

Elementary 2

Year 2 Book 3

E2 Year 2 Book 3

Attempting the Impossible for God

USGA

*Attempting
the Impossible for God*



Teacher's Guide and Student Worksheets

ELEMENTARY 2 YEAR 2 BOOK 3

ATTEMPTING THE IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOD

INTRODUCTION

The main objectives for this quarter are:

- To learn about different characters in the Bible that served the Lord with trust and faith.
- To understand that, as the children of God, we must also follow our Lord wholeheartedly.
- To emphasize the importance of keeping our faith in a world that is filled with temptations and negative influences.

LESSON INDEX

Lesson 1	God's Faithful Servant, Joshua	1-17
Lesson 2	God Saves the Israelites through the Judges	18-35
Lesson 3	God's Mighty Work through Gideon	36-49
Lesson 4	Samson, the Last Judge	50-63
Lesson 5	Ruth and Naomi	64-76
Lesson 6	Samuel Serves the Lord with Trust	77-85
Lesson 7	Jonah Is Sent to Nineveh	86-100
Lesson 8	Amos' Call to Repentance	101-114
Lesson 9	Daniel and His Friends Say No	115-128
Lesson 10	Daniel's Three Friends Refuse to Bow to an Idol	129-145
Lesson 11	God Writes on the Wall at Belshazzar's Feast	146-158
Lesson 12	Daniel Prays Three Times a Day	159-172
Lesson 13	Review	173-177

LESSON GUIDE

The E2 lessons can be separated into 3 sections with several subsections that, as a whole, are aimed to provide a comprehensive Bible study of the selected topic.

The first section is an **introduction** to the lesson and includes the Objectives, Memory Verse, Prayer, Overview, Background Knowledge for the Teachers, and Reaching Out to Your Students sections. This section is meant for the teacher to study while preparing the lesson so that the teacher will know in which direction to guide the students while teaching.

The second section includes the **main content** of the lesson that will be taught to the students during class. Here the teacher will find the Opener, Vocabulary, Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching, Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs, Check for Understanding, Life Application, and Activity sections.

Lastly, the students will have a homework assignment to take home and complete after class as a **review** of the lesson. The students are expected to bring back the homework assignment to the next class completed and with a parent signature.

This lesson guide will list each subsection and explain its purpose, as well as how teachers should use the information in that subsection.

I. Introduction to the Lesson

1. Objectives

These are the objectives that the lesson aims to fulfill. The teacher should always remember to reinforce ideas and teachings that will fulfill these objectives.

2. Memory Verse

The teacher should go over the memory verse at the beginning of class and ask the students to have it memorized by the end of class.

3. Prayer

Go over these points with the students before beginning prayer so that they will know what they should pray for, in addition to their own prayer requests.

4. Overview

A simple lesson overview that emphasizes the important points of the lesson.

5. Background Knowledge for Teachers

Relevant biblical background knowledge that can aid the teachers in understanding the lesson.

6. Reaching Out to Your Students

This section provides an insight into how the students might react to the lesson and how to help the students understand the lesson.

II. Main Lesson Content

1. Opener // 5 Minutes

The purpose of the Opener is to ease the students into the lesson by bringing up relevant topics that will relate to the Bible study. This will give students time to calm down before the teacher goes into the main content.

2. Vocabulary

The vocabulary is provided to explain some of the more difficult terms. The teacher can choose to go over the terms before beginning the Bible study or as the terms come up during the lesson.

3. Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching // 30-35 Minutes

This is the main section of each lesson. It will provide an in-depth study of the selected topic and the students will also be provided worksheets to fill in as the teacher conducts the lesson. The teacher should look at the worksheets while preparing the lesson and print out a copy to use as an answer key during class. The aim of the worksheets is to keep the students focused and to let them actively participate instead of passively listen.

4. Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs // 2-5 Minutes

It is important to tie each lesson back to the Ten Basic Beliefs to reinforce the students' knowledge of the Beliefs; therefore, this section will briefly tie back the lesson to the Basic Belief to which it relates.

5. Check for Understanding // 5 Minutes

This section tests the students' comprehension of the teachings they just learned in the Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching section.

6. Life Application // 10 Minutes

The Life Application section aims to make the lesson content more life applicable and will allow the students to relate the lesson's teachings to events that happen in their daily lives. The goal is to give the students a chance to apply what they have learned in the lesson to their daily lives.

7. Activity // 10-15 Minutes

Each lesson will include one or two activities that relate back to a teaching or story in the Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching section.

III. Homework Assignment

Students are to take this home and return it the next week completed. There are four elements to the homework assignment: (1) Bible reading and prayer chart, (2) what they learned from the Bible, (3) memory verse, (4) and a lesson-specific assignment. The Bible reading and prayer chart is provided to track the students' progress during the week. In addition, the students will have to write down the memory verse and two things they learned from the Bible during that week. The last part of the homework assignment is specific to that week's lesson. It is advised that the students obtain a parent signature to make sure that the parents know what the students are learning each week.

IV. Suggested E2 Class Timeline

5 min.	Opening Prayer
5 min.	Opener
30-35 min.	Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching
2-5 min.	Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs
5 min.	Check for Understanding
10 min.	Life Application
10-15 min.	Activity
5 min.	Ending Prayer

Total: 1 hr. 12 min. - 1 hr. 20 min.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

Upper Elementary/Primary Stage (Ages 9-11)

Characteristics	Pedagogic Application
Body 1. Generally healthy 2. Active 3. Begin to step into puberty stage, get hungry easily 4. Girls become taller than boys toward later stage 5. Increase in stamina	Encourage healthy eating habits Can plan for outdoor activities/fellowships sometimes Prepare snacks if their time in church is especially long Teach them how God values their character; build healthy self-esteem Have challenging and difficult activities
Mind 1. Like to collect things 2. Very creative 3. Begin to think and deduce 4. Like asking questions 5. Have good memory 6. Limited understanding of profound/abstract matters 7. Increased reading ability and comprehension	Include more challenging activities Provide creative and Bible-related activities Use pedagogy that enhance critical thinking Provide satisfactory and biblical answers Encourage memorization of Bible verses Need to explain abstract terms Nurture interest in reading the Bible/Christian materials
Mood 1. Express emotions easily 2. Short-tempered; lose patience easily 3. Like humor 4. May have feelings of withdrawal (may be scared, anxious, etc.)	Provide routines that help students to quiet down and get ready to focus Teach students how to control emotions and appropriate ways to express emotions Include some humor while teaching Show more care and concern; teach them the importance of relying on God
Social Skills 1. Loyal toward friends of the same age more than parents or teachers 2. Like to make friends of the same gender 3. Loyal to groups or teams 4. Enjoy competitive games or activities 5. Like to joke around; may make fun of others 6. Admire favorite teachers and classmates	Encourage friendship, but stress the importance of respecting parents and elders Can separate into girls and boys for group discussion Teach students how to discern negative peer pressure Provide competitive games where everyone can participate Encourage healthy jokes without hurting others' feelings; teach mutual respect Suggest some Christian biographies for students to read; set good examples for the students; share your personal faith and convictions
Spirituality 1. Express maturity in accepting the way of salvation 2. Worship heroes 3. Can study the Bible and pray 4. Can accept a deeper level of Bible teaching 5. Show concern over the souls of others	Talk about salvation seriously; share with them how God changed your life Teach stories of Bible heroes and spiritual characters; provide good Christian living examples Encourage daily spiritual cultivation (pray/read the Bible) Help the students to discover the teachings from the Bible Encourage students to pray and/or bring family members or friends to the Lord

MEMORY VERSES

1. "Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9b)
2. "And when the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge." (Judges 2:18a)
3. "The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped." (Psalm 28:7a)
4. "He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed." (Proverbs 13:20)
5. "For wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God." (Ruth 1:16b)
6. "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." (Proverbs 3:5-6)
7. "And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick." (Matthew 14:14)
8. "Hate evil, love good; establish justice in the gate." (Amos 5:15a)
9. "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts." (Titus 2:11-12a)
10. "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer." (Psalm 19:14)
11. "Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority." (1 Timothy 2:1-2a)
12. "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints." (Ephesians 6:18)

LESSON 1

GOD'S FAITHFUL SERVANT, JOSHUA

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand what it means to trust in God and find courage in Him.
2. To understand what it means to be a Christian soldier.

MEMORY VERSE

"Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

(Joshua 1:9)

PRAYER

1. We thank God for gathering us here so that we can worship and learn more about His word.
2. Lord, please help us to be obedient children of God.
3. Please help us to remember Your word every day and to act upon Your word.
4. And Lord, You have given us so much, so please help us to repay Your love and learn how to be good servants to You.
5. May You help us focus on this lesson and apply its teachings to our lives.



Overview

1. Character Study on Joshua

- Who was Joshua?
- Joshua's qualities
 - o Joshua had the Spirit of God
 - o Joshua had the heart of a servant
 - o Joshua was a man of Integrity and courage from faith in God
 - o Joshua received training
- Major battles led by Joshua

2. Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs—One True God

3. Life Application

- Servant, Leader, Soldier, Spy: To understand what it means to be a Christian soldier.
- Trust and Courage: To understand what it means to trust in God and how to find courage to face our fears.

4. Activity—The Lord Is My Shield

- Design a "Coat of Arms" that reflects His protection and guidance.



Background Knowledge for Teachers

The Book of Joshua provides a record of the Israelite's preparation for entering Canaan, the conquest of the land, the tribal allotments, and issues regarding the covenant. Although Joshua defeated thirty-one kings, not all of these battles were recorded. The Book of Joshua is not simply an abbreviated military record of the conquest of Canaan. Rather, the battles that were selected for record are meant to point us to the main theme in the book, which is the power of God.

God makes covenants with man. Through these covenants, God reveals His plans to man and shows His faithfulness by keeping His side of the promise. As part of the covenant, man is expected to focus on God's promises and will. God empowers His faithful people to accomplish His will. And no matter what the odds are, God is, and always will be, completely reliable.



Reaching Out to Your Students

As an RE teacher, you are not merely a person who teaches your students about the Bible and tells them stories every week. You are also a mentor and an example to them.

Joshua's training under Moses was a prime example of the benefits of having a worthy mentor. For years, he remained close to Moses. He watched Moses as he followed God in an almost flawless manner. He learned from Moses how to pray in a personal way. He learned how to obey through the example of Moses. Joshua also learned from the negative example that cost Moses the joy of actually entering the Promised Land.

As an RE teacher, you are a mentor. Someone, somewhere, is watching you. Some younger person or someone that you are influencing is seeing how you live and how you react. Someone is learning from you. Someone will follow your example. Reaching out to your students encompasses far more than the words that you speak. Your life is on display.



Opener

5 Minutes

What are you most afraid of? As human beings, we all have fears. You could be afraid of the dark, being alone, clowns, bugs, or of something happening to a loved one. [Ask students to complete the following sentence, and then share a story in which they were fearful as a child.]

"When I was younger, I used to be afraid of _____."

What are some other things people may be afraid of? [Invite students to respond.] Yes, in addition to these examples you have given, I can tell you that there are a lot more types of phobias, or fears. Some people are afraid of certain kinds of bugs, some are afraid of certain animals, and some are afraid of a certain taste or even certain types of sensations, such as sounds or touch. Some people have certain disabilities or weaknesses that make them afraid of being exposed and made known. There are all different types of fears.

God knew that we would be people who struggle with fear. He knew that in our world darkened by sin, there would be many things to be afraid of. If you search the Bible, the word "fear" is mentioned over three hundred times. But, over and over again, God says, "Do not be afraid."

"Do not be afraid?" How is that even possible? Today, we're going to learn about a person in the Bible named Joshua, who relied on God to overcome all his fears and stood strong in the face of enemies, knowing that God was on his side.



Vocabulary

meditate: to think and reflect on something, especially in a calm manner; contemplate
commission: to grant certain powers or the authority to carry out a particular task or duty



Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

FOR TEACHERS

Hand out the Bible Discovery worksheet, and ask the students to fill in the blanks as you go over the information on the worksheet. The answers have been underlined.

Today, we will learn about God's faithful servant, Joshua.

I. WHO WAS JOSHUA?

Here is some background knowledge on Joshua, the focus of today's lesson.

Hometown: Joshua was born in Egypt, probably in the area named Goshen, in the northeast Nile delta. He was born a slave, like his fellow Hebrews.

Occupation prior the Exodus: Egyptian slave

Family Tree: Father – Nun; Tribe - Ephraim

Does anyone know what the name "Joshua" means?

It means, "**The Lord Saves**" (or "God is Salvation").

- Joshua was one of the twelve spies sent by Moses to spy the land of Canaan, and only he and Caleb gave encouraging reports.
- Joshua became the leader of the Israelites after Moses died.
- He dared to believe in victory when others predicted failure.
- He was a brilliant military leader who remained humble.
- He always marched forth with faith and courage, and determined to conquer the land that God had promised to the Israelites.
- Joshua and Caleb were the only two adults to both experience Egyptian slavery and enter the Promised Land. All the others died in the wilderness during the forty years of wandering.
- He was faithful to ask for God's direction in the challenges he faced.
- He was a true spiritual leader and a great example for us to learn from.

FOR TEACHERS

Make sure that all the students have filled in the blanks. You may choose to check for understanding by asking the students some questions about Joshua before continuing.

II. JOSHUA, THE NEXT LEADER OF ISRAEL

Our lesson begins with Joshua becoming the next leader of Israel. Let's open our Bibles to Numbers 27:12-23.

God instructed Moses to lay hands on Joshua and commission him to take over as leader of the Israelites. Moses was not allowed to go into the Promised Land, so God had chosen Joshua to lead His people into it instead.

Why do you think God chose Joshua? What are the qualities that Joshua possessed that made him a good choice to succeed Moses? [Let students brainstorm.] Let us look closely at some of Joshua's qualities that made him a good candidate to lead the people of God.

(1) Joshua had the Spirit of God

From verse 18 of the passage we've just read, we know that Joshua had the abidance of God's Spirit. This is the most fundamental prerequisite to being a worker of God.

(2) Joshua had the heart of a servant

Let's read Joshua 24:15. This is an important verse that sums up Joshua's life:

"And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Yes, this verse tells us that Joshua had the heart to serve God. Before God can even choose us, we must have the heart to want to do His work first. In Joshua 24:15, Joshua was saying that the Israelites needed to choose for themselves who they wanted to serve. But for Joshua, he had determined to serve God no matter what the others chose. Because Joshua promised to serve the true God and obey His commands, he was able to successfully lead the Israelites to victory during their battles.

(3) Joshua was a man of integrity and courage, rooted in his faith in God

Let's read Numbers 13:27-33; 14:1-10.

Moses sent twelve spies, one representative from each tribe, to go into Canaan to survey the land. This is the scene that occurs right after the spies return. Ten of the twelve spies were afraid of the "giants" in the land, so the people did not want to go conquer the land. Joshua courageously stood up and spoke words of faith. Then, the glory of God appeared. We can see that Joshua is a person who speaks the truth and has faith in God.

(4) Joshua received training

Let's read Exodus 17:8-13.

Who was the leader of the army in the battle against the Amalekites? It was Joshua.

Joshua had already started learning how to be a leader while Moses was still alive. This training process is very important for a leader of God's people. Joshua also understood from this incident the importance of prayer and reliance on God. This training became the guiding principle for him when he led God's people into the land of Canaan. Let's look at Joshua 12.

This chapter shows a list of all the lands and kings that Joshua defeated with the Israelites. Verse 24 tells us that he defeated thirty-one kings in all! "And these are the kings of the country which Joshua and the children of Israel conquered on this side of the Jordan, on the west, from Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon as far as Mount Halak and the ascent to Seir, which Joshua gave to the tribes of Israel as a possession according to their divisions, in the mountain country, in the lowlands, in the Jordan plain, in the slopes, in the wilderness, and in the South—the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites" (Josh 12:7-8). This was all possible because Joshua was faithful and fearless, and he relied on God.

III. MAJOR BATTLES LED BY JOSHUA

We will now study some of the battles in which Joshua led the Israelites. The following is a short summary of the battles.

The Fall of Jericho (Joshua 6)

When the Israelites followed God's instructions, the walls of Jericho fell by His power.

Battle of Ai (Joshua 7-8)

The first attempt to conquer the city ended in defeat because Achan sinned. After he was punished, the Israelites burned the city down on the second attempt.

The Battle of Gibeon (Joshua 10)

Joshua prayed to God for the sun to stand still for one whole day.

The Fall of Jericho

Let's take a closer look at the Battle of Jericho, the first battle the Israelites fought in order to get to Canaan.

Before this battle, God had dried up the Jordan River so that the Israelites could cross it. The wicked kings of Canaan heard about this, and "their heart melted; and

there was no spirit in them any longer because of the children of Israel" (Josh 5:1).

The Israelites were camped at Gilgal, which is across from the city of Jericho, but God was not ready for them to march against Jericho just yet. He wanted them to remember Him as their God and deliverer.

Joshua must have wondered how they would ever capture the city of Jericho. Really thick, stone walls protected Jericho. How would he ever get enough men inside to take it over? Nothing they had was powerful enough to ram in the walls or doors, nor were any of their other weapons strong enough to break through its walls. Joshua knew one thing was for sure, though—if God fought for them, no walls in the world were strong enough to stop them.

Joshua sent spies into Jericho to get information before they crossed the Jordan. When the king tried to capture the spies, a woman named Rahab hid them on her roof.

Before they lay down on the roof, Rahab came up and said, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us [...] for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath" (Josh 2:9, 11). Not only had the people of Jericho heard what happened at the Jordan River, but they also knew how God had divided the Red Sea. And everyone was afraid.

The king had locked the gates to trap the spies inside Jericho, and Rahab offered to help them escape on one condition: when the city fell, she and her family would be saved and not harmed. The spies agreed to do this. Then, she let them down by a rope through the window. Since her house was on the outside of the wall, they could get away and run back to the camp at Gilgal. Before they left, however, they told Rahab to hang a scarlet cord from that same window so that the Israelites would not hurt them.

The spies had good news for Joshua. "Truly the LORD has delivered all the land into our hands, for indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us" (Josh 2:24).

The king of Jericho shut up all the gates so that no one could go out or come in. Then, God told Joshua exactly how to capture Jericho, commanding, "You shall march around the city, [...] you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do for six days" (Josh 6:3). On the seventh day, they were to march around the same way seven times, but on the seventh time, everyone would shout and the walls would fall down.

They must follow this formation during the march: The

soldiers would come first, followed by seven priests blowing on trumpets made from rams' horns. Next would come the ark of the covenant, with the rest of the people last. And, except for the priests blowing their trumpets, nobody was to say a word.

What do you think the people of Jericho thought?

The people of Jericho could look out from the wall and see this strange procession day after day, silent except for the sound trumpets. What was going to happen?

On the seventh day, they found out. The Israelites started about daylight that day, going around seven times instead of one time, as they had done before. On their seventh round, Joshua commanded them, "Shout, for the LORD has given you the city!"

Joshua 6:20-21 records, "When the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat. Then the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword." But they saved Rahab and her family.

The Lord was with Joshua, and his fame spread through the land. Could this have been done without God? Could this have been done if Joshua hadn't believed that God would help them? Right, Joshua could not have brought down the walls of Jericho if he hadn't believed that God could help.



Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

One True God

In today's story, we learned that if we rely on our almighty God and believe in His power, He will help us. God knocked down the walls of Jericho without so much as a touch from the Israelites. If we have any difficulties today, we can bring it up to God in our prayers.

Our God is true and living, and can hear our prayers. Those idols and other gods in which people believe in this world are just things created by human hands and thought up by humans. They cannot hear us or do anything for us. Only the one true God can be our guide in times of need.



Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

- 1. Name some qualities and characteristics of Joshua.** He: had God's Spirit, was courageous, trusted God, was faithful, had a heart to serve, and was obedient.
- 2. Who were the only two adults to both experience Egyptian slavery and enter the Promised Land?** Joshua and Caleb.
- 3. Who chose Joshua as the next leader of the Israelites?** God, not Moses or anyone else.
- 4. Joshua defeated thirty-one kings in all. What made this possible?** This was all possible because Joshua was faithful and fearless, and he relied on God.

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. "The Lord Saves"
2. leader
3. spies
4. Rahab
5. They had to blow trumpets and shout as loud as they could on the seventh time around the city.
6. Courageous, faithful, obedient, trusted in God



Life Application

10 Minutes

1. SERVANT, LEADER, SOLDIER, SPY

Objective: To understand what it means to be a Christian soldier.

Joshua was not only the leader of the Israelites, but he was also a faithful servant and a soldier. He was even a spy for Israel. Joshua courageously led the people of Israel out of the wilderness and into the Promised Land, and we can learn many lessons from his faithful and courageous example.

We are soldiers, too—Christian soldiers—and we fight different battles every day.

What is a Christian soldier?

Drawing from your own knowledge, picture a soldier in your mind right now. In this world, a soldier is sent to fight his country's enemies, both foreign and domestic, on many types of battlefields.

We, as Christian soldiers, must fight the temptations of the world and the flesh, and of course, Satan himself. These are the three main enemies that we are always fighting. And these enemies never die! You cannot kill them like you would enemies on a regular battlefield.

Because we belong to God, we are constantly in this fight, regardless of who we are.

(A) We must overcome our fleshly desires.

Whether we're baptized or not, Satan always wants us to go astray and be on his side. This is a daily struggle and a daily wrestle in prayer.

What our "flesh" wants are things that we want or enjoy. Examples include entertainment (TV shows, movies, music, video games, etc.), food, or money. For instance, when you're hungry, your stomach growls because your flesh (body) wants food. Some people become addicted to entertainment and watch TV all day long. Let's study a scenario that may be rather familiar to some of us here.

Emma has a lot of homework to do for every subject on this particular day. However, during school this morning, her friend lent her a DVD of their favorite TV show. Emma was very excited because her parents wouldn't let her buy this DVD. So, when Emma got home, she could not resist and started watching some episodes. The entire DVD was 3 hours long. She knew that she had a lot of homework to finish, so she decided to only watch half of it and then continue after she finished her homework. But the show was just too fun to watch, so she ended up watching the entire DVD. It was now getting late, and she realized that she might not have enough time to finish her homework, let alone her daily Bible reading and prayer.

1. **What was Emma's fleshly desire?** Entertainment—her favorite TV show
2. **What were the consequences when she gave in to the desire?** She didn't have enough time to finish her homework or do Bible reading and pray.

Let's read Galatians 5:24. What should Emma have done? She should not have given in to her temptation to watch the whole DVD. Yes, as Christians, we should crucify our flesh, together with its passions and desires.

3. **As a Christian soldier, how could Emma have fought this battle?** (She could have fled from temptation and given the DVD back to her friend when she found out that she had a lot of homework to finish. Also, instead of watching the DVD first, she could have begun with Bible reading and prayer when she returned home.

Let's read Romans 7:23 and Colossians 3:5. What was Paul's struggle? (He was torn between two laws inside of him.) How did Paul overcome this struggle? (By relying on God.) How did Paul encourage the believers at Colossae? (He told them to put to death the members of the body, which are various sins.)

(B) We must fight the world.

There are a lot of temptations in this world. Sometimes, we may not necessarily enjoy a certain activity, but we may be afraid that others will laugh at us or exclude us if we do not join them. Some of us may have secret desires to keep up with the world, or have a secret wish to do as others in the world do. Let's look at another scenario that may just speak to us about this area.

Brandon and his four friends want to start a big weekly online computer game tournament on Saturdays and Sundays for the next two months. At the end of the tournament, the top three teams will be awarded prizes. This sounds really fun to Brandon, and he really, really wants to join. However, this tournament takes place on Saturdays, and he'll be at church when they play in the morning. If he only plays on Sundays, then his team will be incomplete on Saturdays. They would have to find someone else to fill in for him, and he would disappoint his friends.

- 1. What should Brandon do? What should he say to his friends?** First of all, he should tell them the truth: He goes to church Saturdays, so he can't join them on Saturdays. However, he can try to ask that the tournament not be held on Saturdays. Still, he should be prepared to back out of the team if they don't change the days. If that happens, he can offer to find a replacement.
- 2. What would be the consequences if he joined them on Saturdays?** He would not be able to observe the Sabbath and would miss out on the blessings promised by God. He would also miss out on good spiritual food from the Bible lessons and sermons. He would not be able to spend time with brothers and sisters in spiritual fellowship. In the long run, his spirituality would certainly be affected. He would have let the world win him over.

Let's refer to a few verses that would help Brandon face this sticky situation:

James 4:4

"Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."

1 John 2:15

"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

1 John 5:4

"For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith."

(C) We must fight Satan.

Mankind's lifelong enemy is not dead. Ever since the fall of Adam and Eve, he has been going to and fro on earth, always holding on to one goal—to ruin our souls. Never tiring and never sleeping, he is always going about as a lion, seeking someone he may devour.

An invisible enemy, he is always near us, always on our path and looking at our weaknesses and telling us lies. He labors night and day to cast us down to hell. This mighty enemy must be fought daily if we wish to be saved.

Gerry tells his friend Ethan about church, faith, and Christians during lunch one day at school. Ethan responds, saying that observing the Sabbath and reading the Bible, praying, and receiving baptism are not important. He says that the most important thing to do is to live our lives as good people. As long as we don't do bad things, such as steal, murder, or cheat, we will be fine. Gerry thinks that this is a good point and that perhaps he doesn't need to observe the Sabbath anymore. Maybe it is enough just to be a good person.

- 1. What was Satan's trick in this scenario?** Satan uses people, places, and ideas to shake your faith in God. In this case, Satan planted a simple idea: as long as you are a good person, you do not have to follow God's commandments.

2. What are some things you could say to Ethan if you were his friend? God commanded us to observe the Sabbath and do according to His commands. We still need to read the Bible, pray, attend RE class, etc., so that we can understand God.

Let's read a few verses to remind us of the devil's ever-present threat.

Job 1:7

"And the LORD said to Satan, 'From where do you come?'

So Satan answered the LORD and said, 'From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.'"

1 Peter 5:8

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

Luke 22:31

"And the Lord said, 'Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat.'"

As Christians, we must always be on alert. Let's read also Ephesians 6:11. "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

* * * * *

2. TRUST AND COURAGE

Objective: To understand what it means to trust in God and find courage in Him.

Have you ever been scared of a big test, a game/event, or a bully?

In a scary situation, you can remember the words of Joshua, "The LORD is with us. Do not fear them" (Num 14:9). We can always trust in God.

What does it mean to trust in God?

Trusting in God means that we remember that He is in control and knows everything. We don't need to be afraid because God is taking care of us.

It also means that we must place our confidence in God only. It's foolish to trust money or our own human abilities. We should trust in the source of all our abilities: God. Sometimes, some people may inspire us a lot, so we see them as full of wisdom. However, we must remember that human beings are only one of God's many creations, and they are not infallible.

So if you are afraid of anything or feel nervous, keep in mind that God is our ultimate strength.

When the children of Israel were in the wilderness, Moses sent one spy from each of the twelve tribes of Israel into Canaan.

- o Ten of the spies reported that it was impossible to enter the Promised Land because the people who lived there were huge and stronger than the people of Israel.
- o This report made the Israelites complain that they never should have left Egypt.
- o Joshua and Caleb, the last two spies, told the children of Israel not to complain or fear the strength of humans.
- o **Instead, they should trust in God, their ultimate strength.**

Unfortunately, the children of Israel didn't believe Joshua.

- o They had to spend forty years wandering in the wilderness, turning to God every day for their food and water, until they trusted in Him enough to enter the Promised Land. **The path would have been quicker if they had trusted in God right from the start!**

Let's look at a situation regarding trust in God.

Scenario 1: Travis and the Bully

As Travis packs up his backpack at the end of every school day, he always runs into Philip. Philip likes to pick on Travis by taking Travis' backpack and dumping out its contents, scattering Travis' belongings all over the floor. Philip is bigger and taller than Travis, so Travis is always afraid of him. Travis has asked a few of his friends about how to deal with Philip. One of them tells Travis to retaliate and do the same thing to Philip.

So one day, as Philip is packing up his backpack, Travis grabs it and attempts to dump everything out of it. However, Philip immediately turns around and pushes Travis really hard to the ground.

Since that doesn't work, Travis' other friend suggests that he should just tell a teacher or the principal about Philip. Travis talks to his teacher about it, but since the teacher has not seen Philip do anything to Travis before, she is only able to give Philip a warning. This angers Philip, so the next day, Philip takes Travis' lunch bag and hurls it into the mud.

At this point, nothing has worked and Travis is frustrated. Then, one day after RE class, Travis mentions his situation at school to his RE teacher. His teacher tells him that if he keeps trying to take revenge on Philip or harm him in the same way, it will only make things worse. His teacher suggests that he entrust this problem to God, and pray to Him and ask Him to help with this. Travis does as his teacher suggests and prays about it before he goes to sleep at night.

The following Monday, miraculously, Philip does not do anything to Travis. Travis sees him pass by, but he only gives Travis a mean look and that is it! This is much better than before.

1. **What should Travis have done from the very beginning?** He should have trusted in God to help him, instead of trying to solve the problem using his own way.
2. The path is a lot quicker when we trust in God right from the start!
3. Psalm 20:7 – “Some trust in chariots and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.”
4. Psalm 91:2 – “I will say of the LORD, ‘He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him I will trust.’”

By the time the Israelites were ready to cross the Jordan River and enter the Promised Land, they trusted God with every step.

- o In fact, they walked right into the Jordan River, knowing that God would part the waters. And, sure enough, God did. Sometimes, we have to get our feet wet before the waters will part.
- o **To overcome any problem we encounter, we must courageously move forward with faith in God.**

What does it mean to move forward with faith in God?

This means that, no matter what, we believe and trust that God can and will help us when we leave all of our worries to Him only—not to anything or anyone else in the world.

What does it look like when we have faith in God?

When Travis turns to God first and asks Him for help, a very different scenario happens!

Scenario 2: Travis and the Big Test

The end of the school year is near, and Travis and all the students in his grade must take a very important placement test that lasts three days.

All of Travis' teachers have been preparing them for this test. They've been giving them some extra homework to help review what they've learned and spending time in class to sharpen their skills. Travis' parents have also been taking him to a tutoring class especially designed for taking this important test.

As the first day of testing draws closer, Travis starts getting very nervous and even a little scared about this. He doesn't want to do badly or disappoint both his teachers and his parents. He has done his part by working hard, but he also remembers the bully incident where he prayed to God and relied on Him to help.

So, every night before the test, he prays to God to give him the courage to take on this test and also to help him do well and not be too nervous.

Because he relied on God and trusted Him, Travis ends up doing very well at the end of the test. His parents and teachers are very proud of his results.

1. What helped Travis get through the test? He prayed to God and trusted in Him.

2. Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
And lean not on your own understanding;
In all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He shall direct your paths.

3. Psalm 56:3-4

Whenever I am afraid,
I will trust in You.
In God (I will praise His word),
In God I have put my trust;
I will not fear.
What can flesh do to me?

In any difficult circumstance, we might ask ourselves, what am I putting first in my life: God's strength or human strength? Am I facing this challenge by beginning with a prayer? As with Joshua, we can let our lives declare, "The LORD is with us. Do not fear them" (Num 14:9).



Activity

"The Lord Is My Shield" Coat of Arms

10-15 Minutes

Objective: To have students design a "Coat of Arms" that reflects God's protection and guidance.

Materials

- Coat of Arms template
- Grey construction paper
- Scissors
- Markers, colored pencils

Preparation

Before class, design a coat of arms to show the students as an example. Be sure to include elements that relate to God and to you. Then, make a few copies of the template and cut them out. Students will be tracing these onto construction paper.

Instructions

1. Show students your Coat of Arms. Have them try to guess what is important to you by looking at the symbols on the shield. Then, when they're done guessing, you can explain any symbols that they may have left out or interpreted incorrectly.
2. Have your students trace the coat of arms onto the construction paper.
3. Encourage them to illustrate how God helps us through our fears, and gives us strength and courage, just like He did with Joshua. In addition, have them draw pictures that represent their unique personalities.
4. If class time permits, ask some volunteers to come up to the front to share their coat of arms with the rest of the class.

Just as God had been a shield to protect the Israelites, it is important to know that Christ is our shield today as well.

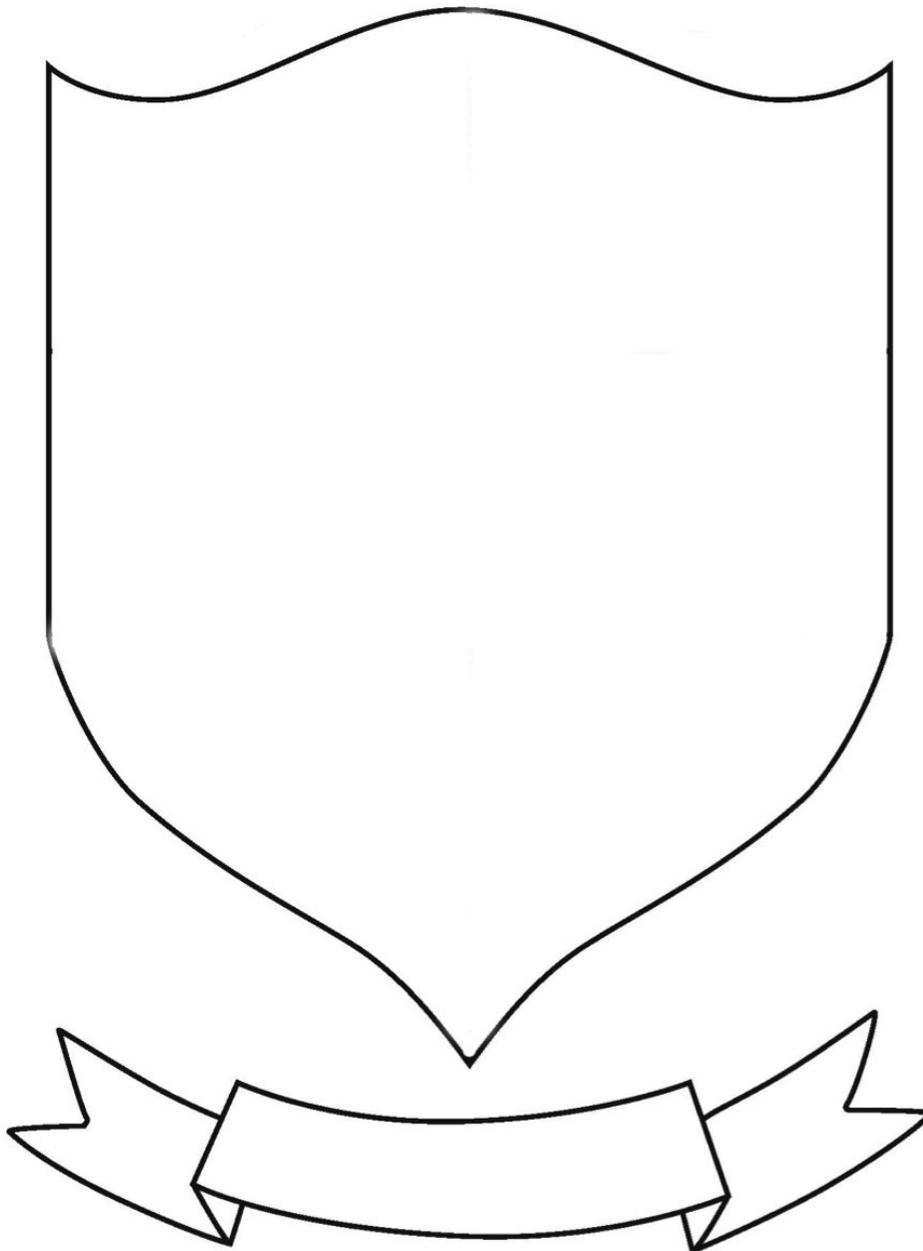
In the Middle Ages, way back in the 12th century, soldiers could not tell each other apart because they wore so much armor! As a result, they started painting their own shields with things that were important to them. For this reason, each shield bore a different coat of arms, or design.

If honesty was important, they decorated their shield blue. If peace was important, they used white. Animals also symbolized character traits. A lion represented courage, a bee represented diligence, and an eagle represented leadership. Other symbols, such as crosses, fire, hearts, stars, and suns were also used on the coats of arms.

We learned today that God is on our side during any battle, just as He was during Joshua's time. When we trust in Him and believe in Him, He will help us. If you think about it, shields are only needed for battle, wars, and defending against enemies. God never said that things in our lives would be easy. But He did say that He would never leave us alone, that He would fight for us, and that He would protect us as a shield so that we are helped.

Today each of you is going to design your own coat of arms on a shield. This shield will remind you that you do not have to be afraid. You could write a verse from today on your shield. Storing God's word in our hearts will help us when we need it most. You could draw a cross, a heart full of trust, or God's hand helping you stand.

But I also want your shields to tell something about you! What is important to you? Family? Friendships? Ballet? Football? Reading? Playing an instrument? Church? Draw symbols on your coat of arms that show who you are.



GOD'S FAITHFUL SERVANT, JOSHUA

Who was Joshua?

- Joshua means “_____”.
- Joshua was one of the _____ sent by Moses to spy the land of Canaan, and only he and Caleb gave encouraging reports.
- Joshua became the _____ of the Israelites after Moses died.
- He dared to believe in _____ when others predicted failure.
- He was a brilliant military leader who remained _____.
- He always marched forth with _____ and courage, and determined to conquer the land God had promised the Israelites.
- Joshua and Caleb were the only two adults to both experience Egyptian slavery and enter the Promised Land. All the others died in the _____ during the 40 years of wandering.
- He was _____ to ask for God’s direction in the challenges he faced.
- He was a true _____ leader and a great example for us to learn from.

Joshua, the Next Leader of Israel

“And if it seems evil to you to _____ the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will _____.”

The Battle of Jericho

Joshua sent _____ into Jericho to get information before they crossed the Jordan.

The king had locked the gates to trap the spies inside Jericho, and _____ offered to help them escape on one condition: when the city fell, she and her family would be saved and not harmed.

God told Joshua exactly how to capture Jericho, commanding, “You shall march around the city, [...] you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do for six days.” On the seventh day they were to march around the same way seven times, but on the seventh time, everyone would _____ and the walls would fall down.



SERVANT, LEADER, SOLDIER, SPY

What is a Christian soldier?

(A) We must overcome our fleshly desires.

Emma has a lot of homework to do for every subject on this particular day. However, during school this morning, her friend lent her a DVD of their favorite TV show. Emma was very excited because her parents wouldn't let her buy this DVD. So, when Emma got home, she could not resist and started watching some episodes. The entire DVD was 3 hours long. She knew that she had a lot of homework to finish, so she decided to only watch half of it and then continue after she finished her homework. But the show was just too fun to watch, so she ended up watching the entire DVD. It was now getting late, and she realized that she might not have enough time to finish her homework, let alone her daily Bible reading and prayer.



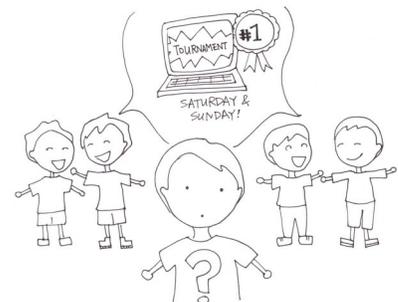
1. What was Emma's fleshly desire?
2. What were the consequences when she gave in to the desire?

Let's read Galatians 5:24. What should Emma have done?

3. As a Christian soldier, how could Emma have fought this battle?

(B) We must fight the world.

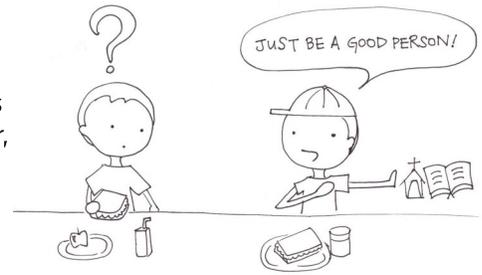
Brandon and his four friends want to start a big weekly online computer game tournament on Saturdays and Sundays for the next two months. At the end of the tournament, the top three teams will be awarded prizes. This sounds really fun to Brandon, and he really, really wants to join. However, this tournament takes place on Saturdays, and he'll be at church when they play in the morning. If he only plays on Sundays, then his team will be incomplete on Saturdays. They would have to find someone else to fill in for him, and he would disappoint his friends.



1. What should Brandon do? What should he say to his friends?
2. What would be the consequences if he joined them on Saturdays?

(C) We must fight Satan.

Gerry tells his friend Ethan about church, faith, and Christians during lunch one day at school. Ethan responds, saying that observing the Sabbath and reading the Bible, praying, and receiving baptism are not important. He says that the most important thing to do is to live our lives as good people. As long as we don't do bad things, such as steal, murder, or cheat, we will be fine. Gerry thinks that this is a good point and that perhaps he doesn't need to observe the Sabbath anymore. Maybe it is enough just to be a good person.



1. What was Satan's trick in this scenario?

2. What are some things you could say to Ethan if you were his friend?



“Put on the whole armor of God,
that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

TRUST AND COURAGE

What does it mean to trust in God?

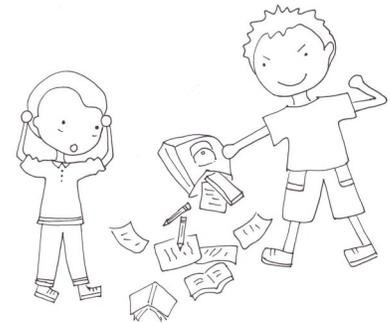
If you are afraid of anything or feel nervous, keep in mind that God is our *ultimate* strength.

Scenario 1: Travis and the Bully

As Travis packs up his backpack at the end of every school day, he always runs into Philip. Philip likes to pick on Travis by taking Travis' backpack and dumping out its contents, scattering Travis' belongings all over the floor. Philip is bigger and taller than Travis, so Travis is always afraid of him. Travis has asked a few of his friends about how to deal with Philip. One of them tells Travis to retaliate and do the same thing to Philip.

So one day, as Philip is packing up his backpack, Travis grabs it and attempts to dump everything out of it. However, Philip immediately turns around and pushes Travis really hard to the ground.

Since that doesn't work, Travis' other friend suggests that he should just tell a teacher or the principal about Philip. Travis talks to his teacher about it, but since the teacher has not seen Philip do anything to Travis before, she is only able to give Philip a warning. This angers Philip, so the next day, Philip takes Travis' lunch bag and hurls it into the mud.



At this point, nothing has worked and Travis is frustrated. Then, one day after RE class, Travis mentions his situation at school to his RE teacher. His teacher tells him that if he keeps trying to take revenge on Philip or harm him in the same way, it will only make things worse. His teacher suggests that he entrust this problem to God, and pray to Him and ask Him to help with this. Travis does as his teacher suggests and prays about it before he goes to sleep at night.

The following Monday, miraculously, Philip does not do anything to Travis. Travis sees him pass by, but he only gives Travis a mean look and that is it! This is much better than before.

Complete the following questions.

1. What should Travis have done from the very beginning?

2. The path is a lot _____ when we _____ in God right from the start!

3. Psalm 20:7

“Some trust in chariots and some in horses; but we will remember the name of _____.”

4. Psalm 91:2

“I will say of the LORD, ‘He is my refuge and my _____; my God, in Him I will trust.’”

**To overcome any problem we encounter, we must
courageously move forward with faith in God.**

What does it look like when we have faith in God?

When Travis turns to God first and asks Him for help, a very different scenario happens!

Scenario 2: Travis and the Big Test

The end of the school year is near, and Travis and all the students in his grade must take a very important placement test that lasts three days.



All of Travis' teachers have been preparing them for this test. They've been giving them some extra homework to help review what they've learned and spending time in class to sharpen their skills. Travis' parents have also been taking him to a tutoring class especially designed for taking this important test.

As the first day of testing draws closer, Travis starts getting very nervous and even a little scared about this. He doesn't want to do badly or disappoint both his teachers and his parents. He has done his part by working hard, but he also remembers the bully incident where he prayed to God and relied on Him to help.

So, every night before the test, he prays to God to give him the courage to take on this test and also to help him do well and not be too nervous.

Because he relied on God and trusted Him, Travis ends up doing very well at the end of the test. His parents and teachers are very proud of his results.

Complete the following questions.

1. What helped Travis get through the test?

2. Proverbs 3:5-6

_____ in the LORD with all your heart,
And lean not on your own understanding;
In all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He shall direct your paths.

3. Psalm 56:3-4

Whenever I am _____,
I will trust in You.
In God (I will praise His word),
In God I have put my trust;
I will not fear.
What can flesh do to me?

***"The LORD is with us.
Do not fear them."***

(Num 14:9)

E2 Year 2 Book 3 Lesson 1—God's Faithful Servant, Joshua

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Weekly Bible Reading: _____

Bible Reading: Check each box when you complete that day's reading.

Prayer: Check each box after you pray to God that day.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Read							
Pray							

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____

2. _____

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse. **(Joshua 1:9)**

Fill In the Blank

1. The name Joshua means " _____."
2. Joshua became the _____ of the Israelites after Moses died.
3. Joshua sent _____ into Jericho to get information before they crossed the Jordan.
4. A woman named _____ was not harmed when the city of Jericho was taken by the Israelites.

Short Answer

5. What did the Israelites have to do on the last day of circling the city of Jericho?

6. List at least three qualities/characteristics of Joshua.

LESSON 2

GOD SAVES THE ISRAELITES THROUGH THE JUDGES

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand who were the judges and what was their relationship with God and the people.
2. To live a life of victory, as the judges did.
3. To break free from cycles of sin that may bind us, as they did the Israelites.
4. To understand the love, mercy, and patience God showed to His people through His deliverance.

MEMORY VERSE

“And when the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge.”

(Judges 2:18a)

PRAYER

1. Thank You, God, for gathering us here so that we can worship and learn more about Your word.
2. Please forgive us for any sins that we know knowingly or unknowingly committed.
3. We ask that You guide us in overcoming our sins through the abidance of Your Spirit.
4. And Lord, thank You for protecting us from the evils of this world.
5. May You help us focus on this lesson so that we can apply its teachings to our lives.



Overview

1. The Israelites' failures and cycle of sin

- Did not drive out the remaining Canaanites (1:19-21, 27-35)
- Served other gods (2:11-23)
- Nations left to test the Israelites (3:1-6)

2. Judges raised by the Lord

- Othniel (1:12-15; 3:7-11)
- Ehud (3:12-30)
- Shamgar (3:31)
- Deborah (4-5)

3. Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs—One True God: Our God is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent.

4. Life Application

- Breaking the Cycle of Sin
- How Can God Use Me?

5. Activity—Repentance Action Plan



Background Knowledge for Teachers

Understanding the Period of the Judges

The period recorded in the Book of Judges has often been termed the dark ages in the history of the Israelites. It spans approximately 450 years from the death of Joshua (Judg 1:1) until the calling of Prophet Samuel (cf. Acts 13:20).

God had willed for the Israelites to have a king since the time of Balaam (Gen 17:6; Num 24:17-18; Deut 17:14-15; 28:36). According to God's plan, the king or the anointed of the Lord's was to act as the Lord's captain or prince (Heb. Nagid), but the king that the Israelites sought was one akin to those found in the Canaanite population (Heb. Melek).

For a king to rule and judge the Israelites, they needed to conquer the land of Canaan and totally drive out its inhabitants. The Israelites failed to do so, which led to a loose confederation rather than a kingdom being established. As a result, the Levites lived in the lands of Ephraim, the Israelites raised up their own gods and own order of religion and priesthood, and brothers killed brothers. There was no political, administrative, or military organization throughout Israel, and every man did what was right in his own eyes (Judg 17:6; 21:25).

The work of the judges was to administer to the people, judging their good and evil deeds, a task not dissimilar to that of the elders during the time of Moses as advised by Jethro (Ex 18:21-23). Additionally, God made use of these God-fearing judges to deliver His people from the hands of their oppressors.

Though the judges may easily be considered heroes of their time, they were mere instruments—often with glaring imperfections—used by God in an interim period until God would raise for them a king to lead His people.

The Sins of the Israelites

The sins of the Israelites are characterized in the Book of Judges as a cycle consisting of a series of common spiritual mistakes, such as not being committed to passing on their faith (i.e., forgetting Joshua's declaration: "As for me and my household"), and being unable to break away from the lures and enticement of the other nations—playing the harlot and defiling themselves with both spiritual and physical adultery (Ex 34:15-17; Num 25).

The underlying cause of the Israelites' cycle of sin was their inability to drive out the Canaanites as God had commanded. The purpose of learning about the Israelites' and judges' sins is not simply to look into their failures, but to understand how failure to follow God's commandments produces gaps and holes in our faith where sin can grow and lead to suffering and death (Jas 1:14-15).



Reaching Out to Your Students

1. "I am weak..."

Students at this age will begin to face more complex issues and challenges regarding sin. Habits are slowly being set and without the correct guidance, cycles of sin may have developed without their realization. Pose this question: "How many times have you asked God for forgiveness for the same sin?" This will help students to realize that many sins are actually repeating cycles (e.g., lying, cheating, stealing, disrespecting parents, etc.). Though students understand the concept of sin and repentance, it is often difficult—even for mature believers—to remove themselves from the situation and see the sinful cycle in which they are caught. Remind students that the first step is to realize that we need God's help; once we have realized that, we must cry out. And we cannot stop there, as the Israelites did; we must break the cycle and seek to be a better, holier Christian every day.

2. "But You are strong!"

We are empowered by the Holy Spirit to overcome sin and to serve Him. Students have both the physical and cognitive ability to take on more responsibility in their church. Remind students that they are never too young to start helping out in church. As long as they have a willing and God-fearing heart, God will make use of them.



Opener

5 Minutes

Has one of your friends ever made a promise to you but didn't keep it? How did that make you feel? How would you feel if the same person kept making the same promise, but time after time they kept breaking it? What would you do?

Now, let's brainstorm for a moment: What are some things that God has asked us to do (e.g., keep the 10 commandments, preach to our friends, keep holy, etc.)? Have we done these things? How many promises have we made to God that we have already broken many times?

The Israelites made many promises to God. When Joshua was still around, they made a covenant to never leave God and to never worship idols. But we will learn today that not only did they break this promise once, they broke it again and again. God wanted His people to learn, so He punished them for their wickedness. But He also loved them, so He raised up judges to save them, too.



Vocabulary

oppressor: someone who uses their power to punish others
forsake: to leave or give up on someone or something
covenant: an agreement or promise between God and man
ox goad: a stick used to guide oxen and prod them to walk

Meaning of Names

Othniel: "Power of God"
 Ehud: "I will give praise"
 Shamgar: etymology unknown



Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

FOR TEACHERS

Students have corresponding worksheets they must fill out for each section. Hand out Bible Discovery Worksheet #1, and ask students to complete it as you go over the first section.

The Israelites' Failures

When Joshua and the Israelites crossed the Jordan River, what was their mission? [Allow students to answer.] That is right, let us read Deuteronomy 20:16-18. Not a single inhabitant could remain in Canaan; otherwise, they would teach the people how to sin against God.

But do you think the Israelites followed God's commands? Let us read Judges 1:19-21. It says that the Lord was with Judah, but why does it also say that Judah couldn't drive out the inhabitants because they had chariots of iron? Does that mean that these chariots were stronger than God? No! Rather, the people were weak; they saw how strong the chariots of iron were and thought that they could not drive these chariots out on their own. They forgot that God was on their side!

Let us go through verses 27-35 and highlight every group of people that they couldn't drive out. There were so many! And those in the tribe of Dan were even kicked out of their land and had to move away to find another place to live because they couldn't reach their land.

Teachings

- Sin is harder to get rid of than we think! It will stick around for as long as it can.
- Sin stays in our actions, in our heart, and in our thoughts.
- God is always on our side, but when we forget that He is watching, that is when we fail.
- Today, God has given us His commands that He wants us to follow.

FOR TEACHERS

Students should have Worksheet #1 completed by now. Review the worksheet with the students to make sure they have completed it correctly. Then, hand out Bible Discovery Worksheet #2 for students to fill out in the next section.

The Israelites' Cycle of Sin

What made God so sad and displeased wasn't just that they failed to drive out the inhabitants, or that the Israelites forsook Him once, but that the Israelites kept on forsaking God and His commandments.

Let us read Judges 2:20-23. The Israelites continued to repeat the same mistakes and sin against God, and it came to the point where God no longer came to their quick rescue but first gave them over to their enemies to punish and teach them.

The Israelites kept falling into the same spiritual rut because they weren't teaching their children about the great things that God had done and weren't teaching their children to obey God's commandments.

As God raised each judge, the people's faith would be renewed, but as each judge passed away, they would continue to forget about God and what He had done for them (Judg 2:11-23; 3:1-6).

How often have we forgotten what God has done for us? Raise your hands if you remember today's sermon. Last week's? The week before? Forgetting the sermons is similar to not remembering God's commands to us.

[If the teacher has an age-relevant cycle-of-sin testimony, this would be a great opportunity to reinforce and illustrate the concept of the cycle of sin.]

Teachings

- The Israelites forgot God's grace and mercy and continued in sin.
- The Israelites didn't tell their children about the sins they were committing.
- Today, we must do our best to remember both God's words and what He has done for us every day.

FOR TEACHERS

Give students time to finish up the Worksheet #2. Go over the cycle as a class, and reinforce the idea that a cycle of sin never ends unless the person makes a determination to break out of the cycle. The suggested answers have been provided below. After the class discussion, hand out Bible Discovery Worksheet #3 for students to complete in the next section.

The Israelites Cycle of Sin

- vv. 10-13: The Israelites forgot about God and worshipped idols.
- vv. 14-15: God punished them and delivered them into the hands of their enemies.
- vv. 15b, 18b: The Israelites were distressed and cried out to God.
- vv. 16, 18a: God raised up judges to deliver them from their enemies.
- vv. 17, 19: The Israelites did not listen to the judges, and returned to worshipping idols and sinning after the judges died.

1. Each time they went back to sinning, they sinned even more and were even more corrupt than before.
2. Answers may vary. Possible answers: They forgot about how God had delivered them from their enemies; they wanted to worship idols that allowed them to sin, instead of worship God, who gave them many commands to follow; etc.]

Judges Raised by the Lord: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah

Now we will study the first four judges mentioned in the Book of Judges. Please follow along and fill in the worksheet as we go over the judges. [Ask the students to read the passage as a class, and then go over the information for them to fill out.]

Judg 1:12-15; 3:7-11 (Othniel)

- o *Name*: "power of God"
- o *Special characteristics*: courage, had Spirit of Lord come upon him, fought with power
- o *Achievements*: defeated King of Mesopotamia and Kirjath Sepher

Judg 3:12-30 (Ehud)

- o *Name*: "I will give praise"
- o *Special characteristics*: left-handed; from the tribe of Benjamin
- o *Achievement*: stealthily defeated King of Moab

Judg 3:31 (Shamgar)

- o *Name*: etymology unknown
- o *Special characteristics*: used ox goad as a weapon
- o *Achievements*: defeated 600 Philistines

Judg 4-5 (Deborah)

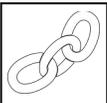
- o *Name*: "torches"
- o *Special characteristics*: only recorded female judge in the Book of Judges; sang a song of prophets; brave
- o *Achievements*: led army of Israel against a king of Canaan

Teachings

- Othniel: We must seek the power of God (Spirit of God) to overcome sin (3:10).
- Ehud: God can make use of our special characteristics (left-handedness) to serve Him (3:21).
- Shamgar: God can use something ordinary (i.e., an ox goad) to do extraordinary things in our lives (3:31).
- Deborah: We must be both brave and active in our service to God (4:14).

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. 1 Samuel 15:24-26 – Insincere
2. Jonah 3:5-10 – Sincere
3. Acts 2:36-41 – Sincere
4. 1 Kings 21:25-27 - Sincere
5. Genesis 3:9-12 - Sincere

**Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs**

2-5 Minutes

One True God

In this lesson, we learned that the Israelites sinned by worshipping other gods and idols. Did these idols or gods save them from being destroyed by their enemies? No. Only the one true God had the power to save the Israelites, because He is omnipotent. Also, since He is omniscient and omnipresent, He knew when and where the Israelites needed help, and He could hear them crying out to Him in their distress. Out of His power, He raised judges and abided with them to deliver the Israelites out of the hands of their enemies.



Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

1. **What were the Israelites failures?** They didn't drive out Canaanites completely and they worshipped other gods.
2. **What was the cycle of sin for the Israelites?** They forgot about God, worshipped idols, were punished by God, cried out to God, God sent judges to save the people, but they forgot God again.
3. **What was the meaning of Othniel's name and how was this shown in his life?** His name means "Power of God". The Spirit of the LORD came upon him.
4. **What was special about Ehud and how did he use this for God?** He was left-handed. He used this special characteristic to help him defeat the king of Moab by using his left hand to kill him when others would normally use their right.
5. **What was special about Shamgar?** He used an ordinary tool to defeat the Philistines and achieved an extraordinary result through God's power and guidance.
6. **What was the difference between Barak and Deborah?** Deborah had courage and actively fought for God, while Barak was afraid to go on his own.
7. **Name one special characteristic you may have today.** Answers may vary.



Life Application

10 Minutes

1. BREAKING THE CYCLE OF SIN

[Hand out Life Application Worksheet #1, and then go over the introduction and the scenarios with the students. Afterwards, have the students complete the diagrams on their own. After the students have all completed both diagrams, ask for volunteers to come up to the front of the class and share how they plan to break their cycle of sin.]

Breaking the Cycle of Sin

Being subject to sin is like being under the weight of a net that keeps us from going anywhere (Heb 12:1). And worse yet, we often don't believe we're stuck in this net.

To break free requires a specific step that the Israelites missed in their life of faith during the period of the Judges, which was to keep setting higher standards and seeking to do better for God. The Israelites stopped short at the iron chariots that kept them from entering their allotted land.

Remind students that we must continue to improve and become better Christians every day. This means that when we sin, we must not only ask for forgiveness, but also overcome the sin by the power of prayer and aim for higher ground.

A Useful Vessel for God

The judges were not perfect but they were God-fearing, they were active in serving God, and they had a heart ready to be used by God. Today, students don't have to fight Philistines or kings of Moab. But how can they keep their faith and be able to serve actively in church?

Remind students that service starts with the willingness in their hearts. They have to desire to do better for God, and want to help others and to help the church grow. And from there they will see "special characteristics" or gifts bestowed to each of them that may help them serve God.

[Read the following scenarios with the students, and then discuss the questions that follow.]

Jonah and His Homework

Jonah hated doing his homework. He found out that he could still get average grades in class without doing his homework. So, every time his parents would ask him if he had any schoolwork to do, Jonah would lie and say that he had already finished it. And whenever he went to school, he would lie to his teacher and make an excuse or copy his friends' work.

Jonah knew that this was a sin, and he wanted to stop lying. But every time a new assignment came along, he dreaded it so much. And every time he lied, he would have to say another lie to cover it up again.

One day during a parent-teacher meeting, his parents found out that he had been lying to them. They scolded him strictly and demanded to see his homework. Jonah felt deeply sorry for lying to everyone and prayed to God to forgive him. When they found out, his RE teachers reminded Jonah that he should study hard in school just as if he were studying for God.

Jonah began to put more effort into finishing his homework. Whenever his parents asked and he hadn't finished his homework, Jonah would still feel tempted to lie. But instead, he would say a silent prayer in his heart asking God to give him the courage to tell the truth and do the right thing.

Slowly and surely, by God's power, Jonah started to live and study honestly, bringing glory to God.

Discussion Questions**1. When was Jonah able to stop lying?**

When he realized how serious his sin was and how his lies didn't just affect himself.

2. What would Jonah do every time he wanted to lie?

He would say a silent prayer asking for the courage to do the right thing.

Lisa's Curious Ears

Lisa always found it interesting to learn about other people's lives. She also found it more enjoyable when she could share what she heard with other people. The more exciting the story, the more excited she would be to share it. Lisa knew it wasn't right to gossip, but she loved being the "girl who knew everything."

Even when she didn't know a secret, she would pretend she did and make up little details. Every time she shared a little gossip, Lisa would feel guilty, but the feeling of attention was much stronger.

Lisa's best friend at school and at church was Lily. Lily decided to tell Lisa outright that all her gossiping was hurting people and that this couldn't be something that pleased God. When Lisa heard this, she felt the guilt again and agreed to pray with Lily to help her stop this bad habit. Lily would remind Lisa every time she was about to blurt out something about someone. And to give Lisa something different to talk about, Lily and Lisa started to read the Bible together after school.

After regular prayers and Bible reading together, Lisa found that her conversation topics had changed and that she no longer had the desire to listen to other people's secrets, let alone speak about them.

Discussion Questions**1. Did Lisa stop gossiping on her own? Who can help us break our cycles of sin today?**

No, she did not. Spiritual companions and those who can be spiritual watchmen for us—brothers and sisters at church, parents, siblings, church ministers—can help us break the cycle.

2. How do you think Lily felt before she confronted Lisa?

She must have been worried about how her best friend would react, but also determined to help Lisa do the right thing.

Ben and His Brother

Ben is ten years old and he has a younger brother, Tim, who is eight. From young, Ben felt as if his parents showed more care towards Tim than they did towards him. His mother would explain that Tim was younger and slower at doing things, so he needed their help and Ben's help. But Ben's jealousy would always get the better of him.

When his parents weren't around, Ben would push his brother around and call him names. He would unleash his anger—directed towards his parents and Tim—all on his poor brother. Every time, Ben's parents would come home and scold and discipline Ben for bullying his brother. But he thought that as long as Tim was getting so much attention, he had the right to act out, and he would continue to let out his frustration and anger on Tim.

One day on the way home from school, Ben saw Tim being bullied by some other kids. Suddenly, Ben saw what he was like every time he hurt and yelled at his brother. Ben felt overwhelmingly guilty and repented to God.

Ben prayed to God and asked God to teach him how to be a better older brother, according to God's will. That week, during RE class, the lesson was about Cain and Abel. Listening to the Bible story, Ben knew that God was telling him how dangerous anger could be. Ben made a promise to help Tim however he could and made sure to pray for Tim and his family every day.

Discussion Questions**1. How did Ben realize that he needed to break this cycle of anger?**

When he saw, through others' eyes, what it looked like to bully Tim and how helpless Tim appeared. He realized his responsibility given by God to be an older brother.

2. How did God help Ben overcome this sin?

God helped Ben overcome this sin by allowing him to learn the danger of anger through RE lessons and through witnessing Tim being bullied by others. Ben determined to overcome this sin by praying for Tim and his family, and by helping Tim whenever he could.

* * * * *

2. HOW CAN GOD USE ME?

God will always listen to our prayers, but we need to know when we need His help and do our best to seek Him when we are in trouble!

In the situations described below, give the student advice as to how he or she can be a servant of God.

[Hand out Life Application Worksheet #2 and give students time to complete it. After the students have completed it, ask volunteers to share their answers and discuss them with the class.]



Activity

Repentance Action Plan

10-15 Minutes

Objective: To remind the students what true repentance is about and to help them visualize the repentance process.

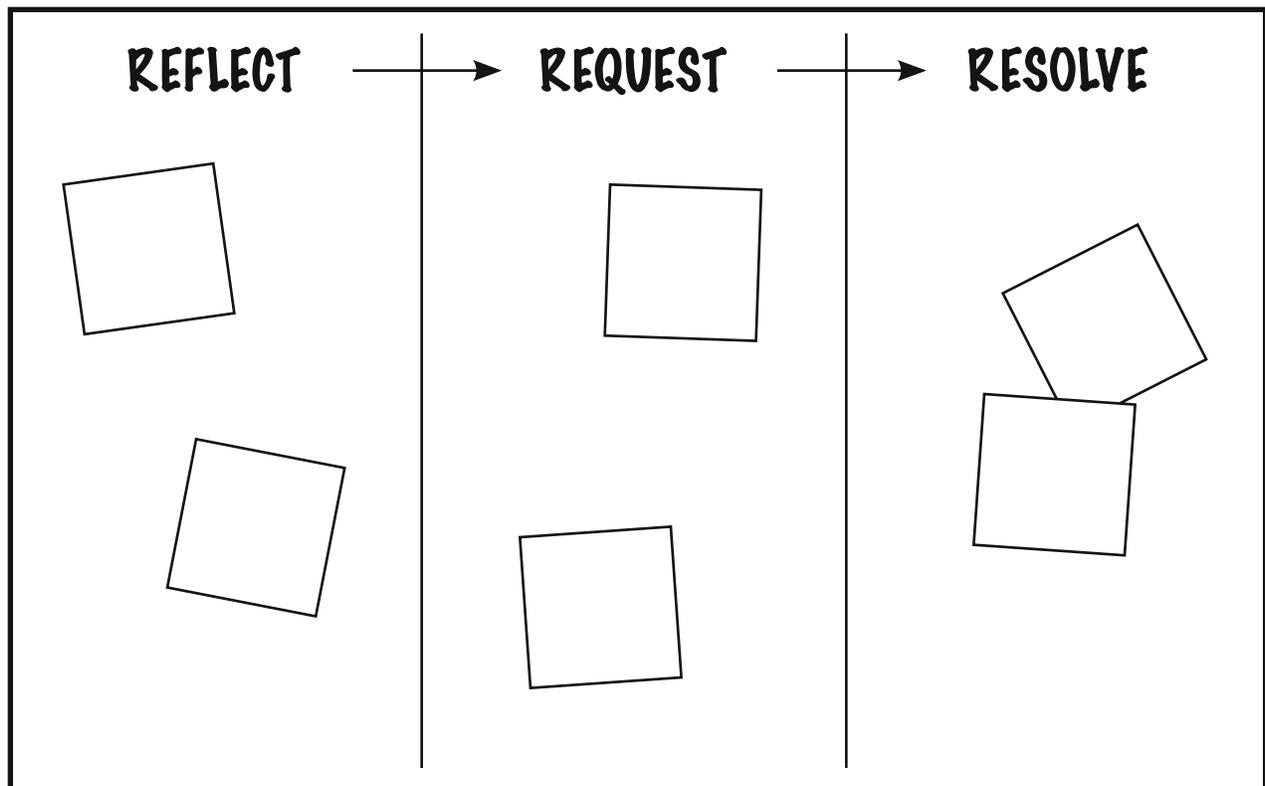
Materials

- Colored cardboard
- Post-Its
- Markers

[Note: For simplicity's sake, basic materials have been listed; however, for more permanent repentance plans, corkboards, Velcro, or magnetic whiteboards may be considered.]

Instructions

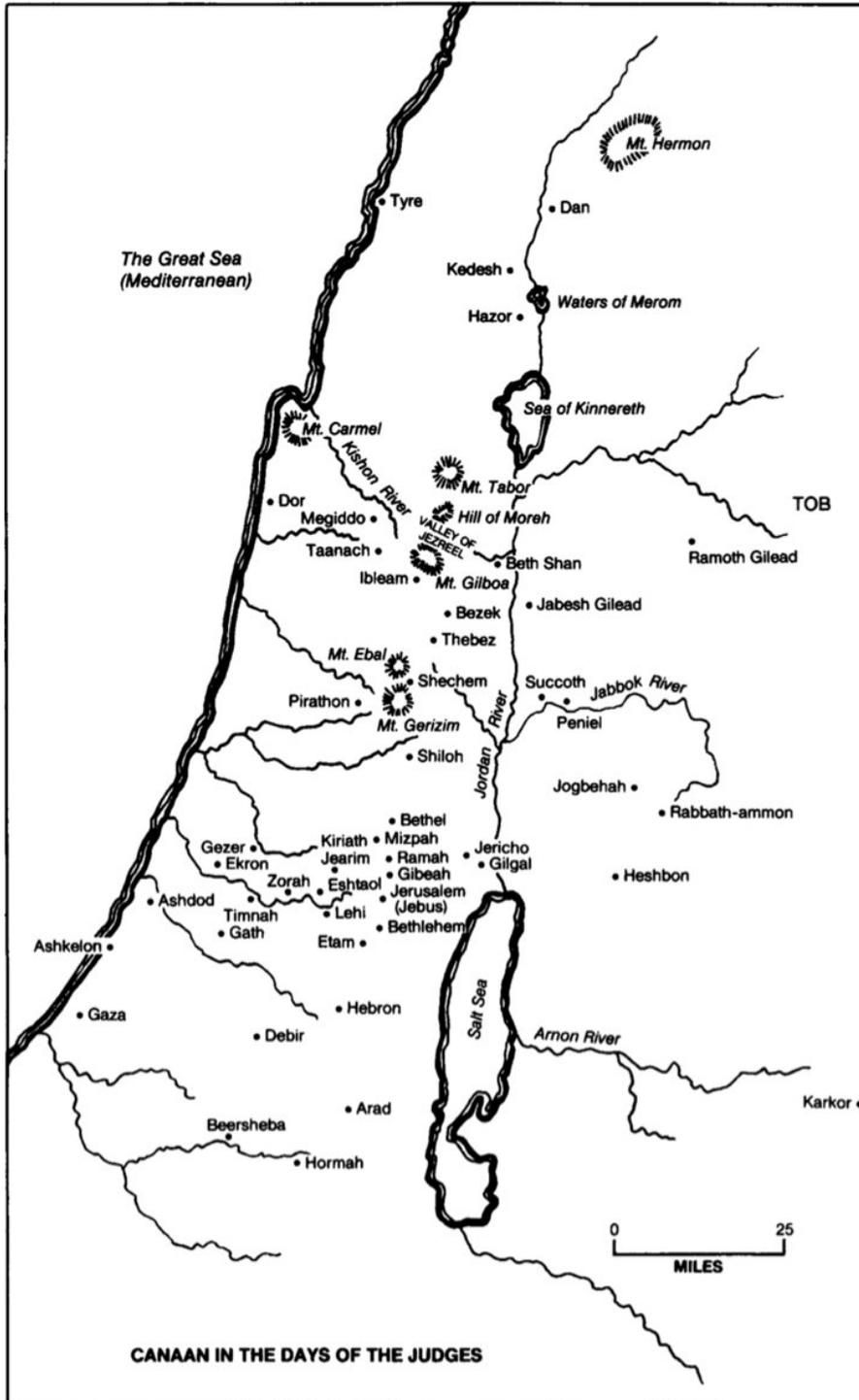
1. Split the cardboard into three columns.
2. Explain to the students the 3 R's: Reflect, Request, Resolve
 - a. Reflect: Think about what we have done wrong to others and to God
 - b. Request: Ask God to forgive our sin – say "Sorry"
 - c. Resolve: Make a spiritual goal to not return to the sin again; make practical steps to try not to commit the same sin again
3. Ensure that the students label the columns in the following order: Reflect → Request → Resolve. Ask them to use arrows to show how we must strive forward and constantly improve.
4. Give each of them Post-Its on which to write a reflection/request/resolution and explain the importance of following through with their repentance to God.
5. Use the poster as a reminder of what they have prayed about and of the importance of following through prayers with action.



THE ISRAELITES' FAILURE

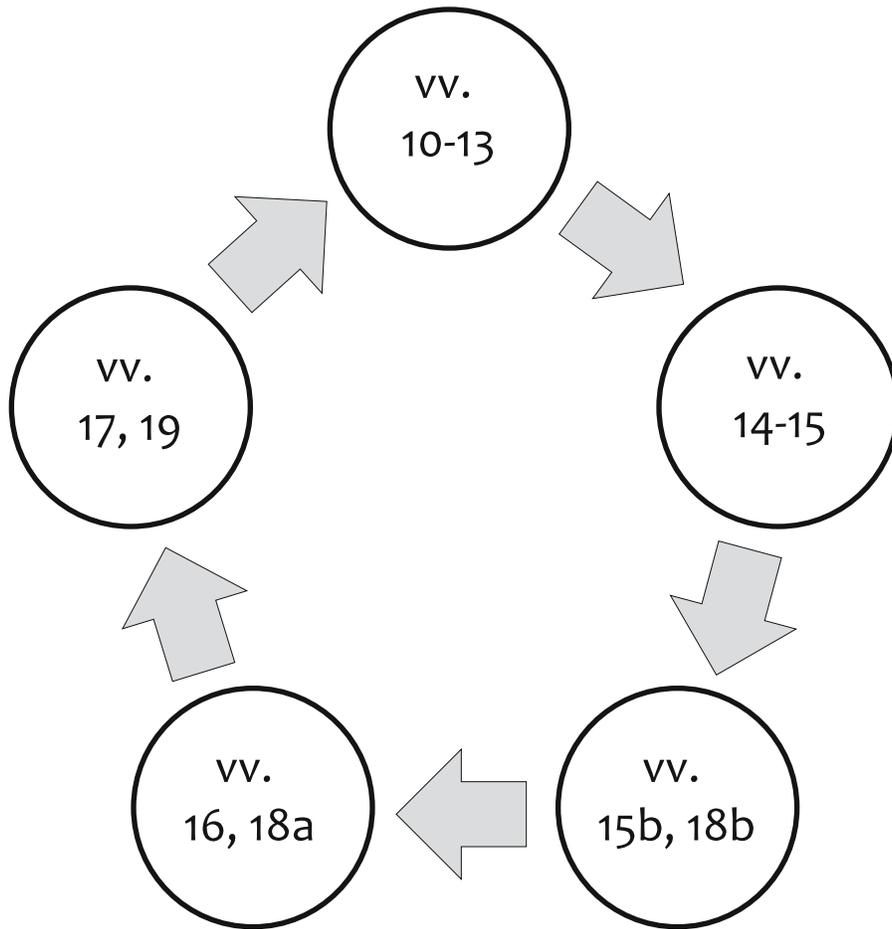
1. What was God's command to the Israelites?

2. Highlight every city where the Israelites failed this mission. (Hint: Judg 1:19-21, 27-35)



THE ISRAELITES' CYCLE OF SIN

Read Judges 2:10-19. Next to each sphere, write which stage that sphere is in the cycle of sin.



1. Each time the Israelites went back to their sins, did they get better or worse?

2. Why do you think the Israelites kept forgetting about God?

THE JUDGES' PROFILES

Fill in the charts with information about each judge.

Portrait	Name
	Bible Passage
	Special Characteristic(s)
	Achievement

Portrait	Name
	Bible Passage
	Special Characteristic(s)
	Achievement

Portrait	Name
	Bible Passage
	Special Characteristic(s)
	Achievement

Portrait	Name
	Bible Passage
	Special Characteristic(s)
	Achievement

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF SIN

1. Read the scenarios below, and then answer the questions that follow.

Jonah and His Homework

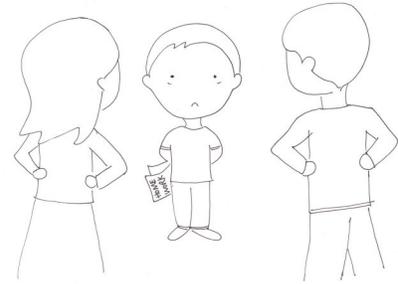
Jonah hated doing his homework. He found out that he could still get average grades in class without doing his homework. So, every time his parents would ask him if he had any schoolwork to do, Jonah would lie and say that he had already finished it. And whenever he went to school, he would lie to his teacher and make an excuse or copy his friends' work.

Jonah knew that this was a sin, and he wanted to stop lying. But every time a new assignment came along, he dreaded it so much. And every time he lied, he would have to say another lie to cover it up again.

One day during a parent-teacher meeting, his parents found out that he had been lying to them. They scolded him strictly and demanded to see his homework. Jonah felt deeply sorry for lying to everyone and prayed to God to forgive him. When they found out, his RE teachers reminded Jonah that he should study hard in school just as if he were studying for God.

Jonah began to put more effort into finishing his homework. Whenever his parents asked and he hadn't finished his homework, Jonah would still feel tempted to lie. But instead, he would say a silent prayer in his heart asking God to give him the courage to tell the truth and do the right thing.

Slowly and surely, by God's power, Jonah started to live and study honestly, bringing glory to God.



Discussion Questions

1. When was Jonah able to stop lying?

2. What would Jonah do every time he wanted to lie?

Lisa's Curious Ears

Lisa always found it interesting to learn about other people's lives. She also found it more enjoyable when she could share what she heard with other people. The more exciting the story, the more excited she would be to share it. Lisa knew it wasn't right to gossip, but she loved being the "girl who knew everything."

Even when she didn't know a secret, she would pretend she did and make up little details. Every time she shared a little gossip, Lisa would feel guilty, but the feeling of attention was much stronger.

Lisa's best friend at school and at church was Lily. Lily decided to tell Lisa outright that all her gossiping was hurting people and that this couldn't be something that pleased God. When Lisa heard this,

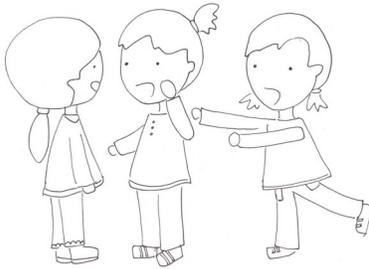
she felt the guilt again and agreed to pray with Lily to help her stop this bad habit. Lily would remind Lisa every time she was about to blurt out something about someone. And to give Lisa something different to talk about, Lily and Lisa started to read the Bible together after school.

After regular prayers and Bible reading together, Lisa found that her conversation topics had changed and that she no longer had the desire to listen to other people's secrets, let alone speak about them.

Discussion Questions

1. Did Lisa stop gossiping on her own? Who can help us break our cycles of sin today?

2. How do you think Lily felt before she confronted Lisa?



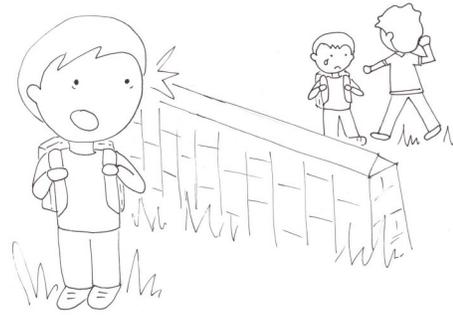
Ben and His Brother

Ben is ten years old and he has a younger brother, Tim, who is eight. From young, Ben felt as if his parents showed more care towards Tim than they did towards him. His mother would explain that Tim was younger and slower at doing things, so he needed their help and Ben's help. But Ben's jealousy would always get the better of him.

When his parents weren't around, Ben would push his brother around and call him names. He would unleash his anger—directed towards his parents and Tim—all on his poor brother. Every time, Ben's parents would come home and scold and discipline Ben for bullying his brother. But he thought that as long as Tim was getting so much attention, he had the right to act out, and he would continue to let out his frustration and anger on Tim.

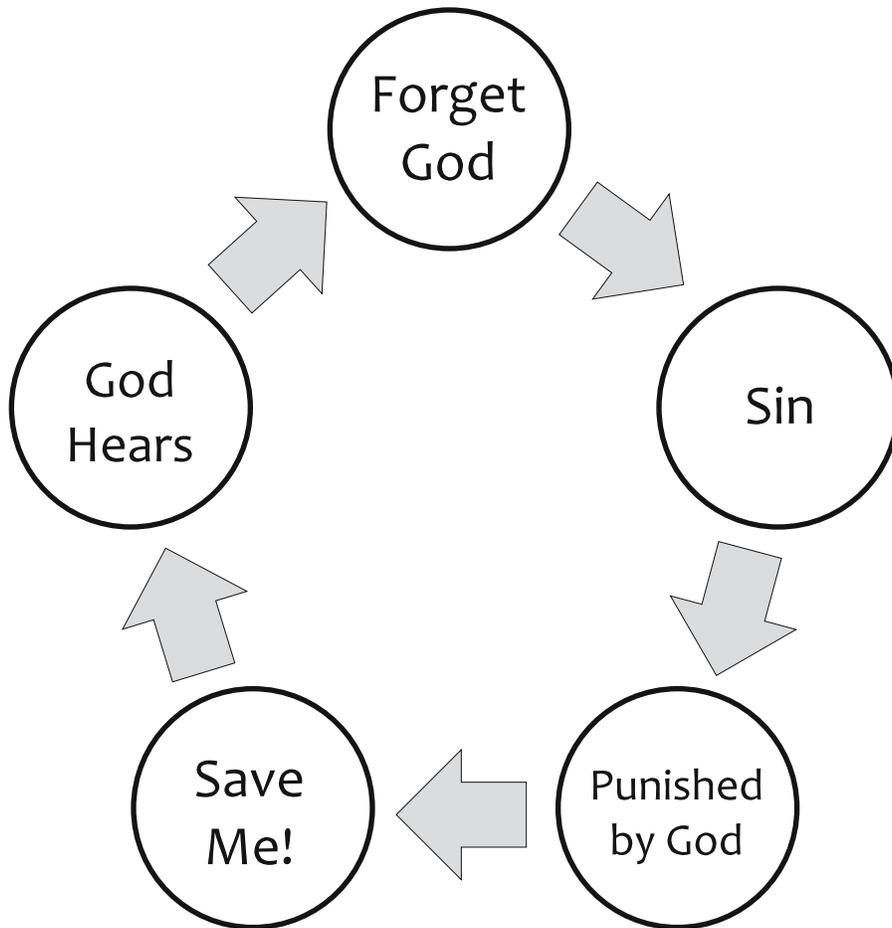
One day on the way home from school, Ben saw Tim being bullied by some other kids. Suddenly, Ben saw what he was like every time he hurt and yelled at his brother. Ben felt overwhelmingly guilty and repented to God.

Ben prayed to God and asked God to teach him how to be a better older brother, according to God's will. That week, during RE class, the lesson was about Cain and Abel. Listening to the Bible story, Ben knew that God was telling him how dangerous anger could be. Ben made a promise to help Tim however he could and made sure to pray for Tim and his family every day.

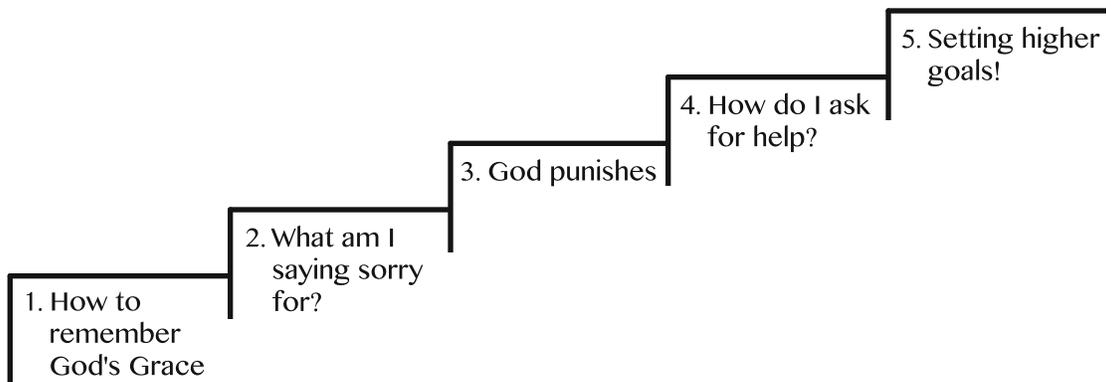
**Discussion Questions**

- 1. How did Ben realize that he needed to break this cycle of anger?**
- 2. How did God help Ben overcome this sin?**

2. Next to each sphere, write a past/current example of a cycle of sin you face:



3. On top of each step, write your action plan to break the cycle of sin.



"HOW CAN GOD USE ME?"

God will always listen to our prayers, but we need to know when we need His help and do our best to seek Him when we are in trouble!

In the situations described below, give the student advice as to how he or she can be a servant of God.

The Young Servant	How Do I Serve?
My friends at school keep asking me if I want to go to play at their place on Saturday. They're also Christian...	
The stationery cabinet in our RE class is always messy and I can never find the colored pencils I want...	
My RE classmate is sick this week and can't come to church...	
Lunch has just started at church, and we're all lining up for food!	
There's a tied up garbage bag next to the kitchen door at church. I wonder why it's there; it's going to stink up the whole place!	
A church visitor is sitting next to me with a closed Bible during Sabbath service, and it doesn't look like she knows how to flip to the passages in the Bible...	

E2 Year 2 Book 3 Lesson 2—God Saves the Israelites Through the Judges

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Weekly Bible Reading: _____

Bible Reading: Check each box when you complete that day's reading.

Prayer: Check each box after you pray to God that day.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Read							
Pray							

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____

2. _____

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse. Judges 2:18a

A. True Repentance in the Bible

For the questions below, first match the verses from the Verse Bank to the person described, identify the person, and then state whether you think theirs was a sincere or insincere repentance.

Verse Bank

1 Kings 21:25-27; Jonah 3:5-10; Acts 2:36-41; 1 Samuel 15:24-26; Genesis 3:9-12

1. I was afraid of what others would think of me if I didn't get God's approval, so I repented to the prophet and asked him to come with me.

Verse: _____

Who was repenting? _____

Was it a (sincere) or (insincere) repentance?

2. When we realized that we had done wrong as a church, the pastor asked us all to fast and pray—every man, woman, and child—hoping that God might forgive us.

Verse: _____

Who was repenting? _____

Was it a (sincere) or (insincere) repentance?

3. When we realized the sins we carried and our past ways of unbelief, our hearts were cut and moved to do the right thing. We repented and were baptized into Christ.

Verse: _____

Who was repenting? _____

Was it a (sincere) or (insincere) repentance?

4. After the Lord sent a prophet to tell me of my many sins, I immediately tore my clothes, put on sackcloth and fasted in repentance.

Verse: _____

Who was repenting? _____

Was it a (sincere) or (insincere) repentance?

5. When God asked me about my sin, I did my best to clear my name by telling Him about the others who caused me to behave that way and asking Him to see that it wasn't entirely my fault.

Verse: _____

Who was repenting? _____

Was it a (sincere) or (insincere) repentance?

B. "Judges Wanted" Advertisement

Write or draw an advertisement in the box below calling for all people of Israel to serve God, and include what qualities God would consider necessary to be a useful judge.

LESSON 3

GOD'S MIGHTY WORK THROUGH GIDEON

OBJECTIVES

1. To learn that even though we may feel small, we can still be a mighty warrior of God.
2. To understand that we are all vessels for God's use, but we must first destroy any idols in our lives before we can be used.
3. To learn to trust in God's guidance so that He can mold us according to His purpose.

MEMORY VERSE

"The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped."

(Psalm 28:7a)

PRAYER

1. Thank You, Lord, for gathering us here today to worship You.
2. Even though we are young, we know that You can still use us to do great things.
3. Please guide us through today's lesson as we learn how You used Gideon and his 300 men for Your mighty works.



Overview

1. The Midianites Oppress the Israelites

- The Lord Appears Before Gideon
- Israel Prepares to Fight Midian

2. Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs—One True God

3. Life Application

- "Destruction of the Altar"
- "Vessels of God"

4. Activity—Mold Me



Background Knowledge for Teachers

The Midianites

The Midianites, desert people descended from Abraham's second wife Keturah (Gen 25:1-2), were in constant conflict with Israel. During the period the Israelites wandered the desert, they fought the Midianites and came close to destroying them completely (Num 31:1-20). However, surviving remnants of the tribe repopulated and began oppressing Israel.

In Gideon's time, the Midianites and Amalekites were camel-riding nomads. They are believed to be the first people to domesticate the camel in large numbers, which gave them greatly increased desert mobility. They preferred to attack the Israelites when harvest was ripe, crossing the Jordan River into central Canaan to plunder and destroy, causing a shortage of food in Israel. Their tactics were largely successful, and the Israelites cried out to God in their misery. In response, God raised up Gideon to deliver them.

Gideon

The name Gideon means "destroyer" or "mighty warrior". Gideon was the son of Joash, from the clan of Abiezer in the tribe of Manasseh. As is the pattern throughout the Book of Judges, the Israelites had again turned away from God following forty years of peace that had been bought by Deborah's victory over Canaan. Now, God once more allowed Israel to be attacked by the neighboring Midianites and Amalekites. He then listened to the Israelites' cry for help, and chose Gideon to free them from the attacks and to lead them back from their worship of idols.

The Midianites never recovered from the attack, and the land was at peace for forty years during Gideon's lifetime. He returned home and eventually had seventy sons by many wives. He died an old man and was

buried by his father in Ophrah. His victory over the Midianites was remembered for many generations as the "day of Midian" (Isa 9:4).

Threshing Wheat

Gideon happened to be threshing wheat in a winepress when the Angel of the Lord first appeared to him. Threshing wheat was the process of separating the grains of wheat from the useless outer shell called the chaff. Traditionally, farmers would thresh their wheat in large areas outdoors so they could toss the beaten wheat into the air, and the chaff would be blown away by the wind. If Gideon had done this, however, he would have been an easy target for the bands of raiders who had overrun the land. To protect himself from the Midianites, Gideon was forced to thresh his wheat in a winepress, likely in a pit that was out of sight of passers-by.



Reaching Out to Your Students

You're too young! You're too small! You don't know how!

At their age, your students may have heard these words countless times while attempting to help others. However, with God, no one is ever "too young," "too small," or "too weak," especially children! In fact, when Jesus was on earth, He respected children and called on others to follow their simple faith (Mt 18:3-4, 10). Explain to your students that Jesus did not come to earth as an adult. He entered our world as a baby, just like they did, in Bethlehem. The Lord knows what it's like to be a child, because He had been one, too. He knows and cares about the fears, hopes, and desires of children, and He responds to children with acceptance and love.

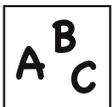


Opener

5 Minutes

Encourage your students to think of ways that the Lord can use them. Instead of dwelling on the things they can't do, the students can focus on the things they can do. Help them think of ways they can serve the Lord at home, at church, and at school with this simple exercise.

1. Draw three wide columns on the board and label them, "Home," "Church," and "School."
2. Give students a minute or two to think about all the things they can do to serve the Lord in these three locations.
3. Have the students come up individually (or several at a time, depending on your class size) to write down all the things of which they can think.
4. Have a quick class sharing about all the things they have written down. The students may be surprised to see how much they can already do for the Lord. They will find that no one is ever too young or too weak to serve the Lord. God can use the weakest and smallest in mighty ways, for He is the origin of all strength.



Vocabulary

winepress: a place to crush grapes and make wine

Baal: a man-made god that people in biblical times idolized and worshipped instead of God

dew: small drops of water that form on the ground overnight

rout: to defeat decisively; to drive out



Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

FOR TEACHERS

If you'd like, supplement the story with visuals, such as pictures of a winepress, threshers, or grain. Hand out the Bible Discovery worksheet to the students now, and allow time for the students to fill out as you go through the lesson. The answers have been underlined in this section.

The Midianites Oppress the Israelites

In today's story, we'll be learning about a man named Gideon. Now, during Gideon's time, the Israelites were being oppressed by a group of people called the Midianites. There was no peace in the land because of the Midianites, who were both powerful and numerous. They would oppress the Israelites by destroying their land and ruining their crops so that they had no food, which forced the Israelites to live in caves and mountains to avoid these ambushes. In addition to ruining all of the crops that the Israelites had planted, the Midianites would also kill their sheep, cattle, and donkeys. As a result, the Israelites were incredibly troubled, poor, and starving, until they had no choice but to call out to the Lord for help.

The Lord Appears to Gideon

After hearing their pleas for help, the Lord chose someone to lead them out of their misery. What kind of a person do you think God chose to rescue His people? [Allow students to make suggestions.] Someone who was very strong and mighty? Perhaps an experienced soldier? Or someone who was accustomed to giving commands or forming smart strategies? Well, the man God chose was someone named Gideon. Let's turn to Judges 6:1-6 and read it together.

Now, before we move on, does anyone know what threshing wheat means? Or, do you know what a winepress is? [Allow students to answer if they can.] Well, threshing wheat is a process where farmers separate the inner grain of wheat from the outer shell, which no one eats. This outer shell is called the "chaff". In biblical times, farmers got rid of it by beating the wheat and letting the wind blow the chaff away, because it was very light. A winepress was normally a pit, or inner cellar.

Let's turn back to the passage and read verses 11-12 together. How did the Angel first greet Gideon? What did He call him? He called him a "mighty man of valor." What a strange name to be calling Gideon! Here he was, threshing wheat in his cellar in order to try and hide from his enemies. Gideon probably wasn't feeling very much like a mighty warrior, and others probably didn't see him as a mighty warrior, either. And yet this Angel came along and called him one!

Let's continue reading verse 13. Now remember, the Israelites had not seen any of God's miracles for more than two hundred years, so it is only natural that Gideon should wonder why God hadn't performed the same sort of miracles to free them from the Midianites. But why is it that they hadn't seen God's power in so long? Let's skip back a bit and read verses 7-10. The answer to our question is in the very last sentence: The Israelites stopped obeying God. They had turned their worship to false idols, and had stopped following His laws and teachings, which He gave to them through Moses. It was because of this that God had allowed the Midianites to oppress His people—in order to remind them of His presence.

However, what was Gideon really asking when he questioned where all the miracles of God he had heard about were?

- He was really questioning if God really was true and if all the old stories really happened.
 - In other words, "Who are You, God?"
 - Does this remind you of someone else who asked this same question? Paul asked "Who are You, Lord" in Acts 26:15.
- What does this question mean to us today?
 - We should strive to know our Lord personally, trust in Him, obey Him, and live a life that can enable us to carry out the mission that He has entrusted us to finish.

Let's now continue our story in verses 14-16. Gideon thought of himself as weak, the least of the least. Not only was his tribe very small, but his clan and his family were also considered very lowly, and he himself was not a great man. But do you remember how the Angel of the Lord greeted Gideon? He called Gideon a mighty man of valor. He called him this because the Lord saw past Gideon's outer appearance and status—a lowly man in a lowly family in one of the smallest tribes—and instead saw what Gideon was capable of. He saw what Gideon could become, and what Gideon would be able to do for the Him. He knew that through Gideon, He would save the Israelites.

FOR TEACHERS

Give students time to finish filling in Section A. Make sure all the students have finished the section before moving on.

Gideon Destroys the Altar of Baal

When the Angel of the Lord spoke to Gideon, He told him to tear down his father's altar of Baal and the wooden

image beside it, and set up an altar to God and make a sacrifice using the wood from the image. That night, with the courage from God, Gideon did as he had been instructed. When everyone woke up in the morning to find the altar and image torn down, they all shouted for Joash to bring out his son Gideon so they could kill him. However, Joash defended Gideon's actions, telling Baal to plead for himself if he were truly a god.

FOR TEACHERS

Give students time to finish filling in Section B. Make sure all the students have finished the section before moving on.

Israel Prepares to Fight Midian

At that time, the Midianites and Amalekites all gathered together in the Valley of Jezreel. But Gideon was not afraid. The Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon and he sent messengers throughout Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they all came up to meet him. The Midianites had finally gathered for open battle against the Israelites. Let's continue the story and read verses 36-40 together. Gideon clearly still wasn't sure about being a "man of valor", so he asked God for two signs: first, to have the morning dew collect only on the fleece while the ground around it remained dry, and second, to have the fleece remain dry with dew on the ground all around it the following morning. Only after these signs did Gideon rise to march against the Midianites.

Let's continue the story in Judges 7:1-2. Just as Gideon was probably feeling very confident in himself, God told him something very unexpected—there were too many men! With so many, the Israelites might attribute their victory to themselves instead of to God, so He told Gideon to reduce the numbers. First, He told Gideon to tell anyone who was afraid of the battle to leave. With this, the number of men was reduced from twenty-two thousand to ten thousand. But this was still too many! So, God

ordered Gideon to have the men drink water from a stream. There, God ordered Gideon to separate the men: those who got down on their knees and put their face to the water to drink were put together in one group, while those who used their hands to scoop up the water to drink were placed in another group. Of the latter, there were only three hundred men, and it was these three hundred men that God allowed Gideon to keep!

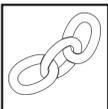
With only three hundred men compared to the twenty-two thousand he had at the beginning of the day, Gideon's confidence probably went down quite a bit. Actually, he was very afraid! But God knew this, because He sent Gideon to the enemy camp to spy on them. And what did Gideon hear when he was there? Let's read verses 13-14. Gideon's very enemies were foretelling their own loss! This was truly God's work! Now Gideon had full confidence that God was with him, and that victory was assured.

Let's finish the story and read verses 15-22. The Israelites didn't even need to draw their own swords to win the fight! This was truly and undeniably God's own work. It was through Gideon, with this miracle, that God delivered the Israelites from the oppression of Midian.

Later on, Gideon—the same man who hid away in his winepress, and thought himself the least of the least—routed the Midianites from the land with his small army, and set up a peace that would last in Israel for forty years.

FOR TEACHERS

Give students time to finish filling in Section C. Make sure all the students have finished the section before continuing. You may choose to go over all the answers once again, or complete a lesson review at the end of the lesson.



Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

From Gideon's story, we discovered that...

- Gideon found favor in God's eyes, and was even called a "mighty man of valor" by Him.
When we live a life that is pleasing to God and to others, God can use us as vessels to do His great work.
- We do not need to be afraid, even if we do not think we have enough experience to do His work. **The Lord God will help and strengthen us, as long as we trust Him with all of our hearts.**
- Despite human preconceptions, three hundred was all God needed to defeat the Midianites. **God has a purpose in everything that He does, and we must obey His lead, even if it doesn't make sense to us.**
- The Israelites didn't even need to draw their swords to defeat the Midianites. God can make the seemingly impossible, possible. **It was God who gave the Israelites the victory!**

God is looking for Gideons among us today—men and women of faith who are willing to step out and do great things for God. God is not looking for perfect people. He is merely looking for people who want to be molded and made for His service. Gideon gives us all hope that we, too, can be mighty warriors, even when we think we are weak and powerless. Through Christ, we can be more than conquerors! People of fear make excuses. People of faith overcome fears and feelings, and it will amaze us when we realize what we can do for God and what God can do for us

Gideon trusted in God wholeheartedly. Despite his inexperience and small army, God delivered Gideon and His people from the hands of the Midianites. Likewise, the Lord Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah when He came to this world to save us from sin and grant us salvation. The salvation that the Lord Jesus brought to us is a manifestation of God's love. It is through Jesus that we have the hope of everlasting life in His glorious kingdom. He is the one true God and our Savior who will help us, as long as we trust in Him, obey His commands, and live a Christian life.



Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

1. **What nation was oppressing the Israelites during the time of our story?** The Midianites.
2. **What were these people doing to the Israelites?** They were ruining their crops and killing off their cattle/animals.
3. **What name did the Angel of the Lord use to greet Gideon?** Mighty man of valor.
4. **Why hadn't the Israelites seen any of God's power or miracles for such a long time?** They had turned aside from His laws and worshipped idols instead.
5. **What two signs did Gideon ask for before battling the Midianites?** First, that dew be on the fleece he had placed on the floor, but not on the ground around it. Second, that dew be on the ground all around the fleece, but not on the fleece itself.
6. **How many men did Gideon initially have? How many did he have when he went to battle?** Twenty-two thousand. Three hundred.
7. **Why did God say that Gideon had too many men?** Because with so many men, they might attribute the victory to themselves instead of to God.
8. **What steps did God take to reduce the number of men in Gideon's army?** He first told Gideon to allow those who were afraid to leave, then He told Gideon to ask the remaining men to drink from a stream. Those who scooped up the water from their hands to drink stayed to fight, but those who bent down on their knees and put their faces to the water to drink were sent home.
9. **What tools did Gideon and his men use in the battle?** They brought torches, pitchers, and trumpets, and shouted with very loud voices.

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. False; He called him a mighty man of valor.
2. True
3. True
4. False; He allowed Gideon to use three hundred men.
5. Mighty man of valor
6. First, that dew be on the fleece he had placed on the floor, but not on the ground around it. Second, that dew be on the ground all around the fleece, but not on the fleece itself.
7. Because with so many men, they might attribute the victory to themselves instead of to God.
8. He first told Gideon to allow those who were afraid to leave, then He told Gideon to ask the remaining men to drink from a stream. Those who scooped up the water from their hands to drink stayed to fight, but those who bent down on their knees and put their faces to the water to drink were sent home.
9. Answers may vary. Possible answers: Television shows, music, movies, books, our friends, the Internet, etc. We can destroy these idols by limiting our time with them and using the time to worship God instead.



Life Application

10 Minutes

1. DESTRUCTION OF THE ALTAR

[Hand out Life Application Worksheet #1 to the students. Have the students complete the first section, and then discuss their answers as a class. Once the first section has been finished, move on to the next section. Ask the students to read each scenario and write down the verse that follows.]

Before He even began to gather an army to face the Midianites, God gave Gideon a very important task. Let's read Judges 6:25-27. How very strange! Gideon's very first task was not to battle the Midianites, but to destroy Baal's altar.

In the Bible, there are many verses that teach us about the harm of worshipping idols. **Read the following verses and write down what each verse teaches us about why worshipping idols is wrong.**

1. Ezekiel 14:3

"Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts, and put before them that which causes them to stumble into iniquity. Should I let Myself be inquired of at all by them?"

Worshipping idols is a sin.

2. Deuteronomy 32:21

"They have provoked Me to jealousy by what is not God; They have moved Me to anger by their foolish idols. But I will provoke them to jealousy by those who are not a nation; I will move them to anger by a foolish nation."

Worshipping idols angers God.

3. 1 Chronicles 16:25-27

"For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised; He is also to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before Him; Strength and gladness are in His place."

God deserves our praise, but worshipping idols causes us to forget God and His sovereignty. There are no other gods that should come before Him.

4. Hosea 4:12

"My people ask counsel from their wooden idols, and their staff informs them. For the spirit of harlotry has caused them to stray, and they have played the harlot against their God."

Worshipping idols causes us to stray from God.

5. Psalm 106:36

"They served their idols, which became a snare to them."

Idols deceive us. Satan uses idols as a trap to lure us away from God and into the world.

In our lives, we may not physically worship idols made of gold or silver, but we may find ourselves placing other things above God. This is just like worshipping idols, because we may spend more time watching TV or going on the Internet than praying or reading the Bible. So, how do we tear down our idols?

- Step 1: Recognize that idols have no value in the eyes of God.
- Step 2: Recognize that worshipping idols is sin.
- Step 3: Repent and turn away from idols.
- Step 4: Destroy our idols.

Read each scenario, and then turn to the verse that follows and write it down in the space provided.

Scenario 1

On his 12th birthday, Rudy was given a smartphone. He was so excited to actually own one since all his friends at school already had one. He couldn't wait to start playing games and surfing the Internet! On the first day, Rudy spent two hours playing with all the options on his new phone and downloading all the latest applications. In the coming weeks, he started to spend more and more time on his phone, playing games and chatting with his friends.

Toward the end of the school semester, Rudy's parents found out that his grades were suffering. They weren't sure what had happened since he was usually a diligent student, but they suspected it was caused by his newfound addiction to his phone. They also realized that Rudy was spending less time with God. His religious education teacher told his parents that he was often distracted during religious education classes and frequently checking his phone, even during class and services. His parents decided to have a chat with Rudy.

When they sat down with him, they explained to him that although he was not bowing or offering things to his phone, he was still treating it like an idol, because it made him forget about God. Rudy had not even realized the problem until his parents pointed it out to him, and he reluctantly agreed to cut down his phone time. Rudy and his parents worked out a timetable where he would only be allowed to use his phone once he had completed his homework and his Bible studies. After a couple months, Rudy found that he was voluntarily spending less and less time on it, sometimes even forgetting it completely. He also realized that his relationship with God had improved, and that his time at church was once again meaningful and precious to him.

Eze 14:6

"Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Repent, turn away from your idols, and turn your faces away from all your abominations."'"

Scenario 2

Charlene was the "new kid" at school. She had no friends and was really lonely. One day, she met a pair of girls in the lunchroom who invited her to sit with them. Charlene was so overjoyed! She couldn't believe this was happening. They were the coolest friends in the world. The three of them started to hang out a lot, going to the mall after school. They always went to look for fashion bargains and listen to the newest music.

Charlene felt right at home with her new friends, but her church friends started noticing that Charlene would miss Friday night services. They weren't sure why, but thought it might have something to do with the new friends Charlene had talked about so often. One day, two of Charlene's church friends spoke to Charlene in private and told her how genuinely concerned they were. Charlene had no idea that her new school friends were having such a profound effect on her. Charlene realized that she had been slacking in her Bible reading and devotions to God. Charlene knew she had to give up something.

Her church friends prayed with Charlene on one Saturday afternoon. After the prayer, Charlene knew that she had to turn things around and spend less time with her friends at school. In the coming weeks, Charlene started to associate less and less with her newfound friends. She would still eat lunch with them at school, but she told them that she had to keep up with her studies during the weekdays. After a month, not only was she no longer feeling lonely at school, but she also felt that she was now a lot closer to God than she had been before.

1 Thess 1:9

"For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God."

2. VESSELS OF GOD

[Hand out Life Application Worksheet #2 to the students. Go over the scenarios and the following questions as a class.]

Do you know what a vessel is? A vessel is a container, such as a vase or bowl, which holds liquids or other contents. In the case of the Bible, a "vessel" is often used to describe someone whom God chooses to use for His purpose. Gideon was one such example of God's chosen vessels. However, Gideon thought that he was not strong enough and not worthy to serve the Lord. In the end, the Lord had a great purpose for Gideon, which was to defeat the Midianites and restore peace to Israel. Likewise, we are crafted specifically for His service, to fulfill our purpose that God has planned for us.

*"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us."
(2 Cor 4:7)*

Read the scenario below and then answer the questions that follow.

Trevor grew up in True Jesus Church, Denver and always loved to be around church. He loved going to RE classes and listening to sermons. He is an avid linguist and speaks Spanish fluently. One day, his J1 teacher asked him if he would like to start interpreting Friday night sermons into Spanish since recently there had been many Spanish-speaking friends attending services. Even though Trevor knows how to speak Spanish, he has always shied away from public speaking and giving presentations. He also felt that he was not good enough and was afraid that he would say the wrong words on the pulpit. He told his teacher that he had to think and pray about it. What if he made a mistake or two in front of the congregation and they laughed at him? What if the sermon speaker used a really hard word that he had never heard before? Trevor was really confused and didn't know what to do.

Trevor decided to talk to his RE teacher and tell her that he was very nervous. She told him to pray about it for a few days and see how he felt afterward. So, for the next few days, Trevor prayed to God for guidance, explaining how he felt and why he was so doubtful. Towards the end of the week, he realized that he felt a lot more calm and comforted about the decision. In fact, he also felt a little more courage and strength about the whole matter. So, on Saturday, Trevor told his RE teacher that he would like to give it a try. After all, God was by his side!

- 1. Have you ever felt like Trevor before? What feelings did you experience?** Answers may vary. Feelings may include anxiety, excitement, shyness, fear, nervousness, etc.
- 2. If you were Trevor's friend, what kind of advice would you tell him?** Answers may vary. You could suggest that he pray and ask God for help, fast for God's guidance, attend more Spanish-language and public speaking workshops, interpret in front of a few friends, etc.
- 3. Refer to 2 Corinthians 4:7. How can this verse encourage those who are starting out in holy work?** We may think that we are useless and unworthy to serve in church, but the reality is that the Lord knows what is in store for us. We just have to trust Him and let Him lead so that He may utilize us to serve Him for His great purpose.
- 4. From a spiritual standpoint, what can we do to gain more courage?** Pray and ask God for more courage. Read the Bible for spiritual encouragement. Ask others to pray with you.
- 5. Have you ever wondered what God's purpose is for you? What must we first do in order to fully know His plan for our lives?** Answers may vary. We must be willing to follow Him, obey His word, and live a Christian life.

To truly realize our potential in the Lord's eyes, we must empty ourselves as vessels and submit ourselves to the Lord. When we trust Him wholeheartedly, He will guide us and allow us to become great workers for Him. Many times when we are asked to perform tasks that are beyond us, such as in Gideon's case, we grow fearful and tend to shy away because of our lack of confidence. However, the antidote to our anxiety is to simply trust God, for He will take care of everything and guide our service.



Activity

Mold Me

10-15 Minutes

Objective: To reinforce that God has a purpose for each and every one of us and will mold us for His great work.

Materials

- Five or six tubs of modeling clay
- List of useful objects

Preparation

Before class, come up with a list of tools or every day objects that people can use to help others. Examples may include the Bible, a pencil, a notebook, a broom, a pot, etc. There are endless possibilities, but come up with objects that students in your class will be able to mold.

Instructions

1. Divide the students into even groups.
2. Give each group a tub of modeling clay.
3. Ask one student in each group to come up to the front of the class, and show them one object from the list. Students are to go back to their group and try to mold the object for their teammates to guess.
4. When a team has correctly guessed the object, the members of that team must share with the class at least one way that people can use that object to help others.
5. If no team correctly guesses the object within a reasonable amount of time (to be determined by the teacher), then the teacher can simply stop and either move on to the next object, or tell the students what the object was. If the teacher chooses to tell the students the object, the teacher can ask for volunteers to share how they, or someone they know, can use the object to help others.
6. Continue, with a new object each round, for as long as time allows. Remember to rotate the students that mold the object so that each student gets to mold.

GIDEON: A MIGHTY MAN OF VALOR

A. The Lord Calls Gideon

During the time of Gideon, Israel was currently being oppressed by the _____. These people would _____ their land and _____ their crops, making it difficult for the Israelites to find food.

In response, an Angel of the Lord came to call for Gideon. The Angel of the Lord called Gideon a _____. However, Gideon was actually someone who was also very afraid. At the time, he was threshing _____ in a winepress, hiding from the raiders.

Instead of immediately accepting his calling, Gideon questioned why he had not seen any of God's _____ in his lifetime. Today, we should strive to know our Lord Jesus _____. We must _____ in Him and _____ Him so that we can accomplish what He has asked us to do.

Gideon also saw himself as a _____ person, and did not understand how God could save the Israelites through him. By calling to him and asking him to serve boldly, God was challenging Gideon to view himself as God viewed him.

B. Gideon Timidly Works for the Lord

Gideon might have been timid, but he was willing to obey and trust in God.

God instructed him to tear down his father's _____ of Baal and the wooden _____ beside it, and set up an altar to _____ and make a _____ using the wood from the image.

So, Gideon did as instructed. However, Gideon was still timid in his calling, so he tore down the altar at _____, when no one could see him do it.

Gideon may not have been a mighty man up to that time, but later, he fought enemies in the broad daylight. God will always encourage us to become the type of person He has destined us to be. God called Gideon a "mighty man of valor" because that is what Gideon would become.

C. Gideon Bravely Conquers His Foes

Now, Gideon was ready to fight the Midianites and the _____.

Everyone gathered together and was ready to fight, but Gideon asked God for two _____. He was still unsure about his leading role. God answered with the signs, and Gideon was ready to fight.

Still, there was one more thing Gideon had to do before going into battle. Gideon had gathered _____ men, but God did not want that many to go into battle, unless the _____ boasted that they had won the battle on their own.

In the end, only _____ men went into battle, and without even lifting their _____, they were able to win the battle. God's glorious work was definitely demonstrated in this victory, and through _____, God delivered the Israelites from the hands of the Midianites. From that day, they enjoyed _____ for forty years.

God will never use a secret saint to win His battles. We need to be bold and brave, and take our stand, regardless of cost or consequences.

DESTRUCTION OF THE ALTAR

Before He even began to gather an army to face the Midianites, God gave Gideon a very important task. Let's read Judges 6:25-27. How very strange! Gideon's very first task was not to battle the Midianites, but to destroy Baal's altar.

In the Bible, there are many verses that teach us about the harm of worshipping idols. Read the following verses and write down what each verse teaches us about why worshipping idols is wrong.

1. Ezekiel 14:3

"Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts, and put before them that which causes them to stumble into iniquity. Should I let Myself be inquired of at all by them?"

2. Deuteronomy 32:21

"They have provoked Me to jealousy by what is not God; They have moved Me to anger by their foolish idols. But I will provoke them to jealousy by those who are not a nation; I will move them to anger by a foolish nation."

3. 1 Chronicles 16:25-27

"For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised; He is also to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before Him; Strength and gladness are in His place."

4. Hosea 4:12

"My people ask counsel from their wooden idols, and their staff informs them. For the spirit of harlotry has caused them to stray, and they have played the harlot against their God."

5. Psalm 106:36

"They served their idols, which became a snare to them."

Read each scenario, and then turn to the verse that follows and write it down in the space provided.

Scenario 1

On his 12th birthday, Rudy was given a smartphone. He was so excited to actually own one since all his friends at school already had one. He couldn't wait to start playing games and surfing the Internet! On the first day, Rudy spent two hours playing with all the options on his new phone and downloading all the latest applications. In the coming weeks, he started to spend more and more time on his phone, playing games and chatting with his friends.

Toward the end of the school semester, Rudy's parents found out that his grades were suffering. They weren't sure what had happened since he was usually a diligent student, but they suspected it was caused by his newfound addiction to his phone. They also realized that Rudy was spending less time with God. His religious education teacher told his parents that he was often distracted during religious education classes and frequently checking his phone, even during class and services. His parents decided to have a chat with Rudy.

When they sat down with him, they explained to him that although he was not bowing or offering things to his phone, he was still treating it like an idol, because it made him forget about God. Rudy had not even realized the problem until his parents pointed it out to him, and he reluctantly agreed to cut down his phone time. Rudy and his parents worked out a timetable where he would only be allowed to use his phone once he had completed his homework and his Bible studies. After a couple months, Rudy found that he was voluntarily spending less and less time on it, sometimes even forgetting it completely. He also realized that his relationship with God had improved, and that his time at church was once again meaningful and precious to him.



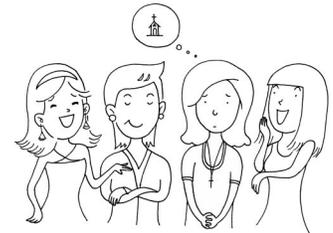
Eze 14:6

Scenario 2

Charlene was the "new kid" at school. She had no friends and was really lonely. One day, she met a pair of girls in the lunchroom who invited her to sit with them. Charlene was so overjoyed! She couldn't believe this was happening. They were the coolest friends in the world. The three of them started to hang out a lot, going to the mall after school. They always went to look for fashion bargains and listen to the newest music.

Charlene felt right at home with her new friends, but her church friends started noticing that Charlene would miss Friday night services. They weren't sure why, but thought it might have something to do with the new friends Charlene had talked about so often. One day, two of Charlene's church friends spoke to Charlene in private and told her how genuinely concerned they were. Charlene had no idea that her new school friends were having such a profound effect on her. Charlene realized that she had been slacking in her Bible reading and devotions to God. Charlene knew she had to give up something.

Her church friends prayed with Charlene on one Saturday afternoon. After the prayer, Charlene knew that she had to turn things around and spend less time with her friends at school. In the coming weeks, Charlene started to associate less and less with her newfound friends. She would still eat lunch with them at school, but she told them that she had to keep up with her studies during the weekdays. After a month, not only was she no longer feeling lonely at school, but she also felt that she was now a lot closer to God than she had been before.



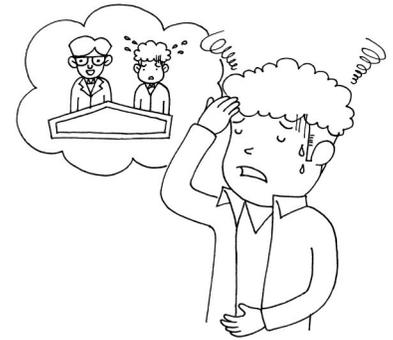
1 Thess 1:9

VESSELS OF GOD

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.”
(2 Cor 4:7)

Read the scenario below and then answer the questions that follow.

Trevor grew up in True Jesus Church, Denver and always loved to be around church. He loved going to RE classes and listening to sermons. He is an avid linguist and speaks Spanish fluently. One day, his J1 teacher asked him if he would like to start interpreting Friday night sermons into Spanish since recently there had been many Spanish-speaking friends attending services. Even though Trevor knows how to speak Spanish, he has always shied away from public speaking and giving presentations. He also felt that he was not good enough and was afraid that he would say the wrong words on the pulpit. He told his teacher that he had to think and pray about it. What if he made a mistake or two in front of the congregation and they laughed at him? What if the sermon speaker used a really hard word that he had never heard before? Trevor was really confused and didn't know what to do.



Trevor decided to talk to his RE teacher and tell her that he was very nervous. She told him to pray about it for a few days and see how he felt afterward. So, for the next few days, Trevor prayed to God for guidance, explaining how he felt and why he was so doubtful. Towards the end of the week, he realized that he felt a lot more calm and comforted about the decision. In fact, he also felt a little more courage and strength about the whole matter. So, on Saturday, Trevor told his RE teacher that he would like to give it a try. After all, God was by his side!

1. Have you ever felt like Trevor before? What feelings did you experience?
2. If you were Trevor's friend, what kind of advice would you tell him?
3. Refer to 2 Corinthians 4:7. How can this verse encourage those who are starting out in holy work?
4. From a spiritual standpoint, what can we do to gain more courage?
5. Have you ever wondered what God's purpose is for you? What must we first do in order to fully know His plan for our lives?

E2 Year 2 Book 3 Lesson 3—God's Mighty Work through Gideon

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Weekly Bible Reading: _____

Bible Reading: Check each box when you complete that day's reading.

Prayer: Check each box after you pray to God that day.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Read							
Pray							

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____

2. _____

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse. (Psalm 28:7a)

True or False

1. When the Angel of the Lord appeared before Gideon, He called Him by name. _____
2. The Midianites were oppressing the Israelites by ruining their food. _____
3. God allowed Midian to oppress His people because they had stopped worshipping Him. _____
4. God allowed Gideon to use twenty-two thousand men to fight the Midianites. _____

Short Answer

5. What name did the Angel of the Lord use to greet Gideon?

6. What two signs did Gideon ask for before battling the Midianites?

7. Why did God say that Gideon had too many men?

8. What steps did God take to reduce the number of men in Gideon's army?

9. The very first task the Angel of the Lord appointed to Gideon was to destroy the altar of Baal and to make an offering to God instead. What kinds of idols are there in our lives, and how can we "destroy" them and turn them into offerings to God?

LESSON 4

SAMSON, THE LAST JUDGE

OBJECTIVES

1. To learn about Samson, Israel's last judge.
2. To learn about the importance of choosing friends wisely.
3. To learn how to be spiritually strong through being a true Nazirite.

MEMORY VERSE

"He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed."

(Proverbs 13:20)

PRAYER

1. Thank God for the past week and this wonderful Sabbath day.
2. Open our hearts so that we can learn from Samson, Israel's last judge.
3. Guard our hearts and minds from the sins and temptations of this world.
4. Help us to lead a holy and victorious life so that we can serve You and glorify Your Name.



Overview

1. **Samson the Nazirite**
2. **Samson's feats of strength**
3. **Samson loses his strength**
4. **Samson's death**
5. **Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs**—Salvation is given by the grace of God.
6. **Life Application**—A True Nazirite
7. **Activity**
 - Samson, Delilah, and the Lion
 - Samson and Delilah Review Game



Background Knowledge for Teachers

The Nazirite Vow

The word Nazirite means "consecrated or devoted one." God invented the Nazirite vow for any person who wanted to devote himself exclusively to Him. The Nazirite vow reminds us that God desires all Christians to lead holy and separated lives.

A Nazirite vow can be temporary. For example, Paul made a temporary Nazirite vow that ended with the shaving of his head [Acts 18:18.]. After the period of separation, the person had to offer five different types of offerings: burnt, sin, peace, grain, and drink, along with unleavened bread and unleavened wafers. The person also shaved off their hair and presented the hair as part of a sacrifice [Num 6:18.].

The Nazirite vow could also be as long as a lifetime. Such a vow was voluntary, with one exception—parents could take the vow for their young children, making them Nazirites for life. The vow included three distinct restrictions:

- a. Their hair could not be cut and their beard could not be shaved
- b. They could not consume wine or strong drink
- c. They were prohibited from touching a dead body

Dagon

Dagon was the chief god of the Philistines, the god of grain and harvest. Many temples were built to Dagon and the worship there included human sacrifice. The temples were also the local entertainment centers. Just as people today crowd into theaters, Philistine townspeople crowded into the local temple. They sat on the flat temple roof and looked into the courtyard below. It was at such an event that Samson caused the entire temple to collapse.



Reaching Out to Your Students

Your students may have trouble looking beyond the “cool” story of Samson and all the things that he did, such as ripping apart a lion or killing 1000 men with the jawbone of a donkey. It may be very easy for them simply to get caught up in the story, losing sight of what they can learn from Samson's life. It is important to emphasize that even though God used Samson mightily, his life had strayed far off the mark. He was controlled by his fleshly desires, befriended the wrong people, and used his gifts for his own purpose. As a result, his life ended tragically.

The students should be reminded that having certain gifts or strengths does not give them an excuse to disobey God's commands or be unkind to others. What God desires for us is to have an obedient heart and to lead a life unstained by the world.



Opener

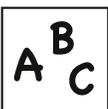
5 Minutes

Having a healthy body is very important to us. What things make us strong physically? [Allow students to respond.]

That's right. Eating healthy food, getting plenty of exercise and activity, getting a sufficient amount of sleep, and building up a strong mind will help us have healthy bodies. At the same time, we need to avoid the things that are not beneficial and are harmful to our bodies. What things might be unhealthy for our bodies? [Allow students to respond.]

Just as it is important to keep our physical bodies healthy, we need to keep our faith and spiritual life healthy and strong, too.

Today, we will learn about a man called Samson who had an exceptionally strong body, but, sadly, a weak and unhealthy spiritual life.



Vocabulary

vow: a serious promise to do something or behave in a certain way

loom: a machine that is used to weave cloth



Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

FOR TEACHERS

Hand out the Bible Discovery worksheet and, at the end of each section, go over the corresponding section on the worksheet with the students. Allow the students to finish each section before moving onto the next one.

A. Samson the Nazirite

Once again, the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and the Lord handed them over to the Philistines, who ruled over them for forty years. The Philistines were strong and cruel people who lived by the coast. But God still loved His people, and He would deliver

His people through a judge called Samson.

Not all the Israelites sinned against God and worshipped idols. Among the tribes of Israel there was man called Manoah and his wife, both of whom continued to fear and serve God. Nevertheless, Manoah and his wife had no children. One day, the Angel of the LORD appeared to Manoah's wife and told her that God would give her a son. The Angel told her that from the time of his birth, the boy shall be a Nazirite and he would be a judge and deliver the land from the rule of the Philistines. The following year, those very words were fulfilled when Manoah's wife gave birth to a boy called Samson.

Do you know what a Nazirite is?

A Nazirite was a person (either a man or a woman) who had taken the Nazirite vow. The vow was usually temporary, but in Samson's case, it was for life. Being a Nazirite meant taking a special vow to be separated to the Lord for a special purpose. During the period of the vow, a Nazirite had to abide by certain rules set by God. The following Bible passages describe the rules a Nazirite had to obey.

Read Judges 13:4-5 and Numbers 6:1-6.

- He was not to drink wine, vinegar made from wine, or grape juice. Nor was he to eat anything that came from grapevines, such as grapes or raisins, or even the seeds or skin!

People usually drink wine as a form of enjoyment and pleasure. Therefore, the Bible uses wine, which is made from grapes to represent the sinful pleasures of the world. Indulging in the enjoyments of the world often leads us to sin and temptation, which is why we need to avoid them (Eph 5:18).

- He must never cut his hair but let his hair grow.

Usually, what kind of person has long hair? Yes, females usually have long hair. 1 Corinthians 11:14-15 tells us that when a woman has long hair, it is her glory and honor. But if a man has long hair, then it is considered a shame and dishonor. God wanted a Nazirite to have long hair to remind him that he had to deny himself and suffer shame for the Lord.

- He could not go near a dead body.

A dead body is something that is decaying, rotting, and unclean. A Nazirite could not go near a dead body because he had to keep himself holy. He had to avoid things that would defile him and make him unclean.

B. Samson's feats of strength

As Samson grew older, God blessed and abided with him. To accomplish God's plans of delivering the Israelites from the Philistines, Samson was given a special gift—extraordinary physical strength. As long as Samson abided by the laws of God, the Spirit of God would fill him and give him great strength to overcome his enemies.

Look up the following Bible verses to see examples of Samson's strength:

- *Judges 14:5-6* – Samson tore a lion apart as easily as tearing apart a young goat.
- *Judges 14:19* – Samson went down to the Philistine

city of Ashkelon and killed thirty of their men.

- *Judges 15:3-7* – Samson caught three hundred foxes, tied their tails together in pairs and placed a torch between each pair. He then lit the torches and set the foxes free through the fields of the Philistines, destroying the grain and olive trees.
- *Judges 15:15* – Samson found a fresh donkey jawbone and killed a thousand Philistines with it.

C. Samson loses his strength

Before Samson was born, he was chosen by God to fulfill a special purpose. As he grew up, God abided with him and gave him great strength to save the Israelites. But later, sin found a place in Samson's heart. Though Samson was physically strong, he was spiritually weak. Instead of doing God's will, he chose to follow his fleshly desires. He was willful and hot-tempered. Whenever he wished to do a certain thing, he would never listen to advice from anyone. He wanted to do as he pleased. This kind of behavior often got him into trouble.

His wrong choices and bad influences caused him to lead an unholy life and to eventually break the Nazirite vow. When the vow was broken, God no longer abided with him, and he lost his great strength.

Let's look at how Samson gradually broke the Nazirite vow:

1. Samson draws near a dead body

Let's read Judges 14:5-9.

One day, as Samson and his parents were going to Timnah, a city in Philistine, a young lion attacked Samson in the vineyards of Timnah. The Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon him and he ripped the lion apart with his bare hands. He did this as easily as if the lion were a young goat. Samson didn't tell his parents about what had happened. When they returned from Timnah, Samson went to look at the carcass of the lion. He found that a swarm of bees had made some honey in the carcass. Samson scooped some of the honey into his hands and ate it along the way. He also gave some of it to his father and mother, but he did not tell them he had taken the honey from the carcass of a lion.

2. Samson drinks wine and enjoys fleshly pleasures

a. *The woman from Timnah*

Read Judges 14:1-3.

One day when Samson was in Timnah, he liked a Philistine girl there. When he returned home, he told his father and mother that he wanted to marry her. Samson's parents

strongly opposed the idea. "Isn't there even one woman in our tribe or among all the Israelites that you could marry?" they asked. "Why must you go to the Philistines to find a wife?" But Samson told his father, "She is the one I want. Get her for me."

Even though God had already told His people that they should not marry Gentiles, Samson insisted. Not only did he want to marry a Gentile, he insisted on marrying a Philistine woman, someone whose people were Israel's greatest enemies. Later at the wedding, Samson threw a wedding feast for thirty young men of the village that lasted for seven days. The wedding celebrations were according to the custom of the day (Judg 14:10-11) and, although the Bible does not specifically mention this, traditionally, there would have been much eating and drinking of wine.

b. Delilah

Let's turn to Judges 16:4-17.

Some time later, Samson loved another woman; this time, it was a Philistine woman called Delilah. Samson did not seem to care about leading a holy life. Instead, he followed his desires and his heart.

When the rulers of the Philistines realized that Samson loved Delilah, they wanted to use her to capture Samson. They said to her, "See if you can get him to tell you the source of his great strength. Find out how we can overpower him so that we can tie him up. And if you do, each of us will give you 1,100 pieces of silver."

Delilah was not a good woman and she loved money, so she begged Samson to tell her the secret of his strength. Samson was unwilling to share his secret, so he told Delilah three false ways that others could use to overpower him: by tying him up with 7 new bowstrings, by tying him up with new ropes, and by weaving his hair into a loom. When Delilah realized that Samson had deceived her three times, she continued to pester him day after day until Samson could stand it no longer and finally told her the secret to his strength.

3. Samson's hair is cut

Read Judges 16:18-21.

After Delilah nagged Samson every day, Samson became so tired and fed up that he told her everything. "I've never used a razor on my head," he said. "I've never cut my hair because I've been a Nazirite since the day I was born. A Nazirite is a person set apart for God. If you shave my head, I won't be strong anymore. I'll become as weak as any other man." Delilah realized that Samson had finally

told her the truth, so she sent for the Philistine rulers. "Come back one more time. He has told me everything." So the rulers returned. They brought the silver with them. Delilah got Samson to fall asleep on her lap. Then a man came and cut off his hair. Delilah then called out, "Samson! The Philistines are here to capture you!" Samson woke up and thought, "I'll go out just as I did before. I'll shake myself free." But he didn't know that the Lord had left him.

The Philistines captured him, gouged out his eyes, and took him to Gaza where he was bound with bronze chains and made to grind grain in the prison.

D. Samson's Death

Finally, let us read Judges 16:22-30.

One day, the rulers of the Philistines gathered together to offer a great sacrifice to their god Dagon because he had given their enemy Samson into their hands. About 3,000 men and women were present at the temple. After they had drunk a lot of wine, they shouted, "Bring Samson out. Let him put on a show for us." As Samson was brought out from the prison, they had him stand near the pillars that supported the temple. Samson, who was blind at that time, said to the boy who was leading his hands, "Place my hands against the two pillars. I want to rest against them."

As the people looked on and made fun of him, Samson prayed to the Lord saying, "O Lord, remember me again. Please strengthen me one more time so that the Philistines pay for what they did to my two eyes."

Then Samson pushed against the pillars with all his might. "Let me also die with the Philistines!" he prayed.

As Samson pushed, the temple crashed down upon the Philistine leaders and all the people who were in it. Samson was able to kill more people at the moment of his death than when he was alive.

In spite of Samson's mistakes and failures, God still heard and answered his final prayers. While in prison, Samson's hair began to grow again and God was willing to hear Samson's prayer of repentance and use him this final time by destroying the temple and its worshippers.

During his twenty years as a judge, Samson committed many wrongs, and yet, his name appears among all the other great characters that overcame different trials through faith (Heb 11:32). Indeed, in the last moments of his life, Samson trusted and relied on God.



Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

Salvation is given by the grace of God.

The salvation that we receive from God is a tremendous grace and blessing that we have to cherish. Our purpose in life is not to live like Samson, but to rely on the Holy Spirit to pursue holiness, to serve and honor God, and to love the people around us.



Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

[You may use choose to use these questions for Activity #2, and use the activity as an opportunity to check for understanding.]

1. **What was Samson chosen to do from birth?** To be a judge and to save the Israelites from the hands of the Philistines.
2. **What rules did a Nazirite have to obey?** They could not drink wine or anything from the vine. They could not cut their hair. They could not go near dead bodies.
3. **What do each of these rules mean to us today?** We cannot indulge in worldly pleasures. We must suffer and sacrifice for the Lord. We need to avoid things that are unholy.
4. **What was the source of Samson's strength?** His life of holiness and keeping the Nazirite vow.
5. **Give some examples of Samson's strength.** He tore apart a lion with his bare hands. He killed 1,000 Philistines with a fresh donkey jawbone. He killed thirty men in one town.
6. **What caused Samson to lose his strength?** He broke the Nazirite vow. He told Delilah the source of his strength and she had someone cut his hair off.
7. **What did Samson do to bring the Philistine temple down?** He prayed to God for strength, and then he pushed against the pillars of the temple.
8. **How many people did Samson kill at his death?** Around 3,000 men and women.

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. True
2. False; the source of Samson's strength was God's abidance.
3. False; he was chosen to save the Israelites from the Philistines.
4. False; we must lead a holy life, because only then can we fulfill God's purpose for us.
5. D
6. C
7. They could not drink wine or anything from the vine. They could not cut their hair. They could not go near dead bodies.
8. We need to live a life of holiness, stay away from fleshly enjoyments and things that are unholy, and sacrifice for the Lord.
9. Answers may vary.



Life Application

10 Minutes

A TRUE NAZIRITE

The previous judges that ruled in Israel had armies fighting alongside them. Judges such as Gideon and Jephthah each had armies to fight against their enemies. Samson, on the other hand, didn't need an army. He was a one-man army. His physical strength was so great that, with only a donkey's jawbone, he could kill one thousand men alone. At the end of his life, when God gave Samson back his strength, he caused an entire temple to collapse, killing the Philistine leaders and the nearly 3,000 men and women gathered there.

Despite such physical strength, Samson was weak spiritually. He didn't realize that God could only work through him if he lived a clean and pure life. Sadly, Samson allowed sin and wicked people to come into his life so that he was defeated and died tragically.

Today, in order to be victorious over temptations, weaknesses, and our environment, we need to be a true Nazirite.

1. Do not drink wine: Don't indulge in pleasures

Biblical Example

Read Hebrews 11:24-26 and fill in the blanks.

"By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward."

Moses grew up as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He gained the knowledge of the Egyptians and enjoyed great luxury and wealth. But when Moses saw the suffering of his own people, who were slaves, he would rather suffer with them than live in the great Egyptian palace.

Scenario

Emily liked to hang out with her classmate Sally. Sally was much trendier than she was and she learned about all the latest things from her. One day, Emily and Sally were browsing through their friend's pictures on Facebook. Sally told Emily that she had made friends with this boy who was very smart and funny. They spent a lot of time chatting and sending each other pictures. Emily wondered if she should also make more friends on Facebook.

- **Are there certain things that you especially like to do?**
- **How might some of our hobbies or pastimes influence our faith?**
- **"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Rom 12:2). What does it mean to "renew our mind"?**

As humans, we all need time to relax and do things that we enjoy. However, it is important to know how to spend our free time wisely. Some pastimes help develop certain skills and improve our bodies and minds. But other pastimes, though fun, can be harmful to our minds, faith, and relationships. If that is the case, we need to find better alternatives. Ask ourselves these questions the next time we do something in our free time:

- *How long am I spending on this each day? Is it taking time away from doing my homework or spending time with my family? Do I have time to read the Bible or pray?*
- *When I am away from it, do I think about this pastime constantly?*
- *Is this pastime helping me know God more or is it pulling me away from God?*
- *What kind of good virtues, skills, or knowledge am I developing?*
- *Does this pastime cause me to let the guard around my heart down?*

2. Do not draw near a corpse: Keep holy

Biblical Example

Read 1 Peter 2:9 and fill in the blanks.

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

Scenario

Fred closed the door with a bang. He slumped his backpack down on the kitchen table. He was so annoyed. His teacher had blamed him for something that he didn't do, and he had to stay behind for detention. Fred hit the table with his fists and then swore out loud. He heard his friends at school swear every day. Fred had sworn in his mind or under his breath many times before, but this was the first time he swore aloud. It felt good for half a second, but then his conscience rebuked him and he felt horrible.

- How was Fred feeling?
- What other ways could Fred have expressed his emotions?

God gave us emotions to experience life and to relate to the people around us. But how we express these emotions can affect us, those whom we love, and our relationship with God. Fred had every right to feel indignant and frustrated. Nevertheless, Fred needed to deal with his emotions appropriately. The Bible tells us that "filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting" are not fitting for the people of God (Eph 5:4). Nor should we allow blessings and cursing to come out of the same mouth (Jas 3:10), as we have to give an account of everything we say to God.

Fred can use other ways to deal with his frustration. For example, he could write down his thoughts and emotions in a journal, create pictures or poems, take a fast walk or run, share his feelings with someone who cares, and of course, he could pray to the heavenly Father who understands.

- What are the things we need to avoid that would defile us or displease God?

Fred's habit of swearing did not just start on the day he had to stay behind for detention. He had picked up this habit from hearing his friends swear every day. Our mind is like a sponge, and unknowingly, we absorb the things we hear and see around us. Therefore, we need to separate ourselves from people and situations that may cause us to stray from God and do what is right. Things such as bad movies, games, books, and music, which can cause our hearts to be defiled, should be avoided.

- Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers (Eph 4:29). Why is it important for us to say words that edify ourselves and others?

3. Do not cut your hair: Suffer and sacrifice for the Lord

Biblical Example

Read 2 Corinthians 11:24-28 and fill in the blanks.

"From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches."

Apostle Paul was a man who came from a very unique and privileged background. A learned man, he was an expert in the Jewish laws. He had great ambitions and was greatly respected and feared in society. Paul was proud of who he was and what he had achieved. But when he came to know the Lord Jesus, Paul willingly gave up everything that was precious to him. For the sake of the gospel, he was willing to suffer shame and persecution.

Scenario

The Spiritual Convocation was coming up. During the Sabbath service, the pastor reminded everyone to preach to their family and friends. William decided to tell his friends at school about Jesus and invite them to church. During recess, William asked his friends if they believed in God, and he started to tell them about Jesus. Before he finished, his friends started to laugh at him. From then on, each time William approached them, they would say, "Oh, here comes the preacher!" William was hurt and wished that he had not opened his mouth in the first place.

- **How would you encourage William?**

Preaching to others is not easy. It takes a lot of courage and love and we might face rejection and mockery. People in the Bible faced the same thing, too. Noah preached for a hundred years and no one came to believe. Paul dedicated his life to the gospel, but he was greatly persecuted and he was called a "mad man." Our Lord Jesus spent three and half years telling people the Good News, but He was eventually crucified on the cross. When we meet with these kinds of responses, it is discouraging and hurting. But our Lord Jesus sees and understands because He experienced the same thing. When we preach, we are doing what is beautiful in God's sight, even if no one listens, and we will be blessed for our efforts. If we don't give up, we will one day see the fruits of our labor.

- **If God asked you to give up something that is precious to you, what would you give up?**
- **What are some examples of how you might suffer or sacrifice for God?**

You might give up a sports activity or a club meeting to attend Sabbath services. You can be the first person to say sorry because the Bible tells us to forgive and make peace with others.

- **Fill in the blanks. "If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified" (1 Pet 4:14).**

**Activity****Mold Me**

10-15 Minutes

1. Samson, Delilah, and the Lion

Objective: To remind students of Samson's strengths and weaknesses.

This game is based on the familiar game of "Rock, Paper, Scissors," but instead of using just the hands, it is a full-body activity where students will act out "Samson, Delilah, and the Lion." Most students will know how to play "Rock, Paper, Scissors." However, the teacher will need to give the full instructions if anyone is unfamiliar with the rules.

Say to students: We're going to play a game called "Samson, Delilah, and the Lion." This game is based on the familiar game of "Rock, Paper, Scissors." But I want to show you a new way to play. Instead of using just our hands, we are going to use our entire bodies, and we're going to use it to tell part of the story of Samson.

It works like this: we will be divided into two teams. Each team will decide on whether they want to be Samson, Delilah, or the Lion.

- If you are Samson, you grunt and make a "muscle-man" pose like this. [Demonstrate the pose by flexing your muscles.]
- If you are Delilah, you pretend to stroke your long hair and say, "Oh, Samson." [Demonstrate.]
- If you are the Lion, you roar loudly, and show your fangs and your claws. [Demonstrate.]

Samson beats the Lion; the Lion beats Delilah, and Delilah beats Samson. Each team will start by standing some distance apart with their backs to each other.

On the count of three, each team will jump around to face the other and make both the sound and action for either Samson, Delilah or the Lion. The team that overcomes the other the most times out of a set number of times is the strongest.

2. Samson and Delilah Review Game

Objective: To review the contents of this lesson.

Preparations

Before class, prepare two sets of the same number of objects as questions. That is, if there are twelve questions, prepare two sets of twelve objects. The objects can be an assortment of things of varying size, such as balls, boxes, books, magazines, balloons, paper cups, and so on.

Instructions

1. Divide students into Team Samson and Team Delilah.
2. From Team Samson, select a volunteer to be Samson, and from Team Delilah, select a volunteer to be Delilah. Samson and Delilah will not answer questions, but hold objects.
3. Team Samson will be given 30 seconds to correctly answer as many questions as possible. For each correct answer, Samson will be given an object to hold. At the end of the 30 seconds, the teacher makes note of how many objects Samson has, and Samson sits down. Now it will be Team Delilah's turn.
4. If a team answers incorrectly, an object will be removed from that team's hands. Also, if an object falls down, it cannot be picked up.
5. The team whose representative (Samson or Delilah) is able to hold up the most objects, and is therefore the strongest, at the end of 30 seconds wins.

Review Questions

[Questions from the Check for Understanding section can be used. Additional questions can be found below. Feel free to come up with your own questions.]

1. What was the name of Samson's father? [Manoah.]
2. How long was Samson a judge in Israel? [20 years.]
3. How many times did Samson lie to Delilah about the source of his strength? [Three times.]
4. Which city did the first Philistine woman that Samson liked come from? [Timnah.]
5. What did Delilah do every day to find out Samson's secret? [She asked him again and again.]
6. What was Delilah's motivation for discovering Samson's secret? [Money.]
7. What three false things did Samson tell Delilah would weaken him? [Tying him up with new bowstrings, tying him up with new ropes, and weaving his hair on the loom.]
8. What did the Philistines do to Samson after they cut his hair? [They captured him, gouged out his eyes, and made him grind grain in prison.]
9. How was Samson's strength restored? [He repented, his hair grew again, and he prayed to God for strength.]

SAMSON, THE LAST JUDGE

A. Samson the Nazirite

Write down the rules of a Nazirite. What does each rule mean to us today?

Nazirite Rule	What does it mean to us today?

B. Samson's feats of strength

Look up the following Bible verses, and then describe Samson's feats of strength.

- a. Judges 14:5-6
- b. Judges 14:19
- c. Judges 15:3-7
- d. Judges 15:15

C. Samson loses his strength

What were Samson's weaknesses and mistakes?

- a. Judges 14:5-9
- b. Judges 14:1-3
- c. Judges 16:4-17
- d. Judges 16:18-21



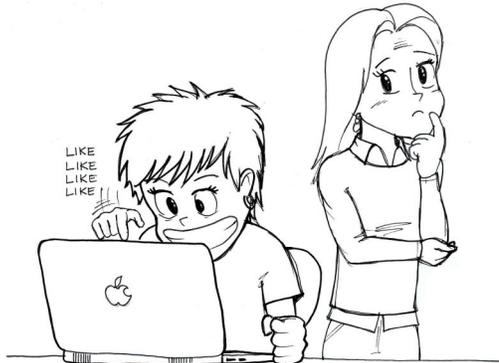
Today, in order to be victorious
over temptations, weaknesses,
and our environment,
we need to be a true Nazirite.

Biblical Example

Read Hebrews 11:24-25 and fill in the blanks.

"By faith Moses, when he became of age, _____ to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to _____ affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing _____ of _____."

**DO NOT
DRINK
WINE** *Don't
Indulge in
Pleasures*



Scenario

Emily liked to hang out with her classmate Sally. Sally was much trendier than she was and she learned about all the latest things from her. One day, Emily and Sally were browsing through their friend's pictures on Facebook. Sally told Emily that she had made friends with this boy who was very smart and funny. They spent a lot of time chatting and sending each other pictures. Emily wondered if she should also make more friends on Facebook.

- Are there certain things that you especially like to do?
- How might some of our hobbies or pastimes influence our faith?
- "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Rom 12:2). What does it mean to "renew our mind"?

Biblical Example

Read 1 Peter 2:9 and fill in the blanks.

"But you are a _____ generation, a royal priesthood, a _____ nation, His own _____ people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of _____ into His marvelous light."

DO NOT
DRAW NEAR
A CORSE
KEEP HOLY

**Scenario**

Fred closed the door with a bang. He slumped his backpack down on the kitchen table. He was so annoyed. His teacher had blamed him for something that he didn't do, and he had to stay behind for detention. Fred hit the table with his fists and then swore out loud. He heard his friends at school swear every day. Fred had sworn in his mind or under his breath many times before, but this was the first time he swore aloud. It felt good for half a second, but then his conscience rebuked him and he felt horrible.

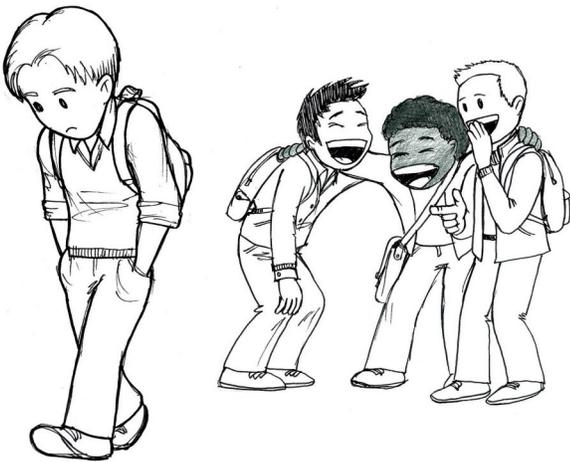
- How was Fred feeling?
- What other ways could Fred have expressed his emotions?
- What are the things we need to avoid that would defile us or displease God?
- "Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers" (Eph 4:29). Why is it important for us to say words that edify ourselves and others?

Biblical Example

Read 2 Corinthians 11:24-28 and fill in the blanks.

"From the Jews five times I received _____ stripes minus one. _____ times I was beaten with rods; _____ I was stoned; _____ times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the _____; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of _____, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in _____ and thirst, in _____ often, in cold and nakedness—besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches."

**DO NOT
CUT HAIR**
SUFFER AND
SACRIFICE FOR THE
LORD


**Scenario**

The Spiritual Convocation was coming up. During the Sabbath service, the pastor reminded everyone to preach to their family and friends. William decided to tell his friends at school about Jesus and invite them to church. During recess, William asked his friends if they believed in God, and he started to tell them about Jesus. Before he finished, his friends started to laugh at him. From then on, each time William approached them, they would say, "Oh, here comes the preacher!" William was hurt and wished that he had not opened his mouth in the first place.

- How would you encourage William?
- If God asked you to give up something that is precious to you, what would you give up?
- What are some examples of how you might suffer or sacrifice for God?
- Fill in the blanks. "If you are _____ for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is _____" (1 Pet 4:14).

E2 Year 2 Book 3 Lesson 4—Samson, the Last Judge

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Weekly Bible Reading: _____

Bible Reading: Check each box when you complete that day's reading.

Prayer: Check each box after you pray to God that day.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Read							
Pray							

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____

2. _____

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse. (**Proverbs 13:20**)

True or False

1. Samson ruled over Israel as judge for 20 years. _____
2. The real source of Samson's strength was his long hair. _____
3. Samson was chosen from birth to be a judge to save the Israelites from the hands of the Amalekites. _____
4. God still used Samson even though he had many weaknesses and mistakes. This means that it is not necessary to lead a holy life because God could still use you. _____

Multiple Choice

5. _____ : What caused Samson's spirituality to weaken?
 - a. He broke the Nazirite vow one by one.
 - b. He married a Gentile woman.
 - c. He ate of the honey found in a dead lion.
 - d. All of the above.

6. _____ : When did Samson kill the most Philistines?
 - a. When he used the jawbone of a donkey.
 - b. When he played the trick with the foxes.
 - c. When he brought down the temple.

Short Answer

7. What rules did a Nazirite have to obey?

8. Today, how can we be strong and victorious in our faith?

9. What are some things you may change about yourself or your habits after learning about Samson?

LESSON 5

RUTH AND NAOMI

OBJECTIVES

1. To show love to our family and friends through actions and self-sacrifice.
2. To follow our Lord Jesus faithfully until the end, even when the future is uncertain.

MEMORY VERSE

“For wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God.”

(Ruth 1:16b)

PRAYER

1. Thank God for protecting and guiding us through the week so that we may come to worship Him in Spirit and in truth.
2. Ask God to help us show love to our family and friends through what we say and especially through what we do.
3. Ask God to help us continue to obey His commands and put our trust in Him.



Overview

1. **The family of Elimelech** (Ruth 1:1-5)
2. **Ruth stays with Naomi** (Ruth 1:6-22)
3. **Ruth and Boaz** (Ruth 2-4)
 - a. Ruth cares for Naomi by gleaning fields (Ruth 2)
 - b. Boaz and Ruth get married (Ruth 3-4)
 - i. They continue to care for Naomi
 - ii. Naomi cares for her grandson, Obed
4. **Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs**—One true God
5. **Life Application**—Showing Love Through Self-Sacrifice
6. **Activity**—Describing Kindness



Background Knowledge for Teachers

Moab was a land located east of the Dead Sea. The Moabites were descendants of Moab, a son of Lot by his elder daughter. Moab was one of the nations that oppressed Israel during the period of the judges, so there was hostility between the two nations. The famine must have been quite severe in Israel for Elimelech to move his family there.

Gleaning was the gathering of grain that fell to the ground during the harvesting of fruit that was not ripe at first picking. Old Testament law established the right of the poor to glean the staple crops of grain, olives, and grapes (Lev 19:9-10; Deut 24:19-22). This important social mechanism helped meet the needs of the poor without robbing them of the self-respect associated with honest toil. Ruth provides an excellent example of gleaning. Here, the young widow picks up loose grain behind harvesters in the fields of Boaz, making full use of the generous law.

Widowed women were particularly vulnerable and powerless in the ancient world. Widows were taken advantage of or ignored. They were almost always poverty-stricken. The fact that Ruth was willing to face the almost sure fate of poverty showed her selfless love for her mother-in-law.



Reaching Out to Your Students

The story of Ruth and Naomi illustrates a beautiful picture of true love. Your students may have different concepts of love; they experience love from their parents, from teachers, and from brothers and sisters at church. They are also exposed to different expressions of “love” on television and in movies. Regardless of what kind of understanding your students may have about love, it is important for them to understand what God’s love is.

The story of Ruth and Naomi centers around one very important aspect of God’s love: self-sacrifice. The Bible tells us, “By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us” (1 Jn 3:16a). This is the ultimate expression of self-sacrifice, to lay down one’s life for another. This kind of love is not just a feeling (like a person might see on television or in the movies), and is not merely something that we just say. Instead, this kind of love is shown through actions. 1 John 3:18 tell us, “My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue but in deed and in truth.” True love is shown through actions, such as those done by Ruth for Naomi. Ruth expressed her love through words, but followed through with her actions.

Help your students understand that love is not a matter of words, but of actions. This means caring about others before themselves, offering help when people are in trouble, and giving up what they might want, even when it’s hard. Is this hard? Yes it is, because no one in their own strength could ever love God or his neighbor more than himself. However, we know that if we rely on the love of God and let Him fill us, God will give us the power to love others with His special love.

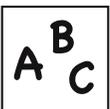
Your students experience the most love at home, from their parents, siblings, and other family members. They probably have also begun to show love to their family members as well through giving hugs and saying, “I love you.” But most children have not yet learned how to show their love to their family through self-sacrifice. For example, when their parents ask them to do some chores, they might complain and say they’re busy playing, but we can help them realize that one way to show love to their parents is to sacrifice their play time to help their parents.



Opener

5 Minutes

Have you ever had to give up something? What was it? Why did you do it? How did it make you feel? [Ask students to share instances when they had to give up something and how they felt when they did it, if they did. If they didn’t give it up, ask them what kept them from giving it up.] Today, we are going to learn about a woman named Ruth who gave up everything she knew and followed God.



Vocabulary

glean: to gather leftover grain (or the like) after the reapers or regular gatherers

harvest: to gather grain, fruit, etc., when it becomes ripe or ready for eating

kinsman-redeemer: a male relative who had the privilege or responsibility to act on behalf of a relative who was in trouble, danger, or in need.



Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

FOR TEACHERS

Hand out Bible Discovery Worksheet #1 to the students now. They will be filling it out as you go over this section. Pause to give the students time to fill in the answers, and make sure they have filled in the answers before moving on.

Let's open the Bible to see how today's story begins. Please turn to Ruth 1:1-5.

Naomi and Ruth Return to Bethlehem

When Naomi heard that the Lord had given His people a good harvest, she and her two daughters-in-law prepared to leave Moab to go to the land of Judah. As they were going down the road, Naomi said, "Go, return to your mothers. I pray that the Lord will be as good to you as you have been to me and my husband and two sons. May He give each of you another husband." Naomi kissed them, and they cried, not wanting to leave her. But she replied, "My daughters, you must go back home, because I am too old to marry again. Even if I got married tonight and had more sons, would you wait for them to get old enough to marry? No, my daughters! Life is harder for me than it is for you, because the Lord has turned against me."

They cried again, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth kept holding on to her. After this, Naomi said to Ruth, "Look, your sister-in-law is returning to her country and to her gods! Why not go with her?" Please refer to the worksheet and fill in the blanks to see how Ruth replied. "But Ruth said: Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you; for wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if anything but death parts you and me." After Naomi saw that Ruth had made up her mind to go with her, she stopped urging her to go back.

Discuss with the class why they think Ruth wanted to go with Naomi. Naomi was very old and Ruth was very young; Ruth could have left, married, and had her own family. What made Ruth want to stick with her mother-in-law? (Ruth loved Naomi and didn't want her to be alone.) What did Ruth have to give up or sacrifice in order to go with Naomi? (She gave up a chance to go back to her own home and be married to a man from her own country.) We can see through Ruth's sacrifice how dearly she loved Naomi.

Ruth Gleans in Boaz's Fields

The barley harvest was just beginning when Naomi and Ruth returned to Bethlehem from Moab. One day, Ruth

said to Naomi, "Let me see if I can find someone who will let me glean by the harvest workers." So Ruth went out and started gleaning in a field owned by Boaz. Now Boaz was a relative of Elimelech, Naomi's husband. When Boaz returned from Bethlehem, he asked the man in charge of the harvest workers, "Who is that young woman?" The man replied, "She is that woman from Moab who came with Naomi. She asked if she could pick up the grain left behind by the harvest workers, and then she went straight to work in the field. Since morning, she has worked without stopping, except for a short break in the shade."

Hearing this, Boaz went over to Ruth and said, "Take my advice and don't work in anyone else's fields. Stay here with my servant girls and follow along behind them as they gather up what the men have cut. I have told the men not to bother you, and whenever you are thirsty, you can drink from the water jars they have filled." Ruth bowed down to the ground and said, "You know that I come from another country. Why are you so good to me?" Let's take a look at the worksheet and see. Boaz answered, "I've heard what you've done for your mother-in-law since your husband died. You even left your own father and mother to come and live in a foreign land among people you don't know. May the Lord reward you for what you have done. Since you have come to Him for help, I pray that He will be very good to you!"

Ruth graciously thanked him and continued to glean. At mealtime, Boaz invited Ruth to sit and eat with them. Right away she sat down with the workers, and ate until she was satisfied; she even saved some for later. When Ruth got up to go back to work, Boaz told his men, "Don't stop her, even if she picks up grain from where it is stacked. Be sure to leave some stalks of grain on the ground for her to glean, and don't bother her!" Ruth worked in the field until evening, and after she had pounded the grain off the stalks, she had a large basket full of grain. She took the grain to Naomi and showed her how much she had picked up from Boaz's field. She also gave her the food she had saved earlier.

"May the Lord bless him!" Naomi replied. "The Lord has shown that He is still kind to the living and to the dead. Boaz is a close relative of ours." Ruth told her, "He even said I could stay in the field with his workers until they had finished gathering all his grain." Naomi replied, "My daughter, it's good that you can work with his servant girls, because something bad could happen to you in someone else's field." From then on, Ruth kept close to Boaz's servant girls while she picked up grain in the field.

Ruth and Boaz Marry

One day, Naomi sent Ruth to Boaz. She wanted to know if he would marry Ruth and buy the land that had been

owned by Naomi's husband and sons, since he was a kinsman-redeemer. Boaz told Ruth there was a closer relative that had to be given the chance to buy the land first. Boaz went to the town gate and sat there until the other kinsman-redeemer arrived. In front of the ten elders of the town, Boaz told the other man about the land Naomi wished to sell and about Ruth. The other man did not want to redeem the land, so he told Boaz to do it. Then the man took off his sandal and gave it to Boaz as a sign that the transfer of the land was final. Thus, Boaz acquired the land and married Ruth. They had a son and named him Obed. Naomi helped to care for him and he brought her joy. And the women of the town told Naomi that she was blessed to have such a loyal daughter-in-law as Ruth.

FOR TEACHERS

At this time, go over the answers on the worksheet with the students, making sure they have filled in the blanks correctly. Once the students have completed Worksheet #1, hand out Bible Discovery Worksheet #2 and fill out the worksheet as a class.

Bible Discovery Worksheet #1: A True Love Story

Two Widowed Women

husband; father-in-law
Moab
mother-in-law

Love Conquers

"For wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. The LORD do so to me, and more also, if anything but death parts you and me."
evening
repay; rewarded

Bible Discovery Worksheet #2: I Know Who Holds Tomorrow

- 1a. b
- 1b. c
2. a
3. b
- 4a. a
- 4b. We need to shine the light of Jesus in our daily lives through our actions. To follow Jesus means to learn from Him—to love others like He does, manifesting His characteristics of love through our actions and speech. That way, we're on the right path to enter the kingdom of heaven!



Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

One True God

Ruth's love for Naomi was so great that she was willing to sacrifice all that was familiar to her to follow Naomi into a future of uncertainty. As they journeyed together through life, Ruth was able to know the God of the Israelites through Naomi, and later through Boaz, too. Ruth learned that the true God is one that cares for His people, both dead and alive, as He cared for Elimelech's family by watching over and protecting Ruth and Naomi. She also learned that the true God is one that blesses people in ways that they cannot imagine. Naomi and Ruth could never have imagined their life to turn out so blessed. They must have imagined that they would live difficult lives gleaning among the harvest workers for the rest of their lives. After all, they were both widows. However, God once again showed His great love for His creation by allowing Ruth to marry Boaz and have a child, bringing joy back into their family once again. Today, we must also remember that in times of hardship, we are never alone. Our God is always watching over us and He will provide the best path for us because He only wants the best for us.



Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

1. **Why did Elimelech and his family leave Israel?** There was a famine in the country and he heard that there was food in Moab.
2. **What happened to Elimelech and his two sons when they were in Moab?** Elimelech died, and his sons took wives, but his sons also died, too, leaving his wife and two daughters-in-law without husbands.
3. **Why did Ruth want to stay with Naomi?** Because she loved Naomi and wanted to stay with her to protect and watch over her since Naomi was an older woman and would be by herself with no one to take care of her.
4. **How was Boaz kind to Ruth?** He allowed her to glean in his fields and told his servants to purposely leave extra grain for her to glean so that she would have more than enough food.

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. There was a famine in the country and he heard there was food in Moab.
2. Because she loved Naomi. Since Naomi was an older woman and would be by herself with no one to take care of her, Ruth wanted to stay with her to protect and watch over her.
3. He allowed her to glean in his fields and told his servants to purposely leave extra grain for her to glean so that she would have more than enough food.
4. She refused to leave her mother-in-law and instead traveled with her to Bethlehem
5. Answers may vary.
6. Answers may vary.
7. We can: help them out when they need instead of spend time playing; honor their needs first before ours; pray for them daily if they are not church members yet, etc.
8. Answers may vary.



Life Application

10 Minutes

SHOWING LOVE THROUGH SELF-SACRIFICE

The Bible tells us that love is not self-seeking. In other words, to love someone is to be willing to sacrifice for that person. It may be your time, labor, money, etc. We can infer from today's story that Naomi treated Ruth very well and with great care and love since Ruth, in return, loved Naomi dearly. We can also see how Boaz was a kind, generous, God-fearing man who immediately did everything he could to help Ruth. In addition, he is also a very responsible person, as he chose to become the kinsman-redeemer instead of waiting for the duty to fall on him. 1 John 4:8 tells us, "God is love." Through their love, Ruth came to know the love of our Lord Jesus. Through our personal relationships with others, we can exhibit the many characteristics of God, such as love, joy, mercy, kindness, gentleness, etc. In doing so, we use our actions to preach the word of God rather than simply learn the teachings without sharing the good news with others.

In the following scenarios, examine the action of self-sacrifice and the characteristics of love shown through such action.

1. Every day after school, Charles plays basketball with his friends. Charles loves sports, especially basketball, and after school is the time of the day that he looks forward to the most. However, Charles' mom is sick this week and has asked Charles to help take care of his little brother after school. Charles, even though he really wishes he didn't have to miss basketball every day for a week, promises to help his mom. In addition, Charles also offers to do some housework for his mom since he knows that she needs to rest more.
 - a. **What did Charles sacrifice in order to help his mom?**
Charles sacrificed his favorite time of the day: playing basketball with his friends. He also sacrificed his time and labor to take care of his little brother and to share his mom's housework.
 - b. **Why do you think that Charles was willing to make such a sacrifice?**
Charles loves his mom and didn't want his mom to have to worry about taking care of his little brother or housework while being sick. He also knew that his mom needed to rest, so he used his basketball time to help with his mom's work so that she could have more time to rest.
 - c. **What characteristics of love do you see in Charles' actions?**
Kindness: Charles showed great consideration and care for his mom by sacrificing his time for her.
Self-control: Even though Charles really wanted to play basketball, he put his mom as his priority, above his own personal interests.
Patience: In order to help his mom, Charles wasn't able to play basketball for one full week. However, Charles didn't complain but waited patiently for a week so that his mom could fully recover.

2. Andy's little sister accidentally broke his favorite toy, and he was very upset that she did so. Andy was extremely sad, but he accepted his sister's apology and didn't want to make her feel even worse. Later, their mom said that if Andy wanted the same toy again, his little sister would have to use her own money to buy it for him. Andy, even though he was very sad to see his toy broken, decided that he would not ask for a new one from his sister since he knew that she had been saving up for a long time to buy her favorite toy. He didn't want her to use the money she saved.

a. What did Andy sacrifice for his little sister?

Firstly, Andy accepted his sister's apology, sacrificing his own pride so that his sister wouldn't feel guiltier than she already did. Secondly, Andy had to sacrifice his toy. He could have gotten a new toy from his sister, but he chose not to.

b. Why do you think that Andy was willing to make these sacrifices?

Andy loves his little sister. He was very upset at first about the broken toy, but Andy chose not to let his negative emotions out because he didn't want to see his little sister feel worse than she already did. In addition, he was willing to give up his chance of getting a new toy because he wanted his sister to be able to get what she really wanted instead of spending money on something else. He would rather give up his favorite toy than see his sister without her favorite toy soon.

c. What characteristics of love do you see in Andy's actions?

Kindness: Andy didn't want his little sister to feel bad. Rather than focusing on how bad he felt, he stepped into his sister's shoes and showed compassion towards his sister. He cared about his sister's feelings more than his own.

Forgiveness: Andy didn't get angry with his little sister for breaking his toy but accepted her apology right away. He didn't hold any grudges or bitterness.

Peace: Andy didn't want this problem to become bigger. He controlled his anger and didn't let it affect his sister or his relationship with her. Andy also didn't want this problem to cause his sister to wait longer for her favorite toy, which would probably disappoint her for a long time.



Activity

Describing Kindness

10-15 Minutes

Kindness is a word full of meaning. There are many other words we can use to help explain what it means to be kind. Find and circle the following words hidden in the puzzle. Each word describes an attitude that is essential to showing kindness.

helpful

sympathetic

gracious

friendly

pleasant

devoted

thoughtful

merciful

loving

gentle

compassionate

benevolent

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

A Story of True Love

“For wherever you go, I will go.”

The story of Ruth and Naomi spread quickly after they moved back to Bethlehem. Many people there, including Boaz’s servants, heard about it and shared their story with others. It encouraged people to love one another with **self-sacrifice!**

TWO WIDOWED WOMEN

“For wherever you go, I will go,” said Ruth to her mother-in-law.

Ruth’s _____ and _____ just passed away. Now she has nothing left but her own family in _____, where she is from. As unfortunate as it sounds, she is luckily still very young and has a good chance of remarrying so that she doesn’t have to live the rest of her life in poverty. No one in her position would question the idea to return to her family and wait to be remarried. In fact, Naomi, Ruth’s

_____, who also became a widow at the same time as Ruth did, also told Ruth to do so. But Ruth, concerned about Naomi’s later life, insisted that she follow Naomi back to her hometown instead of stay in Moab.



LOVE CONQUERS

Naomi once again urged Ruth to stay in Moab with her family, but Ruth would not leave Naomi’s side. She said, “_____.”

What a great sacrifice! Ruth didn’t care if she was going to be poor for the rest of her life. She loved Naomi so much that she didn’t want to leave her alone, old and lacking. She knew that Naomi needed someone to take care of her, both physically and emotionally. Rather than waiting for someone to marry her, love, and provide for her, Ruth determined to stay with Naomi, to be the one to love and provide for this old mother whom she loved.

The Bible said Ruth worked steadily from the morning until very late. She gleaned in the field until _____. After she finished her work, she carried it back to town, and her mother-in-law saw how much she had gathered! Even though life was not easy, Ruth had no regrets. She was happy as long as her mother-in-law was well taken care of. Boaz heard all that Ruth had done for her mother-in-law since the death of her husband. He said, “May the Lord _____ you for what you have done. May you be richly _____ by the Lord, the God of Israel.”

What does it mean to follow Jesus until the end?

I Know Who Holds Tomorrow

*"I don't know about tomorrow, I just live from day to day.
I don't borrow from its sunshine, for its skies may turn to gray.
I don't worry over the future, for I know what Jesus said.
And today, I'll walk beside Him, for He knows what is ahead.
Many things about tomorrow, I don't seem to understand;
but I know who holds tomorrow, and I know who holds my hand."*

These lyrics are the first verse of "I Know Who Holds Tomorrow". Can you relate to them? It is indeed true for everyone that we don't know anything about tomorrow. We can always plan for tomorrow, but we do not know what will happen between now and then that could change our plans. With God's protection, we can live from day to day. This hymn tells us that we shouldn't worry about tomorrow, but hold tight the hand of Jesus and walk with Him until the end. Why? Because God knows the future. He provides us with light and gives us directions for where we should go. Let's read the following verses and examine what exactly it means to follow Jesus until the end.

1. *"Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.'" (Matthew 16:24)*

- A. ____ : First of all, in order to follow Jesus, we must deny ourselves. What does that mean?
- To think that we are useless
 - To humble ourselves before God
 - To think that everything we do is wrong
- B. ____ : Every Christian has a cross to carry. We must carry this cross on our own to follow Jesus. What does carrying our own cross mean?
- To wear something with a cross all the time so that people know we're followers of Christ
 - To carry our own burdens and worries
 - To be responsible for our own salvation by following Jesus until the end, even though it is not an easy journey to complete

2. *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." (Proverbs 3:5-6)*

Following Jesus means to trust His guidance with all our heart, even though we cannot see what is ahead. We may think that one way is better, but if Jesus tells us to go the other way, we must put our trust in His wisdom rather than our own. The first thing we should do when making decisions in our walk of life is to acknowledge God.

- ____ : How can we acknowledge Him?
- Use the Bible as our guide to make sure that our decisions are in accordance with God's words and pray for God's guidance
 - Ask God to walk with us towards the direction we think is best
 - Be assured that God will help us no matter what

3. "For we walk by faith, not by sight." (2 Corinthians 5:7)

To follow Jesus means to be strong in our faith in God, even though we cannot see Him. Many visible things in our lives are temptations that draw us away from God. But it is the intangible and invisible God that we should rely on. Therefore, we should not walk by sight.

_____ : What does it mean to walk by sight?

- a. To wear glasses so that we can see as clearly as possible
- b. To only trust and take pleasure in things that we can see with our eyes
- c. To always open our eyes when we walk

4. "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'" (John 14:6)

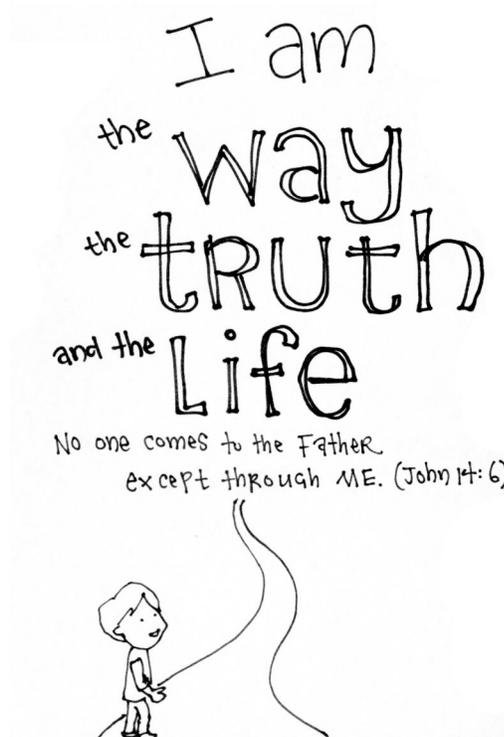
A. _____ : To follow Jesus is to walk in the truth. What does that mean?

- a. To always be in accordance with God's wisdom, pleasing Him in everything we do
- b. To always be honest and true
- c. To meditate on what is right or wrong all the time

B. _____ : Following Jesus will lead us to God, our heavenly Father. How should we follow Jesus in order to see God in heaven? Use 1 Corinthians 11:1 as a reference verse.

Let's determine to
follow Jesus.

He will never lead us
down the wrong path!



Showing Love through Self-Sacrifice

The Bible tells us that love is not self-seeking. In other words, to love someone is to be willing to sacrifice for that person. It may be your time, labor, money, etc. We can infer from today's story that Naomi treated Ruth very well and with great care and love since Ruth, in return, loved Naomi dearly. We can also see how Boaz was a kind, generous, God-fearing man who immediately did everything he could to help Ruth. In addition, he is also a very responsible person, as he chose to become the kinsman-redeemer instead of waiting for the duty to fall on him. 1 John 4:8 tells us, "God is love." Through their love, Ruth came to know the love of our Lord Jesus. Through our personal relationships with others, we can exhibit the many characteristics of God, such as love, joy, mercy, kindness, gentleness, etc. In doing so, we use our actions to preach the word of God rather than simply learn the teachings without sharing the good news with others.

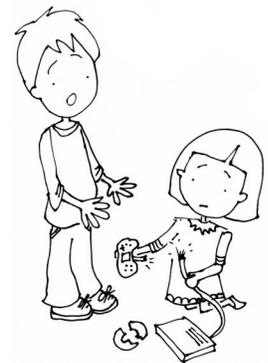
In the following scenarios, examine the action of self-sacrifice and the characteristics of love shown through such action.

1. Every day after school, Charles plays basketball with his friends. Charles loves sports, especially basketball, and after school is the time of the day that he looks forward to the most. However, Charles' mom is sick this week and has asked Charles to help take care of his little brother after school. Charles, even though he really wishes he didn't have to miss basketball every day for a week, promises to help his mom. In addition, Charles also offers to do some housework for his mom since he knows that she needs to rest more.



- a. **What did Charles sacrifice in order to help his mom?**
- b. **Why do you think that Charles was willing to make such a sacrifice?**
- c. **What characteristics of love do you see in Charles' actions?**

2. Andy's little sister accidentally broke his favorite toy, and he was very upset that she did so. Andy was extremely sad, but he accepted his sister's apology and didn't want to make her feel even worse. Later, their mom said that if Andy wanted the same toy again, his little sister would have to use her own money to buy it for him. Andy, even though he was very sad to see his toy broken, decided that he would not ask for a new one from his sister since he knew that she had been saving up for a long time to buy her favorite toy. He didn't want her to use the money she saved.



- a. **What did Andy sacrifice for his little sister?**
- b. **Why do you think that Andy was willing to make these sacrifices?**
- c. **What characteristics of love do you see in Andy's actions?**

Life Application

5. Often, we express our feelings towards our family members, friends, and teachers through words. How can we show them through our actions just how much we love them?
6. Choose a family member or friend to whom you would like to show more love, and write down below how you will do that this week.
7. How can we sacrifice for our family members?
8. Our Lord Jesus has sacrificed so much for us because of His great love. Think of ways you can sacrifice for others for three days. For example, sharing a portion of your snack or lunch with a friend, spending time helping a friend with homework instead of playing, helping out around the house instead of watching TV, etc. How would you feel after those three days?

I sacrificed: _____

This is how I sacrificed: _____

LESSON 6

SAMUEL SERVES THE LORD WITH TRUST

OBJECTIVES

1. To comprehend that serving God faithfully means trusting Him.
2. To practice faithful servitude.

MEMORY VERSE

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
and lean not on your own
understanding; in all your ways
acknowledge Him, and He shall direct
your paths.”

(Proverbs 3:5-6)

PRAYER

1. Thank You for guiding us safely through another week.
2. You guide us safely every day of our lives, therefore we trust You.
3. We are older now and will begin serving You.
4. Please give us the faith to trust You during our service to You. That Your will be done, not ours. That Your name be glorified and not ours.



Overview

1. Character Study on Samuel

- God told Samuel to stop grieving over Saul's failures. He should go to the house of Jesse in Bethlehem and anoint a new king (1 Sam 16:1).
- In Bethlehem, Samuel saw Eliab, Jesse's son. From his appearance, Samuel thought he would be king. But God said that man judges a person's appearance, but God judges a person's heart (1 Sam 16:6-7).
- Jesse's other sons passed before Samuel, but God rejected them (1 Sam 16:8-10).
- David, Jesse's youngest son, passed before Samuel. God told Samuel to anoint him king (1 Sam 16:12-13).

2. Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs—One True God

3. Life Application—Trust in God's Plan

4. Activity—Treasure Hunt



Background Knowledge for Teachers

Young Samuel Served God

Samuel was born during a period when Israel did not have a king. It was a very corrupt time. Every Israelite did whatever they felt was right, which meant they did not necessarily follow God's laws. The priests were also corrupt. While serving as priests, Hophni and Phinehas, Eli's sons, stole the Israelites' offerings and committed other sins. As a result, the Israelites' faith weakened and they stopped obeying God's laws. To punish them, God sent the Philistines to war with the Israelites and to cause suffering.

While most of the Israelites around him continually sinned against God, Samuel was different. Starting as a young boy, he lived in the tabernacle with Eli the priest to serve God faithfully. He served as Eli's assistant and opened the tabernacle doors every morning to welcome the worshippers. Samuel's service pleased God. God would speak to Samuel and tell him what He planned to do.

King Saul, the First King of Israel

The Israelites demanded a king. They could no longer tolerate the corrupt priests and prophets. They also wanted to mimic their neighboring nations. Their request displeased God and Samuel, but God permitted it. Samuel warned them that a king would take their best land, crops, and animals. He would take their sons and daughters to be their servants. But

the Israelites could not be swayed. So, God sent Samuel to the land of Benjamin to find them a king.

In the land of Benjamin, God told Samuel to anoint Saul as king. Saul was a very tall man, but he was also very humble. When Samuel spoke to him, he mentioned that he was from the tribe of Benjamin, the smallest tribe of Israel. And his family was the least of all the families in Benjamin. When Samuel presented Saul to the people of Israel, Saul hid among the equipment. Clearly, this was a man who did not feel he was worthy of being king.

Fall of King Saul

After becoming king, Saul changed. He became proud. Evidence of his pride was shown through his disobedience; he disobeyed God twice. First, Saul failed to wait for Samuel to arrive to offer a sacrifice. Instead, Saul offered it himself. Second, God commanded Saul to war with the Amalekites as punishment for ambushing the Israelites when they came out of Egypt. God commanded Saul to kill every person and animal. Instead, Saul spared the best cattle and King Agag. Saul's disobedience resulted in God rejecting him as king. He sent Samuel to the land of Judah to look for a new king.



Reaching Out to Your Students

Your students are in the period of middle childhood (ages 9 through 11). This period is also known as the “tween years.” They are leaving childhood and entering adolescence. In this stage, they will begin to change physically, emotionally, and mentally, which will continue into adolescence.

The social relationships of children at this age will begin to change. They will begin to grow independent from their parents and begin to form stronger friendships with their peers, especially those of the same gender. As a result, they will begin to experience more peer pressure. They will become more aware of their body and the physical changes that will occur as they approach puberty.

The students will also change mentally as they mature. As school becomes more challenging, they will face more academic pressure. Their attention span will increase. They will be able to understand the viewpoints of their peers more clearly. These changes will make them more susceptible to the social environment around them.

As the students' religious education teachers, we must support their development. They will encounter new situations, experiences, and people, which may cause them anxiety. Use this lesson to teach the students that they can trust in God and His words. God is a constant. He is the North Star from which they can navigate through the uncharted seas of their lives.



Opener

5 Minutes

Trust is the foundation of human relationships. People are willing to establish relationships because they trust each other.

In the comic strip “Peanuts,” the main character, Charlie Brown, always misplaces his trust in Lucy, one of his antagonists. Lucy will propose to Charlie Brown to run and kick a football while she holds it for him. Charlie Brown believes her and runs to kick the football. Just as Charlie Brown is about to kick the football, Lucy pulls it away. Charlie Brown misses the football, but his momentum carries him into the air and he then falls on his back. After this experience, Charlie Brown vows not to trust Lucy anymore, but in the next comic strip, he falls for it again. From this example, we see how important trust is and how important it is to place trust in the right person.

[The teacher can show and read this comic strip to the class. Please do an Internet search with the keywords: “Charlie Brown”, “Lucy”, and “Football”.]



Vocabulary

trust: assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something
anoint: to apply oil to someone as a sacred rite, such as a choosing by divine election



Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

FOR TEACHERS

Hand out the Bible Discovery worksheet to the students. As you go through the lesson, the students will fill out the worksheet. Pause at the blanks to give students adequate time to fill them in, and make sure they have completed the question before moving on. The answers have been underlined in this section.

Samuel: Dedicated for God's Use

Let's start our study of Samuel's life of service with one verse: "But Samuel ministered before the LORD, even as a child, wearing a linen ephod" (1 Sam 2:18). Samuel started his service in the tabernacle of God from the moment he was weaned. Does anyone know, or remember, what his mother's name was? [Allow students to respond.] Yes, her name was Hannah. For a very long time, Hannah was unable to have a baby. So, she prayed to God to give her a baby, and in return, she promised that she would offer him up for God's service. Therefore, we can see that Samuel knew from the very beginning that he had been dedicated to serve the Lord.

Let us now read 1 Samuel 3:1-15. This passage recorded the incident when God first spoke to young Samuel. Even at a very young age, Samuel had already communicated with God. This criterion—God's guidance—is very important for anyone who wants to serve God, in any capacity.

In this passage, how many times did Samuel hear the LORD's voice before he finally responded? [Allow students to respond; he heard His voice four times.] How did Samuel finally answer God? [Allow students to respond.] Samuel said, "Speak, for Your servant hears." What did Samuel understand about his role in life? (He knew that he was a servant of God.) As a servant, he must do two things: he must allow God to speak, and he must hear what God spoke. If we apply these two actions to our lives, what would they be? [Allow students to respond; to seek God's voice by reading the Bible, praying, and having fellowship with the people of God.]

Today, most of us do not physically hear God calling us like He called Samuel. But God still speaks to us, through the Bible, through the answers we receive when we pray

deeply in communication with Him, and sometimes, through the people and happenings around us. A servant of God does not do his own thing according to his own ways. A true servant of God seeks God's will and does things according to God's way.

Samuel Mourns for Saul

Samuel had great hopes for Saul, but became despaired because Saul had disobeyed God twice. "And Samuel went no more to see Saul until the day of his death. Nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul, and the LORD regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel. Now the LORD said to Samuel, 'How long will you mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel?'" (1 Sam 15:35-16:1a).

God's rejection of Saul caused great turbulence within Samuel. Since Samuel's youth, he shared a close relationship with God. Samuel developed confidence knowing that God was with him. "So Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground" (1 Sam 3:19). When Samuel grew older and judged the Israelites, he spoke and acted confidently because he knew that God was with him and that he was acting according to God's will (1 Sam 7:6-15).

Samuel Trusted God to Choose a New King

But after God rejected Saul, Samuel's confidence was shaken. Samuel questioned God's instruction. He was afraid that Saul would kill him if Saul found out that he was going to Bethlehem to anoint a new king (1 Sam 16:2a). God provided a ruse for Samuel, which Samuel followed trustingly (1 Sam 16:2b-4a).

Samuel followed God's instructions and came to the house of Jesse the Bethlehemite to anoint a new king. Samuel had each of Jesse's sons present themselves to him. When Samuel saw Eliab, Samuel said, "Surely the LORD's anointed is before Him!" (1 Sam 16:6b). But the LORD responded to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart" (1 Sam 16:7). Again, Samuel trusted God and rejected Eliab. Then, Jesse presented his son Abinadab to Samuel, and

again Samuel said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one” (1 Sam 16:9b). One by one, seven of Jesse’s sons were presented to Samuel. And every time, Samuel obeyed God and rejected him.

This must have been difficult for Samuel. God had sent Samuel to the house of Jesse in Bethlehem to anoint a king, but He rejected every son that was presented. After the hurt from Saul’s failure, it would seem logical that Samuel’s confidence in God would continue to wane. But, regardless of whether it was logical or not, Samuel continued to trust God.

He trusted that God would anoint a new king in the house of Jesse. When the last son passed before Samuel and he had not yet anointed Israel’s next king, he knew that his job was not done. So, Samuel asked Jesse, “Are all the young men here?” (1 Sam 16:11a). Jesse mentioned that the youngest son was still tending the sheep. Samuel asked Jesse to call his youngest son and present himself to him. When David came in the house, Samuel saw him and the LORD immediately said to Samuel, “Arise, anoint him; for this is the one!” (1 Sam 16:12b). Samuel obeyed God and “took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from

that day forward” (1 Sam 16:13).

In the lives of human beings, there are many variables. We do not control where we will live, how long we will live, or how we will live. But God has determined these things for each person: “And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings” (Acts 17:26). He also has insight into our hearts “for the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart” (1 Sam 16:7). God has a deep knowledge of who we are and what will happen to us.

Human beings are willing to trust those who understand their situation and are able to guide them through their problems. The Lord has the wisdom and knowledge to lead us through our troubles and guide us safely. He created us and determined the course of our lives. He understands our hearts and our desires. He will guide us through our problems and lead us to safe harbors. He is the true North. Therefore, “trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths” (Prov 3:5-6).



Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

One True God

God is the creator of the universe. He created human beings and determined the span of our lives and the events contained in it. He knows the desires in our hearts and knows our personalities. Thus, we must trust Him when He leads us. He loves us and will always lead us to what is best for us. “For I [God] know the thoughts I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope” (Jer 29:11).

Knowing that such a great God loves us and died for us, we should always give thanks to Him in prayers and in our words. Our gratitude should also be demonstrated by the way we live our lives; we must always do things that glorify His name.



Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

1. Where did God send Samuel to anoint a king? God sent Samuel to the house of Jesse in Bethlehem.
2. What did Samuel say to himself after he saw Eliab? “Surely the LORD’s anointed is before Him!” (1 Sam 16:6b)
3. What did God say to Samuel after he saw Eliab? “Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart” (1 Sam 16:7).
4. Jesse presented seven of his sons to Samuel. How many of those did God reject? All seven.
5. After rejecting seven of Jesse’s sons, why did Samuel ask if all his sons were present? Because God told Samuel that He would anoint a king from Jesse’s house, and Samuel had not yet found the king. Samuel trusted God, and therefore knew that not all of Jesse’s must have been present.
6. When David presented himself to Samuel, what did God say? What did Samuel do? God said, “Arise, anoint him; for this is the one!” (1 Sam 16:12b). Samuel obeyed God and “took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward” (1 Sam 16:13).

HOMWORK ANSWER KEY

1. appearance, physical, see, outward, heart
2. thoughts, thoughts, ways, ways, higher, ways, ways, thoughts, thoughts
3. thoughts, peace, evil, future, hope



Life Application

10 Minutes

TRUST IN GOD'S PLAN

A faithful servant is one who trusts God. He trusts God to guide his life and to help him navigate through difficulties. He trusts that God's guidance is the best for him, even though it may lead him through difficult times. God's presence will lead him through and bring him to green pastures and still waters. It is just like David's psalm. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me" (Ps 23:4).

We must trust in God because He knows more about us. He created us, therefore, He knows about our disposition, our desires, and our plans. He also knows His plans for us. These are good plans that will give us joy and fulfillment. Being human beings, we don't have the same understanding as God. Thus, our plans are often flawed. Therefore, we should trust God, because His plans are perfect. It is just as God spoke to Isaiah, "'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,' says the LORD. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts'" (Is 55:8-9).

We, being human beings, have our own desires and plans. When those plans conflict with God's plans, we become very sad. Samuel was very sad that God rejected King Saul. Samuel had hoped that Saul would unify the Israelites in obeying the word of God. We are like Samuel. We have mapped out our lives based on our goals and desires. We picture ourselves successful in our desired profession, with our desired families.

[Have the students answer the following questions on the worksheet.]

Questions

1. What kind of job would you like to have when you grow up?
2. How do you plan to do that? Organize your thoughts into practical steps and various categories. (For example, if you hope to become an engineer, you need to do well in your studies, especially in Math and Science. Then, you need to go to college and choose the appropriate major.)
3. Do you have any aspirations for serving God?
4. How can you prepare yourself to be a good worker of God in the future?

It is natural for us to have our own desires and plans. We form them based on our environment or current situation. That is part of being a self-aware human being. When Samuel came to the house of Jesse, each of Jesse's sons was presented to him. Each son seemed more kingly than the previous. As each son presented himself, Samuel thought that this son had to be Israel's next king. But God said, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart" (1 Sam 16:7).

In mapping our futures, we often forget God's plans for us, or we elevate our plans to a primary status and demote God's plans to a secondary status. While we have our own plans, we must be aware that God has His own plans, too. His ideas and plans are higher than ours (Isa 55:8-9). In addition, He plans to bring us to peace (Jer 29:11). Therefore, we must trust in God's plan and fulfill it.

[Have the students answer the following questions on the worksheet.]

Questions

5. What do you believe is God's plan for you? Why?
6. If your plans conflict with God's plan, what will you do? Why?

After God rejected all of Jesse's sons that had been presented, Samuel knew that there must have been another son that was not present. Samuel knew this because God's plan had not been completed. Samuel trusted completely in God's plan and demanded the missing son to present himself. When David presented himself, God immediately told Samuel to anoint him because he was to be the next king of Israel.

As servants of God, we must trust Him. Our responsibility, as servants, is to execute His will in the manner He desires. Thus, we must trust that His methods are correct. We trust that His methods are correct because He is much greater than us, He is wiser and more knowledgeable, and His thoughts are greater than ours.

[Have the students answer the following questions on the worksheet.]

Question

7. Do you trust God? Why? Give an example.

**Activity****Treasure Hunt**

10-15 Minutes

Objective: To demonstrate how we should trust God.

Preparation

1. Hide various "treasures" in the room. The treasure can be candy, small toys, etc.
2. Draw a treasure map based on the classroom for each treasure.

Instructions

1. Divide the students into pairs. One student will be "blind" and "mute," but able to use their hands. The other student can see and speak, but cannot use their hands.
2. The students must work together to find the treasure and bring it to the teacher. The teacher should not aid the students. Let the students decide how to best work together.

After the activity, ask the students how they worked together to find the treasure. The students should respond that the "blind" student followed the instructions and guidance of the seeing student. When asked why, they should answer that the seeing student could see the treasure map and the classroom. Therefore, he could lead the "blind" student to the treasure.

Similarly, God sees and knows much more than we do. Therefore, when God guides us, He has a much greater understanding of our situation and environment. He also knows of our future and situations we will face. When He guides us, He uses all His knowledge and wisdom. Thus, His plans are much better than our own.

SERVING THE LORD WITH TRUST

Samuel: Dedicated for God's Use

1. Samuel's mother, _____, was unable to bear children. So, she _____ to God for a child that she promised to offer for His service.
2. God granted her a child, whom she named Samuel, and in return, she dedicated him to serve in the _____ of the Lord.

Samuel Mourns for Saul

3. How did Samuel feel after God rejected Saul? _____

Samuel Trusted God to Choose a New King

4. What did Samuel say after he saw Eliab?
"Surely the LORD's _____ is before Him!" (1 Sam 16:6b).
5. What did God say to Samuel?
"Do not look at his _____ or at his _____, because I have _____ him. For the LORD does not _____ as man _____; for man looks at the _____, but the LORD _____ at the _____" (1 Sam 16:7).
6. How many of Jesse's sons presented themselves to Samuel?
7. How many sons did God reject?
8. What did God say when David presented himself to Samuel?
"Arise, _____ him; for this is the one!" (1 Sam 16:12b).
9. What did Samuel do?
He "took the _____ and _____ him in the midst of his brothers; and the _____ of the LORD came upon _____ from that day _____" (1 Sam 16:13).

TRUST IN GOD'S PLAN

What is a

Faithful Servant?

A faithful servant is one who trusts God. He trusts God to guide his life and to navigate through difficulties. But we, being human beings, have our own desires and plans. We have mapped out our lives based on our goals and desires. We picture ourselves successful in our desired profession, with our desired families.

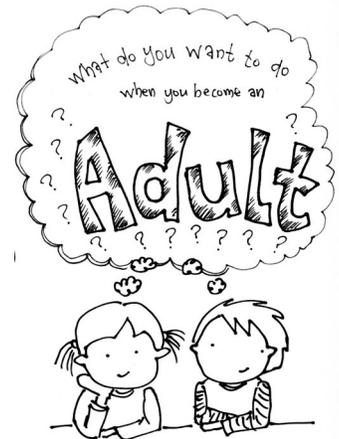
1. What kind of job would you like to have when you grow up?
2. How do you plan to do that? Organize your thoughts into practical steps and various categories.
3. Do you have any aspirations for serving God?
4. How can you prepare yourself to be a good worker of God in the future?

It is natural for us to have our own desires and plans. We form them based on our environment or current situation. In mapping our futures, we often forget God's plans for us, or we elevate our plans to a primary status and demote God's plans to a secondary status. While we have our own plans, we must be aware that God has His own plans, too. His ideas and plans are higher than ours (Isa 55:8-9). In addition, He plans to bring us to peace (Jer 29:11). Therefore, we must trust in God's plan and fulfill it.

5. What do you believe is God's plan for you? Why?
6. If your plans conflict with God's plan, what will you do? Why?

As servants of God, we must trust Him. Our responsibility, as servants, is to execute His will in the manner He desires. Thus, we must trust that His methods are correct. We trust that His methods are correct because He is much greater than us, He is wiser and more knowledgeable, and His thoughts are greater than ours.

7. Do you trust God? Why? Give an example.



E2 Year 2 Book 3 Lesson 6—Samuel Serves the Lord with Trust

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Weekly Bible Reading: _____

Bible Reading: Check each box when you complete that day's reading.

Prayer: Check each box after you pray to God that day.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Read							
Pray							

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____

2. _____

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse. (**Proverbs 3:5-6**)

Fill In the Blank

1. "But the LORD said to Samuel, 'Do not look at his _____ or at his _____ stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not _____ as man sees; for man looks at the _____ appearance but the LORD looks at the _____.'" (1 Sam 16:7)

2. "For My _____ are not your _____, nor are your _____ My _____," says the LORD. "For as the heavens are _____ than the earth, so are My _____ higher than your _____, and My _____ than your _____." (Isa 55:8-9)

3. "For I know the _____ that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of _____ and not of _____, to give you a _____ and a _____." (Jer 29:11)

LESSON 7

JONAH IS SENT TO NINEVEH



OBJECTIVES

1. To learn that, in times of weakness, we should turn towards God, not away from Him.
2. To learn how God's compassion leads us all to salvation.
3. To understand that God wants us to extend this same compassion to those around us.

MEMORY VERSE

"And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick."

(Matthew 14:14)

PRAYER

1. Thank God for guiding and protecting us during the week so that we can come to Him in Spirit and in truth.
2. Praise God for His loving mercy on all people.
3. Ask God for the love to overcome prejudice and proactively include outsiders.



Overview

1. **Jonah's Disobedience**
2. **Jonah Is Swallowed by a Fish**
3. **Jonah Goes to Nineveh**
4. **Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs**—The Holy Spirit brings us God's love so that we can show Christian love to those around us, including those we consider outsiders.
5. **Life Application**—Jonah rebelled against God's command to help the Ninevites. God wants us to show concern to people outside our own group.
6. **Activity**—"Jonah's Journey" Storyboard



Background Knowledge for Teachers

Flight of Rebellion

After Jonah received the instructions from the Lord to go to Nineveh, instead of traveling there, he went from his hometown of Gath Hepher (2 Kgs 14:25) to Joppa, located to the south by the coast. From there, he proceeded to take a boat west to Tarshish, the capital of Assyria, a city near Gibraltar in the southern part of Spain. Nineveh was located to the northeast of Israel, in modern-day Iraq.



Reaching Out to Your Students

Students at this age find comfort in the familiar, deriving validation and happiness from being with like-minded peers. Help them see the value in groups and communities outside of those with which they're familiar by emphasizing God's love for all people. Instill in them a sense of purpose, one that asks them to lead others into God's church through their actions. Share examples of different groups, communities, or cultures that the students may not belong to, but which they may be aware of or even like (such as cuisine, music, practices, etc.).



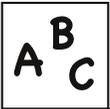
Opener

5 Minutes

To start our lesson, think about the last time you went to a new place, a place where you didn't know anyone. Do you remember how lonely or scared you felt at the time? How you wished your friends and family were with you? If, in that moment, someone came over, greeted you, and brought you to meet other people, how would you feel? Probably relieved, happy, or grateful, right?

What if you could be that good person who greeted newcomers? What if you could help another person feel happy, relieved, and thankful that someone approached them in their time of loneliness? What if you could share God's love and compassion with a stranger so that he or she could also experience God? What if this new visitor became a brother or sister in your local church because you had helped them that one day when they were lonely and far from God?

Today, we will study the story of Jonah, a person who learned to do just that: to reach out to strangers to teach God's love and compassion to them.



Vocabulary

tempest: a storm
mariners: sailors
perish: to die



Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

Today, we're going to be learning about a man named Jonah, the son of Amittai. Now, if you've heard of Jonah before, do you remember what he is very famous for? (He is famous for being swallowed by a great fish.) You probably know the general idea of what had happened to Jonah, but we're going to take a closer look at the actual events and learn why they happened.

Jonah's Disobedience

Our story begins with God's instruction to Jonah, who was a prophet at the time. Let's open our Bibles to Jonah 1:1-3 and read it together. What does Jonah do after God commands him to travel to Nineveh? The very first thing Jonah does is run away! This is very unusual for one of God's prophets. But why did he run? Let's take a closer look at Nineveh, the city to where Jonah was sent.

The Bible mentions Nineveh multiple times. Nineveh was not an Israelite city, but rather a part of one of their neighboring nations. It was the capital of Assyria, a nation with which Israel had long been in conflict. The Book of Jonah isn't the only book that mentions Nineveh. God also directs Nahum to prophesy against the city. In Nahum 3:1, 3-4, he says,

"Woe to the bloody city! It is all full of lies and robbery. Its victim never departs. [...] There is a multitude of slain, a great number of bodies, countless corpses—they stumble over the corpses—because of he multitude of harlotries of the seductive harlot, the mistress of sorceries, who sells nations through her harlotries, and families through her sorceries."

From these verses, we can see that the people of Nineveh were full of pride, greed, and violence, among other things, and as we just read, the Book of Jonah says that Nineveh's sin was so great that their "wickedness [had] come up before [the Lord]." Knowing this, why do you think Jonah tried to run from God? [Allow students to discuss.] Let's continue with our story and find out.

Jonah ran to a port outside of Israel called Joppa, and while there, paid a captain to take him to Tarshish, a city far from Israel's borders. [If possible, prepare a map beforehand to show the students the region Jonah was traveling in.] The verse says that Jonah chose Tarshish in order to flee from God. Why do you think Jonah thought he'd be able to escape from God if he went there? Would he have been able to had he reached Tarshish? [Allow students to answer.] Of course not. Although Jonah was a prophet, he forgot that not only is God's power absolute, but also that His presence extends far beyond any borders that have been drawn by man.

FOR TEACHERS

Hand out the Bible Discovery worksheet to your students and have them work on Part A, either individually or as a group.

Jonah Is Swallowed by a Fish

Let's go back to the boat Jonah hired. It was headed for Tarshish, a very long way from Jonah's hometown, and probably in the opposite direction of Nineveh. Let's read Jonah 1:4-5. Can you believe that Jonah had fallen asleep during that huge storm? It seems that Jonah truly believed that he had managed to run from God, and fell right to sleep with no worries or anxieties. Amazed that he was asleep, the sailors woke him up, and then decided to cast lots to see who was to blame for the storm. Of course, the lot fell on Jonah! Let's read verses 10-17 together.

The sailors were so scared of the storm that they were forced to agree with Jonah's suggestion to throw him into the sea. But when the weather immediately calmed around them, they no longer feared the power of nature. Instead, they feared power of the LORD in heaven and quickly made a sacrifice to Him. Even though Jonah was a disobedient worker, God was able to show His glory through the demonstration of His power over all creation.

Verse 17 says that Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days and three nights. What do you think Jonah did during this time? He prayed! Let's read verses 1 and 7 in Chapter 2. These two verses show us very clearly that Jonah repented of his ways. He must have been incredibly scared when the sailors threw him off the ship! But it was during this time of fear that God reached out and saved him from death. In this time of fear, when Jonah was unsure of what would happen next, he prayed to God.

Just as there are times when we want to run and hide from our problems, there are also times when we feel like we are trapped, unable to do anything. When Jonah tried to run, God proved that He exists everywhere, not just within the borders of Israel. When Jonah was tossed into the sea, God proved that He can save us from anything because He has power over all creation. Surely, if God can make and calm a storm so easily, He can help us with any other problems that we might have! Since that is the case, we should try to remember that when we are in trouble, we don't have to solve the problem by ourselves; we can fully rely on God in times of need or distress.

FOR TEACHERS

Ask students to work on Part B of the Bible Discovery worksheet, either individually or as a group.

Jonah and the Ninevites

After Jonah repented, the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land, where God once again told him to go to Nineveh. This time, Jonah went! Let's read Jonah 3:1-4 together.

Remember, at the beginning of our lesson, we learned that Nineveh was not an Israelite city. This means that its people were not Hebrews, nor were they part of God's chosen people. Most of them had probably never even heard of the LORD when Jonah came along. So, what do you think their reaction was? Let's read on in verses 5-10.

In an amazing turn of events, the Ninevites truly believed Jonah's message, despite being Gentiles! Jonah's message even reached the king and his nobles, and the entire city repented of their sins! Their repentance was so immediate and so genuine that God, who had said the city's wickedness had "come up against [Him]," relented and decided not to punish the city.

FOR TEACHERS

Have students work on Part C of the Bible Discovery worksheet, either individually or as a group.

This story teaches us many things, but one of the most important things is the power of repentance. When we truly repent of a sin that we have committed, we can rely on God's love for forgiveness and for His mercy, which is shown in this story. Jonah was saved from the sea when he repented, and the Ninevites, wicked liars and corrupt thieves, dissuaded God's decision to destroy their city when they thoroughly repented of their deeds. Surely, if God was willing to show mercy to such a wicked city, He is also willing to show the same mercy to us! All we need to do is repent of anything that we have done wrong, and strive to do better in the future.



Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

Salvation is given by the grace of God through faith. Believers must rely on the Holy Spirit to pursue holiness, to honor God, and to love humanity.

Although we are God's chosen people, we cannot simply lock ourselves in a room and wait for salvation to come. We cannot run away from the duties that God has charged us with: to preach the gospel of salvation and spread His Word with love. Jonah believed that the Ninevites didn't deserve salvation, so he ran away from his duties. It's easy for us to feel the same way! However, we have to remember that one of our duties is to love those around us, even if they aren't members of our church. And what better way to show our love than to guide them to salvation? Of course, preaching the message of salvation can be an intimidating task. However, preaching doesn't necessarily only involve talking to others about our church; it can also involve **showing God's love through our actions** by refusing to conform to the values and morals of the world around us.



Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

- 1. What was the first thing Jonah did when he received God's instructions?** He ran away and refused to follow His instructions.
- 2. Was Nineveh an Israelite city?** No, it was the capital of Assyria, one of Israel's enemy nations at the time.
- 3. What were some of the sins of Nineveh that made God want to destroy the city?** Pride, greed, violence, and immorality.
- 4. What happened after the sailors threw Jonah off the boat?** The storm disappeared and they made a sacrifice to God after witnessing His great power.
- 5. How many days was Jonah in the great fish?** Three days and three nights.
- 6. What happened when Jonah preached to the Ninevites of their impending destruction?** They miraculously believed, and the entire city repented.

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. He tried to flee to Tarshish.
2. A great fish swallowed him.
3. The whole city repented.
4. Answers may vary.



Life Application

10 Minutes

1. RUNNING TOWARDS GOD

Jonah's first reaction to God's instruction was to run away. But why did he think that running away would allow him to escape from God? Although he was a prophet of God, Jonah forgot one very important thing: God's **presence**, or His **omnipresence**.

When we encounter tribulations in school or at home, it always seems easier to run away. Sometimes, we don't even want to bother thinking of a solution, much less face the problem head-on. It would be much easier to do as Jonah did, and try to escape to a far-off place. However, as God's chosen, we have a very unique advantage that we may forget at times: God is always present! This means that no matter what trial or tribulation we are facing, God is always standing there with us with the power to help us overcome our problem. We only need to remember to **run towards God, not away from Him**.

Refer to the following verses, and write down what each verse says about how we should face our problems.

Verse	How to Act
Psalm 119:105	<i>Use God's word as a guide for our decisions.</i>
Philippians 4:6	<i>Tell our problems to God in prayer.</i>
Joshua 1:9	<i>Be strong and courageous, and remember that God is always with us.</i>
Romans 12:2	<i>Don't make decisions based on worldly influences.</i>
2 Timothy 1:7	<i>Act with love and self-control.</i>

Finally, read the following passage and discuss the following questions as a group.

"My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him." (Jas 1:2-5)

1. Is it wrong to ask God to just take the problem away?
2. Sometimes, it feels like praying doesn't seem to do anything. Does this mean that God isn't listening?

* * * * *

2. SHARING GOD'S LOVE

God has showered us with many blessings in our lives because He loves us. Instead of keeping these blessings to ourselves, we should take every opportunity to share it with others.

Read the scenarios below, and answer the questions that follow.

Scenario 1

Vanessa's mom had met some nice friends from church at the local supermarket. They had invited Vanessa's mom to come with her family to one of their Sabbath services. As they parked in the church parking lot, Vanessa was feeling a bit scared. She didn't know how the other kids would look at her or treat her because she was new. She was afraid that they might ignore her, or worse, make fun of her. This Holy Spirit that her mom's friends talked about intrigued her, but she was unsure whether she would like to be around a group of strangers. Her mom's church friends were warm and thoughtful, but what if the kids her age were not as welcoming?

Visitors often come to our church or Bible studies to learn more about God. They might also come looking for God's love and presence through His body, the church and its members. What is one reason that makes you afraid to reach out to someone outside of your own group? What does the Bible say about making an effort to share God's blessing with others? (Acts 10:37; 2 Cor 5:14-15)

Scenario 2

Manuel knew he was in trouble. He had broken Grandma's favorite teapot when he was kicking the ball around the house, even after she had told him to play outside. He tried to put the pieces back together, cutting himself in the process. Grandma walked in, saw what had happened, and rushed to his side. Expecting to be yelled at and punished, he started apologizing. Without a second look at the teapot, Grandma gently held his bloody hand and took him to the bathroom to clean and cover the cuts on his hands. As she cared for his wounds, she explained that she had warned him to play with his ball outside, not because she was afraid he'd break her things, but because she didn't want to see him accidentally hurt. He knew that he deserved to be punished for his disobedience, and was moved that his grandmother had been compassionate and forgiving.

In the Bible, we have many examples of how God was merciful to a variety of people. In our world today, we continue to see these examples in our families and in our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. Name a time when God showed you compassion when you didn't deserve or expect it. What does the word of God teach us about being compassionate? (2 Cor 1:3-4; 2 Sam 22:26; Mt 5:7; Lk 6:36)

Scenario 3

Breathe and smile, breathe and smile. Noah was nervous seeing all the many pairs of eyes looking at him as he stood at the front of the class ready to share his testimony. His hands were sweaty and he felt his face flushing. Then he remembered the plan his dad had suggested to help him get through his presentation. Any time he felt unsure, was still trying to remember a line, or was getting distracted by someone's look, he just had to breathe and smile. By planning ahead and remembering to breathe and smile, he was able to share his testimony with his fellow students. (Prov 16:9)

By thinking about what to do beforehand, it can be easier for us to react well when we encounter a situation. Think from a visitor's perspective: what would they like us to do for them? List two ways that you can actively reach out to people you don't know and share God's love and compassion with them.

**Activity****"Jonah's Journey" Storyboard***10-15 Minutes*

Objective: To summarize Jonah's story and help the students recall the main themes.

Materials

- Card stock
- Pencils
- Colored pencils, markers
- Stapler, optional

Instructions

1. Together with the students, divide the story of Jonah into four or five major scenes. An example would be:
 - a. Jonah hires a boat to flee from God.
 - b. Jonah is thrown overboard in the storm.
 - c. Jonah spends three days and three nights in the belly of a great fish.
 - d. Jonah preaches to Nineveh.
 - e. Nineveh repents.
2. Write the scenes down on the whiteboard.
3. Have the students illustrate the scenes on the card stock. Depending on the size of the class and the speed of their work, you may ask them to work in groups to illustrate the whole story, or simply ask them to illustrate one or two of their favorite scenes from those listed. Hand out the appropriate number of sheets of card stock to each student, depending on what you want them to do.
4. Post their illustrations on the wall in the order of when the events occurred. If each student illustrated the entire story, create story booklets using a stapler, and have them write their name and the memory verse on the back.

JONAH IS SENT TO NINEVEH

Part A: Running from God

We probably have encountered times when we really wanted to run away and hide from our problems. It's natural to want to hide when we are stuck in situations that are embarrassing or hurtful, and it's natural to want to run when we are ashamed, lonely, or scared. During these times, we need to remember that, while we may want to just run away and hide, God is the one person to whom we should be turning for help, guidance, and strength.

Read the following verses and then write down **who** was in trouble, **what** kind of problems they were facing, and **the actions** they took to solve it.

Verse	Who was in trouble?	What was the problem?	What actions were taken?
1 Samuel 1:5-11	Hannah	She was unable to bear a child.	She prayed to God for a child, promising Him that her child would be dedicated to serve God all his life.
1 Samuel 26:1-4, 7-12, 23-25	David and Saul	Saul was pursuing David and, one day, David had the opportunity to kill Saul.	David chose not to kill Saul because he was the Lord's anointed. Because David spared Saul's life, Saul also chose to spare David's and to stop pursuing him.
Luke 22:39-46	Jesus Christ	Jesus Christ knew that He would soon be betrayed by Judas and hung on the cross.	In His agony, He cried out and prayed to God earnestly.

Part B: The Sign of the Prophet Jonah

Jonah, despite his disobedience, was a very important prophet of God. This is because his actions prophesied something that would occur far into the future, in the New Testament.

Open your Bible to Matthew 12:39-40 (NKJV), and fill in the blanks below.

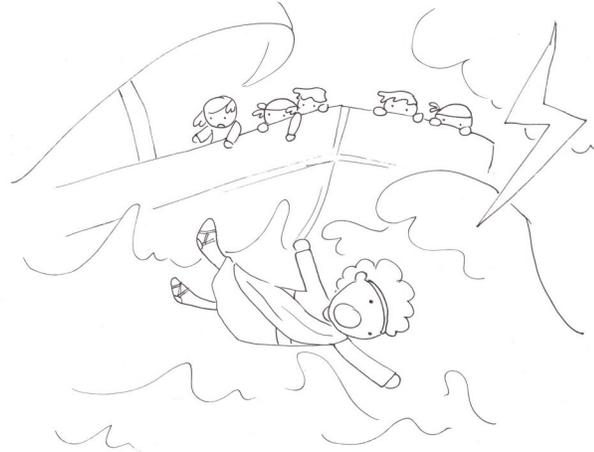
"But He answered and said to them, 'An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.'"

1. Who is the Son of Man? *Jesus.*
2. What does the Bible mean when it says that He will be in the "heart of the earth"? *He would experience death.*

JONAH IS SENT TO NINEVEH

Part A: Running from God

We probably have encountered times when we really wanted to run away and hide from our problems. It's natural to want to hide when we are stuck in situations that are embarrassing or hurtful, and it's natural to want to run when we are ashamed, lonely, or scared. During these times, we need to remember that, while we may want to just run away and hide, God is the one person to whom we should be turning for help, guidance, and strength.



Read the following verses and then write down who was in trouble, what kind of problems they were facing, and the actions they took to solve it.

Verse	Who was in trouble?	What was the problem?	What actions were taken?
1 Samuel 1:5-11			
1 Samuel 26:1-4, 7-12, 23-25			
Luke 22:39-46			



Part B: The Sign of the Prophet Jonah

Jonah, despite his disobedience, was a very important prophet of God. This is because his actions prophesied something that would occur far into the future, in the New Testament.

Open your Bible to Matthew 12:39-40 (NKJV), and fill in the blanks below.

"But He answered and said to them, 'An _____ and _____ generation seeks after a _____, and no sign will be given to it except the _____ of the _____. For as Jonah was _____ days and _____ nights in the _____ of the great _____, so will the _____ of _____ be three days and three nights in the _____ of the _____.'"

1. Who is the Son of Man?
2. What does the Bible mean when it says that He will be in the "heart of the earth"?

Part C: God’s Mercy Is for Everyone

The fact that the Ninevites—Gentiles from a foreign nation—were willing to repent was a miracle that should have been celebrated. But Jonah’s reaction was quite the opposite! Let’s read Jonah 4:2. Jonah didn’t want the Ninevites to be saved! Why do you think this was?

Consider the differences between God’s compassion and human prejudice. Then, think of real-life scenarios that show each of the following:

God’s Compassion	Human Prejudice
<p>“Through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not.” (Lam 3:22)</p> <p>“But He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and did not destroy them. Yes, many a time He turned His anger away, and did not stir up all His wrath.” (Ps 78:38)</p> <p>“The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and great in mercy.” (Ps 145:8)</p> <p>“And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.” (Mk 6:34)</p> <p>“Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.” (Mt 18:27)</p>	<p>“Then Jesus answered and said: ‘A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side.’” (Lk 10:30-32)</p> <p>“But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, ‘Pay me what you owe!’ So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’ And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt.” (Mt 18:28-30)</p>

RUNNING TOWARDS GOD

Jonah's first reaction to God's instruction was to run away. But why did he think that running away would allow him to escape from God? Although he was a prophet of God, Jonah forgot one very important thing: God's **presence**, or His **omnipresence**.

When we encounter tribulations in school or at home, it always seems easier to run away. Sometimes, we don't even want to bother thinking of a solution, much less face the problem head-on. It would be much easier to do as Jonah did, and try to escape to a far-off place. However, as God's chosen, we have a very unique advantage that we may forget at times: God is always present! This means that no matter what trial or tribulation we are facing, God is always standing there with us with the power to help us overcome our problem. We only need to remember to **run towards God, not away from Him**.

Verse	How to Act
Psalm 119:105	
Philippians 4:6	
Joshua 1:9	
Romans 12:2	
2 Timothy 1:7	

Finally, read the following passage and discuss the following questions as a group.

"My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him." (Jas 1:2-5)

1. Is it wrong to ask God to just take the problem away?
2. Sometimes, it feels like praying doesn't seem to do anything.
Does this mean that God isn't listening?



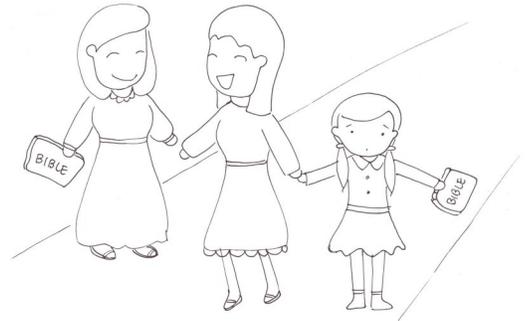
SHARING GOD'S LOVE

God has showered us with many blessings in our lives because He loves us. Instead of keeping these blessings to ourselves, we should take every opportunity to share it with others.

Read the scenarios below, and answer the questions that follow.

Scenario 1

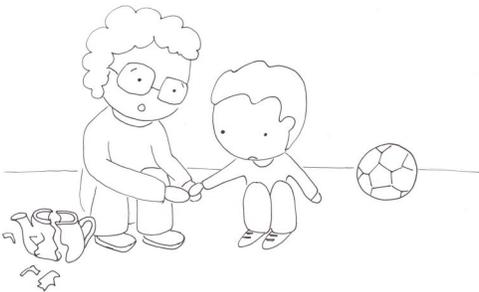
Vanessa's mom had met some nice friends from church at the local supermarket. They had invited Vanessa's mom to come with her family to one of their Sabbath services. As they parked in the church parking lot, Vanessa was feeling a bit scared. She didn't know how the other kids would look at her or treat her because she was new. She was afraid that they might ignore her, or worse, make fun of her. This Holy Spirit that her mom's friends talked about intrigued her, but she was unsure whether she would like to be around a group of strangers. Her mom's church friends were warm and thoughtful, but what if the kids her age were not as welcoming?



Visitors often come to our church or Bible studies to learn more about God. They might also come looking for God's love and presence through His body, the church and its members. **What is one reason that makes you afraid to reach out to someone outside of your own group? What does the Bible say about making an effort to share God's blessing with others? (Acts 10:37; 2 Cor 5:14-15)**

Scenario 2

Manuel knew he was in trouble. He had broken Grandma's favorite teapot when he was kicking the ball around the house, even after she had told him to play outside. He tried to put the pieces back together, cutting himself in the process. Grandma walked in, saw what had happened, and rushed to his side. Expecting to be yelled at and punished, he started apologizing. Without a second look at the teapot, Grandma gently held his bloody hand and took him to the bathroom to clean and cover the cuts on his hands. As she cared for his wounds, she explained that she had warned him to play with his ball outside, not because she was afraid he'd break her things, but because she didn't want to see him accidentally hurt. He knew that he deserved to be punished for his disobedience, and was moved that his grandmother had been compassionate and forgiving.

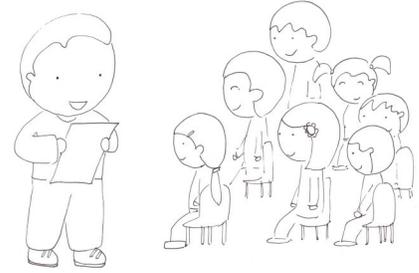


In the Bible, we have many examples of how God was merciful to a variety of people. In our world today, we continue to see these examples in our families and in our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. **Name a time when God showed you compassion when you didn't deserve or expect it. What does the word of God teach us about being compassionate? (2 Cor 1:3-4; 2 Sam 22:26; Mt 5:7; Lk 6:36)**

Scenario 3

Breathe and smile, breathe and smile. Noah was nervous seeing all the many pairs of eyes looking at him as he stood at the front of the class ready to share his testimony. His hands were sweaty and he felt his face flushing. Then he remembered the plan his dad had suggested to help him get through his presentation. Any time he felt unsure, was still trying to remember a line, or was getting distracted by someone's look, he just had to breathe and smile. By planning ahead and remembering to breathe and smile, he was able to share his testimony with his fellow students. (Prov 16:9)

By thinking about what to do beforehand, it can be easier for us to react well when we encounter a situation. Think from a visitor's perspective: what would they like us to do for them? List two ways that you can actively reach out to people you don't know and share God's love and compassion with them.



LESSON 8

AMOS' CALL TO REPENTANCE



OBJECTIVES

1. To understand that the purpose of God's selection is to let others know God.
2. To remember that Israel's downfall is a warning to us.
3. To know that God desires that we repent of our sins and return to Him.

MEMORY VERSE

"Hate evil, love good;
establish justice in the gate."

(Amos 5:15a)

PRAYER

1. Thank You, God, for bringing us together on this holy Sabbath day to worship and praise You.
2. Thank You for giving us Your word so that we can know and practice what is good, just, and righteous.
3. We ask that You help us to worship You in truth and to be kind and fair towards others.



Overview

1. **The Sins of the Surrounding Nations**
2. **The Sins of Judah and Israel**
3. **Judgment Upon the People**
4. **Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs**—Salvation is given by the grace of God through faith.
5. **Life Application**—Do Others See Jesus in You?
6. **Activity**—Showing Kindness to Others



Background Knowledge for Teachers

A. Author

The author of this book is Amos, whose name means "one who bears heavy burden." Amos lived in a rustic town six miles south of Bethlehem in the southern kingdom of Judah, called Tekoa. Amos was not a professional prophet, but a shepherd and a dresser of sycamore trees by profession (Amos 1:1; 7:14). Although he was born in Judah, Amos was called by God to go to the northern kingdom of Israel to be His spokesman there (Amos 7:15).

B. Date

According to Amos 1:1, Amos prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, king of Judah, and Jeroboam, king of Israel. Amos ministered after the time of Joel and Jonah and just before Hosea, Micah, and Isaiah. At this time, Uzziah reigned over a prosperous and militarily successful Judah. In the north, Israel was ruled by the capable King Jeroboam II. Economical and military circumstances were almost ideal, but prosperity only increased immorality and injustice among the people.

C. Background

During this period, both Israel and Judah were enjoying prosperity as well as freedom from external threats. Egypt was in a period of decline, Assyria was also in a temporary decline, and Babylonia had not yet come on the scene as a major power. Both Israel and Judah squandered the wealth that this period of peace brought them. The rich were becoming richer at the expense of the poor, who were becoming poorer. But instead of using their wealth to serve the needy, the upper classes were deaf to their cries. Bribery and injustice permeated the courts and immorality multiplied. During this period of peace and prosperity, both nations were storing up for themselves God's righteous indignation.



Reaching Out to Your Students

Students in this age group may tend to be more reactive than proactive when it comes to social interactions, especially in the church or even in the family. In the school setting, they are expected to abide by certain standards of courtesy. However, in more casual surroundings, civility and generosity can be set on the back burner. Guide students to the concept that being just, honest, and kind is not simply something we only do in church, but something that should be an innate part of our character, regardless of the situation or surroundings we are in.



Opener

5 Minutes

Materials

- Clear drinking glass filled with one cup of water
- Fresh egg
- ¼ cup salt
- Permanent marker
- Tablespoon

[Carefully place the egg in the glass of water, and then say the following.]

Look at what happened to the egg when we placed it in the water. It sunk to the bottom. Have you ever had a friend or sibling who apologized to you for doing something you didn't like, but then turned around and did that exact thing again the next day? Or have you experienced a situation where you felt like someone was being unfair or treated you differently from everyone else?

How did you feel in such situations? [Allow students to respond.]

The egg can represent us when we are not being treated fairly. The egg's sinking to the bottom represents the sinking feeling someone who is left out or mistreated would feel. The person would feel sad, depressed, defeated, unappreciated, and unloved.

[Next, remove the egg from the water and set it aside.]

What are some ways that we can show fairness and kindness to others? [Allow students to respond. With each response, add a tablespoon of salt to the water and stir to dissolve.] The salt represents different ways we can show fairness to others. For example: following the rules when playing a game, taking turns and sharing, treating others with honesty and respect, making friends with those who are left out, and taking action to help someone being treated unfairly.

[After you have added all of the salt, put the egg back in the water. If you want, you can put a smiley face on the egg with the permanent marker. The egg will now float.]

This was how the Israelites were treating God; they were hurting and disappointing Him over and over again. Not only were they unfaithful and unfair to God, they were the same to one another also. God had now had enough. God sent his prophet Amos to tell them that if they did not change from their wicked ways, if they were not kind, fair, and honest to one another, then judgment would come upon them.



Vocabulary

- treaty:** an official agreement that is made between two countries
- priority:** something that a person places above other things in importance
- ephah:** a unit of measure used for wheat and other goods (by making the ephah small, merchants were actually selling less grain than advertised)
- shekel:** the shekel was the weight by which silver was measured (by making the shekel great, the merchants were overcharging their customers)



Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

Amos was an ordinary man with an extraordinary message. He was a shepherd and a fig farmer in a small town south of Judah called Tekoa. But God called him to be His prophet and sent him to deliver God's message to the Israelites living in northern Judea.

When Amos arrived in Israel, what were his first words to the people? Let's read Amos 1:2 and 3:8.

God roared like a lion!!! If you were one of the people living in Israel, what would your reaction be upon hearing those words? [Allow students to respond.]

Why did God roar like a lion? God roared like lion to show His anger and displeasure at the Israelites. God had waited for them to turn from their evil ways, but they had stubbornly refused to do so. Therefore, God opened His mouth to declare the disasters and judgment that would come upon the people.

FOR TEACHERS

Post a large map of Israel and the surrounding nations on the board or wall. As you speak, stick the names of the cities on the map.

A. The Sins of the Surrounding Nations

1. Damascus (Amos 1:3-5)

Damascus was one of Israel's great enemies and God was displeased with them because they killed the people of Gilead with implements of iron. Using iron instruments meant that they showed great brutality and no mercy towards the Gileadites.

2. Gaza (Amos 1:6-8)

God was to punish Gaza, a Philistine nation, because they sold the people of Israel as slaves to Edom.

3. Tyre (Amos 1:9-10)

In the past, the King of Tyre and King Solomon of Israel

had made treaties to help each other and promised that there would be peace between the two nations (1 Kgs 5:12). God was disappointed in Tyre because they had broken their treaty with Israel. They had attacked and conquered the nation and delivered the people as slaves to Edom.

4. Edom (Amos 1:11-12)

Isaac gave birth to twins; the older was Esau and the younger was Jacob. From these two brothers came the nations of Edom and Israel. But the people of Edom were never kind to their brother Israel. God was to punish Edom because they pursued Israel with the sword. They were always angry and unforgiving towards Israel.

5. Ammon (Amos 1:13-15)

When the people of Ammon tried to capture Gilead so that they could conquer more land for themselves, they ripped open the women who were with child and showed no mercy.

6. Moab (Amos 2:1-3)

The people of Moab were to be punished because they burned the bones of their enemy, king of Edom. By doing this, they showed no respect for the dead and completely humiliated their enemies.

Consequently, God punished each nation according to their sins. He would cause fire to destroy their land and palaces, and lead them into captivity.

FOR TEACHERS

Hand out Bible Discovery Worksheet #1. On the map, point out the surrounding nations that Amos spoke about. In the boxes around the map, write down each nation's wrongdoings.

B. The Sins of Judah and Israel

When Amos was pronouncing God's judgment upon the

enemy nations of Israel, what do you suppose the people of Israel were thinking? "Serves them right!" "Pagans! They should be destroyed!" They might have been cheering or nodding in agreement.

But then Amos turned to God's own people. Amos pointed out the sins of the people of Judah in the south and Israel in the north. God wanted them to know that they were no better than these other nations. They, too, had transgressed greatly against God and were no longer following His commands, and they, like these foreign nations, would also suffer punishment.

1. Judah (Amos 2:4-5)

The people of Judah had sinned again and again. They have looked down on the law of God and did not obey His commandments. They also followed their forefathers by worshipping pagan gods (Jer 16:19).

2. Israel (Amos 2:6-16)

God was tired and weighed down by the sins of Israel, and He was not going to tolerate this anymore. Amos was sent to tell them of their sins and the judgment that would befall them.

What sins did Israel commit?

a. They cheated people in their businesses.

The merchants made the ephah small and the shekel large (8:5b), and they even sold wheat that was bad (8:6). The Israelites sold poor quality goods and changed the scales that they used to measure things on so that they cheated their customers.

b. They didn't worship God properly.

i. They did not put their hearts into worshipping God. When they worshipped, they wondered how long until the New Moon or the Sabbath was over so that they could go back to making money (8:5).

ii. They offered tithes and thanksgiving with the money that they earned from cheating others and oppressing the poor. God hated and despised their worship and utterly refused to accept their offerings. He asked them to take away the sacrifices and the singing because, in their daily lives, they walked in great wickedness and oppressed the poor.

iii. They did not care for God's word. The Israelites hated anyone who rebuked them for their wrong and who spoke the word of God (5:10; 2:11-12). When Amos was pointing out their sins, Amaziah the priest told Amos to return to Judah where he came from and prophesy there. The king and the people did not want to be bothered by his message of doom and visions.

c. They worshipped idols.

The people had turned to worshipping foreign gods (5:26).

d. They lived in great luxury but did not care for the suffering of the poor and the needy.

The rich lay in beds of ivory, ate rich foods, listened to music, drank wine from bowls, and anointed themselves with the best ointments, while the poor had very little and were sold as slaves in exchange for sandals. God was angry at their lack of compassion and mercy towards the poor.

FOR TEACHERS

Hand out Bible Discovery Worksheet #2. Give the students some time to fill in the verses based on what they have just learned. After the time is up, discuss the answers as a class. Refer to the Teacher Version for answers.

C. God's Judgement for Israel

In the past, God had used many different ways to remind the people of their sins.

Read Amos 4:1-13. From the passage, we learn that God warned the Israelites using famine, drought, blight, mildew, locusts, plagues, the sword, and fire. Despite all these warnings and disasters, the people still continued in sin and refused to return to God. What happens when God has given so many warnings and the people still refuse to change their ways? [Allow students to respond.] That's right. God's patience will run out. God's wrath will burn and His children will feel the sting of His rod coming down on them.

Read Amos 5:27 and 7:17. God declared that their land would be destroyed and they would be exiled from their homeland. They will be taken into captivity to a country beyond Damascus, to the land of Assyria.

Even though God was angry with the Israelites and pronounced judgment upon them, He still loved them. How did God show His unfailing love and mercy towards His children?

Read Amos 5:14-15, 24. God sent His prophet Amos to once again remind them to return to Him, to do good, and to hate evil. If they did what was good and just, they would live.

Read Amos 9:14. Amos comforted the Israelites by telling them that even though Assyria would destroy their land, they would be brought back from captivity if they turned back to God. They would once again return to their homeland to rebuild their homes, vineyards, and gardens.



Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

Salvation is given by the grace of God through faith.

Believers must rely on the Holy Spirit to pursue holiness, to honor God, and to love humanity by being just, honest, and kind.



Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

1. **What did Amos do before he was called to be a prophet?** He was a shepherd and fig farmer.
2. **Why did God roar like a lion?** God roared like a lion against the people of Israel because He was angry and displeased with them. God had waited patiently for them to turn from their sins, but they didn't. So, He declared judgment upon them.
3. **Name the other foreign nations that God pronounced judgment upon.** Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, and Moab.
4. **What sins did Israel commit?** They cheated people in their businesses. They didn't worship God properly. They worshipped idols. They lived in great luxury but did not care for the poor and the needy.
5. **Name some of the ways God used to remind the Israelites to return to Him.** Famine, drought, fire, plague, the sword, etc.
6. **What did Amaziah the priest say to Jonah?** Go back to Judah and prophesy there!
7. **How was God going to discipline Israel?** They would be taken captives to a foreign land.
8. **Why did God choose the Israelites and give them His laws?** God chose Israel to be His people and gave them His law so that the Israelites could tell all the other nations about God.

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. Damascus; Gaza; Tyre; Edom; Ammon; Moab
2. C
3. A
4. True
5. True
6. False
7. Sickness/accidents
Warning from parents/teachers/friends
The word of God
Prayer
8. God chose Israel to be His people and gave them His law so that the Israelites could tell all the other nations about God.
9. Answers may vary.



Life Application

10 Minutes

DO OTHERS SEE JESUS IN YOU?

God chose Israel to be the people through whom all other nations of the world could know God. The Israelites did not have to do anything to be chosen; God gave them this special privilege because He wanted to, not because they were a great nation or deserved any special treatment. Sadly, the Israelites forgot about God's grace, and they became proud of their privileged position. They hardened their hearts to the word of God.

God reminded the Israelites that, in the same way God brought them out of the land of Egypt, God also brought the Philistines from the land of Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir. God is a just God and He does not show favoritism. God blessed Israel; He also blessed the other nations. And even though God loved Israel, He would judge Israel if they did wrong, just as He would the foreign nations. The Israelites should not have thought that as God's special people they did not need to obey God's rules or that God would overlook their wicked deeds. God expected His people to know what was pleasing to Him because they had the laws of God.

Similarly, today we are blessed to be God's children. We are also blessed to have God's word, the Holy Bible. 1 Peter 2:9 tells us that we are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people." This means that our behavior, speech, and thinking need to be different from the people of the world. We should not conform to the ways of the world but allow others to see Jesus in us.

Read the following scenarios below, and then answer the questions that follow:

Scenario 1

Greg loved to read. He had finished reading many mystery and adventure series. Greg's parents were able to afford to buy whatever books he liked. One day, Greg's friend Harry who also loved books, came over to his house. Greg proudly showed off his book collection. Harry's eyes almost popped out when he saw all the books that he loved but had not been able to read. Unlike Greg's parents, Harry's parents could not afford to buy Harry many books. They told him that if he wanted those books, he would have to borrow them from the library. Usually, Harry had to wait until the library stocked the books and when they did, there was usually a long waiting list for the books because they were so popular. Harry browsed through the collection, and then pulled one from the shelf and asked Greg if he may borrow it. Greg took the book and put it back in the shelf. "I don't loan books," Greg said. "I may never get them back. Besides, you can ask your parents to buy them for you."

- Which of the Israelite's sins do Greg's actions remind you of?
- Why do you think Greg's behavior would not be pleasing to God?
- Suggest how Greg can be more caring towards his friend.

Scenario 2

Last year, Evan's cousins came to visit from abroad, and they had bought the latest video game for Evan. Evan was thrilled—it was exactly what he had wanted. After his cousins left, Evan spent many hours playing the game. He would come home from school, quickly do his homework, and then rush off to play games until dinnertime. When George, his good friend from next door, would call to ask if he wanted to do something together, Evan would reply that he was just too busy. Evan prayed only when his parents forced him to, and even then, he would just mumble the words because his mind was filled with images from the game. Evan had not felt this passionate about anything before. Each time he played, he felt excited when fighting battles and beating other players.

- Which of the Israelite's sins does Evan demonstrate?
- What priority did the video game have in Evan's life? Which actions tell us this?
- Why might Evan's thoughts and actions be wrong in God's sight?
- What could Evan do to prevent video games from taking over his life?

Scenario 3

Jimmy was getting impatient. His R.E. teacher was going on longer than usual and the class was already 15 minutes over time. Jimmy couldn't wait to go home, slip into his sports gear, and play basketball with his friends. Jimmy was daydreaming about all the fun things he would do afterwards when he felt his friend tap him. He realized that his teacher had just asked him a question.

- a. Which of the Israelite's sins do Jimmy's actions remind you of?
- b. Why were Jimmy's actions wrong in God's sight?
- c. How does God want us to worship Him?
- d. What things can Jimmy do so that his heart and mind are present during service and class?

Scenario 4

Helen had brought in her brand new set of colored pencils so that she could use them for her class project. As she was coloring, Maggie came and asked Helen if she may borrow a yellow colored pencil. Maggie was not very smart. When it came to picking teams, she was usually the last person to be picked. Maggie also seemed to wear the same clothes to school each day. Helen didn't really like Maggie too much. "No, you can't borrow it because I'm using it," Helen said. A few minutes later, Sarah came and asked if she may borrow her colored pencils. Helen smiled and said, "Of course, you can borrow any color you want."

- a. Which of the Israelite's sins do Helen's actions remind you of?
- b. Why did Helen refuse to lend her colored pencils to Maggie?
- c. Why did Helen agree to lend her colored pencils to Sarah?
- d. How does God want us to treat people?

**Activity****Showing Kindness to Others***10-15 Minutes*

Objective: To allow students to brainstorm ways they can show kindness to others.

Materials

- Sheets of white cardboard
- Color crayons, color pencils and markers

Instructions

Draw a picture of something you have learned from today's story. For example, you may have learned about how the poor in Amos' time were sold for a pair of sandals. You can therefore draw a pair of sandals. You may have learned about how the merchants used false scales to cheat others. In which case, you can draw a scale. Or, you can draw a lion roaring because you learned that God was angry with the Israelites.

Next, write down some of the ways you can show kindness and fairness to others, and some ways you will worship God truthfully.

Post the completed pictures on the class bulletin board.

THE SINS OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL

Fill in the blanks.

Judah

They have despised the law of God and have not kept His commandments. They have also followed their forefathers by worshipping false gods (Jer 16:19).

Israel

1. They cheated people in their businesses.

The merchants made the ephah small and the shekel large (8:5b) and they even sold bad wheat (8:6).

2. They didn't worship God properly.

- a. They did not put their hearts into worshipping God.
- b. They offered tithes and thanksgiving to God but in their daily lives they walked in great wickedness and oppressed the poor.
- c. They did not care for God's word. The Israelites hated anyone who rebuked them for their wrongs and who spoke the word of God (5:10). They told Amos to go back to Judah (7:12).

3. They worshipped idols.

The people made and worshipped foreign gods (5:26).

4. They lived in great luxury but did not care for the suffering of the poor and the needy.

The rich lay in beds of ivory, ate rich foods, listened to music, drank wine from bowls and anointed themselves with best ointments (6:4-6). The poor were sold as slaves in exchange for a pair of sandals.

God's Judgment for Israel

"Therefore thus says the LORD: [...] You shall die in a defiled land; And Israel shall surely be led away captive from his own land" (7:17).

God's Mercy on Israel

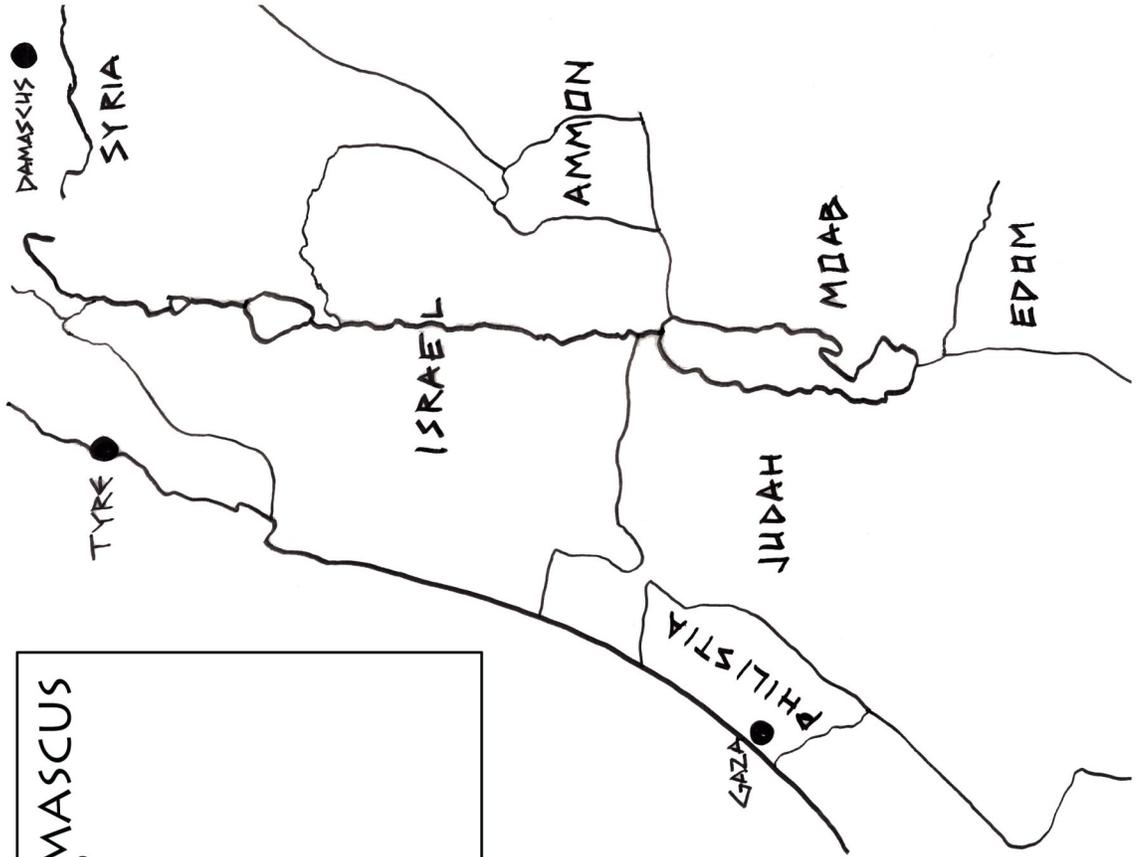
Seek good and not evil, that you may live (5:14).

I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; They shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; They shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them," says the LORD your God (9:14-15).

In the boxes, briefly describe each nation's wrongdoings.

TYRE (AMOS 1:9)	DAMASCUS (AMOS 1:3)
---------------------------	-------------------------------

AMMON (AMOS 1:13)	MOAB (AMOS 2:1)	EDOM (AMOS 1:11)
-----------------------------	---------------------------	----------------------------



THE SINS OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL

Fill in the blanks.

Judah

They have despised the law of God and have not kept His _____. They have also followed their forefathers by worshipping _____.

Israel

1. They cheated people in their businesses.

The merchants made the _____ and the _____ and they even sold bad wheat (8:6).

2. They didn't worship God properly.

a. They did not put their _____ into _____ God.

b. They offered tithes and thanksgiving to God but in their daily lives they walked in great _____ and oppressed the _____.

c. They did not care for God's word. The Israelites hated anyone who rebuked them for their wrongs and who _____ the word of God (5:10). They told Amos to go back to _____.

3. They worshipped idols.

The people _____ and _____ foreign _____.

4. They lived in great luxury but did not care for the suffering of the poor and the needy.

The rich lay in _____ of _____, ate rich _____, listened to _____, drank _____ from bowls and anointed themselves with _____. The poor were sold as _____ in exchange for a pair of _____.

God's Judgment for Israel

"Therefore thus says the LORD: [...] You shall _____ in a _____ land; And Israel shall surely be led away _____ from his _____."

God's Mercy on Israel

_____ and not _____, that you may _____.

I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; They shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; They shall _____ vineyards and _____ wine from them; They shall also make _____ and eat fruit from them. I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be _____ from the land I have given them," says the LORD your God.

DO OTHERS SEE JESUS IN YOU?

Read the following scenarios, and then answer the questions that follow.

Scenario 1

Greg loved to read. He had finished reading many mystery and adventure series. Greg's parents were able to afford to buy whatever books he liked. One day, Greg's friend Harry who also loved books, came over to his house. Greg proudly showed off his book collection. Harry's eyes almost popped out when he saw all the books that he loved but had not been able to read. Unlike Greg's parents, Harry's parents could not afford to buy Harry many books. They told him that if he wanted those books, he would have to borrow them from the library. Usually, Harry had to wait until the library stocked the books and when they did, there was usually a long waiting list for the books because they were so popular. Harry browsed through the collection, and then pulled one from the shelf and asked Greg if he may borrow it. Greg took the book and put it back in the shelf. "I don't loan books," Greg said. "I may never get them back. Besides, you can ask your parents to buy them for you."



- Which of the Israelite's sins do Greg's actions remind you of?
- Why do you think Greg's behavior would not be pleasing to God?
- Suggest how Greg can be more caring towards his friend.



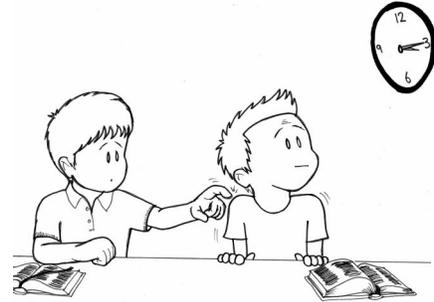
Scenario 2

Last year, Evan's cousins came to visit from abroad, and they had bought the latest video game for Evan. Evan was thrilled—it was exactly what he had wanted. After his cousins left, Evan spent many hours playing the game. He would come home from school, quickly do his homework, and then rush off to play games until dinnertime. When George, his good friend from next door, would call to ask if he wanted to do something together, Evan would reply that he was just too busy. Evan prayed only when his parents forced him to, and even then, he would just mumble the words because his mind was filled with images from the game. Evan had not felt this passionate about anything before. Each time he played, he felt excited when fighting battles and beating other players.

- Which of the Israelite's sins does Evan demonstrate?
- What priority did the video game have in Evan's life? Which actions tell us this?
- Why might Evan's thoughts and actions be wrong in God's sight?
- What could Evan do to prevent video games from taking over his life?

Scenario 3

Jimmy was getting impatient. His R.E. teacher was going on longer than usual and the class was already 15 minutes over time. Jimmy couldn't wait to go home, slip into his sports gear, and play basketball with his friends. Jimmy was daydreaming about all the fun things he would do afterwards when he felt his friend tap him. He realized that his teacher had just asked him a question.



- Which of the Israelite's sins do Jimmy's actions remind you of?
- Why were Jimmy's actions wrong in God's sight?
- How does God want us to worship Him?
- What things can Jimmy do so that his heart and mind are present during service and class?

Scenario 4

Helen had brought in her brand new set of colored pencils so that she could use them for her class project. As she was coloring, Maggie came and asked Helen if she may borrow a yellow colored pencil. Maggie was not very smart. When it came to picking teams, she was usually the last person to be picked. Maggie also seemed to wear the same clothes to school each day. Helen didn't really like Maggie too much. "No, you can't borrow it because I'm using it," Helen said. A few minutes later, Sarah came and asked if she may borrow her colored pencils. Helen smiled and said, "Of course, you can borrow any color you want."

- Which of the Israelite's sins do Helen's actions remind you of?
- Why did Helen refuse to lend her colored pencils to Maggie?
- Why did Helen agree to lend her colored pencils to Sarah?
- How does God want us to treat people?

E2 Year 2 Book 3 Lesson 8—Amos' Call to Repentance

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Weekly Bible Reading: _____

Bible Reading: Check each box when you complete that day's reading.

Prayer: Check each box after you pray to God that day.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Read							
Pray							

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____

2. _____

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse. (Amos 5:15a)

1. Circle the six foreign nations that God pronounced judgment upon.

Damascus

Babylon

Edom

Gaza

Tyre

Ammon

Nineveh

Moab

Egypt

Multiple Choice

2. _____ : Before Amos was called to be a prophet, he was a _____.

- a. Fisherman
- b. Potter
- c. Shepherd and fig farmer
- d. Priest

3. _____ : How was God going to punish Israel?

- a. They would be captives in a foreign land.
- b. They would all die from famine.
- c. They would be burned by fire.
- d. They would die from a plague.

LESSON 9

DANIEL AND HIS FRIENDS SAY NO

OBJECTIVES

1. To learn about Daniel's strong resolution to remain holy.
2. To learn that God's people should not compromise with wrongdoing.
3. To discover ways to firmly say "no" when we are tempted.

MEMORY VERSE

"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts."

(Titus 2:11-12a)

PRAYER

1. Thank You, Lord, for guiding and protecting us throughout the week so that we can come before You on this Holy Sabbath Day.
2. Help us treasure our noble status as Your special children so that we will not be defiled by the things of the world.
3. Grant to us wisdom and strength to be resolute in obeying Your commandments.



Overview

1. **Daniel's Training in Babylon**
2. **Changing My Identity**
3. **Daniel Refuses to Eat the King's Food**
4. **God Blesses Daniel**
5. **Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs**—Water Baptism is for the remission of sins and regeneration.
6. **Life Application**—Saying "No!"
7. **Activity**—Taking a Stand



Background Knowledge for Teachers

Dates of Babylonian Captivity

First captivity: In the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign in 606 B.C., which is the third year of Jehoiakim of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar took people as prisoners, including many young people. Daniel and his three friends were among the first.

Second captivity: In the eighth year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar came a second time, taking approximately 10,000 captive. Ezekiel the prophet was among this group of prisoners.

Third captivity: During the ninth year of King Zedekiah's reign, the 17th year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar came and broke down the temple and destroyed the city of Jerusalem. He took away almost all the rest of the people.

Israelite Youths in Babylon

Taking young men captive and making them into highly educated members of the king's court was common practice in the ancient world. The ancient kings wanted to take advantage of not only the physical wealth of the conquered country, but the human resources as well. Highly skilled captives were put to work serving their new king and were expected to do their very best for him.

However, besides wanting to have them serve in his palace, King Nebuchadnezzar wanted to assimilate the Israelite youth into the Babylonian culture and religion. By giving them new names, educating them in the literature and language of the Chaldeans, and having them serve in the royal palace, Nebuchadnezzar wanted them to forget about

their Israelite identity and background. This would help keep the exiled nobility in line and they would serve as trophies of the king's conquests and victories.



Reaching Out to Your Students

Modern society is riddled with temptations that are packaged beautifully, albeit deceitfully. The media and society persuade children that if something looks or feels good, then they should indulge in it. Our role as teachers is to help our students become aware of the negative consequences of giving in to items that might seem natural, or even widely accepted as good, among their peers. We should also point them in the direction of righteousness, reminding them of the positive results of staying the course. By increasing this consciousness, they will be more alert to similar stimuli in their environment and remember the value of staying true to what is pleasing to God.



Opener

5 Minutes

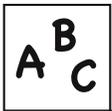
Divide the students into two teams. Scatter the members of one team around the room and instruct them to stand strong by remaining perfectly still—absolutely no movement is allowed. While the first team stands strong, the second team will try to get them to move without touching them. They may try to make them laugh, sneak around them, whisper in their ear, and so on. The slightest movement, besides blinking, counts. Every person that moves is “out” and has to stand against the wall.

Play the game for about two minutes, and then count how many team members have moved. Switch roles and repeat the activity.

Gather your students together to discuss the following questions:

- How hard was it to stand firm and remain focused when the other team was distracting you?
- For the opposing team, how did it feel to distract others?
- How is standing firm in this game like trying to stand firm in real life? (Like the game, standing strong in our faith can be hard when there are many distractions and influences around us).

In our lesson today, we will learn how four great friends stood firm in God's word.



Vocabulary

- blemish:** defect, mark, flaw, or imperfection
delicacies: delicious, unique, and expensive food
defiled: to be polluted or made unholy
midwife: a person who helps women give birth to a baby



Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

FOR TEACHERS

Before Class

Take four pieces of different colored construction paper. Write down Daniel and his three friends' Hebrew names, with meanings, on one side and their Babylonian names, with meanings, on the reverse.

Hebrew Names

Daniel	"God is my judge."
Hananiah	"God is gracious."
Mishael	"Who is like God?"
Azariah	"God is my helper."

Babylonian Names

Beltshazzar	"Protector of life."
Shadrach	"Servant of Aku, the moon god worshipped by the Babylonians."
Meshach	"He who is like Marduk, the name of a Babylonian god."
Abed-Nego	"Servant of Nego, a Babylonian god."

These can be used as visuals as you get to the part of the lesson where you teach the students how Nebuchadnezzar changed their names.

Daniel's Training in Babylon

When God gave the Israelites the land of Canaan to live in, He promised that as long as His people obeyed Him, He would bless them and take care of them and let them live on the land (Deut 28:1-14). Sadly, the people began to take God's blessings for granted. They disobeyed His commandments and went in pursuit of false gods.

God used many ways to make His people return to Him; He used prophets, natural disasters, and even wars, but the people stubbornly refused to return to Him. God finally brought upon them the ultimate punishment, which was to allow enemy nations to invade the land and take their people captive to a foreign land.

These enemies were the Babylonians. [If you have a map, show where Babylon is in comparison to Judah.] Under King Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian army came to Judah and Jerusalem during the third year of king Jehoiakim's reign. Nebuchadnezzar was victorious in conquering Judah, and he brought King Jehoiakim to Babylon bound in fetters. He also brought back Jerusalem's people, many of them valuable and wise young men.

Among the prisoners taken to Babylon was a young man named Daniel, who was of noble descent. Daniel's three friends, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah were also made captives. These young men were between the ages of 14 to 18 years old.

King Nebuchadnezzar gave orders to a man named Ashpenaz, the chief court official, to select some of the Jewish youth brought back as captives—young men of the royal family and nobility of Judah—to undergo a three-year training program.

After the training, the young men were to work for the king in his kingdom. Naturally, Nebuchadnezzar wanted only the best!

What did Nebuchadnezzar look for in the young men? Ask students to find the answers from the Bible.

- Descendants of the royal family and nobility
- Without blemish, but good-looking
- Gifted in all wisdom
- Possessing knowledge
- Quick to understand
- Had the ability to serve in the king's palace

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were four of the young men chosen, along with many other young men who met the king's qualifications.

Changing My Identity

When Nebuchadnezzar saw the young Jewish prisoners who had been chosen for his training program, he was on a mission to change them from being Jewish to being Babylonians.

If we were to change our identity, what would we have to change about ourselves? [Ask for responses and write them down.] That's right. To change our identity, we may have to change our appearance, adopt a new name, learn a new language, or even behave differently.

This is what Nebuchadnezzar wanted for the young men from Israel. He wanted to train them so that they would fit into the lifestyle and culture of the palace in Babylon.

How were the young men trained for the king's service? Read Daniel 1:4-7.

- a. They were taught the language and literature of the Chaldeans.
- b. They were assigned a daily amount of the king's delicacies and wine.
- c. They were given new Babylonian names.

Let's see what their new names were:

[If you prepared the names on construction paper, take them out now. Select four volunteers. Give each volunteer a card and ask the volunteer to read the Hebrew names and meanings.]

Daniel and his three friends all had names that reminded them about the one true God.

- Daniel's name means "God is my judge."
- Hananiah's name means "God is gracious."
- Mishael's name means "Who is like God?"
- Azariah's name means "God is my helper."

But now they were given new names. [Have volunteers turn the construction paper over and read their new names and meanings.]

Daniel was called Belshazzar. Bel was the name of a Babylonian god. His name meant "protector of life."

Hananiah was called Shadrach. Shadrach means "the servant Aku," the moon god worshipped by the Babylonians.

Mishael was called Meshach, which means "he who is like Marduk," the name of a Babylonian god.

Azariah was called Abed-Nego, which means "the servant of Nego," a Babylonian god.

Why do you think the king wanted to give Daniel and his friends new names? These names were given to them to make them forget about the one true God whom they worshipped. Now, their names were names of Babylonian idols! Nebuchadnezzar wanted them to worship his gods instead.

Daniel Refuses to Eat the King's Food

Each day, Daniel and his three friends were given a portion of the king's food. They were allowed to eat the rich, delicious foods that the king ate. They could also drink the wine that he drank.

How would you feel if, each day, you could eat and drink the same food and wine as the king? [Allow students to respond.]

Let's read Daniel 1:8 to see Daniel's response. [Ask a student to read the verse aloud.]

The Bible tells us that Daniel had made up his mind not to eat the food and wine given to them by the king. Why did Daniel choose to do this? In Daniel 1:8, it tells us that, although the king treated the captives kindly, Daniel

considered taking the king's food and wine to be defiling. He made up his mind that he would not sin against God and cause himself to be unclean by eating the king's food.

How would eating and drinking the king's food and wine cause Daniel to be defiled?

- As the people of God, they were given strict dietary laws. They were permitted to eat animals, fish, insects, and birds that were clean, but there were unclean foods that could not be eaten. For example, the Babylonians ate pork, but the Jewish people were not allowed to eat pork. Also, the food may have been prepared in a way that was not according to Jewish law. Daniel saw that the king's food was considered unclean.
- Daniel knew that Babylon was an idol-worshipping country. The custom of these countries was to offer the food and wine as a sacrifice to their gods before eating it.
- Daniel knew that wine could cause him to enjoy the pleasures of sin and cause him to lose his vigilance.

When Daniel made up his mind not to sin against God, it took great courage for him to take a stand and speak to Ashpenaz about his decision. It wasn't as easy for Daniel as it is for us. If we don't like certain foods, we can easily choose to eat something else. For Daniel, it was different; he was a prisoner. Prisoners don't tell those in charge what they will or will not do, or what they want to eat. Daniel knew that speaking up and making this request might cost him his life. However, Daniel did not allow the fear of death keep him from taking a stand and obeying God. So, Daniel told Ashpenaz that he could not eat the king's food and asked for permission to eat other things instead.

God Blesses Daniel

When Daniel made the decision to talk to Ashpenaz, God had already opened a way for Daniel. God had caused Ashpenaz to show favor and kindness to Daniel. However, although Ashpenaz liked Daniel, he was also afraid of the king. He told Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and drink. If you become pale and thin compared to the other youths your age, the king will have me beheaded."

However, Daniel did not give up. He then asked the steward that Ashpenaz had put in charge of him if he could take a test. For ten days, Daniel and his three friends would only eat vegetables and drink water. If, at the end of the ten days, they looked worse than those who were eating the king's food, then the steward could decide whether or not to let them continue their diet.

However, Daniel did not give up. He then asked the steward that Ashpenaz had put in charge of him if he could take a test. For ten days, Daniel and his three friends would only eat vegetables and drink water. If, at the end of the ten days, they looked worse than those who were eating the king's food, then the steward could decide whether or not to let them continue their diet.

The steward agreed to the test. What do you think happened after ten days? Did they look thin and pale because they didn't eat the king's delicacies that had been worshipped to idols? Not at all. At the end of the ten days, they discovered that Daniel and his three friends looked healthier and better nourished than those who were eating the king's delicacies. From then on, the steward fed the youths only vegetables and water.

God not only blessed Daniel and his three friends with good health, but He gave them a great ability to learn, and they soon mastered all the literature and science of the

time. God also gave Daniel a special ability in understanding the meanings of dreams and visions.

When the three years of training was completed, all the young men were brought before King Nebuchadnezzar for an interview. The king tested them in all matters of wisdom and understanding and he found that among the youths, none of them impressed him as much as Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. What did the king observe? [Have a volunteer read Daniel 1:19-20.] The king found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were already working in his kingdom. And so Daniel and his three friends became the king's advisors.

FOR TEACHERS

Hand out the Bible Discovery worksheet. Going over one question at a time, give the students time to complete the blanks, and then discuss the answers as a class. The answers have been provided below.

BIBLE DISCOVERY WORKSHEET

Fill in the blanks.

1. How did Nebuchadnezzar change the identity of the young men?

- They were taught the language and literature of the Chaldeans.
- They were assigned a daily amount of the king's delicacies and wine.
- They were given new Babylonian names.

2. Write down the meaning of the young men's Jewish names and their new Babylonian names.

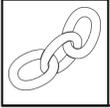
- Daniel's name means "God is my judge." His name was changed to Belteshazzar.
- Hananiah's name means "God is gracious." His name was changed to Shadrach.
- Mishael's name means "Who is like God?" His name was changed to Meschach.
- Azariah's name means "God is my helper." His name was changed to Abed-Nego.

3. Why did Daniel not want to eat and drink the king's food and wine?

- It would cause him to be defiled.
- The foods that the king ate were unclean.
- The foods may have been offered to idols.
- Wine could cause Daniel to enjoy the pleasures of sin and lose vigilance.

4. How did God bless Daniel and his three friends?

- God caused Ashpenaz to show favor and kindness to Daniel.
- They looked better and more nourished than the youths who had eaten the king's delicacies.
- God gave them ten times more wisdom, knowledge, and understanding than the king's magicians and astrologers.



Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

Water Baptism

Through water baptism, we are buried with Christ into His death and are raised with Him to be a new creation. Henceforth, we should rely on the Holy Spirit to walk in newness of life, keeping ourselves unstained by the world. Daniel and his three friends set an excellent example for us of staying pure in an ungodly world, and having the faith and courage to say “no” to things that would defile and compromise our faith.



Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

1. Why were the Israelites made captives?

They disobeyed God's commandments and worshipped false gods.

2. What kind of young men did the king look for?

- Descendants of the royal family and nobility
- Without blemish, but good-looking
- Gifted in all wisdom
- Possessing knowledge
- Quick to understand
- Had the ability to serve in the king's palace

3. What did King Nebuchadnezzar try to do with the young captives who were brought to Babylon?

He tried to change their identity.

4. How did King Nebuchadnezzar try to change the captives' identities?

- He made sure they were taught the language and literature of the Chaldeans.
- He assigned to them a daily amount of the king's delicacies and wine.
- He gave them new Babylonian names.

5. What were the Hebrew and Babylonian names of the four Israelite youth mentioned in today's story?

The Hebrew names were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. The Babylonian names were Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego.

6. Why would the king's delicacies and wine defile Daniel?

They were unclean foods. They had been offered to idols.

7. What enabled Daniel to stand up for his faith?

Daniel had already decided in his heart that he was not going to defile himself and sin against God by eating the unclean foods. He was also not afraid of death, which gave him the courage to stand up for his faith.

8. How did God open the way and bless Daniel and his companions?

- God caused Ashpenaz to show favor and kindness to Daniel.
- They looked better and more nourished than the youths who had eaten from the king's delicacies.
- God gave them ten times more wisdom, knowledge, and understanding than the king's magicians and astrologers.

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. False; he gave them new names to erase their Jewish identities and create new Babylonian ones.
2. False; he felt that the food would defile him because it had been offered to idols and it would cause him to sin.
3. a
4. d
5. a
6. judge, Belteshazzar
gracious, Shadrach
God, Meshach
helper, Abed-Nego
7. Answers may vary. Possible answers: Fear of being left out or teased; consequences; lack of courage; etc.
8. Daniel had already decided in his heart that he was not going to defile himself and sin against God by eating the unclean foods. He was also not afraid of death, which gave him the courage to stand up for his faith.
9. God caused Ashpenaz to show favor and kindness to Daniel.
They looked better and more nourished than the youths who ate the king's delicacies.
God gave them ten times more wisdom, knowledge, and understanding than the king's magicians and astrologers.



Life Application

10 Minutes

SAYING "NO"!

In our story today, we learned how Daniel recognized that the king's food would defile him. Eating it meant disobeying God's commandments, and over time, it would weaken his faith and relationship with God. Daniel was therefore determined to remain pure and faithful to God.

In the world around us, there are many things that can cause us to be defiled. Although, on the surface, these things may seem harmless, in the long run, they will affect our thinking, behavior, attitude, and relationship with God.

Can you think of things around us that may cause us to be defiled and lead us further from God? What are things that we need to stand up and say "No" to? [Allow students to volunteer answers. Write them on the board.] Some possible answers could be:

- Music that has bad words
- TV programs that contain violence and sexual images
- Bad influences from friends
- Sexual images in magazines or on the Internet
- Lies, profanity, dirty jokes
- Trends or customs of the world, such as Halloween and Christmas

In the Bible, there are many characters who said "No" to things that could defile them, to things that they knew were against God's will. These characters stood up for what they believed in.

Be Courageous and Say "No."

1. Read Matthew 4:1-11. When Jesus was tempted by Satan, what did Jesus say "No" to?
Jesus said "No" to the desires of the body, to pride, and to the glory and riches of the world.
2. What did Joseph say "No" to? Read Genesis 39:4-12.
Joseph said "No" to his master's wife when she tried to seduce him to commit sin.
3. What did the two midwives say "No" to? Read Exodus 1:15-22.
When Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, saw that the Israelites were becoming a strong and mighty nation, he feared that one day they might overtake Egypt. Pharaoh therefore came up with a plan to kill all the Hebrew male babies. The midwives refused to do as the king commanded them. Instead of killing the male babies, they kept them alive.

4. What did Peter and John say “No” to? Read Acts 4:13-22, 31.

After Peter and John healed the lame man by the temple gate, the priests and Jewish leaders had them arrested and imprisoned. The next day, Peter and John were brought before the council and commanded never to speak about Jesus again. But Peter and John replied, “You decide whether it’s right to obey you rather than God. We cannot stop telling about the wonderful things we have seen Jesus do and say.”

What did these characters do to stand up for their faith?

1. When Jesus was tempted in the desert by Satan, Jesus’ response was to revert to the Scriptures. He knew the word of God and was able to use it in His spiritual battle against Satan. For us, knowing the Bible helps us to know what is good, godly, and right, and what is wrong, ungodly, and sinful. More importantly, knowing the Bible helps us to know how to deal with tempting and testing situations when we are faced with them.
2. Joseph knew that sleeping with his master’s wife was a sin not only against his master, but also against God. Every day, his master’s wife tried to seduce Joseph, but he did not heed her or desire to be with her. One day, as she caught hold of Joseph, he fled and ran away from her. The Bible tells us to flee when we meet with temptation. If we do not avoid it, but draw as close as we can to it, we put ourselves in great spiritual danger. We should follow Joseph’s example by fleeing from temptation as fast as we can.
3. When Pharaoh asked the two midwives to kill the Hebrew male babies, they refused to obey because they feared God more than Pharaoh. Their fear of God gave them the courage to take a stand for what they knew was right, even if it meant endangering their own lives. When we fear God, we will have the faith to do what God wants rather than compromise with sin.
4. Peter and John appeared before the rulers, speaking with courage and boldness. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we will be filled with courage to stand up for what is right, even if it means we have to suffer for it. Peter and John refused to listen to men more than God.

God will open a way for us and bless us. How did God bless these Bible characters when they said “No”?

1. After Jesus overcame the temptations of Satan, angels came and ministered to Him. Because Jesus stood firm in His faith and in His mission, He became the Savior of mankind.
2. Joseph eventually became the Prime Minister of Egypt.
3. Because of their fear of God, the midwives were blessed with families of their own (Ex 1:21).
4. Peter and John experienced the abidance of God and were filled with the Holy Spirit. They were given courage so that they continued to speak the word of God with boldness (Acts 4:31).

The characters we just learned about give us strategies and attitudes we should imitate when we say “No.” What are the strategies?

- | | |
|-------------------|------------|
| a. Use God’s word | b. Flee |
| c. Fear God | d. Be bold |

Scenario: “It’s Christmas!”

It was that time of the year again—Christmas. During this time of year, Margery always felt left out and different. At school, they would do all kinds of Christmas-related things. Her friends would exchange Christmas cards and gifts. They would even bring gifts for their teacher. And the worst thing was when her teacher would gather everyone around her and open up the gifts she received from all her students—all except Margery. But Margery’s parents and her RE teachers have told her that she shouldn’t celebrate Christmas because Jesus was not born on Christmas Day. Plus, the Bible doesn’t tell us to remember Jesus’ birthday. However, Margery liked Christmas; she liked the presents and cards, the Christmas trees, the lights and all the fun things that people ate and did on Christmas. Margery wondered why celebrating Christmas was so wrong.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you think it is wrong for Margery to celebrate Christmas? Why?
2. What may help Margery overcome/accept her feelings of being different and left out?



Activity

Taking a Stand

10-15 Minutes

Objectives

- To provide students the opportunity to practice saying “No” using some of the strategies discussed in the Life Application.
- To allow students to practice standing up for their faith in different situations.

Instructions

1. Divide the students into pairs.
2. Have the students role-play each scenario by thinking of different ways to say “No,” and acting them out.
3. Ask each pair why it might be difficult to say no in the current situation. Emphasize to the students that saying “Yes,” is usually easier, but it is dangerous for our spirituality. Therefore, we must always be vigilant and say “No.”

Scenarios

- Your friend offers you a cigarette and encourages you to smoke it.
- Your friends always use bad language around you.
- Your best friend asks you to share your homework answers because he did not have time to do it. This is the first time that he's done this.
- Your friend gives you a really short skirt for a birthday present. She asks if you like it and also when you will wear it.
- Your older brother has put a huge dent in your parents' car. He tells you not to let your parents know that he was responsible.
- Your father, who is not a church member, wants you to join the basketball club that meets on Saturdays.

DANIEL AND HIS FRIENDS SAY NO

Fill in the blanks.

1. How did Nebuchadnezzar change the identity of the young men?

- They were taught the _____ and _____ of the Chaldeans.
- They were assigned a daily amount of the _____ and wine.
- They were given new _____.

2. Write down the meaning of the young men's Jewish names and their new Babylonian names.

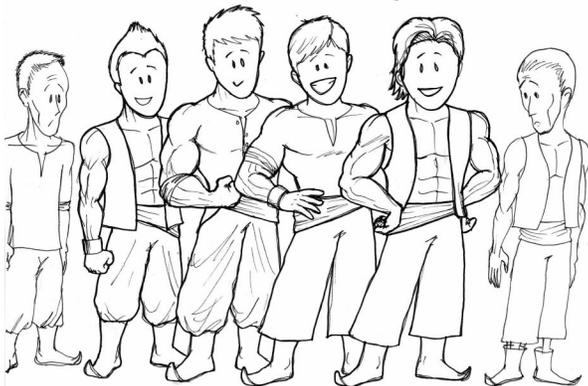
- Daniel's name means "God is my _____." His name was changed to _____.
- Hananiah's name means "God is _____." His name was changed to _____.
- Mishael's name means "Who is like _____?" His name was changed to _____.
- Azariah's name means "God is my _____." His name was changed to _____.

3. Why did Daniel not want to eat and drink the king's food and wine?

- It would cause him to be _____.
- The foods that the king ate were _____.
- The foods may have been offered to _____.
- Wine could cause Daniel to enjoy the _____ of _____ and lose _____.



4. How did God bless Daniel and his three friends?



- God caused _____ to show favor and kindness to Daniel.
- They looked _____ and _____ nourished than the youths who had eaten the king's delicacies.
- God gave them _____ times more wisdom, knowledge, and understanding than the king's _____ and _____.

BE COURAGEOUS TO SAY NO

Look up the Bible verses and
write or draw your answers.



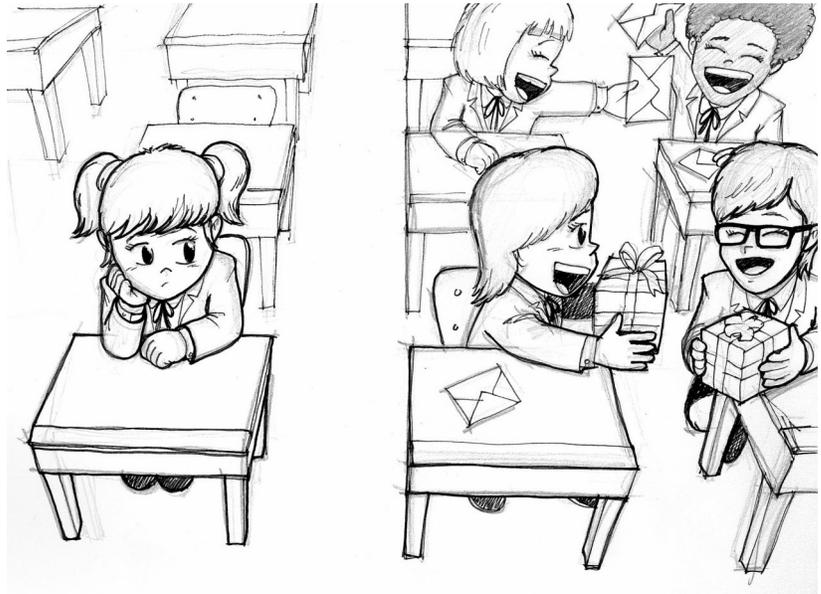
Be courageous and say "NO"	How did they stand firm?	God will open a way and bless us
What did Jesus say "NO" to? Read Mt 4:1-11.	How did Jesus stand firm?	How was Jesus blessed?
What did Joseph say "No" to? Read Gen 39:4-12.	How did Joseph stand firm?	How was Joseph blessed?
What did the midwives say "No" to? Read Ex 1:15-22.	What enabled them to stand firm?	How were they blessed?
What did Peter and John say "No" to? Read Acts 4:13-22, 31.	What enabled them to stand firm?	How were they blessed?

Jesus, Joseph, the midwives, and Peter and Paul all taught us strategies that we should use when we need to stand up to say “NO.” List them down below.

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.

It's Christmas!

It was that time of the year again—Christmas. During this time of year, Margery always felt left out and different. At school, they would do all kinds of Christmas-related things. Her friends would exchange Christmas cards and gifts. They would even bring gifts for their teacher. And the worst thing was when her teacher would gather everyone around her and open up the gifts she received from all her students—all except Margery. But Margery's parents and her RE teachers have told her that she shouldn't celebrate Christmas because Jesus was not born on Christmas Day. Plus, the Bible doesn't tell us to remember Jesus' birthday. However, Margery liked Christmas; she liked the presents and cards, the Christmas trees, the lights and all the fun things that people ate and did on Christmas. Margery wondered why celebrating Christmas was so wrong.



Discussion Questions

1. Do you think it is wrong for Margery to celebrate Christmas? Why?

2. What may help Margery overcome/accept her feelings of being different and left out?

E2 Year 2 Book 3 Lesson 9—Daniel and His Friends Say No

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Weekly Bible Reading: _____

Bible Reading: Check each box when you complete that day's reading.

Prayer: Check each box after you pray to God that day.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Read							
Pray							

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____

2. _____

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse. (**Titus 2:11-12a**)

True or False

1. King Nebuchadnezzar gave the young captives new names because he didn't like their Hebrew names.

2. Daniel felt that the king's delicacies and wine would defile him because the cooks never washed their hands when they prepared the meals. _____

Multiple Choice

3. _____ : What purpose did the king have for bringing the young Israelites into the palace?
 - a. He wanted them to be trained for service.
 - b. He wanted to be nice to the prisoners.
 - c. He wanted to keep an eye on them.
 - d. He wanted them to build more rooms for the palace.
4. _____ : What did King Nebuchadnezzar do to change the identities of the Israelite youths?
 - a. He made sure they were taught the language and literature of the Chaldeans.
 - b. He assigned them a daily amount of his delicacies and wine.
 - c. He gave them new Babylonian names.
 - d. All of the above.
5. _____ : What impressed the king the most about Daniel and his friends?
 - a. Their wisdom and understanding
 - b. Their courage
 - c. Their appearance
 - d. Their friendship

Fill In the Blank

6. Choose the right answer from the word bank, and then fill in the blank.

Meshach, God, Shadrach, gracious, Belteshazzar, judge, helper, Abed-Nego

Daniel's name means "God is my _____." His name was changed to _____.

Hananiah's name means "God is _____." His name was changed to _____.

Mishael's name means "Who is like _____?" His name was changed to _____.

Azariah's name means "God is my _____." His name was changed to _____.

Short Answer

7. What often keeps you from taking a stand?

8. What enabled Daniel to stand up for his faith?

9. God will open a way and bless those who fear Him and keep His words. Write down how this was true for Daniel and his companions.

LESSON 10

DANIEL'S THREE FRIENDS REFUSE TO BOW TO AN IDOL

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand what idols are and why we shouldn't bow to them.
2. To recognize that God's true followers should practice what they profess, even in times of persecution.
3. To find ways to show actions consistent with our beliefs.

MEMORY VERSE

"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer."

(Psalm 19:14)

PRAYER

1. We thank God for bringing us all together today so that we can learn about His words and grow in His wisdom.
2. Today, we will learn about Daniel's three friends who braved death and remained faithful to You. Please also grant us the courage needed to be Your true followers.
3. Lord, please place in our hearts a desire to become better Christians for You.
4. May God help us learn from Daniel's three friends and attain the same kind of faith in our beliefs as Christians.



Overview

1. The Golden Image Is Made (Dan 3:1-18)

- Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, makes and dedicates a golden image (1-3)
- A new law is set to compel all the king's people to worship the image (4-7)
- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, Daniel's friends, are accused of not bowing to the image (8-12)
- The king pardons the three Jews with a last warning (13-15)
- Persisting in their faithfulness to God, the three friends refuse to obey the king (16-18)

2. Daniel's Three Friends in the Fiery Furnace (Dan 3:19-30)

- The king commands the three friends to be thrown into the fiery furnace (19-23)
- God delivers the three friends from the fire in the sight of the king (24-27)
- The king praises God and promotes the three friends (28-30)

3. Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs—One True Church

4. Life Application

- Christians: Yes, We Are!
- Consistency Is Key!

5. Activity

- Why Persecution?
- Letter to God



Background Knowledge for Teachers

King Nebuchadnezzar

Before this event took place, Daniel interpreted King Nebuchadnezzar's dream and honored God as the supreme. The years passed and the king, forgetting that he had once acknowledged God's wisdom and power, made a gold image and demanded all his people to worship it. King Nebuchadnezzar is a prime example of how pride can destroy one's relationship with God. He was not consistent with his faith in God. In turn, the king repeatedly disobeyed God and disregarded God's grace. Because of his pride, God humbled him by making him dwell with the beasts in the wild for 7 years.

Babylon

Babylon symbolizes sins (ref. Rev 17:1-6; 18:1-4). For all its glory, the Babylonian Empire lasted less than a century. The army of Cyrus the Persian captured Babylon in 539 BC.



Reaching Out to Your Students

Many of your students at this age may not relate to the danger of committing outright idolatry since they are not likely to encounter other religious practices in their daily lives. However, the prominent danger they face with idolatry has to do with old pagan customs, such as celebrating Christmas, Easter, and Halloween. God warned the Israelites not to follow pagan ways:

"Take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them. [...] You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way." (Deut 12:30-31)

Today, these customs greatly intermingle with our Christian life. We should help our students understand that practicing what we profess as Christians sometimes means behaving differently and despising common beliefs and values. Challenge the students to be different from their friends who celebrate festivals associated with paganism. Daniel's three friends were different from all the people in Babylon in their choice of religion. We should learn from their loyalty to God and be fearless when facing persecution in times of tribulation, knowing that God is our reliance.



Opener

5 Minutes

Before we begin today's Bible story, let's do a quick Bible flipping exercise. Find the third commandment. Discuss with the classmate next to you where you think it may be recorded. Raise your hand quietly when you have found it so that the rest of class can stop searching.

[If your students are having trouble finding the verse, remind them that God gave the Ten Commandments to the Israelites in the wilderness after they left Egypt. Indicate that the Commandments can be found in the Book of Exodus (Ex 20:1-17; Dt 5:4-21).]

"You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments." (Ex 20:4-6)

From this commandment, we can see that God really detests idols. When the Israelites were in the wilderness, Moses warned them repeatedly not to commit idolatry. Let's look at some of the things he said to the people. [Ask the students to flip to the following verses.]

"Take careful heed to yourselves, for you saw no form when the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, lest you act corruptly and make for yourselves a carved image." (Dt 4:15-16)

"So that there may not be among you man or woman or family or tribe, whose heart turns away from the LORD our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations." (Dt 29:18)

Just like the Israelites, we are the children of God, His chosen people. Therefore, these warnings also apply to us today. In fact, there are multiple places in the New Testament that tell us to stay away from everything connected to idols. The Bible says, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols" (1 Jn 5:21), "abstain from things polluted by idols" (Ac 15:20), and "flee from idolatry" (1 Cor 10:14).

God said, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is One!" (Dt 6:4). We must know that there is no other god other than the one true God that we worship. When we tell others that we believe in God, it means that our actions are ALWAYS pleasing in God's eyes. This is not easy. But, if God sees that we are determined to follow His will, He will always help us. Today, we are going to learn about the story of Daniel's three friends. Their lives were threatened by their belief in God. But they were very, very determined. They relied on God. And guess what happened at the end? We'll find out!



Vocabulary

idol: a person or object worshipped as a god. The golden image King Nebuchadnezzar made is a carved, gold-plated object.

cubit: about 20 inches (in Babylon)



Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

FOR TEACHERS

Pass out the Bible Discovery worksheet to the students and let them fill out the blanks as you progress through the lesson. The answers are underlined. The students will be asked to read various verses throughout this section. Make sure to give all of the students a chance to read.

This story begins with a law, a very wrong law, which the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar made. He asked all his servants, including the satraps, the administrators (Daniel was one of the administrators; Dan 2:48), the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials in the plain of Dura to join him in the dedication of a gold image he had made, which he later commanded all his people to worship. Let's go back in time and hear how this new law was announced to the people. "They stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Then a herald cried aloud" (3:3-4). May I ask a volunteer to be the herald to cry aloud this new law? [Either write these verses on a piece of paper prior to class or have the student read directly from the Bible.]

"To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, that at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up" (3:4-5).

[Pause the student here.] This was the law. Now, think about it. For a law to be effective—a law that people would follow—there must be a... [let students answer]. Right, there must be a penalty for disobeying that law! For the people who do not fall down and worship the gold image, there is a penalty—death. [Have the student continue reading.]

"And whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace" (3:6).

How cruel! King Nebuchadnezzar did not give the people a

choice. He forced all his people to bow down to the gold image he made. Today, in the United States, we are given the freedom to choose our own religion. But, do you know that there are still countries in today's world where people that practice certain religions, including Christianity, are being discriminated against? As Christians, we will face persecution. Your friends might laugh at you because you say grace before you eat. They might think you are strange for not celebrating Halloween. But should we easily compromise and let them change who we are? No. We are the children of God, and our actions must always be consistent with who we are. We know that our heavenly Father will reward us for being a good Christian. The Bible says,

"Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. [...] Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Rev 2:10).

Therefore, as Christians, we should not be afraid of persecution, but be courageous, always behaving the way the Bible teaches us to behave. King Nebuchadnezzar threatened all his people with death if they did not worship the idol, but there were three people who were unafraid! These people were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego—Daniel's three friends. Like Daniel, these three men were Jews and were exiled to Babylon when Jerusalem was taken captive. However, their faith in God was unmovable, even though they were with Gentiles. They knew that this new law was against the Bible's teachings and God's will. As true followers of God, they chose not to obey the king but God, the same God that we worship today!

So one day, some Chaldeans finally discovered that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego weren't following the new law. They were accused and brought to the king. Surprisingly, the king didn't command them to be thrown into the fiery furnace immediately, as the law stated. What did he say instead? Let's find out! [Have a student read Daniel 3:14-15.]

"Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, that you

do not serve my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up? Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, and you fall down and worship the image which I have made, good! But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?" (3:14-15)

The king forgave them for their first known offense. Can you believe it? Now, you might think that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego must have been trembling when the king spoke to them. They must have been so afraid to die in the fiery furnace. And now that the king had pardoned them, they must at least bow down in front of the king first to save their lives, even if they had already planned not to bow down later.

Dangerous! Satan was using the king's pardon to tempt these three Christians to disobey God! Daniel's three friends, however, were indeed true believers of God. They were hardly threatened by the king or the fiery furnace! Instead of compromising to the king's law, they answered the king in a surprising way:

"O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up" (3:16-18).

Uh-oh. They were definitely going to be thrown into the fiery furnace this time! Well, from Daniel's three friends' answer, we know that they already expected this. Not only did they expect to be thrown into the fiery furnace, but they also expected themselves to be saved from the fiery furnace. Who did they think was going to save them? [Let students answer.] Right, God! They said to the king that the God whom they serve is able to deliver them from the burning fiery furnace. They believed that God has the ability to rescue them even though they know that, as human beings, we can't survive being burned in a fire! On the other hand, since God had not told them that they would be saved from the fiery furnace, they also added, "But even if our God doesn't save us, let us make it clear that we will not fall down and worship the gold image you have made." Daniel's three friends were determined to persevere in their faith. They knew that nothing was more important than obeying God, not even their lives. What do you think happened next? How do you think King Nebuchadnezzar reacted?

Furious, Nebuchadnezzar immediately commanded Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego to be thrown into the

fiery furnace. Not only that, out of his anger for Daniel's three friends, he also commanded his people to heat the furnace seven times more than usual. The furnace was so hot that the flame of the fire killed the men who carried Daniel's three friends, bound, to the fiery furnace.

Now, if the fire killed the men who only got close but didn't go into the furnace, Daniel's three friends should also have been killed before being thrown into the fire. But, they didn't! Rather, the king, who was outside of the furnace, stood up in astonishment, saying, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" (3:24). What kind of question was that? He just witnessed Daniel's three friends being thrown into the fire. Why would he ask such a question? So his counselors answered him, saying, "True, O king" (3:24). They were indeed thrown into the fire. So, the king finally acknowledged the miracle. Let's look at what made him ask that question. [Have a student read.]

"Look! I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God" (3:25).

King Nebuchadnezzar saw that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego were alive in the fiery furnace with another man that looked like the Son of God! The king then knew that the God Daniel's three friends worshipped was a real God. Again, He is the same God that we worship today!

So, King Nebuchadnezzar went near the mouth of the burning fiery furnace and said, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here."

Talk to your neighbors. What do you think happened next? Do you think that Daniel's three friends were still alive and able to walk out of the fire? Do you think that their skin was burned? Was their hair all gone? Did they smell burned? [Allow students to discuss quietly with their neighbors, and ask each of them to share their thoughts with the rest of the class after a short discussion.]

Some of you were right. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego all came out of the fiery furnace unharmed; everybody came close to them and realized that they were perfectly fine. The fire did nothing to their bodies at all; they still had all their hair and there was no smell of fire on them. How was that possible? With God, all things are possible. He cares for those who are His true followers. He protects those who are His obedient children. God loves us and does not overlook the tiniest part of our bodies. God kept the hair on Daniel's three friends perfectly fine in the burning fire.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego overcame Satan and

remained loyal to God, despite death threats and danger. They did not submit themselves to the king's command, but followed what they believed was right, and for them, obeying God was right. This is the kind of unyielding faith that we should exhibit as Christians.

At the end, King Nebuchadnezzar came to realize that God is so powerful that He is able to overcome even death. Let's read together what he said after his realization. [Have all students read together.]

"Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God! Therefore I made a decree that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap; because there is no other God who can deliver like this" (3:28-30).

By braving death for God, Daniel's three friends proved to the king that God is an almighty God who is worthy of praise. King Nebuchadnezzar gave praise to God and announced it to all his people. Moreover, he also promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.

When we face persecution, what do we do? Is God more important than everything else? Even when everyone else was bowing down to the gold image, Daniel's three friends firmly denied the king's authority and resolved to be faithful in God. We should attain the same courage and choose the Christian way of life, even if it means to be different from all of your friends.

We worship the same God and learn the same truth as Daniel's three friends. The Bible teaches us not to carve out an idol to represent Him and to "worship in spirit and truth" (Jn 4:24). Let's practice only the truth in our daily lives and not be afraid to show everybody that we are Christians!



Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

True Jesus Church Is the Only True Church

Before Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego were thrown into the furnace of burning fire, King Nebuchadnezzar pardoned them with a last warning. This was a very dangerous temptation, as the three Jews could have given up their faith and turned to the king's mercy in exchange for their lives. Nevertheless, they remained loyal to the Lord, whom they acknowledged to be the one true God. They believed that their God was the only Savior who could save them from the fiery furnace.

As present-day Christians, we may also suffer great persecution in times of tribulation. Our loyalty to True Jesus Church may bring forth conflicts and arguments with others. However, an unmovable faith like Daniel's three friends' allows us to recognize True Jesus Church as the one true church. There are many churches that preach a diluted gospel, and we must come to be fully convinced that TJC is the only church that provides salvation.



Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

- 1. What did King Nebuchadnezzar do to promote idolatry in the province of Babylon?** He made an image of gold that he commanded all his people to worship.
- 2. How did the king find out that Daniel's three friends were not bowing to the idol?** Some Chaldeans came forward to the king and accused Daniel's three friends.
- 3. Why were Daniel's three friends not afraid of the king or the fiery furnace?** They believed that the God whom they served was able to deliver them from the burning fiery furnace, and from the king's hand."
- 4. How do you know that Daniel's three friends were thrown into an extremely hot furnace?** The flame of the fire killed the men who took Daniel's three friends to the furnace.
- 5. To what extent did the fire injure Daniel's three friends?** The fire did not injure them at all. "The hair of their head was not singed nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them."
- 6. How was God's name glorified at the end of this story?** King Nebuchadnezzar praised God and promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.

HOMWORK ANSWER KEY

1. Shadrach, Meshach, Abed-Nego, Jews, Babylon
2. other gods
3. False
4. c
5. a
6. b
7. dedicated the gold image
8. some people accused them
9. He commanded his servants to heat the fiery furnace seven times more than usual, and the men who threw Daniel's three friends into the furnace were killed.
10. He did not believe that any god could save them from the fiery furnace.
11. The king made a decree that whoever spoke anything against God would be punished.
12. Practice what we profess as Christians, obey God commands even braving death, do not be afraid when facing persecutions, trust that God can deliver in all situations, etc.



Life Application

10 Minutes

1. REAL-LIFE SCENARIOS

[Separate the class into two groups. Hand out Life Application Worksheet #1.1 to one group and Worksheet #1.2 to the other. Have your students complete Part I individually and Part II with their assigned groups.]

PART I: Self-Reflection

Consider each action listed below. Put a check mark if you do that action at the specified place.

[The chart is on the worksheet, but has not been reproduced here. Please refer to the worksheet if needed.]

How many check marks do you have for each action? If you do not have three for each, what does this tell you about your actions as a Christian? Are you only an "at-church" Christian? Do you only act like a Christian at church, or do you also act like a Christian at school and at home?

As Christians, we should practice what we profess at ALL TIMES. We cannot act like a Christian at church, but not at home or at school. This is not what God wants from us. Our heavenly Father is with us everywhere, and He would not be happy to see that our actions are not consistent!

PART II: Discussion

Read the story below and discuss the situation Vincent faces in the story with the rest of your group members. Use the questions at the bottom as a guide.

GROUP I: At school, Vincent and his classmates are sitting together at the table, ready to eat lunch. As Vincent is saying grace on his own quietly, his friend William says aloud, "Look, Vincent is praying to the God he learned about from the story book! He believes in everything the story book says!" Some of their other classmates start laughing with William.

GROUP II: It's Halloween this weekend and Vincent's friends have invited him to go "trick-or-treat" with them. Vincent knows that he should not celebrate Halloween as a Christian, so he politely declines their invitation and says thank you. Two days later, they ask Vincent again, and he insists not to go with them. William, who is one of these friends, begins to get angry and says to Vincent that if he does not go with them, he and his friends will never talk to him again.

Discussion Questions

1. **How do you think Vincent feels in this situation?** He was probably embarrassed/sad, afraid of losing his friendships, feeling misunderstood, etc.
2. **What would you do if you were Vincent?** Leave the table embarrassed and never say grace again when eating with the same group of friends; go trick-or-treat with William and his friends; explain to them that I feel very blessed to have this food and will always say grace before I eat; explain to them the reason that I do not celebrate Halloween; pray for God's comfort, etc.
3. **What do you think God wants Vincent to do?** God wants all of us to practice what we profess as Christians at all times. Therefore, God wants Vincent to resist his friends and remember that he is right for doing what is pleasing in God's eyes.
4. **What difficulties does Vincent face as a Christian?** He faces persecution from his friends. His friends laugh at him and threaten him with their friendships. He knows that what he is doing is right in God's eyes, but his friends do not understand. For him to say grace in front of his friends and to refrain from celebrating Halloween, he is suffering for God's name.
5. **How can Vincent apply the teachings from today's lesson into this story?** Vincent, just as Daniel's three friends, was being persecuted for his actions. They all ran into an undesired situation because of their Christian beliefs. Daniel's three friends, facing death, insisted on not bowing to the gold image. They knew that God is more important than anything else, and therefore they were not afraid of the king. Likewise, Vincent should stand by his faith and beliefs. He shouldn't be afraid of his friends who do not know God. And if he lacks comfort, he can always pray to God for faith and strength. In addition, Vincent can also preach to his friends. If his friends see that he is so persistent in his belief, they might change their attitude towards his faith and begin pursuing God!

[Teachers: When they are discussing, go to each group and facilitate their discussion if needed and/or help them brainstorm ideas. Encourage students to contribute to the discussion and let them know that one of them will be picked to report their answers back to the whole class after the discussion.]

Conclusion

Today, we may get discouraged when we face situations like these. But Daniel had three wonderful friends who were of the same mind and faith as him. Who were they? [Let students answer.] Correct. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. Daniel and these three friends joined together in their faith, faced persecution together, and glorified God's name together. Likewise, we need spiritual friends when we face persecution. Thank God, I see that all of you have many spiritual friends who are sitting around you right now! We are all here for one another. If you need spiritual strength at any time, you can be assured that there are many of us here who will encourage, lift, and brighten you up. Last but not least, we will pray for you so that God Himself will strengthen you and give you comfort and peace.

2. CONSISTENCY IS KEY!

[Hand out Life Application Worksheet #2.]

We need friends like Daniel's three friends with us today! We need men and women of faith who will make up their minds to be consistent and faithful in their beliefs! Are you a consistent Christian? Do you live every day to the glory of God? God just wants people to be consistent in their good actions. Do you know the secrets of being consistent in your beliefs? Here are the secrets!

I. Remember that God is always with us.

"I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Mt 28:20). Can you imagine that God is always by your side? Whether you are at home, at school, or at church, walking, talking, or sleeping, He is always there. He

knows every little thing we do, every single word we say, and even every little thought in our minds. We should always remember that God is always present around us. Even now, He's here with us! This is why we should always be consistent in our beliefs. Imagine how God feels when He walks with us each day and see our actions changing as we are with different people? He would be very hurt and disappointed as our heavenly Father.

Let's look at the real-life scenario on your worksheet:

"Vivian behaves well when she is surrounded by adults. However, when she is only with her friends at school, she is not very nice and friendly to others. Vivian's friends think that she is mean and disrespectful. One day, one of Vivian's friends said to her, 'You don't act like a Christian.'"

Questions

- 1. God, who promises to be always with us, is next to Vivian. How do you think God feels when He hears what Vivian's friend said?** Disappointed. Explain to the students that our actions and deeds tell other people a lot about us. If our actions do not correspond to our Christian beliefs, other people will not see God in us. As Christians, we should strive to shine the light of Jesus in our everyday life instead of making Him feel disappointed.
- 2. In your daily life, do you also do things that make God feel that way?** Answers may vary.

Another reason for God to be with us is to protect us. For example, in times of persecution, trials, and tribulations, we may feel threatened and afraid. But knowing that God is always with us, we can be assured that there is no one that can harm us. "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go" (Josh 1:9). God has promised to protect us wherever we go. Therefore, we should never be afraid to stand by our faith. Just as Daniel's three friends did, we should always practice what is consistent with our beliefs even when we face persecution. "For we walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor 5:7).

II. Have daily devotional time with God.

The Bible is the word of life! Pray daily—ask for strength, faith, and grace. Never underestimate the power of prayer. Once we get into a habit of reading the Bible and praying, we will discover that God desires us to walk in obedience, minute-by-minute and day-by-day. Does that describe you? If not, there is help in Him. If you are up and down and in and out, you don't have to be! You can walk for Him and be consistent. He will enable you, just as He enabled Daniel's three friends. He will do it so that you can demonstrate the power of a consistent life.

Consider the story on your worksheet:

"Darren is going to college next year. Not only does he study very hard every day and night, but he also quit basketball, his favorite after school activity, in order to make more time for studying. Nevertheless, Darren understands that God is his priority, and therefore continues to do his daily Bible reading and praying despite how busy he is."

Questions

- 1. In order to make time for basketball, Darren could have sacrificed his daily devotional time with God. What do you think about Darren's decision to quit basketball?** Explain to the students that it is very important for us to spend time on spiritual cultivation every day in order to exercise our faith. There might be a lot of things that we like to do, but we must understand that God is always our priority. Darren has set an excellent example for us.
- 2. Are you so busy every day that you cannot make time for God? How can you apply this story to your daily life?** Students at this age may not have the habit of reading the Bible and/or praying every day. Encourage them to start a good habit of spending devotional time with God.



Activity

1. Why Persecution? / 2. Letter to God

10-15 Minutes

1. Why Persecution?

[Hand out Activity Worksheet #1 and ask the students to complete them using the Bible verses provided. Students may work in groups or individually. The answers have been listed below.]

"Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (2 Tim 3:12). The Bible tells us that we will certainly face persecution as Christians. But why? Why does God allow those who want to please Him to suffer? What should we do when we are persecuted? These are questions that a lot of people have. God in fact already provided us with all the answers. Do you know where? [Let students answer. Answer: In the Bible.]

On your Activity worksheet, there is a verse listed after each question that we are going to read together. Try to complete these questions as we read.

What are we suffering for in times of persecution? (1 Peter 1:7)

"That the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Answer: For the name of Jesus Christ to be glorified.

Which quality can we produce when facing persecution? (Romans 5:3)

"And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance."

Answer: Perseverance.

What did God promise to reward us with if we endure persecution for His name? (James 1:12)

"Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him."

Answer: The crown of life, i.e., eternal life in the kingdom of God.

What should we do to our persecutors? (Matthew 5:44)

"But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you."

Answer: Love them, do good to them, and pray for them.

If we have a good conscience, what will eventually happen to our persecutors? (1 Peter 3:16)

"Having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed."

Answer: They will be ashamed.

What should our attitude be when facing persecution for Christ's sake? (1 Peter 4:13; 1 Peter 3:14)

"But rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy."

"But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. 'And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.'"

Answer: Be joyful, instead of afraid or troubled.

Do not be discouraged when you face persecution. God gives us these tests so that we can grow our faith and become stronger as Christians. Trials and tribulations never come to stay, but they come to strengthen us and make us better for Christ. The Bible tells us that God will never give us more than we can handle. We should not give up our faith easily because God is letting us suffer. Instead, we should pray to God for help and comfort.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego were perfect examples of people that fulfilled the purpose of trials and tribulations from God. They were thrown into the blazing fire for choosing to obey God's command rather than the king's. At the end, God's name was glorified because of their immovable faith and courage.

2. Letter to God

In today's lesson, we learn about ways to be more courageous, loyal, and consistent Christians in our lives. These are ways that we will always find helpful throughout our journey of faith. Write a letter to God and tell Him what changes in life you want to make in order to become like Daniel's three friends—courageous, loyal, and consistent Christians. Tell Him how determined you are and ask Him to help you make these changes.

DANIEL'S THREE FRIENDS REFUSE TO BOW**PART I: THE GOLDEN IMAGE IS MADE**

1. King Nebuchadnezzar compelled all his people to worship a _____ set up in the plain of _____, in the province of Babylon.
2. According to the new _____, whoever did not fall down and worship the gold image would be cast immediately into a burning _____.
3. There were three _____ who did not follow this new law—Shadrach, _____, and Abed-Nego.
4. King Nebuchadnezzar said to the three friends, "And who is the god who will _____?"

PART II: SHADRACH, MESHACH, AND ABED-NEGO IN THE FIERY FURNACE

1. The king was angered by the three friends and commanded the furnace to be heated _____ times more than it was usually heated.
2. The king saw _____ men walking in the midst of the fire and the form of the fourth was like the _____.
3. After the three friends came out from the furnace, the king and his subjects realized that there was no _____ of fire on them.
4. King Nebuchadnezzar then made a _____ that any people, nation, or language which spoke anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego would be cut in pieces, and their houses would be made an _____; because there was no other God who could _____ like this.

Christians: Yes, We Are!

PART I: SELF-REFLECTION

Consider each action listed below. Put a check mark if you do that action at the specified place.

	At Home	At School	At Church
I pray on a regular basis.			
I think about God's teachings from time to time.			
I respect others.			
I am kind and friendly to others.			
I don't say bad things about others.			
I am eager to help others.			
I am aware of my responsibilities.			
I am not afraid to tell others I am a Christian.			
I talk politely.			
Other people know that I am a good person/Christian.			

PART II: DISCUSSION

Read the story below and discuss the situation Vincent faces in the story with the rest of your group members. Use the questions at the bottom as a guide.

At school, Vincent and his classmates are sitting together at the table, ready to eat lunch. As Vincent is saying grace on his own quietly, his friend William says aloud, "Look, Vincent is praying to the God he learned about from the story book! He believes in everything the story book says!" Some of their other classmates start laughing with William.



Discussion Questions

1. How do you think Vincent feels in this situation?
2. What would you do if you were Vincent?
3. What do you think God wants Vincent to do?
4. What difficulties does Vincent face as a Christian?
5. How can Vincent apply the teachings from today's lesson into this story?

Christians: Yes, We Are!

PART I: SELF-REFLECTION

Consider each action listed below. Put a check mark if you do that action at the specified place.

	At Home	At School	At Church
I pray on a regular basis.			
I think about God's teachings from time to time.			
I respect others.			
I am kind and friendly to others.			
I don't say bad things about others.			
I am eager to help others.			
I am aware of my responsibilities.			
I am not afraid to tell others I am a Christian.			
I talk politely.			
Other people know that I am a good person/Christian.			

PART II: DISCUSSION

Read the story below and discuss the situation Vincent faces in the story with the rest of your group members. Use the questions at the bottom as a guide.

It's Halloween this weekend and Vincent's friends have invited him to go "trick-or-treat" with them. Vincent knows that he should not celebrate Halloween as a Christian, so he politely declines their invitation and says thank you. Two days later, they ask Vincent again, and he insists not to go with them. William, who is one of these friends, begins to get angry and says to Vincent that if he does not go with them, he and his friends will never talk to him again.



Discussion Questions

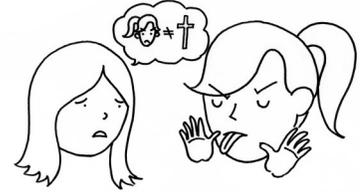
1. How do you think Vincent feels in this situation?
2. What would you do if you were Vincent?
3. What do you think God wants Vincent to do?
4. What difficulties does Vincent face as a Christian?
5. How can Vincent apply the teachings from today's lesson into this story?

Consistence Is Key!

We need friends like Daniel's three friends with us today! We need men and women of faith who will make up their minds to be consistent and faithful in their beliefs! Are you a consistent Christian? Do you live every day to the glory of God? God just wants people to be consistent in their good actions. Do you know the secrets of being consistent in your beliefs? Here are the secrets!

I. Remember that God is always with us.

"Vivian behaves well when she is surrounded by adults. However, when she is only with her friends at school, she is not very nice and friendly to others. Vivian's friends think that she is mean and disrespectful. One day, one of Vivian's friends said to her, 'You don't act like a Christian.'"



Questions

1. God, who promises to be always with us, is next to Vivian. How do you think God feels when He hears what Vivian's friend said?
2. In your daily life, do you also do things that make God feel that way?

II. Have daily devotional time with God.

"Darren is going to college next year. Not only does he study very hard every day and night, but he also quit basketball, his favorite after school activity, in order to make more time for studying. Nevertheless, Darren understands that God is his priority, and therefore continues to do his daily Bible reading and praying despite how busy he is."



Questions

1. In order to make time for basketball, Darren could have sacrificed his daily devotional time with God. What do you think about Darren's decision to quit basketball?
2. Are you so busy every day that you cannot make time for God? How can you apply this story to your daily life?

WHY PERSECUTION?

Why does God allow us to be persecuted and suffer for His name? What should we do when we are being persecuted? Let's find out from the Bible! Answer each question using the reference verse given.

What are we suffering for in times of persecution? (1 Peter 1:7)

Answer:

Which quality can we produce when facing persecution? (Romans 5:3)

Answer:

What did God promise to reward us with if we endure persecution for His name? (James 1:12)

Answer:

What should we do to our persecutors? (Matthew 5:44)

Answer:

If we have a good conscience, what will eventually happen to our persecutors? (1 Peter 3:16)

Answer:

What should our attitude be when facing persecution for Christ's sake? (1 Peter 4:13; 1 Peter 3:14)

Answer:

E2 Year 2 Book 3 Lesson 10—Daniel's Three Friends Refuse to Bow to an Idol

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Weekly Bible Reading: _____

Bible Reading: Check each box when you complete that day's reading.

Prayer: Check each box after you pray to God that day.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Read							
Pray							

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____

2. _____

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse. (Psalm 19:14)

Fill in the Blank

1. Daniel's three friends who did not bow to the gold image were named _____, _____, and _____. They were _____ who had been exiled to _____.
2. King Nebuchadnezzar said that there was no _____ who delivered like the God Daniel's three friends worshipped.

True or False

3. The fourth person King Nebuchadnezzar saw in the fiery furnace was Daniel. _____

Multiple Choice

4. _____: King Nebuchadnezzar threw Daniel's three friends into the fiery furnace after _____.
 - a. He immediately found out that they did not bow down to the gold image he had made.
 - b. He asked them why they did not worship the gold image he had made and they did not answer.
 - c. He commanded them once again to bow down to the gold image and they refused.
5. _____: Daniel's three friends did not bow to the gold image because _____.
 - a. They knew that God is the only true God to whom they should bow down.
 - b. God appeared in their dream and told them not to bow down to the gold image.
 - c. Daniel told them not to bow down to it.
6. _____: After Daniel's three friends were thrown into the fire, King Nebuchadnezzar _____.
 - a. Was relieved and left.
 - b. Saw the three friends alive in the furnace with another man.
 - c. Sent his servants to see if they were still alive.

LESSON 11

GOD WRITES ON THE WALL AT BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST

OBJECTIVES

1. To know that God holds nations and rulers accountable for their actions.
2. To remember to pray for our head of state to honor God and follow His ways.

MEMORY VERSE

"Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority."

(1 Timothy 2:1-2a)

PRAYER

1. Thank You, Lord Jesus, for bringing us into Your presence to worship and learn Your precious word.
2. You are the almighty God who sets up and removes kings and rulers. You make nations great and You destroy them.
3. Help the leaders of the land know You. Help them to govern the country wisely so that they may make decisions that honor You and do what is best for the people.
4. Thank You for giving us a stable and peaceful environment to know You and to tell others about Your marvelous deeds.



Overview

1. **Belshazzar's Feast**
2. **The Interpretation and Judgment**
3. **Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs**—One True God
4. **Life Application**
 - Pray for All Men
 - For You I Am Praying
5. **Activity**—Prayer Cube



Background Knowledge for Teachers

A major theme in the Book of Daniel is God's sovereignty over the course of history and individual destinies. Through visions and dreams revealed to Daniel, God demonstrates that "the kingdom is the LORD's, and He rules over the nations." (Ps 22:28; Is 46:9b, 10; Dan 2:31-45; 7:3-14). "He makes nations great, and He destroys them; He enlarges nations, and guides them" (Job 12:23).

God gives power, riches, and authority to kings and leaders for a purpose. They are not granted these things so that they can indulge in sin and pleasure, but rather so they can be accountable to the people and honor and glorify God.



Reaching Out to Your Students

Our students are growing up in a society and country that values its rights, one of which is the freedom of speech. Your students may have been taught to question and challenge people of authority if they don't agree on something.

Our students need to understand that the authority figures in their lives—whether it be teachers, government officials, church ministers, parents—are people whom God has placed in positions of authority to help, guide, and protect us. This doesn't mean that we will agree with each of their decisions, particularly the ones that go against the Bible. However, the Bible teaches us that we still need to respect and pray for them. By praying for our leaders, the students will realize that God is in ultimate control of the world and its leaders. Praying for leaders also broadens the scope of their prayers; they learn to extend their love and care to the people of the world, as well as to their immediate family and friends.



Opener

5 Minutes

Prepare a sheet of card stock, a magnet (such as a toy magnet or refrigerator magnet), and several iron or steel items (paper clips, nails, etc.).

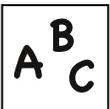
Invite a volunteer to come up to the front. Instruct the volunteer to hold the card stock horizontally, and place one of the items, such as a paper clip, on top of the card stock. Next, give the volunteer the magnet and instruct the volunteer to move the magnet under the card stock to guide the item on the top.

Ask the students what they noticed. The metallic items followed their leader, the magnet.

In this world, we have many leaders. What kind of people are leaders? (Kings, presidents, teachers, parents, etc.)

What makes a good leader? (A person who loves those whom they are guiding and does what is best for them. A person who follows God's teachings and helps others do the same.)

Today, we will learn about Belshazzar, king of Babylon. Although Belshazzar was a powerful and mighty king, he was not a good leader. Rather, his choices and deeds caused his entire empire to be destroyed.



Vocabulary

dominion: supreme authority and power

supplication: an earnest and humble plea

intercession: a plea for God's mercy and blessings made on behalf of another

concubine: a secondary wife, usually lower in rank



Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

During the time of Daniel the prophet, one of the greatest kings who ruled was King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. The Babylonian empire was full of majesty, glory, and honor. One day, as Nebuchadnezzar was walking in his royal palace, he exclaimed, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?"

Within that very hour, God stripped him of his kingdom and splendor. He was driven from human civilization and lived like a wild animal for seven years. After the appointed time, however, God allowed understanding to return to Nebuchadnezzar, and his kingdom and glory were restored to him. The king eventually realized that he did not build Babylon with his own hands; rather it was God who gave the kingdom to him. Therefore, all glory, honor, and praise should be given to God.

Today our story follows the death of King Nebuchadnezzar. After King Nebuchadnezzar died, the powerful Babylon Empire was given to his grandson Belshazzar, who became king.

Belshazzar was a smart king. He knew that enemies would want to invade his kingdom, so he built walls around his kingdom to protect his people. The walls were about eight stories high and wide enough that even chariots could be ridden around on the tops of these walls. Belshazzar also made a passageway under the wall for a river to flow into the city so that the people could have plenty of water to drink. He also ensured that there was enough food in his kingdom so that they could stay inside the closed walls for a very long time.

Belshazzar was proud of himself. He thought his plan to protect his kingdom from being invaded was foolproof, even though enemies were already outside trying to invade and attack him. Belshazzar was confident that the great Babylon was indestructible.

As his enemies were outside trying to find a way in, King Belshazzar decided to throw a huge banquet.

FOR TEACHERS

Hand out the Bible Discovery worksheet. Ask the students to fill it out as you teach the lesson. The answers are underlined in this section.

Belshazzar's Feast

Let's read Daniel 5:2. Who were Belshazzar's guests? Belshazzar invited one thousand lords, and his many wives

and concubines to the banquet.

As Belshazzar was tasting the wine, what did he command? He gave orders to his servants to bring out the drinking vessels that had been taken from the temple in Jerusalem so that they could drink from them.

These were the vessels that his grandfather King Nebuchadnezzar had brought home when he attacked Jerusalem and captured the people and everything in the temple. The vessels were made of gold and were to be used for serving the Lord in the temple. But King Belshazzar and his guests drank wine from them like they were common vessels.

What did they do while drinking the wine from the vessels? Let's turn to Daniel 5:4. They praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone.

As King Belshazzar and his guests were feasting merrily, a human hand suddenly appeared from out of nowhere and began to write on the wall of the king's palace. King Belshazzar was petrified! His face turned very white, and he was so frightened that his knees knocked together and his legs gave way. Belshazzar quickly called for all his officials, astrologers, and magicians to come and interpret the writing for him.

What was Belshazzar's great reward to the person who could interpret the writing? Let's see in Daniel 5:7.

He would be clothed with purple.
He would have a gold chain around his neck.
He would be the third highest ruler in the whole kingdom.

Even with the offer of such a great reward, none of the wise men could explain the writing. When the queen heard about the king's predicament, she told the king that there was a man in the kingdom called Daniel in whom the Spirit of the holy God dwelled. He had an excellent spirit and had the knowledge and understanding to interpret dreams, solve riddles, and explain enigmas. He had previously interpreted dreams for King Nebuchadnezzar. The king asked for Daniel to come before him.

The Interpretation

When Daniel appeared, the king promised him that if he could read the writing and explain its meaning, he would give the reward to Daniel. But Daniel was not interested in the reward. Instead, he clearly and courageously pointed out the king's sins.

What were God's charges against King Belshazzar? Let's find out by reading Daniel 5:18-25.

Verse 21

Although Belshazzar already knew what had happened to his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar, he did not take to heart the lesson that "the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses."

Verses 22-23

God said, "But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this. And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven."

Verse 23

"They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them.

And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do not see or hear or know; and the God who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified.

Verses 24-25

"Then the fingers of the hand were sent from Him, and this writing was written. And this is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN." [Write the four words on the board.]

What did the writing mean? Let's flip to Daniel 5:26-28 to find out.

- MENE means "to number." God had numbered the days of Belshazzar's reign and his kingdom was going to come to an end.
- TEKEL means "to weigh." God had weighed Belshazzar on the balances, and he had been found wanting. Belshazzar had been greatly blessed, but he did not repay God's grace. He denied God and worshipped abominable idols.
- UPHARSIN means "to divide." God had divided his kingdom and given it to the Medes and the Persians."

That very night, everything that God had spoken through the prophet Daniel came true. The great and indestructible kingdom of Babylon had been conquered. A new king called Darius the Mede received the kingdom and established the Medes and Persian Empire.

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. We can learn that it is important to be humble in God's eyes, and to remember all that He has given to us. We must remember that He is the One who gives and the One who takes away. While we may not commit the sin of drinking from the temple vessels, we may find ourselves crediting all our achievements to our own efforts. Therefore, it is essential to give thanks to and glorify God for all that we have and in all that we do.
2. Answers may vary.
3. Answers may vary.
4. It is important to pray for people in authority so that we can lead a peaceful and stable life. If our government or country is in political or civil unrest, then it may be difficult for us to preach the gospel to others. We should also pray for our head of state so that he or she can make wise decisions that are in accordance with the Bible. Lastly, Paul reminds us to pray for all men, and this includes our leaders, regardless of whether they are good leaders or not.



Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

One True God

In the story we learned about today, King Belshazzar's entire kingdom was taken away from him because he failed to give the glory to God. He forgot that it had been by God's hand, not his own, that his kingdom had come to be so prosperous and great. God is the one true God, and He has the power to grant great power and wealth, and also the power to take it away if we are not careful.

Today, we must remember that our God is omnipotent, or all-powerful. That means can grant us anything He wishes, and more often than not, He bestows upon us great blessings. All our achievements, talents, and the life that we enjoy all come from the one true God. Only through Him are we able to do all that we can do. We, or our parents, would not be able to achieve all these on our own. Therefore, we must always remember to give all the glory and thanks to the one true God. When we do so, we will glorify Him and show our gratitude for all that He has given us.



Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

1. **What did the hand write on the wall during the banquet?** Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin.
2. **What does each of these words mean?** Mene means "to number," tekem means "to weigh," upharsin means "to divide."
3. **Which sins was Belshazzar guilty of?** He had forgotten that it was God who had put him in his current position as king. He exalted himself instead of humbling himself and glorifying God. He had also taken the holy vessels from the temple and drunk wine from them, while praising other gods.
4. **Which empire took over Babylon?** The empire of Medes and Persia.
5. **Which lesson did Belshazzar not learn from his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar?** He became proud and did not recognize that it was God who gives and takes away kingdoms.
6. **Please complete the verse.** "The Most High rules in the _____ (kingdom of men), and gives it to _____ (whomever he chooses)" (Dan 4:32).
7. **What reward did Belshazzar offer for interpreting the writing?** The person would be clothed with purple, with a gold chain placed around his neck, and be the third highest ruler in the whole kingdom.



Life Application

10 Minutes

1. Pray for All Men

[Hand out Life Application Worksheet #1 to the students and go over the introduction together. Then allow the students to match the passages to their description on their own.]

From our story we can see how vital a king's actions are to his country. For though King Belshazzar knew full well that the enemies had already encircled Babylon, he continued to feast and provoke God to anger. His decisions and actions caused the collapse of a whole empire. A country's leader needs to be responsible and accountable to his people and to God.

Apostle Paul understood the importance of praying for our country's leaders and those who are in authority.

Let's turn to 1 Timothy 2:1-4 and read it together. [Give the students time to fill in the blanks on the worksheet.]

What does Paul ask us to do? "Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men."

Who are those that we should pray for? We should pray for all men, for kings and all who are in authority.

Who are those in authority? The leaders in our world today, such as the President, school principals, pastors in church, parents, and teachers are people in authority.

It may be somewhat surprising to learn that we have to pray for kings and people in authority. Usually, we may pray only for our friends and family, or people that we know. Let's find out the three reasons apostle Paul gives for praying for kings and those in authority.

- a. To lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

The purpose of praying for kings and those in authority is to allow us to lead a quiet and stable life. This enables us to draw close to God, enjoy freedom of worship, and preach the gospel.

- b. Because it is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior.

No matter whether in times of peace or unrest, we need to be constantly praying for our leaders, as this is something that is good and acceptable in God's sight. Leaders make decisions daily that affect everyone, decisions that will help shape the country. Sometimes, leaders may make unwise decisions that cause negative effects for the people—the country may face financial hardships, people may lose their jobs or homes. There are also decisions made that allow people to go against the teachings of the Bible and do what is wicked in God's sight. This will incur God's wrath and punishment. Therefore, we need to ask God to guide our leaders to govern with wisdom, mercy, and truth so that our country will be blessed and prosperous. Praying for our leaders demonstrates our love for the people of the world and will be remembered by God.

c. So that all men can be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.

God desires that all people be saved. When we live in times of peace, there will be opportunities for us to preach the gospel. But if a country has civil unrest, war, persecution, then worship would be difficult. Under such circumstances, it would be hard to preach the gospel, since there may be chaos and people may be more concerned about survival than hearing the gospel.

We also need to pray for a leader even if that leader may not be a good one or one that we do not like. In 1 Timothy, Paul reminds us to pray for all men.

In fact, Paul wrote the letter to Timothy at a time when persecution was a growing threat to the believers. Emperor Nero was the current emperor of Rome, and he was a cruel ruler. In AD 64, a great fire broke out that destroyed much of Rome. Emperor Nero shifted the blame to the Christians, even though they were not responsible for the fire. Not only were Christians denied certain privileges in society, some were even butchered, burned, or fed to the lions.

Despite this, Paul reminds the believers that we should not rebel against our leaders but pray for them and their salvation. Praying for the salvation of leaders may change their hearts or bring better leaders into office.

In each of these passages, a person is interceding, or praying for, another person or group of people.

Gen 18:20, 22-23	Abraham prayed for Sodom and Gomorrah.
Gen 20:17-18	Abraham prayed for Abimelech, king of Gerar.
Jer 29:4, 7	Jeremiah told the Israelites to pray for Babylon, their captor.
1 Sam 12:19, 23	Samuel never ceased to pray for the Israelites.
Dan 9:16-19	Daniel asked God to forgive the sins of his country and people.
1 Sam 7:8-9	Samuel asked God to deliver his people from the hands of the Philistines.
Neh 1:2-4	Nehemiah prayed for his country and people in times of great shame and suffering.
Exo 8:8-9; 10:16-18	Moses interceded for Pharaoh of Egypt.

* * * * *

2. For You I Am Praying

[Hand out Life Application Worksheet #2 to the students.]

A. In each of the categories below, write down some things related to that category for which we can pray. [Have the students write down their own ideas. Some suggestions have been provided.]

Our nation: The President and his government; decision-making that is according to the Bible; a safe and war-free country; soldiers at war; the wounded; etc.

Our school: Our classmates; our teachers and principals; safety in school; wise textbooks and materials that teach us to be good citizens and Christians; etc.

Our people: The salvation of the people of the world; the homeless, the poor, and unemployed; the sick, depressed, and lonely; for people of different races to live in peace; etc.

Our world: Natural disasters, such as floods, wildfires, earthquakes, hurricanes, and those affected by them; protection of our things in our environment, such as plants, animals, birds, and water; etc.

Our church: The health and safety of our pastors and family as they preach the gospel; the church board, teachers, parents, and friends who come to seek the truth; for God to let us know His will; for the church be a light to the world; etc.

B. Thank God for what He has done. Praise Him for the all the wonderful things you are enjoying in this country.

God, thank You for... [Allow students to complete.]

C. Pray for the needs and problems in your country.

Lord Jesus, I know that You can do anything. Please... [Allow students to complete.]



Activity

Prayer Cube

10-15 Minutes

Objective: To teach students to learn to pray for their country and leaders.

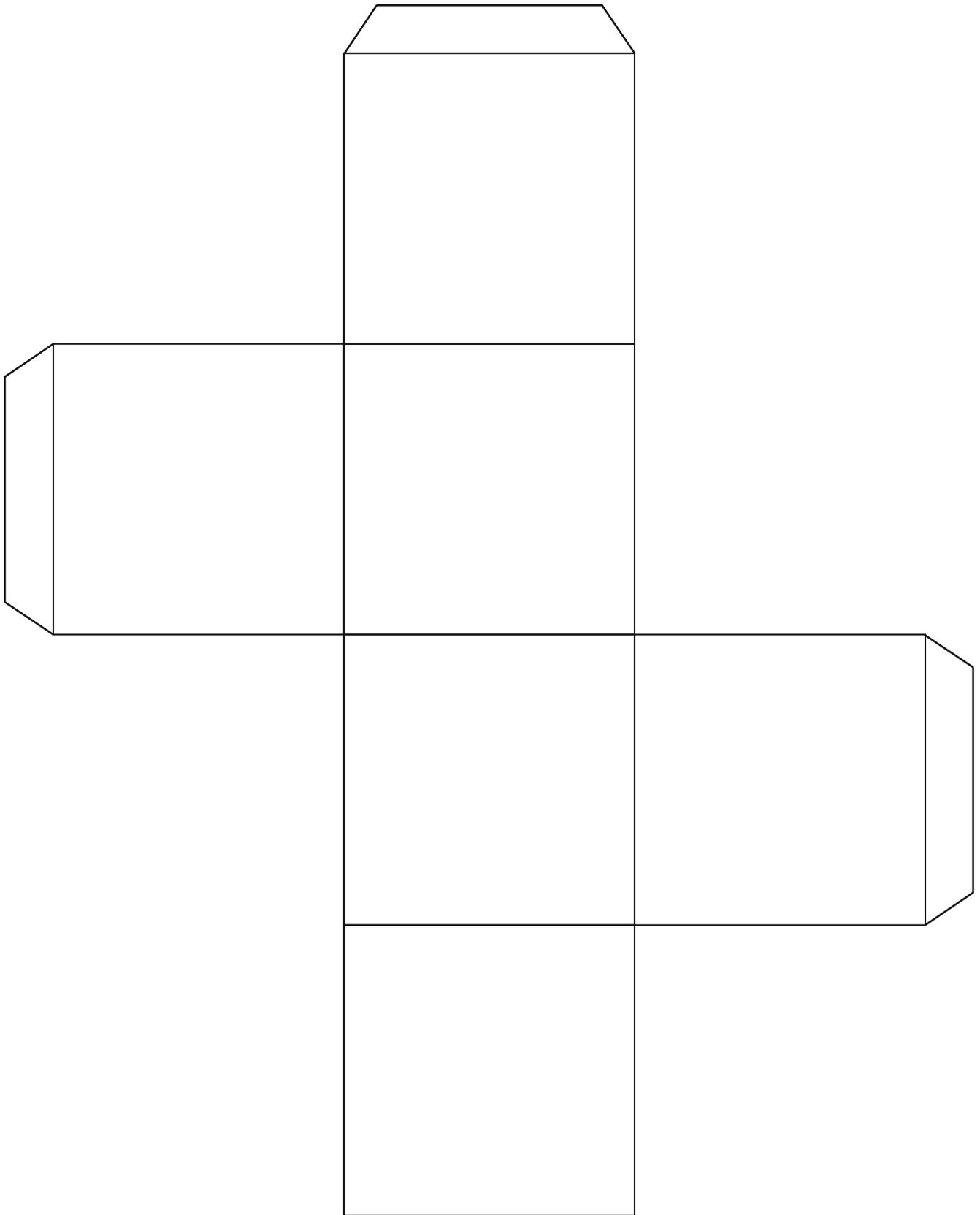
Have students cut out and decorate their own prayer cubes.

Materials

- Cube template, pre-cut
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue/tape
- Markers

Instructions

1. Glue the cube template to a piece of construction paper, and cut it out.
2. On the construction paper side, write or draw pictures of the following, one on each square:
 - Our family
 - Our nation; our people
 - Our earth; natural disasters
 - Preaching the gospel to the world
 - Our school and classmates
 - Our church
3. Firmly creasing the paper along the lines first, fold the paper into a cube and tape or glue it together.
4. Gather in a circle on the floor or around a desk.
5. One student rolls their cube and offers a short prayer for the picture or word that comes up on top. If the "president" comes up on top, the student will offer a prayer for the president.
6. Continue around the circle until everyone has had a turn.
7. Encourage students to use the prayer cube every day to remind them to pray for those that need our prayers.



A. BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST

Who were Belshazzar's guests?

One thousand _____, and his many _____ and _____.

What was Belshazzar's command?

He gave orders to his servants to bring out the _____ that had been taken from the _____ in _____ so that they could drink from them.



Who did they praise while drinking wine?

They praised the gods of _____ and _____, _____ and _____, _____ and _____.

Belshazzar's Great Reward!

He would be _____ with _____.

He would have a _____ around his neck.

He would be the _____ in the whole kingdom.

B. THE INTERPRETATION AND JUDGMENT

What were God's charges against Belshazzar?

Although Belshazzar already knew what had happened to his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar, he did not take to heart the lesson that "the Most High God _____ in the _____ of _____, and _____ over it whomever He _____."

God said, "But you his son, Belshazzar, have not _____ your _____, although you knew all this. And you have _____ up against the Lord of heaven,."

They have brought the _____ of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have _____ from them.

And you have _____ the _____ of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do not see or hear or know; and the God who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have _____.

WHAT DID
THE WRITING
ON THE WALL
MEAN?

MENE meant that the days of Belshazzar's reign were _____ and that his kingdom was going to come to an end.

TEKEL meant that God had _____ Belshazzar on the balances, and he had been found _____.

UPHARSIN meant that his kingdom would be _____ and _____ to the _____ and the _____."

PRAY FOR ALL MEN

**PRAY
FOR
ALL MEN**

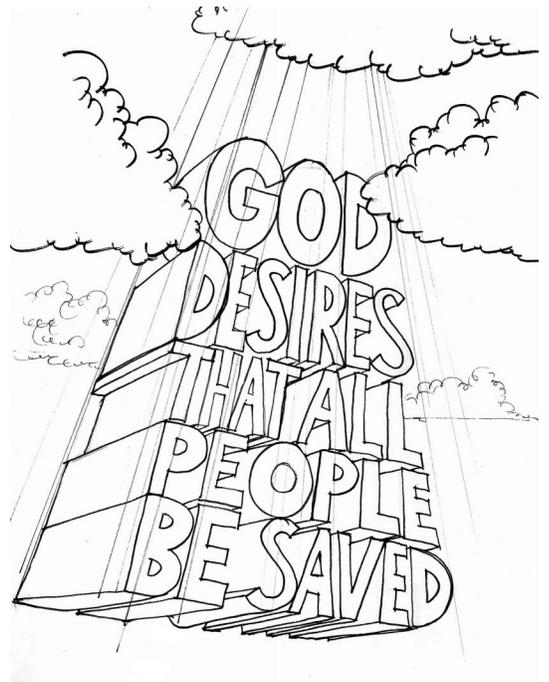


A. Read 1 Timothy 2:1-4, and then fill in the blanks.

Therefore I exhort first of all that _____, _____, _____ and _____ of _____ be made for _____, for _____ and all who are in _____ that we may _____ a _____ and _____ life in all _____ and _____. For this is _____ and _____ in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be _____ and to come to the knowledge of the _____.

B. Draw a line to match up the correct Bible verse with the description of the prayer being made in that verse.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| Gen 18:20, 22-32 | Nehemiah prayed for Jerusalem and the Jews in times of great shame and suffering. |
| Gen 20:17-18 | Samuel never ceased to pray for the Israelites. |
| Jer 29:4, 7 | Abraham prayed for Abimelech, king of Gerar. |
| 1 Sam 12:19, 23 | Abraham prayed for Sodom and Gomorrah. |
| Dan 9:16-19 | Moses interceded for Pharaoh of Egypt. |
| Neh 1:2-4 | Jeremiah told the Israelites to pray for Babylon, their captor. |
| Exo 8:8-9; 10:16-18 | Daniel asked God to forgive the sins of Jerusalem and the people. |



FOR YOU I AM PRAYING

A. In each of the categories below, write down some things related to that category for which we can pray.



Our nation:

Our school:

Our people:

Our world:

Our church:

B. Thank God for what He has done. Praise Him for the all the wonderful things you are enjoying in this country.

God, thank You for...

C. Pray for the needs and problems in your country.

Lord Jesus, I know that You can do anything. Please...



*WE SHOULD
PRAY FOR ALL
MEN, FOR KINGS
AND ALL WHO
ARE IN
AUTHORITY*



E2 Year 2 Book 3 Lesson 11—God Writes on the Wall at Belshazzar's Feast

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Weekly Bible Reading: _____

Bible Reading: Check each box when you complete that day's reading.

Prayer: Check each box after you pray to God that day.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Read							
Pray							

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____

2. _____

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse. (1 Timothy 2:1-2a)

Short Answer

1. Belshazzar forgot that it was God who put him in a position of authority. As a result, he committed many sins and God took away his kingdom, a kingdom that brought him great pride. What teachings can we learn from this?

2. Belshazzar displeased God by being proud and drinking from the temple vessels while praising idols. Share a time in your life when you displeased God. How did God remind you of your errors? What did you learn from your experience?

3. God gives leaders power, riches, and authority to serve their country and glorify God. What talents/gifts has God given you? How will you use them to glorify and honor God?

4. Why is it important to pray for kings and people in authority?

LESSON 12

DANIEL PRAYS THREE TIMES A DAY

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand how Daniel continued to worship God in a hostile environment.
2. To learn about Daniel's uncompromising faith in the face of resistance.
3. To learn about the temptations or dangers that may threaten our daily walk with God.
4. To learn the importance of developing a habit of prayer in our daily lives.

MEMORY VERSE

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints."

(Ephesians 6:18)

PRAYER

1. Thank You, Lord Jesus, for a peaceful week so that we can come to worship you in Spirit and truth.
2. Help us to be like Daniel by placing You first in our hearts and in our lives.
3. Give us the courage to continue to worship You, even when it is difficult to do so.
4. Instill in us a determination to spend time with You each day in prayer and Bible reading, just as Daniel did, so that others can see You in our lives and give glory to You.



Overview

1. **Daniel: The Right Man for the Job!**
2. **Daniel's Unshakeable Faith**
3. **Daniel Is Saved**
4. **Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs**—Jesus is the only true God, the Creator of the heavens and earth.
5. **Life Application**
 - Meeting with God
 - Making Prayer a Habit
6. **Activity**—"Time with God" Poster



Background Knowledge for Teachers

Darius the Medes

Darius the Medes is found only in the Book of Daniel. Other records make no mention of any king between Belshazzar and Cyrus. Therefore, King Darius may have been:

- a. King Cyrus himself
- b. Cyrus' son Cambyses
- c. One commissioned by King Cyrus to be the ruler of Babylon

The Laws of the Country

In Babylon, the king's word was the law. In the Medo-Persian Empire, however, when a law was made, even the king couldn't change it. The law could not be broken—not even an important official like Daniel could break it. Another example of the irrevocable nature of the laws of the Medes and Persians appears in Esther 8:8.

After Daniel had spent a night in the lions' den unharmed, King Darius immediately ordered him to be brought out from the lions' den. According to ancient law, a person who was cast into the lions' den and survived the night unscathed would be acquitted immediately.



Reaching Out to Your Students

“Watch your thoughts, for they become words. Watch your words, for they become actions. Watch your actions, for they become habits. Watch your habits, for they become character. Watch your character, for it becomes your destiny.”
– Unknown

Have you noticed how some things in life can be done without us thinking twice about it? Things like cleaning our teeth, having breakfast, closing the door when we leave the house. We do all these automatically because we recognize their benefits if we do them and their harm if we don't.

Reading the Bible and praying each day is a habit each Christian needs to cultivate. Developing the habit is beneficial to our students' characters, their spiritual lives, and their journey of faith. However, it does not come naturally and easily, but with a lot of time, effort, and discipline.

Experts have found that developing a habit takes about twenty-one days. Therefore, in this lesson we have challenged our students to meet with God for twenty-one days. It will require a lot of encouragement, modeling, and even the help of their parents. After each week, our students will be asked to bring their posters with the stickers to church to evaluate their progress. By way of a small encouragement, teachers may choose to reward students with small gifts, such as erasers, stickers, and pencils. Of course, over time, these will not be necessary as our students personally experience the joys and benefits of meeting with God.



Opener

5 Minutes

[Pass out a blank sheet of paper to each student. Prepare a bell. Write a phrase relating to the lesson, such as “Daniel is saved in the lions' den”, on the board.]

Students, with which hand do you normally write? Have you ever tried writing with your non-dominant hand?

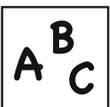
Today, let's try writing with both our dominant and non-dominant hands. Using the hand that you normally write with, copy the phrase on the board. Write as legibly and as neatly as you can. When you hear the bell, switch to your left (or non-dominant) hand and write the phrase again. [Repeat this a couple of times. Afterwards, discuss the following with students.]

How many times did you write the phrase with each hand? Was it easier to write with your non-dominant hand as you used it more? What would you need to do to make your non-dominant hand write as well as your dominant hand?

Most likely, you found that writing with your non-dominant hand was awkward and uncoordinated. A lot of practice is needed so that you can write as freely and comfortably as your other hand. If you made it a habit to write with your non-dominant hand, then before long you would be writing with ease and without too much thought or effort.

Developing a habit of praying and reading the Bible is the same. As Christians, we need to develop a good habit of talking to God every day, because this will mold us to be Christ-like.

Today, we will learn about Daniel who, since his youth, prayed to God every day, in both good and bad circumstances.



Vocabulary

satrap: an official responsible for a certain province
governor: a chief or someone who oversees



Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

FOR TEACHERS

Hand out the Bible Discovery Worksheet to the students now. The students will be completing the worksheet as you go through the lesson. The answers have been underlined in this section. Give students time to complete each question before moving on with the lesson.

A. Daniel: The Right Man for the Job!

During his reign, King Darius divided his kingdom into 120 provinces. In each of the provinces, Darius chose one satrap to be responsible for each province. King Darius also chose three men to be governors who were to be over the 120 satraps. One of the governors was Daniel, whose job was to make sure the satraps were serving the king faithfully.

King Darius soon noticed that Daniel was more capable than all the other governors and satraps, and he began to think of placing Daniel over the entire empire. Throughout Daniel's life, others could see that Daniel was different.

What others thought of Daniel:

- Dan 6:3 - King Darius saw that Daniel was different from the rest because an excellent spirit was in him.
- Dan 6:4 - The governors and satraps sought to find some charge against Daniel, but they found none because he was faithful.
- Dan 4:8-9 - King Nebuchadnezzar described Daniel as one who had the Spirit of the Holy God.
- Dan 5:10-12 - King Belshazzar's wife described Daniel as a man who had the Spirit of the Holy God. Light, understanding, and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him.
- Ezek 14:14 – The prophet Ezekiel described Daniel as one of the three great righteous men, along with Noah and Job.
- Dan 9:23; 10:11; 10:19 – Daniel was a man greatly beloved by God.

The people who knew Daniel perceived that he was different. They could see God in Daniel. Can others see Jesus in us? Can others see the love, kindness, and holiness of God through us? Did Daniel have some important daily habits that enabled him to shine for God? Let's find out.

The Conspiracy

When the other governors and satraps realized the king's intention to set Daniel over the entire kingdom, they were very jealous of Daniel and sought to find fault with him.

The two governors and 120 satraps gathered to find some charge against Daniel. The men thought and thought. They searched their memories for all the different times they were with Daniel. None of them could remember a time when they heard Daniel speak disrespectfully against the king. No one ever saw Daniel mistreat someone in the kingdom. Not one person could stand up and say anything bad about Daniel that would keep the king from promoting him. After thoroughly thinking about Daniel, all they realized was that he was completely trustworthy and honest.

It took some time, but the men finally came up with an idea. The only way that they could accuse Daniel was through his religion. They knew that Daniel worshipped and prayed to his God daily. Unlike the others, Daniel did not worship any other gods or persons except the God of Israel. If they could convince the king to make a law that forced Daniel to choose between obeying his God and obeying King Darius, they would surely be able to trap Daniel then.

Having come up with this brilliant idea, the men then all thronged before the king. Do you know what "thronged" means? It means to crowd together in a large number. These men were so eager to bring Daniel down that they crowded around King Darius to tell him about Daniel.

Let's read what they said in Daniel 6:6-8.

What was the decree upon which they had unanimously decided?

The decree stated that whoever petitioned any god or man for thirty days, except the king, would be cast in the lions' den. King Darius was caught off guard by their flattering words. He was not aware of their conspiracy and agreed to enforce the decree.

What did this mean for Daniel? The law would restrict Daniel's freedom of religion and choice to worship the true God for thirty days.

Here in America, we are blessed to have religious freedom. We are free to pray to God at any time without fear of breaking the law. In certain parts of the world, people do not have the freedom to worship God. They may even

even be persecuted for believing in the Lord Jesus and reading the Bible. We ought to cherish the freedom that we have to worship God and preach the gospel.

B. Daniel's Unshakeable Faith

What would you do if you wanted to worship God, but the punishment for doing so would be being thrown into the lions' den? [Allow students to respond.]

What could Daniel have chosen to do in order to pray without being noticed? [Allow students to respond.]

Read Daniel 6:10 to find out what Daniel did. Write the verse down, and then highlight the important words that tell us what he did.

- **He went to his upper room.** This was probably Daniel's usual place of prayer, a place where he communed with God in peace.
- **He opened the windows toward Jerusalem.** Daniel opened the window that faced the direction of Jerusalem, the holy city. Even though he was in Persia, a foreign land, his heart was with his people and with God.
- **He knelt down on his knees three times that day.** He continued to fear and worship the Lord in prayer. Daniel didn't allow the fear of death keep him from altering his habit of praying three times a day.
- **He prayed and gave thanks before God.** Even though Daniel knew of the decree, he did not murmur against God. He entrusted his problem and life to God and gave thanks to God for everything.
- **As was his custom since early days.** From his youth, Daniel had continued with this habit of praying until his old age.

From this verse, we don't read of any hesitation on Daniel's part to change his lifestyle based on the new decree. We don't read of him being tempted to pray quietly in his heart so that no one would ever know. We don't read that he was so afraid of being thrown into the lions' den that he made a pact with God telling Him that he would resume prayer after the thirty days was over. Nor do we read that he closed his windows when he prayed or prayed only when everyone was asleep.

In fact, Daniel did not do anything to compromise his life of faith. Daniel was totally faithful to God, even if it meant losing his life.

Why do you think Daniel was willing to risk his life to pray to God?

When we reflect upon our own lives, what things might cause us to be distracted from spending time with God or even to give up our faith?

- Fear of death
- Pain or suffering
- Love of money
- Love of idols
- Media (e.g. computer games, movies, etc.)
- Hobbies/interests

Who in the Bible compromised their faith because of their desires?

- Judas for 30 pieces of silver (Mat 26:14-16)
- Demas for the love of this world (2 Tim 4:10)
- Gehazi for two talents of silver and two garments (2 Kgs 5:20-24)
- Ananias and Sapphira for a good name (Ac 4:36-5:4)

The group of men kept a close eye on Daniel to see what he would do, to see if he would break the law. Lo and behold, they found Daniel praying and making supplications before God. They could not get back to King Darius fast enough to accuse Daniel.

Let's turn to Daniel 6:12-13.

Darius' heart sank. He was so upset with himself for making such a decree that now jeopardized the life of his most trusted leader. However, the jealous men were not going to let King Darius forget what he had to do. "Remember, O king that no decree made by you can be changed."

The men were right. In the Medes and Persian Empire, when a law was made and signed, there was absolutely no way to change it; even the king couldn't change it. There was only one thing the king could do and that was to have Daniel thrown into the lions' den. Before Daniel entered, the king said to Daniel, "Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you."

After Daniel entered the den, a large stone was rolled in front of it to prevent Daniel from escaping. The king then used his ring to seal the stone, along with the rings of the other lords to say that nothing could be changed.

While the conspirators felt secretly glad that they had gotten rid of a rival, how was the king feeling?

Let's read Daniel 6:18-19.

Darius returned to his palace with a very heavy and troubled heart. Throughout the night, he ate nothing. He was in no mood for any music or entertainment. He was

unable to sleep, thinking about Daniel surrounded by hungry lions. He was also very upset with himself because of the part he played in putting Daniel in his current situation. Oh, how he hoped that Daniel's God would rescue him from this terrible situation! As the sun was starting to come up over the horizon, Darius hurried to the den in which Daniel was sealed.

C. Daniel Is Saved!

When King Darius reached the stone, he cried out in an anguished voice, "Daniel, servant of the Living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?"

Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever! My God sent His angel to shut the lions' mouths so that they may not hurt me. I was found innocent before Him and before you, O king, I have done no wrong."

The king was exceedingly glad to hear Daniel's voice. He gave the command for Daniel to be brought out of the den. As Daniel was taken from the den, not a mark was found on him. No lion bite marks or even a scratch could be seen on his body. God had protected Daniel because he believed in his God. As for the men who conspired against Daniel, the king commanded that they and their families be thrown into the den. Let's read Daniel 6:24.

God was not in the den to protect them from the ferocious, hungry lions. Before they even reached the

bottom of the den, the lions devoured them. Compare what happened to Daniel with what happened to his enemies when they were thrown into the den.

Why were the fates of Daniel and his enemies so different? Turn to Proverbs 11:6a, 8. Daniel was a righteous man who trusted and believed that God would deliver him. As a result, God saved him from the lions' den. Daniel's enemies were evildoers who did not fear God. They did not have the protection of God and consequently perished.

King Darius' Decree

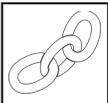
Daniel's life of prayer and good conduct enabled King Darius to gain some knowledge about God. Before Daniel entered the den, he had said to Daniel, "Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you" (Dan 6:16). After Daniel's miraculous escape from the lions' den, the king had a greater understanding of God. King Darius made a decree that all his subjects must revere the almighty and living God worshipped by Daniel.

Let's read how King Darius described the God of heaven in Daniel 6:25-27.

After this, God continued to bless Daniel. Daniel continued to serve and prosper not only during the reign of King Darius, but also later under a new king, Cyrus, King of Persia.

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. Answers may vary.
2. Daniel was a righteous man who was faithful to God and had the Spirit of God in him. He knew that by praying to God, he'd be putting his life in danger, but he still did it anyway. He cared more about obeying God than obeying the king's law. We can learn that no matter who may be persecuting us, it is important to always follow God and keep His commandments. When we do so, He will protect and save us, just as He did for Daniel.
3. Answers may vary.



Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

One True God

Daniel fully understood the God whom he worshipped, which is why he courageously continued to pray and worship God even though his life was in great danger. He believed that the God whom he worshipped is the Creator of the heavens and earth and his Savior, who is able to deliver him from the mouth of lions and his enemies.



Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

- 1. Name two of the people who could tell that Daniel was different.** King Darius, King Nebuchadnezzar, King Belshazzar's wife, or Ezekiel the prophet.
- 2. What qualities did these people see in Daniel?** He had an excellent spirit. He had understanding and wisdom. He was faithful and righteous.
- 3. What decree did King Darius pass?** Whoever prays to any god or man other than the king in the next thirty days shall be cast into the lions' den.
- 4. What did Daniel continue to do, even though he knew that doing it would put him in danger of being thrown into the lions' den?** He prayed to God, three times a day as usual.
- 5. Why was Daniel willing to risk his life to pray to God?** He loved God more than his own life. He knew that God would protect him because he feared God and kept God's commandments.
- 6. What are some of the things that can distract a person from spending time with God or even cause them to give up their faith?** Answers may vary.
- 7. Why were the fates of Daniel and his enemies so different?** Daniel was a righteous man who trusted and believed that God would deliver him. As a result, God saved him from the lions' den. Daniel's enemies were evildoers who did not fear God. They did not have the protection of God and consequently perished.
- 8. What did King Darius do after he saw how Daniel was delivered from the lions' den?** He made a decree that all the people in his empire had to revere the God whom Daniel worshipped.



Life Application

10 Minutes

1. MEETING WITH GOD

[Teacher: Before beginning Life Application #1, prepare four sheets of paper with one of the following obstacles on each paper: "Too Tired!", "Too Scared!", "But I'm Watching a Movie!", "Busy as a Bee!". Post these signs in different parts of the room. Students will be asked to go to the sign that shows the obstacle they may face.]

Throughout his life, Daniel prayed earnestly three times a day. Even when he was over eighty years old, he continued to fast and pray (Dan 9:1-4). This daily spiritual cultivation enabled Daniel to be close to God and understand the things of God. Furthermore, Daniel did not allow any obstacle or difficulty to take his time away from his daily prayers. Daniel never gave himself any excuse, even though he was a busy prime minister of the Medes and Persian Empire. Even in the face of death, Daniel prayed and gave thanks to God as he had done all his life.

Read the story below to learn how, like Daniel, these men met with God each day.

In 1882, there were two students called Hooper and Thornton who attended Cambridge University in England, UK. Every day was filled with studying, going to class, and practicing sports. Hooper and Thornton loved their life as students. However, they discovered that although they enjoyed a very satisfying life, something was missing in their spiritual lives. They knew that if they did not fix it, it would bring problems later on. They sought an answer and came up with an idea called the morning watch—a plan to spend the first minutes of each new day alone with God, praying and reading the Bible.

After some time, they knew that the morning watch was exactly what they needed. They realized that if they wanted to know God, it was necessary to spend time every day with Him. Their idea began to spread to other students who wanted to meet with God. But these men found that getting out of bed in time for the morning watch was very difficult. Still, Thornton was determined to change his laziness. He invented an automatic contraption and set it up by his bed: when the alarm clock went off, the vibration of the alarm clock would set his fishing tackle in motion, and the sheets that were clipped to the line would then lift off his body and wake him up. Thornton wanted to get up to meet his God!

These men continued to meet with God every morning. After they graduated from college, this group of very educated and wealthy men decided to give up their personal dreams and everything they had to live for Jesus. They decided to go out to China to preach the gospel. What made them change? They met with God each morning.

Say: What inspired Thornton and Hooper to meet with God daily? What things may have prevented them from keeping their appointment with God? How did they overcome these obstacles? How did these daily meetings with God shape their future lives?

Like Thornton and Hooper, we may want to spend time with God each day, but there may be certain things that hinder us from doing so. Let's read the following scenarios together to find out what these hindrances might be.

[Hand out Life Application Worksheet #1. Show the students the signs that have been posted around the classroom, and then have the students read all of the following scenarios. The students will then go to the obstacle that may be a hindrance to them. In their groups, students will come up with some "tips" that will help them overcome their obstacles.]

Read the following scenario, and then go to the area of the room with the same obstacle listed. Then, discuss with your group the question that follows the scenario.

1. Too Tired!

The alarm went off. Kevin reached for the clock and pressed the snooze button. He turned over and slept some more. When Mom came into the room twenty minutes later, Kevin was still in bed. She lifted the covers, gave Kevin a good shake, and then shouted, "Five minutes! You better be ready in five minutes or else you're walking to school yourself." Kevin jumped out of bed, changed his clothes, grabbed his lunch and backpack, and rushed out the door. It was like this every morning.

What should Kevin do to give himself more time with God?

2. Too Scared!

Last week during R.E. class, Lucy's teacher spoke about the importance of setting aside a time each day to be with God. She challenged each of them to try it for a week. Lucy wondered how she was going to do this as her family barely prayed at all. She felt a bit embarrassed about doing something no one else in her family did. She also worried that her brothers would laugh at her when they found her praying.

What should Lucy do to give herself more time with God?

3. But I'm Watching a Movie!

Bill is sitting at home watching one of the latest movies that has just been released. This is what he enjoys most besides playing computer games. Bill spends about three to four hours a few times a week doing this. By the time the movie is over, it is late and he goes straight to bed. Sometimes he does remember to sneak in a prayer, but it ends too quickly. Bill cares more about watching movies and playing games than about speaking to God.

What should Bill do to give himself more time with God?

4. Busy as a Bee!

Sally arrived home from school famished. She quickly ate the snack Mom had prepared before running through her pieces one more time before her violin lessons. An important violin competition was coming up soon, and her teacher told her she had to be ready. By the time the lesson was over, it was dinnertime. Sally helped Mom with setting the dinner table and cleaning up afterwards. Then it was homework time. At 8:30 pm, Dad called the family together for their daily Bible reading and prayer before the end of the day. "Oh, not tonight!" Sally moaned. "I have too much homework!"

What should Sally do to give herself more time with God?

2. MAKING PRAYER A HABIT

[There is no worksheet for this Life Application. Simply reinforce the teachings with the students.]

A lot of times, we begin to spend time with God, but we cannot maintain it on a regular basis for long. This is because we haven't developed the habit. We are taught good habits, such as brushing our teeth, bathing, and wearing seatbelts, from our youth, so that eventually they become a regular part of our lives.

When we were young and our parents told us to brush our teeth, we probably didn't like it very much and refused to do it. But after many weeks, or even months, brushing our teeth became a habit. In the same way, spending time with God in prayer and Bible reading is a habit that we have to develop from a young age, just like Daniel.

1. Set a time for yourself.

Take a close look at your daily schedule to find the best times and places to pray. It's best if it were the same time each day. For some people, it might be mornings, while evenings may work better for others. Find a time when you can concentrate and are not too tired. A suggested time can be ten minutes before or after your homework time. The key is to be consistent.

2. Do not make excuses.

No matter how many activities or how much homework we have to do, we still eat and sleep each day since these are essential for us to stay alive physically. In the same way, we have to take time out to be with God because that's how we stay alive spiritually. If we put God first over watching TV, playing video games, playing with friends, or just dawdling, then nothing will distract us from our appointment with God.

3. Set reminders everywhere.

Think of something that will stand out as a reminder of your appointment with God. Draw a big poster with a catchy phrase like, "God is waiting," and post it up in a space where you can see it. Write notes to yourself and place them in front of the TV or on your computer game. You may choose to enlist the help of your parents to give you daily reminders. Or you may work with a classmate and call each other at a set time. Or perhaps the entire class may wish to set a time to meet with God. These reminders will be necessary until meeting with God each day becomes a habit.

4. Start small.

Set a time frame for yourself. Perhaps you may want to start with seven minutes. You could call it a daily "Seven-Up." Start with something that you can manage and achieve. How will you spend these seven minutes? You might want to start with reading God's words. You can read a passage or a verse, and then spend time with God in prayer.

5. Use your heart.

In the 1996 Summer Olympics, a 19-year-old American gymnast captured two gold medals for her effort in the team competition and for her performance on the balance beam. A few days later, television reporters asked her how hard it was for her to keep practicing and training. The gymnast answered that she loved gymnastics. Because she loved it so much, she hadn't minded the toil of training for the Olympics. The work that might have been hard and unpleasant to someone else was not so hard for her simply because she loved her sport. In the same way, spending time with God should not be a forced and unpleasant experience, but rather a joyful one, because we desire to meet with God.



Activity

"Time with God" Poster

10-15 Minutes

Objective: To make a poster that will remind the students to spend time with God.

Materials

- Large construction paper
- Markers
- Crayons
- Scissors
- Miscellaneous art supplies
- Small stickers

The students will be designing a poster to hang in their room that will remind them to spend time with God. Before they begin designing their poster, ask the students to draw three rows of seven boxes for each day of the week at the bottom of the poster. Provide students with stickers and have them put a sticker for each day they spent time with God.

Check with the students each week to see how they are doing. Praise their efforts, and encourage and help the students who may be struggling with the challenge.

What others thought of Daniel

a. Daniel 6:3

_____ saw that Daniel was different from the rest because an _____ was in him.

b. Daniel 6:4

The _____ and _____ sought to find fault with Daniel, but they found none because he was _____.

c. Daniel 4:8-9

_____ described Daniel as one who had the _____ of the _____.

d. Daniel 5:10-12

King Belshazzar's wife described Daniel as a man who had the Spirit of the _____, _____, _____ and _____, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him.

e. Ezekiel 14:14

The prophet Ezekiel described Daniel as one of the three great _____, men along with Noah and Job.

f. Daniel 9:23; 10:11; 10:19

Daniel was a man _____ by God.

Teaching: How do we shine for the Lord Jesus?

Daniel's Unshakeable Faith

1. Write out Daniel 6:10. Highlight the important words that demonstrate Daniel's faith in God.

2. Write down some things that may rob us of our time with God.

3. Look up the following Bible verses to find out who compromised their faith.

_____ for 30 pieces of silver (Mat 26:14-16)

_____ for the love of this world (2 Tim 4:10)

_____ for two talents of silver and two garments (2 Kgs 5:20-24)

_____ and _____ for good name (Ac 4:36-5:4)

Daniel is Saved!

a. Compare what happened to Daniel with what happened to his enemies when they were thrown into the lions' den.

Daniel

Enemies

b. Why were the fates of Daniel and his enemies so different?

Fill in the blanks.

The _____ of the _____ will deliver them. (Prov 11:6a)

The _____ is _____ from trouble and it comes to the _____ instead. (Prov 11:8)

MEETING WITH GOD

Throughout his life, Daniel prayed earnestly three times a day. Even when he was over eighty years old, he continued to fast and pray (Dan 9:1-4). This daily spiritual cultivation enabled Daniel to be close to God and understand the things of God. Furthermore, Daniel did not allow any obstacle or difficulty to take his time away from his daily prayers. Daniel never gave himself any excuse, even though he was a busy prime minister of the Medes and Persian Empire. Even in the face of death, Daniel prayed and gave thanks to God as he had done all his life.

Read the story below to learn how, like Daniel, these men met with God each day.

In 1882, there were two students called Hooper and Thornton who attended Cambridge University in England, UK. Every day was filled with studying, going to class, and practicing sports. Hooper and Thornton loved their life as students. However, they discovered that although they enjoyed a very satisfying life, something was missing in their spiritual lives. They knew that if they did not fix it, it would bring problems later on. They sought an answer and came up with an idea called the morning watch—a plan to spend the first minutes of each new day alone with God, praying and reading the Bible. After some time, they knew that the morning watch was exactly what they needed. They realized that if they wanted to know God, it was necessary to spend time every day with Him. Their idea began to spread to other students who wanted to meet with God. But these men found that getting out of bed in time for the morning watch was very difficult. Still, Thornton was determined to change his laziness. He invented an automatic contraption and set it up by his bed: when the alarm clock went off, the vibration of the alarm clock would set his fishing tackle in motion, and the sheets that were clipped to the line would then lift off his body and wake him up. Thornton wanted to get up to meet his God!



These men continued to meet with God every morning. After they graduated from college, this group of very educated and wealthy men decided to give up their personal dreams and everything they had to live for Jesus. They decided to go out to China to preach the gospel. What made them change? They met with God each morning.

Read the following scenario, and then go to the area of the room with the same obstacle listed. Then, discuss with your group the question that follows the scenario.

1. Too Tired!

The alarm went off. Kevin reached for the clock and pressed the snooze button. He turned over and slept some more. When Mom came into the room twenty minutes later, Kevin was still in bed. She lifted the covers, gave Kevin a good shake, and then shouted, "Five minutes! You better be ready in five minutes or else you're walking to school yourself." Kevin jumped out of bed, changed his clothes, grabbed his lunch and backpack, and rushed out the door. It was like this every morning.



What should Kevin do to give himself more time with God?

2. Too Scared!

Last week during R.E. class, Lucy's teacher spoke about the importance of setting aside a time each day to be with God. She challenged each of them to try it for a week. Lucy wondered how she was going to do this as her family barely prayed at all. She felt a bit embarrassed about doing something no one else in her family did. She also worried that her brothers would laugh at her when they found her praying.



What should Lucy do to give herself more time with God?



3. But I'm Watching a Movie!

Bill is sitting at home watching one of the latest movies that has just been released. This is what he enjoys most besides playing computer games. Bill spends about three to four hours a few times a week doing this. By the time the movie is over, it is late and he goes straight to bed. Sometimes he does remember to sneak in a prayer, but it ends too quickly. Bill cares more about watching movies and playing games than about speaking to God.

What should Bill do to give himself more time with God?

4. Busy as a Bee!

Sally arrived home from school famished. She quickly ate the snack Mom had prepared before running through her pieces one more time before her violin lessons. An important violin competition was coming up soon, and her teacher told her she had to be ready. By the time the lesson was over, it was dinnertime. Sally helped Mom with setting the dinner table and cleaning up afterwards. Then it was homework time. At 8:30 pm, Dad called the family together for their daily Bible reading and prayer before the end of the day. "Oh, not tonight!" Sally moaned. "I have too much homework!"



What should Sally do to give herself more time with God?

REVIEW

Teachers can reference this lesson to give them some ideas about questions to ask during a review lesson. The review can be in any format: a standard written quiz, a Jeopardy-style game, a board game, etc. The important thing is to give the students a chance to review all the things they have learned in the past quarter. You can draw your review questions from the **Check for Understanding** sections in each lesson, as well as the **homework assignments**. Remember to include some **life application questions** to allow the students to apply what they have learned to their lives.

ANSWER KEY

I. Memory Verse Fill In the Blank

1. courage, dismayed
2. judges, delivered
3. strength, trusted
4. wise, fools
5. wherever, people
6. understanding, paths
7. compassion, healed
8. evil, justice
9. salvation, denying
10. mouth, heart
11. prayers, all
12. Spirit, watchful

II. A True Nazirite

- A. Do Not Cut Hair: shave, head
Do Not Drink Wine: Philistines, feast
Do Not Draw Near a Corpse: tore, carcass, took
- B. Answers may vary. Reference answers are below.

Suffer and Sacrifice for the Lord

As Christians, we must be willing to suffer for the Lord. Others may say things that hurt us temporarily, but our treasure lies in heaven, which is everlasting. Furthermore, while our friends may be having fun at a birthday party on Saturday, we must recognize the important of keeping the Sabbath, and “sacrifice” our time with our friends for something even better: time with the Lord.

Don't Indulge in Pleasures

We must spend our free time wisely, because some hobbies can have a negative influence on us, which may cause us to stumble in our faith and drift away from God. Therefore, we must find ways to spend our free time that will both allow us to relax and maintain a good relationship with God.

Keep Holy

In our world today, the things that we hear and the things that we see can keep us from being holy. When we watch TV, it is important not to watch programs that will cause us to defile our body, which is the temple of God. In addition, if we hear our friends

swearing and we swear alongside them, then we are not keeping ourselves holy. Rather, we must be vigilant and stay holy in our speech, our actions, and our thoughts.

III. Attempting the Impossible for God

Jonah Is Sent to Nineveh
2, 9, 4, 8, 1, 5, 3, 7, 10, 6

Gideon: A Mighty Man of Valor
4, 8, 10, 3, 6, 1, 7, 5, 9, 2

IV. Short Answer and Life Application

1. In order to be good Christian soldiers, there are three important things we must do: overcome our fleshly desires, fight the world, and fight Satan. Therefore, we must always be vigilant and keep the word of God in our heart so that it will remind us of what to do when we are making decisions in our daily lives.
2. Answers may vary. In order to break out of a cycle of sin, we must first identify the sin, and then sincerely repent of the sin. Then, we must set goals so that we don't commit the same mistake again, and ask God for the strength to help us break the cycle.
3. Instead of going back to her hometown after her husband died, Ruth chose to follow her mother-in-law Naomi back to her hometown. She gave up the opportunity to marry another man, and the possibility of a better life. She worked hard in the fields to earn money for Naomi and herself. Lastly, she married Boaz under Naomi's instructions, because she knew it was best for Naomi and herself if she remarried.
4. Answers may vary. God can warn us through: sickness, accidents, a warning from the adults around us, the Bible, or even prayer. The important part is that we recognize when God is admonishing us so that we can quickly repent of our sin and do our best not to commit it again.
5. They did not eat of the king's food, nor did they bow down to the golden image he had made. They courageously stood up for their faith, even though they faced death. While today we might not face death, we must let those around us know that we are separate from the world.

I. Memory Verse Fill In the Blank

Instructions: Complete the memory verses by filling the blanks in with the missing words.

people	prayers	evil	mouth	understanding	courage
trusted	healed	Spirit	wise	delivered	denying
salvation	judges	watchful	justice	wherever	dismayed
compassion	heart	fools	strength	paths	all

1. "Be strong and of good _____; do not be afraid, nor be _____, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9b)
2. "And when the LORD raised up _____ for them, the LORD was with the judge and _____ them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge." (Judges 2:18a)
3. "The LORD is my _____ and my shield; my heart _____ in Him, and I am helped." (Psalm 28:7a)
4. "He who walks with _____ men will be wise, but the companion of _____ will be destroyed." (Proverbs 13:20)
5. "For _____ you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your _____ shall be my people, and your God, my God." (Ruth 1:16b)
6. "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own _____; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your _____." (Proverbs 3:5-6)
7. "And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with _____ for them, and _____ their sick." (Matthew 14:14)
8. "Hate _____, love good; establish _____ in the gate." (Amos 5:15a)
9. "For the grace of God that brings _____ has appeared to all men, teaching us that, _____ ungodliness and worldly lusts." (Titus 2:11-12a)
10. "Let the words of my _____ and the meditation of my _____ be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer." (Psalm 19:14)
11. "Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, _____, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and _____ who are in authority." (1 Timothy 2:1-2a)
12. "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the _____, being _____ to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints." (Ephesians 6:18)

II. A True Nazirite

A. As a Nazirite, Samson was supposed to follow three important rules. However, the Bible tells us that Samson broke these rules one by one. Unscramble the words below, and use them to fill in the blanks for the following verses. Then, draw a line to match the verse with the rule that Samson was breaking.

hsiensPliti

oert

dhae

sarcsac

atesf

hvaes

okto

DO NOT CUT HAIR
SUFFER AND SACRIFICE FOR THE LORD

DO NOT DRINK WINE
Don't Indulge in Pleasures

DO NOT DRAW NEAR A CORPSE
 KEEP HOLY

"And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he _____ the lion apart. [...] After some time, [...] he turned aside to see the _____ of the lion. And behold, a swarm of bees and honey were in the carcass of the lion. He _____ some of it in his hands and went along, eating."

"Then she lulled him to sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him _____ off the seven locks of his _____. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him."

"Now Samson went down to Timnah, and [...] told his father and mother, saying, "I have seen a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the _____; now therefore, get her for me as a wife." [...] So his father went down to the woman. And Samson gave a _____ there."

B. While we may not have taken the Nazirite vow, each of the three rules still apply to us. What actions can we take to follow the rules today? For each of the following rules, name some ways in which you can also be a true Nazirite.

Suffer and Sacrifice for the Lord

Don't Indulge in Pleasures

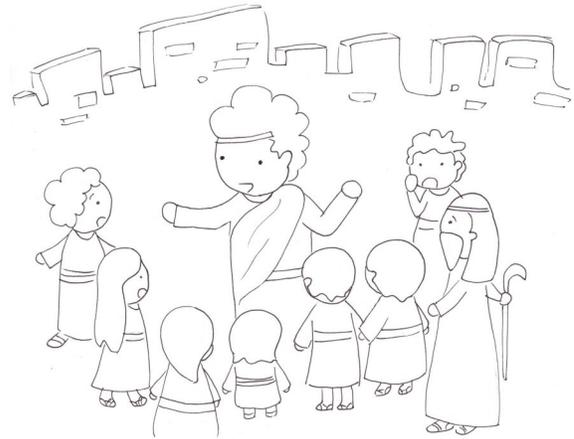
Keep Holy

III. Attempting the Impossible for God

Both Jonah and Gideon first had doubts when God instructed them to do His work. However, after they knew that God was with them, they were able to attempt the impossible for God. Their stories have been mixed up below. Put them back in the correct ordering by numbering them from 1-10.

Jonah Is Sent to Nineveh

- _____ Jonah flees to Joppa and boards a ship bound for Tarshish.
- _____ The Ninevites believe God, and fast and repent of their sins.
- _____ The sailors discover Jonah is to blame and reluctantly throw him overboard.
- _____ Jonah preaches to the Ninevites about their impending punishment from God.
- _____ God instructs Jonah to travel to Nineveh.
- _____ A great fish swallows Jonah, and he is in its belly for three days and three nights.
- _____ God sends a mighty tempest upon the sea, but Jonah falls asleep.
- _____ Jonah prays to the Lord and repents, and then the great fish vomits Jonah onto dry land.
- _____ God sees their sincere repentance and does not bring punishment onto the Ninevites.
- _____ The sailors praise God after the sea immediately calms.



Gideon: A Mighty Man of Valor

- _____ Gideon tears down the altar of Baal and sets up an altar to God.
- _____ Gideon spies on the enemies and hears them foretelling their own loss.
- _____ Israel enjoys forty years of peace.
- _____ Gideon doubts that he will be the one to save Israel from the Midianites.
- _____ Gideon asks for two signs, involving fleece and dew, from God.
- _____ The Israelites cry out to God because of the Midianites.
- _____ God reduces Gideon's army from 22,000 to 300 men.
- _____ Gideon gathers men from Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali.
- _____ The Midianites flee from Gideon, who pursues and subdues them.
- _____ The Angel of the Lord greets Gideon as a "mighty man of valor."

Short Answer and Life Application

Instructions: Answer the questions.

1. Be a Christian Soldier

Joshua was not only the leader of the Israelites, but he was also a faithful servant and a soldier. Today, what must we do in order to become good Christian soldiers?

2. Breaking the Cycle of Sin

During the period of the judges, the Israelites remained in a cycle of sin that repeated with each judge. They would: forget God, sin, receive punishment from God, cry out to God, be saved by God, and then forget God once again. Write down one sin you may be having trouble overcoming, and list some actions you can take to try and break out of the cycle.

3. Showing Love through Self-Sacrifice

Ruth is a great example of someone who showed love through self-sacrifice. What were some of Ruth's actions that showed how much she loved Naomi? Share your own example of when you showed someone love by sacrificing something.

4. Call to Repentance

God has used famine, drought, fires, and plagues to remind the people to turn back to Him. What ways might God use to get our attention if we have sinned?

5. Daniel and His Three Friends

Daniel and his three friends faced many difficult challenges as captives, but they never failed to honor God. Name some ways in which Daniel and his three friends remained faithful to God. What can we learn from their actions?

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.

Daniel 6:10



Attempting the Impossible for God

Elementary 2

Year 2 Book 3

General Assembly of True Jesus Church

21225 Bloomfield Avenue
Lakewood, CA 90715 USA