feels great! What about giving something really nice to someone we don't like or who has been mean to us? Why does it feel better to give to a friend than to an enemy? Because of love. We love our friends and want them to be happy! Jesus loves our friends and our enemies the same, and He wants us to love them the same, too. That's not easy, but it is something we can accomplish with God's help.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 5



Q5a: How far could Roman soldiers force people to carry their gear?

A5: Roman soldiers could force people to carry their gear for one mile.

Q5b: Have you ever done something for someone and he or she didn't thank you?

TN: Doing good for ungrateful people isn't super fun, but that shouldn't stop us! God sees our work and His appreciation and acknowledgment means more than if everyone in the whole world gave us a standing ovation!

SLIDE 6



Q6a: God gives His goodness and love to who?

A6: God gives His goodness and love to everyone, even those who don't deserve it.

Q6b: Have you ever had a day when it just felt like nothing would go right?

TN: Students don't have to share details of this bad day, but ask them to think about the things that happened. Then ask them to think about how they reacted to the problems that came up that day. How did they behave that day? Then ask them how a person who had never met them before might think of them based on their behavior on this particular day. No matter how angry, mean, or difficult we are on our worst days, Jesus loves us. Despite our behavior and actions, Jesus would still come to die on the cross so that we could live with Him in Heaven forever.



SLIDE 7

QUESTION & ANSWER



Q7a: Instead of taking revenge or getting even, what did Jesus do to those who hurt and insulted Him?

A7: Instead of taking revenge or getting even, Jesus gave His own life as payment for our sins.

Q7b: Can you tell whether a person is good or bad based only on the way he or she acts?

TN: The way a person acts in any given situation can give us a good idea of that person's personality, but this is just one instance. What if that person was having a bad day and was grumpier than usual? Without being able to see every part of a person's life and see into his or her heart, we are unable to judge a person as good or bad; only God can do that. Jesus loves our enemies just as much as He loves us, and if Jesus finds them worthy of love, they deserve the same from us. By loving our enemies, or even just people who aren't particularly nice, we are displaying love like Jesus.



MEMORY VERSES

▶ **Matthew 5:44:** But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

Proverbs 25:21: If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink.

.....

BIG IDEA

▶ God loves everyone, even our enemies, and He wants us to love them, too.

.....

CLOSING PRAYER

▶ Dear Lord, thank You for Your example of love, that while we were still sinners, You died for us. Help us to be kind and to do good things, even to those who say and do mean things to us. We love You, and ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 1



During the time of Jesus, Jerusalem was ruled by the Roman Empire. The Romans had invaded Jerusalem, and they made life very difficult for many Jews. The Roman emperor demanded that the people worship him instead of God, Roman tax collectors took the people's hard-earned money, and Roman soldiers bullied anyone who disagreed. Throughout Jerusalem, the Romans were viewed as an enemy—they were hated!

SLIDE 2



One day, Jesus sat down on a hillside, surrounded by His disciples and a large crowd of people. Many of those listening had seen first-hand how cruel the Romans could be, and they listened eagerly to Jesus' teaching. What would Jesus say about people like the Romans? Would He say people should hate their enemies? Would He say they should get even with them? Much to their surprise, Jesus said that they should love their enemies.

SLIDE 3



Jesus explained what this love looked like by giving some examples. First, He told the people, "If someone slaps you on your right cheek, let them slap your left cheek as well." This would have been very difficult for the people to accept, but Jesus wanted everyone listening to understand something very important: Love doesn't take revenge. Love doesn't hurt others who have caused harm.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 4



Jesus gave the people a second example: “If anyone brings you to court to take your shirt, let them have your coat as well.” A person’s outer coat was very important in Jesus’ time. For example, the poor would use their coats as blankets to sleep in on cold nights. But Jesus wanted the crowd to understand that true love comes from a deep trust in God. Love will give away things of incredible value, even to those who don’t deserve them.

SLIDE 5



Next, Jesus said, “If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile, carry it for 2 miles.” According to their law, Roman soldiers could force people to carry their heavy gear for 1 mile. People hated having to do this, and they would never think of going an extra mile. But Jesus taught the crowd that love always serves others, even enemies, with a humble heart. Love always goes above and beyond, doing more than expected.

SLIDE 6



Jesus was letting the crowd know that they should love others the way that God loves them. Jesus explained that God was like a good Father in Heaven. God shows His goodness and love to everyone, even those who don’t deserve it. Jesus reminded the crowd that God gives his very best gifts, like warm sunshine and nourishing rain, to everyone—good and bad. Jesus challenged the crowd to love each other in the same way.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 7



Later, on a cross, Jesus would become the perfect example of God's love. There, people hurt and insulted Him, but He didn't take revenge or get even. Instead, Jesus gave away the most valuable thing of all—His own life—as a payment for our sins. Our Savior went the extra mile so that we could be free from our sin and live with God in Heaven forever. God loved us first, even when we were sinners. It's amazing! And this is how Jesus says we are to love others!



**THE STORY OF
MARY AND JOSEPH**



THE STORY OF MARY AND JOSEPH

MATTHEW 1:1-25, 2:1-23, AND LUKE 2:1-20

GOAL

- ▶ To teach children the story of how Jesus, the savior of the world, came into the world, not as a powerful man, but as a baby born into a humble family.
-

WORDS TO KNOW

- ▶ **Descendant:** A person who is part of a family that has come from a particular individual.
-

MEMORY VERSES

- ▶ **Luke 2:7** And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.



OVERVIEW



Read Matthew 1:1-25, 2:1-23, and Luke 2:1-20: Mary and Joseph, both descendants of Abraham and King David, were engaged to be married. Sometime before their wedding day, an angel of the Lord came to Mary, who was a virgin, to tell her that she was going to give birth to the Son of the Most High. Before Joseph was able to break off his engagement to Mary, an angel of the Lord came to him in a dream and explained that she was pregnant by the Holy Spirit, and she was going to give birth to the Messiah. Near the time that Mary was due, she and Joseph had to travel to Bethlehem for the Roman census. When they arrived, the city was packed with travelers, and the only place left for them to stay was a stable. On the night that Jesus was born, a star appeared in the sky over the stable. This attracted the attention of the Magi, who began a long journey to see the newborn king. When they arrived in Jerusalem, they asked King Herod where they could find the baby born king of the Jews. Angry that anyone would try to take his power, King Herod asked the Magi to find this baby and tell him where He was so he could go worship Him. King Herod planned to kill Jesus. The Magi followed the star to the place where Mary, Joseph, and Jesus were living. They worshiped the newborn King and gave him gifts fit for a king: gold, incense, and myrrh. An angel of the Lord came to the Magi in a dream and warned them of King Herod's plan, and they went home in a different direction. An angel of the Lord warned Joseph of King Herod's plan, so they fled to Egypt where they lived until after Herod's death.



SUGGESTIONS

Many years earlier, Jesus' birth was prophesied. Many people had expectations of who the Messiah would be and what would change once He had come.

God has a plan: God has always known that humanity would need a savior. He had been planning for Jesus' birth from before He created anything. God knew the family line from which Jesus would be a descendant. He knew the dangers Jesus would face. He knew the sacrifice Jesus would have to make. And yet, because He loves us so much, He sent His only Son to save us.

Looks can be deceiving: Many people expected the Messiah to be very different from a baby born to a poor family. Many expected that the Messiah would be born royalty and would eventually become the good and just ruler they had so longed for. But Jesus came to serve, not to rule. This confused people, and many did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah because He did not look like what they thought He would or should be.

The best gift has been given: Christmas is a time of getting together with friends and family and exchanging gifts. Gift giving is meant to remind us of the gifts the wise men gave to baby Jesus, but giving and receiving often becomes the focus of Christmas celebrations. It is important at Christmas time to reflect on what we have been given. God gave us His son, and through Him, we can receive salvation. We will never receive a more precious gift than that.



PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY



Ages 5-7 Stars Ornaments | Supplies: yellow construction paper; markers; glitter; glue; hole punch; and ribbon, yarn, or string.

Using the yellow construction paper, cut out enough star shapes for every student. On one side, write the following: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given. At the top of one of the star's points, punch a hole. Allow students to decorate their stars using the craft supplies. Once students are done, run a piece of ribbon, yarn, or string through the hole, and tie the ends in a knot so the star can be hung on Christmas tree or elsewhere.

Ages 5-10 Follow the Star

Get the students to stand in a line. The student at the front of the line is the "star." The star leads the rest of the class round while making different motions that the rest of the line must mimic. Any student who does not successfully mimic the star is out. Continue until each student has a chance to be the star or until the class must move on to the next activity.

Ages 8-10 Present Predictions | Supplies: Gift boxes, wrapping paper, ribbon, bows, tape for gift wrapping.

Print out or cut out from newspaper ads items that students would like to receive for Christmas (bicycles, video games, instruments) and things they would not be excited to receive for Christmas (package of socks, box of non-color pencils, bag of sand). Print out enough so that each team will have two of each type of gift. Place one of these items in the gift boxes, but leave some of the gift boxes empty. Wrap enough gifts so that each team receives two elaborately wrapped gifts, two moderately wrapped gifts, and two unwrapped gifts. Mix things up so that the exciting gifts aren't always in the prettiest boxes.

Let the students unwrap the first set of gifts. Ask them if what was in each gift was what they expected to find in box wrapped or not wrapped that way. On the second set of gifts, ask the teams to predict what is in each box, and then let them open the boxes. Ask if their predictions were correct.

Just because something looks good, doesn't mean it is and vice versa. The wise men traveled very far to worship a king only to find a baby born to a poor family. Jesus was not born rich and powerful by worldly standards, but the wise men knew that He was great all the same. The same is true of people; we can't tell whether people are good or bad, funny or boring just by looking them.



MEMORY

VERSE

MEANING



Luke 2:7: Jesus, the savior of the world, was born in a barn. Instead of a crib, He was laid down in a manger used to feed livestock. The Creator of the universe did not come into this world a powerful man, but as a powerless baby born into a poor, humble family.

Isaiah 9:6: This prophecy foretold of the coming Messiah and the attributes He would have and the power He would have. Although Jesus was born fully human, He was also fully God.

Post-Lesson Activities

POST-LESSON ACTIVITY



Ages 5-7 **Don't Wake the Baby** | **Supplies:** baby doll, baby blanket, shallow box, strips of yellow paper, stuffed animals.

Cut yellow paper into strips and lay them along the bottom of the box to serve as hay. Wrap the baby doll in the blanket, and place it on top of the strips of paper. Give each student a stuffed animal (they don't have to be the kinds of animals that would have been in the stable). Tell the students that they must feed their stuffed animal with hay from the manger that the doll is in. Instruct them to carefully pull out a piece of hay from the manger without touching or disturbing the doll. If the doll moves more than an inch or rolls over, that student doesn't get a piece of hay. Keep going until all the pieces of hay have been pulled out of the manger or until the class needs to move on to another activity. The student with the most pieces of hay wins.

For a bit of extra fun, have the students make the sound their stuffed animals make while playing the game.

Ages 5-10 **Shepherds and Sugar** | **Supplies:** candy canes

Divide the class into teams and have the students line up. Give each student a candy cane. In front of each line, place a pile of candy canes on a table. Students at the front of the line will put the straight end of their candy canes in their mouths. On go, they will use the hook end of the candy cane to hook candy canes in the pile without using their hands. After 30 seconds, count how many candy canes the students hooked. Each candy cane hooked counts as one point. Continue until each student has a chance to try hooking candy canes. The team with the most points at the end wins.

Candy canes are holiday treats and decorations that are meant to remind us of the shepherd's crooks, or canes, carried by the shepherds who came to worship Jesus on the night He was born.



Ages 5-10 | Stargazing | Supplies: construction paper, marker, tape

Write out Luke 2:7 one word at a time on the back of cut-out star shapes. Make enough so that each team has a set. Tape the stars around the room. Add an element of difficulty by putting the stars in locations that are not obvious. Divide the class into teams. On go, each team sends one person out to find a star. When that student returns, the next student in line goes out to get another star. Students waiting in line should try to assemble the words into the verse. Continue until a team has assembled the verse in order or until all the stars have been collected. If the teams are unable to put the whole verse together because of word duplication, the team with the most complete verse wins.

TAKE
HOME



God has a plan: Just as God had a plan for Jesus, God knows everything about us. We are not here on accident. We were created with a purpose, and if we follow His guidance through the Holy Spirit, we can help to carry out God's plan and glorify Him.

Looks can be deceiving: Because we do not know people's hearts or every detail about their lives, we cannot judge people or their value. God knows these things, and it is His job to judge. We should try our best to love everyone, no matter what, and help them to see the love God has for them.

The best gift has been given: Giving and receiving gifts isn't bad. Asking for things isn't something to be ashamed of. It is something we should enjoy! Just don't lose sight of what the celebrating is all about: Jesus, the ultimate gift given to us by God.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 1



Q1a: Jesus' family could be traced back to whom?

A1: Jesus' family could be traced back to Abraham and King David.

Q1b: From your parents, how far can you trace your family?

TN: From our parents we have aunts, uncles, cousins, grandmothers, grandfathers, and maybe even great grandmothers and great grandfathers. The oldest relative we can think of had great grandmothers and great grandfathers! Our families go back farther in time than anyone living can remember. We know who our ancestors are from records and family stories, just like Mary and Joseph were able to trace their family.

SLIDE 2



Q2a: What news did God share with Mary?

A2: God told Mary that He had chosen her to be Jesus' mother.

Q2b: A box of cookies is missing. Only you and your friend are home. You didn't eat them, so your friend must have, right?

TN: It seems logical to assume our friend ate the box of cookies, but we have no evidence. Just because we can't think of any other way for the cookies to go missing doesn't mean that the only answer is that our friend ate them. Maybe someone else was home at the time and we didn't know. Maybe the cookies were eaten the day before and we didn't know. These possible scenarios are pretty simple compared to what can happen with an all-powerful God. In the case of this story, a virgin was made pregnant. It wasn't illogical for Joseph to have thought that Mary must have been unfaithful because it is not humanly possible for a virgin to become pregnant. It is highly unlikely that anyone would have suggested Mary's pregnancy was caused by the Holy Spirit, as that just wasn't a thing that happened. Joseph is a good example of why it is a good idea to give people the benefit of the doubt and let them explain their side of the story before passing judgment.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 3



Q3a: What did the angel of the Lord tell Joseph?

A3: The angel of the Lord told Joseph that Mary's baby came from the Holy Spirit.

Q3b: If someone promised every day to buy you a pony, but never did, would you still believe you'll get a pony one day?

TN: At first, we'd probably continue to believe it. What an exciting promise! After a couple of weeks, we'd probably start asking for specific information, such as when we might expect to see this promised pony. After months, this promise would just sound empty to us. No matter how much we want the pony, this person isn't coming through on their promise. The first mention of God sending a savior is thought to appear in Genesis during God's explanation of Adam and Eve's punishment for their disobedience and sin. Humanity had been waiting for the Messiah for nearly all of history, and yet those who believed and understood that God is faithful knew that God would send our Savior. No matter how long it takes, God is always faithful, and He will fulfill His promises when the time is right.

SLIDE 4



Q4a: Why was Bethlehem so crowded when Mary and Joseph arrived there?

A4: Bethlehem was crowded with people who had traveled there to be counted.

Q4b: How would you go about counting the number of students who go to your school?

TN: If we count the number of students while out on recess, we might count the same people more than once because no one stays in one place during recess. The same is possible if we tried to count during lunch. The best way to count everyone in the school would be to gather everyone into one room all at the same time. That way we know that each student is counted only once. It was for these same reasons that the Romans made specific people go to specific places at specific times so they could be counted. It would have been impossible to get anything close to an accurate count otherwise.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 5



Q5a: What appeared the night that Jesus was born?

A5: A star appeared in the sky on the night that Jesus was born.

Q5b: Can you locate the North Star?

TN: Before compasses and GPS devices were available, people used the stars to help them navigate. Knowing how to find the North Star meant that a person could figure out where they were and how to get to where they needed to go. The Magi used the brilliant star that began to shine on the night Jesus was born so they could find and worship the savior of the world.

SLIDE 6



Q6a: What did the Magi give Jesus?

A6: The Magi gave Jesus gold, incense, and myrrh, which are gifts fit for a king.

Q6b: You are given two birthday gifts: one is in a box big enough for a bike, the other is the size of a book. Which do you open first?

TN: Most of us would open the big box first, but there is no guarantee that what it holds is any better than the little box. Looks rarely are the best indicators of content and substance. The story of Jesus' birth would have been very different if the Magi had reached the place where Jesus was and decided to turn around and go home because there was no way anyone with any real power would be found in such a poor home. The Magi truly were wise men because they recognized the power and majesty in this poor, powerless baby.



SLIDE 7

QUESTION & ANSWER



Q7a: In a dream, what did God warn the Magi, Mary, and Joseph about?

A7: God warned the Magi, Mary, and Joseph of King Herod's plan to kill Jesus.

Q7b: Have you ever had a dream you thought really happened?

TN: Sometimes our dreams are very lifelike, and it can be a bit confusing. When God came to the Magi, Mary, and Joseph, there was no mistaking that it wasn't just a dream. They all knew that the message they received should be taken seriously. They obeyed the advice, and Jesus was kept safe from King Herod.



QUESTION & ANSWER

MEMORY VERSES

▶ **Luke 2:7** And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

.....

BIG IDEA

▶ God sending His Son, Jesus, to save us from our sins was the best gift we will ever receive!

.....

CLOSING PRAYER

▶ Father God, thank You so much for sending us Your Son, Jesus. Thank You for the relationship we have with You that was restored by Jesus' sacrifice. Help us to live lives that are as pleasing to You as the kingly gifts the Magi gave to Jesus after He was born. We love You and ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 1



In the beginning, before God created the universe and everything in it, His salvation plan was for Jesus to come to the earth. God selected a very special people to be part of Jesus' family. Mary, Jesus' mother, and Joseph, Mary's husband, were part of this special family. It was a family that could be traced back to the great King David, whom God had promised an eternal Kingdom, and then to Abraham through whom God has promised to bless the entire world.

SLIDE 2



But before Mary and Joseph got married, God came to her and shared some astonishing news. God had chosen Mary to be Jesus' mother! God told Mary that she would become pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit. When Joseph found out, he was hurt and confused. He didn't understand how Mary could be with child unless she had been unfaithful to him. Heartbroken, Joseph considered breaking his engagement to Mary and quietly ending their relationship.

SLIDE 3



Before Joseph could go through with his plans, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. The angel told Joseph that the child Mary was carrying was from the Holy Spirit and there was no reason Joseph shouldn't marry her. Joseph was amazed and overjoyed by this incredible news! The angel told Joseph that the baby boy would fulfill God's promise to send His people a savior, and the baby should be named Jesus. Mary's baby was the Messiah!



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 4



The Romans, who were in control of Israel at the time, ordered that everyone under their rule be counted. This meant that Joseph and a very pregnant Mary had to take a long and difficult journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem. The weary couple arrived to find the city overflowing with people who had all traveled to be counted. This presented a big problem for them because Mary was ready to give birth. With the inn full of travelers, Mary and Joseph took shelter in the only place still available: a stable. Next to horses and sheep, the savior of the world was born. Angels sang, and nearby shepherds came to worship the newborn king.

SLIDE 5



On the night Jesus was born, a star shone brightly in the night sky over the stable where Jesus was born. It attracted the attention of a group of wise men, called the Magi. The Magi, in wonder of this beautiful sight, followed the star in search of Jesus. When they arrived in Jerusalem, they asked King Herod where they could find the child who was born king of the Jews. Evil King Herod, angry at the idea that someone was trying to take away his power, asked the wise men to continue their search and to let him know where the child could be found so he could worship Him. But worship wasn't King Herod's plan; King Herod was plotting to kill Jesus.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 6



The Magi followed the star until they reached the town of Bethlehem. Their long and difficult journey came to an end when the star stopped over the place where they found Mary and Joseph caring for the baby Jesus. The wise men bowed down and worshiped Jesus. Despite the humble surroundings, the wise men knew they were in the presence of holiness. They didn't need to find the baby in a palace to know that it was right to give Jesus gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, which were the types of gifts given to kings.

SLIDE 7



In a dream, God warned the Magi and Mary and Joseph of King Herod's plan to kill Jesus. To help keep Jesus safe, the wise men began their long trip home in a different direction than they came so they wouldn't run into King Herod. Mary and Joseph scooped up Jesus and escaped to Egypt. They stayed in Egypt until an angel of the Lord appeared in one of Joseph's dreams to tell him that King Herod had died and that it was finally safe for them to return home to Israel. Some years later in Israel, Jesus began His ministry, performing miracles, healing people, and ultimately sacrificing Himself to save us from our sins.



HE IS RISEN



HE IS RISEN

MATTHEW 27:22–56; 28:1–6

GOAL

- ▶ **To teach children how Jesus conquered the curse of sin and death by the power of His own death and resurrection.** God demonstrated the depth of His love through Jesus' death on the cross: "But God showed His love for us, that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). Jesus endured ridicule, hatred, punishment, and death—all to keep God's promise that, through His Son, sins would be forgiven, emotional and physical wounds would be healed, and our relationship with God would be restored. Every man, woman, and child who accepts the sacrifice that Jesus made on their behalf will be saved.

WORDS TO KNOW

- ▶ **Crucifixion:** The brutal punishment and execution method in which a person is nailed to a cross and then left to die slowly. Jesus was crucified for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole, and He suffered so we could be healed. He died for our salvation.

The Temple Veil: A physical divider that separated the temple in two: the Holy of Holies, the place where God dwelled, and the rest of the temple where men were allowed. Only the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies, and then only once a year on Yom Kippur. When Jesus died, God Himself ripped the veil in two, from top to bottom. Jesus' death on the cross ended our separation from God, making a relationship with Him possible for the first time since sin entered the world.

Resurrection: When a dead person comes back to life. After Jesus died on the cross and was buried, He rose again on the third day; this is known as His resurrection. Jesus has the power over death, so we don't have to be afraid of it.



MEMORY VERSES

▶ **Matthew 28:6:** He is not here, for He has risen, as He said. Come, see the place where He lay.

I Corinthians 15:4: For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

OVERVIEW

▶ **Read Matthew 27:22-56; 28: 1-6:** This is the story about how Jesus suffered, died, and rose again from the dead. It is the story of the intense love of God demonstrated in the greatest sacrifice of all time. Jesus was betrayed, beaten, mocked, stripped of His clothing, humiliated, blasphemed, and disrespected. A crown of thorns was pressed onto His head, an angry crowd taunted Him, He was hung on a cross, and worst of all, He was separated from His Father in Heaven. Then He died, and it was finished! At that moment, the veil in the temple tore in half from top to bottom. It was God's announcement that the world, once separated from His holiness, could once again enjoy sweet fellowship with Him.

SUGGESTIONS

▶ **Why would Jesus volunteer to go through suffering and death on the cross?**

1. Love: God demonstrated His intense love for us; no matter how bad we are, He loves us, and He sent His Son to die for us (Romans 5:8).

2. Promise: Even before the world was created, God had a plan to save mankind and bring us back into relationship with Him (I Peter 1:20). He promised that He would send a Messiah, and He kept that promise.

3. Relationship: When sin entered the world, one of the first effects was the loss of close fellowship with God. When Jesus died, that relationship was mended for all those who put their trust in His sacrifice.



Why is the resurrection important?

- 1. The resurrection proved Jesus was the Messiah:** The resurrection of Jesus proved that the claims He made were true—He was the promised Messiah!
- 2. The resurrection demonstrated Christ's power over death:** The curse was broken. Jesus conquered death!
- 3. The resurrection proved Jesus' sacrifice was accepted:** God accepted the sacrifice of Christ's death on our behalf. Jesus took the punishment we deserved.

PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY



Ages 5-7 **In the Tomb, Out of the Tomb** | **Supplies:** masking or painters' tape

Place a long piece of tape on the floor to divide the playing area. Designate the right side of the line as "in the tomb" the other side of the tape as "out of the tomb." Stand on the "out of the tomb" side, and have the children face you while standing in the "in the tomb" side of the line. When you call out either "in the tomb" or "out of the tomb," the children should jump to the side you have called. If they fail to jump at all, or jump to the wrong side, they are out. Make it extra challenging by picking up the pace, and calling out the same side several times before switching. The teacher can make it tricky by pointing to one side while calling out the other. The last child standing wins.

Ages 5-7 **Roll the Stone Relay** | **Supplies:** several slightly heavy stones

To play this outdoor game, divide the class into teams and instruct the teams to stand in a line. On "go," the first child in line roll will the stone to a specified point, then roll the stone back. The next child does the same, and so on. The first team to complete the exercise wins!

The stone that was rolled in front of Jesus' tomb was very large, very heavy and would have taken several people to move. When Jesus rose from the tomb, an angel rolled back the stone.



Ages 8-10 **"He is Alive!" Letters** | **Supplies:** Large cutout letters spelling out the phrase, "He is Alive!"

Divide the children into groups, and give each group a large letter. Provide each group with materials to decorate the letter—glue, glitter, ribbon, cutouts, stickers, crayons, markers, buttons, etc. When the letters are all completely decorated, hang them up somewhere on the church campus for all to enjoy!

He is Alive!

**MEMORY
VERSE
MEANING**



Matthew 28:6: After Jesus died He was placed in a tomb. Three days later the women came to the tomb and saw that He was gone! The angel showed them the empty tomb and exclaimed, "He is Risen!"

I Corinthians 15:4: This verse is a summary of the Gospel—the "Good News." Jesus died as a sacrifice for sin; He was buried for three days to show that He was truly dead; and He rose again, to prove victory over death and to give the hope of eternal life. All of this was done exactly as the Old Testament scriptures foretold.

**POST-LESSON
ACTIVITY**



Ages 5-7 **Cross Bookmark** | **Supplies:** Card stock cutouts, glue, markers, glitter, colored yarn, hole punch

Provide each child with a card stock cutout of a cross (or alternately, cut vertical and horizontal rectangles and have the children glue them together to form a cross). The cross should be small enough to fit in a standard bible. The children can glue, tape, or carefully tie a piece of yarn to the top of the cross. To tie the yarn through the cross, use the punch to make a hole in the top of the cross and gently tie it. Have the children write one of the memory verses from today's lesson on the cross and decorate the cross as they choose.



Ages 8-10 Spreading the Good News

A variation on hide and seek. Tell the students to gather in a group, close their eyes, and count to 30 while one student hides. When the group finishes counting, the hunt is on! The students then spread out to find the hiding player; as the seekers find the player hiding, they join him or her in the hiding place and whisper “He is Risen,” until all the seekers have found the hiding place. The last player to join the group becomes the next person to hide.

Ages 8-10 Gospel Charades | *Supplies:* strips of paper

On strips of paper, write the names of characters and events relating to the resurrection story, and place them in a bucket or hat. Choose a player to start the game. Using the regular rules of charades, or your own variation of those rules, have each child take a turn drawing from the bucket and act out the word they select. The first person to guess the word or phrase, gets a point. The person with the most points at the end of the game wins.

He is alive!

TAKE
HOME



If we place our trust in Jesus’ perfect sacrifice, how does His death and resurrection affect us?

- 1. We can be confident that we are right with God.** We were once His enemies, we are now His children. John 1:12: “But to all who did receive him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.”
- 2. We don’t need to be afraid of death.** Romans 6:9: “We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him.”
- 3. We can be confident in God’s written Word.** Many Old Testament scriptures prophesied the coming of the Messiah hundreds of years before His coming!
- 4. We can be confident in every claim and every word that Jesus spoke.** Romans 1:4: “[He] was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by His resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.”



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 1



Q1a: What kind of crown did the soldiers press onto Jesus' head?

A1: The soldiers pressed a crown of thorns onto Jesus' head.

Q1b: Why didn't Jesus defend himself?

TN: Jesus was innocent. He did not do the things He for which He was being punished. Jesus knew that saying anything or doing anything would work against His plan. This was all part of what needed to happen for Him to accomplish His mission to save humanity.

SLIDE 2



Q2a: What does Golgotha mean?

A2: Golgotha means the "place of the skull."

Q2b: Did Jesus have the power to save Himself?

TN: Yes. At no point in time did Jesus lack the power to save Himself from the humiliation and suffering He endured. He endured everything out of His incredible love for us. He knew that the only way to save us from our sin was to allow His death on the cross. Jesus chose to save us rather than Himself.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 3



Q3a: What happened after Jesus died?

A3: After Jesus died, an earthquake shook the ground and the veil in the temple tore from the top to the bottom.

Q3b: Did God really abandon Jesus?

TN: This is a tough question, but it's one that just about everyone wonders about when they read this. If God could abandon Jesus, the only perfect person to walk the face of the earth, how could God ever forgive and love me? Sin is what separated people from God, and even though Jesus walked the earth as a man, He was sinless and, therefore, still one with God. While hanging on the cross, Jesus took the responsibility for the sins of every person. When Jesus took our sins, He experienced the separation from God for the first time—something that caused such a deep sadness in Jesus that it caused Him to cry out to God. God still loved Him, but a perfect God cannot tolerate sin, not even for Jesus. Jesus' death on the cross ended the separation from God because of sin. God loved us and wanted the separation caused by sin to end so much that He sent His Son to die a horrible death to bring us together.

SLIDE 4



Q4a: What was door of the tomb?

A4: The door of the tomb was a huge stone that was rolled in front of the entrance.

Q4b: Someone took the last cookie. Which would work better to prove you didn't take it: your word or video?

TN: Video would be much more convincing than our word that we didn't take the last cookie. Witnesses are also good. Perhaps someone saw what you were doing at the time the cookie was taken, or maybe someone saw who did take the last cookie. The religious leaders' distrust of Jesus' followers led them to install unbiased witnesses to Jesus' resurrection. Having guards at the tomb meant that no one could have stolen Jesus' body, which gives proof that it happened as described in the Bible. God can use all things for good!



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 5



Q5a: What appeared in front of the tomb.

A5: An angel appeared in front of the tomb.

Q5b: How would you react to meeting an angel?

TN: Angels are commonly described as shining like lightning, which isn't something we see every day. It's no wonder that in nearly every story of angels meeting humans, the angels have to calm the people and tell them not to be afraid. Their presence was so shocking, it caused the Roman soldiers—a group of men known for being very tough—to fall over like dead men! Judging from the accounts of encounters with angels, the experience likely would be a combination of amazing and terrifying!

SLIDE 6



Q6a: Who did the women meet on the road?

A6: The women met with Jesus on the road.

Q6b: The first thing Jesus said to the women was "Do not be afraid." Why would they be afraid?

TN: These women saw Jesus crucified. They saw His dead body pulled down from the cross. They saw His lifeless body wrapped in cloths and put into a tomb. He was dead, and now He stood before them on the road wishing them a good morning. That's not a normal thing to encounter, and it's likely that people in such a situation would feel fearful. But this was Jesus, and there was nothing to fear. He had done something wonderful, and He wanted to share it with His disciples.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 7



Q7a: Where did Jesus tell the disciples to meet Him?

A7: Jesus told the disciples to meet Him at the top of a mountain in Galilee.

Q7b: Was the mission Jesus gave to the disciples just for them?

TN: No, that mission is ours to carry out as well. We have some very important information to share with everyone: Jesus has died for our sins. We are forgiven! If we believe in Him, we can live for all eternity in Heaven with God. That is the best news ever, and we should share it with everyone!



MEMORY VERSES

▶ **Matthew 28:6:** He is not here, for He has risen, as He said. Come, see the place where He lay.

I Corinthians 15:4: For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

.....

BIG IDEA

▶ Jesus conquered sin and death so that we could have a relationship with God again.

.....

CLOSING PRAYER

▶ Dear Lord, thank You for suffering and dying for us on the cross. Thank You that You rose again victorious! Help us to place our trust in Your sacrifice and believe in Your resurrection so we can live forever with You. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 1



On the day of His death, soldiers surrounded Jesus and treated Him terribly. “Hail the King of the Jews!” they snickered as they pressed a crown of thorns onto His head and hit Him over and over with a staff. But Jesus was silent. He didn’t speak up as they told lies about Him or laughed at His pain. This was the very reason He came into the world—Jesus would give His life to save the world from its sin. Like an innocent lamb, He was led to His death.

SLIDE 2



Jesus was forced to carry His cross up a hill called Golgotha, which means “place of the skull.” It was a horrible place, and there, Jesus was hung on a cross between two criminals. Those who passed by shouted insults at Him: “He saved others, but He can’t save himself!” “If you are so powerful come down off that cross!” But Jesus wouldn’t come down; He had chosen to die. He had chosen to love the world so deeply that He would give His life away to save it.

SLIDE 3



As Jesus got closer to death, the sky became black, and from the darkness Jesus cried out, “My God, my God why have you forsaken me?” Shortly after, Jesus cried out again and then died. At the moment of His death, there was a violent earthquake. Inside the temple, the thick curtain that once separated a holy God from sinful man, tore from top to bottom. These events terrified the soldiers who were there, and they confessed, “This has to be the Son of God!”



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 4



Late in the afternoon, Jesus' body was wrapped with cloth and placed in a tomb. This tomb was carved from rock, and a huge stone was rolled over the entrance. Jewish leaders remembered that Jesus claimed He would rise from the dead after three days. They feared His disciples would steal His body and claim that Jesus had risen. These Jewish leaders demanded the tomb be made secure. Roman soldiers were ordered to seal the tomb and stand watch outside of it.

SLIDE 5



Three days later, early in the morning, two women who had been followers of Jesus went to see the tomb. Suddenly the earth began to shake beneath their feet as an angel came down from Heaven and rolled away the stone from the entrance of the tomb. The angel shone like lightning, and the Roman soldiers standing guard fell to the ground like dead men. But the angel proclaimed good news to the women: "Jesus is not here, He is risen! Hurry, go and tell the disciples."

SLIDE 6



The women ran from the tomb, astonished at what they had just seen. Filled with joy, they ran to tell the disciples what the angel had said. Suddenly a man was standing in front of them. "Good Morning," the man said. The women realized that it was Jesus standing before them, and they fell to His feet and began to worship Him. Jesus told them not to fear, and then He told the women to tell the disciples to go to Galilee, and that He would see them soon.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 7



Later, the disciples went to the mountain in Galilee where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw Jesus, they were amazed! The disciples, filled with joy, worshiped Him! Jesus was alive! He had risen from the dead just as He had promised! Jesus then gave His disciples a very important mission: "Go! Tell the world the good news about me, make disciples, and teach people to obey my commands." And to this very day the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection is being shared around the world!



GIDEON THE JUDGE



GIDEON THE JUDGE

JUDGES 6-7

GOAL

▶ To help children understand how strong God is, especially when they are weak.

CHARACTERS

▶ **Gideon:** God chose this unlikely and skeptical man to defeat the huge armies of Midian.

Angel: God sent an angel to summon Gideon for the task.

Israelite Army: Gideon's forces started out thousands-strong, but shrunk to a paltry 300 men by the time God was selecting the best soldiers for the task.

MEMORY VERSE

▶ **2 Corinthians 12:10:** When I am weak, then I am strong.

OVERVIEW

▶ **Read Judges 6-7:** Israel was crushed under the military thumb of Midian. God chose an unlikely and unwilling man, Gideon, to raise an army and throw off Israel's oppressors. Gideon, unsure of himself and scared to take on God's task, asked God to show him signs that God really wanted him to take on the Midianites. God gave him a number of signs to assure him that he was the right man for the job and that God would be with him. An army of 33,000 men assembled to fight the Midianites with Gideon. God scaled back his army from 33,000 to 300 to show that God is more powerful than Gideon or the Israelites ever fathomed.



SUGGESTIONS

▶ **Gideon wasn't a warrior or a leader, so he was sure God must have chosen the wrong man for this great task.**

1. God sees Gideon's potential. We are introduced to Gideon when an angel of the Lord greets him as a "mighty man of valor." Gideon was just a regular guy, something he was quick to point out to God after He chose him to take on the Midianites. God knew that Gideon was capable of this task, even if Gideon doubted himself.

2. God provides assurance. Gideon asked God for a sign three times. Each time, God responded exactly as Gideon requested. God recognized Gideon's fear before he and his army of 300 men were to attack the Midianite camp. God gave him an opportunity to go down to the camp and spy on the enemy. While there, God gave Gideon yet another sign that God would give him the victory.

3. God's strength is sufficient. Gideon wasn't a strong warrior who had been trained how to fight. If God needed a warrior, He would have chosen one; God wanted Gideon to do this for Him. God explained everything Gideon needed to know moments after He called him to this task "But I will be with you, and you shall strike the Midianites as one man." Gideon would not need to rely on his own strength, but on the Lord's. The Lord's strength would make the work of defeating the entire Midianite camp as easy as defeating a single man.

PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY

▶ **Catch the Midianites**

Divide the class into two teams: the Israelites and the Midianites. The Israelite team attempts to tag the Midianite team. When all the members of one team are tagged, switch roles.



MEMORY VERSE MEANING

- ▶ **2 Corinthians 12:10:** Highlighting personal weakness is one way of drawing attention to God's strength. Another way is to highlight God's strength.
-

POST-LESSON ACTIVITY

- ▶ **Gideon's Torches | Supplies:** brown construction paper; yellow, orange, and red tissue paper; and tape.

Roll the construction paper into cone shapes, and tape the paper at the seam. Stuff the colored tissue paper into the opening to create the torch's flame.

.....

TAKE HOME

- ▶ God uses ordinary people, like Gideon and us, every day to do extraordinary things.

God sees our full potential. God created each of us for a purpose. He has given each of us skills and talents, and He knows how we should use them. When we use our God-given abilities and are backed by God's power, we will find success in any endeavor to which we are called.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 1



Q1a: How long had Israel endured hardships under the Midianites?

A1: Israel was oppressed for seven years.

Q1b: If your smartphone or computer suddenly died, how would you recover all your photos?

TN: This is why it's important to backup all important information on all of our devices. Computers and electronic devices frequently break, and without a recent backup, we will have lost information. There are many circumstances in life for which having a backup plan is a very good idea, but God is not one of them. God absolutely cannot fail. Many of the Israelites lived in areas surrounded by foreigners who worshiped foreign gods. Often, the Israelites prayed to all of them, figuring one of them will hear their prayers. It was a poorly advised backup plan that disrespected God and was in violation of God's law.

SLIDE 2



Q2a: What did God tell Gideon to do?

A2: God told Gideon to go deliver Israel from the Midianites.

Q2b: Would you wash a dog in the middle of the living room?

TN: No, it would make a huge mess that we'd have to clean up. Also, it's much easier to wash a dog in a bathtub or outside where there is running water and soapy water won't cause any damage. When the angel of the Lord appears to Gideon, he is beating out wheat in a winepress, which is essentially a large hole in the ground used to squish grapes and capture the juice for winemaking. Beating out or threshing wheat is usually done in a large, open space where the wind can blow away the unwanted part of the wheat. Threshing wheat in a winepress would be a long and tedious job, but the concealment Gideon found in the winepress would keep him and his wheat safe from the Midianites. He chose this location not out of convenience, but fear.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 3



Q3a: How did God assure Gideon that he could deliver Israel from the Midianites.

A3: God told Gideon that He would be with him and give him strength.

Q3b: At a professional football game, the head coach comes into the stands and tells you to play quarterback. What do you do?

TN: Panic is probably the first thing that comes to mind for most of us. Even if we know all the rules and are familiar with how to call plays, this is an experience few would be ready to face. We came to be spectators, not players! We aren't professional football players, how can we play against a whole team of them? This is exactly how Gideon felt. He wasn't a warrior or a leader, how on earth would he lead an entire army in battle against the Midianites?! God answered this question: He would be with Gideon and He would give him the strength.

SLIDE 4



Q4a: What did Gideon bring to the angel of the Lord?

A4: Gideon brought meat, broth, and unleavened cakes.

Q4b: Does God give us signs?

TN: We probably won't witness anything as spectacular as an angel setting fire to an offering with heavenly flame, but yes, God gives us signs. When we pray and ask for wisdom or for confirmation, often we will see something that sets our hearts at peace. It is important that we are able to distinguish whether it is a sign or if we are reading into something that isn't really there. This can be tricky. Signs are sort of the icing on the cake. Looking to Scripture, appealing to God for wisdom, and listening for the Holy Spirit's guidance is a sure bet.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 5



Q5a: What was the first task God gave to Gideon?

A5: God told Gideon to break down the altar of Baal and to cut down the Asherah next to it.

Q5b: Do you think it is harder to stand up for what is right to a close friend or a bully?

TN: Let students answer. Sometimes it is harder to call out someone close to us for doing something wrong than it is with someone we don't like or a bully. When Gideon tore down the altar of Baal and cut down the Asherah that his father built, he was making a statement to his family and everyone else who worshiped these false gods. Gideon was so nervous about doing this, he did it at night when no one would see him. This was the first task God called Gideon to do for Him, and while it didn't take as much courage or convincing as going to war with the Midianites, it did require a measure of courage.

SLIDE 6



Q6a: What sign did Gideon ask God to provide?

A6: Gideon asked that a fleece laid out overnight would be wet with dew, but not the ground around it.

Q6b: If God asked you to do something terrifying, what kind of convincing and reassuring would you need?

TN: Whether it's public speaking, sitting in a small enclosed area, or scuba diving, we all have something we can't imagine ever wanting to do. That is exactly the situation Gideon found himself in when God called him to deliver the Israelites from the Midianites. Gideon asked God if He was sure He was asking the right guy, and even after God told him that He would be with him and give him strength, Gideon asked for a sign—and then two more signs, just to be absolutely sure. It finally clicks that if God has the power to accomplish all of the signs that he asked for, He surely is capable of holding up His end of the bargain: being with him, providing him with strength, and giving the enemy into his hand.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 7



Q7a: How many warriors were originally in Gideon's army?

A7: There were 33,000 warriors at first.

Q7b: How would you feel if your sibling took all the credit for the hard work you both did cleaning the house?

TN: We'd probably be pretty upset. No one likes to not get credit for a job well-done. So when an army of 33,000 warriors shows up to help in Gideon's efforts to rid Israel of the Midianites, God saw that the victory could easily be attributed to the strength and valor of the men on the field, when in fact, God won the battle.

SLIDE 8



Q8a: How did God tell Gideon to further reduce the number of warriors?

A8: The men who bent down to drink out of the stream like dogs were to go home.

Q8b: Why do you think God wanted it to be so clear that He was responsible for the victory of the Midianites?

TN: It can be easy to read Bible stories like this and wonder if God might not be a bit of glory hog. But truthfully, all the glory, in every single situation, belongs to God, and He is often not recognized for His work. In this situation, it was important that Gideon not receive the credit for this victory because the people of Israel needed to see that God still loved them and still fought for them. They had been living in horrible conditions for seven years as punishment for their disobedience and sin. The battle that defeated their oppressors needed to be a victory obviously from God.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 9



Q9a: What did Gideon hear when he went down to the Midianite camp?

A9: Gideon heard soldiers discussing a dream that pointed to Gideon's victory.

Q9b: How many grains of sand do you think are on a beach?

TN: Let students guess. It's an impossible thing to know how many grains of sand are on the beach! The Bible says that the number of camels in the Midianite camp "were without number, as the sand that is on the seashore in abundance." It's safe to say that the majority of those camels had riders, and if we couldn't count the number of camels, we probably couldn't count the number of warriors who rode them. Gideon had 300 warriors to their seemingly uncountable army. That's an intimidating battle to start! God knew Gideon was afraid, so He told him to go down and spy on the enemy. There, Gideon received additional reassurance from the Lord that, despite their numbers, the Midianites would be defeated that night by Gideon's 300 men.

SLIDE 10



Q10a: What did Gideon give to each soldier?

A10: Gideon gave each warrior a trumpet, one torch, and one jar to hide the torch.

Q10b: What would you do if someone came into your room while you were sleeping and blew a trumpet?

TN: Well, we'd definitely wake up and wonder what was going on! It would be confusing to say the least, and that was what Gideon and his 300 warriors were hoping would happen at the start of their battle.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 11



Q11a: What did the Midianites do when Gideon and his army launched their attack?

A11: They grabbed their weapons and started running and fighting anyone they encountered.

Q11b: If you spun around in a circle for a minute, how long would it take you to regain your balance?

TN: We'd probably stop being dizzy a few seconds after we stopped spinning around. At the beginning of the battle, Gideon and his men had an advantage over the Midianite camp because they were confused and maybe a little bit groggy. After a while, that confusion would have worn off, and they would have started to realize that there really weren't that many attackers with torches and trumpets. This is when the real advantage Gideon had came into play. God caused the Midianites to be confused far longer than would have been natural in such a situation. God gave Gideon and his 300 warriors the victory over an enormous foe that night!



MEMORY VERSE

▷ **2 Corinthians 12:10:** When I am weak, then I am strong.

.....

BIG IDEA

▷ If God calls us to something, He will equip us to be successful.

.....

CLOSING PRAYER

▷ Dear Lord, even though we are weak, we know You are strong. Thank You for being our strength. Help us to find courage to answer Your call like Gideon did. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 1



Israel continued to disobey God. They had fallen into idol worship and neglected God's commandment to worship Him and Him alone. For this, God's punishment was heavy on Israel, and He gave them over into the hands of the Midianites. For seven years, Israel suffered terrible hardships under the oppression of the Midianites, who, along with the Amalekites and people from the East, plundered Israel's livestock and produce, leaving none for Israel's own use. The people complained to God, and He sent them a prophet to explain that this hardship was upon them because of their sin and disobedience.

SLIDE 2



During that time, there was a young man named Gideon. One day, while he was beating out wheat in a winepress to hide it from the Midianites, an angel of the Lord appeared to him and said, "The Lord is with you, O mighty man of valor." Gideon was not feeling very brave or very happy. "If the Lord is with us, then why do we suffer so much, and why are we being oppressed by the Midianites?" Gideon asked. The Lord then looked at Gideon and said, "Go and deliver Israel from the hands of the Midianites!"



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 3



Gideon was in shock. How would he, a young man from the weakest clan of the tribe of Manasseh, be able to deliver Israel from the Midianites? The Lord replied by assuring Gideon that He would be with him. God was going to give him the strength to fight the Midianites, and He would give them victory. Gideon was in disbelief. If this indeed was true, he needed to make sure that God was going to pull through. He then proceeded to ask the angel of the Lord for a sign. "If you will protect me and help me, then give me a sign, and I will believe you," Gideon said. Gideon then rushed to his house to prepare a food offering to God.

SLIDE 4



When Gideon returned to the tree where the angel of the Lord was waiting, he brought with him meat, broth, and unleavened cakes. The angel told him to put the meat and cakes on a rock and pour the broth over them. The angel then touched the food with his staff. Immediately, fire sprung up and consumed the entire food offering. At that moment, the angel of the Lord vanished from Gideon's sight. God had just given Gideon a mighty sign.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 5



Gideon was filled with awe and wonder. That night, God continued to work in Gideon's heart, preparing him for the big task ahead. He told Gideon to break down the altar of Baal that his father built and cut down the Asherah next to it. These false gods were what got Israel in trouble. Israel was still foolish enough to believe that a wooden statue could actually help them, instead of relying on the one true God. As God had commanded, Gideon destroyed the altar of Baal and cut down the Asherah. In their place, Gideon built an altar to God and sacrificed a young bull.

SLIDE 6



Gideon was still unsure about leading an army to face the Midianites, so he asked God for another sign. This time, he was going to lay a wool fleece outside over night. If there was dew on the fleece and none on the dry ground, he would be sure that God was with him. The next morning, Gideon found that the fleece was wet, but the ground around it and everywhere else was dry. God listened to Gideon's request and gave him a sign. But poor Gideon was still scared and needed more reassurance. Gideon then asked for a reversal of the first sign. This time, he asked God to make the ground wet, but keep the fleece dry. The next morning, Gideon found that the ground was wet and the fleece was dry. This time, Gideon knew that God was really going to use him to save Israel from the Midianites.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 7



The next morning, Gideon and thousands of men assembled together, waiting on instructions from the Lord. God told Gideon that there were simply too many warriors. If they won, they would surely take credit for themselves and not give it to God. God told Gideon to let all the men who were scared to go home. After Gideon made this offer, 22,000 of the 33,000 warriors walked away. There were only 10,000 left, but God said that was still too many.

SLIDE 8



Gideon continued to trust God, and he took the remaining warriors to a stream of water as God had told him. God told Gideon that all of the men who bent down to drink from the stream like dogs should go home as well. Those who scooped up the water in their hands could stay. Out of the 10,000 remaining, only 300 men remained. On God's orders, Gideon sent thousands of capable warriors home, leaving Gideon with an army of 300 men. God really wanted to show Gideon that victory comes from the mighty power of God and not by the strength of men.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 9



That night, Gideon and his little army looked down at the huge Midianite camp. Gideon trusted God, but the Midianites were so many. God told Gideon to go down to their camp and spy on them. While spying on the Midianite camp, Gideon overheard a conversation between two soldiers. One soldier told the other about a dream he had, and the other interpreted it to mean that Gideon and the Israelites would defeat the Midianites. Once again, the Lord had strengthened Gideon's heart, and he was finally ready for battle.

SLIDE 10



With his tiny army, Gideon launched the plan of attack. He divided the army into three groups and gave every warrior one trumpet, one torch, and a jar to hide the torch. In the dark of night, they would surround the Midianite army's camp. When Gideon blew his trumpet, it would be a sign for everyone else to blow theirs. Then they would break their jars and shout, "For the Lord and for Gideon!"



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 11



They carried out the plan exactly. When Gideon gave the signal, the 300 men blew on their trumpets and shattered their clay jars. The sound of shattering pottery echoed off the mountains, filling the valley with the noise. The Midianites were awake, confused, and scared. They looked up at the flickering torches all around them and heard the crashing sound of the breaking jars, the piercing blasts of the trumpets, and the hoarse shouts of the men. They did not know what to do. Confused, the Midianites grabbed their weapons and started running and fighting! The Lord confused the Midianites so much that they started fighting amongst themselves, thinking they were battling Israel. It was a sight to behold. The confusion spread so rapidly that the Midianites ran away. Gideon and his army of 300 men pursued them, and it was not long before they defeated the mighty Midianites. That day, God delivered the Midianites into the hands of Gideon. God's mighty power once again proved that He was the one true God, and He wanted to bless and protect His people. All Israel had to do was to put their trust in God and serve Him alone.



ESTHER

THE QUEEN OF PERSIA



ESTHER THE QUEEN OF PERSIA

ESTHER 1-10

GOAL



To help children understand God's amazing protection of His people.

CHARACTERS



Esther: She was a beautiful Jewish woman who was selected to be the king's bride. God used her to make the brave choice to protect her people.

King Ahasuerus: The king of Persia allowed one of his officials to carry out a plan to kill all of the Jewish people living in the kingdom. He didn't realize that his own queen, Esther, was a Jew.

Haman: He was a high-ranking official who hated the Jews and plotted to have them all killed.

Mordecai: He was Esther's uncle. He helped Esther protect the Jewish people from extermination.

MEMORY VERSE



John 10:29: No one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

OVERVIEW



Read the book of Esther: The king was in search of a wife, and Esther's beauty qualified her for the position. She was also a brave woman and a Jew. Haman, one of the king's high-ranking officials, devised a way to kill off the Jews with the king's permission. Mordecai, Esther's uncle, figured out a way to stop Haman's plan from succeeding, and Esther played the key role in defending the Jews.



SUGGESTIONS

- ▶ Though the name of God doesn't appear in the book of Esther, His presence is everywhere. God is the only reason Esther was successful. He is constantly protecting, supervising, and directing all of history.
-

PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY

- ▶ **Word It! | Supplies:** paper and pencils or pens.

Divide the class into two teams. Give each team a piece of paper with "Esther the Queen" written at the top. Using the letters in the phrase at the top of the page, see which team can come up with the most words within the specified amount of time. Letters may not be used more than once. When time is up, tally up the points. Cancel out words that both teams have on their papers. The team with the highest remaining number of words wins.

.....

MEMORY VERSE MEANING

- ▶ **John 10:29:** Once we are saved, we cannot lose our salvation. Nothing can separate us from the love of God.
-

POST-LESSON ACTIVITY

- ▶ **Draw Esther | Supplies:** printouts of the outline of a faceless woman's head, crayons, markers, aluminum foil, art supplies, and glue.

Give each student a printout and have them draw and color the face of Esther. Give the students pieces of aluminum foil for them to fold into the shape of a crown that they can glue onto the picture they colored of Esther's face.



TAKE HOME



Sometimes it is hard to see God working in our lives, but that does not mean He isn't there. In the entire book of Esther, God's name is not mentioned once, but we can see His work throughout this story. Nothing that led up to Esther being put in the position to protect the Jews was a coincidence—it was God's plan.

God has a plan for each of us. His plans for our lives are good, and we can trust that God will help us to be successful. God is always with us.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 1



Q1a: Why were Israelites living in Persia?

A1: The Persians invaded Israel and took many of God's people as exiles to Persia.

Q1b: Have you ever spent the night at a friend's house?

TN: Even if we're just staying over for the night, we may experience a number of different things, such as new or strange foods for dinner or breakfast, or maybe we have to sleep on the couch or on the floor in a sleeping bag. These things are different from our normal day-to-day life, and it takes a bit of adjustment. The Israelites had much more to get accustomed to while living in Persia.

SLIDE 2



Q2a: How long did King Ahasuerus' party last?

A2: His party lasted for a whole week.

Q2b: What is your favorite way to celebrate your birthday?

TN: Whether its throwing a party and inviting all our friends or having a big dinner with our families, we all have ways we like to celebrate. King Ahasuerus celebrated his position and influence by hosting a celebration that lasted for an entire week!



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 3



Q3a: How did Queen Vashti respond to the king's order?

A3: She refused to come to the party.

Q3b: How willing would you be to stand on a stage and let people throw pies in your face?

TN: That doesn't sound very fun, in fact, it sounds like it would be a pretty humiliating experience. Queen Vashti thought that standing in front of a bunch of drunken partygoers sounded like a terrible idea, so she refused to go.

SLIDE 4



Q4a: What did the king do to Vashti for disobeying him?

A4: He removed her crown, stripped her of her title, and banished her from the kingdom.

Q4b: What would happen if you refused to do something your parent asked you to do?

TN: We'd get in trouble. Our parents are the authority figures in our homes, and we are to obey them. If we don't do what we're told, we can expect to be punished. The king was the authority in Persia, so when Queen Vashti refused to do what she was told, she was punished for her behavior.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 5



Q5a: What plan did the king's counselors propose?

A5: They suggested that the king choose a new queen.

Q5b: If you could choose any video game system, how would you decide which one to pick?

TN: The best way to choose a video game system is to look at all of them and consider all of the things they can and can't do. Once we have all of that information, we can decide which one suits our needs the best. The king wanted a new wife, so his officials brought all of the best candidates to him so he could see who was the best.

SLIDE 6



Q6a: Why did Esther keep her identity as a Jew a secret?

A6: She kept it secret because some people in Persia hated the Jews.

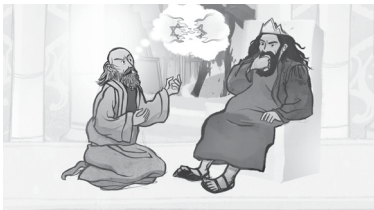
Q6b: You just get home from a week-long camping trip to learn that you are going to meet the president. What do you need to do?

TN: At the very least, we would need to take a shower! To meet the president, we'd want to look our best. The women who were brought before the king underwent a number of beauty treatments so they would look their best when they met the king.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 7



Q7a: What was Haman's plan really meant to do?

A7: His plan was really meant to annihilate the Jews.

Q7b: You hate hip hop music so much that you decide not to be friends with anyone who listens to it. What problems will that cause?

TN: We'd be missing out on friendships with a lot of cool people! What if we found out that our best friends listened to hip hop? Would that change how we see the other things we really like about these people? No, they're still the same people we like to spend time with, they just like a different type of music. We aren't going to always agree with people and like all the same things, and that is okay.

SLIDE 8



Q8a: What did Mordecai and all of the other Jews do after hearing about the new law?

A8: They tore their clothes and placed ashes on their heads.

Q8b: How would you get tickets to a sold-out concert or sporting event?

TN: If it's sold out, we'd have to know someone who has tickets or access to the place where the event is being held. Without that kind of connection, we wouldn't be able to attend. Mordecai had a connection within the palace—his niece, Esther. Through her, he could alert the king to Haman's evil plan to wipe out all of the Jewish people.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 9



Q9a: What did the king do when he saw Esther in his court?

A9: He held out his scepter to her.

Q9b: Why do superheroes protect normal people?

TN: In comic books, cartoons, and movies, superheroes protect normal humans out of a sense of responsibility and duty. They have extraordinary powers that enable them to help in ways normal humans are unable to on their own. Even though going up against the forces of evil poses a threat to themselves, they are able to see that it is less of a threat for them than it would be for a normal person to take on a villain. Esther found herself in a position that allowed her to do something other Jews could not do. Going in to talk to the king would put her in danger, but it was a risk she felt was her duty.

SLIDE 10



Q10a: How many banquets did Esther hold for the king and Haman?

A10: She held two banquets.

Q10b: Your friend borrows and then loses your bike. Would you want to throw her a party after that?

TN: Throwing a party for a friend who just treated something of ours so carelessly is not likely our first response. But that is what Esther did. She went through a lot of trouble to honor Haman, the man who had plotted to kill her and all of her fellow Jews.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 11



Q11a: What happened to Haman's plan after he was executed?

A11: Haman's plan was still in motion and could not be stopped.

Q11b: When playing a board game, have you ever made a move you wished you could take back?

TN: When playing games, we often fixate on a good move and fail to see that it makes us vulnerable to attack from our opponents. The king made a mistake by trusting Haman and not looking into the consequences of this plan. Once the king made and sent out his edict, there was nothing he could do to take it back.

SLIDE 12



Q12a: What did the king's new edict allow the Jews to do?

A12: The edict allowed all the Jews to defend themselves against the coming attack.

Q12b: A parade has made it impossible for you to take your normal route to school. How do you get to school?

TN: Take a different route! Surely there is more than one way to get to school. The king couldn't reverse his edict, but he could help to change its intended outcome. We must act much in the same way when we face unexpected obstacles in life. We may have a plan to achieve certain goals, but we shouldn't give up at the first sign of opposition. There will be another way, and God will help us!



MEMORY VERSE



John 10:29: No one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

BIG IDEA



The evil plans of men will never defeat the plans God has for those who love Him.

CLOSING PRAYER



Dear God, You rescued Esther and protected a whole nation of people because You are loving and merciful. Help us to rest in Your protection and to be brave for You. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 1



The Persian Empire was a glorious kingdom full of riches, splendor, and majesty. The Persians had conquered the world. They invaded Israel and took many of God's people as exiles to Persia, so there were many Jews living there.

SLIDE 2



The king of Persia was a mighty ruler named Ahasuerus. To celebrate his vast power and kingship, he hosted a banquet that lasted a whole week. People ate the finest food, drank the most expensive wine, and had all the entertainment they wanted.

SLIDE 3



In the middle of the crazy party, Ahasuerus asked his beautiful wife, Vashti, to come before the people. He wanted to show off her great beauty. So the king's servants were sent to Vashti to tell her that the king had requested her presence at the banquet. Queen Vashti did not want to be disgraced by being put on display at a drunken party, so she did something unheard of: She refused the king's order. No one refused the king.





LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 4



When the king heard of this, he was furious. How dare she refuse the king? This would set an example to all the wives in the kingdom to disrespect their husbands. He had to put a stop to this kind of behavior. Following the advice of his law experts, King Ahasuerus removed her crown, stripped her of her title, and banished her from the kingdom.

SLIDE 5



When the king's anger finally subdued, he remembered Vashti and missed her. When his counselors saw his turmoil, they came up with a plan. They told the king to send out men to gather all the young, beautiful women in the kingdom so he could choose his new queen. The king liked this plan, and soon news spread throughout the kingdom.

SLIDE 6

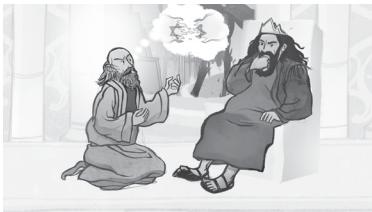


Throughout the empire, beautiful young girls were taken away. After many days of beauty treatments, they were brought before the king. One such girl, Esther, lived with her uncle Mordecai. She was beautiful indeed, but she was also a Jew. Out of all the young girls the king met with, he decided that Esther was the most beautiful woman in all the land. He chose her to be his wife. Esther the Jew was now the queen of Persia. Esther was wise about her new position and kept her Jewish identity a secret, as there were some people in the land who hated the Jews.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 7



One of the king's most important officials was a man named Haman. He was a wicked man who hated the Jews. One day, Haman came before the king and presented a plan that made it sound like he was protecting the kingdom from potential enemies, but really, the plan would annihilate all the Jews in the Persian Empire. Haman knew that once this edict was signed by the king, it would be irrevocable. The king believed Haman, and the edict was signed. Because Esther kept her Jewish identity a secret, Haman did not know that she was part of the race he wanted to annihilate.

SLIDE 8



When Mordecai, Esther's uncle, heard about the horrible new law, he was devastated. He and all the Jews across the land tore their clothes, placed ashes on their heads, and went into mourning. But God knew of all these things, and He helped Mordecai come up with a plan. Even though the law could not be changed, the queen of the empire was a Jew, and the king would never let his wife be killed. Mordecai then pleaded with Esther to make her identity known to the king. But Esther was afraid, as no one was allowed to appear before the king without an invitation or they would be put to death.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 9



Esther asked Mordecai to command all the Jews to pray and fast on her behalf. Knowing this could cost her life, she proceeded to dress in her finest royal clothing and went and stood in the inner court of the king's palace. When the king saw Esther, she found favor in his eyes, and he held out his scepter to her. This was the signal that the king allowed Esther to approach his throne.

SLIDE 10



"What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? I'll give you anything, even half my kingdom!" the king said. Esther's request was simple. She wanted to have a meal with Haman, the enemy of the Jews, and the king. She was going to find a way to tell the king about Haman's evil plot. Twice, Esther held a banquet for the king and Haman. Finally, on the second night, she revealed her Jewish identity to the king. She explained to him the consequences of the terrible edict that would annihilate her and her people. When the king heard this, he was furious. He stormed out to the palace gardens. When he came back, he found Haman falling on the couch where Queen Esther was sitting. To the king, it looked like Haman was assaulting the queen. Immediately, the king's guards grabbed Haman and took him away.

SLIDE 11



The king ordered Haman's execution. Though this wicked man was dead, his evil plan was still set in motion. There was nothing the king could do to stop it.

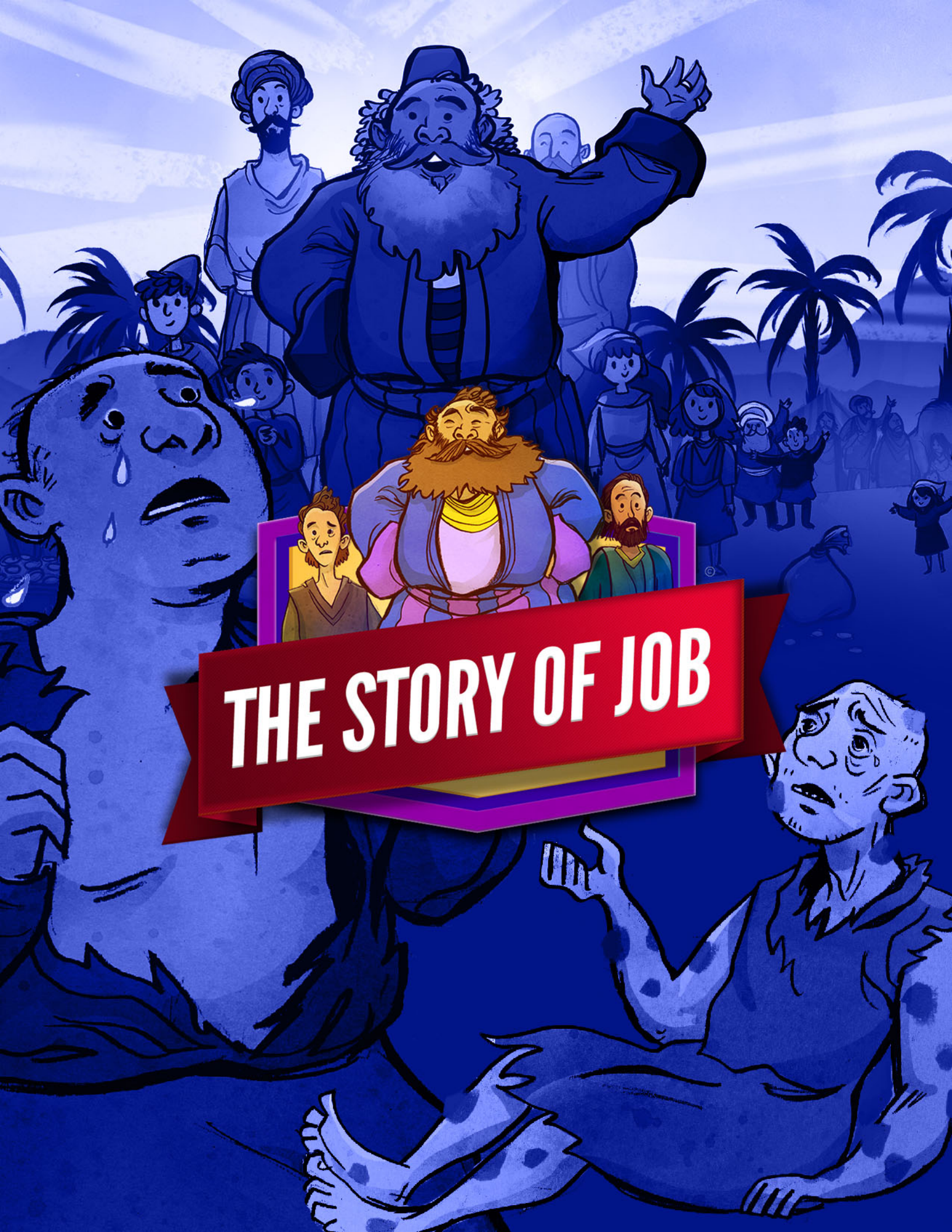


LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 12



Once again, the Queen risked her life and went before the king uninvited. She wept and pleaded with him, for the edict would still destroy her people. The king then issued a new edict that gave all the Jews in the Persian Empire the right to take up arms and defend themselves against this coming attack. When that day finally came, the Jews rose up against their adversaries and took control of them. Even the palace officials and governors helped the Jews, and they were victorious. The Jewish people celebrated God's victory and instituted a festival that is observed every year. During the festival of Purim, the Jewish people recall God's provision and Esther's bravery. This festival stands as a reminder that God will always protect His covenant people. Even though there have been and will be many evil men who try to annihilate them, God will never let His people be destroyed.



THE STORY OF JOB



THE STORY OF JOB

JOB 1-42

GOAL

- ▶ To teach children that God is bigger than our problems. God is sovereign so He does not have to answer for the things He does or does not do, but He is also good so we can trust Him with everything that happens in our life.

GOSPEL HIGHLIGHT

- ▶ As Job endures his suffering, he speaks of a Redeemer in Job 19:25-27 who could restore back to him all that had been lost. The redeemer Job spoke of is Jesus who gave His life to save us from sin, death and suffering. Jesus says it like this in Mark 10:45, "the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many."

CHARACTERS

- ▶ **Job:** Job was a good man who shunned evil (Job 1:1), had a large family, and was very wealthy. But he also endured terrible suffering and loss. Through it all, Job remained faithful to God.

Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar and Elihu: These were Job's four friends who were certain that Job was being punished for his sins. They pretended to offer Job comfort, but ultimately they accused him of sinfulness that was deserving of God's judgement.

WORDS TO KNOW

- ▶ **Suffering:** The experience of physical pain and/or mental anguish. Job is often remembered as a man who endured terrible suffering and yet kept his faith.

Sovereignty: The absolute right of God to do all things according to His own good pleasure. In the story of Job, the sovereignty of God is contrasted with the limited understanding of Job and his friends.



MEMORY VERSE

MEMORY VERSE

MEANING

OVERVIEW

SUGGESTIONS

▶ **Job 1:21:** The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

▶ No matter what happens in this life, God is in control. Regardless of how we perceive our circumstances, God is for us and will work everything in our lives (even suffering) for good.

▶ **Read Job 1-42:** This story centers on a wealthy and famous man named Job whom God allows to be directly attacked by Satan. Through these attacks, Job loses everything important to him – his family, wealth, prestige and health. Friends came to comfort Job, but they offered him bad advice, questioned Job's character, and they drew false conclusions from events.

In the end, God showed Job that He is sovereign and can be trusted entirely. Job humbles himself before God and confesses that the ways of God are beyond his understanding. Throughout his story, Job remains faithful to God. In the end, God blesses Job with far more wealth than he had before.

▶ Job went through an absolutely miserable season in his life, but he never cursed God for what happened to him; however, he did question God's judgment in inflicting this suffering on him. As you discuss this lesson with your class, be sure to cover the following:

1. Bad things happen to good people: The Book of Job opens telling us that Job was a blameless and upright man. Then Job lost everything. Job's suffering was not a result of his sin, and it was not sent by God. Rather, it was something God used to reveal more of Himself to Job, while at the same time, revealing the character of Job.

2. Friends may fail, but God never will: Throughout this story, Job's friends failed to comfort him (Job 16:2). But in Job 19:25-27, Job describes the strength that sustains him through his suffering: a personal Redeemer who lives!

3. God is with us when we suffer: Over the course of this story, Job asks the question "why?" over 25 times. And while Job may never have gotten the answer he was looking for, he came to the conclusion that God was with him as he suffered. In Job 23:10 Job says "he knows the way that I take; when he has tried me, I shall come out as gold."



PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY



Ages 5-7 **A Good Friend** | **Supplies:** *Blindfolds, masking tape and small pillows.*

On the floor of your classroom, use two long parallel strips of masking tape to create a walking path. In this path, place several pillows that will be used as obstacles. Pick a student to go first, blindfold them and place them at the start of the path. The remaining students can give verbal commands to help the blindfolded student stay within the lines and avoid obstacles. This game is a good way to remind your class that a good friend helps, rather than criticizes, in a time of need.

Ages 5-10 **The Mirror Game** | **Supplies:** *A mirror and index cards with Bible verses written on them.*

Prop up the mirror with some books, or if it is bigger, lean it against the wall. Have your students take turns holding the memory verse up to the mirror so that the letters appear backwards to the child. The student who can read their verse the quickest without making any mistakes wins. Use this game to remind your kids that though we may not always understand what God is saying to us in difficult times, He is still with us.

Ages 8-10 **Would You Rather...?** | **Supplies:** *A list of "Would you rather...?" scenarios.*

Start this activity by having a volunteer come forward. Present them with a "Would you rather...?" scenario that is connected to suffering. For example, "Would you rather be stung by 100 bees or bitten by a single shark?" Before the student answers, let the rest of the class try to convince them one way or the other. Then let the student give their final decision. Continue this activity until you are out of questions or time. This game is a good way to discuss the trials of Job that often left him with no easy choice.



POST-LESSON ACTIVITY



Ages 5-7 Job Tag | Supplies: *A pack of red circular “dot” stickers. You’ll need enough for each student in your class.*

In this game, every student is given a single red dot. On the word “Go!” students will try to stick their red dot on another student. Students who get stuck with a red dot will try and remove the dot and stick it to someone else. Set a time limit. When time is up, any students without a dot at the end of the game win. The student with the most red dots loses.

Ages 5-10 Balloon Stomp | Supplies: *Balloons and string.*

Prepare students for this game by reminding them that Job lost everything precious to him and that the tragedies that befell him seemed to come from out of nowhere. Then, tie a balloon to the ankle of each student. Once all students have a balloon, start the game and have students try to stomp on each other’s balloons. The last student with an unpopped balloon wins.

Ages 8-10 God Sees Our Steps | Supplies: *Binoculars.*

Before the game starts, read Job 34:21 to your class “His eyes are on the ways of men; he sees their every step.” Take your class outside and have them take turns using the binoculars and telling the class the things they see. Remark on how any wildlife that is spotted is unaware of being watched. Then, remind your class that God sees everything we do even if we don’t realize He’s watching. When we suffer, God knows and cares.



TAKE
HOME



Like Job, all of us will go through tough times. It's not a matter of if, but when. So, when we face challenging times of suffering, the following should guide us:

- 1. Seek God, not understanding:** When we go through difficult times, we always want to know why. But many times there is no answer to this question. Instead, we should draw near to God and allow Him to bring us peace of heart and mind.
- 2. Seek help in suffering:** During suffering, we should reach out for help. This can be a parent, friend or other loved one. But human help is limited. Our greatest source of help is always found when we bring our problems before God in prayer.
- 3. Remember God is in control:** Nothing we face is outside of God's control. Even in times of sickness, distress or suffering, God is able to use these things for our good and His glory. When we suffer, the most important thing is to continue trusting God!



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 1



Q1a: How many children did Job have?

A1: Job had 10 children.

Q1b: Most would say Job lived the "good life." What would the "good life" include for you?

Teacher Notes: Maybe it would mean having a cool bike or all the video games we could ever want. While prosperity is not promised to everyone who loves God, He blesses everyone who loves and obeys Him. We may not have every material possession we've ever wanted, but God has blessed us in other ways.

SLIDE 2



Q2a: What did God say Satan was not allowed to do to Job?

A2: God told Satan that he could not kill Job.

Q2b: You bet your friend that his bedroom is painted blue, and if you're wrong you'll do his chores for a week. Is this a smart bet?

Teacher Notes: No, because our friend knows what color his room is painted. If our friend takes this bet, we should know that we guessed the wrong color. We are about to get saddled with a lot more chores! The deal Satan makes with God regarding Job is an equally foolish idea. God knows everything present, past, and future. God knows how Job was going to react to everything, just as He knew that Satan would present this plan.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 3



Q3a: What terrible news did the servants bring Job?

A3: The servants told Job that all of Job's servants, livestock, and children had been killed or stolen.

Q3b: Think back to the last bad day you had. Was it as bad as what Job experienced?

Teacher Notes: Hopefully, none of us has ever experienced a day anywhere nearly as bad as Job's. Many stories in the Bible can offer us perspective, meaning, by comparison, things we face on a day-to-day basis really aren't that bad.

SLIDE 4



Q4a: What did Job do after hearing all the bad news?

A4: He tore his clothes, shaved his head, fell on the ground, and worshiped God.

Q4b: How would you react if you lost your most favorite possession?

Teacher Notes: We likely would be very sad. Worshiping God may not be something we think of immediately, but it should. The only reason we had it in the first place is because God blessed us with it.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 5



Q5a: What did Job's wife tell him to do?

A5: She told Job to curse God and die.

Q5b: Have you ever had chicken pox?

Teacher Notes: Anyone who has ever had chicken pox remembers how itchy they are! All you want to do is scratch them, but that only makes it worse. Job's sores were so itchy, the only thing that made it feel better was to scrape broken pottery against his skin! Those are some seriously itchy sores! How horrible it must have been to have to endure!

SLIDE 6



Q6a: What did Job's friends think was the cause of his suffering?

A6: Job's friends thought he was suffering because of some sin he committed.

Q6b: Has a friend ever offered to help you study for a math test and then criticized you for not understanding it yet?

Teacher Notes: This doesn't sound very helpful. Job's friends came over to pray for him and comfort him, but instead they ended up giving him awful advice and criticizing him for being in this situation, which they thought was obviously caused by some sin Job had committed. They came to offer comfort and left Job feeling worse than before they had arrived. When we see a loved one going through a hard time, we should offer them our love, support, and prayers. We shouldn't judge them, just help them.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 7



Q7a: What did God explain to Job?

A7: God explained that no one had the right to question Him or His decisions, even if they don't seem to make sense.

Q7b: If God is in charge of everything, couldn't He have stopped Job's suffering?

Teacher Notes: Yes, God could have stopped Job's suffering. In fact, He could have prevented it from happening all together. Job complained to God that He was wrong to deal so harshly with him. He had done nothing wrong! Why was this happening to him?! As God explained to Job, He created everything. He sees everything. He is in control of everything. He does not need to explain His decisions to anyone. Because God's decisions have far-reaching reasons and effects, it would take a very long time to explain them, and it's likely that even with all of the facts, we still wouldn't understand. When we face difficult situations, the only explanation we can expect to get or understand is that God has His reasons, and they are good. We must trust that God knows what He is doing.

SLIDE 8



Q8a: Did Satan's plan work?

A8: No, Job still loved God.

Q8b: Have you ever had a cold and couldn't breathe through your nose?

Teacher Notes: Sometimes colds can last for a couple of weeks. We don't realize how nice it is to be able to breathe through our noses until we can't for an extended period of time. Once our colds have cleared up, the first few minutes of nose-breathing is glorious! Job had gone without any comfort for so long, when his suffering was ended, he appreciated life more—and it didn't hurt that God blessed Job even more than He had before!



QUESTION & ANSWER

MEMORY VERSE

- ▶ **Job 1:21:** The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

.....

BIG IDEA

- ▶ God allows bad things to happen to good people, but never without a purpose.

.....

CLOSING PRAYER

- ▶ Dear God, thank You for what you teach us through the life of Job. Help us to be like Job and remain faithful to You when bad things happen. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 1



Long ago in the faraway land of Uz, there lived a man named Job. Job was a good man. He loved God, refused to do wrong, and was honorable. Job was a very wealthy man and had thousands of sheep, camels, oxen, donkeys, many servants, and 10 children. Job was the greatest man in the land. Everything in his life went smoothly.

SLIDE 2



Meanwhile, Satan took notice. He complained to God about Job. "He only serves you because you give him so many blessings. If you take away Job's blessings, he'll curse you right to your face." God then told Satan to do with Job as he pleased, but he could not harm Job himself. Satan slipped away and began devising a plan to make Job turn against God.

SLIDE 3



One day, as Job was simply enjoying life, a servant ran up, breathless, with devastating news. "All the oxen and donkeys were stolen by an invading force, and the servants were killed! I barely escaped!" Right as Job was hearing this horrible news, another servant ran up, shouting out, "A huge fire came, burned all the sheep, and killed all the servants!" Another servant came running to Job, sobbing in terror. He said, "Job! The enemy came and stole all the camels and killed the servants!" The servant had hardly finished when yet another servant came running to Job, screaming the most horrible news of all. "Your children were having a feast together and a terrible wind destroyed the house! Your children are all dead!"



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 4



In an instant, Job lost everything. It was all gone. The grief was unimaginable. Job tore his clothes, shaved his head, and fell on the ground. Satan thought Job was going to be mad at God, but instead Job worshiped Him. "The Lord gave me everything and He has the right to take it away. I will still praise God." Job said.

SLIDE 5



Satan asked God if he could make Job sick. He was sure that Job would then curse God. God told Satan that he could continue with his plan but was not allowed to kill Job. So Satan caused Job to break out with sores over his entire body. He became very ill. The pain and itching was so unbearable that he took broken pieces of pottery to scratch the sores. Job's wife was of no help at all. She came up to her husband and growled, "You're still trying to do good? Just curse God and die!" Job did not sin. He continued to worship God.

SLIDE 6



Even Job's friends started to turn against him. They thought that Job must have sinned for God to punish him like this. They were all trying to give him advice and tell him what to do. Instead of helping Job and praying for him, they criticized him. But through all this, Job still did not sin. He continued to trust and worship God.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 7



Job started to lose heart. He didn't understand why God would allow these things to happen to him. So God spoke with Job and explained to Him that, as God, he created Job and everything in existence. No one had the right to question Him or His decisions, even though they may not make sense. God was trying to show Job a valuable lesson. Job responded in the only way possible. He worshiped, and he repented.

SLIDE 8



Eventually, Job's suffering stopped. Satan's plan did not work. Job still loved God. God was so pleased with Job that He healed him and gave him back everything he had lost. This time, He blessed Job with more children, wealth, and possessions than he could ever imagine. Job even lived until he was 140 years of age. The end of Job's life was even better than the beginning.



JESUS FEEDS 5000



JESUS FEEDS 5,000

MATTHEW 14:13-21

GOAL

▶ To teach children about the compassion and miraculous power of Jesus, and encourage them to act in compassion toward others and in great faith towards God.

CHARACTERS

▶ **Jesus:** He taught the people and miraculously fed them when they were hungry.

Disciples: Jesus told them to feed the hungry people despite the fact that they did not have any food.

Boy: He gave his small meal to Jesus, and Jesus turned it into a meal for thousands of people

People in the Crowd: Scripture says that 5,000 men were present, which means that if women and children had been counted, the number of those in attendance would have been much higher. They came for healing and to listen to Jesus' teaching. Jesus fed them with only five barley loaves and two fish.

MEMORY VERSE

▶ **Matthew 14:14:** When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick.



OVERVIEW

▶ **Read Matthew 14:13-21:** A crowd of people hoping that Jesus would heal their sick loved one followed Jesus to where He was. As Jesus healed the sick and taught the crowd of people, it grew late. The disciples realized that they were pretty much out in the middle of nowhere, and the people must be getting hungry. They asked Jesus to tell the people to leave so they could find food in nearby villages, but Jesus told the disciples to feed all of the people there. The only food they could find was five loaves of barley bread and two fish given to them by a boy, nowhere nearly enough food for a crowd of well over 5,000 people. Jesus took the loaves and fish, thanked God for it, and gave it to the disciples to distribute to everyone there. After everyone ate enough food to make them full, there were 12 baskets of leftover food.

SUGGESTIONS

▶ Scripture informs us that the crowd was made up of 5,000 men, but women and children were also present. Some people estimate that the number of people fed was as high as 15,000 or more.

This miracle demonstrates a couple of important concepts:

1. Recognition: Out in the middle of nowhere, the disciples' idea of a solution to feeding thousands of people was to send them away into the nearby villages to find food. When Jesus told them to feed all of the people, they again leaned on their own understanding of accomplishing such tasks and quickly became discouraged. They were right in that five loaves and two fish is not enough food to feed more than 5,000 people when using our own human ability—but that amount of food was more than enough for Jesus. If they had recognized and relied on Jesus' power, they could have avoided the frustration they felt at first and instead, sat back as they watched a miracle unfold.

2. Offering: God doesn't need us to accomplish his goals on Earth, but despite our failings, He uses us to show His glory. When the Israelites wandered the desert for 40 years, God gave the people manna to eat. Jesus didn't need these little loaves and dried fish to feed everyone. He wants us to participate—He wants us to experience the blessing of glorifying God.



PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY



Gone Fishin'

Cut-out images of food items such as cake, an ice cream cone, corn on the cob, a hamburger, etc; cut-out images of five loaves of bread and two fish; a bucket; a stick, such as a broom handle; a long bit of string; and a clothespin.

Create a fishing pole by tying the string to one end of the stick. Tie the clothespin to the end of the string. Place the food images into the bucket. Have children circle around the bucket. Assign one child to stay at the bucket as the Fisher's Helper. Children take turns with the fishing pole, putting the clothespin at the end of the string into the bucket. The Fisher's Helper closes his or her eyes and pulls out a food cutout and attaches it to the clothespin. The children must retrieve the five loaves and both of the fish in order to complete the game.

MEMORY VERSE MEANING



Matthew 14:14: At this point in Scripture, Jesus had just learned that His friend John the Baptist had died, and He and His disciples were constantly being sought by thousands of people who had heard of the great works Jesus had done. He was saddened by the news and exhausted from the work. He and the disciples sailed to a desolate area to have some time to themselves, but when they reached the shore, they saw that a multitude of people were already there waiting for Jesus. Instead of pushing off and sailing somewhere else where He might have a moment of peace, He saw their need and was moved to help them. Jesus calls us to follow His example and help others, no matter what is going on in our own lives.



POST-LESSON ACTIVITY

- ▶ **Loaves and Fishes Necklace | *Supplies:*** string; dry pasta, such as penne or ziti; small, cut-out images of fish.

Have children string five pieces of pasta on the string, and color and decorate their fish cutouts. Then, tie the strings to form necklaces. The five pieces of pasta and two fish will remind them of the loaves and fishes that Jesus made into a meal for thousands of people.

TAKE HOME

- ▶ Now that we've read about Jesus' power, how can we grow in faith so that we can be confident that God will provide for us?

The more we put our trust in Jesus, the more confident we can become in His ability to help us. The more confident we become in His abilities, we will be much more likely to automatically turn to Jesus when we face obstacles. God will provide us with a solution or with direction in how to solve the problem. The sooner we turn our problems over to God, the less frustration we will experience in our lives.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 1



Q1a: What types of people came to hear Jesus teach?

A1: People from all social classes and cultures, including Jews and Gentiles

Q1b: Who is your favorite teacher in school?

TN: Ask students why they like this teacher so much. People loved to hear Jesus teach because He was able to relate very complicated concepts in a way that everyone could understand.

SLIDE 2



Q2a: What did Jesus command the disciples to do?

A2: He told them to feed the people.

Q2b: Have you ever helped cook a meal for your family?

TN: Cooking a meal for a few people can be tricky, but imagine making sure that 5,000 people were fed! This difficult task was complicated by the fact that the people were already hungry and the disciples didn't exactly have an abundance of ingredients from which to choose. They felt Jesus had given them an impossible job, but really, Jesus was giving them an opportunity. This was a chance for the disciples to recognize who Jesus was and rely on His power. While Jesus isn't a genie in a bottle who grants us all of our wishes, it should have occurred to the disciples to ask Jesus if He could help.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 3



Q3a: What food did the boy offer?

A3: Five barley loaves and two fish

Q3b: Have you ever shared your lunch with someone?

TN: The food this boy had with him was enough to feed him, but it certainly wasn't enough to feed all the people who had come to see Jesus that day. Knowing it wasn't enough to feed everyone, he could have kept it to ensure that he was well fed, but he gave it anyway, hoping it would help. Sometimes we may not feel like we have anything to offer, but God can do so much with us. Remember, God doesn't need us to carry out His will. Jesus could have commanded food to miraculously appear, but instead he let a boy show his faith and that He trusted Jesus to provide. It offered Jesus an opportunity to glorify God and demonstrate His power.

SLIDE 4



Q4a: What did Jesus do first with the loaves and fish?

A4: He thanked God for the food.

Q4b: Has anyone ever told you to eat something you don't like because there are starving children in the world?

TN: The loaves that the boy gave to Jesus were probably small biscuits that could have been eaten in a couple of bites, and the fish were probably small dried fish. While this was likely a common meal at the time, some people may not have been particularly happy to eat it; but they recognized that it was better than nothing. We should be thankful for the food we have to eat and all of the things we have because God provides us with everything.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 5



Q5a: How did Jesus' lessons help the disciples?

A5: The lessons helped the disciples to strengthen their faith.

Q5b: What miracle would you like to have witnessed Jesus perform?

TN: While on Earth, Jesus performed many miracles, such as turning water into wine, healing sick people, and walking on water.

SLIDE 6



Q6a: After everyone had been fed, how many baskets of food were left over?

A6: 12 baskets

Q6b: Have you ever been sick and had to visit a doctor?

TN: When you go to the doctor, they use a number of clues to determine what exactly has made us unwell, and they prescribe medicines or treatments to slowly make the pain or discomfort stop. Jesus didn't require the sick people who sought His help to give Him a detailed medical history before deciding how to heal them—He just prayed, laid His hands on them, or told them that they were healed, and it was so. This story describes not only the miracle of Jesus feeding more than 5,000 people, but also discusses His miraculous power to heal people.



MEMORY VERSE

- ▶ **Matthew 14:14:** When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick.
-

BIG IDEA

- ▶ With Jesus, who is all-powerful, everything is possible.
-

CLOSING PRAYER

- ▶ Dear God, You're amazing! You fed thousands of people, making food out of nothing! You showed us that You know our needs and take care of us. Please help us to turn to you when we need help because you are able to provide. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 1



Jesus was one of the most famous people in all of Israel. One day, as He was teaching, thousands of people came to listen, hanging on His every word. He spoke and taught in a way that people could understand. There were people from all social classes and cultures, including Jews and Gentiles. Yet, each of them found significance in the wisdom with which He taught. Jesus had a lot to say, and later during the day, the crowds became hungry.

SLIDE 2



"Jesus, the people are hungry!" his disciples came and told Him. "You must send the people away to find a place to stay and find something to eat!" Jesus looked at the thousands of people. It was a huge crowd. Not counting the women and children, there were 5,000 men. Then Jesus gave a strange order to His disciples: "You give them something to eat," He commanded them. The disciples were confused. How were they supposed to find enough food to feed so many people? "We don't have any food! Even if we spent all the money we have on food, there still would not be enough."

SLIDE 3



Then Jesus asked them, "What food do you have?" Andrew, one of His disciples, came up to Jesus with a young boy. Jesus looked at the boy kindly as he held up his lunch. "This boy has five barley loaves and two fish. But that is not enough for all these people." Jesus smiled in thanks as the boy handed Him his lunch. "Have the people sit down," Jesus instructed. The disciples went to work arranging the people into an orderly seating pattern.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 4



The young boy watched as Jesus held up his food and thanked God for it. Suddenly, a miraculous thing occurred. After giving thanks, Jesus started handing out the food. The more He handed out, the more food there was. God was multiplying the five barley loaves and two fish to be enough to feed all of the people.

SLIDE 5



The crowds were amazed. Once again, Jesus' disciples witnessed the power of the Son of God. Jesus was constantly illustrating and teaching them valuable lessons that would help strengthen their faith. With God, nothing was impossible, not even turning two fish and five loaves of bread into enough food for more than 5,000 people. Then, to prove God's power even more, Jesus gave the disciples instructions to gather all the leftovers.

SLIDE 6



As the disciples scooped up the leftovers, they filled 12 baskets. This was an undeniable miracle. Who could have such power? Indeed, Jesus was the Son of God. That day, thousands more people believed, repented, and put their trust in God.



**JONAH, NINEVEH
AND THE BIG FISH**



JONAH, NINEVEH, & THE BIG FISH

JONAH 1-4

GOAL

▶ To help children understand the importance of obeying God.

CHARACTERS

▶ **Jonah:** This prophet ran away from God, was swallowed by a big fish, and traveled to Nineveh where he reluctantly preached to the people about repentance.

Sailors: They threw Jonah overboard.

Ninevites: Pagans who repented before God and turned to Him

MEMORY VERSE

▶ **Jonah 2:9:** Salvation belongs to the Lord.

OVERVIEW

▶ **Read the book of Jonah:** God called Jonah to preach to the foreign city of Nineveh, Israel's enemy and the scourge of the ancient world. Jonah flatly refused and ran the opposite direction. God sent a storm that threatened to sink the ship on which Jonah was sailing. When the sailors discovered that it was Jonah's fault that they were in peril, they asked him what they could do. Jonah told them to throw him overboard. As soon as they threw Jonah off of the boat, the sea became calm. A huge fish swallowed Jonah, and for three days and three nights, Jonah sat in the belly of the great fish. Jonah prayed, and God made the fish spit Jonah out onto dry land. Jonah eventually went to Nineveh to preach, where the people received his message, and the people there repented of their sin and turned to God.



SUGGESTIONS



Jonah was essentially a missionary, going to a distant land to tell them about his God. God is passionate that His salvation be proclaimed to the ends of the earth. He even uses unwilling messengers like Jonah. While Jonah's story teaches us the importance of humility and obedience, it also teaches us about God's grace.

1. Humility: As an Israelite, Jonah thought of himself as superior to the people of Nineveh. They worshiped false gods and were an enemy to the people of Israel. Jonah thought that it was beneath him to go to such a place and preach to such unworthy people.

2. Obedience: God made Jonah a prophet and gave him all of his gifts and talents that made him successful at his job. So when God gave Jonah a mission, he should have gone. Only when he found himself sitting in the belly of a fish for three days and three nights did Jonah see the error of his ways. Jonah didn't particularly care for the mission God sent him on, but he saw that not going was disobedient.

3. Grace: Jonah had a hard time seeing the purpose of God's command for him to go to Nineveh. Then when he finally got there, he warned the people that God would bring disaster upon them for their evil ways. The people heard this message and took it to heart. They truly repented, and God spared them from punishment. Instead of being relieved and overjoyed, Jonah became angry with the Lord. He didn't understand why God wouldn't punish these people for the evil they had done. What Jonah failed to see was that, just as the Ninevites, Jonah deserved punishment for disobedience. God's grace through faith saves us all.

PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY



Jonah Hide-and-Seek

Appoint one student to act as Jonah, and ask him or her to hide. When other children find Jonah, they must hide in the same place until everyone has found Jonah. Remind children that it is impossible to hide from God.



MEMORY

VERSE

MEANING

POST-LESSON

ACTIVITY

TAKE

HOME

- ▶ **Jonah 2:9:** Salvation is a gift from our gracious and merciful God that is given to those who believe in and love Him. We cannot earn salvation.

- ▶ **In the Belly of a Fish | Supplies:** Printouts of a coloring page featuring a figure who can serve as Jonah, paper, crayons, markers, and glue sticks.

Give each student a piece of paper and a coloring page of Jonah. Instruct the students to draw a whale on the blank page and to color the picture of Jonah. Next, have the students cut a flap in the belly of their whale drawing. Have the students glue their picture of Jonah to the back of the whale drawing. When the flap is lifted, Jonah can be seen in the belly of the whale.

- ▶ Jonah is more than a message of obedience, although that is central. It is also a way for us to understand that God desires to spread the fame of His name to all people. In spreading His name, we can tell people about His saving grace.

1. God wants everyone to hear about Him and have a chance to choose Him and the salvation He offers. It is not for us to decide who is worthy of this message and grace.
2. God has a plan. It may not sound like a good idea, but His thoughts are not our thoughts. He knows the full background of situations and the future our actions will bring. When He asks us to do something in His name, we should obey.
3. God is constant. The things we think people should be punished for are sometimes the same things for which we seek God's grace and mercy.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 1



Q1a: Where did God tell Jonah to go preach?

A1: God told him to go to Nineveh.

Q1b: Would you rather visit Disneyland or a prison?

TN: It seems pretty likely that everyone would rather visit Disneyland than a prison. God asked Jonah to go to a place filled with evil people. He was afraid for his life. The important thing for us to remember is that if God calls us to go to a potentially scary place, He will protect us and help us to be successful.

SLIDE 2



Q2a: Where did Jonah go?

A2: He went to the port city of Joppa.

Q2b: Have you ever worked on a group project and someone didn't do their part?

TN: When this happens, we have to do our own part of the project as well as the work the other person was supposed to do. This is a really irritating situation! When we are given a responsibility, others are depending on us to follow through. God gave Jonah talents and abilities, and when He gave Jonah a task to do, He expected it to be done.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 3



Q3a: Jonah bought a ticket on a ship going to what city?

A3: The ship was going to Tarshish.

Q3b: Is there anywhere in your house where you could hide and never be found?

TN: Probably not. It might take a while for someone to find us, but if we were known to be hiding in the house, they could look in every room, around all of the furniture, and behind every door. At some point, we would be found. God is with us always. Trying to hide from God is like playing hide-and-go-seek in a single room without furniture and the seeker doesn't have to cover his or her eyes. There's nowhere to go.

SLIDE 4



Q4a: What did the sailors do to help lighten the ship's load during the storm?

A4: The sailors started throwing cargo off of the ship.

Q4b: How hard would it be to swim wearing a life jacket filled with sand?

TN: That would be pretty hard! Life jackets are filled with a material that is meant to float, but sand is heavy and would cause us to sink. The sailors were desperate. The storm was causing the boat to take on water, which was causing them to sink. The only thing they could think to do was to throw cargo overboard.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 5



Q5a: What was Jonah doing while the storm was raging?

A5: Jonah was sleeping below the deck of the ship.

Q5b: When are some good times to pray?

TN: Well, pretty much any time is a good time to pray, but we often think to pray when we are facing danger or trouble. God hears all of our prayers, and He will always help us.

SLIDE 6



Q6a: What did Jonah say had caused the storm?

A6: God sent the storm because of Jonah's disobedience.

Q6b: What might happen if you don't study for a test?

TN: We could get lucky and pass, but more than likely, we would fail. That's a pretty obvious consequence for not doing something we know we should. Jonah had hoped that God would find someone else to go to Nineveh, but when he saw the terrible storm, he knew that God sent it because of his disobedience.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 7



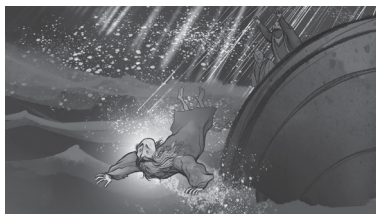
Q7a: What did the sailors do to find out who was to blame for the storm?

A7: They cast lots.

Q7b: Do you think you could flip a coin 10 times and get heads every time?

TN: Statistically speaking, that's not very probable. Not a whole lot is known about casting lots. Flipping a coin might be the closest way to describing this activity that is mentioned several times in the Bible. So like heads and tails, traits of the lots were assigned to each person on the boat. Every time the lots were cast, they pointed toward Jonah.

SLIDE 8



Q8a: What happened after the sailors threw Jonah overboard?

A8: The storm stopped and the sea was peaceful.

Q8b: What happens when you throw a big rock into a pond?

TN: The rock causes a splash, and then the water ripples out from the spot where the rock hit the water. It might take quite a while for the water to become completely calm again. So when the sailors threw Jonah off of their boat and the storm stopped and the water became instantly calm, they recognized the power of Jonah's God. Once they witnessed that kind of power, they knew Jonah's God was the only true God.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 9



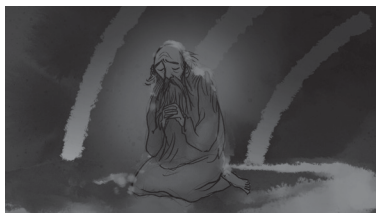
Q9a: What swallowed Jonah?

A9: A big fish swallowed him.

Q9b: The chain on your bike is broken. Which do you choose as a way to get to school: a hot-air balloon or a horseback ride?

TN: While both options are effective methods of transportation, they are a bit unconventional. God has the power to cause a storm and then stop it, so he must have the power to make it so that a ship heading toward Nineveh would have been in the area to pick up Jonah after he was thrown overboard. Instead, God causes a huge fish to swallow Jonah and take him back to where he needed to be. While effective and a way to save Jonah from drowning, this has to be the strangest mode of transportation ever.

SLIDE 10



Q10a: How long was Jonah in the belly of the fish?

A10: Jonah was in the fish's belly for three days.

Q10b: Do you enjoy camping?

TN: Camping and being out in nature without the comforts of home is one of those activities that people either love or hate. In a way, Jonah was camping out in the belly of a fish. There were no comforts of home and nothing to distract him from his thoughts and feelings. He sat there thinking about what he had done, which led him to pray. Camping may not be something everyone enjoys, it is a good idea to find a quiet place where we can spend some quiet time reflecting on our actions and praying without distraction.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 11



Q11a: Once on the beach, what did Jonah know he had to do?

A11: He knew he had to obey God and go to Nineveh.

Q11b: Would seeing someone's reaction to drinking hot sauce be enough for you to know that it's not good, or would you have to experience it for yourself?

TN: Seeing someone's reaction is usually enough for us to understand how things work, taste, or feel. Observing the outcome of certain actions rather than being the one experiencing the outcome is the difference between learning things the easy way versus the hard way. No doubt, Jonah had seen people disobey God and the consequences for it, but he disobeyed anyway. Once on the beach, he realized what he needed to do. No matter how much he didn't want to go, Jonah knew he had to go to Nineveh.

SLIDE 12



Q12a: What was the message Jonah brought to the Ninevites?

A12: He gave them God's message: Repent or die.

Q12b: Have you ever helped someone even though your heart wasn't really in it?

TN: It's safe to say that most of us have done this at some point. Even though Jonah didn't particularly care for the Ninevites or their salvation, he went to give them God's message. So even if we don't particularly want to feed the homeless with a church group or help someone move into a new house, when we leave, some homeless people were fed and a person is relieved of some heavy lifting. When we help, we bless. When we help and have a good attitude, we are blessed, too.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 13



Q13a: What did God do after the Ninevites repented and asked for mercy?

A13: God forgave the Ninevites.

Q13b: You see someone spit out a bite of a cookie. The person then offers you one of these cookies. Do you try it?

TN: People don't usually spit out tasty treats, so we'd probably say no thank you. This person clearly didn't like it, so his or her recommendation isn't very sincere. This is much like Jonah coming to Nineveh with a serious attitude problem. Even though it was probably pretty obvious that this person didn't much care about them, the Lord's message and love shone through. The people of Nineveh took God's message to heart and did everything they could to change their ways, hoping for mercy.

SLIDE 14



Q14a: Where did Jonah go after he saw that God wasn't going to punish Nineveh?

A14: Jonah left the city and sat on a hill that overlooked Nineveh.

Q14b: Would you be angry if you went on a game show and won a lot of money?

TN: Anger probably isn't how most people would react to winning a game show. Anger isn't a natural response to success, but that is how Jonah felt after the message he delivered for God caused the Ninevites to repent. He wanted God to punish the people for their wickedness. He completely missed the point. This was a real reason to celebrate!



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 15



Q15a: What destroyed the plant that had shaded Jonah.

A15: A worm destroyed the plant.

Q15b: Your sibling eats a bunch of junk food before dinner and is forgiven. You do the same thing and get grounded. Is that fair?

TN: Let the students answer. The people of Nineveh were disobedient, and Jonah thought they should be punished for their wickedness. Jonah had just experienced God's mercy and grace for being disobedient. While Jonah's disobedience may not have been quite as extensively wicked as that of the Ninevites, it was still disobedience. Jonah was thankful for God's mercy when it was bestowed upon him, but he was angry with God for being merciful to the Ninevites. God is constant. He doesn't change or bend the rules. No matter what, when we repent and ask for forgiveness, we are met with God's mercy.

SLIDE 16



Q16a: What did God want to teach Jonah?

A16: God wanted to teach Jonah that when we repent, God forgives us.

Q16b: Would you want to be on a soccer team with someone who didn't like soccer or care whether or not the team wins?

TN: No, we generally want to be on teams with people who want to be there and who will work just as hard as we do to win. God knew Jonah's attitude toward the people of Nineveh, so why did He choose him for this mission? As much as this mission was to show the people of Nineveh that they were acting wickedly, it also had a lesson to teach Jonah about his attitude and about God's love and mercy.



MEMORY VERSE

- ▶ **Jonah 2:9:** "Salvation belongs to the Lord!"

BIG IDEA

- ▶ God is merciful to save those who love and obey Him.

CLOSING PRAYER

- ▶ Dear God, thank You for teaching Jonah a lesson. Thank You that we can learn the lesson of obedience, too. Help us all to obey You. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 1



One day, God told Jonah, a prophet and messenger of God, to go on a special journey to the great city of Nineveh. God wanted Jonah to go tell the people to stop sinning and obey God. This big task made Jonah afraid. The people of Nineveh were the scariest people in the entire world.

SLIDE 2



Jonah was so afraid that he made a foolish decision. Instead of obeying God, he ran away to the port city of Joppa, which was in the opposite direction of Nineveh. Jonah hoped that God would forget and ask someone else to go.

SLIDE 3



When Jonah arrived at the port city of Joppa, he found a ship that was going to sail to the city of Tarshish. Jonah thought this was a great idea, so he paid for his ticket, boarded the ship, and settled in for the long ride. Hopefully, he would be rid of God's mission, rid of Nineveh, and God would use someone else to bring His message.

SLIDE 4



How foolish Jonah was to think he could run away from God. While on the ship, a big storm broke loose. Everyone on board thought they were going to die. In an effort to lighten the load, the passengers started throwing cargo overboard, but nothing helped.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 5



The ship was tossed in the ocean, and the waves were getting bigger and bigger. All the sailors started praying to their gods. Finally, the captain came to Jonah and found him fast asleep below the deck of the ship. Maybe Jonah had a God that knew how to quiet the storm. Maybe Jonah could pray to his God and ask for help.

SLIDE 6



Angrily, the captain shook Jonah awake. "What's going on, you lazy sleeper?! Don't you care that the ship is about to sink? Hurry and get up here! Ask your god to make this storm stop!" Jonah was in no praying mood; he knew that because of his disobedience, God had sent the storm.

SLIDE 7



Up on the deck, the sailors decided to cast lots to see who was to blame for this storm. In the end, the lots all fell to Jonah. Jonah then told the sailors that he was running away from God. This made them even more afraid. "Just throw me into the sea!" Jonah told them. "If you do, the sea will become calm." The sailors did not want to throw him overboard. They tried to save the ship, but nothing worked.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 8



In the end, they did throw Jonah overboard. As soon as Jonah fell into the sea, the storm stopped, and everything was peaceful. The sailors knew that Jonah's God was the true God, and they started worshiping Him.



SLIDE 9



As Jonah sank deeper into the dark water, a big fish appeared and swallowed him. Jonah was so afraid and thought he was going to die; but God had other plans. This was not the end of Jonah.

SLIDE 10



Jonah found himself in the dark, squishy, stinky belly of this big fish. He thought he would suffocate in here. Jonah had time to think, pray, and get things right with God. He prayed, and he knew that God would save him. For three days and three nights, Jonah stayed in fish's belly.

SLIDE 11



After three days, the fish was done with Jonah. The fish spat Jonah out onto the beach, and then swam away. There he was, stinky, alone, and washed up on a faraway beach. But Jonah knew this time that he had to obey God. He had to go to Nineveh and tell them God's message.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 12



This time he went, but not with a good attitude. He was really grumpy and still a little scared. Even so, he told the people of Nineveh about God's message. "Repent!" he said. "Repent, or you'll all die!" Jonah was hoping that they would not repent, and that they would all die. He still did not like these Ninevites.

SLIDE 13



To Jonah's surprise, the people of Nineveh listened to God's message and became very sad over their wicked sin. For days, they cried and prayed, asking God to have mercy on them. God listened to their prayers and forgave them.

SLIDE 14



When Jonah saw that God was not going to punish the Ninevites, he became angry and he complained to God. "You send me all this way and then you don't even punish these wicked people." Jonah left the city and went out and sat on a hill that overlooked Nineveh. Jonah still hoped to see God destroy it. As he waited, God caused a plant to grow, and it gave Jonah a bit of shade.

SLIDE 15



The next day, God caused a worm to destroy the plant shading Jonah. Without the plant, Jonah was unprotected from the sun, which made him even more mad and grumpy. Jonah lost his temper and said to God, "It is better for me to die than to live!" Then God spoke to Jonah and said, "Is it right for you to be angry for the plant? You mourn for a plant that you did nothing to make grow because it provided you with a bit of comfort. Should I not pity an entire city of people who don't know right from wrong?"



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 16



Then Jonah knew the lesson God wanted him to learn. He fell on his knees and started worshiping God. As he did this, he realized that God was a God of mercy and love. God wanted to teach Jonah that when people stopped sinning and obeyed Him, He would forgive, protect, and bless them.



LOVE IS



LOVE IS

1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-13

GOAL

- ▶ **To teach children that, while God gives us many wonderful and powerful gifts to help us share our faith and the Word of God, the greatest gift is love.** If we use the gifts God has given us, but we don't use them with love, our actions are meaningless.
-

WORDS TO KNOW

- ▶ **Agape Love:** The Greek word used in 1 Corinthians 13 that describes a different notion of love than that felt between family, friends, or romantic partners. Agape love is selfless, charitable, sacrificing, and unconditional for the benefit of the object of love. Agape love is used to describe the love God has for us as well as to describe God, who Himself is love.
-

MEMORY VERSES

- ▶ **1 Corinthians 13:13:** So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Romans 13:10: Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is fulfilling the law.

OVERVIEW

- ▶ **Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-13:** The people of the church in Corinth were arguing about which of the spiritual gifts God gives us is the best. The Apostle Paul heard about this bickering and wrote to them to settle the matter. In his letter, Paul explained that the greatest gift God gives us is love—a gift that is given to everyone. Each of the other spiritual gifts, while powerful in their ability to help us advance the kingdom of God on Earth, is worthless if our actions are done without love.



SUGGESTIONS



God gives us gifts that will help us through life and to help advance the kingdom of God by sharing the story of Jesus' ultimate act of love and sacrifice to save us from our sins. Spreading this good news is obeying Jesus' command to make disciples of all nations. The goal of this commandment isn't so God will have the most followers, but so that His love will be spread to every corner of the Earth and that every person will experience His love. God gives us spiritual gifts out of love so that we can share His love. Using these gifts without love makes our actions meaningless. With love we can hope to accomplish the following:

- 1. Unity:** People we've never met, people from different countries, and even people who speak different languages are our brothers and sisters because we share something that forms the foundations of our lives: Jesus and His love.
- 2. Purpose:** God created each of us each as unique individuals and granted each of us spiritual gifts with the common purpose of spreading the good news of Jesus by showing our love for everyone.
- 3. Transformation:** The more we come to know and understand God, the more we understand the power of love. Love can change who we are and those with whom we interact. Love can change the world.



PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY



Ages 5-7 Candy Hearts | Supplies: heart-shaped cutouts, markers, pens, crayons, glitter, decoration supplies.

Cut heart shapes out of construction paper. On each heart write the word LOVE. Give each student a heart to decorate. This craft can remind students that Jesus loves them and that He wants them to love others the way He loves them.

Ages 5-10 Share the Love | Supplies: Paper and pens or pencils

On a strip of paper, write each student's name. Pass out these strips of paper to the students, making sure that no one gets his or her own name. Instruct the students not to say whose name they received. Ask the students to write something nice about the student whose name appears on the strip of paper they received. These comments can be as simple as "You are nice," or "You have pretty hair." Once students have written something, have them bring the strips back to you, then give the students the comments about them. Students can keep the comments private or they can share if they want to.

Teachers may want to quickly glance at the comments to ensure that they are all in fact nice comments.

Ages 8-10 Paper Sandwiches | Supplies: construction paper and scissors

Divide the class into teams. Instruct students to use the pieces of construction paper to build a sandwich. For example, using brown, purple, and white paper, they can make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, or they can make a ham and cheese sandwich using pink and yellow paper. They can add extra ingredients, such as green paper for lettuce and red for tomatoes. Provide them with scissors so they can cut out ingredient shapes if they want. Once all the teams have constructed their sandwiches, ask the class which sandwich looks the tastiest. Ask them if they would like to try the sandwich. Paper sandwiches are not edible. No matter how closely these paper sandwiches look real, they aren't, and they will not taste as expected. There is no actual substance to a paper sandwich, much like using a spiritual gift without love.



MEMORY
VERSE
MEANING

▶ **1 Corinthians 13:13:** God gives us different spiritual gifts, but we are all given faith, hope, and love. These universal gifts are eternal, unlike the spiritual gifts that will be of use only while we are here on Earth. Of these common gifts, love is the greatest.

Romans 13:10: Jesus commanded us to love each other as He loves us. Love in our hearts from our faith in God helps us to fulfill the law of loving others as Jesus commanded.

POST-LESSON
ACTIVITY

▶ **Ages 5-7 One Love, Three Legs | Supplies:** rope or string

Pair up all students in the class, and instruct them to stand side-by-side and put their inside arms around each other. Tie the pair of students' inside legs together. Give the students a chance to get used to walking as a team, then have them stand on the starting line. On "GO!" the students should try to make it to the finish line as quickly as possible.

To be successful in the mission God has given us, we must work with love. We cannot accomplish the goals God has set for our lives without love. Remembering to team up with Jesus throughout our lives will make our work easier!

Ages 5-10 Do You Hear the Message or Music? | Supplies: stereo or radio and Christian children's music

Have the class sit in a circle. Choose one child to start the game by whispering the message to him or her: "Jesus loves you! Pass it on!" Tell the student to whisper the message to the person sitting to his or her right, and so on. When the message gets back to the student who started it, have him or her tell the class what the message ended up being and what it was when the game started. While all this is going on, place a portable stereo in the middle of the circle, turn on the music, and turn it up so it will be difficult for the students to hear each other's whispered messages. Continue until each child has had a chance to start the game or until the class needs to move on.

Without love in our hearts, our words are but a clanging cymbal or a really loud stereo!



Ages 8-10 **Love Languages** | **Supplies:** heart-shaped cutouts, strips of paper, and tape

Look up Bible verses about love and then find those verses in another language (choose languages the students aren't likely to know). Find enough verses so that when the class is divided into teams, each team will have a foreign-language verse. Copy these verses by writing or printing them out. Number each strip of paper with the foreign-language verses on them. Write the translation of each verse on one of the heart cutouts, and put the number of the corresponding foreign-language verse on the other side. Tape the hearts on the wall or in other semi-hidden locations around the room with the number side facing out. Divide the class into teams, and give each team a verse. On "Go!" the students should try to find the heart with their number on it. The first team to find their heart wins.

Without love, great words have no meaning or don't make sense to us.

TAKE HOME



The spiritual gifts God gives us work only when we use them with love. Without love, our actions and work are meaningless. Showing love helps us to bring unity, purpose, and transformation to our lives and those around us.

Unity: The more people know about Jesus and accept Him as their Lord and Savior, the more we have in common with people: love for Jesus.

Purpose: God created us to serve a specific purpose. He gave us specific, spiritual gifts to help us accomplish that purpose. When we use these gifts, we glorify God, help others to come to know Jesus, and fulfill the goal God has for our lives.

Transformation: The more we love, the closer we get to becoming the people God created us to be. Learning to love everyone, even those who are not nice to us, is what Jesus commanded us to do.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 1



Q1a: What were the people in the church in Corinth arguing about?

A1: The people in the church in Corinth were arguing about which spiritual gift was the best.

Q1b: You see two identical cars in a parking lot, but one is blue and the other is green. Which car is better?

TN: Outside of color preference, neither is better than the other because they are the same car. No one is better than anyone else. God gives us gifts that suit the purpose He created us for, and none of these spiritual gifts are better than the other or make the people who have them better than anyone else.

SLIDE 2



Q2a: People gifted in speaking the truth of God help to do what?

A2: They help to teach about Jesus and to open cold, hard hearts.

Q2b: If you make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich without jelly, have you made the sandwich correctly?

TN: No, we made a peanut butter sandwich. While peanut butter sandwiches are yummy, it's not a proper PB&J without the jelly. Our spiritual gifts are powerful, but they are not complete or effective when we use them without love.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 3



Q3a: What can people gifted with spiritual understanding of God do?

A3: They can face any difficult situation and never fear because they trust in God.

Q3b: You sit down to watch TV, but the power cord is missing. Can you get it to turn on without electricity?

TN: Even though we have the TV, it requires electricity. Without a power cord, the TV won't work. We may have spiritual gifts, but without love, they won't work. Love is what gives our gifts power!

SLIDE 4



Q4a: What does a person gain by giving everything away without love?

A4: A person who gives away everything without love gains nothing.

Q4b: Is it okay to tell others that you shared your sandwich with your friend who forgot his lunch?

TN: It feels good to give, and when we do it with love in our hearts, the happiness we feel is from the Holy Spirit inside of us who is overjoyed at our decision to follow and obey Jesus' command to love others! These feelings are exciting, and we want to tell others about it, and that's okay. Talking about our giving becomes a problem when we give only to seek praise from others. The reward for giving is the blessing of knowing we helped someone in need, not praise from others for being a good person.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 5



Q5a: The descriptions of what love is also describe who?

A5: The descriptions of what love is also describe Jesus.

Q5b: You aced a test at school that your friend failed. Is it wrong to be proud of yourself?

TN: No, we worked hard to understand the concepts on that test! We should be proud of ourselves! Being proud is wrong in this situation when we tease our friend about how well we did in comparison. It is wrong to assume that we are smarter than our friend because of their test score. Pride becomes a problem when we start think we are better than others; that is simply not true. God created each of us, making every person on the planet a miracle and part of God's plan, and He loves us equally. To show love in this situation, we can offer to help our friend study for the next test.

SLIDE 6



Q6a: On Earth we only have part of the picture. What will we have in Heaven?

A6: In Heaven, we will have an understanding that is perfect and true.

Q6b: Have you ever figured out something you thought was too hard to understand?

TN: Let the students answer. Most of us have encountered something like this in school. For some of us, we experience this in math class, for others it's language arts. The moment we figure it out, it's like someone turned on the lights, and we can see everything clearly. It's an amazing feeling! Here on Earth, we understand the world we live in and spiritual truths about life as best as we can, but there is just so much that we cannot understand. When we get to Heaven, it will be like someone turned on a light as big as the sun! We will understand everything!



SLIDE 7

QUESTION & ANSWER



Q7a: Of all the gifts that God gives us, which is eternal?

A7: Love is eternal.

Q7b: Would you like to share a time when you recently felt loved?

TN: This can be a story about how they felt loved by God or by someone in their lives. Let the students tell their stories. That feeling of love is what God wants us to spread everywhere we go, and He has given us special gifts to help us do just that. Who doesn't want to make everyone experience such a fantastic feeling?! What a wonderful mission He has sent us on! This is an opportunity to connect the stories students tell with blessings they have received from God.



QUESTION & ANSWER

MEMORY VERSES

- ▶ **1 Corinthians 13:13:** So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Romans 13: 10: Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is fulfilling the law.

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BIG IDEA

- ▶ God has given us gifts to help spread His love.
-

CLOSING PRAYER

- ▶ Dear Heavenly Father, thank You so much for blessing us with amazing spiritual gifts. Help us to use them in love as we seek to tell everyone we know about how wonderful You are. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 1



God gives us many wonderful gifts, such as the ability to speak well, spiritual understanding, or a heart for giving to the needy. As the Apostle Paul worked to spread the Good News of Jesus, the church in a place called Corinth began to argue over which gift was the best. Paul wrote to this church to remind them that love is the most important gift of all. In fact, Paul would tell the church of Corinth that without love, every other gift God gives becomes meaningless. Love is the only way to use all other gifts as God intended.

SLIDE 2



Some people are gifted in speaking the truth of God. When people with this magnificent gift are filled with the love of God and speak about what He has done in their lives, their audiences stop and listen. Their words help to teach about Jesus and to open otherwise cold, hard hearts. But without love, these same words are empty and have no meaning. The Apostle Paul said without love, a person with this gift is “a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.”

SLIDE 3



People gifted with spiritual understanding of who God is and His mighty power know what God is capable of and what that means for our lives. People with this gift who are filled with the love of God can confidently face any difficult situation and never fear because they know God is more powerful than anything they may encounter. The Apostle Paul writes that while people with this gift can have a faith that moves mountains, without love, such miracles will look like nothing more than cheap magic tricks.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 4



God gives some people hearts that care for others. Whether they are giving money, time, or talent, these people are following Jesus' command to love others as Jesus loves us. But Paul explains that if a person gave away everything, including his own life, he gains nothing if it is done without love. Without love, the giving this person does is not meant to help others and glorify God, but is an attempt to show how great the giver is.

SLIDE 5



So, if these powerful and wonderful gifts are nothing without love, what is love? Paul explains that love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous of what other people have, and it does not brag or act proud. Love is not rude, selfish, or quick-tempered. Love doesn't keep a list of all the wrong or bad things everyone has ever done. Love does not find happiness in evil things, but is delighted by the truth. Ultimately, love is outward, giving, and selfless. It's no coincidence that these descriptions of love also describe Jesus. Jesus is love.

SLIDE 6



Paul explained how temporary these gifts are using the example of a child growing up. When children mature into adults, they can see life as bigger than themselves and their own personal needs. According to Paul, on Earth, we are like children—we can only see part of the picture—but in Heaven, we will have an understanding that is perfect and true. In Heaven, we will fully grow up in Christ!



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 7



Love is so important for us to focus on because, of all the magnificent gifts God gives us, love is eternal. Love is at the heart of everything God does and asks us to do, making it something we should focus our lives on. The love we experience on Earth is good, but in the presence of God once we're in Heaven, love will not only be felt, but also will be seen. When we see the face of God, we will truly know what love is!