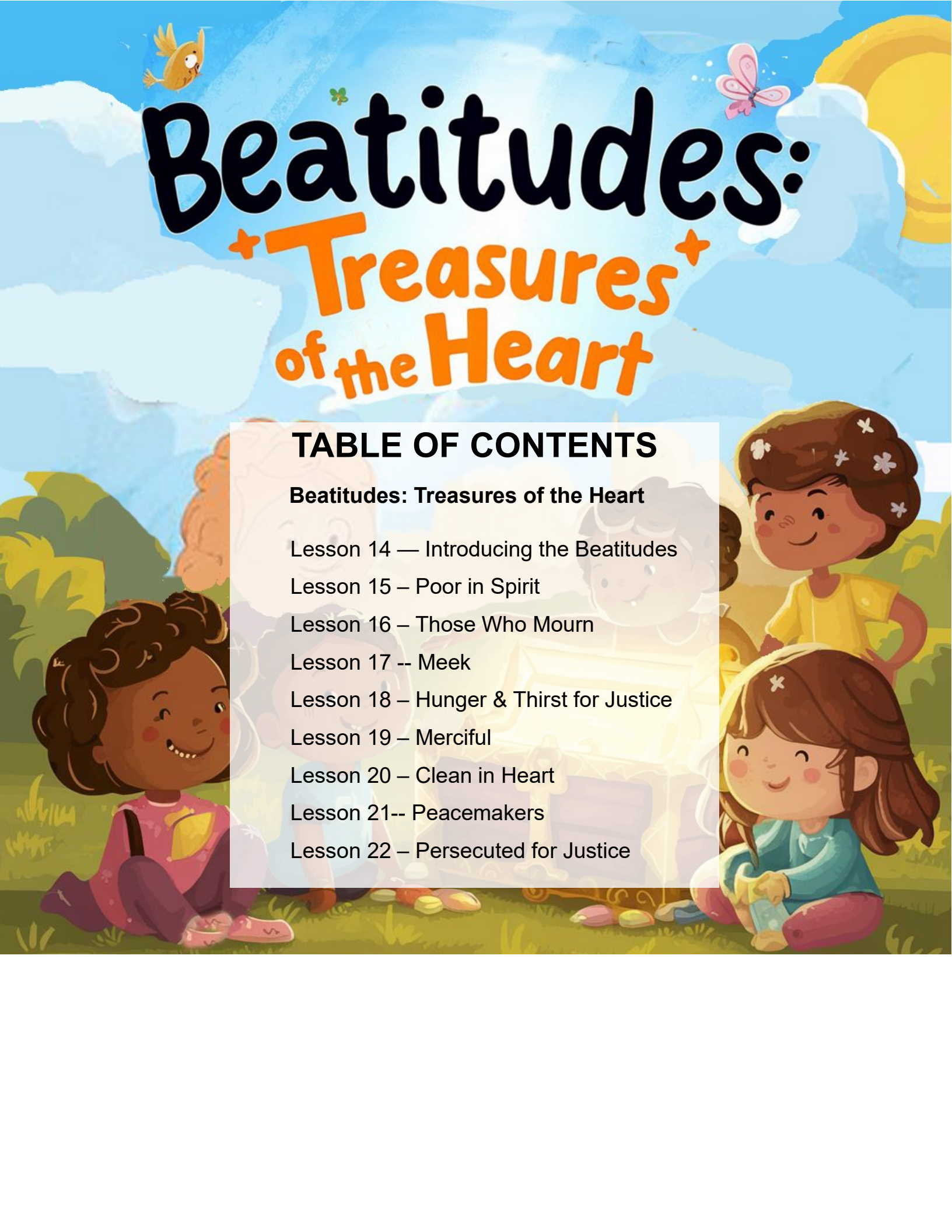


Beatitudes: + Treasures + of the Heart





Beatitudes: + Treasures + of the Heart

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Introducing the Beatitudes

Blessed Are the Losers?

In His first sermon Jesus promised that losers are the real winners when it comes to God's Kingdom.

Everyone wants to be blessed. We want to be blessed with money, with fame, with power, and with importance. The world teaches us that to get these things, we have to fight for them.

Many people in Jesus' time thought the same way. When Jesus taught the Beatitudes, He turned their understanding (and our understanding) of what it means to be blessed upside down!

The Beatitudes are a new attitude. They are a new way of looking at the world. If we live by the Beatitudes, we will be blessed!

The name "Beatitude" comes from the Latin phrase for being blessed. Each Beatitude is a statement about being blessed. People who are humble are blessed. People who mourn are blessed. People who are persecuted are blessed.

Power Point

How to Live
the Blessed
Life.

MEMORY VERSE

Ephesians 4:32, "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." (NIV)

The Beatitudes for Kids

- 1) "Happy are the humble kids, because they'll get to be in charge of everything one day!"
- 2) "Happy are the kids who feel sad, because they'll get lots of comforting hugs."
- 3) "Happy are the gentle kids, because they'll inherit the whole playground."
- 4) "Happy are the kids who always want to do what's right, because they'll be super full of good stuff."
- 5) "Happy are the kind kids, because they'll get kindness back."
- 6) "Happy are the kids with pure hearts, because they'll see really cool things."
- 7) "Happy are the peacemaker kids, because they'll be like superheroes."
- 8) "Happy are the kids who get picked on for doing the right thing, because they're part of God's special team!"





Object Lesson

ITEMS NEEDED:

A cereal box with a free toy inside

How many of you have convinced your Mom and Dad to buy you a box of cereal like this? You could have gone for the regular box of cereal, the brand you always get and the one you love the most. But what made you want to persuade them to buy this one instead?

Three words: Free. Toy. Inside.

This cereal box has a promise. If you buy this cereal, you're going to get a prize. It

could be one of several prizes, but make no mistake: buying this cereal will get you a prize.

The Beatitudes come with a prize of their own. They promise us the blessings that God

has reserved for those who follow him. It may not mean earthly riches and treasures,

and there's certainly no free toy in the Beatitudes, but they are blessings that will last for eternity.



Group Game

DUCK POND

ITEMS NEEDED:

A small tub of water

A number of rubber ducks (Amazon)

INSTRUCTIONS:

Mark one duck with the word "WIN" on the bottom. Set all the ducks afloat in the water.

Choose four kids to come up on stage. Each one will take a turn trying to find the duck

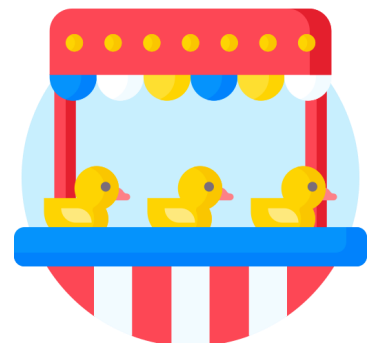
that says, "Win." The kid who finds the word "WIN" gets a prize.

VARIATION:

Instead of just giving prizes to individual kids, make it a team competition. Each kid gets one chance to pull a duck from the water. Players from each team will take turns pulling a duck. The first team to pull the "WIN" duck wins.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

If we follow the Beatitudes, we will be blessed.





Craft: “Beatitude Bouquet”

You will need *(craft supplies)*



Construction paper or notecards

Scissors

Paper bags or baskets

Markers or crayons

Decorating materials

Glue or tape

Popsicle sticks

Procedure :

Cut the paper into geometric shapes or flower shapes.

Decorate the paper with the words of the beatitudes, adding a picture for reminder reference. If space allows, write the starting line on one side of the paper (“Blessed Are”), and the conclusion on the other side.

Glue or tape the papers onto popsicle sticks.

Decorate a basket, bucket, or bag to hold the beatitudes; or merely cut slits into a large sheet of construction paper.

Place the “flowers” into the container. Use as a reminder of the words of Jesus!



The Poor in Spirit





The Poor in Spirit

Getting' Empty



Present various items to the class which are empty such as an empty bag of cookies, an empty piggy bank or an empty jewelry box. Create anticipation for the kids to see what's inside. Ask, "What do you expect to find?"

Who wants to be the first to open one of them up?" (*You might allow a few kids to come open them.*) "Did you expect to find them empty? Is being empty ever a good thing?" Most often we like things to be filled up. When we go on a trip, we want our gas tanks filled. When we're hungry we want our stomachs filled. When we get a box of candy, we want candy in it. In fact, I can't think of anything that when empty, it's a good thing!

When Jesus began his teaching, he said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." What do you think of when you hear of someone being poor? (*Discuss*) What do you think Jesus means? (*Poor in spirit means spiritually broke.*)

Poor in Spirit

Digging Deeper: Being poor in spirit is realizing that we have nothing without Jesus. Our "spiritual piggy bank" is empty! We also have nothing we can give to Jesus. It is understanding that we are completely sinful and do wrong, and that nothing in and of ourselves choose to follow God's ways.

The Bible says it like this, "There is no one who does right, not even one person" (Romans 3:10). And, "All of our ways of doing right are like dirty rags in God's sight" (Isaiah 64:6). In other words, being poor in spirit means we are completely lost and empty without Jesus. It is knowing that we do not deserve God's approval, his salvation or his forgiveness. It is also realizing we can't work our way to earning God's favor and approval either.

Another way to say Jesus' statement could be said like this, "Blessed, favored or approved by God, are the empty ones, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." So, being empty, or poor in spirit, is exactly what Jesus wants from us. He wants us to see our emptiness, and then ask him to fill us with himself.

So What? The immediate benefit of being poor in Spirit is being forgiven of our sins, and then being filled with God's Spirit and love--we be-



Power Point

We need a Savior

MEMORY VERSE

Matthew 5:3,
"Blessed are the
poor in spirit, for
theirs is the kingdom
of heaven."



Intro Activity

Begging for Change

As you're starting class, have someone dressed as a poor person come into your class and ask for money. It's best to disguise this person as much as



possible so that kids don't recognize them. They can also carry a sign that says they're poor and hungry.

Have a jar of pennies or some other money on hand and tell students that you were going to use the pennies to buy snacks for the Sunday School class but that they can give the person the money if they want to.

If students opt to give the poor person the money, give it to them and let them leave. If students want to keep the money for snacks, tell the poor person that you don't have any money for them and ask them to leave.

Group Game: Freeze Tag

Divide students into two teams. Team A is It. They try to tag the members of the other team. When a member of Team B is tagged, they freeze in place. They can then call out for one of their team members to tag and unfreeze them. A teammate cannot "unfreeze" a frozen member unless that person calls out for help.

The round ends when Team A tags all of the members on Team B or after 5 minutes. Afterward, switch roles and play again.

Remind students that we're poor in spirit and can't save ourselves. We need to ask Jesus to save us, just like they need to call on their teammates to unfreeze them.





Bible Story: The Prodigal Son

Once upon a time, there was a kind father who had two sons. The younger son was a bit wild and restless. One day, he asked his dad for his share of the family's money. Imagine that! He wanted it right away, even before his father passed away.



So, with his pockets full of coins, the young son set off on an adventure. He traveled far, far away to a distant land. There, he spent his money on fancy clothes, delicious food, and wild parties. But soon, his pockets were empty, and a big famine hit the land. Uh-oh!

Desperate and hungry, the young man took a job feeding pigs. Can you believe it? Pigs! And he was so hungry that he even wished he could eat the pig food. Yuck!

Then, one day, he came to his senses. He thought about his dad back home. "I've made a big mistake," he said to himself. "I'll go back and ask for forgiveness."

Guess what? His dad had been waiting and watching for him all along. When the young son returned, his father ran to him, hugged him tight, and threw a big party!

But wait, there was another son—the older one. He was working in the fields when he heard the music and laughter. "What's going on?" he wondered.

When he found out about the party for his younger brother, he got grumpy. "Why celebrate him? I've been good all along!" he complained.

But the father explained, "My dear son, your brother was lost, but now he's found. Let's celebrate!"



Those who Mourn





Blessed Are those Who Mourn

Those Who Mourn

Ask students: Who can tell me about a time when you were sad?

Who can tell me about a time when someone you knew died?

(Talk about someone you knew who died and tell how sad it made you feel. Show them a picture of the person.)

Read Matthew 5:4, “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.”

What is mourning? (It’s being sad when someone dies.)

Jesus said that people who mourn will be comforted. What does it mean to be comforted? *(It means someone will help you feel better when you’re sad.)*

Who can make us feel better when we’re sad?

God says that He will make us feel better because we will see all the people who believe in Jesus in Heaven. And one, day, when Jesus comes back, He will bring all the people who believe in Him back to life. We’ll all live together forever.

(Read Revelation 21:3-4.)

When Jesus comes to make everything new, God will wipe the tears away from our eyes and nothing sad will ever happen again. No one will ever die again or get hurt or get sick. Everything will be perfect, and we will live with God and everyone who died forever.

Craft: Letters

Power Point

Jesus comforts
us when we
mourn.

MEMORY VERSE

Matthew 5:4,
“Blessed are those
who mourn, for they
will be comforted.”

Intro Game: Who’s Missing?

For this game you will be asking a student to guess who is missing. Have the child hide their eyes and take another child out of the room or into a hiding place. Ask the first student to open their eyes and try to guess who is missing. Keep the game going as long as you want by choosing another student to hide their eyes while a different child hides.

Alternative: You can choose to have a tray of objects or have objects around the room. Have all the students hide their eyes. Take one of the objects or put one in your pocket or out of the room. Have students open their eyes and try to guess what object is missing.

Say: When people die, we feel like they’re missing. Fortunately, those people will only be away for a short while. When we die, God will take us to Heaven, and we will see those people again. Then, when Jesus comes back to earth, He’ll bring all of us back with Him and we’ll all live forever Him.





Activity

Letters to Heaven:

Give students writing and drawing supplies and ask them to write a letter or draw a picture for someone who has died. It can be about how they're excited to see that person again one day.

If any of your students haven't lost someone, they can write to Jesus about how they're excited to see Him.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we thank You that death is not the end for us. You will take us to Heaven so that we can all live together with You. Help us stay hopeful for that day and not to be too sad when someone dies because we know that we'll see them again. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Mourn Over Our Sins

More Teaching Ideas:

There is no sadness as deep as the sadness felt when someone you love dies. That is the kind of sadness Jesus means when he says "blessed are those who mourn." He means the kind of grieving that makes your heart and your stomach hurt. What are we grieving over, though? The kind of grief Jesus is referring to in this passage is not the kind of mourning felt when someone dies, necessarily. Jesus means we are blessed when we mourn over our sins. And the Bible says that when we live in sin, when we choose to do what we want all the time instead of what God wants, we are dead in our sins.

Mourning over our sins will make us turn away from them and instead turn to God. When we repent and turn away from our sins and toward God, he saves us! God forgives us of all our sins and makes us right with him. 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

"See? Mourning is a good thing! When we mourn over our sins, we repent, and when we repent, we get salvation. That is why mourning is a blessing. When we mourn over our sins, God gives us the comfort of salvation, the comfort of getting to spend all of forever with him."

One last thing: When you have a birthday party, what do you do with the cake? Do you take it into a corner and eat it all by yourself? Of course not! Birthday cake is so good, that you just have to share it with all your friends, so they can enjoy it too! That is kind of what God is telling us to do with his comfort. When you mourn and turn to God, he gives you comfort. God makes you feel better. When we see others mourning, it is our job as people who love God to share his wonderful comfort with others. Can you think of any ways to do that?





Bible Story

Title: “Lazarus Wakes Up!”



Once upon a time, in a little village called Bethany, there lived a man named Lazarus. He was a good friend of Jesus. Now, Lazarus got very sick, and his sisters, Mary and Martha, were worried. They sent a message to Jesus, asking for help.

Jesus heard about Lazarus and decided to visit. When He arrived, Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four whole days! The tomb was like a dark, quiet cave with a big stone covering the entrance.

Martha met Jesus and said, “Lord, if only You had come sooner, my brother wouldn’t have died.” But Jesus comforted her.

He said, “Martha, if you believe, you will see God’s glory.”

Together, they went to the tomb. Jesus stood in front of it and said, “Lazarus, come out!” And guess what? **Lazarus came out!** He was still wrapped in his burial clothes, but he was alive! Everyone gasped in amazement.

Jesus told them to unwrap Lazarus and set him free. Mary and Martha hugged their brother, tears of joy streaming down their faces. Lazarus was alive again, all because of Jesus’s love and power.

And from that day on, people knew that Jesus was not just a regular man. He was the **resurrection and the life**. And Lazarus? Well, he had the most incredible story



The Meek





Year 4—Quarter 2

Blessed Are the Meek

Strength Under Control

Sailors would use the word meek to describe a gentle breeze. Farmers would use the word meek to describe a wild animal, like a horse, that had been trained to submit to and follow the farmer's lead.

Both these definitions describe **strength under control**. The sailor harnesses the power of the wind using his sails, so his boat can move. The farmer trains a wild horse so they can be used for farm work, like plowing fields and riding.

The wind doesn't become weak when the sailor uses it to sail, and neither does the horse become weak when he does farm work or when people ride him.

The power of the wind and the power of the horse are used, not lost. So when Jesus says Christians are meek, he is not saying they are weak. He is saying they submit to God's will and they let God lead their lives. Meek people trust in the Lord because they know that God's ways are best. (On the board, write TRUST GOD.)

Power Point

Be self-controlled and not a “show-off”

MEMORY VERSE

Matthew 5:5,
“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”

Small Group: Dig Deeper

Let's take a look at part of Psalm 37. Chances are, Jesus may have been thinking about this very passage as he taught today's Beatitude. Follow along as I read Psalm 37:5-11.

“Commit your way to the Lord;

trust in him and he will do this:

⁶He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn,
your vindication like the noonday sun.

⁷Be still before the Lord

and wait patiently for him;

do not fret when people succeed in their ways,

when they carry out their wicked schemes.

⁸Refrain from anger and turn from wrath;

do not fret—it leads only to evil.

⁹For those who are evil will be destroyed,

but those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land.

¹⁰A little while, and the wicked will be no more;

though you look for them, they will not be found.

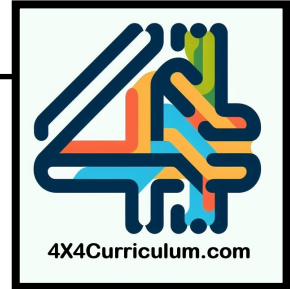
¹¹But the meek will inherit the land.

This passage paints a pretty good picture of what it means to be meek. We see in verse 5 that the meek person commits his way to the Lord and trusts in him. Sometimes it can be easy to think that we know best and that we can manage things all by ourselves. But that's a ME attitude, not a BEE attitude!

Meek people trust that God knows best, and they follow him. (Write FOLLOW GOD on the board.) What does verse 7 tell us meek people do? (Allow a student to answer.) Verse 7 tells us to be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him. The patience this passage is talking about refers to patiently waiting for the Lord to deal with people.

Matthew 5:5 says that when we are meek, we will inherit the earth! So what does that mean? Romans 8:17 helps clear it up. It says, “Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.” This is saying that when we are children of the Lord, when we are meek, we get the same things as Jesus.





Game: M&M Move

Gentle movements illustrate our lesson on meekness and are the key to this game. There are several variations to this game. Choose what works best for your group. In every variation, the goal is to move M&M candies from one bowl to another by sucking through a straw and getting the M&M to stick to the end of the straw. When they stop sucking, the candy will fall. If they move too abruptly, the candy will fall. Any candies that fall onto the floor or table are trash and don't count for any points.

First variation: Give everyone their own small pack of M&Ms. The first kid to move all their candies from one bowl (or cup) to another wins.

Stop Watch: You can also see how many M&Ms each kid can transfer in one minute.

Team Relay: The first team to get all their candies from one bowl to another wins.

Roll a Die: Have all children form a circle facing in. The first player gets as many M&Ms out of a big bowl and into their own bowl as they can, while the player to their left rolls a die. Once the player rolling the die rolls a 1, (or even number, or whatever you choose,) the first player stops taking M&Ms and passes the bowl to the player on their left. Play continues until everyone gets some M&Ms. *(This is not a good variation for a mixed age group, as younger kids may become upset when they can't get as many M&Ms as the older kids.)*

If you want to **avoid candy**, make little bees out of cardstock or construction paper. *(Two inches across should be good. If they are too big, the kids won't be able to hold onto them with the straw.)* Put all the paper bees in a stack or in a bowl, and the kids have to try to move the bees from one place to another by sucking on the end of a straw and getting the bee to stick to the other end.

What's the Point? God's not impressed by the loudest or the proudest. Matthew 5:5 says, "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth." A lot of times, when we're really good at something we want to make sure that everyone knows about it. Being meek doesn't mean that we should be weak, but that we should be self-controlled and not "show-offs."

Family Time Questions:

Parents: We learned about Jesus saying, "Blessed are the meek." Discuss these questions with your child:

- What's the difference between being meek and being weak?
- Can you give an example of Jesus being meek?
- What's something that you're good at?
- How can you show meekness?





Storytime

Title: “Wildrose the Brave Horse”

Once upon a time, in a cozy little farm nestled among rolling hills, there lived a wild horse named Wildrose. Wildrose had a shimmering coat the color of caramel, and her eyes sparkled like the night sky. She loved to gallop freely across the meadows, her hooves kicking up dust and dreams.

Now, nearby in the same village, there was a kind farmer named Carlos. He had a daughter named Amber, who dreamed of riding a horse. But not just any horse—a spirited one! Amber’s eyes would widen as she listened to tales of brave steeds and daring adventures.

One sunny morning, Carlos spotted Wildrose grazing near the creek. Her mane danced in the breeze, and her spirit seemed as untamed as the wind. Carlos knew that this horse could be the answer to Amber’s dreams.

He approached Wildrose slowly, speaking in gentle tones. “Hello, beautiful,” he said. “Would you like to be my daughter’s friend? She longs for a horse to ride.”



Wildrose snorted, unsure of this farmer’s intentions. But something in Carlos’ eyes made her pause. Maybe, just maybe, she could trust him.

Day by day, Carlos spent time with Wildrose. He brushed her coat until it gleamed, whispered secrets into her velvety ears, and shared juicy apples. Wildrose began to see that not all humans were scary.

One evening, after months of making friends with Wildrose, she let Carlos place a saddle on her back. Amber climbed onto Wildrose’s back, her heart racing.

“Go, Wildrose!” Amber urged. And with a leap, they were off—hooves pounding, wind whistling. Wildrose carried Amber across fields and streams, their bond growing stronger with every stride.



Ideas for using this coloring page: Have small pictures of bees cut out for the children to glue to the globe. Or, let them put fingerprints all over the globe using a stamp pad, and then draw wings on each thumbprint to make bees. (Have wipes ready for finger cleanup)



Blessed are the meek,
For they will
Inherit the earth.

HUNGER FOR JUSTICE





Year 4—Quarter 2

Hunger for Justice

Hunger & Thirst

Ask, How many of you have ever been hungry?

What does it feel like when you're hungry?

What do you want to do when you're hungry?

Everybody act like you're really, really hungry.

Now, everybody act like you're really, really thirsty.

(Read Matthew 5:6.)

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."

What is righteousness? *(Doing the doing right thing, being right with God.)*

What do you think it means to be hungry and thirsty for righteousness?

It means that you really want to do the right thing. You really want to be right with God. You want it so bad that it's like you're hungry for it or thirsty.

Power Point

Do the right
thing. Be right
with God.

MEMORY VERSE

Matthew 5:6,
"Blessed are those
who hunger and
thirst for righteous-
ness, for they will be
filled."

Lesson Introduction Game

Let's play a quick game.

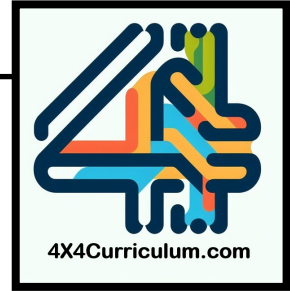
Everybody stand up right where you are. Now if you did NOT eat breakfast this morning, sit down. If you had cereal for breakfast, sit down. If you had eggs for breakfast, sit down. *(Keep naming breakfast foods until only a couple of kids are left standing. When you get to that point, say.)*

Now if you had cardboard for breakfast, sit down. *(No one will sit.)* If you had water from your dog's water bowl, sit down. Why aren't you all sitting down? What did you have for breakfast? *(Allow the standing students to answer, and then have them sit down.)*

So did anyone have cardboard or dog water for breakfast? No one? Why not? *(Allow students to answer.)* I've never been hungry for cardboard or dog's water! When we eat breakfast, we want to eat good things that fill us up. Today's beatitude promises to fill us up with good things. Who wants to read today's beatitude for me? *(Allow a student to read Matthew 5:6.)* "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."

We know what it means to be hungry and to be thirsty when it comes to our bodies. Our tummies start to growl, our mouths get dry; we may get a little grumpy. Those are signs that we need to eat and drink something to take care of our bodies. But Jesus isn't talking about being physically hungry and thirsty. He's talking about being spiritually hungry and thirsty. When our hearts are hungry and thirsty, we need to fill them with the righteousness of God.





Story: Daniel in the Lion's Den

As an example of someone who lived a righteous life, tell the story of Daniel in the Lion's Den:

Once upon a time, in a faraway land, there lived a man named Daniel. He was a kind and faithful person who loved to pray to God every day. But there were some jealous people who didn't like Daniel. They tricked the king into making a rule: for thirty days, nobody could pray to any god or person except the king.

Daniel didn't stop praying, even though he knew it was against the rule. He opened his windows, faced Jerusalem, and talked to God three times a day. The jealous people caught him praying and told the king. The king was sad because he liked Daniel, but he had to follow the rule. So, he put Daniel into a dark den filled with hungry lions.



That night, something amazing happened! God sent an angel to protect Daniel. The lions didn't hurt him at all. When the morning came, the king rushed to the den. He was relieved to find Daniel safe and sound. The king realized that Daniel's God was powerful and special.

From that day on, Daniel became even more famous, and people knew about his strong faith. The story of Daniel in the lion's den teaches us to be brave, trust in God, and stand up for what we believe, no matter what. The end.

Group Games

When you need a game that is fun, easy, and requires nothing but your kids:

Gotcha: This is a quick and fun game that is easier to show than tell. Everyone stands in a circle facing inward. Everyone holds their right-hand palm up towards the person on their right. Everyone then forms their left hand into a pointing finger and places it pointing down into the palm of the person on their left's hand. This can be quite challenging the first time. The leader then calls "1, 2, 3!" and on three, each person needs to grab the pointing finger of the person on their right while snatching away their own left hand from being grabbed. This game sounds odd but it creates lots of laughs. It's also a great mix of concentration and action.

The 60 second game

This is a great game for settling a group down. Ask everyone to stand up and put their hands behind their back. Tell them they need to silently guess how long one minute is and sit down when they think it's up. You do need a clock or watch so you can tell when the time is up. This game can be adjusted to a shorter period for younger children, but I've been surprised how well it works even with a Kindergarten group.

Would you rather?

This can be played on the spur of the moment; with options you've prepared or with options suggested by the children. The children are presented with a choice and move to one side of the room or the other to cast their vote. For example, "Would you rather grow wings and fly or be able to walk through walls?" Silly options are especially fun: "Would you rather have jelly legs or sausage arms?"



THE MERCIFUL





Blessed Are the Merciful

Where Does Mercy Come From?

Today's Beatitude is "blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy." Mercy is a very important topic, and a word you hear a whole lot around the church. So today we are going to ask, where does mercy come from? How can I become merciful? What is mercy? (*Write these questions on the board.*)

We get mercy when we are humble before God and when we want to be forgiven of our sins. Please understand that we can't earn God's mercy, though. It isn't something we can buy by being good or going to church or saying the right things. Mercy is a gift from God.

Let's look at it this way. If you are outside playing on a hot summer day, you will probably get pretty thirsty. Your mom will know that you are thirsty, but she isn't going to chase you down, sit on you and force you to drink water. She will offer you a drink, but she will not **MAKE** you drink the water, even though she knows it's what you really need. She also isn't going to make you beg for water or do one hundred jumping jacks before giving you a drink. All you have to do is ask, and your mom will give you the water you need. Only what you need though, if you ask for remote control cars when you need food, you won't get anything. God's mercy is like that. He knows we really need his mercy to live healthy, happy and full lives, but He will never **FORCE** his mercy on us. He also does not make us beg or work for mercy. All we have to do is ask for it. So now we have answered our first question, "where does mercy come from?" Mercy comes from God. (*Write "free gift from God" on the board next to the question "Where does mercy come from?"*)

We ask for mercy after we realize we need it, when we realize we are sinners who deserve to be punished for all the wrong we do. We become humble, broken over our sins, and we don't fight back when people wrong us, and we thirst for a right life with God. Basically, we see all the Beatitudes we have studied so far fall into place in our lives. That's when we become merciful. People who show mercy are the ones who are broken before the Lord.

Game: Mercy Tag

Clear a large space in your room (*or take the kids outside*). Mark off the boundaries of this game of tag. You have two people who are "it" in this timed game of tag. One is "Mean" and one is "Mercy." It may help to have Mean wear a hat or scarf of one color and Mercy another color. When you say go, everyone starts running around like crazy within the boundaries of the game. If Mean tags you, you must freeze. Mercy will come and unfreeze you. It is important that you keep moving unless you are tagged, so Mercy doesn't try to unfreeze you when you are just standing around for no reason! Play continues for two minutes, then you see who came out on top, Mercy or Mean. How many kids were frozen by Meanness? How many were set free by Mercy? Choose new "its" and continue play for as long as you have time. If too many people are getting tagged and staying frozen, have two kids be Mercy. If Mercy is unfreezing kids too fast, have two people be Mean. (*If you would like, have the kids pretend to be bees. Mean stings and Mercy heals.*)

Say: Mercy is not receiving from God something unpleasant that we deserve.

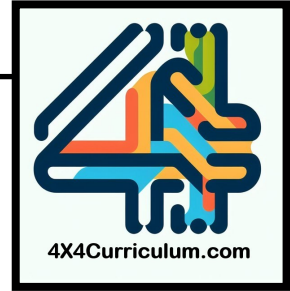


Power Point

People who
show mercy
are the ones
who are broken
before God.

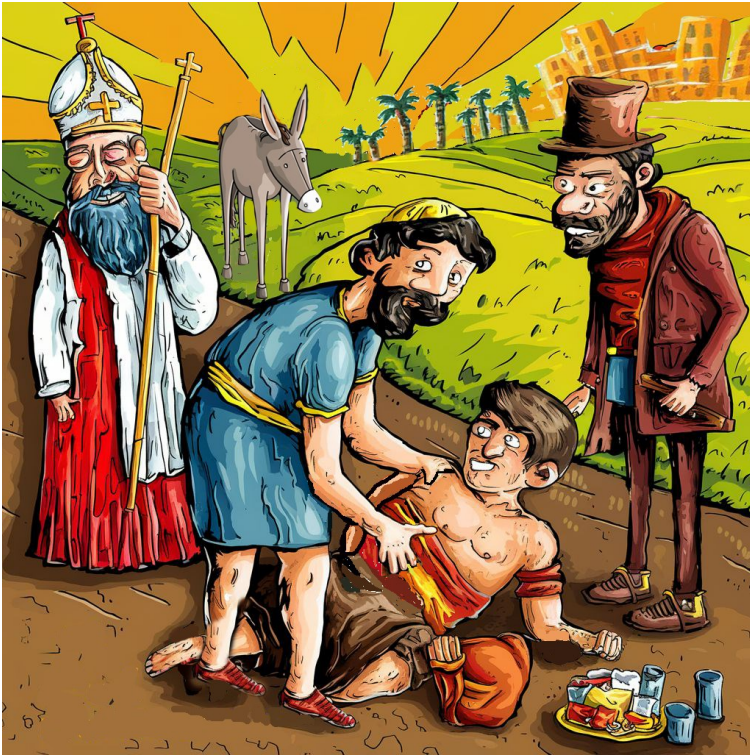
MEMORY VERSE

Micah 6:8, "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good... To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."



Bible Story: The Good Samaritan

Being a Good Neighbor



Once upon a time, in a land where hills rolled like cozy blankets, there was a winding road from Jerusalem to Jericho. Now, this road wasn't just any road—it was a rocky, twisty path that made travelers huff and puff like little steam engines.

One sunny day, a Jewish man decided to take this bumpy journey. He hummed a merry tune, his sandals crunching on the pebbles. But oh dear! Out of nowhere, some not-so-nice men leaped out like mischievous shadows. They snatched his bag, tore his clothes, and left him all bruised

and bleeding by the roadside. Ouch!

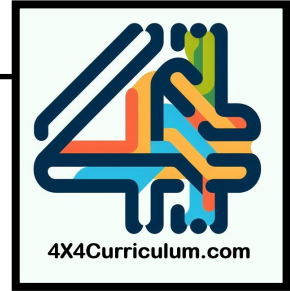
Soon, a priest came strolling along. Priests were like the church helpers, you see. But did he help our poor, hurt friend? Nope! He tiptoed to the other side of the road, pretending he didn't notice. Maybe he thought the man was taking a nap. Silly priest!

Next up was a Levite. Levites were like priest helpers. Surely he'd lend a hand, right? Wrong! He slowed down, peeked at the man, and then tip-toed away. Not very neighborly, Mr. Levite!

But wait! Here comes our hero—the Samaritan. Now, Jews and Samaritans didn't get along like peanut butter and jelly. They were more like cats and dogs. But guess what? The Samaritan didn't care. When he saw the hurt man, his heart melted like warm butter on toast.

He bandaged the man's wounds, lifted him onto his donkey, and took him to an inn. "Take care of him," the Samaritan told the innkeeper. "Here's some coins. If he needs more, I'll pay you back."

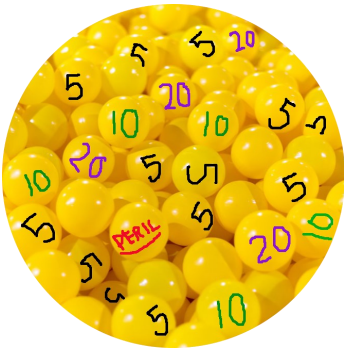




Game: Peril Ping Pong

This game is perfect for **Quiz Questions** or **Review Questions**

Prepare Ahead: Have a small bag of ping pong balls with you and write a point value on each one in various colors. For example, write in black on some worth five points, write in green the ones that are 10 and so on. You need less of the ping pong balls that are worth more. You also need one 'peril' ball with a distinctive color (eg red).



Procedure: The group is divided into teams and the leader asks the group questions. A correct answer means the child can choose a ball from the bag (without looking, of course) and their team scores the value written on the ball. If the 'peril' ball is chosen, all that team's points are lost.

Activity: Sticky Note Mercy

DEFINE MERCY: Not receiving from God something unpleasant that we deserve.

MATERIALS:

Sticky notes
Handouts (See supplement page)
Markers
Whiteboard (for the "increased-difficulty" Option)

DURATION:

Approximately 10 minutes

PREPARATION:

Give each child the handout, sticky notes, and a marker.

WHAT YOU WILL DO:

Ask the students to come up with an expected punishment for each box on the handout. Then tell them to write the punishment on a sticky note and place it over the box. Once completed, discuss the definition of mercy (*withholding a deserved punishment in view of God's mercy on us.*) Ask the children to take each sticky note off and write "MERCY" in each box. Tell the children it is God's mercy that protects us from the ultimate penalty of our sin (*being forever separated from Him and spending eternity in hell*). Also emphasize that God's mercy gives us more time to repent, ask for forgiveness, and enter into a relationship with Him through His Son, Jesus Christ.

TIMESAVING OPTION: Provide a list of punishment suggestions for the children to choose from.

INCREASED-DIFFICULTY OPTION: Ask the children to come up with additional ways we sin against God and write the suggestions on the whiteboard. Then discuss how God uses mercy in each scenario.



STICKY NOTE MERCY

Lying to your parents about
homework

Stealing items
from a store

Hitting someone
at school

Breaking someone's toy
on purpose

Staying outside
past curfew

Yelling at your parents

Skiping school

Sneaking out of
the house





The Clean of Heart

Pure of Heart

The first three Beatitudes didn't really seem like blessings when we first started studying them. They were all about being empty and humble and broken before the Lord. Last week we learned that God starts to fill up that emptiness by giving us mercy. For a couple more weeks we will look at how God fills up the hunger we have in us for him.

Today's beatitude: *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."* Let's start by discussing what it means to be pure. (Write "pure" on the board.) What does pure mean? (Allow students to answer.) Pure means not contaminated, not mixed with any other substance.

I have a demonstration to help you understand purity a little better. I have here an unopened bottle of water. (Show the kids that the seal is still intact on the bottle.) This is pure water and is safe and good for me to drink. (Open the water bottle and take a drink. Before saying anything else, take out a clear cup of sand and add a few spoonfuls of sand to the water bottle. Put the lid back on and give it a good shake.) Is the water safe and good for me to drink now? Of course not. The water is no longer pure. It has been contaminated by sand.

This contaminated bottle of water is like our hearts when we fill our lives with things other than God. So a pure heart is one that is focused on God, and not filled up with the thoughts and desires of the world. (On the board next to "pure," write "focused on only God.")

(Draw a large heart on the board with the word "God" in the middle) Ask: What can make our hearts impure? (write them in the heart). The only thing that should be permanently in our hearts is God. (Erase everything except "God" in the heart. In order to see God and spend eternity with Him, we must become pure in heart by following Jesus.

Object Lesson: Clean Penny

Bible Reference: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Psalm 51:10 ESV

Target Age: This object lesson will work for almost any age group. Older children may appreciate the symbolism better, but younger kids will certainly understand.

Materials:

4 tablespoons of white vinegar

1 teaspoons of ionized salt

several small mason jars or clear drinking glasses

enough dirty old pennies for each child, on shiny new penny for explanation

paper towels

either wooden spoon, salad tongs, or latex gloves to keep the vinegar off your fingers



Power Point

We can let
Jesus purify
our hearts.

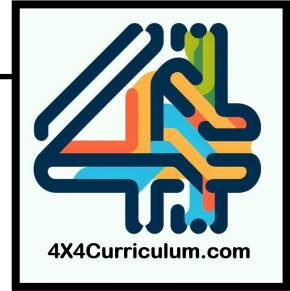
MEMORY VERSE

Matthew 5:7,
"Blessed are the
pure in heart, for they
will see God."

Procedure: As the children come to



class hand them each a dirty old



Game: Purify Your Heart

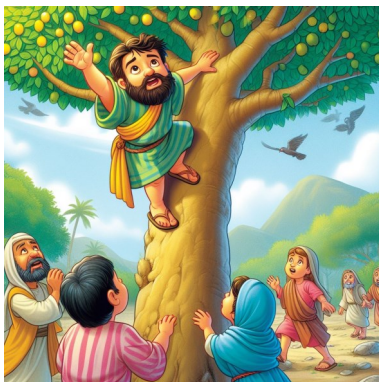
Have a bowl of dry rice or beans, with marbles mixed in. Include a small cross. A small cross pendant and about ten marbles in each bowl of rice will work. The children must sift through the rice using spoons in order to find all the marbles (or “distractions”) hidden within the rice. They must remove the marbles using only the spoon and transfer them to another bowl. They must leave the rice and the cross in the original bowl. This represents that the way to have a pure heart is to have only Jesus as our focus.



You can have the kids work in teams and run a relay, with children running to their team’s rice bowl, scooping up one marble, and carrying it back on a spoon to their team’s bowl. The first team to remove all the marbles wins.

Variation: Give the children each their own bowl and have them compete against everyone. Be sure to have the same number of marbles in each bowl, so it is easy for you to know when they have removed them all and to tell the kids how many they still have left to look for if they start to get frustrated.

Story: Zacchaeus’ Heart Change



Once upon a time, in a bustling town called Jericho, there lived a man named Zacchaeus. Now, Zacchaeus was not very tall. In fact, he was quite short! But what he lacked in height, he made up for in wealth. You see, Zacchaeus was a tax collector—a job that made people frown and grumble.

One sunny day, news spread like wildfire: Jesus was coming to Jericho! The whole town buzzed with excitement. People lined the streets, hoping to catch a glimpse of the kind Teacher who healed the sick and told stories that touched hearts.

Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus too. But there was a problem—the crowd was like a human wall, and he couldn’t peek over their heads. So, with determination in his heart, he dashed ahead and found a sycamore tree. Up he climbed, branches swaying, until he perched high above the ground.

And there, among the leaves, Zacchaeus waited. His heart raced as Jesus approached. When Jesus reached the tree, He looked up and smiled. “Zacchaeus,” He said, “come down

quickly! I must stay at your house today.”

Zacchaeus nearly fell from the tree in surprise. Jesus wanted to visit him? The crowd gasped—they knew Zacchaeus wasn’t the nicest man in town. But Jesus saw something more—a heart ready for change.

Down climbed Zacchaeus, joy bubbling inside. At his home, he sat with Jesus, sharing stories and laughter. And then, something wonderful happened. Zacchaeus stood up and declared, “Lord, I will give half of my possessions to the poor. And if I’ve cheated anyone, I’ll pay them back four times!”

Jesus’ eyes sparkled. “Salvation has come to this house today,” He said. “For the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost.”

From that day on, Zacchaeus became a different man. His heart grew bigger than his wealth. He helped others, forgave debts, and spread kindness like wildflowers. And every time he looked at that sycamore tree, he remembered how Jesus changed his life.



THE PEACEMAKERS





The Peacemakers

Christmas: Jesus Prince of Peace (Is. 9:6)

Children of God Are Peacemakers

The Beatitudes build on each other. When we are merciful, we work to have pure hearts before God, not being distracted by things of the world. When we are focused on God, it is easier for us to be peacemakers because children of God aren't distracted by the world's idea of who we should like and who we should call an enemy. Children of God work to bring *everyone* together, to bring *everyone* to God.

Those who make peace are called children of God. We make peace between ourselves and God when we confess our sins and follow Jesus, we make peace with others when we choose to be kind and pure hearted and merciful, even when the world would say we should be enemies.

There is one last important thing to mention as we wrap up today's lesson. Peacemaking is only possible because Jesus made peace with God for us. While we follow sin we are enemies of God, saying NO to his good word. Jesus came to make peace, through his cross—we can be totally forgiven and be welcomed back.

Do Not Be Afraid

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news. It will bring great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is the Messiah, the Lord." (Luke 2:10-11, NIV)

But the angel said to them...

"Do not be afraid..."

I bring you good news

That will cause great joy

For all the people

Today in the town of David

A savior has been born to you

He is the Messiah, the Lord."

Flutter your hands like wings

Shake your head vigorously

Wave your hands up and down (exciting news)

Jump in the air

Make quick pointing motions to many different people

Hands make make megaphone around your mouth

Pantomime rocking a baby in your arms

Point upwards to heaven with both hands

Power Point

Children of God are Peacemakers

MEMORY VERSE

Matthew 5:9,

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

Isaiah 9:6, "And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."





Peacemakers Make “Wise-Way-Choices”

Peacemakers make “wise-way-choices” not “my-way-choices.”

1. **Conflict is an opportunity:** By handling it right we get a chance to glorify God, serve others and become better people. Even when conflict is caused by wrong doing and causes a great deal of stress, it can lead to good. You can use conflict to:
 - **Glorify God** (by trusting, obeying, and imitating him)
 - **Serve other people** (by helping to bear their burdens or by confronting them in love)
 - **Grow to be like Christ** (by confessing wrong and turning from attitudes that promote conflict)

The “Five A’s” can resolve conflict. (Simple steps that lead to peace)

Children, like adults, can learn to confess their wrongs in a way that demonstrates they are taking full responsibility for their part in a conflict.

- **Admit what you did wrong.** Include both wrong desires and bad choices.

Peacemaker or Troublemaker

A kid with lots of peace is called a “peacemaker” and does these things:

- is obedient and kind to parents
- looks for ways to make friends at school.

The opposite of a peacemaker is a troublemaker, and that kid does these things:

- doesn’t pay attention to what mom and dad says
- causes a lot of problems with other kids at school

If you’re a follower of God, you should be closer to the “peacemaker” end than the “troublemaker” end. That’s what God wants. Now don’t panic – because nobody is perfect! But if you notice that you’re too far to the “troublemaker” side, talk about it! Admit that you’ve got to work on it, and start making peace. Pray to God that he will help you become a peacemaker, and ask your parents or friends to help you, too.

Did you know that Christmas is all about Jesus being a “peacemaker?” When he was born into the world, he came to make peace. In fact, there’s a famous verse about it:

Isaiah 9:6 *For a child is born to us, a son is given to us.... And he will be called: Wonderful*





Bible Story

Angels Announce the Birth of the Prince of Peace

Once upon a starry night, in a little village nestled among rolling hills, there were shepherds tending their fluffy sheep. These shepherds were ordinary

folks, with worn-out sandals and hearts full of dreams.

One chilly evening, as they sat around a crackling fire, something wonderful happened. The sky twinkled extra bright, and suddenly, **whoosh!** A group of shimmering angels appeared! Their wings sparkled like moonbeams, and their voices were as soft as lullabies.

“Good news!” sang the angels, their eyes gleaming. “In Bethlehem, a special baby has been born—a tiny King who will bring joy to the whole world!”

The shepherds blinked in wonder. “A baby King?” they whispered. “But why tell us?”

The angels smiled kindly. “Because you’re important too,” they said. “Go find the stable, where the star points. There, wrapped in swaddling cloths, you’ll discover Baby Jesus.”

cover Baby Jesus.”

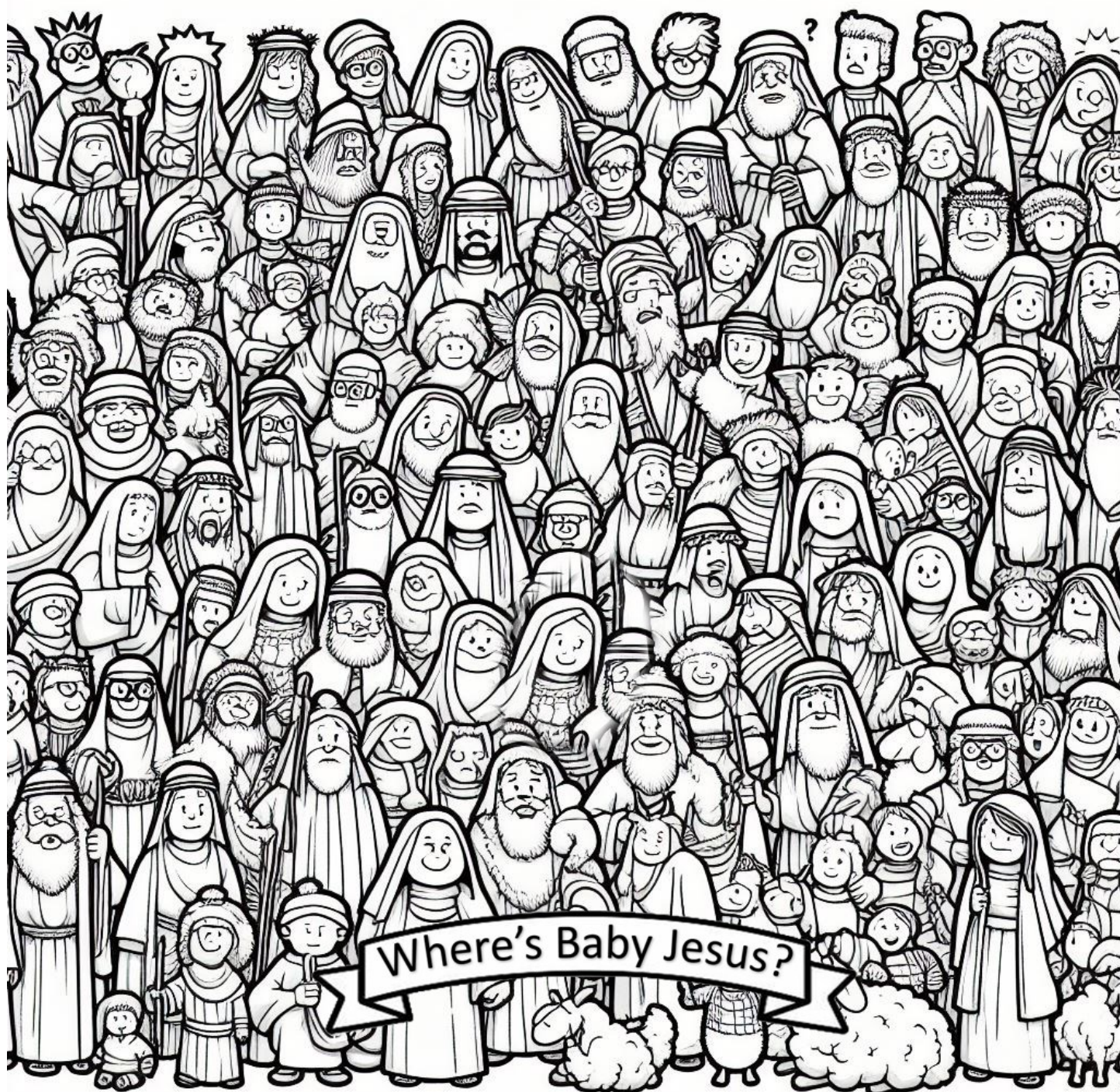
The shepherds hurried down the hill, their hearts racing. And sure enough, in a humble stable, they found Mary, Joseph, and the sweetest baby boy. His eyes sparkled like the angels’ wings, and his tiny hands reached out as if to say, “Welcome.”

The shepherds knelt, their breaths held in awe. They whispered blessings over Baby Jesus, and the angels sang once more, filling the night with joy.

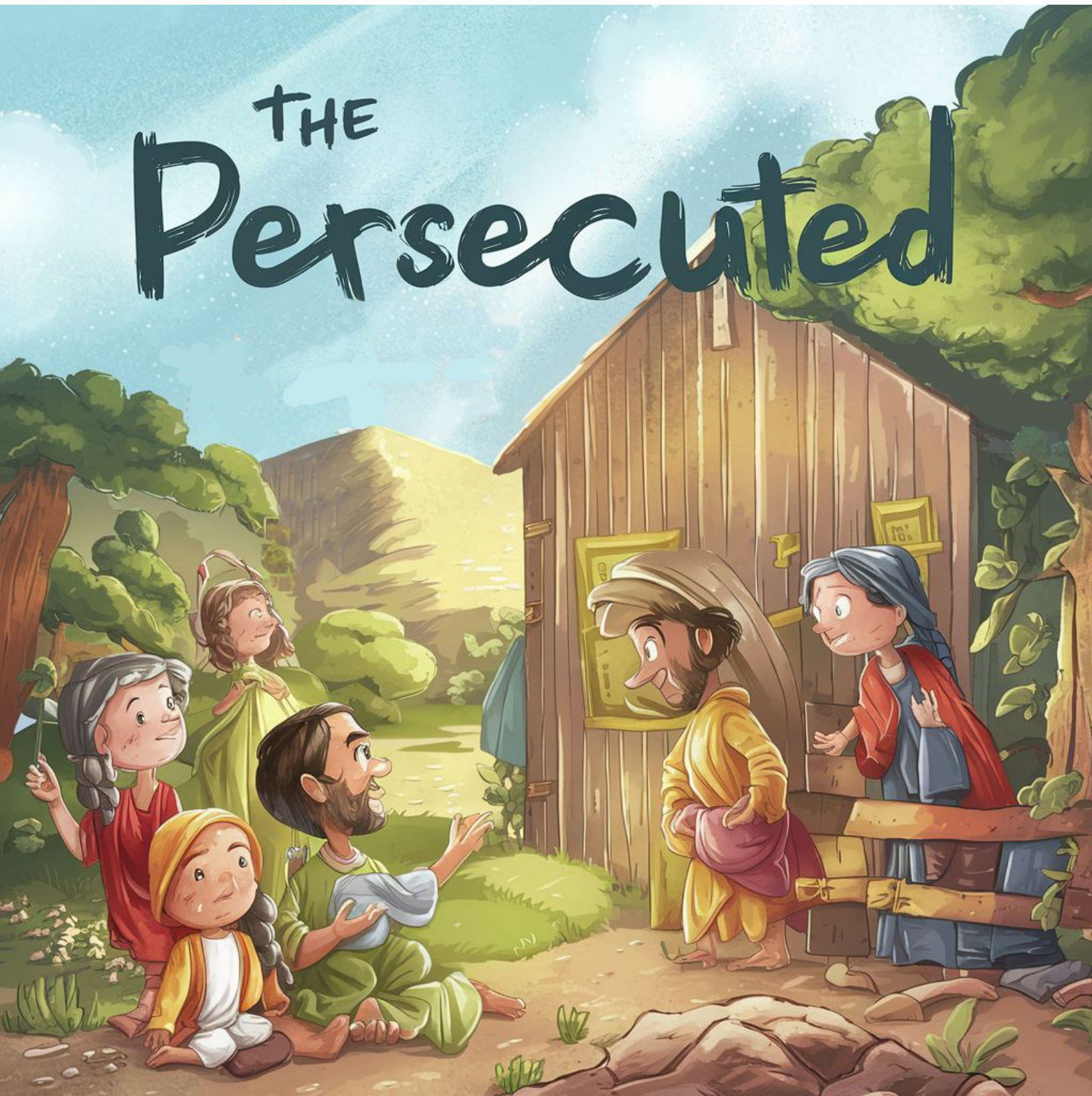
From that moment on, the shepherds knew they were part of something bigger—a story of love, hope, and a little King who would change the world. And as they returned to their sheep, they whispered to the stars, “Thank you, angels, for sharing this heavenly secret with us.”



But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news. It will bring great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is the Messiah, the Lord.” *(Luke 2:10-11, NIV)*



THE Persecuted





Year 4—Quarter 2

The Persecuted

BEE-Attitudes Not ME-Attitudes

The Beatitudes have taught us how to have an attitude that focuses on others instead of ourselves. So when we are being persecuted for being righteous, we can remember to pray for our persecutors because we have learned how to have BEE attitudes.

When we are poor in spirit and recognize our need for a savior. We mourn over our sins and meekly submit to the Lord. When we do these things, we begin to hunger and thirst for God's righteousness. God gives us the kingdom of heaven, he comforts us and tells us we'll inherit the earth, and he fills us with his righteousness. After all the brokenness, we begin to grow in our ability to love others. We become merciful and pure in heart and peacemakers. When we begin to do those things, we will be persecuted. And that's okay, because we gain the kingdom of heaven! If there is one thing I want you all to remember from the past lessons in the Beatitudes, it's this: God blesses us when we follow him. God gives us what we need, gives us his favor, when we follow him. He loves us and wants us to have a life full of him. The Beatitudes are what our attitudes are when we follow Jesus. So let's follow Jesus with our BEE attitudes instead of our ME attitudes!

Power Point

Blessed are
those that are
persecuted

MEMORY VERSE

Matthew 5:11,
“Blessed are the persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Persecuted: Simple Meaning

There has always been persecution for Christians. There have always been those that have been unhappy with Christians sharing about Jesus. Not to mention, Jesus Himself was killed by those that hated Him. Stephen in the Bible (Acts 7) was someone that followed Jesus, yet he was killed for sharing about Jesus. Paul the Apostle was one of those that tried to kill Christians. He had hated Christians, yet Jesus changed his heart and mind on the road to Damascus.

There is a video for kids on YouTube called “Secret Smuggler: The Story of Brother Andrew” (6 min.). Brother Andrew is someone who experienced persecution and went to visit many countries where Christians were being persecuted. God protected him many times as he took Bibles into these countries.

Consider watching this video with your class and then having a discussion about Brother Andrew's experiences. Then, go on to help your class understand that Christians in many countries suffer persecution, but God is their protector.





Bible Story: Saul Persecutes Christians

Once upon a time, there was a man named **Saul**. He didn't like the people who followed **Jesus**, and he wanted to stop them. So, he decided to go to a place called **Damascus** to find these Christians and make them stop believing in Jesus.



One sunny day, as Saul was on his way to Damascus, something wonderful happened. A bright light appeared in the sky, and it was so dazzling that Saul fell down! He covered his eyes with his hands, and then he heard a voice. It was like a whisper from the clouds, saying, "Saul, why are you hurting my friends?"

Saul was scared and confused. He asked, "Who are you?"

The voice replied, "I am Jesus, the one you're trying to stop. But now, I want you to change your ways."

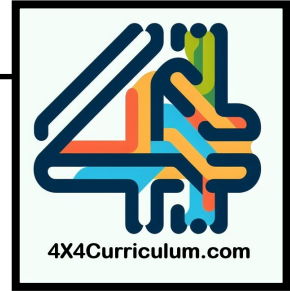
Saul's heart raced. He realized he was wrong. He had been mean to the Christians. Jesus told him to go to Damascus and meet a man named **Ananias**. Ananias would help him understand the truth.

So, Saul got up, and his eyes were still blind from the bright light. His friends helped him to Damascus. When he met Ananias, something amazing happened. Ananias prayed for Saul, and suddenly, Saul could see again! Not just with his eyes, but also with his heart.

From that day on, Saul became a friend of Jesus. He traveled far and wide, telling everyone about Jesus and how love is stronger than hate. And the people listened because they saw the change in Saul. He went from being a mean man to a kind one, all because of that moment on the road to Damascus.

And that's the story of how Saul became a friend of Jesus, and how love changed





Game Idea:

World Map Mash-up

Buy a world map per team and cut it up into pieces. Have the teams compete to put the maps together the fastest. You could even make a relay race out of it. — have teams race to get pieces of the map before they can put it together as a team.

Review Questions:

1. What is persecution?
2. Is God with those that are persecuted?
3. Why are we blessed if we are persecuted?

Prayer for the World: Have your kids form a prayer circle to pray for Christians around the world. You could pass a world globe beach ball around and ask the student who catches it to say a prayer.



Gum Wrapper Chain Crown

Students can make gum wrapper paper chains to remind themselves of those who are in chains for their faith. This is a fun craft that requires no glue, tape, or staples (only folding). You will not be using gum wrappers, but strips of decorative paper (*scrapbook paper is perfect*) that are 1.25" x 12" in length. Use a paper cutter to cut them. You will need about 25 strips to make a crown. Crowns remind us "Theirs is the kingdom."

These zig-zag chains can also be turned into: bookmarks, bracelets, arm bands, belts, or a let's-see-who-can-make-the-longest-chain contest!



Crown made with a paper chains

A tutorial of step-by-step instructions can be found on the supplemental page.

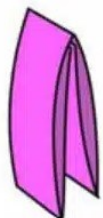
As your students are making their chains, **begin a discussion** with them by asking this question: How do you think it would feel to be persecuted for your faith in Jesus?



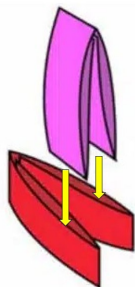
Directions to make a Gum Wrapper Paper Chain

PREP: Use a paper cutter to make strips of paper that are 1.25" x 12" in length. You'll need about 25 for each student to make a crown.

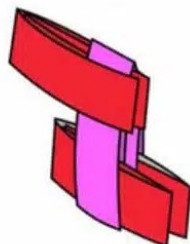
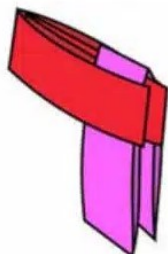
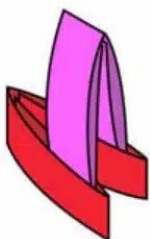
Time needed: 30 minutes



1. To make one link, fold a strip in half, wrong sides together, and make a crease. Open it up and fold each side in half again. Lastly, fold both sides together to look like "bunny ears". Press to make the shape flat. Repeat for all links.



2. To start the chain, line up two paper links as shown



3. Slide each "bunny ear" **INSIDE** the other "bunny ear"