

Themes for Christian Studies level 4 Age 8

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Related resources

Songs from the following Beacon Media recordings:

All Creation Sings

Sing a Joyful Song

Couldn't Be Finer

Jesus First - a guide to character development (*Beacon Media*)

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Themes Level 4 (age 8)

Biblical Overview

God is Creator - *We are created in God's image*

The creation and fall (Gen. 1-3)

We are wonderfully made (Psalm 139)

Gifts and talents (Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:12-27; Matt. 25:14-30)

God is Love - *God is a loving Father*

God is a Father who gives good gifts ((Luke 11:1-13)

Jesus told us to say 'Our Father' (Matt. 6:7-13)

God hears us when we pray (1 John 5:14)

The patient father (Luke 15:11-32)

God will forgive us (Ps. 31:3; 86:5)

We are God's children (1 John 3:1; John 1:12-13; Gal. 4:6)

The family of God (Acts 2:46-47; Heb. 10:24-25)

Our Father expects obedience: story of Jonah

Jesus obeyed His Heavenly Father (Luke 2:41-52; Luke 4:1-13)

God is Wise - *God's wisdom is better than being rich*

King Solomon asks for wisdom (1 Kings 3:1-28)

The value of wisdom (Prov. 4 & 16:16)

The rich young ruler (Matt. 19:16-30)

God is more important than money (Matt.6:19-21 & 33)

The love of money (1 Tim. 6:10)

God is Protector - *God rescues His people and protects them from sickness*

God must rescue and protect because of the fall (Gen. 3)

God's strategy for bringing the Israelites out of Egypt (Ex. 7-11)

The escape (Ex. 12)

Opening of the Red Sea (Ex. 14)

God protects and heals (Deut. 7:12 & 15; Ex. 15:2; Ps. 91)

God's rescue plan for us (John 3:16)

God is Powerful - *God's power is the greatest*

God set the Israelites free (Ex. 7-14)

Jesus came to set prisoners free (Luke 4:18)

God uses Gideon (Judges 6-8)

God's power over nations (Ps. 66:1-7; Prov. 21:1)

God's power over the evil one (1 John 3:8; Luke 9:37-43)

God's ultimate power (Ps. 29:1-4)

God is Truth - *God's word is a sure foundation*

The house on the rock (Matt.7:24-27)

Jesus, the way, the truth, the life (John 14:6)

The sower (Mark 4:1-8)

Following the truth (Phil. 3:16)

The word of God is truth (Prov. 30:5-6; Ps. 12:6)

Obey God's word (Ps. 119:105)

God's word is a sword (Eph. 6:17)

God is Pure - *The battle of darkness and light; the defeat of Satan*

Satan defeated at the cross (John 3:16)

The final defeat of Satan (Rev. 20:7-10)

God's light casts out evil (1 John 1:5-7)

Live as children of the light (Eph. 5:8-11)

Heaven: a place of purity and light (Rev. 20, 21 & 22; John 14:2-3)

God is Patient - *It takes patience to do things properly*

Diligence shown by:

Dorcas (Acts 9:36-42)

Noah (Gen. 6:14-16)

Diligence in helping others (Heb. 6:10-12)

The diligent wife (Prov. 31:10-29)

Warnings against laziness (Prov. 20:13; 2 Thes. 3:10)

The ten girls and their lamps (Matt. 25:1-13)

God is a Servant - *Jesus, the humble servant*

Jesus born in a stable (Luke 2)

Jesus was baptized (Matt. 3:13-17)

Jesus washed the disciples feet (John 13:3-5)

The rich man and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14)

The humility of a child (Matt. 18:1-4)

Don't make yourself important (Luke 14:7-11)

A servant of all (Matt. 20:20-28; Mark 10:35-45)

God is Life - *God is a living person*

New life from the grain of wheat that dies (John 12:24)

The sower (Mark 4:1-8)

Eternal life (John 17:3)

Made new in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17)

The Vine (John 15:1-11)

God is Provider - *God is a caring provider*

The Good Shepherd (John 10:1-18)

The Lord is my Shepherd (Ps. 23)

God gives good gifts (Luke 11:11-13)

Don't worry about tomorrow (Matt. 6:25-34)

Jesus provided at the wedding (John 2:1-11)

God is Peace - *Jesus broke down the barrier of sin*

Separation from God (Rom. 3:23; 5:8; 6:23)

Christ's death broke the barrier (Col. 1:20)

He is our peace...He has broken down the wall (Eph. 2:14)

Forgiveness through Christ (Rom. 5:1; 1 John 1:9)

Other Stories

The Carpenter's Tools (*Creator 4.1*)

Special Things for Justin (*Love 4.1*)

Henri, the boy from Paris (*Love 4.3*)

Scrooge (*Wise 4.2*)

Mary Jones and her Bible (*Truth 4.3*)

The Little Red Hen (*Patient 4.2*)

The Fisherman's Wife (*Servant 4.2*)

Good King Wenceslas (*Servant 4.3*)

The Story of Granny Smith (*Life 4.1*)

The Skate-board (*Provider 4.2*)

The Master Musician (*Peace 4.2*)

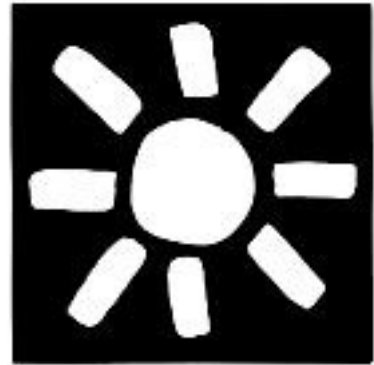
God is Creator

Level 4 (age 8)

Subtheme

We are created in God's image

You created the moon to mark the months; the sun knows the time to set. Psalm 104:19 (GNB)



Integrated topics for Christian Education

Human biology; self concept; personal interests and hobbies

Other

- light
- plants
- animal life; ecosystems
- solar system
- air
- water
- fossil records; the Flood; the six-day creation
- technology; inventions

Character development (see *Jesus First*)

- confidence
- creativity
- flexibility
- resourcefulness

Christian Life

Our response to *God is Creator*

- standing in awe of the Creator
- praising Him for His great works
- believing in a six day creation, (not millions of years)

God is Creator 4.1

Subtheme

We are created in God's image

Focus

We are special to God.

Bible references

Genesis 1; Genesis 2:1-4 The seven days of creation

Songs

All Creation Sings (*All Creation Sings*)

Sing A Joyful Song (*Sing A Joyful Song*)

Couldn't Be Finer (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

Adam and Eve) (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

God Loves You (*All Creation Sings*)

Story: The Creation

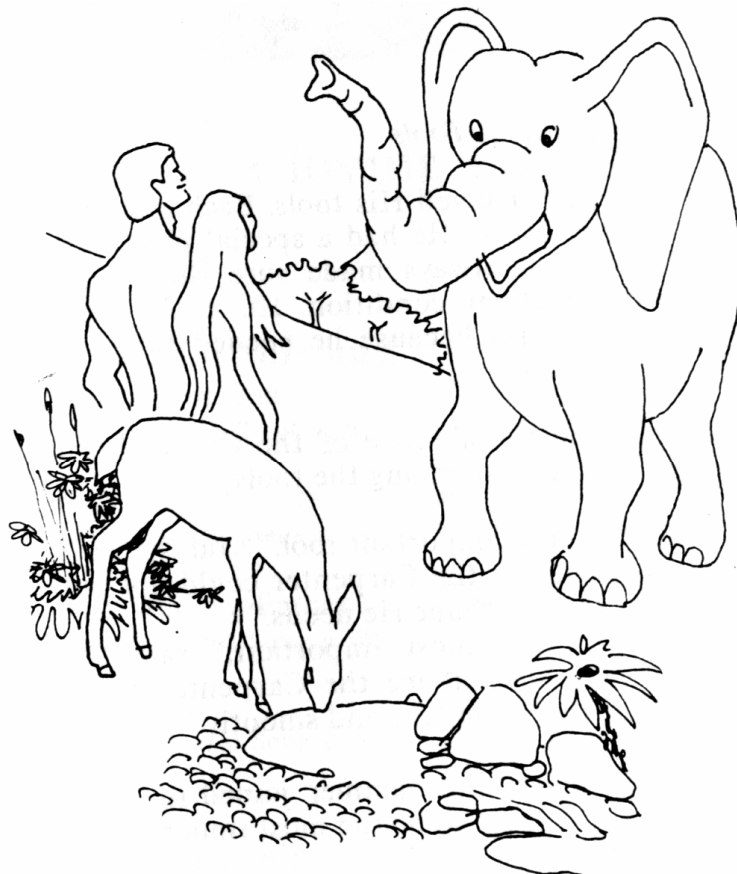
Read or tell the Biblical account of the seven days of creation. (Genesis 1 & 2)

Discussion

Although animals and people were created on the same day, God made people to be far more special than animals. God gave people the ability to love their Creator. Human beings were created in the image of God. (Genesis 1:26-28).

Art/Craft

Illustrate the land animals, (day 6), and display them as part of a group mural.



God is Creator 4.2

Subtheme

We are created in God's image.

Focus

God's beautiful world spoiled by disobedience

Bible References

Genesis 2:4-25; Genesis 3 Adam and Eve disobey their Creator.
Romans 5:12 Sin came into the world through one man. (GNB)

Story: Adam and Eve disobey their Creator

Read or tell the story from Gen 2 & 3.

Discussion

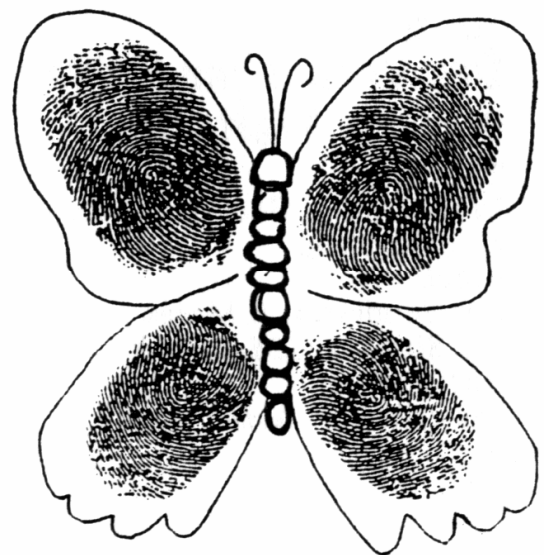
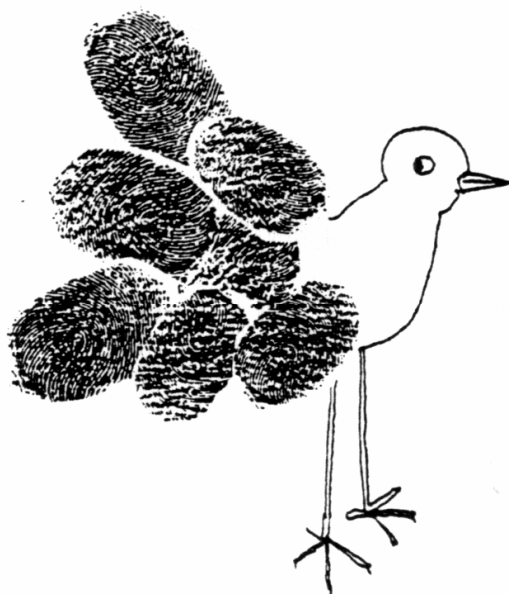
When God made Adam and Eve, He wanted them to be His special friends. God made them in His own image. They were created with the ability to love God.

God said "Let us make man in our image." (Gen.1:26)

When Adam and Eve disobeyed, they lost the special relationship they had with God. However, many years later, Jesus came to earth in human form. Because of His death on the cross, people could accept forgiveness for their disobedience and once again walk and talk with their Creator.

Art/Craft: Fingerprint designs

Make a stamp by placing a sponge on a plastic lid. Put a blob of paint on the sponge. Place fingerprints together to form animal designs. When dry, they can be outlined with markers emphasise the shape of each animal. Alternatively finger prints can be made using pressing finger into powdered charcoal or pencil scrapings.



God is Creator 4.3

Subtheme

We are created in God's image

Focus

We are special to God.

Bible References

Psalms 119 We are wonderfully made.

Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Matthew 25:14-30 Gifts and talents.

Story: The Carpenter's Tools

The Carpenter loved His tools. Each one was precious to Him. He had a special place for each one, and always made sure that they were kept in excellent condition. His tools were valuable to him because He needed them to do His work.

One day, in the absence of the Carpenter, a quarrel broke out among the tools.

"I am the most important tool," said the saw, "for without me the Carpenter could not cut the wood to the shape He needs."

"No, I am the most important," said the plane, "for without me the Carpenter could not make the wood fine and smooth."

Then the chisel and hammer joined in. Each tool thought itself to be the most important.

The Carpenter returned. There was a hush over the workshop. He picked up the saw and set to work. Then he used the hammer, the chisel and plane in turn. After many hours, a beautiful wooden table was completed. The tools stared in wonder at the craftsmanship. Each tool realized that they had all been needed to get the job done. Each one was as important as the other. The Toolmaker had given each one a special ability.

Discussion

God has made each individual special to Him. No two people in the world are exactly alike. No two people in the world have the same fingerprints. Even identical twins are different in small ways. God cares so much about us that He makes each person unique.

We all have special abilities. Some are good at drawing or singing. Others are good at running or swimming. No matter what talents we have, we should use them for God. Some people are naturally cheerful and friendly. Others have a natural desire to help people. For some, their special gift is bringing pleasure to others. When we use our gifts and talents for God, we are like lights shining out to the world.

Read what the Bible has to say about gifts and talents.

Activity

Make a chart showing the names of all the children in the group. Next to each name write the gifts and talents special to that child.

God is Love

Level 4 (age 8)

Subtheme

God is a loving Father.

*The Lord is good. His love is eternal.
Psalm 100:5 (GNB)*



Integrated Topics for Christian Education

God's love for us, expressed in provision of the things we need, e.g. sun; rain; soil; food.

Other

- myself: God loves me just the way I am
- my family: God's plan for love and protection
- understanding different cultural groups
- understanding the aged and disabled
- professions which show care e.g. nursing
- caring for animals
- the third world: giving and sharing
- friendship, fruits of the spirit
- biographies of those who have shown kindness and compassion
- the balance of nature
- the nation of Israel: Jews and gentiles; God's love for the whole world

Character Development (See *Jesus First*)

- kindness
- gentleness
- friendliness
- compassion
- forgiveness
- faithfulness

Christian Life

Our response to *God is Love*

- feeling loved and accepted
- loving God as He first loved us
- loving others

God is Love 4.1

Subtheme

God is a loving Father

Focus

We can talk to our Heavenly Father through prayer.

Bible references

Luke 11:1-13 God is a Father who gives good gifts. Ask and it shall be given.

Matthew 6:7-13 Jesus told us to say, "Our Father".

1 John 5:14 God hears us when pray the things that God wants us to pray.

Songs

God Loves You (*All Creation Sings*)

God is a Provider (*All Creation Sings*)

Thank You for All the Good Things (*Couldn't be Finer*)

Ask, Seek, Knock (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

Discussion

Think about the good things that God provides...things like rain and sunshine, food and clothes. There is another gift that God expects us to ask of Him. The gift of the Holy Spirit is available to all those who choose to invite Jesus into their life.

When we are a child of God we can talk to our Heavenly Father and tell Him whatever is on our heart. When we ask our Father for something, and if He knows that it is something good for us, He will give it to us. (Read 1 John 5:14.)

Bible research

Read Matthew 6:8b-13

Does God know the things we need?

God wants us to ask Him for the things we need? Why?

Jesus told us that we need to ask our Heavenly Father for special things. Just as a good father wants to give his children good gifts, so our Heavenly Father wants to give us good things too. Jesus said that we must keep on asking until we receive the things we pray for.

Think...

Which of these would your Heavenly Father expect you to pray for?

- control of your bad temper
- new friends if you are lonely
- a brand new car every year
- the ability to forgive someone who has done something awful to you
- losing your fear of the dark
- ice-cream for dessert every night
- a way to pay back someone who has wronged you
- strength to tell others about Jesus
- the latest fashions all the time
- a sick person

On a piece of paper, write down one or two special things to ask God for this week.

Story: Special things for Justin

Justin Brown was eight years old. He had always wanted a dog of his own but Dad said there was a lot of responsibility involved in looking after a dog. There was the regular feeding, bathing, brushing and powdering, not to mention the exercising and provision of a warm place to sleep. "May be when you're older," Dad would say.

Justin would have loved the company of a dog. He didn't have many friends at school. Jonathan, his best friend, had recently moved away to another school. Justin wasn't good at football like the other boys, and somehow he always got left out of games.

"How was school today?" Justin's mother would ask as Justin sat down to his after-school snack.

"O.K.," he would reply sullenly. He didn't really want to talk about it.

"You know that God is a Heavenly Father who gives good things," said Mrs. Brown. "If you have a problem you can tell Him about it."

That night Justin told his Mum why he didn't like school anymore.

"It's not the same now that Jonathan's left. I don't have anyone to play with."

"Why don't we ask God our Father to help you make new friends," said Mrs. Brown.

Justin agreed, and together they asked God to do something really special for Justin.

"We don't know how God will answer our prayer, but we know that He will answer if we keep on asking," said Mrs. Brown. God knows the best way to answer our prayers. He loves us and only does what's best for us."

Each night Justin and his Mum would pray. Then it happened. A new boy came into the class.

"Justin, would you take care of our new class member, Peter?" asked the teacher.

Justin and Peter soon found they had a lot in common. They both liked drawing, liked the same T.V. programs, and both had the same secret wish...to have a dog of their own.

"Guess what, Mum!" shouted Justin as he ran in the door after school. "I've made a new friend today. God really does answer our prayers!"

Mum had a big smile on her face. It looks as if God has given you more than one good gift today. Look what Dad's brought home for you.

Dad walked in with a little brown bundle.

"A puppy!" shrieked Justin.

"Your very own," said Dad. "I didn't want you to have a dog of your own until I was sure that you were responsible enough to look after it. I think you're old enough now. What are you going to call him?"

Justin thought for a moment.

"Pete," he said, taking the puppy in his arms.

Then he remembered something.

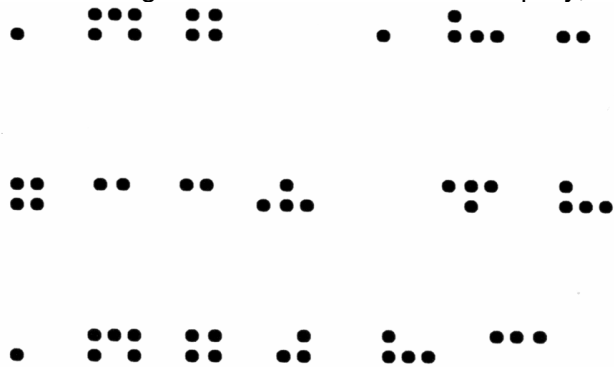
"Thanks, Dad! You really are the best Dad in the whole world."

Justin gave Dad a big hug. Pete just gave Dad a big lick on the cheek.

"Pete's saying thankyou too laughed Justin."

Puzzle: A Secret Message

If we don't get answers the first time we pray, what must we do?



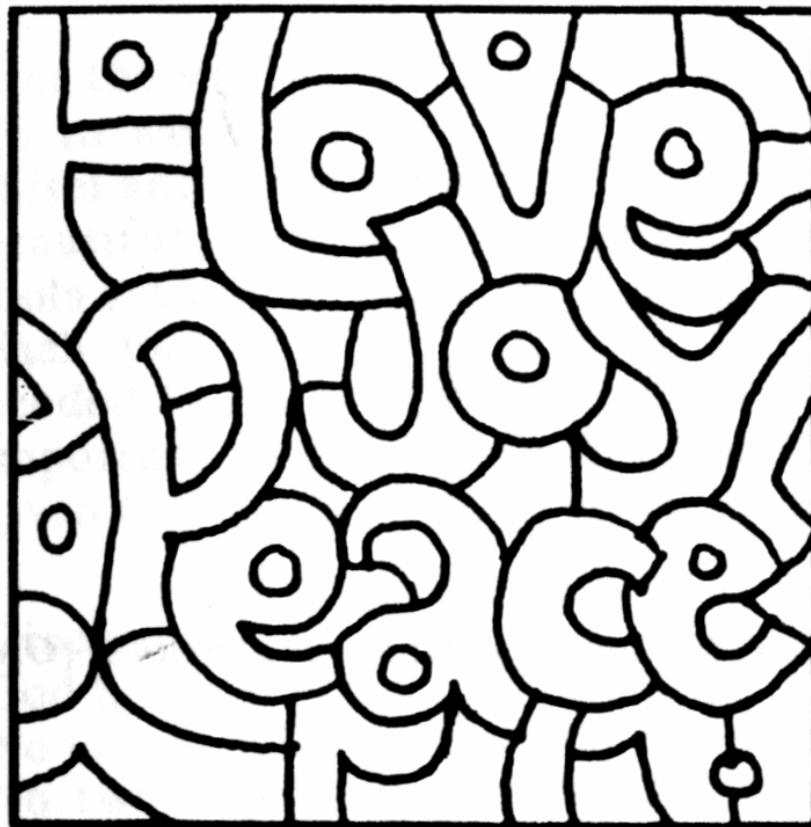
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H :::	Q :::	Z :::
I :::	R :::	

Game

Write all the letters of the alphabet on separate pieces of cards. Place the cards in a stack, face down. Each player, in turn, picks up the top card and tries to think of one of God's gifts to us, beginning with that letter.

Activity

Find three good gifts our Heavenly Father gives to us. Colour the words when you have found them.



God is Love 4.2

Subtheme

God is a loving Father; God is a perfect Father.

Bible references

Luke 15:11-32 The son who left home.

Psalm 103:8 God is slow to anger.

1 John 3:1 We are called God's children.

Psalm 31:3; 86:5 God is ready to forgive.

Songs

The Waiting Father (*Sing A Joyful Song*)

Ask, Seek, Knock (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

God Loves You (*All Creation Sings*)

Discussion

Imagine that you have done something wrong. You know that your parents will be really cross.

What might happen when Mum or Dad finds out?

What would you do if YOU were a Mum or Dad?

We would hope that our parents would stop being cross with us after a while, and give us a second chance. We would expect them to forgive us because they love us. Parents are not perfect, and sometimes make mistakes. However there is a father who is perfect. That's God our Heavenly Father. Here is a story about a father who kept on loving his son even after the son had acted very foolishly.

Story: The Son Who Left Home

Read or tell the story from Luke 15:11-31

Discussion

Why is God the perfect father?

God never stops loving us. He never pushes us away when we return to Him, no matter what we have done.

Could the father in the story have acted in a different way when the son returned? Could he have been unforgiving?

God is not like this. The Bible says that He is slow to anger. He will forgive us again and again, as long as we are truly sorry for the wrong things we have done.

Act it out

Divide into two groups and make up two different plays:

One play about a son who returned to a forgiving father

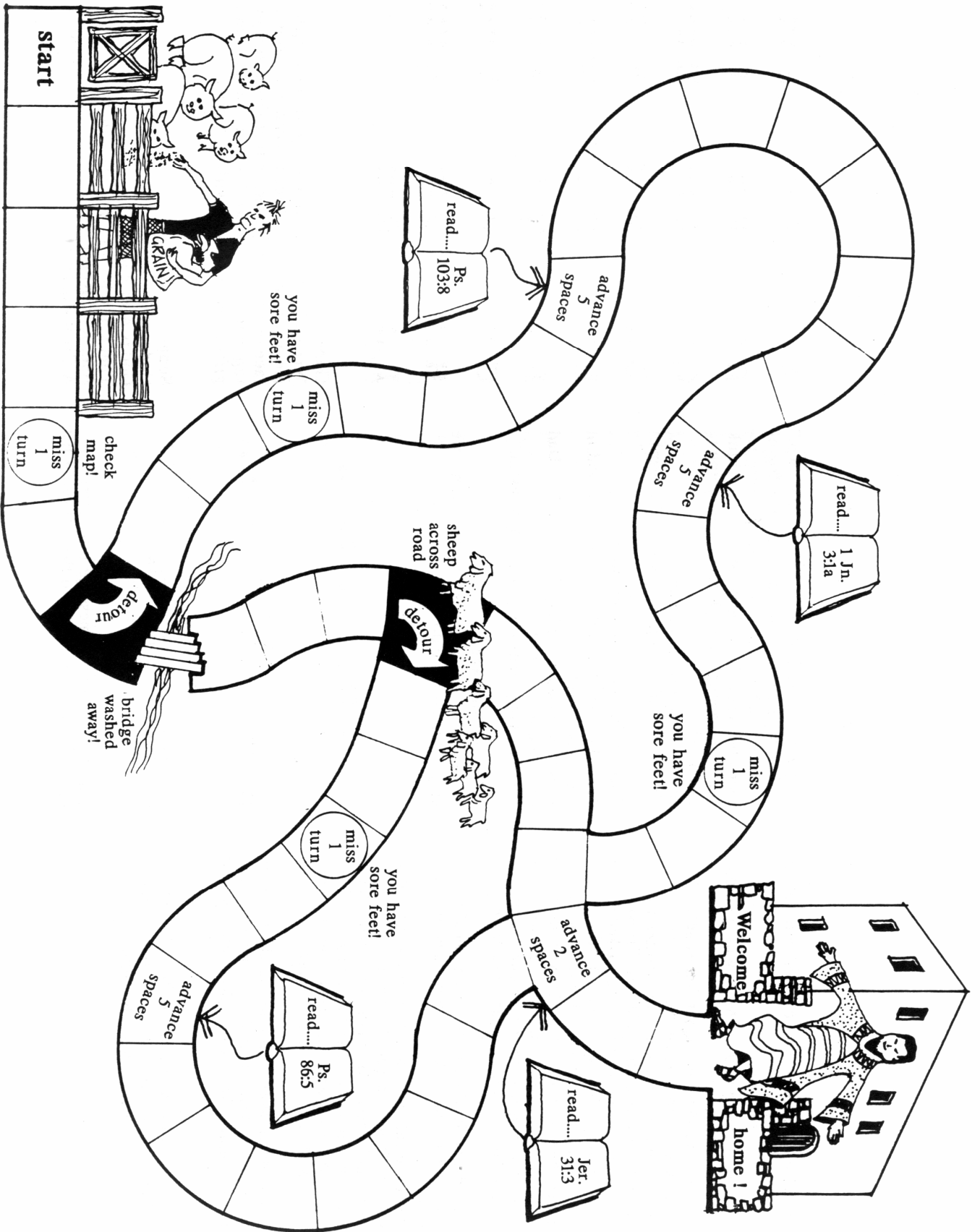
One play about a son who returned to an unforgiving father

Which example is like God our Heavenly Father?

Game

How long will it take the son to find his way home?

(This is a dice game for two to four players.)



God is Love 4.3

Subtheme

God is a loving Father

Focus

God is the Father of a big family.

Bible references

John 1:12-13; 1 John 3:1; Galatians 4:6 Who are God's children?

Hebrews 10:24-25 Show love to one another and meet together.

Acts 2:46-47 The family of believers met together.

Songs

God Loves You (*All Creation Sings*)

Thank You for all the Good Things (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

Clap Your Hands (*All Creation Sings*)

Discussion

Why is it good to be part of a family?

We have parents to protect us. We have brothers and sisters to play with and to share with. Older brothers and sisters can help younger brothers and sisters. Members of a family can support one another.

What do we learn by being part of a family?

We learn to love, share, help each other and work together.

When we are a child of God we are welcomed into a big family. All those who have Jesus as their special friend are part of this family, and God is their Heavenly Father.

What do we have to do to become a child of God, and a member of God's big family?

Read these verses: John 1:12-13; 1 John 3:1; Galatians 4:6

Story: Henri, the boy from Paris

Henri was excited as the plane touched down on the runway. It had been a long journey from Paris, and he was full of curiosity about the new country, Australia. Henri's father had been given the opportunity to work in Sydney for two years.

Henri found that everything was different in Australia. The houses, the city, the people and the language they spoke were all new to him. Henri had learned some English at school in Paris but he still couldn't understand what people were saying. Henri didn't like his new school. It was all so strange, and nobody played with him. He couldn't understand what the other children were saying anyway. He was so glad when the bell rang at the end of each school day. Then he could go home to be with his own family. It felt so good when Dad came home at 5:30 and the whole family was together.

The first week had been difficult, but Henri was starting to like his teacher, Mrs. Green. She was kind and patient. On Thursday a new teacher came into the classroom. Henri was told by Mrs. Green that this was Mrs. O'Brien who came each week to teach the children about the Bible. Henri listened carefully. Mrs. O'Brien told the children about Jesus. Yes, Henri remembered the stories about Jesus. He had heard these stories before in his own language in Paris.

That evening, Henri told his parents about Mrs. O'Brien and the Jesus stories. Henri's father thought for a moment.

"Why don't we find a church to go to on Sunday? Then you could learn more about Jesus and maybe make some new friends".

On Sunday, the whole family went along to church. What a surprise Henri received when he saw Mrs. O'Brien there. She soon introduced Henri's Mum and Dad to some of her friends. Henri took his little sister along to the children's program. They had a great time. Even though Henri couldn't understand everything, he knew that the people here loved and accepted him. Henri learned more about Jesus and decided to make Jesus his special friend. When church was over he told Mrs. O'Brien.

"When you are a friend of Jesus you have lots of other friends too." she said. "It's like being part of a great big family. Just as you are loved by your own family, you are loved by God's family. Wherever you go in the world you will find people who belong to that family."

"Even when I go back to Paris?" asked Henri.

"Of course," replied Mrs. O'Brien.

But that didn't matter now. Henri was happy here in Australia. He had found a wonderful new family.

Something to think about

To make a fire you need lots of sticks, all placed together.

If you separate the sticks while they are burning, one by one they will go out.

How is similar to Christians being together?

Is it easier to keep our "light shining" when we are together with other Christians?

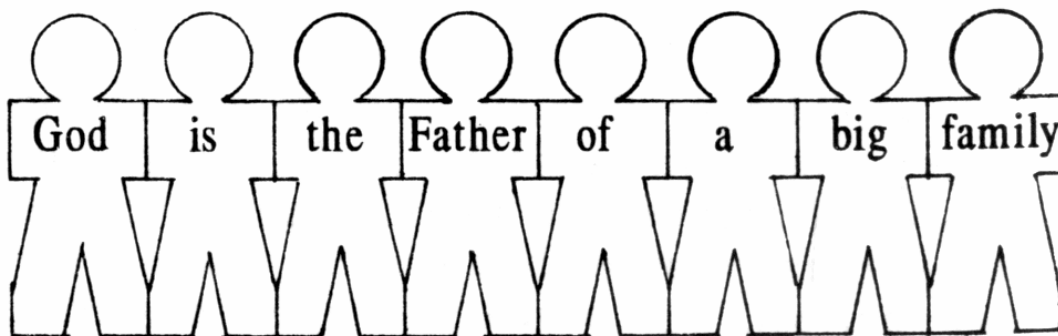
Being together with other members of God's family is called fellowship.

Quiz

How many smaller words can you make using the letters from the word FELLOWSHIP.

Art/Craft

Fold paper in a pleated fashion to make joined cut-outs.



God is Love 4.4

Subtheme

God is a loving Father

Focus

As parents expect obedience from their children, so God expects obedience from His children.

Bible references

Jonah 1-3 Father God protected and disciplined Jonah.

Luke 2:41-52; Luke 4:1-13 Jesus obeyed His Heavenly Father.

Psalm 103:13 God is a Father to us.

Songs

God Loves You (*All Creation Sings*)

Jonah and the Whale (*All Creation Sings*)

My Dad (*Sing A Joyful Song*)

Revision

Who are God's children?

When we choose to become a friend of Jesus we also have a special relationship with the Heavenly Father. We become His child.

Discussion

What do parents expect from their children? (Our Heavenly Father expects these things of His children as well.)

What could be the right response in the following situations...?

- a) Dad gives Danny some pocket money for helping with jobs around the house.
- b) Mum asks Danny to look after little sister while Mum is talking on the phone.
- c) Dad comes home to the family after being away at work all day.
- d) Mum asks Danny to pick up his toys.

Answers: a) thankfulness b) responsibility c) love and appreciation d) obedience

Bible revision

Look at examples from the Bible which show how Jesus was obedient to His Heavenly Father.

Jesus as a Boy (Luke 2:41-52)

Jesus obeyed His Heavenly Father (Luke 4:1-13)

How did Jesus set an example for us?

Story 2: The story of Jonah

Jonah 1; Jonah 2:10; Jonah 3 Did Jonah obey his Heavenly Father? What happened?

Something to think about

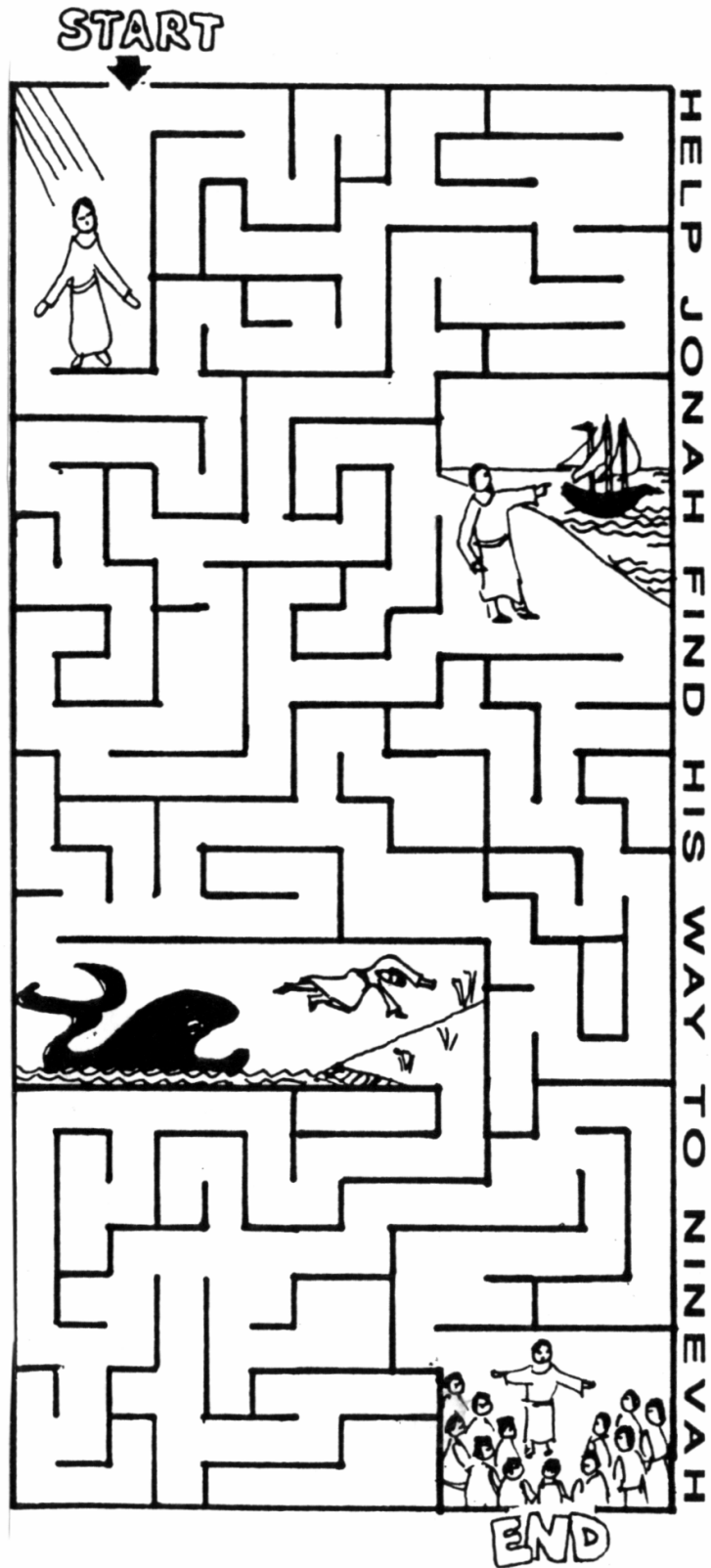
How can we obey our Heavenly Father?

In what ways can we disobey?

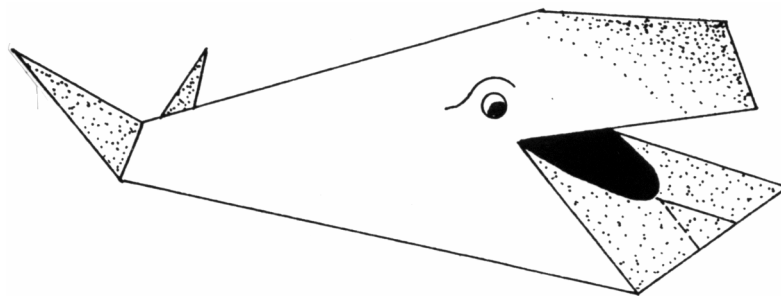
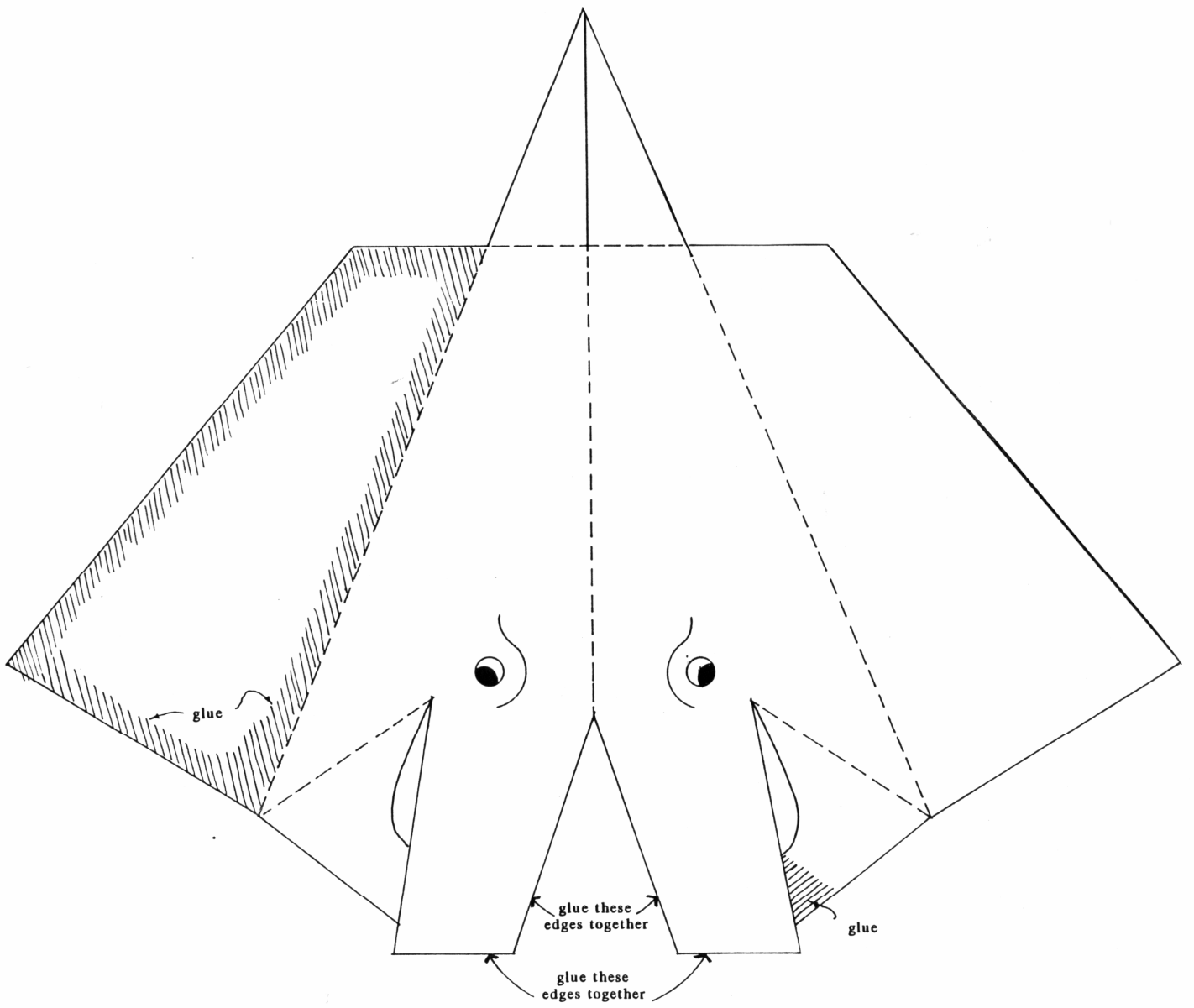
How can God show us when we are doing the wrong thing?

Puzzle

Help Jonah find his way to Ninevah.



Make a paper whale.



God is Wise

Level 4 (age 8)

Subtheme

God's wisdom is better than being rich.

*Go to the ant...consider her ways and be wise.
Proverbs 6:6 (KJV)*



Integrated topics for Christian Education

Wise use of money; banking; consumer education

Other

- civil laws
- environmental responsibility; recycling; wise use of environment
- safety
- stranger danger
- money; banking; shopping
- planning for the future; careers
- biographies of those who relied on God for guidance and wisdom
- technology; inventions (God's wisdom given to man)
- journeys/exploration: people who relied on God's wisdom and guidance
- preparation for outdoor activities e.g. hiking, orienteering
- preparation for disasters: taking precautions
- preparation for seasonal weather conditions
- wise choices and decisions: choosing friends; drugs and alcohol

Character Development *(See Jesus First)*

- wisdom
- obedience

Christian Life

Our response to *God is Wise*

- acknowledging that God knows more than we do
- allowing Him to be in charge of our life

God is Wise 4.1

Subtheme

God's wisdom is better than being rich.

Focus

Having Jesus in our life is far more important than having an abundance of material possessions.

Bible references

1 Kings 3:1-15 King Solomon asks for wisdom.

1 Kings 3:16-28 Solomon makes a wise decision.

Proverbs 4 The value of wisdom.

Proverbs 16:16 How much better it is to get wisdom than gold.

Songs

Jesus Show us the Way (*Sing A Joyful Song*)

He's Wiser (*All Creation Sings*)

Come and Listen (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

Definition

What is wisdom?

Wisdom is knowing the right thing to do, and doing it.

Story: The Wisdom of Solomon

Do you know the story of David and Goliath? When David grew up he became king of Israel. David's youngest son was called Solomon. The Lord chose Solomon to be the new king when David died.

It was Solomon's responsibility to organise the building of the Lord's house. It would be a special building where people could come together to worship God. When Solomon was crowned king, he promised that he would always keep the Lord's commandments. After he was crowned, Solomon and the people went up to a place called Gibeon, to give thanks to God. While they were there, God spoke to Solomon.

Read 1 Kings 3:4-14

What happened at Gibeon?

Solomon needed wisdom, because as king he had a lot of responsibility, and had to make a lot of decisions. He needed special wisdom in organizing the building of the temple. Solomon wrote many wise sayings. We can read them in a book called Proverbs.

There was a time when Solomon showed great wisdom in sorting out a quarrel between two women. The two women came to Solomon. One had a baby in her arms. The other woman wanted the baby. The woman without the baby started to explain, "I gave birth to a baby, and three days later, this woman had a baby also. But she lay on the baby while she was sleeping and the baby died. She came to my house and stole my baby. Now she says that the baby is hers."

"No!" cried the woman with the baby. "You are lying. The dead baby is yours and the living baby is mine."

How was Solomon to know who the real mother of the baby was? God gave him wisdom.

"Bring me a sword," said Solomon. "I will divide the baby in two."
(Solomon didn't really intend to harm the baby, but the women thought he was serious.)

"No!" cried the woman without the baby. Let this woman have the baby! Don't kill him!"

King Solomon now knew who the real mother was.

"Give the baby to this woman," said the king. "She is the mother."

Soon all of Israel knew of Solomon's wisdom. God gave him wisdom because he chose God above everything else. He could have chosen to be the richest man in the world, but instead he chose to have the wisdom of God.

Discussion

Why is it important to have wisdom?

How can we become wise?

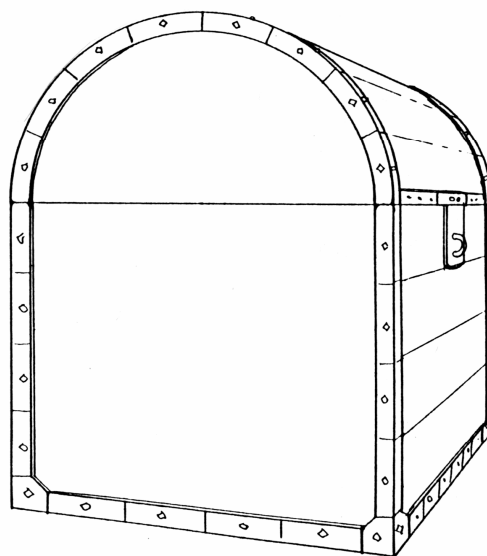
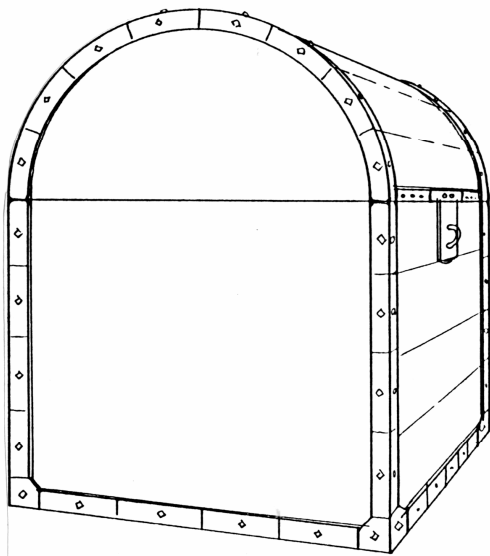
Here are some ideas:

- Ask God for wisdom.
- Listen to what God has to say.
- Act responsibly, even when we don't feel like it.
- Listen to parents and others who are wiser than ourselves.

Art/Craft

Read Matthew 6:19-21

In the first treasure chest, draw some different kinds of treasure that people may like to store up. In the second treasure chest, draw what might happen to this treasure.



Puzzle

Solve the picture puzzle to find out the very best treasure to store up.



God is Wise 4.2

Subtheme

God's wisdom is better than being rich

Focus

The danger of loving money and possessions more than God

Bible references

Matthew 19:16-30 The rich young ruler chose money above God.

Matthew 6:19-21 God is more important than money.

Matthew 6:33 Seek first God's kingdom.

1 Timothy 6:10 The love of money.

Songs

He's Wiser (*All Creation Sings*)

Jesus Show us the Way (*Sing A Joyful Song*)

Come and Listen (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

Story 1: Scrooge

This is an old story from England.

It was one week before Christmas.

"How can I afford Christmas presents for my children this year," sighed Jerry Thomas as he worked away in the office.

He looked at the time. Five o'clock and still another hour to go. The Christmas rush had meant that Jerry needed to work over-time every night now, and for no extra pay.

Mr. Scrooge, the boss, had not given Jerry a pay rise in two years. On the little money he received, Jerry could barely afford to buy food for his large family. The children were often in need of food and clothes. Then there were the bills to be paid.

Jerry would have changed to another job if it were possible, but both he and Mr. Scrooge knew that in such difficult times jobs were scarce.

"Maybe I could ask Mr. Scrooge for a pay rise," thought Jerry. "After all, it is Christmas."

Jerry took a deep breath as he walked to Mr. Scrooge's office and knocked at the door.

"Yes, come in," said a gruff voice. "Well, what do you want, Thomas! Didn't I tell you that everyone in this office works until six o'clock up until Christmas Eve?"

"Yes, I know sir," replied Jerry timidly. "But I was just wondering whether I could have a pay rise. After all, it is Christmas, and I haven't had a pay rise in two years. Please sir, I have a large family to provide for. I won't be able to afford any presents for them this year."

"How dare you!" shouted Mr. Scrooge. "Get back to your work at once. A pay rise is out of the question."

Jerry walked home that night with a heavy heart, knowing that there would be no Christmas presents this year, and certainly no special Christmas dinner.

Christmas Eve arrived, and Mr. Scrooge closed the office at six o'clock. He felt excited as he thought about the huge Christmas dinner his wife would be preparing. Then there was the Christmas tree with all the expensive decorations, and the presents! He could hardly wait for Christmas day. He went to bed feeling very happy indeed.

During the night Mr. Scrooge had a dream. In the dream he saw himself at the office.

"No pay rises this year!" he heard himself say.

Then his dream took himself to the home of Jerry Thomas. He saw the children sitting around a table eating a Christmas lunch of bread and soup. Some of the children were still hungry, but there was no more food. There were no new toys for the children and no fancy decorations.

Then Mr. Scrooge heard a voice. It was the voice of his conscience.

"You think you are very wise, Mr. Scrooge. You have a very profitable business and you have everything you could possibly want. But your money is worth nothing. You only think of yourself. The more you have, the more you want, and you don't care how you get it. Can you really enjoy this Christmas, Mr. Scrooge?" said the voice of his conscience.

Mr. Scrooge woke up with a start. It was six o'clock in the morning.

"Yes, there is still time," he thought to himself.

He grabbed some of the expensive presents he had put aside for his nephews and nieces. There were plenty to spare. He packaged up some food that had been prepared for his own Christmas table.

Jerry Thomas awoke to the sound of the door bell. He opened the door but there was no one there. He looked down and his eyes fell upon a large box wrapped in Christmas paper. On the box was a note signed, Mr. Scrooge.

Adapted from "A Christmas Carol"

Discussion

At the beginning of the story, what were the most important things in life for Mr. Scrooge?

What does God say is the most important thing? (Matthew 6:33)

What made Mr. Scrooge change?

Story 2: A Rich Young Man's Question.

Read the story from Matthew 19:16-24.

Discussion

Did Jesus really mean that if you have a lot of money you can't get into heaven?

What is the real problem? (Ans: loving money and things more than God.)

What does 1Timothy 6:10 say about loving money?

The rich young ruler's problem was not really his money, but the fact that he loved it more than anything or anyone else... even God. Children do not usually have a lot of money, but wanting THINGS can be the same.

Art/Craft

Find a wise saying from Proverbs. Write the saying on a bookmark and decorate it.

God is Protector

Level 4 (age 8)

Subtheme

God rescues His people and protects them from sickness.

The name of the Lord is a strong tower. The righteous run into it and are safe. Proverbs 18:10



Integrated topics for Christian Education

Human Biology:

- * Protection mechanisms of the human body.
- * White blood cells, clotting mechanisms of the blood.
- * Immunisation, hygiene and protection against bacteria.

Other

- family
- shelter: history of buildings;
- protection services e.g. police; firemen
- castles ;fortresses; armour and weapons; the armour of God.
- sea voyages, ships and lighthouses
- environmental protection: saving animals on the verge of extinction
- animal defence mechanisms; camouflage

Character Development (See *Jesus First*)

- security
- courage

Christian Life

Our response to *God is Protector*

- trusting in God as Father
- feeling safe and secure in His care

God is Protector 4.1

Subtheme

God rescues His people and protects them from sickness

Focus

Because of Adam and Eve's original disobedience, sin and suffering entered the world. However, protection and healing are available to those who trust God.

Bible references

Genesis 3 Sin enters the world.

Exodus 7-11 God's strategy for the rescue

Deuteronomy 7:12,15; Exodus 15:26 "If you pay attention to my commandments, I will put none of these diseases upon you. I am the Lord who heals you."

Songs

Out of Egypt (*All Creation Sings*)

Adam and Eve (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

Discussion

What happened to God's beautiful world after Adam and Eve sinned?

Did sickness and suffering exist in the world when God first made it?

The fact that people suffer from pain, hunger, sickness and sadness makes God sad too. It was not God's original plan. God loves everyone He made and wants them to be happy.

Story: God prepares for the rescue

In the Old Testament we read about a special group of people who trusted God. They were the Israelites. They suffered terribly because they were slaves to the cruel Egyptian Pharaoh. God saw how His people were suffering and decided on a special plan to rescue them. It was not easy. It would take time, as the Pharaoh's heart was very hard. He was determined to keep the Israelites as slaves.

God decided that the person to be in charge of the rescue plan was Moses. You may remember that Moses was the baby who was found in the bulrushes by the Pharaoh's daughter. He was brought up in the Pharaoh's palace. When he grew up, God showed him that he was an Israelite, and not an Egyptian. Moses knew that God's special power was upon him for the dangerous and very important task of setting the Israelites free from Egyptian rule.

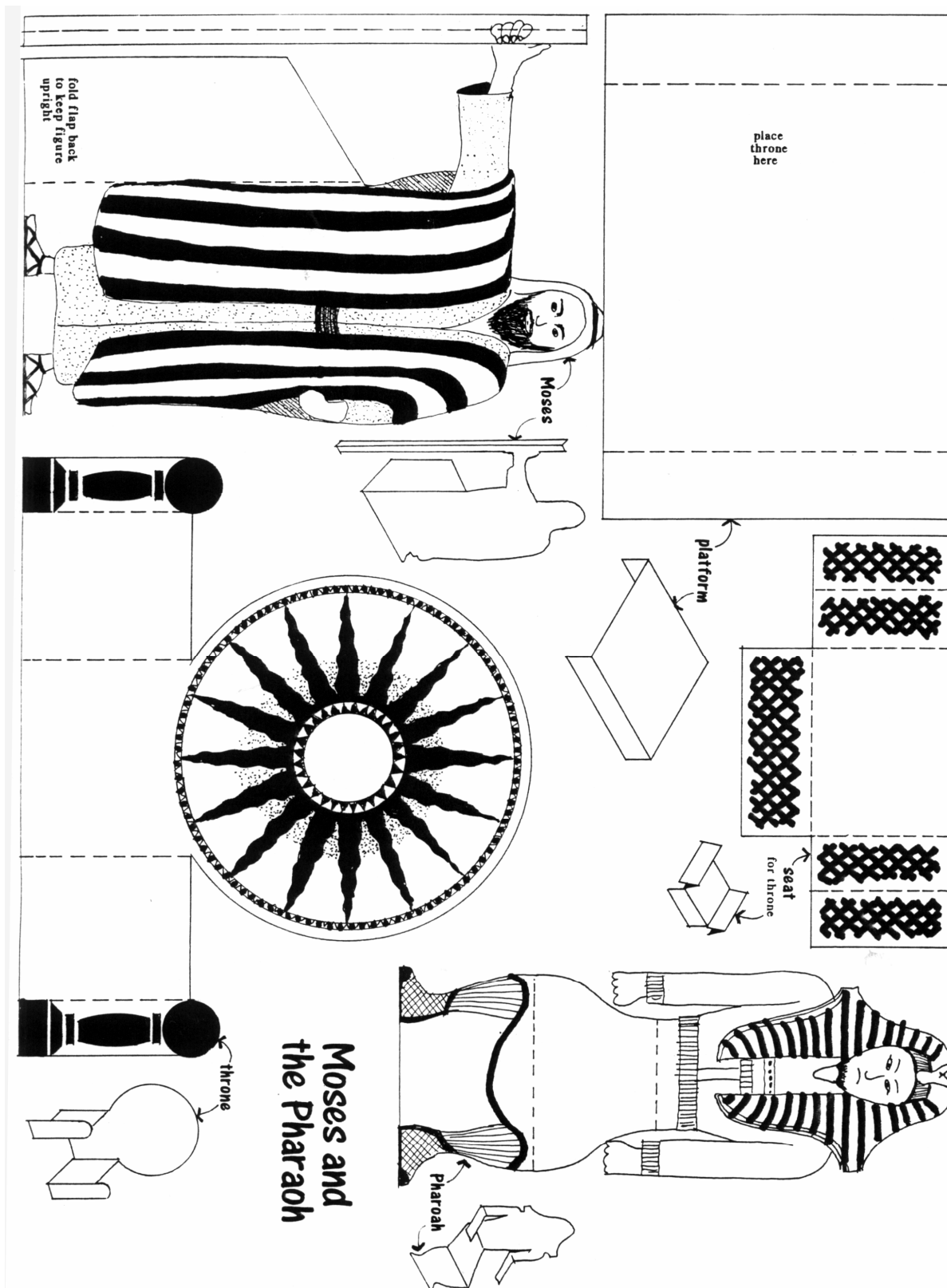
Again and again Moses went to the Pharaoh and said, "God says 'Let my people go'". Each time the Pharaoh said, "No!" and his heart became more and more hardened. The Israelites worked day after day making bricks for the Egyptians. If they did not work hard enough they were whipped. The Israelites cried to God to save them but the Pharaoh would not change his mind. There was now only one thing God could do. That was to send plagues and disasters to Egypt to show the Pharaoh that God was very serious about the release of the Israelites. Sending disaster to Egypt would be the only thing that would make the Pharaoh agree to letting God's people go. In fact, God had to send ten different disasters to Egypt before the Pharaoh would finally let the Israelites go.

Bible Research : Make a list of the ten disasters.

DISASTER 1 Exodus 7:14-18; DISASTER 2 Exodus 7:25; 8:1-4; 8:13-14; DISASTER 3 Exodus 8:16-19; DISASTER 4 Exodus 8:20-24; DISASTER 5 Exodus 9:1-7; DISASTER 6 Exodus 9:8-12; DISASTER 7 Exodus 9:13-26; DISASTER 8 Exodus 10:3-6; DISASTER 9 Exodus 10:21-23; DISASTER 10 Exodus 11:1-5.

Art/Craft

Make a cardboard model of Moses and the Pharaoh.



God is Protector 4.2

Subtheme

God rescues His people and protects them from sickness

Focus

God rescues those who put their trust in Him.

Bible references

Exodus 9-11 God's strategy for the rescue

Psalm 91 No plague shall come near your dwelling.

Exodus 12 The escape.

Songs

Out of Egypt (*All Creation Sings*)

A Great Big Dad (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

I Don't Have to Worry (*Sing A Joyful Song*)

Story: The Escape

God told Moses that the tenth disaster would be the final one. After this the Israelites were to escape. God told Moses exactly how the people were to prepare for the escape. Moses gathered the people together.

"Tonight we are leaving Egypt," he said. "Tonight at midnight, God will send the angel of death into Egypt. The oldest child in every family will die. However God will protect all the Israelite children. Every family must kill a lamb. Use the blood to make a sign on the doorposts of your houses. The blood should be placed down the side posts and across the top. Then when the angel of death goes through Egypt he will pass by your door and your oldest child will be safe."

The angel of death passed through Egypt at midnight, exactly as God had said, but the Israelite children were protected.

Then Pharaoh sent word to Moses, "Go. Leave Egypt! Take your children and your animals with you."

So God's people left Egypt that night. God went with them to show them the way back to their own land.

Art/Craft

Illustrate one of the plagues of Egypt, OR, draw the Israelites with all their animals and belongings leaving Egypt.

Puzzle

There are six words missing from this message. Use the words below to complete the message from Psalm 91.

GOD HAS _____ HIS _____ IN _____ OF YOU. THEY WILL _____ OVER YOU _____ YOU _____.

Missing words: ANGELS, WHEREVER, GO, PUT, CHARGE, WATCH.

God is Protector 4.3

Subtheme

God rescues His people and protects them from sickness

Focus

God has a rescue plan for all people.

Bible references

Exodus 14 God protects His people again. He opens the Red Sea.

John 3:16 God's rescue plan for us

Songs

Out of Egypt (*All Creation Sings*)

What a Mighty God (*All Creation Sings*)

I Don't Have to Worry (*Sing A Joyful Song*)

Story: God Rescues His People Again

The Pharaoh was sorry he had let the Israelites go. Even though God had sent ten disasters, Pharaoh had not learnt his lesson. He called his soldiers together.

"Get ready!" he commanded. "Take your horses and chariots and go after the Israelites. Bring them back to Egypt."

The Israelites were a big group. With their children and animals and all their goods they could only move slowly. It did not take long for Pharaoh's army to catch up. The Israelites saw them coming, and were terribly afraid. But Moses trusted God.

What did he say to the Israelites? (Exodus 14:13)

God had been leading the Israelites by a big cloud. God was in the cloud. Suddenly the big cloud was behind God's people. The sky became black over the Egyptians, but over the Israelites it was bright daylight.

Find out how God protected the Israelites from the Egyptians. (Exodus 14:21-31)

Discussion: God's protection and rescue plan

How does God protect His people today?

Can you think of a time when He has protected you?

What sort of things does God need to protect us from?

When should we remember to ask God for protection?

We have seen through the Exodus story that God had a rescue plan for His children. However God is not just concerned about the Israelites. He has a rescue plan for all people. When people became separated from God through sin in the Garden of Eden, God needed to make a rescue plan so that all people could once again be friends with God. God's rescue plan was to send Jesus. Because of Jesus we can be forgiven for the wrong things we do and become friends with God. Find out what John 3:16 says about God's rescue plan.

Art/Craft

Using drawing materials, collage or paint, depict the crossing of the Red Sea. (The Good News Bible is a good source of ideas for illustrations)

God is Powerful

Level 4 (age 8)

Subtheme

God's power is greater than any other power.

The Lord rules... greater than the roar of the oceans, more powerful than the waves of the sea. Psalm 93:4 (GNB)



Integrated topics for Christian Education

God's greatness revealed in the creation: Landforms - mountains, glaciers, volcanoes.

Other

- God's power seen in the creation: Force and energy; machines; tools; toys; transport.
- electricity magnetism
- steam power; hydroelectric power
- solar system: expresses the greatness of God
- change: chemical reactions
- weather: powerful forces seen in storms; hurricanes
- transport; flight: utilizing the power forces in the Creation
- God's power to do miracles

Character Development *(See Jesus First)*

- faith
- surrender to a powerful God

Christian Life

- expecting to witness God's supernatural power in our lives
- allowing the Holy Spirit to work supernaturally through us
- relying on God's power and not our own strength

God is Powerful 4.1

Subtheme

God's power is the greatest

Focus

God is more powerful than men.

Bible references

Exodus 7-14 God set the Israelites free.

Luke 4:18 Jesus came to set the prisoners free.

Proverbs 21:1 The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord.

Songs

Out of Egypt (*All Creation Sings*)

God is Greater (*All Creation Sings*)

What a Mighty God (*All Creation Sings*)

Story: Out of Egypt

Make a summary of the Exodus story. Using a large sheet of paper, write down the main points and place them in correct sequence.

Discussion

Why did Pharaoh finally let the Israelites go free?

Was it because Moses was a very powerful man, or was it because of God's power?

What does this show us about God being in control of nations?

What does Proverbs 21:1 say about this?

The Israelites were prisoners of the Egyptians, but God set them free. What does Luke 4:18 say about setting prisoners free?

What kind of prisoners can Jesus set free by His power?

Art/Craft

Using a long sheet of paper, work as a group to illustrate in sequence, the main events of the Exodus. Write captions for each picture and make a wall story.



God is Powerful 4.2

Subtheme

God's power is the greatest

Focus

God is more powerful than men.

Bible references

Judges 6-8 God used Gideon to set the Israelites free from the Midianites.

Psalm 66:1-7 God's power over nations.

Songs

God is Greater (*All Creation Sings*)

What a Mighty God (*All Creation Sings*)

God is Wonderful (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

Story

Part A The Midianites rule Israel

Read Judges 6:1-10.

What kind of people were the Midianites? (verse 2)

What happened to Israel because of the Midianites? (verses 4-6)

What did the Lord send when the Israelites called to the Lord for help? (verse 8)

Why had God allowed the Midianites to rule over the Israelites? (verse 10)

Part B God chooses Gideon to set the Israelites free

One day a man called Gideon was threshing his father's wheat to make flour. While he was working, an angel said, "God is with you Gideon. God is going to help his people now, and he wants you to be the leader."

"But I'm only a poor farmer," said Gideon.

The angel said, "God will be with you to help you."

Gideon was afraid to be leader. He asked God to give him a special sign to assure him that He really would be with him.

That night, he placed a sheep's fleece on the ground. He said to God, "If you really want me to save Israel, make the fleece wet by the morning."

In the morning the fleece was wet with dew, even though the ground around it was dry. This was the sign that Gideon needed. He knew that God had chosen him for a special job. He was chosen to save God's people from the cruel Midianites.

Part C The Midianites defeated

Gideon couldn't fight the Midianites by himself. He needed an army. Soon he had 32,000 volunteers. But God said, "That's too many. Send home all those who are afraid." That only left 10, 000 men.

God said, "That's still too many. Take the men to the river to drink. Send home all those who get down on their knees to drink. Keep only those who lay down on their stomachs and lap up the water with their tongues."

(When a soldier lies on his stomach to drink, his eyes can still watch out for the enemy.)

That only left 300 men.

Read how Gideon and his army defeated the Midianites. (Judges 7:16-22)

Discussion

God rescued the Israelites from the Midianites because the Israelites worshipped the true God. The Midianites worshipped false gods.

The Israelites however, started to become disobedient. They started to worship false gods too. This is why God allowed the Midianites to rule over the Israelites for a while.

When God chose to set his people free, He wanted the people to know that it was through God's power that they were set free... not their own. When Gideon looked at the size of his army compared with the Midianite army, he was afraid. There were thousands of Midianites. Gideon's army was only 300 men.

God wanted it this way. He wanted to show that the battle was won through His power.

It seemed impossible for Gideon's army to win, but God is more powerful than men. God told Gideon what to do. The Midianites were so confused by all the noise that they thought they had lost the battle. They ran away in fright.

Many people today have big battles. Not battles against armies, but battles against things like fear, sickness and sadness. Maybe there are problems which seem impossible to solve. If we do have a problem, and we belong to God's family, then God will fight the battle for us. God can win the battle for us even when things seem impossible. God can do anything if we have faith in Him. He is more powerful than anyone.

What does Psalm 66:3-7 say about God's power?

Art/Craft

Complete the following. Cut out the two sections and make them into a book.

In Gideon's army
there were _____
hundred men.

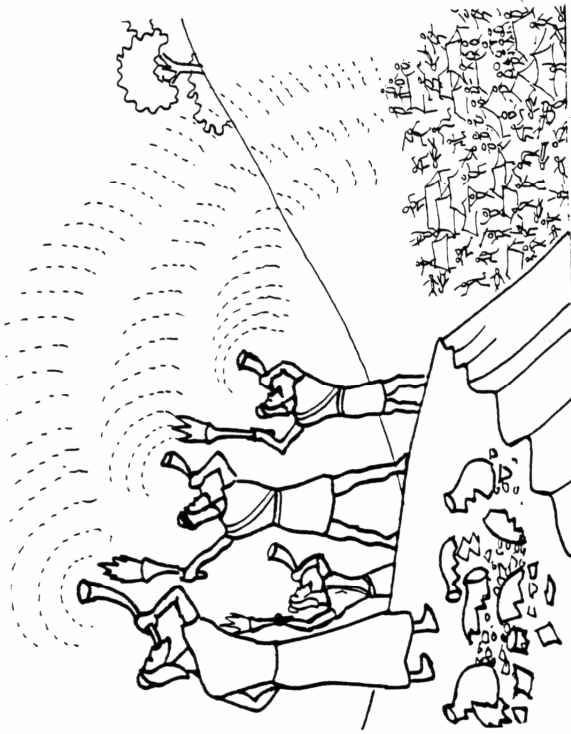
In the Midianite army
there were _____
of men.

page 2

This story shows us
that God is more

powerful
than any problem.

page 4

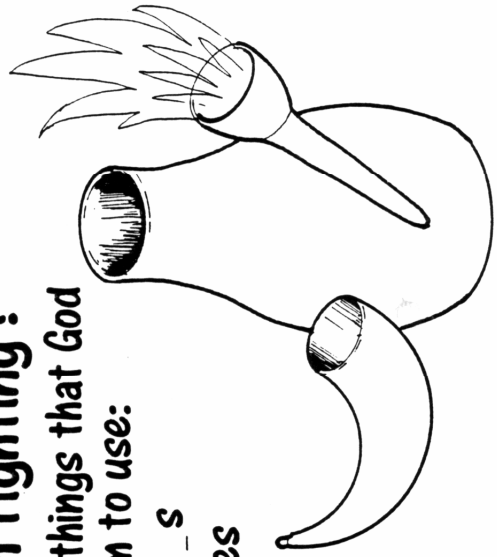


page 1

**Gideon's army won without
even fighting!**

Name 3 things that God
told them to use:

t _ _ s
t _ _ es
j _ _ s



page 3

God is Powerful 4.3

Subtheme

God's power is the greatest

Focus

God has power over Satan.

Bible references

Luke 9:37-43 A boy troubled by an evil spirit.

Psalm 29:1-4 God's power over everything.

1 John 3:8 Jesus came not destroy the works of the devil.

Isaiah 14:12-15 The fall of Lucifer

Revelation 20:10 Satan destroyed

Songs

God is Greater (*All Creation Sings*)

What A Mighty God (*All Creation Sings*)

Introduction

When God created the world, He did not create the evil being that we know as Satan. Instead He created a beautiful angel called Lucifer. Lucifer was an angel of light. Originally Lucifer was a good angel, but one day he decided he wanted to be greater than God. Some other angels joined him in a battle in Heaven...a battle against good and evil. Lucifer and the other wicked angels had to be thrown out of Heaven to a place of darkness. Lucifer became known as Satan, and from that day on has kept up his evil works and his fight against God.

Discussion

How do we see the works of Satan and his wicked angels in the world today?

Satan not only tempts people to do wicked things, but also causes people to suffer. There is a story in the Bible about a boy who was suffering terribly because of the work of a bad angel, but Jesus set the boy free from Satan's power.

Story: Jesus heals a sick boy

Read the story from Luke 9:37-43.

Discussion

Why was Jesus able to set the boy free?

Jesus is far more powerful than Satan. When Jesus died on the cross he defeated Satan's work. Satan had planned to keep people from knowing God, but through Jesus' death, we can be forgiven for all the wrong things we do and become a child of God.

Satan is still at work in the world. He still tries to stop people from knowing God, and he still causes pain and suffering, but God has promised that one day he will be destroyed. (Revelation 20:10)

When we know Jesus as our friend, God promises to fight for us against the power of Satan.

Why did Jesus come to earth?

Find out the answer from 1 John 3:18

God is Truth

Level 4 (age 8)

Subtheme

God's word is a sure foundation.

Live a life that measures up to the standard God set when He called you. Ephesians 4:1 (GNB)



Integrated topics for Christian Education

Rocks: classification, identification, strength and durability, uses. (Build your life on the Rock!)

Other

- friendship: faithfulness, truthfulness and honesty
- discovering truth through the scientific method
- scientists who discovered the truth: eg. Galileo who discovered the truth about the solar system; pendulums
- testing properties of matter to determine whether a substance is real or substitute
- literature studies: fact or fantasy?
- discovering the truth through archaeology
- creation science: scientists who seek the truth and gather evidence to show that the universe is not millions of years old.
- the media and advertising; consumer education: honesty/dishonesty in advertising and packaging; deception through advertising; customer surveys; testing performance of products.

Character Development (See *Jesus First*)

- honesty
- discernment

Christian Life

- believing God's Word
- obeying God's Word

God is Truth 4.1

Subtheme

God's word is a sure foundation

Focus

Knowing Jesus is the most important thing in life.

Bible references

Matthew 7:24-27 The house on the rock.

John 14:6 Jesus, the way, the truth, the life

Songs

The House on the Rock (*All Creation Sings*)

Whatever is Good (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

Come and Listen (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

Introduction

Make a collection of rocks, sand and soils. Discuss the way in which soils are made.

Can some rocks be made from soil?

Can some soils be made from rocks?

Consider the qualities of rocks.

Some are hard, some are soft, some are rough or smooth.

Consider different uses for rocks.

Rocks can be used for building houses, floors, fences; for making roads and driveways. Very soft rocks, like limestone can be used for writing with.

If you were going to build a house, would you choose to build it on limestone or something harder?

Building foundations are usually made from concrete. If the house has wooden foundations, then the ground beneath must be very hard and stable, or you could end up with a building like the leaning tower of Pisa.

Story: The House on the Rock

Read the story from Matthew 7:24-27.

Discussion

How can we make Jesus the foundation of our life?

When Jesus IS the foundation of our life, we always stand up for the truth, and nothing will move us from the truth.

In the story, the houses faced storms. In every-day life certain troubles may come our way. These may seem like storms.

Think of some examples of troubles that could come into a person's life.

If Jesus is not the foundation, these troubles could cause people's faith in God to crash. Some people might say, 'If God is really there, then He would not have allowed this to happen.' However, people who have Jesus as their closest friend find that instead of blaming God for troubles, they depend more and more on Him when things get difficult.

Art/Craft

Make a model of the House on the Rock story.

Puzzle

Build a house from these bricks.



God is Truth 4.2

Subtheme

God's word is a sure foundation

Focus

Commitment to the truth

Bible references

Mark 4:1-8 The Sower

Ephesians 3:17 Christ in our hearts

Philippians 3:16 Following the example of truth

Songs

The House on the Rock (*All Creation Sings*)

Whatever is Good (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

Come and Listen (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

Introduction

Show some different kinds of seeds.

What would we do if we wanted these seeds to sprout?

What would we need?

What kind of soil would be best for planting the seeds...fine and soft...or hard and rocky?

Story: The sower and the seed

Read the story from Mark 4:1-8 and Mark 4:14-20.

OR use the following story.

There was once a farmer who wanted to grow some wheat. He took his bag of seed and started to throw it here, there and everywhere. He didn't plant each little seed carefully in the ground as you may do with peas or beans. That would take too long. He just threw the seed all around the field.

Well I'm sure you can guess what happened. Not all of the seed landed in the nicely ploughed soil. There was a little breeze blowing that day. Some of the seeds blew away and fell on to the road. That was no place for seeds to grow. It was far too hard, and the seeds would be trampled under people's feet. Besides that, the birds flying above could see the seeds lying there on the road so they would quickly swoop down and eat the seeds.

Some of the seeds blew away and fell on hard stones beside the road. The seeds would never have a chance to grow there. There was no soft soil for sending their roots down, and who would water them?

In one corner of the field was a thistle patch. Some of the seeds blew across there too. Very soon the thistles decided that they didn't want any little seeds growing in their patch. As the seeds tried to grow, the thistles took all the water from them, and then finally grew up so tall that the little plants couldn't get any sunshine.

Meanwhile, the seeds that fell on the fine ploughed soil sprouted. As the farmer watered them and the sun shone on them, the little seeds grew into beautiful heads of golden wheat. But the seeds that fell on the road, the rocks and among thistles just didn't grow at all.

Jesus told that story because He wanted people to understand their own hearts. When our hearts are ready to accept Jesus, God's word can be sown in our hearts and we will receive it with joy. As we learn more about Jesus and choose to love and obey Him, it is like sun shining into our hearts.

Some people however do not want to accept Jesus. Their hearts are hard, just like the road or the rocks in the story. There are still other people who say, "Yes, I want to be a Christian," but later they see their friends who are not living for Jesus. They forget about Jesus and go with their friends. Their hearts are like the soil where the thistles grew. The soil is soft enough, but other things get in the way. Jesus wants us to have hearts that will receive His words and never turn away from them.

Discussion

Discuss the representation of the four soil types.

1. The person who hears what the Bible has to say, but is tempted by Satan to forget about it. This person turns their back on Jesus. (*the roadside*)
2. The person who hears the message of the Bible and is so happy to accept it. This person decides to be a follower of Jesus. However, when difficult times come they decide they no longer want to be a Christian. This is a bit like a person who built his house on the sand. (*the rocky soil*)
3. The person who hears the message and lets other things like money or personal interests become more important than God. (*the thorny ground*)
4. The person who hears the word of God, obeys God and remains with the truth. (*the good soil*)

Puzzle

If our hearts are to be like the good soil then we need to _____ God's word and _____ it. Then _____ and produce _____.

(Find the missing words from Mark 4:20)

Art/Craft

Decorate a terracotta pot or a paper cup with painted designs. When dry, fill it with some good fine soil and plant some seeds. Water them and watch them sprout.

For comparison, other pots could be prepared containing different types of soil. e.g. rocky, sandy, full of weeds. How well do seeds grow in these pots?

Alternative activity

Make a model of the four soil types in a sand tray. Make labels for the soil types.

Act it out

You will need a narrator, and children to represent:

- seeds which fall upon 4 different kinds of soil
- the sun
- the rain
- the wind

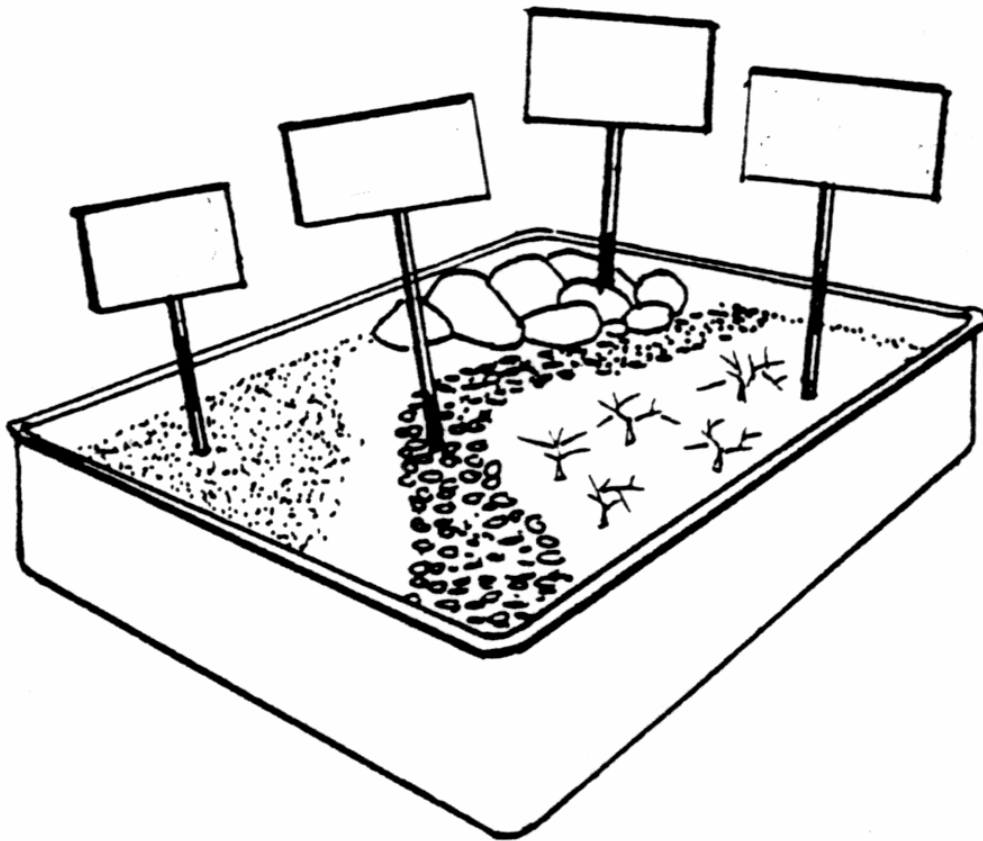
The 'seeds' take their places in four designated areas (good soil, stony path, rocky ground and thorny ground). 'Seeds' curl up into small balls. They gradually open up as they are visited by 'sun' and 'rain'.

Narrator:

Once a farmer planted some seed. Some fell on the good soil. Some on the stony path, some on the rocky ground and some on the thorny ground. The rain watered the seeds. The sun shone. The seeds began to sprout. Soon the little seeds grew into tall plants. The sun shone hotter and hotter. *(Wipe brow)* The rain fell. *(Open hands to sky)* The wind blew. *(Sway)* One by one the little plants withered and wilted...all except the plants with their roots deeply planted in the good soil. These plants continued to grow tall and strong.

Art/craft

Make a model or draw a picture of the four different types of ground the seed fell upon. Write the names of the soil types.



God is Truth 4.3

Subtheme

God's word is a sure foundation.

Focus

The importance of God's word

Bible references

Proverbs 30:5-6 The word of God is truth.

Psalms 12:6 God's word is pure.

Psalms 119:9-11 Obey God's word.

Psalms 119:105 God's word is a lamp to our feet.

Ephesians 6:17 God's word is a sword.

Songs

The House on the Rock (*All Creation Sings*)

Whatever is Good (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

Come and Listen (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

Discussion

Why is the Bible different to other books?

How do we know the Bible is true?

Why did God give the Bible to us?

Why is it important for everyone in the world to have the opportunity of reading the Bible?

Can you think of missionaries who have helped to make this possible? (e.g. Bible translators, Bible smugglers).

Story: Mary Jones and her Bible

Mary Jones was a girl who lived in Wales more than 200 years ago. If you look at a map of Great Britain you will find Wales next to England. In those days the people of Wales didn't speak English. They only spoke their own language, Welsh.

Mary started school when she was nine years old and soon became a very good reader. At school there was a big Bible written in Welsh. One day she was asked by the teacher to read aloud from the Bible. Mary was excited. She loved the Bible stories and was now able to read them for herself.

She told her parents about her opportunity to read the Bible at school, but at the same time felt sad that there was no Bible at home. Her family was poor and could not afford to buy a Bible.

Mary decided that she would save up to buy one, no matter how long it took. Mary worked hard. She collected fire wood and helped her neighbours with cleaning and baby-sitting. Every job earned her a few pennies. Finally, after six years she had enough money.

Mary was fifteen now. She knew of a man who sold Bibles in a village 40 kilometres away. Mary decided to go to see this man.

"How will you get there?" asked her parents.

"I'll walk," said Mary. "I know I can walk that far."

"We will pray that God will keep you safe," said her parents.

Mary had only one pair of shoes. She knew that she couldn't afford them to wear out, so she decided to walk barefoot. It was rough and stony. Mary's feet became sore but she pressed on. Finally she arrived at the village.

"Can you direct me to the house of Mr. Charles?" she asked a friendly minister. The minister took her to the home of Mr. Charles.

"I'm so sorry, Mary," said Mr. Charles, "but I only have one Bible left and I have already promised that to a friend."

Mary started to cry. Mr. Charles felt sad too.

"Mary," he said, "I will let you have the Bible. My friend can have an English Bible while I am waiting to get some more."

Mary's tearful face quickly changed to a happy one.

The next day she started the long journey home with her Bible under her arm. After some days she arrived home. How happy her parents were to see her. God had protected Mary and helped her to get the Bible. Now they too could read the Bible.

Meanwhile Mr. Charles thought of Mary's eagerness to own a Bible.

"I'm sure there are others who would like to have their own Bibles as well," he thought. Mr. Charles went to London, and with a friend started working to produce Bibles for the many people who needed them. This involved translating and printing. It was his aim that one day there would be enough Bibles for the whole world. The work started by Mr. Charles in 1804 later became known as the British and Foreign Bible Society.

This story has been used by permission of the Bible Society.

Activity

Make a list of Bible verses that can be helpful in different situations.

God's word can help me when I am:

angry.....James 1:19-20

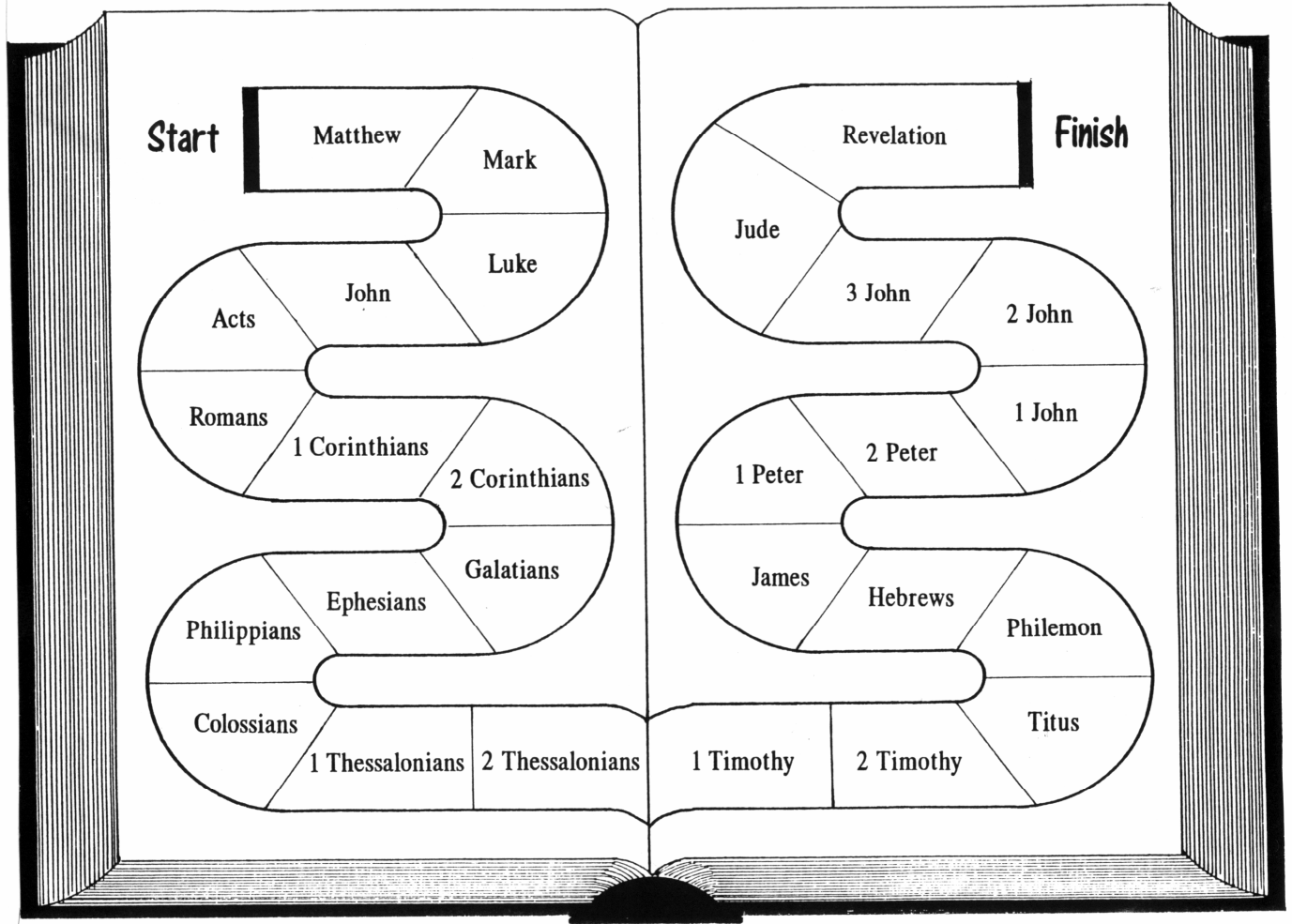
sad.....2 Corinthians 1:3-5

afraid.....Psalm 27:1

feeling selfish...Galatians 6:2-3

tempted.....Ephesians 6:10-11

Game: Books of the New Testament This is a dice game for 2-4 players. When you have finished the game, try to say the books of the New Testament in correct order, without looking!



God is Pure

Level 4 (age 8)

Subtheme

The battle of light and darkness; the defeat of Satan

Wash me and I will be whiter than snow.
Psalm 51:7



Related topics for Christian schools

The purity of Heaven: A study of the precious stones and metals contained in the Holy City (Revelation 21); crystals; refining of gold and silver.

Other

- cleaning in the home
- water (symbol of purity)
- light (symbol of purity)
- purity in relationships: loving and forgiving
- the fall of the perfect creation; environmental pollution

Character Development *(See Jesus First)*

- honesty
- goodness
- respect
- responsibility

Christian Life

- living as Jesus wants us to live
- putting into practice the words of Jesus
- having a clean heart

God is Pure 4.1

Subtheme

The battle of light and darkness; the defeat of Satan

Focus

The contrast between the works of darkness and the works of light

Bible References

Genesis 3 Satan enters the world.

John 3:16 Satan defeated at the cross

Revelation 20:7-10 The final defeat of Satan

1 John 1:5-7 The symbolism of light and darkness; God's light casts out all evil.

Ephesians 5:8-11 Live as children of light.

Songs

White as Snowflakes (*All Creation Sings*)

Adam and Eve (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

Whatever is Good (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

More Like Jesus (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

Story: The angel of light

Long ago, before the world was created, there lived a beautiful creature named Lucifer. The Father and the Son had created Lucifer along with many other beautiful creatures, but now they wished they had never made him. Lucifer had joined with some of the other creatures in a special plot to overthrow the Father and Son.

Lucifer declared war, and there was a battle in Heaven. The evil forces, however, could not win the battle. God's power proved to be greater than any evil power! Lucifer, along with his army of evil angels, was thrown to a place of outer-darkness where they would live forever.

Meanwhile, the Father and Son decided to create a beautiful planet called earth, which would be home for man and woman. The man and woman were created to be friends with the Father and Son. However, someone in outer-darkness was watching. Once again he would try to destroy the power of the Father and the Son. He would try to make the man and woman obey him instead of their Creator.

Would the man and woman stand up to the test? Would they obey Lucifer or their Creator? To the Father's dismay, the man and woman chose to obey Lucifer. The Father was filled with sadness. There was now only one thing to do. The Son would have to be sent to earth to live amongst the people. He would become a man and later die. By doing this, the power of Lucifer would be broken, and once again the man and the woman could be friends with the Father. In order to be friends with the Father, the people would first have to accept the Son and ask Him for forgiveness.

Many did accept the Son, and for them, the power of Lucifer was broken. They were set free from their sadness, and were no longer persuaded by the evil one. They became children of God. Lucifer would sometimes try to make them return to following him, but as they continued to trust God they found the strength to resist the temptation of the evil one.

Although they still had to battle against evil, they knew that for them, the battle had been won. They now had the love of God in their hearts and knew that they would be God's children forever. They knew from reading God's special book, which they had a place

prepared for them in a beautiful city called Heaven. The book also told them that one day the work of Lucifer would be completely finished and he would be destroyed forever.

Bible research

Read about the final defeat of Satan (Revelation 20:10)

Read about the children of darkness and the children of light from 1 John 1:5-7 and Ephesians 5:8-11. Make a list of opposites, contrasting light and darkness.

Write the lists on separate sides of the paper. Outline one side in black and the other side in yellow.



God is Pure 4.2

Subtheme

The battle of light and darkness; the defeat of Satan

Focus

The purity of Heaven

Bible References

Revelation 21:23; 22:5; Isaiah 60:19 There is no sun or moon in Heaven and yet no darkness. God is the light.

Revelation 22:3 The throne of God

Revelation 22:6-9 Angels

Revelation 21:4 No sickness, sadness, crying, pain or dying

Revelation 21:8,27 No sin in Heaven

John 14:2-3 Many mansions

Revelation 21:2,9-21 A holy city made of pure gold with gates of pearls; foundations of precious jewels.

Revelation 21:21 Streets of gold

James 1:12; Revelation 3:21 A crown of life

Revelation 20:15; 21:27 The book of life

Revelation 22:2 & 14 Tree of life

Revelation 22:1 The river of life

Revelation 7:9 People from every nation wearing white robes and waving palm branches

Revelation 20:10 The final defeat of Satan

Visual Aids

Gemstones / coloured stones/ coloured stones in jewellery; or pictures of gemstones

Story: Heaven

Heaven will be a beautiful place. It will be far more beautiful than any place here on earth. The book that tells us most about Heaven is the very last book of the Bible called Revelation.

What will make Heaven such a beautiful place? Firstly, it will look beautiful. Do you like gold and precious jewels? Well, Heaven is full of these. There is a city in Heaven called the Holy City. The whole city shines like a precious stone. In fact it is made of crystal. The city is as clear as glass and so are the walls around it. The foundation stones upon which the city is built are precious stones that we have here on earth. They are jasper, sapphire, agate, emerald, onyx, carnelian, yellow quartz, beryl, topaz, chalcedony, turquoise and amethyst. The streets of the city are made from pure gold. Nothing impure is allowed into the city. That is why only the purest of metals and precious stones are used.

Another reason for Heaven being such a beautiful place is that there is no sickness, sadness, crying, pain or dying there. These things were brought into our world when Satan had his way in the Garden of Eden. However God has promised that Satan will one day be destroyed forever. He will be thrown into a lake of fire. None of his evil works will be allowed into Heaven. Just as everything used in the building of the city is pure, so are the people in it. God will take away all sin from people's lives if they have asked for forgiveness. There won't be any need for police in Heaven. You might think that all those precious jewels and the gold might get stolen. However, there is no risk of that happening. No one wants to lie, kill or steal, because those who live in Heaven are true followers of Jesus.

The Bible calls the people who live in Heaven 'the saints'. They are people who have had their names written in the book of life. The good thing is that any one can have their name written in the book of life if they truly want to be a follower of Jesus. Even people who have done really bad things on this earth can go to Heaven. If they decide to change, and to ask Jesus for forgiveness, then God will accept them. However, they must decide to become a follower of Jesus sometime during their life on earth.

There is a tree of life and a river of life in Heaven too. The river has pure water that sparkles as crystal. It's refreshing water gives life to everyone who lives there. Near the river is a tree that gives fruit twelve times a year.

No one will need to sleep in Heaven because no one ever gets tired. It's just as well because there's no darkness. It's just beautiful daylight all the time. However, the sun does not make the light. Because God is light, He will be the light for us in Heaven.

God will sit on a beautiful throne in Heaven because He will be king. There will be angels in Heaven too. They are God's special messengers. However, we are more important to God than even the angels. We were created to love and praise Him, and in Heaven we will just love spending time with God, telling Him how much we love Him.

Discussion

What things will NOT be in Heaven?

Who will be in Heaven?

What is the Holy City like?

What is it made of?

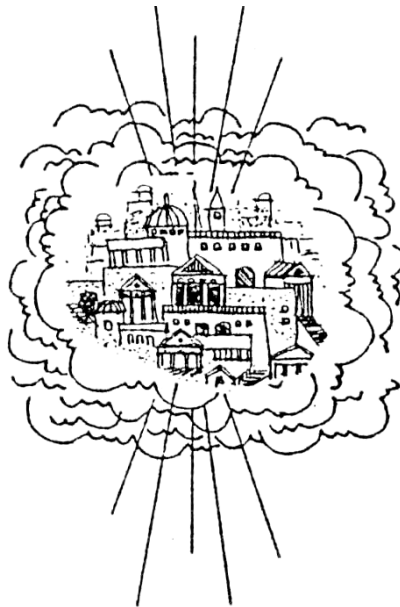
What colours are the jewels? (Use a book of gemstones or encyclopaedia to find out.)

What will God be sitting on?

Why do you think the book of life, the tree of life and the river of life are needed in Heaven?

Art/Craft and Bible research

Look up some of the verses that tell us about Heaven. Build up a picture in your mind of what Heaven will be like. Put these ideas together in a large group mural. Use bright sparkling materials such as fluorescent paint or markers, gold/silver foil, glitter and sequins.



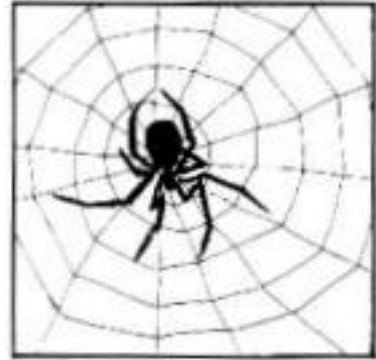
God is Patient

Level 4 (age 8)

Subtheme

It takes patience to do things properly

Be patient with everyone. 1 Thessalonians 5:14 (GNB)



Integrated Topics for Christian education

Patience displayed by animals in home building. e.g. spiders.

Hobbies requiring patience, e.g. jigsaws; stamp collecting; playing a musical instrument; various crafts.

Occupations; works of art/ architecture requiring patience, e.g. Sistine chapel ceiling by Michelangelo

Other

- waiting for seeds to grow
- measuring time
- listening to others patiently
- listening, sound and the ear
- patience with people
- patience with the elderly or disabled
- tolerance
- life 100 years ago or more: patience in doing tasks manually.
- lifestyle of pioneers and early settlers
- development of technology

Character Development (See *Jesus First*)

- patience
- diligence
- self-control

Christian Life

- being patient with others
- having self-control
- waiting for God to answer prayer

God is Patient 4.1

Subtheme

It takes patience to do things properly

Focus

Diligence

Bible References

Acts 9:36-42 Dorcas showed diligence in sewing.

Genesis 6:14-16 Noah showed patience and diligence in building the ark.

Hebrews 6:10-12 Diligence in helping others.

Proverbs 31:10-29 The diligent wife.

Songs

Waiting Patiently (*All Creation Sings*)

Hare and Tortoise (*All Creation Sings*)

Discussion

Have you ever wanted to be really good at something? Maybe you would love to be able to play a musical instrument well, or to be a ballet dancer, or even an Olympic gymnast. People who are good at difficult things can only become successful with lots of practice. They need to listen to their instructor carefully with concentration, and then do exactly as the instructor says. It is important to keep trying and not give up, even when things seem difficult.

Activity

Take a survey. Find out how many in your group are learning to do something that requires particular skill. It might be gymnastics, sport, ballet, or learning a musical instrument. Record the information on a chart. Find out about practice routines. Is practicing always easy?

Working hard at something is being diligent. If we really want to do well at something then we must be diligent. Diligence is the opposite to being lazy.

What kinds of distractions could make it difficult to be diligent in these situations:

- doing homework
- training for athletics
- practising a musical instrument
- keeping your room tidy
- doing jobs for Mum

The Bible speaks about two women who were very diligent in what they did. One was Dorcas who was very diligent in making clothes for the poor.

Sewing is a job that requires a lot of patience and diligence.

In Bible times there were no sewing machines. Imagine how much patience you would need to make an entire garment by hand. Dorcas never gave up. She kept working because she knew that God wanted her to serve Him in this way.

One day something very special happened to Dorcas. Find out about it in Acts 9:36-43.

Another person who showed diligence was Noah. Think about the size of the ark. What a huge job for one man! God wanted Noah to be very exact in how he built the ark. Noah didn't

just throw it together. He made it exactly according to the plans that God had given him. He took time to find special materials and also took time in making exact measurements. Read about it in Genesis 6:14-16.

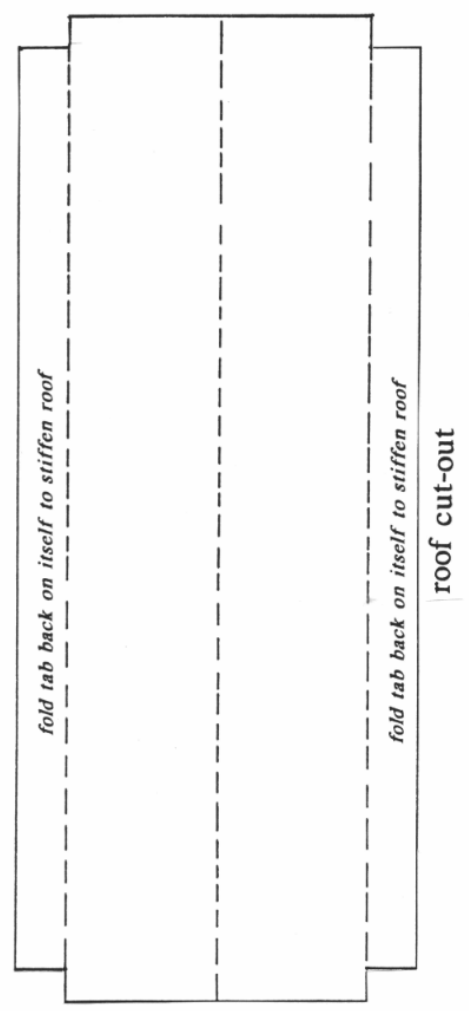
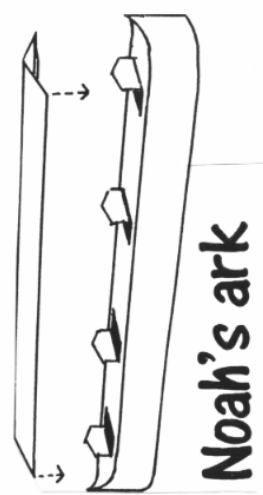
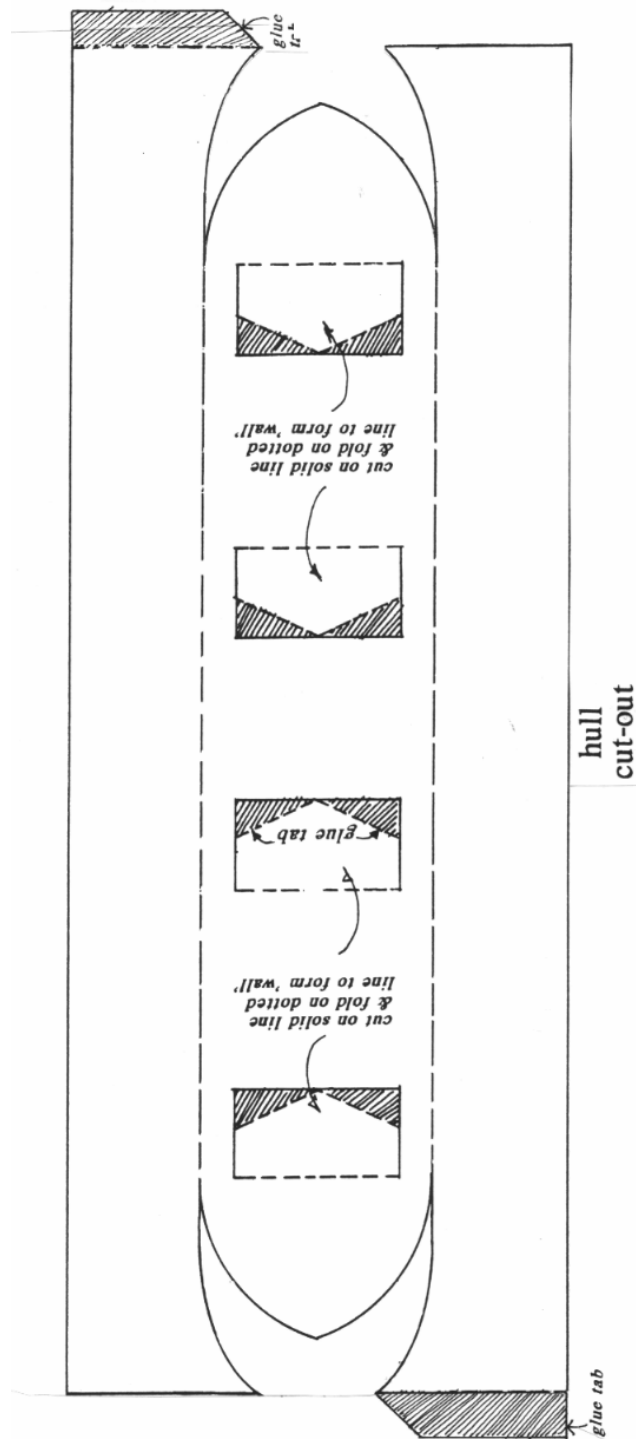
God wants us all to be diligent in doing good things. That means working at something even when we don't feel like it. It means finishing something we start, even if we are not so excited about it any more.

Art/Craft

Choose a project to work on for the next two weeks. Maybe you can make a gift for someone as Dorcas did. Remember to be diligent about it. You may need to take some time to work on it at home. Make sure you choose something that requires diligence, and make sure that you finish it!

Here are some suggestions...

- a mosaic wall hanging. *Outline a shape and then fill it in with tiny pieces of coloured paper, crushed dyed egg shells or other material.*
- a fabric table mat. *Decorate it with stitching.*
- a Noah's ark made from cardboard
- a collage made from seeds and other natural materials
- weaving on a shoe box loom



God is Patient 4.2

Subtheme

It takes patience to do things properly

Focus

Diligence

Bible References

Proverbs 20:13; 2 Thessalonians 3:10 Warning against laziness

Matthew 25:1-13 The ten girls and their lamps; diligence in our faith in Jesus.

Songs

Waiting Patiently (*All Creation Sings*)

Hare and Tortoise (*All Creation Sings*)

Discussion

Revise the meaning of 'diligence'. Look at diligence required by:

a) artists and craftsmen, e.g. Michelangelo's work on the Sistine Chapel ceiling

b) farmers

Farmers need to get up early, especially if they have animals to feed or milk. When crops need harvesting, or hay needs to be brought in from the paddocks, the work must be done as quickly as possible before the crops spoil.

Read what these verses say about working hard:

Proverbs 20:13 and 2 Thessalonians 3:10.

Story 1: The Little Red Hen

Once upon a time there was a little red hen who wanted to make a loaf of bread, but she had no flour.

"I shall grow some wheat," she said.

The little red hen asked her chicks to help her.

"First we must plant the wheat," she said.

The little red hen asked the other farmyard animals to help too.

"Who will help to plant the wheat?" she asked.

"Not I," said the dog.

"Not I," said the cat.

"Not I," said the mouse.

So the little red hen and her chicks planted the wheat by themselves.

The wheat grew, and the heads turned to golden brown.

"We must harvest the wheat," said the little red hen to her chicks. "Then we must collect the grain and put it into sacks."

"Who will help me harvest the wheat?" the little red hen asked the other farm animals.

"Not I," said the dog.

"Not I," said the cat.

"Not I," said the mouse.

So the little red hen and her chicks harvested the wheat and put the grain into sacks all by themselves.

"Now we must take the sacks of wheat to the mill to be ground into flour." said the little red hen. "Who will help me?" she asked the other animals.

"Not I," said the dog.

"Not I," said the cat.

"Not I," said the mouse.

So the little red hen and her chicks took the wheat to the mill and brought back the freshly ground flour.

"Now it is time to make the bread," said the little red hen.

"Who will help me knead the dough?" she asked.

"Not I," said the dog.

"Not I," said the cat.

"Not I," said the mouse.

So the little red hen and her chicks made the bread by themselves. Soon some hot brown loaves were taken out of the oven. They smelled delicious.

"Who will help me eat the bread?" the little red hen asked.

"I will," said the cat.

"I will," said the dog.

"I will," said the mouse.

"Oh no," said the little red hen. "You wouldn't help me to plant the wheat, or to harvest the wheat, or to put the grain into sacks, or to take the sacks to the mill, or to knead the dough. My chicks and I will eat the bread all by ourselves. And they did.

Traditional

* This is a good story for dramatization, or to retell by making a story book.

Story 2: The ten girls and their lamps

Jesus told a story about being diligent. It was not about diligently working to grow food, but it was about being a diligent follower of Jesus. You can read the story in Matthew 25:1-13.

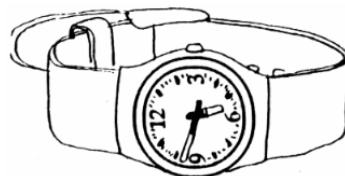
WHY is it important to be a diligent follower of Jesus?

HOW can we be diligent follower?

(Ans: Reading the Bible, praying, meeting with others who know Jesus)

Puzzle

Work out this message found in Mark 13:33.



....and....

p + sting _ _ _ .

God is a Servant

Level 4 (age 8)

Subtheme

Jesus, the humble servant

Let love cause you to serve one another. Galatians 5:13 (GNB)



Integrated topics for Christian Education

- Biographies of people who have served.
- Serving with our talents.
- Ways in which technology serves us.; use of technology for spreading the gospel.

Other

- serving in the home
- people who serve in the community
- medical profession
- animals that serve man
- communications
- serving with time and talents
- occupations
- pioneers and explorers who sacrificed and endured
- missionaries

Character Development (See *Jesus First*)

- helpfulness
- humility
- sacrifice

Christian Life

- serving God and others with humility
- giving up time and energy to help others

God is a Servant 4.1

Subtheme

Jesus, the humble servant

Focus

The life of Jesus was an example of humility.

Bible references

Luke 2 Jesus was not born in a palace but in a stable.

Matthew 3:13-17 The baptism of Jesus

John 13:3-5 Jesus washed the disciples' feet.

Songs

A Servant for Jesus (*All Creation Sings*)

What Can I Give/Jesus Take my Hands (*Sing a Joyful Song*)

More Like Jesus (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

Discussion

In the land of Israel, about 2000 years ago, some people knew that it was the time for a new king to be born. They knew because they had studied the Scriptures and followed the stars. The three wise men were looking for this new king. Other people were waiting for his coming as well. Many people expected Jesus to be the new ruler of Israel. Perhaps they thought that He would make a better king than Herod. However, no one expected the new King to be born in a stable!

Although many people were excited about having a new king, for many, Jesus was not the type of king they were expecting. He didn't have a royal throne or a gold crown. He didn't have a king's robe and He didn't give orders.

The people didn't understand that Jesus was the king of Heaven. Jesus could have had a throne and a crown had he wanted to. He could have been the king of Israel, but instead, He chose to be an ordinary person. He didn't choose to give orders, although He could have. Instead He chose to serve people.

How did Jesus serve people?

Make a list of ways in which Jesus served others.

Bible Research

Read Matthew 3:13-17.

Being baptized shows people that you are willing to say sorry and turn away from your sins.

Jesus didn't need to do this because He had never sinned.

Why do you think He did it anyway?

Read John 13:3-5

Why do you think Jesus washed the feet of His friends?

Read John 13:6-8

Why do you think Peter didn't want his feet washed?

As the Son of God, Jesus didn't have to wash feet, but He wanted to give us an example to follow. He wanted to show us that we should always be willing to serve others.

Think of ways in which you can serve others.

Perhaps there are jobs at home you could do, even though you don't really have to. Wouldn't your family get a surprise if you did some extra jobs! That would really be an example of serving.

Activities

Draw four pictures which show that Jesus was humble.

1. Born in a stable.
2. Baptized by John.
3. He healed and helped people.
4. He washed the disciples' feet.

Play reading or puppet play: Who's the best?

Number of characters: 2

Props: fishing line (stick and string)

For puppet theatre: taped it to platform of puppet theatre and let string hang over edge.

John is fishing with a fishing line. Along comes Dan

Dan

Hello John. Caught any fish today?

John

No.

Dan

Did you know that last Saturday I caught seven fish? And the week before I caught nine?

John

Really?

Dan

Yes. You've got to know how to exactly the right bait to use, and the right time of day. And you have to be really quiet.

John

Really?

Dan

I'm very experienced with fishing and I learned all about it from my Dad.

John

Really?

Dan

I don't think you would have much hope of getting anything. You're not experienced enough.

John

Really? Oooh! What's that on my line? Oh it's a big, big fish!

Dan

Not as big as the ones I caught last week.

John

Mum will be really pleased with this. We'll have it for dinner.

Dan

Can I come?

John

No. There won't be enough for you. See you later.

Philippians 2:3 Don't do anything from selfish ambition, or from a desire to boast, but be humble towards one another, always considering others better than yourself.

God is a Servant 4.2

Subtheme

Jesus, the humble servant

Focus

What is humility?

Bible references

Luke 18:9-14 The rich man and the tax collector.

Matthew 18:1-4 The humility of a little child

Song: Willie Wonder (*All Creation Sings*)

Listen to the song and discuss the lyrics.

How did Willie Wonder act? Why didn't his friends like him? How does God want us to act?

Story 1: The Rich Man and the Tax Collector

Read the story from Luke 18:9-14.

What was the rich man's problem?

How does it compare with Willie Wonder?

Story 2: The Fisherman's Wife

This is an old folk tale about a lady who lived with her husband in an old shack. They were very poor. One day the husband went fishing and caught a large fish. To his surprise, the fish spoke.

"Please, Mr. Fisherman, let me go, for I am not really a fish but a prince."

So the fisherman let the fish go. When he went home, he told his wife about the fish, and she exclaimed, "Why didn't you ask for anything first? Surely this fish could have granted you a wish. Go back and catch the fish again. Tell the fish that I am tired of living in this old shack. I want to live in a house."

So the fisherman went back to the sea and caught the fish again. He asked the fish to grant his wife's wish.

"Alright," said the fish. "Your wish is granted. Just let me go again."

When the fisherman returned home he found his wife living in a lovely house. But she soon became tired of the house.

"Go back and catch the fish again," she said. Tell him I'm tired of living in this house. I want a mansion."

So the fisherman went back to the sea and caught the fish again. He told the fish that his wife now wanted a mansion.

"Your wish is granted," said the fish. "Just let me go."

When the fisherman returned, he found his wife living in a mansion, but she soon became tired of it.

"I want to be a queen and live in a palace," she said.

Once more the fish granted her wish. But soon she became tired of being queen.

"Go back to the fish," she said to her husband, and tell him that I want to be God so that I can rule the world."

The fisherman went back to the sea. He caught the fish again and told him of his wife's request.

"Go home," said the fish, "and you will find your wife living in the old shack."

Of course, this story is only make-believe, but it does show us the danger of desiring to be too great, or more important than everyone else.

Traditional tale from Grimm brothers

Discussion

What does Jesus say about being great? Read Matthew 18:1-4

Jesus does not think that we are better people if we wear beautiful clothes, or if we have an important position. He looks at our heart. He wants to know whether we have a proud heart like the Pharisee, or whether we have a humble heart. If we have a humble heart, we won't think that we know everything. We will always be willing to learn. We will listen to what others have to say.

Think of a little child. Perhaps the child is two years old. She doesn't know very much. She is always exploring. She wants to learn about everything. Soon she will be asking questions and saying 'why' quite a lot.

God wants us to be like that little child. He wants us to be ready to learn and to ask questions about Himself, about Jesus and the Bible. A little child needs help with lots of things. She has to depend on her parents. God wants us to depend on Him just like that little child. He wants us to ask Him for help.

Act it out:

Dramatize one of these:

- Willie Wonder
- The Righteous Pharisee
- The Fisherman's Wife

Puzzle

Put these words in numerical order and find out what Jesus has to say about being humble.

**LITTLE (16) THE (1) ONE (9) LIKE (14) IS (7)
CHILD (17)GREATEST (2) HUMBLE (13) THE (8)
PERSON (3) A (15) HIMSELF (12) PERSON (3)
MAKES (11) IN (4) KINGDOM (6) GOD'S (5)**

God is a Servant 4.3

Subtheme

Jesus, the humble servant

Focus

To be great in God's kingdom you must become a servant.

Bible references

Matthew 20:20-28; Mark 10:35-45 A servant of all
Luke 14:7-11 Don't make yourself important

Songs

Jesus You are my King (*Sing A Joyful Song*)
A Servant for Jesus (*All Creation Sings*)
What Can I Give?/Jesus take my Hands (*Sing A Joyful Song*)
More Like Jesus (*Couldn't be Finer*)

Introduction

Think of some ways in which we can help others.
(Some members of the group can mime helping activities. Others can guess what they are miming.)

Bible research

What is a servant?
Read Matthew 20:26b.
What did Jesus mean when He told His disciples to be servants?
Read Matthew 20:28
How did Jesus give us an example of serving?

Story 1: Don't make yourself important

Read the story from Luke 14:7-11.
What point was Jesus trying to make in this story? (verse 11)

Story 2: Good King Wenceslas

This is a true story of a king of olden days in the European country of Czechoslovakia. This king chose to serve others even though he had a very important position.

One cold, snowy day, about Christmas time, King Wenceslas looked out of his window and saw deep snow all about. The moon was shining brightly, and he could see someone slowly walking along. It was a poor man in old clothes. The king saw that the man was stooping down to collect fire wood, but the wood was wet from being buried under the snow.

"That will not make a good fire," thought the king.
The king had a page boy. He was a sort of junior servant. The king called for the page boy.

"Do you know this man?" asked the king.
"Yes," said the boy. "He and his family live up on the hill."
"Then help me to take some things to his family," said the king.

The king gathered up some of his own good fire wood, and also packed some roast beef. The two set off in the bitterly cold wind. The king went first, carrying the wood, and the page

boy followed, carrying the meat. The sky grew darker and the wind blew harder. The page boy found that he could hardly walk because the snow was so deep. When he put his feet into the snow he could hardly pull them out again.

"I can't go on," he said to the king.

"Never mind, boy," said the king. "Just watch my footsteps. Walk directly behind me and place your feet in my footprints."

So at last they made it to the poor man's house. When the poor man arrived home with his wet fire wood, to his surprise, he found a fire blazing and a good Christmas dinner of roast beef waiting for him.

(A traditional story)

Jesus was the greatest king that ever lived. But He was also the greatest servant that ever lived. He served the people around Him by healing, teaching and loving them. He gave up His home and family to go travelling with His friends, telling everyone about the kingdom of God. Like the young page boy in the story, we can walk in the footprints of our King Jesus. When we have troubles in life, Jesus is there to help us. He says to us, "Walk in my footprints."

Think...

Which of these things will make a person greatest in God's kingdom?

- Having beautiful clothes.
- Being rich.
- Being an important person in the church.
- Telling God, "I'm sorry."
- Telling God that you need Him.
- Being really clever.
- Admitting that you have a lot to learn.
- Being a good runner.
- Being kind.
- Being humble.
- Knowing Jesus.

Puzzle

Who said this? (Mark 10:44)

Children can make the puzzle on the next page and give it to another person put together again.

If	you	want	to
be	great	in	
God's	kingdom		
then	you	must	be
a	servant	of	all

God is Life

Level 4 (age 8)

Subtheme

God is a living person

*No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.
John 3:3 (GNB)*



Integrated Topics for Christian Education

Growing things, e.g. wheat, vegetables, flowers

Other

- ecosystems
- Requirements for life-support: air; food; water
- animal life
- the cycle of life from birth to old age
- requirements for life: air, water
- desert survival
- joy in life: celebrations and cultural festivals

Character Development *(See Jesus First)*

- joy
- enthusiasm

Christian Life

- receiving God's gift of eternal life
- accepting Jesus as Lord and Saviour
- knowing the joy that Jesus gives

God is Life 4.1

Subtheme

God is a living person

Focus

A new start.

Bible references

John 12:24 The life that comes from the death of a grain of wheat.

John 17:3 The meaning of eternal life.

2 Corinthians 5:17 We are made new in Christ.

Songs

Welcome Jesus (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

He is Alive (*All Creation Sings*)

Let's Celebrate (*Sing A Joyful Song*)

Introduction

Look closely at some grains of wheat.

Are the seeds dead or alive?

In one sense the seeds are not alive because they are no longer attached to a living plant. However, within each small seed is the potential for new life. If the seed is used for making flour it will not produce new life, but if it is planted in the ground, with enough sunshine and water, it will produce a new plant.

Read what Jesus said in John 12:24.

Story: The story of Granny Smith

This is a true story from Australia.

Granny stirred the pot on the stove, singing quietly to herself as she worked.

"Autumn is my favourite time of year," she thought. "There's always so much to do... berries to pick, apple pies to make, and of course, crab apple jam."

"That should be enough cooking," she said, as she removed a very large pot of crab apple jam from the stove. Granny then proceeded to fill two dozen crystal clear jars with the beautiful red crab apple jam.

"Now for the labelling," she said.

On each of the jars Granny proudly placed her own personal label...

GRANNY MARIA ANN SMITH

CRAB APPLE JAM

4th April 1902

Of course there was now the cleaning up to be done. Granny gathered up the scraps. She put these in the barrel with the remains of the crab apples.

"All good for compost," said Granny. "Nothing to be wasted."

Granny threw the contents of the barrel on to the compost heap and continued cleaning up.

Months went by...

Granny gave no more thought to the crab apples. However, when Spring arrived, Granny noticed a small seedling growing out of the compost heap.

"Looks to be a small apple tree," she said, "just in the place where I threw those crab apples last Autumn."

Granny carefully transferred the seedling to some good soil in a protected part of the garden. As years went by, Granny watched the tiny seedling develop into a fine apple tree. Then one Summer she noticed some small green apples on the tree. By Autumn they had grown into large green apples, quite unlike any she had ever seen.

The story of Granny Smith is a true one. The large green apples were the delicious Granny Smith apples which are now world famous. The discovery of the new variety of apples near Sydney many years ago is something for which all Australians are very grateful. The story reminds us too that something good can come from something that looks useless. Just as new life can come from a seed that is thrown away, Jesus can give new life to people.

God said that all people need a new start. Every person needs to put their old life behind them and make a new start with Jesus. Jesus can forgive us for everything. The new life that Jesus gives us is the beginning of living forever. The Bible calls it eternal life.

Find out what John 17:3 says about eternal life.

Discussion

What is the difference between 'knowing' God, and knowing about Him?
We can get to 'know' God because He is a living person.

Retell the story

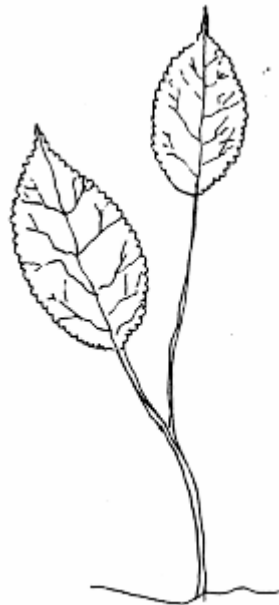
Use the pictures on the following page to retell the story.

Activity

Plant some wheat seeds on cotton wool and watch them grow.

Art/Craft

Make a collage using all different kinds of seeds. Bird seed is good for this.



God is Life 4.2

Subtheme

God is a living person

Focus

Knowing God and growing in relationship with Jesus.

Bible references

John 12:24 The grain of wheat.

Mark 4:1-8 The Sower

John 15:1-11 The Vine

Focus

Knowing God and growing in Jesus.

Songs

He is Alive (*All Creation Sings*)

Welcome Jesus (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

Ask, Seek, Knock (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

Introduction

Observe the progress of planted seeds. Look for sprouts.

Revise the principle of John 12:24. That is, the need for the grain of wheat to die in order to bring forth new life.

Jesus told the disciples about the grain of wheat so that they would understand what was soon to happen. Jesus himself would have to die, but from that death would come new life. Jesus himself would come alive again, but as well as that, His death would mean new life for millions of people.

How could Jesus' death give new life to others?

Revision

We could look at these seeds and say that new life begins when the seed sprouts. This is a bit like when we hear God's word and accept it. (*Refer to the story of the Sower.*)

The seeds we planted will continue to grow into plants. This is because we will make sure they have enough water and sunshine. If we are to continue to grow as Christians, then we need to have certain things to help us. We need to hear what God has to say to us in the Bible. We need to be with other Christians. We need to spend time talking to Jesus in prayer. We can talk to Jesus any time, about anything. As we do these things, we will grow to love Jesus more and more.

Bible research

Read John 15:5,7 & 8. These verses tell us about growing as Christians.

Try to find a picture of a grape vine. The main part of the vine, with its roots going down into the soil represents Jesus. The branches represent Christians. The only way that a Christian can grow is by staying attached to Jesus. We need Him to give us life.

What kind of fruit should Christians produce? (Galatians 5:22-23)

Art/Craft

Using brown, green and purple paper, make a collage of a grape vine. Beneath your picture write: *Jesus is the vine and we are the branches.*



JESUS
*is the vine,
we are the branches*

God is Provider

Level 4 (age 8)

Subtheme

God is a caring provider.

I have provided all kinds of grains and all kinds of fruits for you to eat. Genesis 1:29 (GNB)



Integrated Topics for Christian Education

Fibres and fabrics: classifying; identifying; testing properties; crafts; history and design of clothing.

Other

- Food: buying food; preparing food; kitchen chemistry; heat
- plants
- forestry
- animal husbandry
- fishing industry
- third world food shortage
- technology
- rainforests; ecosystems

Character Development *(See Jesus First)*

- trust
- faith
- thankfulness
- generosity

Christian Life

- trusting God as Father
- thanking God for His provision

God is Provider 4.1

Subtheme

God is a caring provider

Focus

God cares and provides for His children as a shepherd cares and provides for his sheep.

Bible references

John 10:1-18 The Good Shepherd.

Psalm 23 The Lord is my shepherd.

Isaiah 40:1 He feeds His flock like a shepherd.

Songs

God is a Provider (*All Creation Sings*)

God Loves You (*All Creation Sings*)

The Good Shepherd (*Sing a Joyful Song*)

Thankyou for All the Good things (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

Introduction

In the land where Jesus lived, people were very familiar with sheep and shepherds. That is why the Bible speaks so much about them. (*Find Israel on a map or a globe.*)

Shepherds in Israel did not have huge mobs of sheep as Australian farmers do. The shepherd cared for the sheep without the aid of fences and sheep dogs. Shepherds spent most of their time with the sheep and knew the name of every sheep in the flock. Shepherds protected the sheep from wild animals. They found fresh grass for them to eat and water to drink.

When God wanted to tell us how much He loved and cared for us, He thought of the care the shepherd showed for his flock. If God cares that much for us, He will certainly make sure we have everything we need.

Bible research

Read Isaiah 40:1 and Psalm 23. How does God show His care for us?

Read John 10:11, 14 & 15. What does Jesus call himself? How do we know that He really cares for us?

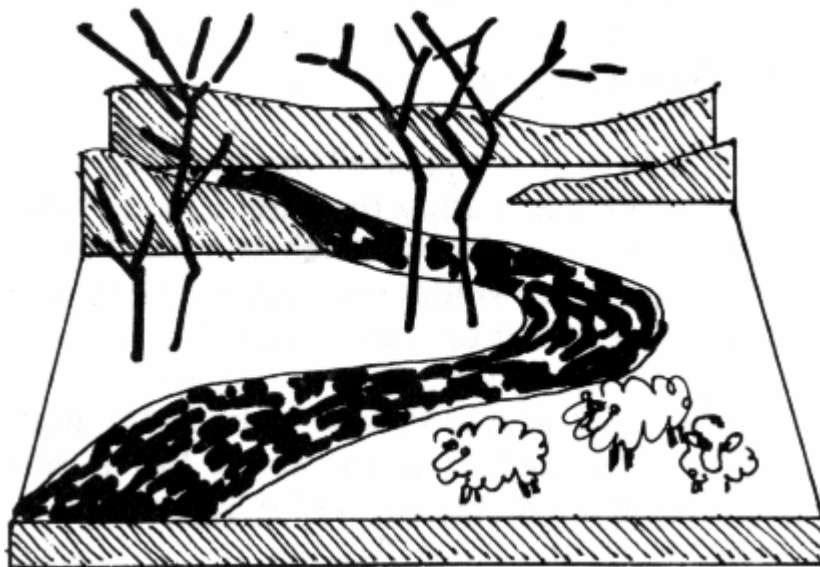


Art/Craft

Make a collage of the shepherd and sheep. Use cotton wool, fabric, pieces of bark etc. Show the things that the shepherd provides for the sheep...food, water and shade.

OR

Make a 3D model. Create the scene by using green fabric for grass, blue cellophane for a stream and twigs for trees. Use plastic sheep from a farm set or model them from plasticine.



God is Provider 4.2

Subtheme

God is a caring provider

Focus

God is a loving Father who provides for all our needs.

Bible references

Luke 11:11-13 Our Heavenly Father wants to give His children good gifts.

Matthew 6:25-34 Don't worry about tomorrow.

John 2:1-11 The wedding at Cana

Songs

God is A Provider (*All Creation Sings*)

Thank You for All the Good Things (*Couldn't Be Finer*)

God Loves You (*All Creation Sings*)

Introduction

Think about birthdays. Describe your last birthday. Were there presents, special food, party games and decorations? Why do parents give special things at times?

Parents like to provide more than just the food and clothing that their children need. They like to give special things at special times because they love their children very much. God is like that too. He provides rain, sun, air seeds and soil for producing food. He provides the materials we need for shelter and warm clothes. He also provides answers to prayer when we have special needs. He does this because He loves us.

Story 1: The Skate-board

A true story

Eric was eight years old when he and his family left their home in the U.S.A. and went to Hawaii to live at a Christian mission organization called *Youth With A Mission*.

Skate-boards were popular at the time, and just everybody had a skate-board...Everybody, that is, except Eric. Whenever they were near the shops, Eric was always found to be gazing longingly at skate-boards.

"Mum, why can't I have a skate-board?" he begged one day.

"You know why, Eric. I'd love to be able to buy you one but we just don't have the money for it at present. If you want one so badly, why don't you pray to our loving Heavenly Father?" said Mum. So Eric began praying earnestly for a skate-board.

One Sunday, not long after this, the family was driven home from church by a young man. When he opened the trunk (boot) of his car to hand them their things, Eric noticed a skate-board there.

"Could I try it out please?" he begged.

The owner was happy to allow Eric to ride it, and when he saw how much it meant to him, he said, "Eric, would you like to have it? I'd be glad to give it to you."

Eric was delighted! It wasn't the shiny plastic new one he had dreamed about but it was a skate-board and he received it joyfully.

As soon as they arrived home Eric took the board outside to look for a place to ride it. But there were only rough stony paths and roads around their home, so he pleaded with his mother, "Mum, would you please take me to some place where I can ride it properly? It's so rough and rocky all around here."

So Jan, his mother, agreed to take him after supper that evening. They found a cul-de-sac, (court) where the road had been sealed but no houses had yet been built...a nice safe piece of road for a skate-board rider.

Jan settled down by a street-light to read whilst Eric set off up the slope with his treasured skate-board. For a few minutes all went well. Then suddenly the regular rumbling of wheels on road was broken by a cry of despair, and then a 'clunk, clunk, clunk, that faded into silence.

"Oh no!" cried Eric as he ran crying to his mother. "Mum, my skate-board's gone down the drain! Look, it went under that metal grid there."

Mother and son were equally distressed. How could it happen that after longing and praying for so long, he should ride it for five minutes and then lose it? It seemed so wrong!

There was no way to retrieve the board, so they climbed back into the car and drove off home, both in tears. But as they drove, God spoke to Jan, who took up the message and spoke it out to Eric.

"Eric, we're going to stop crying. This is nothing more than an opportunity to prove God's faithfulness. The Bible tells us we are to praise God and thank Him in all situations. That's what we're going to do right now, and God is going to show His faithfulness."

So Jan began to praise God. Eric was silent.

"Come on Eric, you must praise Him too. I know it isn't easy, but it's what God wants you to do."

Eric looked up questioningly at his mother. "How can I thank God when my favourite plaything has just gone down the drain," he thought.

However his mother encouraged him, and soon Eric was able to praise God too.

After the children had gone to bed, Jan pondered the situation. "Lord, I don't know how You're going to do this, but I just believe You will prove Yourself for Eric's sake."

Next day she called the council authorities to inquire whether they could retrieve the skate-board.

"I'm sorry, ma'am, but we have to wait for volunteers for a job like that! I can't send a worker out."

"Well," ventured Jan, "if I found volunteers, would you object if we lifted the grid and climbed down into the drain to look for the board ourselves?"

"No, that's alright, ma'am. We'd allow that."

"Oh! Thank you so much," said a relieved Jan.

"But be careful!" came the final comment. It's twenty feet down!"

Jan found two young sturdy men who were willing to go down the man-hole to search in the drain. They gathered some strong rope and boarded a truck to drive up to the drain in the cul-de-sac. They tied knots for hand-holds along the rope and then, with all the strength they

could muster, they removed the grid that covered the drain. The rope was secured to the truck, and then lowered down the man-hole. Down went Stan, into darkness, and right out of sight.

"Are you alright down there? they called from the top.

"Yes, I'm fine," he called back.

"Can you see the skate-board?"

"Yes, I see it. And there's something else down here too."

Soon Stan was up to the top again, a broad grin of triumph on his face.

"Here's your skate-board, Eric," he said as he handed it back to it's happy owner. "And look what else was there."

He held up another skate-board...almost brand new.

"Oh!" cried Eric, ecstatic, "That's just the kind I wanted, and it's almost new. Thank you Stan. Thank you Mum for helping me to trust God. Thank you Heavenly Father. You are so very good to me. You've given me just the kind of skate-board I need."

A true story from Margaret McIntyre's collection. Used by permission

Story 2: The Wedding at Cana

God provided something special for Eric. Jesus provided something special in this Bible story. Read John 2:1-11.

How would you feel if you were the host of a party and the drinks ran out? Jesus loved His mother Mary, and wanted to please her. She knew how embarrassed the hosts would be if they had to serve only water.

Jesus was able to do this miracle because He was God. He didn't have to provide the best wine. Ordinary wine would have been all right. But Jesus showed His love by providing nothing but the best.

Bible research

Read Luke 11:11-13 and Matthew 6:25-26.

What do these passages tell us about the goodness of our Heavenly Father?

Art/Craft

Make a group banner: "*Thankyou God for being my Father*".

Decorate the banner with things that remind us of God's provision.

God is Peace

Level 4 (age 8)

Subtheme

Jesus broke down the barrier of sin

*We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.
Romans 5:1*



Integrated Topics for Christian Education

Obstacles or barriers to peace:

Visible barriers such as walls, moats, fences border crossings;

Invisible barrier such as hatred, jealousy and racial prejudice

Other

- security through homes and families
- peaceful play
- trust, (inner peace)
- dealing with fears, (obstacles to inner peace)
- national and international peace
- biographies of peacemakers and those who have struggled for peace
- peaceful environment: nature walks
- art and music: compare examples - which examples create a feeling of peace?

Character Development

- contentment
- being a peace-maker

Christian Life

- experiencing inner peace
- feeling safe and secure in God's care

God is Peace 4.1

Subtheme

Jesus broke down the barrier of sin

Focus

The barrier of sin

Bible references

Romans 3:23; 5:8; 6:23 When people sin they are separated from God. Sin makes a barrier between people and God.

Colossians 1:20 Christ's death on the cross broke the barrier.

Ephesians 2:14 He is our peace...He has broken down the wall.

Romans 5:1; 1 John 1:9 If we ask Jesus to forgive us, and if we have faith in God, we can have peace with God.

Songs

God is my Peace (*All Creation Sings*)

Jesus You are my King (*Sing a Joyful Song*)

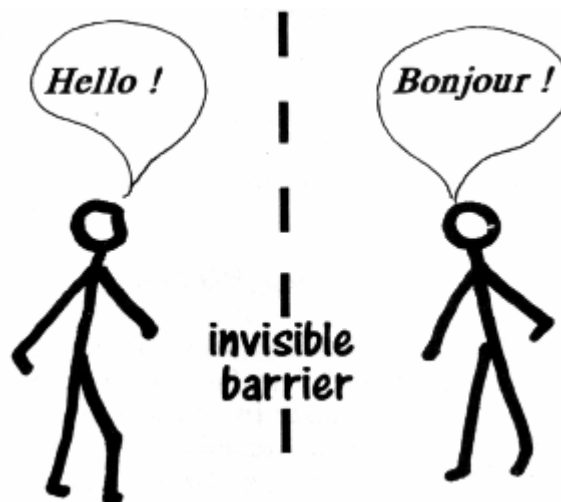
Holy Holy (*Sing a Joyful Song*)

Discussion: Barriers

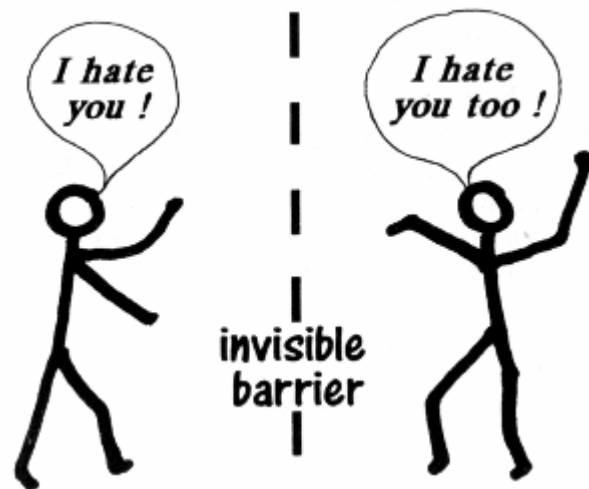
Make a list of as many different kinds of barriers as you can think of. (Some examples would be walls, fences, road-blocks, and railway gates.) Try to find pictures of some of these.

Make a barrier by stacking up a pile of cardboard boxes, or, use a piece of upright display board and paint it to represent a brick wall.

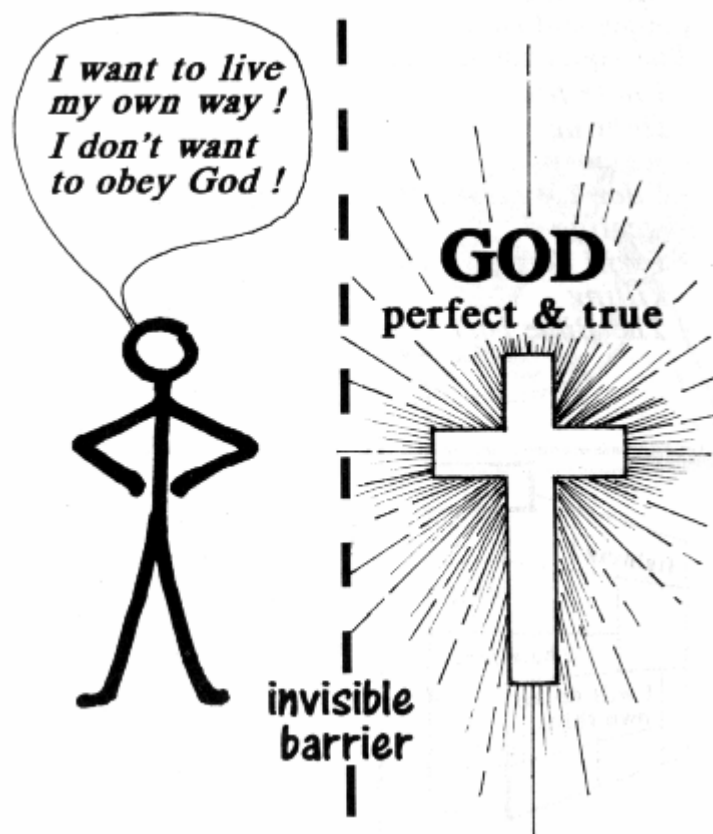
Sometimes barriers can be invisible. When two people speak different languages we say that there is a language barrier between them because they cannot communicate.



When two people hate each other we can also say there is a barrier between them. Because they hate each other they may decide not to communicate.



When people do wrong things and live only for themselves, an invisible barrier is placed between people and God.



Story: The Beginning of Sin

Read the story from Genesis 3:1-14; 3:17, 23 & 24.

What was the invisible barrier that came between the man, the woman, and God?

What did it mean for them?

How did it change their lives?

Activity

Two groups can work on two projects:

Group 1

Use the cardboard box wall (previously constructed), and cover it with signs and pictures which explain the invisible barrier between people and God.

The signs could read:

- I hate him
- fighting
- jealousy
- I don't want anything to do with God
- stealing
- I will do my own thing
- killing
- The Bible isn't true

Group 2

Make a cross out of two pieces of cardboard or wood. Make some signs and place them on the cross:

- Thank you Jesus for dying for me
- Jesus broke down the barrier of sin
- I ask Jesus to forgive me for my sin
- I give my life Jesus
- Jesus loves me
- Jesus died for my sin

Now the climax

Everyone knocks the wall down and replace the wall with the cross.

Note: If you don't have boxes / cardboard etc available, you could just draw the wall and the cross on two very large sheets of paper, then hold them up once they are made. (Just tear the paper to shreds for the destruction of the wall.)

God is Peace 4.2

Subtheme

Jesus broke down the barrier of sin

Bible references

Romans 3:23; 5:8; 6:23 When people sin they are separated from God. Sin makes a barrier between people and God.

Colossians 1:20 Christ's death on the cross broke the barrier.

Ephesians 2:14 He is our peace...He has broken down the wall.

Romans 5:1; 1 John 1:9 If we ask Jesus to forgive us, and if we have faith in God, we can have peace with God.

Focus

Through His death, Jesus broke the barrier.

Songs

God is my Peace (*All Creation Sings*)

Jesus You are my King (*Sing A Joyful Song*)

Holy Holy (*Sing A Joyful Song*)

Story: The Master Musician and His Son

Long ago, in a place called Musicland, lived a Master Musician and His Son, who created the most beautiful music in the whole world. Everyone who lived in Musicland was gifted in playing an instrument, and they would often come together for a great performance. The Master Musician and the Son were not only the greatest composers, but also the greatest conductors as well. Only They knew exactly how the music should sound, and only They could direct the orchestra with the necessary skill.

Under Their direction, the orchestra produced beautiful, harmonious music. As long as the musicians followed the Master Musician and the Son, they would not only produce beautiful music, but also live in happy harmony with each other.

There was one member of the orchestra who excelled above the rest. His name was the Musician of Light. The Master Musician and Son decided to train him so that one day he may become a conductor too. The Musician of Light worked very hard, but one day he thought of an idea which was not a good idea...in fact it was an evil idea. He decided that he could become greater than the Master Musician and Son, and even overthrow them. He waited cunningly for his opportunity.

One day, in the absence of the Master Musician and Son, the Musician of Light called the orchestra together. He had composed some new music, which he thought would make him famous. As he trained the musicians in this new kind of music, something very strange happened. Instead of the beautiful, harmonious sounds, there was clanging and jarring and scraping. The music made the musicians agitated and unhappy. They started fighting amongst each other. Some became jealous of others and hate grew in their hearts.

Suddenly the Master Musician returned! As He walked on to the stage the musicians were afraid. The Master Musician raised His hands to conduct the music, but only clanging, jarring and scraping sounds came from the orchestra.

The Musician of Light, with an evil look in his eye, crept off the stage. The Master Musician knew immediately what had happened. From the moment the musicians had decided to

follow the evil musician, they could only play his kind of music. They could no longer play the music of the Master Musician. There was now a huge barrier between them. The Master Musician was heart broken.

However, there was a way by which the barrier between the Master Musician and the orchestra could be broken. The Son would have to be sent to fight the evil musician. If the musicians would listen to the Son and follow Him, then the relationship between the Master Musician and the orchestra would be restored.

With great sorrow in His heart, the Master Musician asked the Son if He would be willing to take on the mission. The Son agreed to the plan, even though he knew that the fight against the evil musician would be a painful struggle.

One day, as the Musician of Light was conducting the orchestra, the Son appeared on stage. The fight began. The Son wrestled and struggled with the Musician of Light. The Son endured the cruel blows of the evil one. After a long struggle the evil musician was defeated. Knowing that his time had come, he ran off stage. He gathered up a group of followers and started his own orchestra in another part of Musicland.

However, many were happy that the evil musician had been defeated. They decided that from now on they would follow the Son. In making that decision, something happened inside them. As they lifted their instruments, the beautiful sound of the Master Musician's music was heard once again. The Son had broken the barrier. The musicians were again at one with the Master Musician. They loved the Master Musician and they loved the Son, and they were once again very happy.

Discussion

What similarities are there between this story, and the true story of God the Father who sent His Son to fight against Satan?

Music and drama activity

Divide the children into two groups.

One group can create a beautiful, harmonious sound.

(Use gentle percussion instruments such as triangles, finger cymbals and chime bars/xylophones. If you don't have these instruments, use things around you that make lovely sounds, such as glasses filled with water and metal spoons; rice shakers)

The other group can make clashing, scraping, discordant sounds.

(Use saucepan lids, metal baking trays hit with spoons, party whistles and plenty of imagination).

Re-tell the story, allowing the appropriate group to demonstrate the sounds as the story progresses. Some may like to act out the parts of the Master Musician, the Son and the Musician of Light.

Discussion

Does God have an answer for the invisible barrier of sin? Read 1 John 1:9.