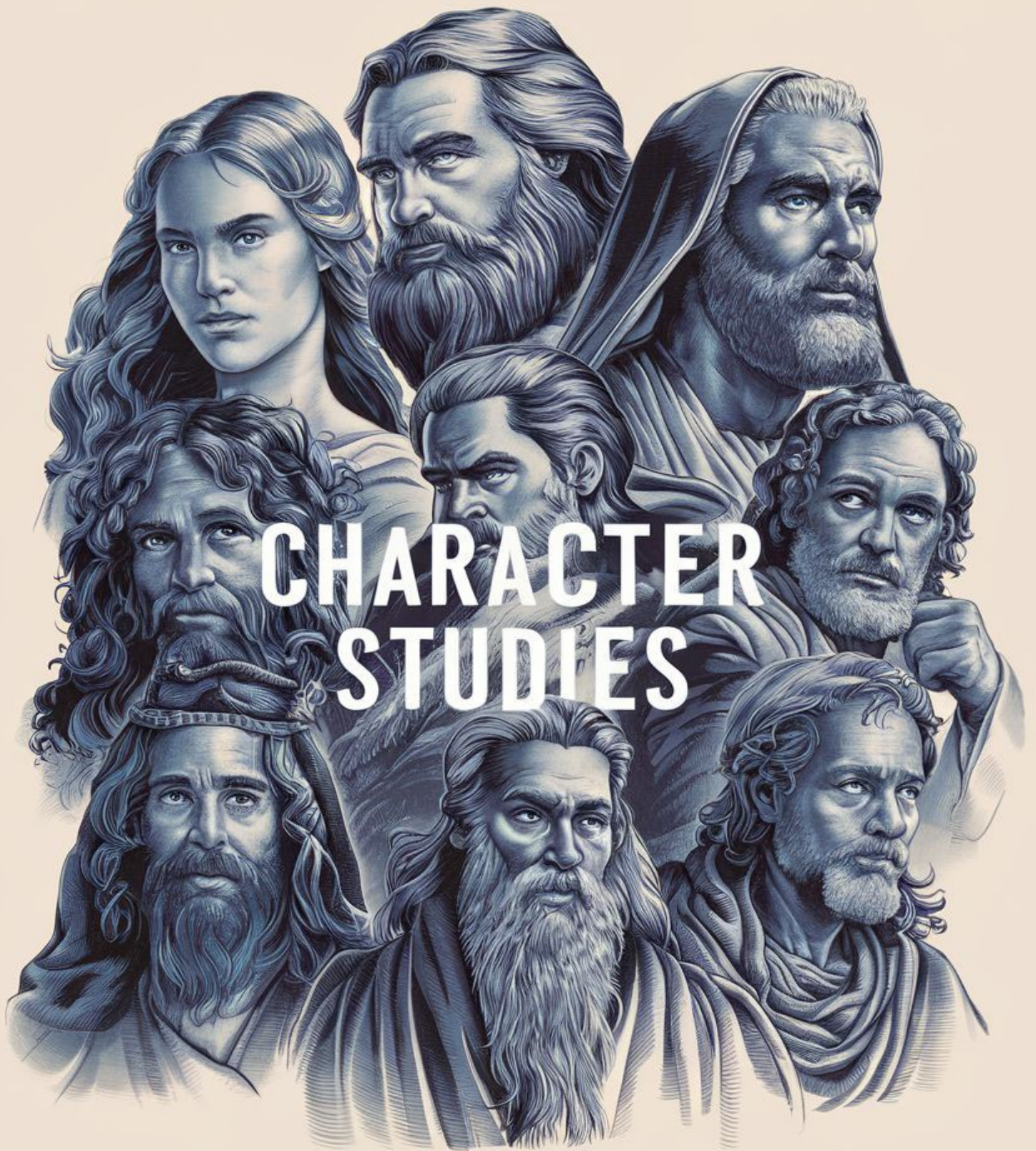




CHARACTER STUDIES

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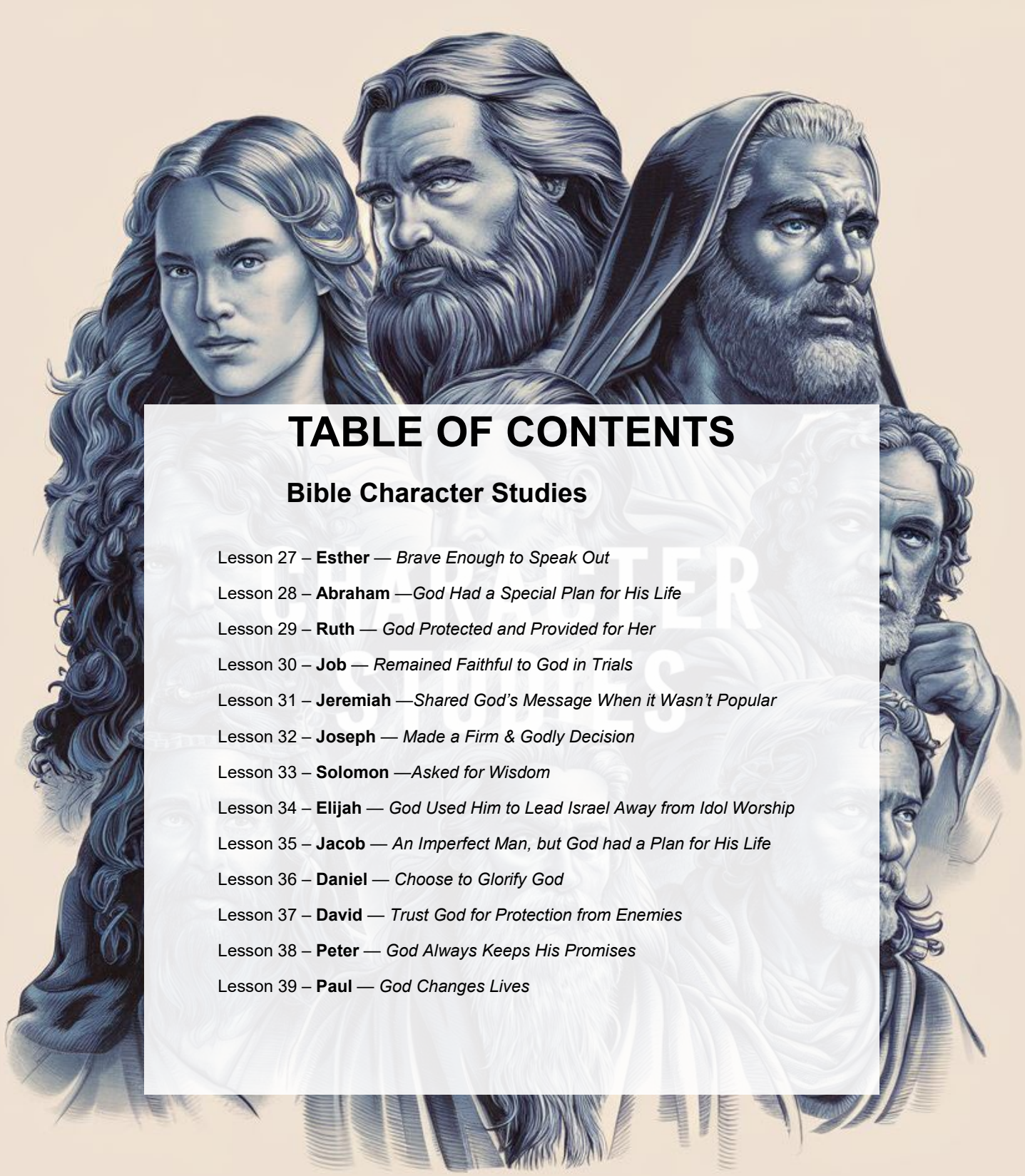


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QUEEN
ESTHER



Queen Esther

Tough Choice

Our character studies begin with one of the greatest heroines in history, a woman named Esther. Esther was a Jew, and at the time she was born, her people were captives of the Kingdom of Persia. Esther was chosen to become queen to the great King Xerxes after the old queen made him angry. It was a great honor, but soon, Esther found herself in a difficult position. There were men plotting to kill many of her people, and her uncle sent word, begging her for help.

READ ESTHER 4:8-17

If Esther dared to see the king without being called and he chose not to see her, she could die. But if she didn't take the chance, her people would die. Esther had a tough choice to make, and with God's help, she found the courage to make that choice.

READ ESTHER 5:1-3

MAIN POINT: I hope you'll all read the book of Esther for yourself, but I'll go ahead and tell you how it ends. Esther does persuade the king to save her people. Not only that, the king turns around and ordered the men who wanted the Jews dead to be killed. Not only did Esther save her people, she helped to prevent the enemies of Israel from trying again!

Esther made a difficult choice. She could have stayed silent and not gotten involved, but she risked her life to do what is right. Esther shows us that heroes always find the courage to make the right choice.

Power Point

Ask for God's help making a tough choice.

MEMORY VERSE

Psalm 118:14, "The Lord gives me strength and makes me secure. He has saved me." (NirV)

Object Lesson

ITEMS NEEDED: A jar of crunchy peanut butter and a jar of creamy peanut butter

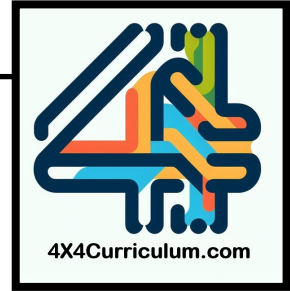
Ask: How many of you who are going to school bring a lunch from home? Who takes a peanut butter sandwich? How many hot lunch kids do we have?

Now, those of you who are peanut butter sandwich eaters, here's the real question. Crunchy, or creamy? Who here prefers crunchy? Who here prefers creamy? Some decisions are no brainers. You don't have to think about crunchy vs. creamy because odds are you made that preference long, long ago. Same goes for those of you who are allergic. Peanut butter is always a no for obvious reasons!

Some decisions aren't so easy. Sometimes it's hard to know what's right and what's wrong. Sometimes it's pretty obvious that one thing is wrong, but it's hard to make the right choice when all your friends are making the wrong one. Do you have the strength to make the right choice, even when it's hard?

When you find yourself faced with one of those tough choices, do what Esther did. Pray. Ask others to pray with you. Ask God for the courage to make the right choice. Be brave enough to make the right choice, and who knows? God could make you a hero to someone who needs it.





Apply the Lesson

As kids, many of the choices you face aren't nearly as difficult as Esther's. Most of the choices are pretty routine. Am I going to wear pants or a skirt to school? Will I



eat Rice Krispies or Cheerios for breakfast? Will I sit by this person or that person at lunch? Will I choose to read *Little House on the Prairie* or *The Chronicles of Narnia*? These choices may sometimes seem tough, but they're not the choices we're talking about. Have you ever made the choice to befriend the new kid in school?

What about the choice to stand up for the kids all the bullies want to push around? Would you be brave enough to step in and defend a fellow student who looks different, acts different, and gets picked on just for being different? Have you ever had to make a choice between right or wrong when all your friends have already made the wrong choice? Peer pressure can make even the simplest choices very difficult. You know in your heart what the right choice is, but are you willing to be rejected by your friends to do what is right? Making the right choice is never easy.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Play a game of "Would You Rather" with the kids, asking them to choose between some crazy, silly options, such as, "Would you rather be able to fly like a bird or swim like a dolphin?" "Would you rather have a pet dinosaur or a pet dragon?" "Would you rather eat pizza for every meal or ice cream for every meal?" "Would you rather have super speed or super strength?" "Would you rather live in a house made of candy or a house made of toys?"

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Esther 4:8-17 and 5:1-3

- Who was Esther?
- Why were Esther's people in danger?
- Why was it a tough choice for Esther to see the king?
- Was Esther able to save her people?
- Is there a tough decision you have to make right now?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God, Show us the right thing to do, and help us to do it. In Jesus' name, Amen





Apple Object Lesson

Class, today we're going to learn a big idea with the help of a little apple. *(Have an apple to show)*

Imagine an apple tree full of bright, yummy apples. Each apple is different; some are big, some are small, some are super shiny, and some have funny shapes. But guess what? Every single apple is important and has a special job to do.

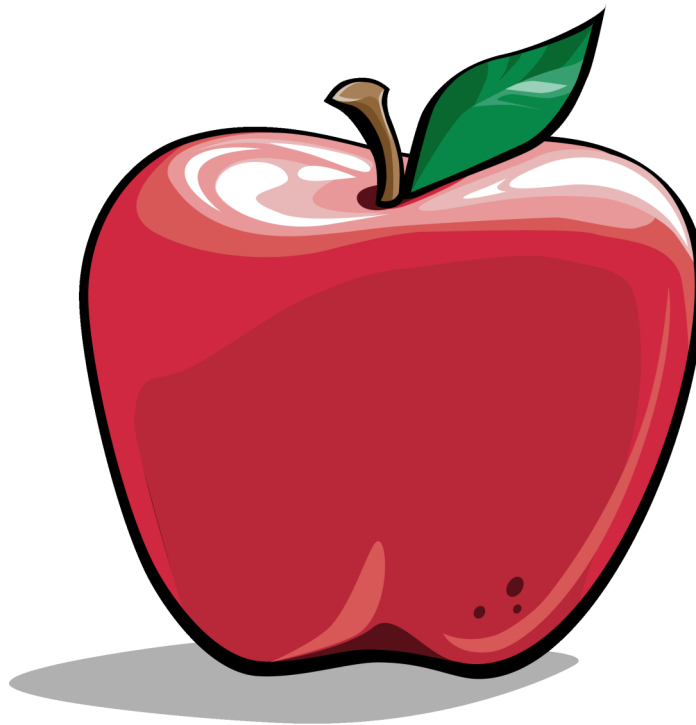
Just like apples, each of us is unique. We all look different, like different things, and are good at different stuff. And that's awesome because it means we all have our own purpose – our own special part to play in the world.

Think about it. Some apples are perfect for making apple pie, and some are just right for snacking or making juice. Some apples might even become seeds that grow into new apple trees! They all have a purpose.

And just like those apples, we all have something special to give. Maybe you're great at drawing, or you can run really fast, or you're super good at sharing and making friends. Whatever it is, it's your gift to the world.

So, remember, no matter how different we are, we're all like apples on a tree – each with our own purpose that makes the world a better, more interesting place.

Whatever happens and wherever our life paths lead, we recognize God's hand is on us and will give us all we need. He is our Father, and just like our earthly fathers, He cares for us and has remarkable things in store for our lives! Anything is possible when we remember who we are in Christ.





ABRAHAM



Abraham

Abram to Abraham

Today we are talking about Abraham. Abraham wasn't perfect but God greatly used him and God wants to use us too!

Abraham was an imperfect man who God chose to start the Jewish nation (his people)." Explain to the students that Abraham's original name was Abram (God changed it to Abraham later). Start by reading God's promises to Abram in Genesis 12:1-4 & 7. Ask, "How old was Abram when God announced his promises (75)? What were God's promises (to make Abram into a great nation, to make his name great, to bless him, and to give him land)?" Then read Genesis 17:1-8 to learn why God changed Abram's name to Abraham. Emphasize that God gave Abraham a new name (and a new identity) because he would make him into, "a father of many nations."

Power Point

Abraham wasn't perfect, but God used him.

MEMORY VERSE

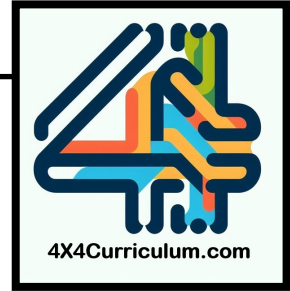
Psalm 118:14, "The Lord gives me strength and makes me secure. He has saved me." (NirV)

Game: Bible Trivia

Say: We're going to play a trivia game called, 'Who Said It?' to review some important biblical characters. Pass out paper and writing utensils and ask the children to number from one to ten. Then explain that you will read a quote and they will write the name of the person they believe said it in the bible. (You may provide a list of names on the board to help the children.)

1. "Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?" (Abraham)
2. "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" (Moses)
3. "Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God." (Ruth) 3/5
4. "This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head." (David)
5. "Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" (Job)
6. "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him." (Elijah)
7. "My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight." (Daniel)
8. "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (Jesus)
9. "We have left all we had to follow you!" (Peter)





Craft: Scattered Splattered Stars

You will need: • Paint (white, yellow or any color) • Toothbrush or paintbrush • Scissors • Construction paper, cardstock or cardboard • Markers or decorating materials • Stickers, glitter, jewels, or other decorations

Procedure:

1. Decorate dark paper or cardstock with verses or captions.
2. Use light-colored paint for the “starry spatter.” Have students dip a toothbrush or paintbrush into the paint and gently flick it to create a paint spray against the paper. Be sure to flick the paint AWAY from the child. This can get messy!
3. Add extra stickers, glitter, and decorations as desired. Allow paint to dry and hang in a place for regular viewing, and to recall God’s promises!



Galaxy Jar

You will need: • Scissors • Construction paper or cardstock • Glue and/or tape • Decorative materials (markers, crayons, stickers) • Clear plastic bottle • Oil • Glitter • Food coloring (optional)



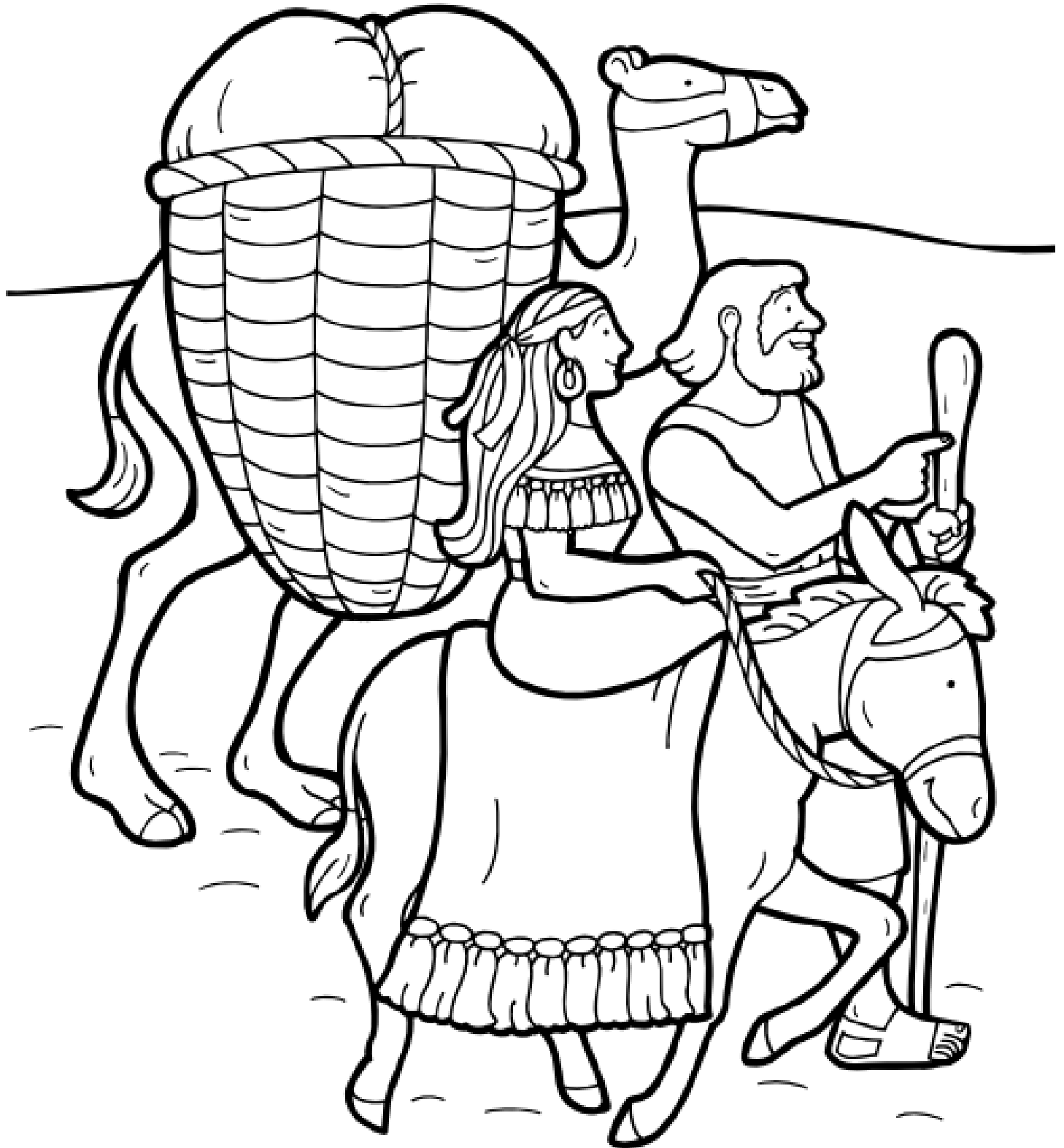
Procedure:

1. Decorate the bottle with stickers and permanent markers.
2. Add verses and captions (marker or taped paper).
3. Place a small amount of oil in the jar. Add food coloring drops if desired (oil and food coloring do not mix).
4. Add water to almost fill the jar (or shampoo or body wash).
5. Add glitter to the jar.
6. Tightly screw the lid and glue it shut.



Abram travels to a new home

Genesis 12:1-9



Ruth





Ruth

Ruth Trusts in God

Today we will learn about a woman named Ruth who was used by God in amazing ways even though she was a foreigner and faced many hard circumstances.

MAIN IDEA: Ruth deliberately chose to trust God even though she faced loss and hardships. God protected and provided for Ruth, and she even became a part of the family God would one day use to provide salvation through Jesus Christ.

Bad things happen in life, but Ruth teaches us to put our full trust in God even when we've suffered loss. Through her loving devotion to Naomi, we learn that God puts people in our lives to help us grow closer to him. Also, Ruth's life shows the amazing, redemptive power of God – the same power that would one day raise Jesus from the dead! Her story of loss, obedience, and blessings show us that God had a special plan for Ruth, and he also has a special plan for us.

Power Point

God has a special plan for our families.

MEMORY VERSE

Ephesians 6:1,
“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

Activity: Magazine Pictures

Gather: Magazines with pictures of families that children can tear out.

Discuss how God uses families by looking through magazines. Ask the class to find pictures of families, tear them out and glue them to a piece of construction paper to make a collage. As they make their creations, have them explain what their creation represents. Especially talk about the examples that closely match God's desire to use faithful, obedient families to show others His love. Remind the children that God is pleased to use families who desire to serve Him (just like He used the people/families we are learning about in the bible)

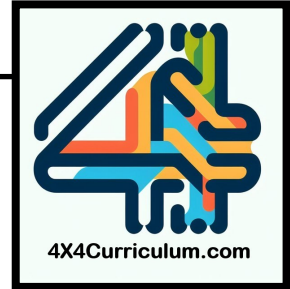
Song: Father Abraham Had Many (Kids) Sons

Introduce the song by saying that Ruth was a foreigner in Israel, but God included her in the family line of Abraham that led down to Jesus.

There are several versions of this song on YouTube for you to use in your class. Some have the lyrics and some have the motions.

In Exodus 3:6, God says to Moses, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” The family line from Abraham down to Jesus is important to God. Ruth





Candy Object Lesson

Topic: God created us beautifully different on the outside but all special to Him

Object: M&Ms Candy or Skittles

Bible Verses: Psalm 139:14, 1 John 4:9-16, 1 John 4:19

Key Takeaway: Ruth was a foreigner, but God wanted her in the family line that Jesus was born into. We should see all our different skin colors and tones as part of God's creativity and beauty while remembering we each are special to God and created to be filled with His love.

Hold up a clear jar filled with either M&Ms or Skittles. Ask students which of the colors is their favorite. Get several answers and then ask if "Jon's" choice of color is better than "Amy's". Ask does the yellow taste better than the green?

We know that although these candies are different colors on the outside, they are the same yummy sweetness on the inside.

God has created each of us unique in many ways too.

One way is that we look different on the outside. Have students compare the color of their arms. No matter what color people may call us, there are so many shades of every color that we're all different, unique and special!

We LOOK different in other ways too!!!:

- * Have those with brown eyes stand. Everyone sit.
- * Those with curly hair stand. Everyone sit.
- * Those with earlobes attached at the bottom stand. Everyone sit.
- * Those who can curl or roll their tongue stand. Everyone sit.
- * Those with dimples stand. Everyone sit.
- * Those who are left-handed stand. Everyone sit.
- * Those who have freckles stand. Everyone sit.
- * Those whose hairline on their forehead makes a point or widow's peak stand. Everyone sit.

There is no one exactly like you! You are unique & special!

Have students open their Bibles to the verse Psalm 139:14 –

"I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Your works are wonderful, I know that full



Color Page: Ruth and Boaz







Job

Lessons We Learn from Job

Let's explore some important lessons we can learn from the story of **Job**, a man who faced many challenges but remained faithful to God.

1. Don't Blame God for Your Misfortune: When bad things happen, it's natural to feel upset or confused. Job lost his family, possessions, and even his health. But instead of blaming God, he chose to trust Him. We can learn that even in tough times, God is still in control and can bring good out of difficult situations. Remember Romans 8:28: "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God."

2. Stay Faithful Even When Things Go Wrong: Job's life turned upside down, yet he never gave up on God. He worshipped and prayed, even when his friends and wife advised him to curse God. Job's unwavering faith teaches us that trusting God during hard times is essential. We can pray and seek His help, knowing that He cares for us.

3. True Friends Encourage and Support: Job's three friends tried to explain why he suffered, but their advice wasn't helpful. Instead of comforting him, they blamed him for his troubles. A lesson we can learn is: that real friends listen, encourage, and show kindness. Let's be true friends to others!

Remember: even when life feels tough, we can learn from Job's example. Trust God, stay faithful, and be a good friend to those around you.

Power Point

Stay faithful
even when things
go wrong.

MEMORY VERSE

Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God."

Object Lesson: Paper Brads

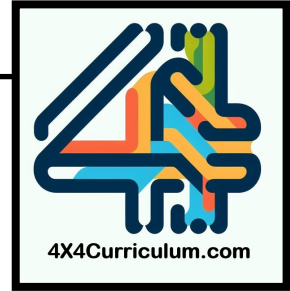
Items Needed: One box of brass paper brads, one box of tin paper brads, and one cow magnet (powerful magnet sold at farm supply stores), or any powerful magnet.

Procedure: Mix a pile of brass brads and some tin brads together. Demonstrate how the magnet picks up the tin brads, but it will not pick up the brass brads.

Lesson: In our lesson today Job was a man whose heart was true to God. Even though Satan accused him before God and even though Job suffered many losses, his heart was faithful. Our object lesson demonstrates how, just as all the brads look alike on the outside, the magnet "knows" what the brads are made of. It picks up the tin ones, but will not pick up the brass ones,

Point: God knows what we are made of. He knows the hearts of people. He can see who is faithful and who is not.



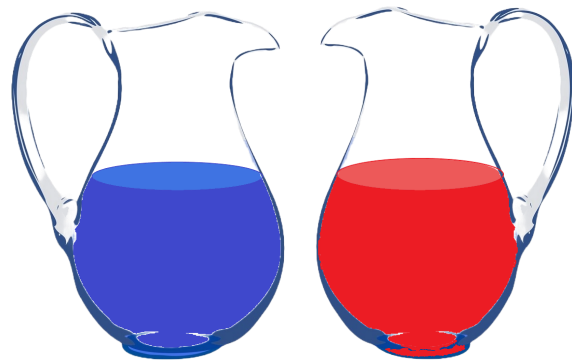


Object Lesson

Lesson: God looks beyond outward appearances and sees our hearts. (1 Samuel 16:7)

Materials Needed:

- 2 Water Pitchers
- Paper Cups
- Water
- Food coloring (blue and red)
- Sugar
- Salt



Taste Test:

- Begin by providing each student with four cups.
- Explain that they will be sampling different types of water.
- First, give everyone a taste of regular water (some tinted with blue food coloring) and some with red food coloring. Ask if the colors taste different (students may answer “yes”).
- Next, provide a sip of salt water and another cup of sugar water. Ask again if there’s a taste difference.
- Point out that the sugar and salt water appear essentially the same, just like the dyed waters look different. However, what’s inside the cup (sugar or salt) altered the flavor of the water, while changing the color did not keep it from being water.

Key Message: God doesn’t judge us based on our outward appearance; He looks at our hearts. Just as the water tasted different because of what was inside the cups, our true character matters more than what we look like.

Alternate Idea:

- Revisit the salt and sugar water principle with two visibly similar items, such as sour cream and vanilla frosting or peanut butter and maple frosting.
- Show the containers to the students and discuss how they look alike on the outside.
- Open the containers and reveal their contents. Even though they appear similar externally, what’s inside makes all the difference.

Encourage kids to focus on cultivating a heart that reflects love, kindness, and goodness, knowing that God sees beyond the surface and values what’s inside each of us.



Color Page: Job & 3 Friends





Jeremiah



Jeremiah

Jeremiah Obeyed God

Key Message: Jeremiah obeyed God and shared a message of impending judgment (*even though the message was not welcome and Jeremiah himself didn't escape the consequences of the message*). Life can be tough, but God promises that we can trust his methods and his will. Last week we learned about Job who obeyed God even when it was difficult. So, will we obey the Lord even when it's difficult?

Explain: that today we are talking about a prophet named Jeremiah who had a hard message to bring to God's people.

Read Jeremiah 1:1-10. Ask: "What was Jeremiah's job? (*he was a priest*) What were his concerns when God spoke to him? (*that he couldn't speak and he was too young*) How did God respond? (*that he must speak and not be afraid*)

Emphasize: that Jeremiah reacted very humanly, but God required that he step up boldly and accept his given calling.

Explain: that the same is true for all of us – when God calls us to do something, then we can trust that he will help and enable us. Also, our obedience to God's calling affects our families and communities.

Power Point

God promises
that we can trust
His methods and
His will.

MEMORY VERSE

Philippians 4:13, "I
can do everything
through Him who
gives me strength."

Dig Deeper

Jeremiah, the Brave Messenger

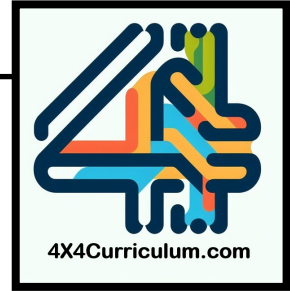
Let's talk about a man named **Jeremiah**. He wasn't a superhero with a cape, but he was a special kind of hero—a **prophet**. A prophet is someone who listens to God and tells people what God wants them to know.

Jeremiah lived in a place called **Judah** a long, long time ago. People there were not always nice. They didn't want to listen to God's words. But Jeremiah was brave. Even when his message was not welcome, he kept telling everyone what God said.

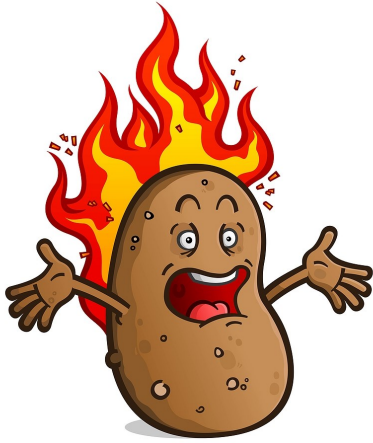
What can we learn from Jeremiah?

1. **Obedience:** Jeremiah obeyed God, even when it was hard. He didn't hide or run away. He stood tall and spoke the truth. We can learn to listen to our parents, teachers, and do what's right—even when it's tough.
2. **Courage:** Jeremiah faced mean kings, angry people, and even went to jail! But he didn't give up. He showed us that being brave means doing what's right, even when it's scary.
3. **Honesty:** Jeremiah's message was about judgment. He warned people that bad things would happen if they didn't change. Sometimes honesty is tough, but it's important to tell the truth kindly.
4. **Trust in God:** Jeremiah knew God loved him. Even when things got tough, he trusted God. We can learn to trust God too, even when life feels tricky.





Game: Hot Potato



Here are the simple steps:

Gather in a Circle: First, everyone stands (*or sits*) in a circle. (*You can play this game indoors or outdoors.*)

Find Your “Hot Potato”: Imagine you’re holding a **steaming hot potato** in your hands. You can use a real potato wrapped in foil, a soft ball, a beanbag, or any other small toy. The important thing is to pretend it’s hot!

Start the Music: Turn on some music. While the music plays, pass the “hot potato” around the circle. You can toss it gently to the person next to you.

Don’t Get Burned!: Here’s the tricky part! You want to pass the potato quickly to the person beside you. But be careful! If you’re holding the potato when the music stops, you’re out of the game. Imagine it’s too hot to hold, and you need to pass it fast!

Keep Passing: The game continues as long as the music plays. Keep passing the “hot potato” around. When the music finally stops, the person who’s holding the “hot potato” is out. They step out of the circle.

Last One Standing Wins: The game keeps going until only one person remains—the **last one standing**! That person is the winner!

Remember, it’s all about having fun and being quick on your feet. So, dance, laugh, and pass that “hot potato” as fast as you can!

Apply to the Lesson: Jeremiah was given a hard message for the people of Judah. It was like a “hot potato” that no one wanted to hold, not even Jeremiah.

Craft: Hard Places

MATERIALS: paper, pencils or pens, quarter-sized stones (*at least three per child*), clear party favor bags or plastic sandwich baggies, permanent markers (*preferably fine-tipped*).

Reiterate: to the class that even though Jeremiah was obedient to God, he experienced some hard things (such as being taken to Egypt and having to share bad news with God’s people).

Comment: We’ve all experienced some hard, heart-breaking, and frustrating things because we are God’s children. So, we’re going to make a craft to remind us that the Lord is greater than anything bad we could ever experience.

Give each child **at least three stones** and ask them to carefully write the name of something that has challenged their faith on each stone (*e.g. sadness, loss, death, insecurity*).



Where is the Prophet Jeremiah?





Joseph

Joseph's Life Story

Joseph was a young man who lived a long time ago. His dad's name was **Jacob**, and they lived in a place called **Canaan**. Joseph had eleven brothers, and he was the second youngest. Imagine that!

Now, Joseph's dad loved him a lot and gave him a special coat with many colors. It was like a rainbow wrapped around him! But guess what? Joseph's brothers felt a little jealous because of this colorful coat.

Joseph had some interesting dreams. In one dream, he saw bundles of grain bowing down to him. Another time, he dreamed about stars and the moon bowing to him. These dreams were like secret messages from **God**!

But things got tough for Joseph. His brothers were so jealous that they sold him as a slave! Joseph ended up in a faraway land called **Egypt**. But don't worry, because God had a plan. Even in hard times, Joseph stayed strong and trusted God.

In Egypt, Joseph worked for a powerful man named **Potiphar**. But then, something went wrong, and Joseph was thrown into prison! Yet, even there, he didn't lose hope. He helped others and kept believing in God's goodness.

Guess what? Joseph's dream gift came in handy! He could understand special dreams, and that skill helped him a lot. Eventually, he became a big leader in Egypt, second only to the king!

One day, Joseph's brothers came to Egypt because of a famine. They didn't recognize him, but Joseph knew them. Instead of being angry, he forgave them. He said, "God turned a bad situation into something good."

Power Point

God gives us
second chances
and works things
out for good.

MEMORY VERSE

Psalm 124:8, "Our help comes from the Lord. He is the Maker of heaven and earth." (NirV)

Applying the Lesson

Here are **four important lessons** that we can learn from Joseph's life story:

Colorful Coats and Kindness: Joseph's special coat with many colors made him appear different from his brothers and they were jealous of him. What if his brothers had been kind to him instead? Let this remind us that we should be kind to others, even if they're different from us.

Dreams and Patience: Joseph had interesting dreams, but he had to patiently wait for them to come true. Sometimes, we might have dreams or goals too. It's essential to be patient and keep believing, just like Joseph did.

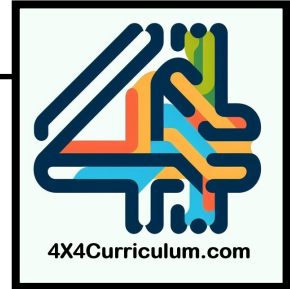
Forgiveness: When Joseph's brothers hurt him, he forgave them. Forgiveness means letting go of anger and choosing kindness instead. Even when things are tough, forgiving others can bring healing and peace.

Trusting God: Joseph but he never lost had a plan, even in from Joseph to trust seem difficult.



faced many challenges, hope. He trusted that God hard times. We can learn God, even when things





Game: 64 Pick Up



ITEMS NEEDED: A box of 64 crayons

INSTRUCTIONS: Choose one player for this game. Spread the 64 crayons from the box on a table. The player will have 60 seconds to try and put all the crayons back inside and close the box. If they can complete the task before time runs out, they win a prize.

VARIATION: Make this a race between two players to see who can refill a box of 24 to 64 crayons the fastest.

WHAT'S THE POINT? God can make something good out of our mistakes or the mistakes of others that hurt us, just as he did for Joseph.

DRIVE IT HOME:

The Bible tells us that God is faithful to forgive us when we confess our mistakes. God sent Jesus to die for our sins, and when we admit we are sinners and ask for forgiveness, God wipes our slate clean. That doesn't mean we won't have consequences for our mistakes, but He will forgive us.

God also works out everything for our good. Just as He did with Joseph. When others hurt us like Joseph's brothers, or when we make mistakes, God can still help us grow, teach us, and prepare us for new challenges down the road.

If we want God to work things out for the good, we need to first confess our sins. We need to tell God we are sorry, and we need to tell anyone we have wronged we are sorry as well. Once we've admitted our mistake, we need to also forgive ourselves.

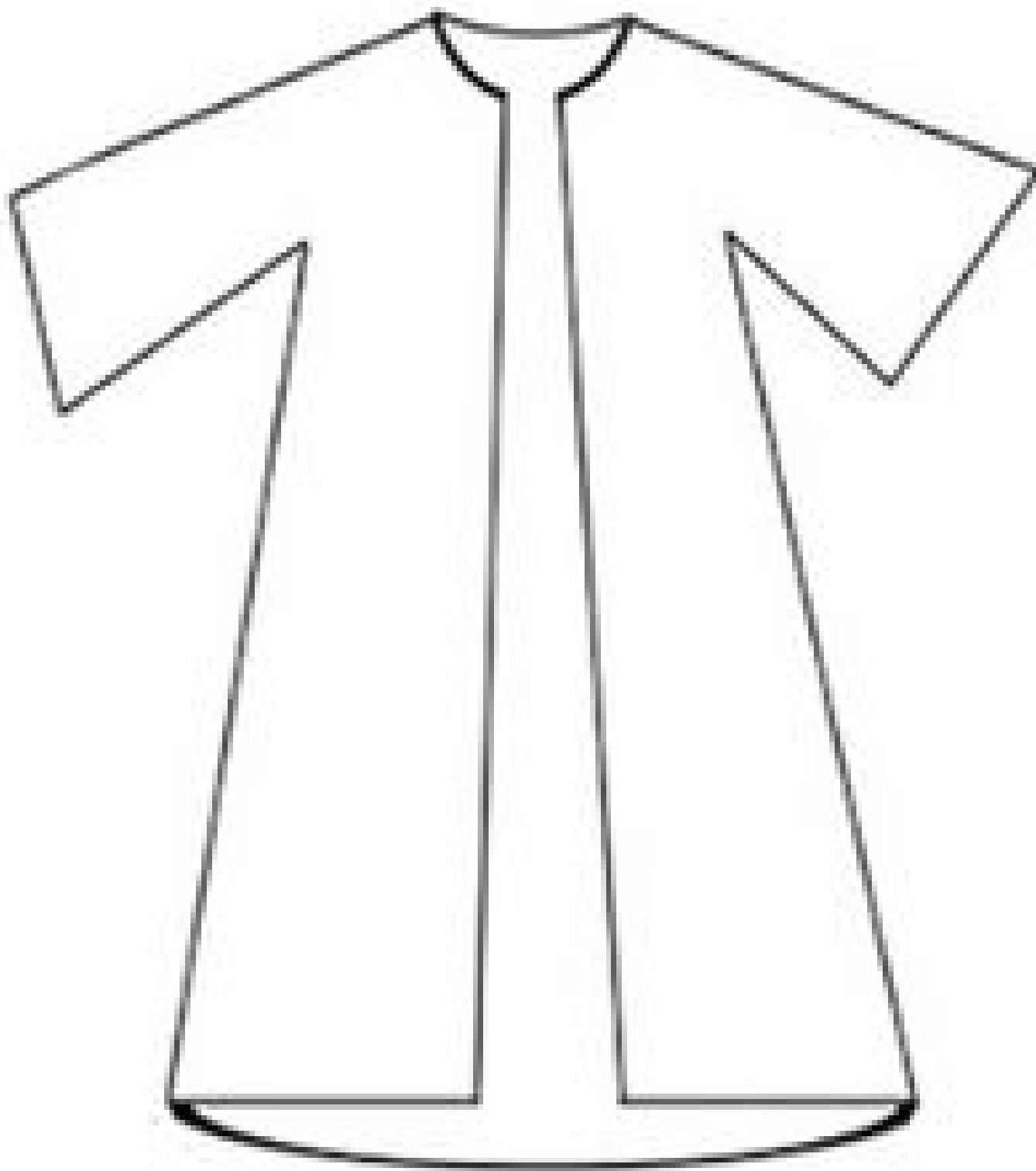
We need to remember that none of us are perfect. When we ask forgiveness and forgive ourselves, it is then that God can work things out. Like an artist who had

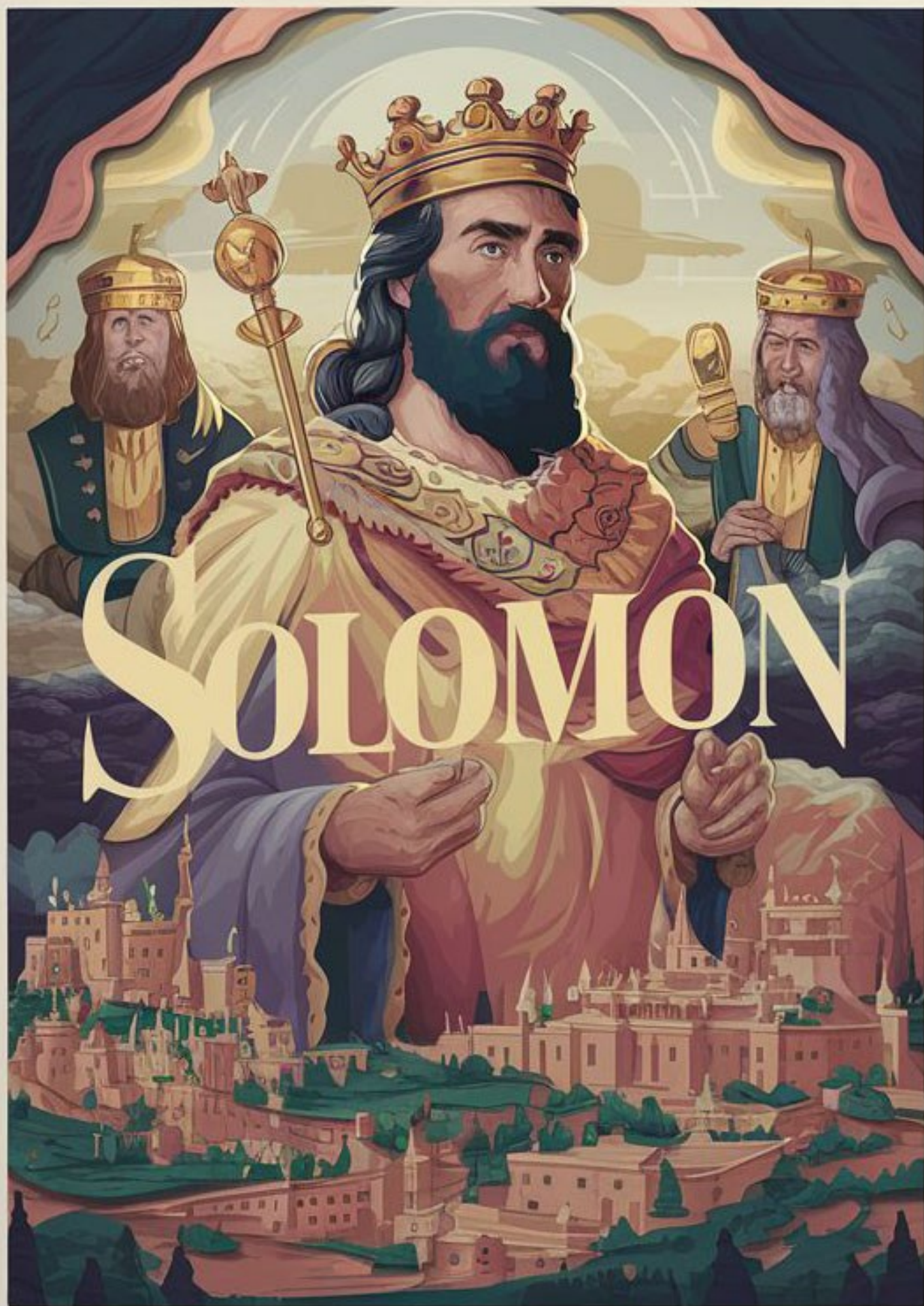


Joseph's Colorful Coat

NAME: _____

Use markers, crayons, or colored pencils to decorate the coat the way you think it might have looked.







Solomon

King Solomon's Life Story

King Solomon was an important king in a place called **Israel**. He was like a superhero because he had lots of **riches** (which means he had a ton of money and fancy things) and **wisdom** (which means he was very smart). His dad was another famous king named **David**, and his mom was a lady named **Bathsheba**.

Now, let's talk about the coolest thing King Solomon did: **building a special place called the First Holy Temple in Jerusalem**. It was like an extra fancy house for people to worship and pray to God. Imagine a fancy castle with golden walls and shiny decorations—that's what the temple was like! People from all around came to see it and be amazed. But, here's the twist: King Solomon wasn't perfect. He made some not-so-great choices, especially when it came to having too many wives (yikes!). Because of those choices, the kingdom got split up after him.

Apply the Lesson

What **lessons** we can learn from **King Solomon's life story**?

1. **Choose Wisdom:** Solomon was wise! He asked God for **wisdom** instead of fancy stuff like gold or a big castle. Wisdom means being really smart about making good choices. So, remember: it's cool to be smart and make wise decisions!
2. **Be Kind and Fair:** There's this famous story about two moms fighting over a baby. Solomon knew how to solve the problem. He said, "Let's cut the baby in half!" But wait, that's not what he meant! He wanted to see who cared more. The real mom said, "No way! Give the baby to her!" Solomon knew she was the true mom. So, be kind and fair like Solomon!
3. **Listen to God:** Solomon talked to God in dreams. Imagine having a chat with the Maker of heaven and earth! God asked, "What do you want?" Solomon didn't ask for a superpower or a pony. Nope! He asked for wisdom. So, listen to God and ask for good things!
4. **Don't Be Greedy:** Solomon had lots of wives (more than anyone should!). Sometimes he made not-so-great choices. Greed means wanting too much stuff. Solomon learned that having too much isn't always good. So, share your toys and be happy with what you have!
5. **Build Cool Stuff:** Solo-

mon built a beautiful tem-

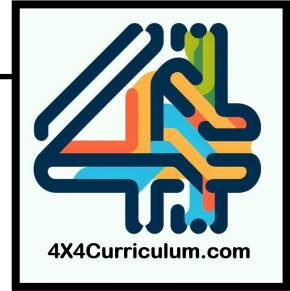
Power Point

True wisdom
comes from
God.

MEMORY VERSE

Proverbs 2:6, "For the Lord gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding."





Learning Activity: Wisdom/Lack Wisdom

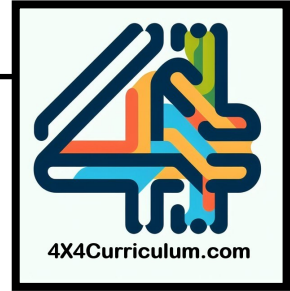
Read the following statements. Have the students make a W (by slanting both arms in the air) if the statement shows someone exercising wisdom. Have them cross their arms and shake their heads if the statement shows someone lacking wisdom (LW).

1. Even though Damien had been coming to church for a while, he realized that he had never invited Jesus to be his Lord and Savior. He decided to make a decision to follow God. (W)
2. Cara could never understand her Bible, so she quit trying to read it. (LW)
3. Ivette knew she was wrong when she stole her friend's money, so she returned it and asked for forgiveness. She never stole anything after that. (W)
4. Trent didn't understand his Bible either, but he kept trying. He read it in small parts and he asked questions when he didn't get it. He couldn't believe some of the stories that were in there! (W)
5. Derek wasn't prepared for the test, so he cheated. He knew it was wrong, but it got him good grades without having to work hard, so he kept doing it. (LW)
6. While Ji Yeong was at a friend's house, the friend started playing a video game that Ji Yeong's mom would not have liked. Since he knew it was wrong, he ended up leaving right away. (W)
7. Samantha loved being popular, wearing name brand clothes, and getting everyone's attention. The Bible, in her opinion, was old and didn't have anything good to say. Besides, her favorite TV shows told her how to act anyway. (LW)
8. Tracy had a lot of friends. Sometimes they didn't always do what was right. When she was around them, she made bad decisions too. She decided to hang out more with the friends that helped her follow God. (W)
9. Micah hated getting up for church in the mornings. His parents always made him get dressed up and go anyway. Whenever his teacher started talking about God's word, he always tuned her out and thought about playing hockey instead. (LW)

After a Vacation Bible School talk, Melody felt like she should pray to accept Jesus into her heart. But she was afraid about what other people would think, so she decided against it. She still doesn't know Jesus today. (LW)

Remember: True wisdom comes from God. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." - Proverbs 9:10





Object Lesson

ITEMS NEEDED: M&M's



Who can tell me what these candies are?
Choose one kid to answer. When they do, give them some candy. (Do this with each of the questions in this lesson.)

What colors do M&M's come in?

What kind of candy is inside the shells?

What other kinds of M&M's are there besides plain chocolate?

What you all just showed me is your **knowledge**. You know what M&M's are, what colors they come in, and what flavors. But

knowledge is not the same as wisdom. Let's try a few more questions.

Can you eat M&M's at every meal?

Should you eat just M&M's for lunch?

Why wouldn't you want to eat candy all the time?

Wisdom isn't knowing facts; it's knowing how to make wise choices. You can't eat candy all the time because it's not good for you. It's important to be wise, and to eat candy in moderation so we do not make ourselves unhealthy.

The wiser we are, the more good choices we make. There's no one who can make you wiser than the Lord. God is the source of all wisdom, and when we seek his wisdom in making decisions, he will never steer us in the wrong direction!

Game: Eggs Over Easy

ITEMS NEEDED: Three raw eggs, A spatula, A wooden spoon, A pair of tongs. Masking tape, A cone

INSTRUCTIONS: Mark a start/finish line on the floor. Set an orange cone 30 feet from the line.

Choose three players for this game. Let the first player pick a utensil, then the second, then the third. Tell players one and two to choose wisely, but don't tell them why. Give each contestant an egg. Contestants must race from the starting line around the cone and back to the starting line, carrying the egg with their utensil. If they drop their egg, they lose. They may not hold the egg with their hand; it must be handled with the spoon, spatula, or tongs.

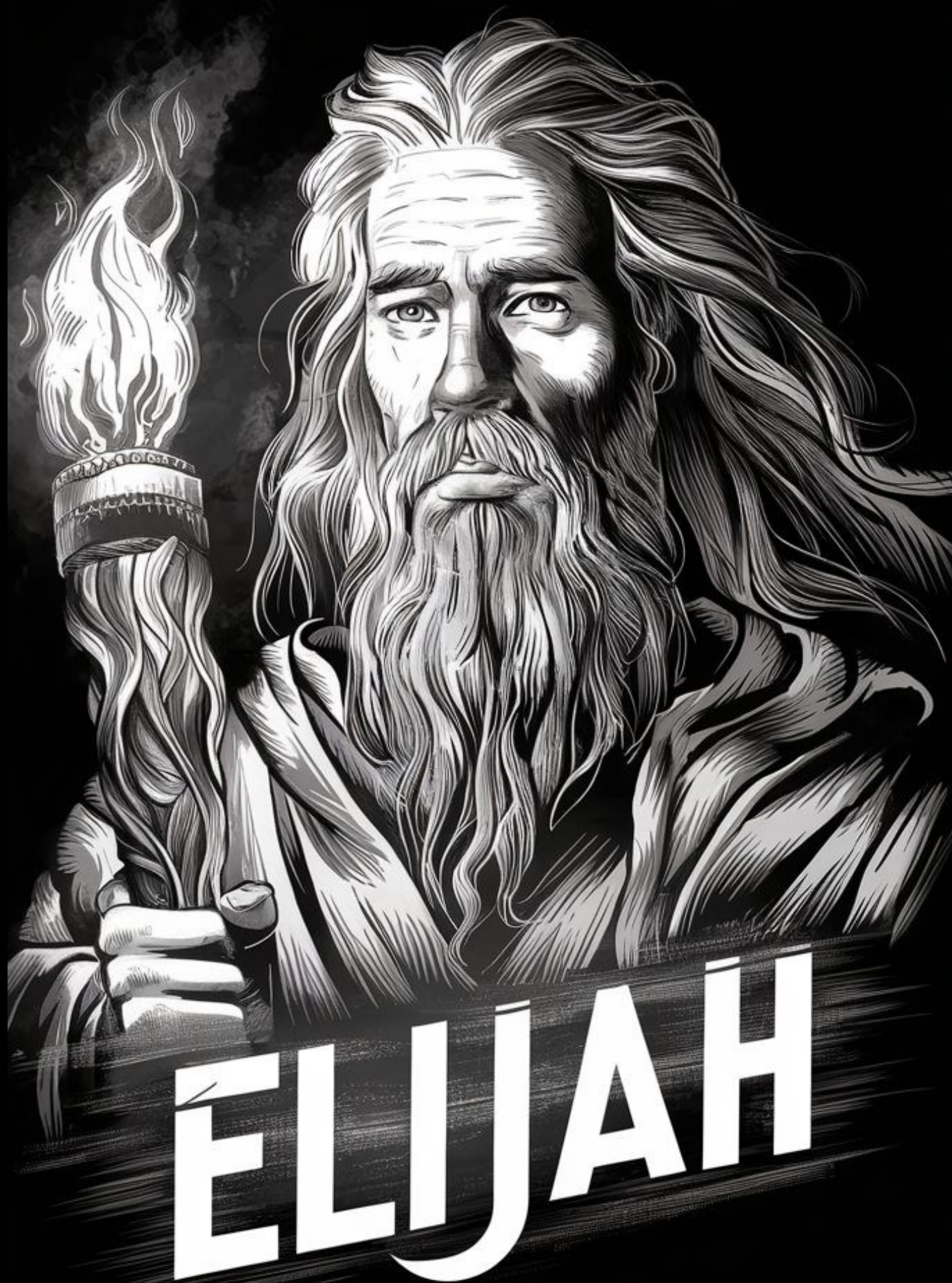
VARIATION: You can pick kitchen utensils that handle eggs more easily for younger kids, like tea spoons and ice cream scoops and spaghetti spoons.

WHAT'S THE POINT? Knowledge is knowing your kitchen utensil. Wisdom is using it the right way so you don't lose your egg!





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Elijah

Elijah and the Widow

READ 1 KINGS 17:7-24

Story: Elijah was a prophet. Elijah was in need of a place to stay and food to eat. God told him to find a poor widow who had almost nothing and ask her for food. Sounds foolish, I know, but it's God's direction.

The woman probably thought Elijah was crazy, asking her to sacrifice some of her food for him, but just as Elijah found God's directions to be good, the woman found them to be good as well. She kept on making food for her, her son, and Elijah, and her food never ran out.

Then tragedy struck. The woman's son dies, and the woman questions whether or not God really loves her. But God gives Elijah the power to raise the woman's son from the dead.

Had Elijah not obeyed God, he would have gone without food. Had the woman not obeyed Elijah, she'd have run out of food. She would also have lost her son forever. God blessed the prophet and the woman for following his directions and for showing us the way to live.

Power Point

God wants us to
follow His
direction.

MEMORY VERSE

Hebrews 3:4, "Every house is built by someone. But God is the builder of everything." (NirV)

Object Lesson: Custom Lego Set

Show a Custom Lego Set: Each of you are unique and special just like the pieces in this Lego set. If you want it to turn out like the picture on the box, you must follow the directions.



God has a plan for each and every one of you. You were designed to fulfill a plan that God has laid out for you. It's up to us to follow directions.

We can start following directions by following the Bible. God gave us the Bible to teach us who he is and how we should live. Through the Bible we learn to love others. We learn what sin is so we can avoid temptation. We learn how to live a life that pleases God.

We gain further direction when we pray. When we take our problems, our hopes, and our requests to God, he not only hears us, he answers us. God will open doors that need opening. He will close other doors to keep us from going the wrong way.





Review: True or False



Power Point:

- Elijah was a prophet of God. TRUE
- The widow only had enough food at home for one more meal. TRUE
- After making one last meal, the woman and her son died. FALSE
- The woman's son died, but Elijah brought him back to life. TRUE
- God wants us to follow directions, but he did not give us any written directions to follow. FALSE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Read 1 Kings 17:7-24

What did God tell Elijah to do?

How much food did the woman have left when Elijah came to her?

What did Elijah tell the woman to do?

What happened when the woman obeyed Elijah?

How did God bless Elijah and the woman for their obedience?

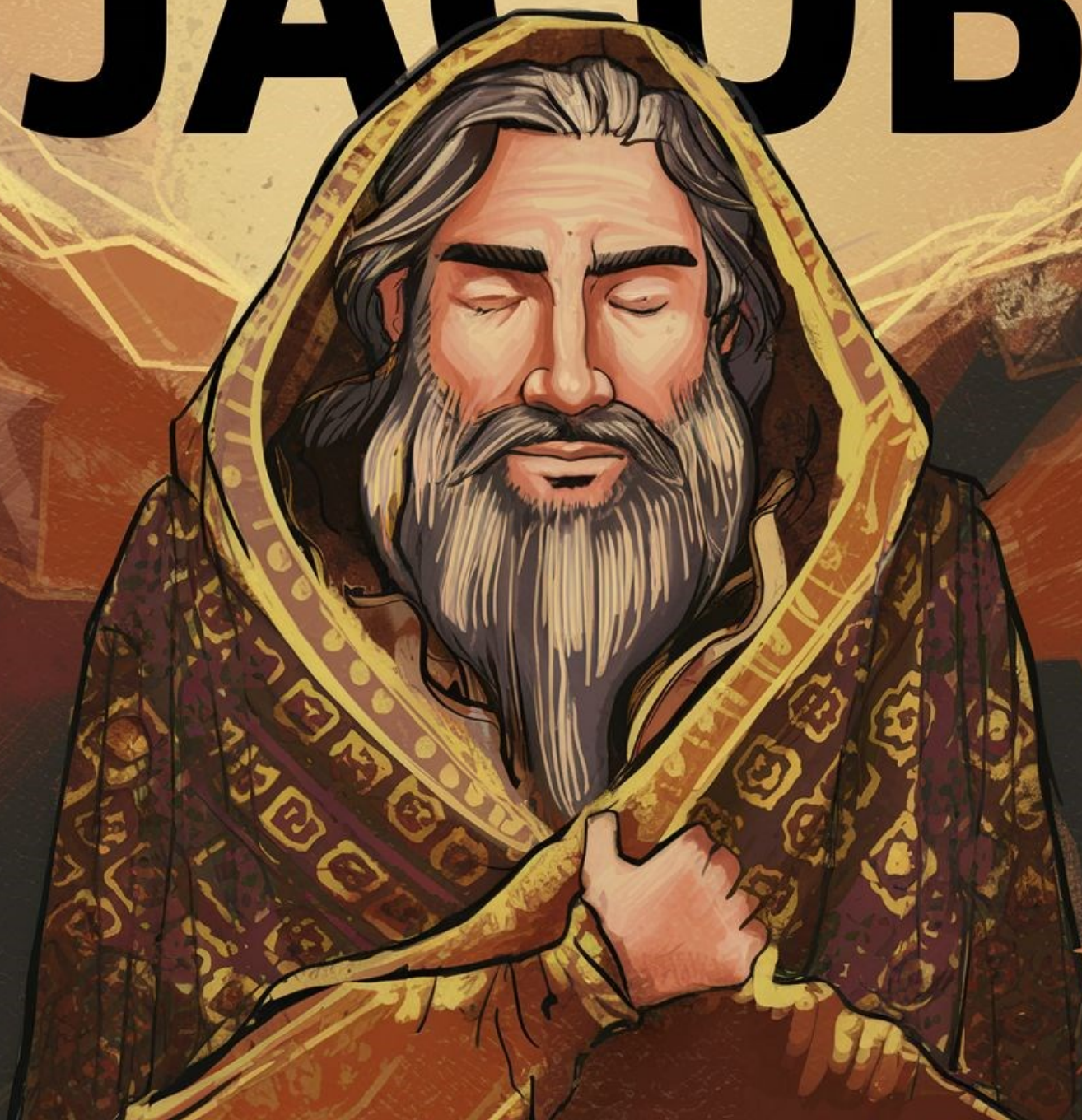


Elijah Is Fed by Ravens

1 Kings 17:2-6



JACOB



Paul
Rout



Jacob

Jacob was a Twin

Once upon a time, in the ancient land of Canaan, there lived a boy named **Jacob**. He was a twin, and his brother's name was **Esau**. Now, Jacob was a clever fellow, but sometimes he got into trouble because of his tricks.

One day, their mommy, **Rebekah**, asked God about her twin boys, and guess what? God told her that these two brothers would grow up to be the ancestors of two great nations. Jacob would lead the people of Israel, and Esau would lead the people of Edom.

Jacob's name means "one who follows on another's heels." It's because when he was born, he was holding onto Esau's heel! But Jacob wasn't just a heel-grabber; he was also a bit of a trickster. He once traded a bowl of soup for Esau's birthright, which was like a special blessing from their dad. And then, he even fooled their uncle Laban to get the best sheep and goats!

But here's the exciting part: Jacob wrestled with God! Imagine that—a wrestling match with the Almighty! God gave Jacob a new name, **Israel**, which means "he struggles with God." From then on, Jacob wasn't just a trickster; he became a hero. He learned that God's love could change him, and he became the father of the twelve tribes of Israel.

So, remember Jacob's story when you face challenges. Just like Jacob, we can all grow and change with God's help.

Power Point

With God, it is
never too late to
move in a new
direction.

MEMORY VERSE

Deuteronomy 32:3, "I
will proclaim the
name of the Lord.
Oh, praise the great-
ness of our
God." (NIV)

Apply the Lesson

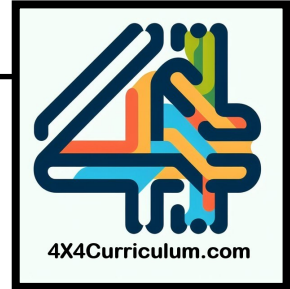
Say: The story of Jacob is really a summary of the whole Bible. The Bible tells us that mankind made a bad choice by rebelling against God. Adam and Eve sinned, and they put all of us on the wrong path, just as Jacob did when he deceived his father.

But rather than leave us to stay on the wrong road, God took action. He used men like Jacob to bring about his plan of salvation. Hundreds of years later, Jesus was born to one of Jacob's descendants. Jesus was God's Son, and he died for our sins. Because he died, he is able to forgive our sins, all the bad choices we make.

What's more, Jesus can set us on the right path. He can help us **make a U-turn** so that we can lead a life that honors and pleases him. We've all made bad choices, haven't we? When we make fun of someone, that's a bad choice. When we ignore or disobey our parents, that's a bad choice. When we lie, when we cheat, when we act selfishly, those are bad choices.

Many people get so down on themselves for their bad choices. They begin to think they are truly bad people, and they don't think anyone can forgive them. **Remember:** God loves us, in spite of our bad decisions. And even though we continue to make bad choices, he can use us to share his love with others. When we give our lives to Jesus, we are telling him, "I'm sorry. Please help me make this right." It's the first step in the right direction, the first step down the path God wants us to follow.





Object Lesson: Hot Wheels Racetrack

ITEMS NEEDED: Hot Wheels cars and racetrack

Pick a few kids from the group who love Hot Wheels. Let them pick cars, and then race them. See who can get his car to go the fastest and the farthest.

Then ask them to do a trick. I want to know if any of you Hot Wheels experts can do a trick. Who can make his car drive down the track and do a U-turn? Can anyone get his car to turn when it's not in his control?

You can't do it, can you? Sure, if you curve the track, you could do it, but without something to turn that car around, there's no turning back once it leaves your hand.

Some people feel that way about their life and the choices they make. They think they are stuck going one way and can never turn around.

Thankfully, we have help. God can step in. He can forgive us our sins and get us on the right track. Hot Wheels can make turns when we help them, whether we guide them by hand or lay out the track for them. Let's thank Jesus that he has a hand in our lives and the power to get us back on the right path when we go astray.



Game: U-Turn Relay

ITEMS NEEDED: Four orange cones, two trays, eight Solo cups

INSTRUCTIONS: Choose two teams of four. Each team will be given a tray with four cups on it. This is a relay race. Players will race from one cone to the next and then back, making a U-turn as they round the farthest cone from the start. If they drop any cups, they must stop and put them back on the tray before continuing. First team to complete the race wins.

VARIATION: To make it extra difficult on the older kids,



Jacob Wrestles With the Angel of God

Genesis 32



DANIEL





Daniel

Who Was Daniel?

Once upon a time, there was a man named **Daniel**. He lived a long time ago in a place called **Babylon**. Daniel was a good person who loved God very much. He was smart and kind.

One day, the king of Babylon asked his wise men to tell him a dream he had. But the wise men couldn't do it! Daniel prayed to God, and God showed him the dream. Daniel went to the king and told him the dream. The king was amazed and made Daniel an important person in his kingdom.

Daniel was also famous for not eating the king's fancy food. He ate simple things like fruits and vegetables. God blessed him for being faithful.

Daniel's friends were **Shadrach**, **Meshach**, and **Abednego**. They were thrown into a fiery furnace, but God protected them. Daniel prayed three times a day, no matter what. He loved God more than anything.

Apply the Lesson

Five important lessons we can learn from the life story of **Daniel** in the Bible:

1. Unshakeable Faith in God: Daniel showed us that having strong faith in God is essential. Even when he faced danger, he continued to pray and trust in God. We can learn to rely on God, no matter what happens in our lives.

2. Consistent Prayer: Daniel prayed three times a day, even when it was hard. His commitment to prayer teaches us that talking to God regularly is important. Just like Daniel, we can stay close to God through prayer, even when things get tough.

3. Integrity and Obedience: Daniel obeyed God, even when it was difficult. He didn't give in to what others wanted him to do. We can learn to make good choices and stay true to what we believe, just like Daniel did.

4. God's Protection: When Daniel was thrown into the lions' den, God protected him. We learn that God is always with us, even in scary situations. Trusting God brings comfort and strength, just like it did for Daniel.

5. Standing Up for What's
down to false gods. He stood
it was risky. We can learn to



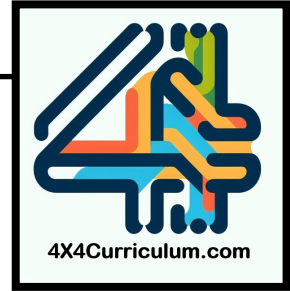
Right: Daniel didn't bow
up for his beliefs, even when
be brave and do what's right,

Power Point

Choose what will
bring glory to
God and honor
His name.

MEMORY VERSE

Daniel 1:8, "But
Daniel purposed in
his heart that he
would not defile
himself."



Discussion Questions



Read Daniel 1:1-21 (Daniel chooses to honor God)

Read the passage to the children as they follow along in their own Bible.

(A “eunuch” in this instance means an officer or steward who rules or is in charge of a lord’s household when he is absent.)

Discussion Questions:

1. Why did the servant want Daniel and his companions to eat the king's food? *(So they would be strong and healthy like the others.)*
2. Because he didn't want to eat or drink anything unclean, what did Daniel ask to be served instead? *(Vegetables and water.)*
3. How did Daniel prove he and his companions didn't need to eat the king's food? *(After a 10 day test, they were stronger and looked better than those who ate the king's food.)*
4. How was Daniel rewarded for having a strong reputation of one who honors God? *(He was given knowledge and wisdom and allowed to serve before the king.)*
5. "In Daniel's time", certain foods were considered unclean and forbidden. What kind of things do we have in our life today that might be considered unclean and forbidden? *(Answers will vary.)*

Game: Popcorn Throw

MATERIALS: Popcorn

DURATION: Approximately 8 minutes

WHAT YOU WILL DO:

First, divide the children equally and have them stand in two lines, facing each other, about 10 feet apart. Each child will need to be facing another child. The children will be tossing a piece of popcorn back and forth to the person across from them. If you have an odd number of children, the extra child can count the number of successful catches.

Give all the children in the first row, called "Row A", a piece of popcorn. Instruct the children that on your signal, they will toss the piece of popcorn 10 feet across the aisle to the person directly facing them in "Row B". Instruct the older children to use only one hand to toss or to catch the popcorn. Tell the kids that the popcorn in this activity represents our relationship with God. Give the signal and have the children toss the popcorn. Many of the tosses will fall short since the children are so far apart. Record the number of successful throws on a chalkboard or whiteboard.

Make sure each child in "Row B" has a piece of popcorn. Each child in "Row B" will take one-step towards "Row A." Then on your signal, have the children toss the popcorn again. Once again, record the number of successful throws on a chalkboard or whiteboard. Do this several more times, each time taking one-step closer until the two rows are together. Once together, the children can simply drop the popcorn into the hands of the other child, resulting in no misses.

Explain that our relationship with God is similar to what we just did. The further away from each other, the harder it was to catch the popcorn. Likewise, the further we are from God, the harder it is to have a relationship with God. On the other hand, the closer we are to God, the easier it will be to have a strong relationship with Him. How do we get close to God? We can get closer to God by reading the Bible, praying, and fasting.



Year 4—Quarter 2



Object Lesson: Cutting Corners

Lesson: *We should be careful to follow God's standards, so that we do not defile ourselves and ruin our reputation.*

PREPARATION:

Print out two copies of the treasure map. (See supplement page) Fold each map in half-length wise, and then fold the maps in half again. Fold the maps in such a way, so as the treasure chest is located in one of the corners. Make sure that you cut off enough of the corners so that the treasure chest is no longer on the map.

WHAT YOU WILL DO:

As you tell the story, you slowly clip off the four corners of one of the maps that will represent the dishonest salesman's product.

Story to Tell (Read):

Let's suppose two new salesmen were just hired by a company called Old World Treasure Maps. The salesmen's names were Bob and Fred. Initially both salesmen worked very hard. Both of them would arrive at work early and work late into the night. They were so dedicated that they ate lunch at their desks while they continued to work. Soon both Bob and Fred had many customers.

One night after getting home from work, Fred thought to himself, "Why am I knocking myself out at work? I have plenty of customers. I think I'll start taking it easy." The next day Fred was late for work. Fred starting taking more and more coffee breaks during the day and did not answer all his phone calls. Fred was getting lazy. *(Clip one corner off the folded map.)*

Soon Fred was taking long lunches and charging them to the company, stating that he was taking customers to lunch, when in fact this was true only half of the time. Fred was becoming dishonest. *(Clip another corner off the folded map.)*

The boss noticed that Fred's sales were steadily decreasing and mentioned that he was falling way behind the company's star salesperson, Bob. Fred began to sell his customer's cheaper products at a higher price to try to make it look like he was making a lot of money for the company. Fred began to cheat his customers. *(Clip another corner off the folded map.)*

Fred's evil plan did not work and he was still losing customers. The boss called Fred into his office and asked Fred why he was losing so many customers. Fred thought for a moment and then lied, "It's Bob's fault, he's stealing all my customers." The boss soon found out that Fred had lied to him and fired him on the spot. Fred had also become a liar. *(Clip off the last corner of the map. Then unfold both the treasure maps and hold them up, so all the kids can see them.)*

Which map would you rather buy, the map that is complete or the map that has many missing pieces? *(Allow for answers.)*

In our story today, we saw how easy it is to become defiled. In other words, lose or ruin our integrity and reputation. When we defile ourselves, we defile ourselves before men and God. As Christians, we should continually strive to follow God's laws and commandments. When we follow God we can rest assured that our reputations are safe.









David

Who Was King David?

King David was a **remarkable leader** in the **Bible**. He started as a **shepherd boy**, tending to sheep. But guess what? He became a **hero**!

One day, there was a **giant** named **Goliath** who scared everyone. But David, with his **sling and stone**, bravely defeated Goliath!

Later, David became a **king** of **Israel**. He made **Jerusalem** the capital city. David was **wise** and cared for his people. He even wrote **beautiful songs** called **Psalms** that we still sing today!

But, like all of us, David had **flaws**. He made mistakes, but we remember him for his **courage**, love for God, and inspiring music. King David's story teaches us about **bravery**, **forgiveness**, and

Power Point

God can choose a shepherd boy to be a king.

MEMORY VERSE

Psalm 150:6,
“Let everything
that has breath
praise the Lord.”

Apply the Lesson

Let's explore **five important lessons** from the life of **King David**:

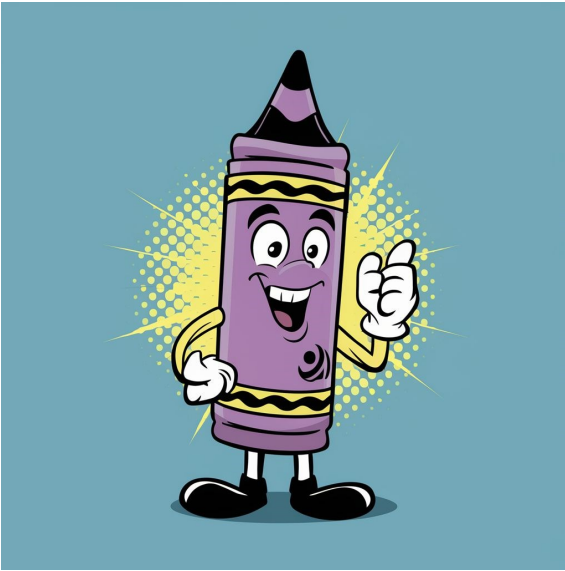
1. **Bravery and Trust in God**: When David faced the giant **Goliath**, he didn't run away. Instead, he trusted God and used a sling to defeat the giant. We can learn to be brave and trust God when we face big challenges.
2. **Obedience Matters**: David listened to God. Even when he was just a shepherd boy, he obeyed God's plan. We should try to obey our parents, teachers, and God too. Obedience is like following the rules in a game—it helps us win!
3. **Forgiveness and Second Chances**: David made mistakes, but he asked God for forgiveness. We all make mistakes, but we can learn from them and try to do better next time.
4. **Being a Good Leader**: David became a king. He cared for his people and made **Jerusalem** a special city. A good leader thinks about others and helps them. We can be leaders too, by being kind and helpful to our friends and family.
5. **Music and Worship**: David wrote beautiful songs called **Psalms**. They are like poems that praise God. We can sing, pray, and thank God just like David did. Music and worship connect us to God and make our hearts happy!





Object Lesson: Purple Crayon

ITEM NEEDED: Purple crayon



How many of you would consider purple to be your favorite color?

What kinds of things have you colored purple?

Purple is one of the brightest colors in the crayon box, but it's not a very common color out in the real world. You don't see politicians or business people wearing purple very often. You don't see too many sports teams wearing purple either. It's a very select group of people who like to wear the color purple.

Purple was always a favorite color of kings. Purple linen was very difficult to make in the ancient world, and that made it expensive. Purple stands out in a crowd, and if you could wear purple, it meant you were a very

rich, very important person.

David was just a boy when God anointed him king. The world saw a child, but God saw someone worthy to dress in purple. You may just be kids in the eyes of the world right now, but God sees something special in each one of you. You may not be kings and queens, but if you trust your heart to God the way David did, He will do great things through your lives.

GAME: STAND 'EM UP

ITEMS NEEDED: A box of 24 crayons

INSTRUCTIONS:

Choose one player for this game. The player must open a box of twenty-four crayons and stand all twenty-four on their flat end on a table. The player has sixty seconds to get all twenty-four crayons standing up. If he is able to complete the challenge in time, he wins a prize.

VARIATION:





Digging Deeper

READ 1 SAMUEL 16:1-13

MAIN POINT:



The people of Israel had asked God for a king, and God had chosen a man who turned out to be a disappointment. Israel was God's country. The people were God's chosen people, and the man who led Israel needed to be a man after God's own heart.

God knew that he needed to choose someone new, to start over. God sent his prophet Samuel to the house of Jesse to anoint the next king. Jesse and Samuel both assumed this new king would be one of the older sons. He would be tall and strong and handsome, just like Saul. But God looked at the heart of Jesse's sons, and he chose David.

David was just a boy. He had done nothing to show he was someone special. He hadn't even faced off with a certain giant yet. But God knew David was the one to wear purple. He had a plan for David, and the same God has a plan for each one of you.

DRIVE IT HOME:

Does that surprise you? Have you ever thought about what God might have planned for you? It's okay if you haven't. You're probably used to hearing things like, "Wait til you get older," and, "When you grow up." Adults don't often see the potential in children that's really there, but the God who made us knows exactly what's in our hearts. He has plans for every one of us, a plan that only you can fulfill.

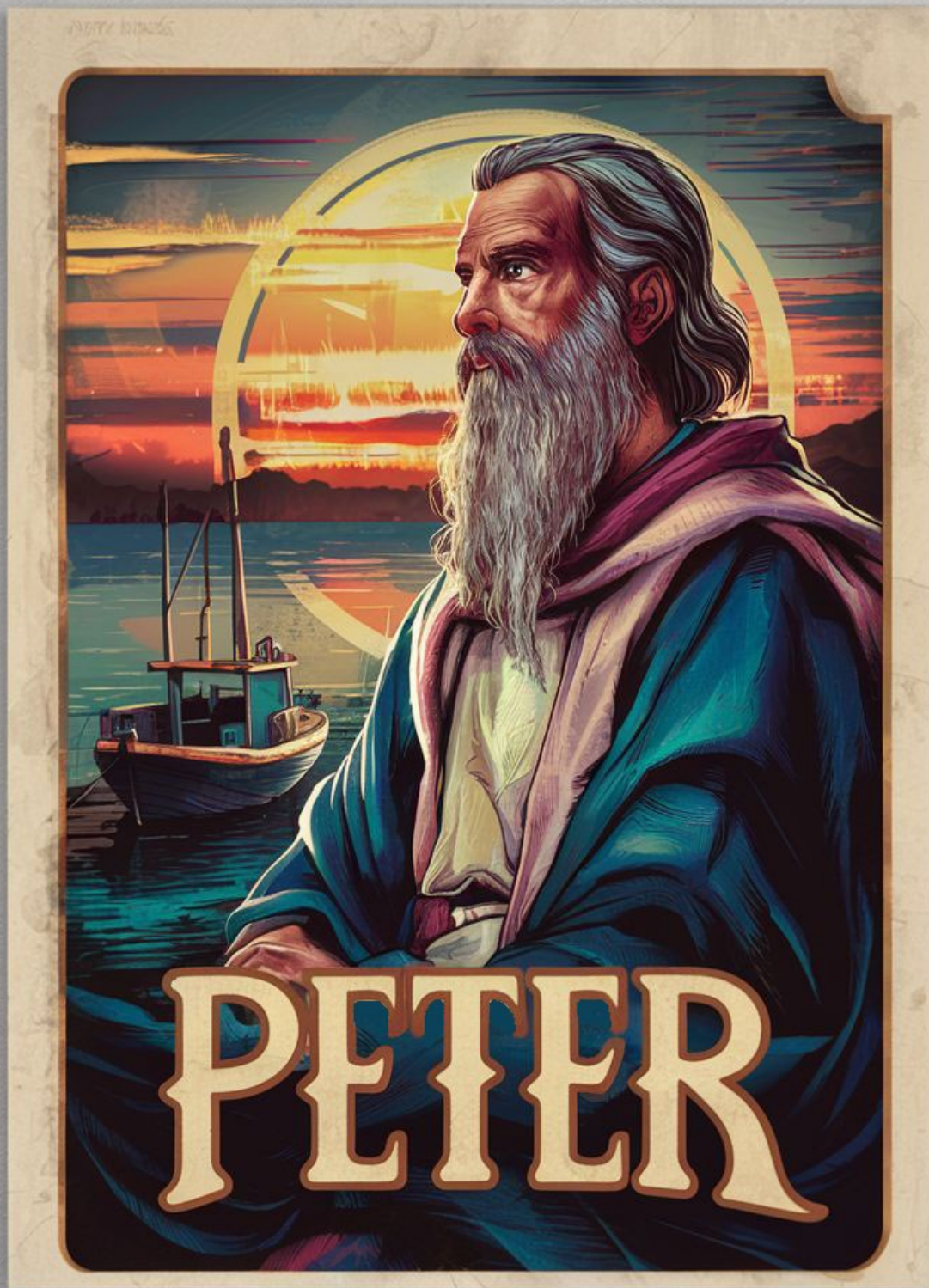
Now here's the real surprise. That plan may not begin when you graduate college. It might happen sooner. It might even begin right now while you're just kids. God isn't limited by age or education or maturity. God can inspire kids to do great things, the same as he can adults, and he can use us to point other people to Jesus.

David is just one example of someone young whom God called to a special purpose. God told young Joseph that he would save his family. God told Samson's and John the Baptist's parents that their sons would be special before they were even born. God's been planning for you just as long. The only question is, will you be ready to obey and follow Him?

David could have ignored Samuel. Saul did, and it cost him his throne. But David was a man after God's own heart, and he led a colorful life that honored God and grew His kingdom. As we start this series, I hope that all of you will commit your hearts to Jesus so you can see just how amazing God's plans can be.









Peter

Apostle Peter

Peter, one of Jesus' best buddies, was a **fisherman** who lived near a big lake called the **Sea of Galilee**. Imagine a place with sparkling blue water and boats bobbing up and down—that's where Peter worked! One day, his brother Andrew introduced him to Jesus. Peter thought Jesus was pretty amazing and decided to follow Him around.

Now, Peter was a bit like a **super-excited puppy**. He sometimes rushed into things without thinking. But Jesus saw something special in him. He even gave Peter a new name: **Cephas**, which means "The Rock." Peter was thrilled!

Peter had some wild adventures with Jesus. He walked on water once—yes, you read that right! Imagine stepping out of a boat onto the water like it's a sidewalk. Peter did it! He also saw Jesus change into a shining superhero during a special event called the **transfiguration**.

But Peter wasn't perfect. When Jesus needed him most, Peter got scared and said he didn't know Him. Imagine your best friend saying they don't know you! It hurt Jesus, but He forgave Peter.

After Jesus went back to heaven, Peter became a brave preacher. He told everyone about Jesus and even healed sick people. Eventually, Peter traveled to Rome, where he faced a tough time. They put him on a cross, but he asked to be hung upside down because he didn't feel worthy to die like Jesus did.

So, Peter's life was like a roller coaster—full of ups, downs, and twists. But he never stopped loving Jesus, and that's what makes his story so special!

Power Point

God's promises
can be trusted.

MEMORY VERSE

Isaiah 26:4, "Trust
in the Lord forever,
for the Lord God is
an everlasting
rock."

Apply the Lesson

Let's explore **five inspiring lessons** from the life of the Apostle Peter:

1. **Listen When Jesus Calls:** Peter was a fisherman, just like someone who loves catching fish at the lake. One day, Jesus walked by the water and said, "Come follow me!" Peter dropped his fishing net and followed Jesus. The lesson here is that when Jesus calls, we should listen and follow Him, just like Peter did!
2. **Be Friends with God:** Jesus didn't want Peter to be just a helper; He wanted to be Peter's friend. Peter spent time with Jesus, talked to Him, and learned from Him. We can also be close to God by praying and reading our Bible. God loves us and wants to be our friend too!
3. **God Can Use Anyone:** Peter wasn't perfect. Sometimes he made mistakes, like when he denied knowing Jesus. But Jesus forgave him and still used him to do great things. It shows that God can use anyone, no matter their flaws. So, don't worry if you're not perfect—God has a plan for you!
4. **Keep Trying, Even When You Fail:** Peter tried to walk on water like Jesus once. Imagine stepping out of a boat onto the water! But he got scared and sank. Still, he didn't give up. When things don't work out, remember Peter and keep trying. God is with you, even when you fail.
5. **Love Jesus No Matter What:** Peter loved Jesus a lot. Even when things got tough, he never stopped loving Him. When Peter preached about Jesus, thousands of people believed! So, the lesson is to love Jesus with all your heart, no matter what happens. He loves you too!

Remember, just like Peter, you can be brave, make mistakes, and love Jesus every day.





Game: Broom Relay

Can be played: Indoors or outdoors

Supplies: Two chairs and a broom



Set two chairs a broom's length apart and lay the broom across the chairs. Players will run toward the chairs, drop down and crawl under the broom without knocking it off, and then stand up and run to tag the next player in the relay. This race continues until every person on the relay team has taken a turn. The first team done wins.

Variations: Use a stick or pole if you do not have a broom. You also can use the rungs on the chair to lower the broom for the next round so that players have to do a belly crawl under the broom or pole.

Lesson: As we race under the broom and hurry to “tag” the next player, Peter was trusted to carry the Good News of Jesus to others, but had to face many obstacles along the way.

Classic Game: Follow the Leader

Jesus called Peter to quit his job as a fisherman and become a “fisher of men” or a leader. Kids love this classic game, “Follow the Leader.” Here is how it is played:

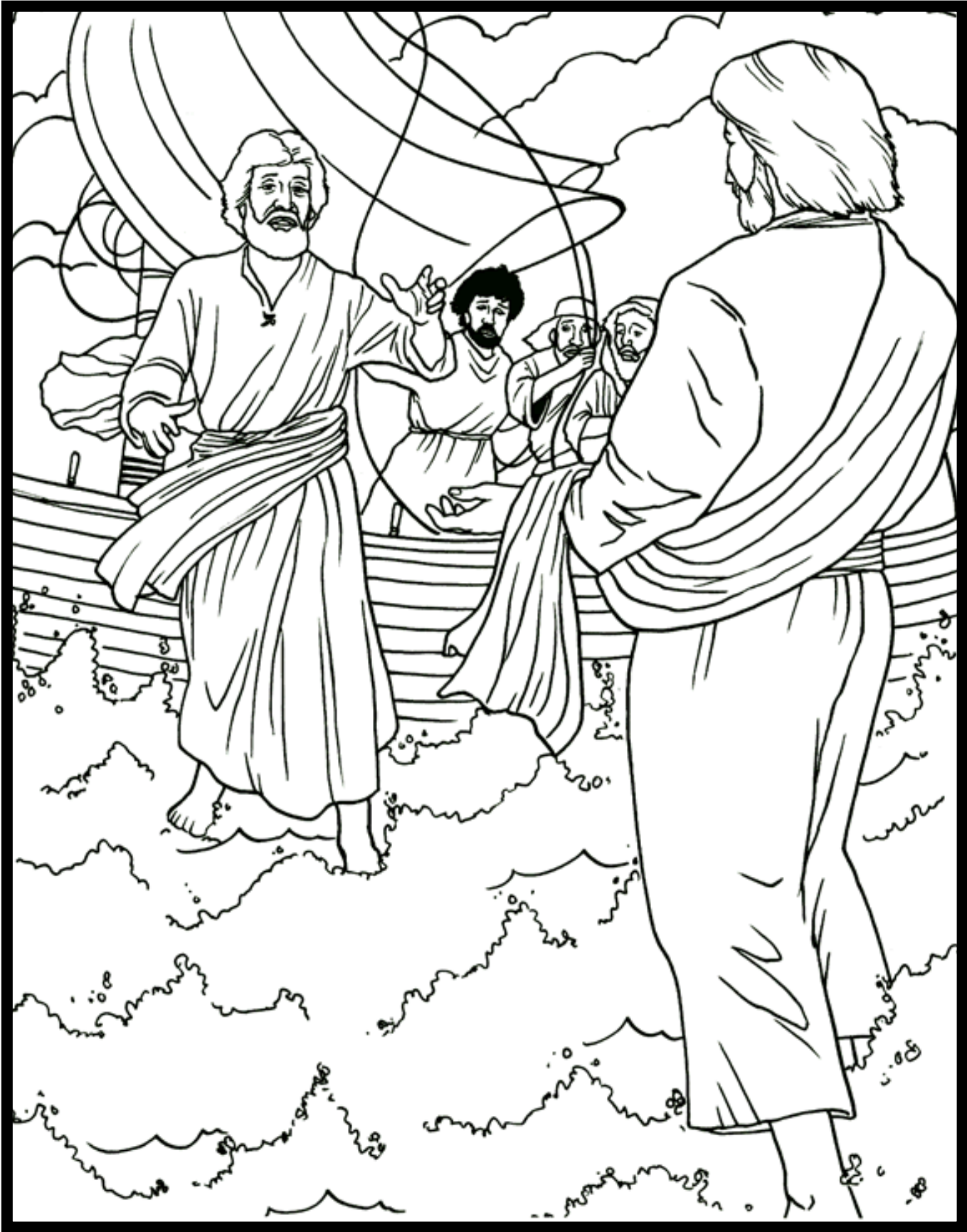
This is a simple and fun game. Have the kids line up single file. The leader (first kid in line) makes outrageous motions, etc. as he/she walks around the room. The kids behind must follow the lead of the person in front. For a competitive game, set up two lines and take players out as you notice them not following the leader.

Another Classic: Dodge Ball (Indoor Version)

There are many versions of dodge ball. Here is a great one for more confined spaces. Have the kids line up in a large circle. Designate a small circle/square inside. Put one group of kids in that area. Kids in the outer circle try to throw the balls (I advice you use foam balls or even beach balls) at the kids in the inner circle/square. Once a child is hit, they have to leave the game. Hits to the head to do not count. Once the first inside group is eliminated (or at set time intervals) put a new group of kids in the center circle.



Peter Walks on Water



PAUL





Paul

Apostle Paul

Apostle Paul, also known as **Saint Paul**, was a very important person in the history of **Christianity**. He lived a long time ago, around 2,000 years back.

1. **Start of His Journey:** Paul was born with the name **Saul** in a place that is now part of **Turkey**. He was Jewish and didn't like the followers of **Jesus**. He even wanted to punish anyone who believed in Jesus.
2. **Big Change:** One day, while traveling to **Damascus**, something magical happened. A bright light appeared, and Jesus spoke to Saul! After this, Saul became a believer in Jesus and changed his name to **Paul**.
3. **Missionary Work:** Paul traveled a lot and told people about Jesus. He helped create many **churches** in different places like **Asia Minor** and **Europe**. Because of his work, Christianity spread all over the world.
4. **Letters to Churches:** Paul wrote many letters to churches and Christians. These letters are now part of the **Bible**. They talk about Jesus, God, and how to live a good life.
5. **End of His Journey:** Paul went to **Jerusalem** and got arrested for bringing non-Jewish people into the **Temple**. He was sent to **Rome**, where he stayed for two years. We're not sure exactly how he died, but some believe he was beheaded by the emperor **Nero**.

Power Point

It's possible for God to change lives.

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 1:8, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...and surely I am with you always." (NIV)

Apply the Lesson

Let's explore **five important lessons** we can learn from the life of the **Apostle Paul**:

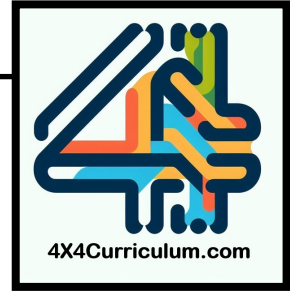
Never Give Up: Paul faced many challenges, like being put in jail and shipwrecked. But he never gave up on sharing the good news about Jesus. Even when things were tough, he kept going. So, remember, when you face difficulties, keep trying!

Be Kind to Others: Paul was once a mean person who didn't like Jesus' followers. But after meeting Jesus, he changed. He became kind and caring. We can learn from him to treat others with kindness, even if they're different from us.

Share Your Faith: Paul traveled to different places, telling people about Jesus. He wrote letters to churches too! You don't need to travel far, but you can share your faith with friends and family. Talk about Jesus and how much He loves us.

God's Love Is for Everyone: Paul taught that Jesus loves everyone, no matter who they are. He





Group Activity

ICEBREAKER: What country would you most like to travel to?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY: **Read:** Matthew 28:19-20 **Ask** the kids what they think the writer was trying to say when he wrote these words. Then ask them how this verse is connected to today's story about the Apostle Paul.

GAME/ACTIVITY: Ahead of time ask your pastor to tell you about a missionary family that your church supports. Tell your class about them and what country they serve in. On a world map see who can be the first to locate that country.

Then choose one child to be a “missionary.” Take them off to the side and tell them to whisper “Jesus loves you” into each of the other kids ears. Tell the other children that they are going to get a message from the missionary and that you will time them to see how long it takes for everyone to get the message.

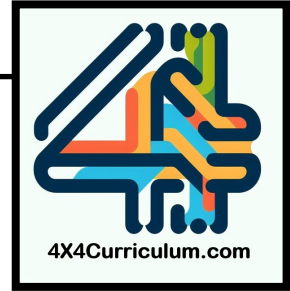
Then do it again, but the second time, tell the children receiving the message to go tell another kid as soon as they hear the message. See how much faster God's love spreads when we all share the Good News.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: Read Act 9:1-19.

1. Why was Saul on his way to Damascus?
2. Who did Saul meet on the road?
3. For how long was Saul blind?
4. Why was Ananias afraid to go to see Saul?
5. What happened when Ananias spoke to Saul?





Games

Some lessons have a related game, which is ideal. Often you must improvise your own games. Don't call it wasted time if the kids are making friends and learning to work together. Remember having a positive experience (aka fun) is one of the things kids need at church.

Here are three classic games that kids have enjoyed for years and still do:

Duck, Duck, Goose

Have the kids form a circle sitting on the floor. One child walks around the circle tapping each child on the head and reciting the word "Duck" as they do so. When they tap the child they wish to select, they say/yell "Goose." That child then has to get up and chase the child who selected them (the "tapper") around the circle. The tapper tries to get back to the spot vacated by the Goose before the Goose catches and tags them. The Goose becomes the tapper for the second round.

Keep Away

Have the kids stand in a circle. Select one, or a small group of kids, to be in the middle of the circle. The kids on the outside throw a ball to other kids in the circle trying to keep the kid(s) in the middle from intercepting the ball. If a child in the middle of the circle does get the ball, they trade places with whoever threw the ball.

Hot Potato

Have the kids stand/sit in a circle. They pass/throw an object (with a large enough group you can use more than one) around the circle as music plays. Whoever has the object when the music stops is out.

Object Lesson: Cleaning Supplies

We have come to realize how important it is to keep things clean, right? We make sure to wash our hands and sanitize surfaces, because we want to keep germs away. Well, I have several items here that you might use to clean. Let's see if you can identify them. What might I use this product for? *(Hold up different types of cleaning products, inviting students to describe their purposes. Examples could include hand soap, dish soap, laundry soap, sanitizer, or body wash.)*

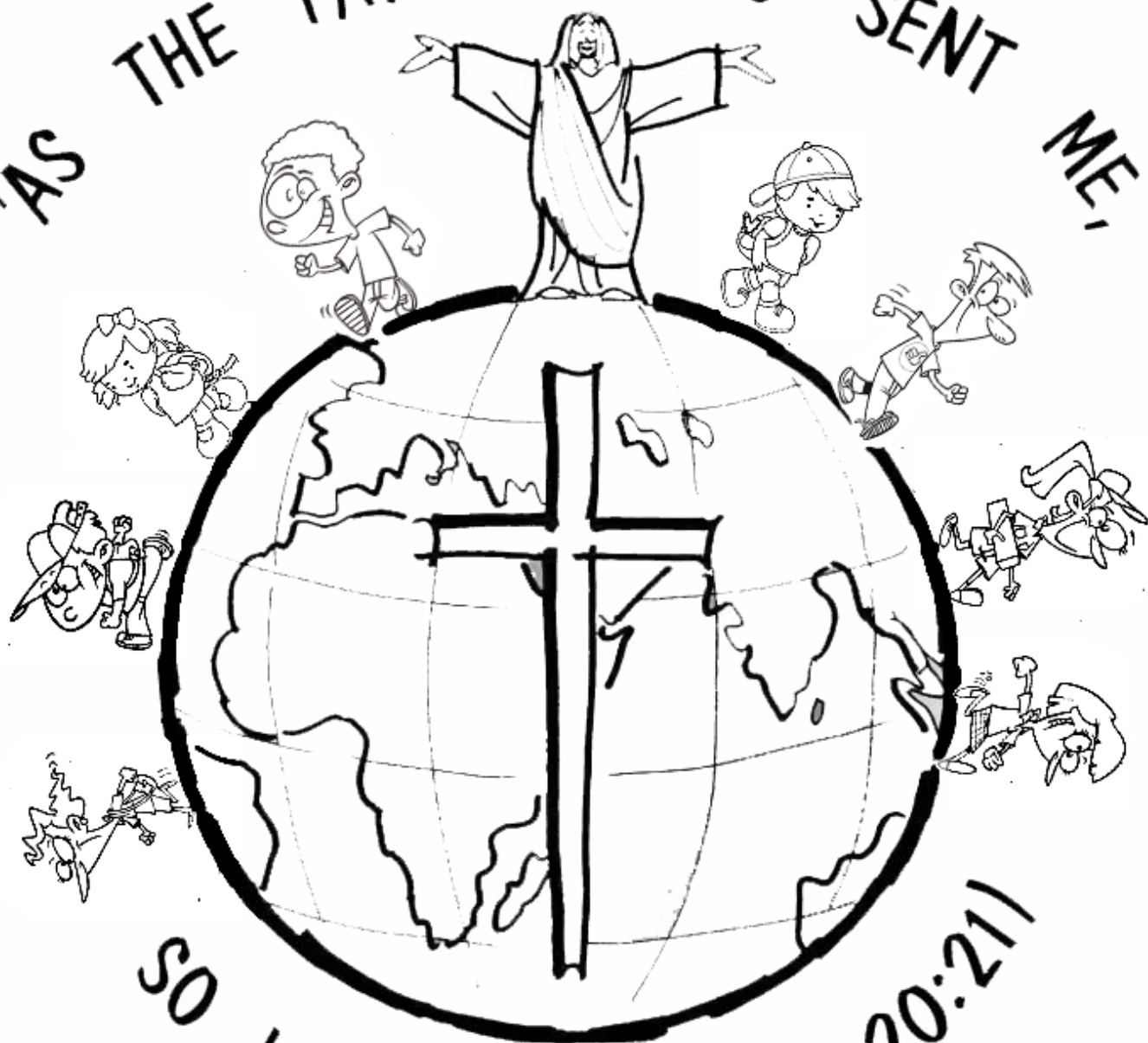
These cleaning supplies are great for getting us clean on the OUTSIDE. However, my question for you today is, "How do we get on the INSIDE?" (Teacher: Prepare your heart ahead of time by reading Mark 7:1-15.) **Say:** Jesus and his disciples were criticized by the Pharisees for eating without washing their hands and Jesus explained that it is what comes out of our INSIDE that is unclean. Jesus said that the attitudes of our hearts are more important than the words that we say or the rules that we have. Washing hands in just the right way wasn't going to truly impact how the Pharisees followed God. Jesus turned the criticism back onto the Pharisees by pointing out how they were so upset about the rules that they failed to consider the reason for the rules. They didn't follow God with their hearts.

Ask: How can Jesus make us clean inside? (Let kids answer.)

Say: Jesus gave Himself for us, so that even when we make mistakes and don't keep all of the rules just right, we have forgiveness. He cleanses us from our sinful thoughts and behaviors. He helps us to have faith and believe in that truth to give us new hope and peace.



"AS THE FATHER HAS SENT ME,"



SO I SEND YOU." (Jn 20:21)