

What does it mean to live  
as a child of the King of Kings?

Help children to discover  
the answer through ...

# LIVING IN THE KINGDOM

A Curriculum of 40 Bible Discovery Lessons  
for Leaders of children's groups

max7



## WELCOME TO 'LIVING IN THE KINGDOM'

**The theme is: *What does it mean to live as a child of the King of Kings?***

There are 40 Bible discovery lesson outlines. As you use them pray that as the children participate in the programs they will realise that God the King understands the everyday issues that they face, and wants to help them in the joys and pain of that life.

The Children will discover more about the King of Kings as they explore:

- stories about Jesus and stories Jesus told
- stories of the Old Testament kings (the good and the bad)
- the Sermon on the Mount
- psalms of praise
- what it means to trust the King of Kings

This curriculum is designed to run for 30 – 40 minutes and has been prepared for people with limited resources. Here are some special features.

### **1. Participation of the children**

Children learn best when they are involved. So there are dramas, storytelling, memory verses, games and activities that invite the children to discovering more about this King.

### **2. Visual aids**

We recognise that the size of your group may make it difficult to use resources that have to be photocopied. So we have made suggestions for how to use the things freely available around you to make the lesson live. That's what Jesus did! In addition, there are some simple line drawings for you to copy.

### **3. Preparation**

At the end of each lesson, there's a reminder of what preparation will be needed for the next lesson to save you time.

But is the Holy Spirit who will draw children to the King. He loves every one of them. Trust Him to speak into the life of every child as His Word comes alive.



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# UNIT ONE: JESUS THE KING

## LESSON 1: JESUS THE KING COMES

**Bible Base:** Luke 20:1-20

**Main Teaching Point:** The coming of Jesus Christ the King has brought good news to ordinary people.

**Preparation:**

Bring a Christmas card of baby Jesus

**Memory Verse:** Luke 2: 10-11.

*Do not be afraid for I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people... a Saviour has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord.*

## LEARNING SEQUENCE

### Introduction

Ask the children to share the most exciting news they have ever received. If it has not been mentioned, talk about the birth of a baby and the joy that it brings to a family.

### Bible Discovery



#### The King of the world is born

Display a typical Christmas card. Point out that baby Jesus looks fat and spotlessly clean with a halo over his head; Mary and Joseph look well-rested and also wear haloes. Even the animals look well groomed and the hay is clean and soft. Point out that the first Christmas was not like this! It was not pretty and clean! The contrast between of the King of the World entering it in such humble circumstances is a main focus of the Christmas story. Tell the story in your own words. For example:

*'Caesar Augustus had ordered a census (ask the children what a census is). People from all over the country had to return to their place of birth. This was bad news for Mary and Joseph because the birth of Mary's baby was very close and their journey from Nazareth would be long and dusty - at least 3 days -and at times, dangerous.*

*By the time they were close to the journey's end, Mary was so very, very tired. Although Joseph was doing his best to ease the journey for her, her back was aching and her head was spinning. She felt grimy and longed for a wash and somewhere to rest. There was worse news when they arrived in Bethlehem. Every hotel had been booked. Everywhere they went, the signs said 'No Vacancy'.*

*Finally - I'm not sure how - they were offered the use of his stable. It was there that Mary gave birth. She had just a few animals for company (imagine the smell!). And just a food trough for a bed. There were only a few strips of cloth to wrap around the baby to keep him warm and clean.*

Ask the children to close their eyes and imagine the scene and the smells and the noises - animal noises, people hurrying around outside, laughter and shouting as neighbors shared meals with guests. And amongst this dirt and noise, the King of the world was born!



## The King's First Visitors

Imagine if a new baby was born into our President's/King's family. What sort of welcome does the baby receive? Official photographs, congratulations from world leaders, some state visits to the proud parents. The first visitors that Mary, Joseph and Jesus welcomed were not at all important. Who were they? Point out that field shepherds were considered to be quite 'low-class' people.



Luke 2:8-18 aloud.

Ask the children to imagine that they are the shepherds and that you are a reporter from the Bethlehem Times. Interview different 'shepherds', highlighting how they felt about this extraordinary night. The questions below are guidelines only: involve as many children as possible to bring out the main points of the narrative they have just heard.

- How do you like this job of shepherding? What is an average night like?
- But you've been spreading very strange stories about last Tuesday night - something about angels? How did you **feel** when this angel appeared?
- Why? What was this message he delivered?
- Then I understand that a huge crowd of angels joined this one angel. Tell me what happened then.
- You say that the angels said that the birth of this baby is good news for the whole world? How can a little baby bring joy to **everyone**?
- I find it hard to believe that God would trust this message that you say you heard to a group of rough shepherds on a hill at night. I mean there are far more important people who would be better suited to an angelic visit - why you?
- What do you say to people who just won't believe that this happened to you?



## Step 3



### God Does the Unexpected!

Explain that God had told the Jews thousands of years before that He would send His special messenger to bring the good news of salvation to the entire the world. But when Jesus was born, this was not how they expected God's messenger to come. Surely someone so important would arrive on earth like a King!

But God often acts in unexpected ways. Ask the children to list all the unexpected ways that God acted in coming into this world that first Christmas e.g.

- He came as a helpless baby - needed feeding, changing
- His parents were not at all famous
- He was born in a stable, not a palace
- The announcement of his birth was made to workers, not national leaders

Draw out that to God, everyone is special: shepherds and leaders; adults and children; black and white and brown; clever or not. When Jesus came to live on earth in such an ordinary way, God was trying to tell us that His Good News - **that we can all belong to the family of God through faith in Jesus** - is for everyone.

### Teach the Memory Verse

Write the words in shapes of all different people: short, tall, girl, boy fat, thin –to demonstrate that the Good News of Jesus is for everyone. We don't have to prove that we are good or clever to enjoy the Good News of Jesus. We simply have to invite Him to be our King. Challenge them to do so. Offer to talk and/or pray with children who need to know more about Jesus' good news, or who don't feel as if they are very special.

#### For the next lesson:

Collect enough pieces of paper and pencils/pens available for the children

Practice the drawings of the lake and boat.

Prepare a brief testimony.

## LESSON 2: KING OVER CREATION

**Bible Base:** Luke 8:22-25

**Main Teaching Points:** When we feel in danger, we can turn to Jesus for help because He is able to help us.

**Preparation:**

Have enough pieces of paper and pencils/pens available for the children.

Write the chorus 'Trust and Obey' on a chalkboard or piece of paper before the start of the lesson.

Practise the drawings of the lake and boat.

Prepare a brief testimony of your personal experience of being in danger.

**Memory Verse:** Psalm 145:18.

*The Lord is near to all who call upon Him*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Tell the group of a personal experience from your own life, when you were in danger. Emphasize how scared you were, and what thoughts were going through your head. Create suspense by not telling how the ordeal came to an end (this will be told later). Ask the children if they remember any instance when they have been in real danger. Ask if any of them would like to share their experience with the group later (if more than two volunteer, choose just two of them).

#### Bible Discovery



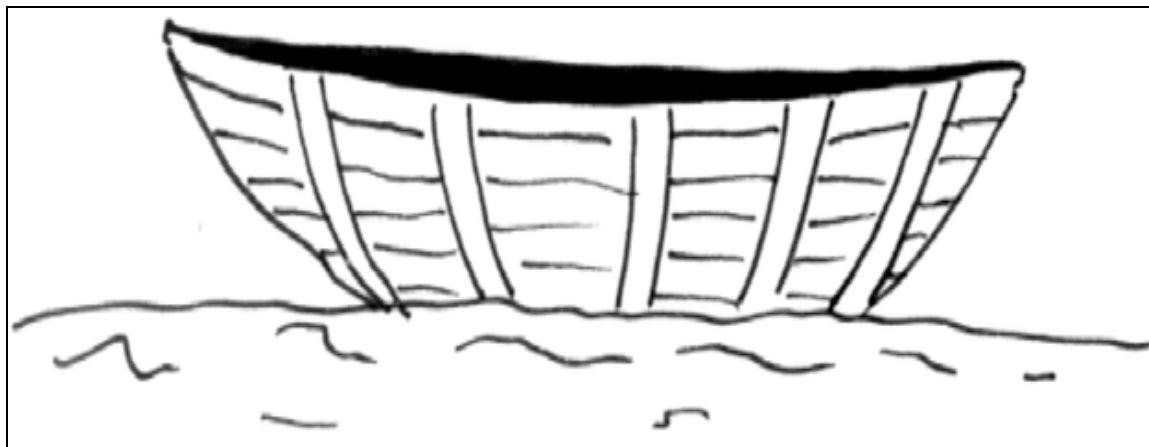
#### The Disciples Obey

Begin to retell the story from the Bible. As you do so, draw picture 1. *Jesus is out of sight because He is sleeping inside the boat.* When Jesus told the disciples to go across the lake, they obeyed. Describe how pleasant the day it was when the journey started. The weather was fine; the disciples had enough experienced fishermen aboard that they would have felt safe. Their friend and leader Jesus was with them, having a well-deserved rest. It had been easy to do as Jesus had suggested when they felt so content.

*As you speak, your voice should be quiet and soothing.*



Picture 1



## Step 2

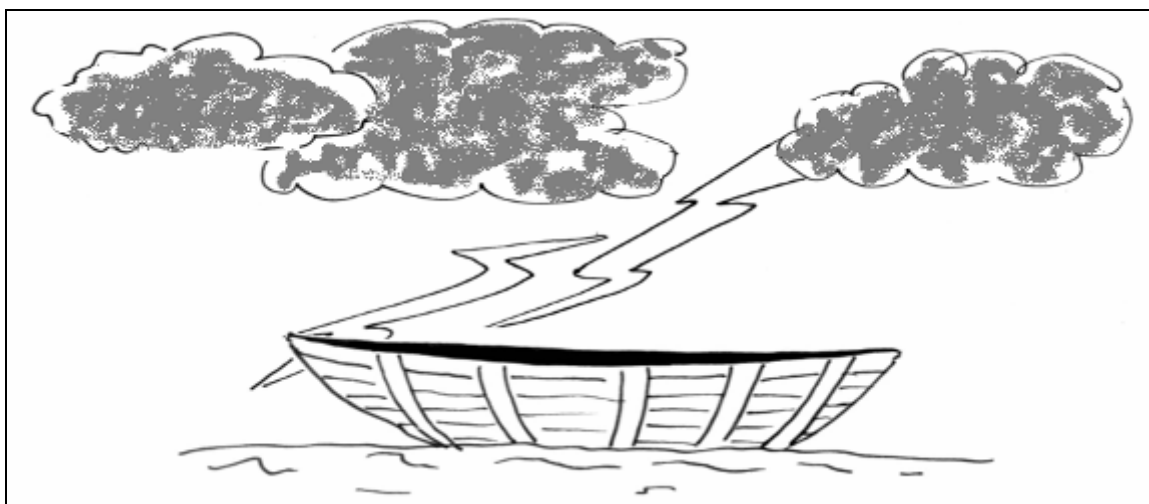
### The Disciples in danger

Break the quiet mood with a loud 'bang' e.g. drop a book/tin from the table; stamp your feet.

Suddenly things began to change with a loud clap of thunder. What had started as a few small clouds on the horizon, were now huge and threatening. Lightening flashed across the sky. *As you tell the story, draw picture 2 - or you could invite some of the children to help with the drawing.*

But the biggest danger came from the strong wind that was now sweeping across the lake, whipping up huge waves that crashed over the side of the boat. In a few short moments, everything had changed! Worse still, the boat began to fill with water and no matter how hard they tried to bail out the water and row towards the shore; they were fighting a losing battle. At this point re-enact the struggle with the children rocking violently from side to side within the 'boat', desperately trying to reach the shore. The harder they try, the more pointless their efforts seem

Picture 2





## Step 3



### The Disciples feel deserted

Before this happened, maybe the disciples thought that it was easy to trust Jesus. But now Jesus is asleep - not even noticing how much danger they are in.

What might they be thinking now? *Does He really care? Couldn't He at least help? He has so much power - think of all those people He has healed - but we're going to die here!*



Mark 4:38

Ask the children if it was 'right' of the disciples to feel this way. Point out that they were ordinary people with ordinary fears - just like us. Perhaps they had seen Jesus help others, but now that they are in terrible danger they doubted that He could help them. Or perhaps they doubt that He will. After all, Jesus didn't help everyone who came to Him to be healed - would He be willing to help them now? Or maybe He can heal some diseases but to control the forces of nature is beyond His power. Or perhaps they are just so overwhelmed by the situation that they are in that they don't even have time to think!!

## Step 4



### The Disciples experience Jesus' power

What happens next? Have the children tell the ending of the story. Point out that at Jesus command, the chaos and danger of Picture 2 returned to the peace and safety of Picture 1. **Why?**

**ASK??** the children: What had the disciples learned about Jesus that they had not known or understood before? *He had greater power than they had seen; that He cared for them more than they had imagined.*



What was their response? Read verse 26

## Step 5



### When we feel in danger...

Give pieces of paper to the children and ask them to list down those things that put them in danger. It need not be a physical danger like the disciples are in. Think of times or places or situations when we do not feel safe. Assure them that they do not have to share what they have written with the group if it is too private but invite some who would like to do so.

**ASK??** if there is something that we have learned today - from the disciples as well as from Jesus - that will help us when we don't feel safe. List these on the board e.g.

1. It's natural to feel overwhelmed and scared in some situations
2. Jesus understands and He does care
3. When we feel very alone, even as if Jesus is not there, He is!
4. Jesus has the power to help us because there is no situation too big for Him.

### Teach the Memory Verse

by writing the words on the boat in Picture 1.

Now present to God all the sheets of paper on which the children have written the things that put them in danger, assuring them that Jesus will certainly help them. Invite the children to pray for each other.



Tell the children how your own personal experience of danger ended. Sing together the chorus of "Trust and Obey". Invite the children to write a verse that expresses the things that they have learned today.

**For the next lesson:**

Practice drawing a picture of a village with Jesus in it.

Find out some details about leprosy, and the various social barriers it raises.



## LESSON 3: JESUS: KING OVER SICKNESS

**Bible Base:** Luke 5:12-15

**Main Teaching Point:** We can ask Jesus to help us, no matter how awkward, or embarrassing the situation is, because He is **trustworthy**. However, Jesus doesn't always answer our prayers in the way we expect Him to.

**Preparation:**

Practice drawing a picture of a village with Jesus in it.

Find out some details about leprosy, and the various social barriers that sufferers had to face in Jesus' day (and today).

Write the memory verse on paper or on a chalkboard

**Memory Verse:** Matthew 11:28

*Come to me all who are burdened, and I will give you rest.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Start by asking children what it is like when someone is injured or sick. Allow them to call out answers. Then ask for volunteers to come forward (in front of the group) and act out the symptoms of any sickness of their choice. The rest of the group must try and identify which particular sickness or condition is being acted out. Allow up to five or six volunteers.

Question : "Where do people usually go for help when they are sick or have a medical problem ?". Write down the answers as given by the children.

Josh worked in a bank. He went to church faithfully and sang in the choir. He was proud of his family too. His wife was a teacher and his four children were doing well at school. That was, until Josh got sick. It started with a cough and developed into pneumonia. He began to lose weight and had more and more time off work. He recovered, but each time he got sick, he got a little weaker. People started to talk behind his back 'I wonder if he has AIDS'. Another said 'Perhaps he has been unfaithful to his wife'. At the bank where he worked, people started to ignore him and didn't want to shake hands with him.

His wife Deborah heard others talking and although no-one said anything directly to her, she felt alone and isolated. As a family they were very fearful, but tried to look cheerful, as if nothing was wrong. Josh himself was too afraid to go for HIV testing, just incase the results were positive and above all he guarded his secret that when he was working away from home, some years back, he had been unfaithful to his wife. He knew God had forgiven him, but he also feared that the church would not forgive him if they knew. Josh became very ill and died of TB, but everyone had their suspicions that it was AIDS.

Deborah then started to cough. She was terrified and so wanted to share her burden with someone who would not judge her. There was one friend, another teacher at school, who was also a Christian, and she was one of the few people who had not judged her husband. She talked to this friend one day and together they prayed for God to heal her. But Deborah experienced a far greater healing. She was healed from her fear and loneliness and was somehow better able to face her illness, knowing that there was someone she could share with. Her friend also re-assured her that if she did die, she would make sure that her children were taken good care of.

In a similar way the lepers who came to Jesus were fearful, rejected, had to live outside the village. No-one in the village would talk to them, and they even had to ring a bell to warn people to scatter if they were anywhere near others. Somehow, they knew that Jesus would not run away, they were safe coming to Him with their terrible sickness.

## Bible Discovery

### Teach the Memory Verse

Repeat it several times all together using actions for 'all', 'come' 'weary' and 'rest'. The invite a few children to the front to act as Jesus saying the verse and judge which one says it with the greatest meaning.



#### The leper is in need

Explain what leprosy is, and describe the social barriers against lepers that existed in Jesus' time, and the rejection that they had to face. Draw (on a chalkboard or on paper) a picture of a village, with huts, and Jesus standing near one of the homes. Draw a person half-hidden one of the huts in the distance, to indicate the leper looking for the right opportunity to come to Jesus.



#### The leper asks for healing

Read the story from Luke 5. Point out that the leper did not demand his healing from Jesus, instead, he was very polite.

Ask: What is generally our attitude when we are sick or upset? *Cross, bitter, sulky, reserved, petty, quiet, lashing out, crying etc.*

Ask: Will such attitudes help us to get well?"

## Step 3



### Jesus responds

Tell all the boys to stand up, and all the girls to come to the front of the group. The boys should then go to the back of the group area. At the command 'Go', everyone should then run back to where they were sitting and sit down. Explain that, because you are the leader and you have authority, you have just asked the children to do something and they all obeyed.

It was like that with Jesus. He only had to give the command and the man was healed. Why? *Because Jesus has authority over sickness, because He is King over sickness..*

Did Jesus go about boasting of what He did for the man? Why not?

We too can have confidence to come to Jesus, and ask Him for His help because He will never judge us or turn us away. He is always willing to help, and He has the authority and power, because He is the King.



Perhaps it's not sickness that is bothering you today. Maybe there is something else that is causing you a lot of worry. How would Matthew 11:28 help you? What sort of help would you want to have from Jesus? Tell him about it now.

### Point out that...

- We don't understand why Jesus physically heals some people and not others. We can talk to him about it.
- But Jesus has promised that He can help us with all our worst fears and anxieties.



Pray for at least one person who needs Jesus' help because he/she is sick or has a fear or worry that is troubling them.

### For the next lesson:

Collect at least 4 blindfolds

Practice the 2 drawings.

## LESSON 4: STORIES JESUS TOLD – THE WISE MAN

**Bible Base:** Luke 6:47-49

**Main Teaching Point:** We can grow in trusting God without fear, because He wants the best for us and He has given us the Bible to show us the way.

**Preparation:**

At least 4 blindfolds

Practice the 2 drawings.

**Memory Verse:** Luke 6:49.

*That is why whoever hears these words of mine and does them is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction:

Game: 'Crossing the Lion's Den'. 5 children are selected to be the lions. The lions all stand in an empty space either in a room or outdoors. It must be a confined space, so if you are outside create barriers by using rows of children. When the lions stretch out their hands there must be about 50cm between them. They cannot move their feet but can turn around. Their job is to catch the sheep as they come through their territory. Two other children (shepherds) stand at one end of the room/area. There are 6 sheep at the other end of the room/area. The sheep are all blindfolded. The sheep must listen for the master's voice in order to avoid getting caught by the 'lions'. The lions may turn and grab with one hand but they may not bend or move their feet.

Ask one child to go last and to deliberately disobey his master and so get caught. (The others must not know.)

#### Bible Discovery



##### Jesus challenges us

Why did the last 'sheep' get caught? *He did not listen and follow the instructions.*

In the same way, it is impossible to get through the temptations and problems in our life, unless we listen to Jesus our 'shepherd.'



##### The Fool

In Luke 6:47, Jesus asks his disciples: What is the point of calling me your leader if you refuse to follow my instructions. Jesus says that a man like that is a fool, like a man who has built his house on sand. Why? What happens to a house on the sand if there's a really bad storm?(Draw the picture.)

Picture 1

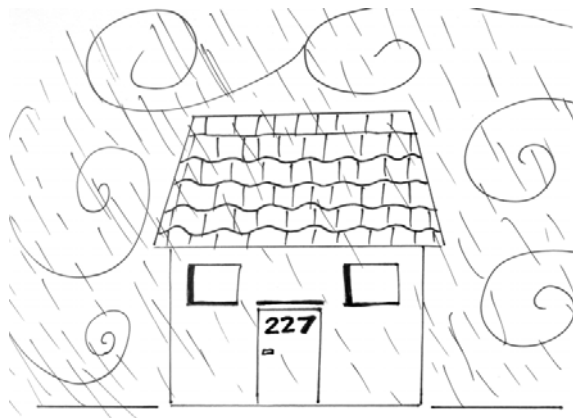


### Step 3

#### The Wise Man

Draw the second picture as you continue with Jesus' illustration. The wise man dug deep foundations without complaining or waiting, while he had the time, and while things were good. Then when the storms came the house stood strong.

Picture 2



### Step 4

#### Wisdom

The wise man made sure – long in advance – that he could trust his house. And so, even in the most terrible storm, with waves destroying the village, he was safe in the house he knew he could trust.





## Step 5



### Trusting Jesus

Our lives are a bit like houses. They will only be safe if they are built on good solid foundations.



Read Luke 6:47 to the children.

Ask the question: What are those foundations? *Please note that it is not Jesus, but obedience to His word, this is the foundation on which we build.*

The Bible offers us advice about how to live life God's way and promises that follow if we do that. We need to learn to follow this advice

**ASK???** the children what some of that advice is.

### Teach the Memory Verse

By writing the words on 'bricks' that form the foundation of a stable house.

## Step 6



### Obeying the voice of Jesus

Tell the true story of Chris, a Scripture Union worker in Madagascar. Chris was born in Zambia, to parents who loved him very much. On the day of his birth there was great rejoicing in the village and his father knelt beside his mother, held the baby in his arms and prayed that Chris would be a great man of God, would hear God's voice calling him and would serve him as a missionary.

The years passed and Chris grew to be a shy, quiet boy who didn't like school although he found the work quite easy. When he left school he told his parents he was going to become an architect (someone who designs houses). His mother shook her head and said 'But Chris, do you think you have heard God's voice right?' Chris was determined to do what he wanted and so off he went to university to become an architect. He later married but his parents again wondered whether he had heard God's voice calling him. As the years passed, Chris went through some hard times. He wasn't fully satisfied in his work, and his marriage didn't work out. It was then that he remembered how his parents had prayed for him, and he turned to God. He learnt to listen to God's voice, a quiet, gentle and safe voice. It was a voice that he could not hear when he was too busy and rushing around. He heard the shepherd calling him, quietly and confidently by name. He heard him most clearly when he was quiet and took time to listen. He eventually went to work with street children in Madagascar (a very big island off the East coast of Africa). He became more and more accustomed to hearing the voice of the good shepherd calling and guiding him. Then one day he met a girl and God spoke to him again. He was familiar with the shepherd's voice now, and it was as if God told him that she would be his wife. He found this hard to believe, as he barely even knew her. They married some years ago and are as much in love with each other today as they were when they first heard God calling them to be together. Chris and Jeannette both learnt to hear God's voice and trust Him.



Lead the children to pray for Chris and Jeannette. Encourage them to also learn to listen to Jesus and obey Him.

**Sing:** The Wise Man built his house upon the Rock, and add this verse:

*So listen to the words of the Lord Jesus Christ*

*ObeY the things He asks you to do.*

*His word is true so you'll be safe with Him*

*When the storms come crashing round.*

If you are unfamiliar with this song, choose a tune that fits the words.

**For the next lesson:**

Collect an invitation to bring.

Prepare shapes for teaching the memory verse, using the idea suggested.

## LESSON 5: STORIES OF THE KING – THE WEDDING BANQUET

**Bible Base:** Luke 14: 15-24

**Main Teaching Point:** God invites all people to share in his heaven. It is a wonderful place that Jesus is preparing now for his followers.

**Preparation:**

Bring an invitation – for example, a card.

Prepare shapes for teaching the memory verse, using the idea suggested.

**Memory Verse:** Revelation 21:3&4

*God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Display a completed invitation card e.g. to a wedding or a party. Ask a couple of children to come to the front where they can easily see it, and see who can answer first:

- Who it is for?
- When will it be?
- Where will it be?
- When do I have to reply?

Then ask the group: what would happen if I went at the right time but to the wrong place? Or if I went to the right place but a week too late? Ask children to explain what it is that we all love about parties or weddings?

#### Bible Discovery



#### The Party in Heaven

Jesus said that heaven is something like a big party – but much better than anything that you've ever been to before! No one will be hungry, or sad or sick. And it won't ever finish!



Read Revelation 21: 1 - 4

Ask the children what will make this party special (God will be there). What won't be at this party?

## Teach the Memory Verse

On a chalkboard or piece of paper, write every word of the first sentence in the shape of party items e.g. balloons, presents, drink bottles.

Write every word of the second sentence on tear drop shapes.

Each time they repeat the verse, remove one more word, until all the tears have gone.

### Step 2



#### The party being prepared

Explain that the custom in Jesus' time was that you sent out invitations, and then when everything was ready, you sent a servant to tell all those invited that it was time to come. Since this seems to have been a rich man, ask the children what sort of preparation he may have made. (Food, entertainment, decorations...). And when it was all ready, the servant left to call the guests.

### Step 3



#### The Guests refuse



Read from Luke 14:18-20

**ASK??** the questions:

- What were the excuses that people made?
- Where they reasonable? (Point out that they knew that the party was coming, and none of these things is urgent).

How would you have felt if you had been the man who had made all the preparations?

### Step 4



#### More invitations

The man was really angry! What was he going to do with all that food and all the entertainment? Invite responses from the children. Then read verses 21. Who would come if you went to the streets and invited everyone who was there? (Street kids, shoppers, beggars, glue sniffers...).

And even when they all came, there was still more room, so they went and invited people out in the rural areas – farmers, labourers. Anyone who wanted to could come! And what a fantastic party it was!

### Step 5



#### Invited to Heaven

Ask the questions:

- Who enjoyed the party?
- Who didn't – and why not?
- Why do you think that Jesus told the story?



Produce the invitation that you used at the beginning. Ask the children to imagine that this was an invitation from God, to the party he's preparing.

- What time will it be? *We don't know*
- Where will it be? *Heaven*
- Who is invited? *Everyone*
- Who will be there? *all those who have said 'Yes' to Jesus invitation*
- What does it mean to say 'Yes' to the invitation? *To be sorry for the sin that Jesus hates, and to ask his forgiveness.*



Allow for a time of silence. Then lead the children in a time of prayer:

*Thank you Jesus, for getting this wonderful place of heaven ready for us. Thank you that we don't have to be rich or clever or famous to be invited. Make us willing to say 'Yes' to you.*

Offer to talk personally with children who wish to talk about the invitation.

**For the next lesson:**

Prepare treasure chest, gifts and envelopes

## LESSON 6: STORIES FROM THE KING - HIDDEN TREASURE

**Bible Base:** Matthew 13:44-45

**Main Teaching Point:** Finding Jesus as the one to live for, is like finding hidden treasure.

**Preparation:**

1. Build a small treasure-chest from cardboard or wood or tin. If you make it durable, it can be used in other camps, clubs etc.
2. Line it with aluminium foil (e.g. from a chocolate wrapper). For added effect, put a battery and bulb from torch inside. Cover with 'jewels'. Jewels can be made from: small bits of broken glass (from a smashed car windscreen or mirror), bright pebbles, sweets, coloured beads, buttons, small coins that have been cleaned for 30 minutes in Coca Cola, bits of broken watches, plastic toy jewellery, small balls of foil (e.g. from cigarette boxes) – anything that glitters!
3. Inside the box, put strips of paper on which the words 'Health', 'Happiness', 'Education', 'Friendship' are written.
4. Wrap 8 small gifts to hide in the room e.g. 2 sweets, a fruit, a pen, a postage stamp, 3 headache tablets, a few coins. These are to be the 'hidden treasures'.
5. For each child, provide a small envelope and inside each envelope, place 8 strips of paper with one Bible promise on each strip. (Alternatively, if there are too many children, prepare one very large envelope for the whole group as above, and have the children write the promises in their exercise books as a record.

**Memory Verse:** Matthew 6:33.

*Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be given to you.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Activity: Tell the children that there are eight hidden treasures in the room. They must find them but not open them. Get them to bring them to the front and ask one child to the front. He can open two treasures and decide which one to keep (the other children can give advice as to which is the more important). He continues to open one gift at a time and chooses which of the two he wants to keep, until all eight have been opened.

#### Bible Discovery



#### The Choice

a). Reasons for choosing. Once the child has made his final decision, ask him what motivated his choice. Ask others what they would have chosen and why. Point out that the choices differ. Each is free to choose, but each has different reasons for making that choice. A sick man would choose the headache tablets; a hungry man, the fruit; a stamp collector, the stamp etc. b). The Gift. Point out that none of the gifts were deserved – they were all free (a matter of grace). c). The Exchange. Point out that the child was willing to exchange the others so that he could have the one 'treasure' that he wanted most.

## Step 2



### Treasures

A real treasure is like that. It is something of such great value, so great that the owner will hide it to protect it from thieves. He will not exchange it for anything else because it is too precious. He might go to great lengths to obtain it. Take out the treasure chest that you have made. Imagine that this is a real treasure chest. What would it hold? Coins, gold, diamonds, jewellery. But it could also be other things that we do not easily see. Have children take out the strips of paper inside, and talk about how precious each one is: health, education, happiness, friendship. These are things that grab hold of our hearts and we really want them.

## Step 3



### The Greatest Treasure

Ask children what they think the greatest treasure in the world might be? What would they be willing to give up everything for?



Read Matthew 13:44

Divide the children into groups to discuss what they think the verse means. (What is the Kingdom of God? How is the kingdom of God like a great treasure?)

Listen to their answers and then point out that when Jesus said this he didn't describe what the Kingdom of God is like. How will we know? We'll have to look for clues! Where will we find the clues? In the Book that tells us about the Kingdom of God! The Bible tells us that the Kingdom of God is the rule of God – it is where God is already King and that can be in your own life today. He lives in the life of all believers. And if we want God to be the King of our life, we only have to invite him to be.

### Teach the Memory Verse

Teach the memory verse, mentioning all those other things that we treasure from Step Two: what will happen if we sincerely seek for this treasure? (*God will supply the other things **that we really need***) God is waiting for us to seek him and to allow him to be our king, our boss. He will be your greatest, most exciting friend and will never leave you or let you down.

## Step 4



## God's Treasure

Open each strip of paper with the following verses on, and allow the children to think about how precious we are to God!

Isaiah 43:1-4. God loves you so much that he was willing to pay a very high price to have you

Ephesians 1:4. It was always His plan that you would become his child

1 Peter 1:18. He paid for you with His own life.

Isaiah 43:25. He has taken away your sin

Romans 8:16. If you have accepted His forgiveness, you are now a child of God. His very own!

Romans 8:31. He will look after you in every situation because you are precious to Him.

Romans 8:38-39. Nothing can separate you from His love.

John 14:1-3. He is preparing Heaven for us. One day, He will come back, dry all our tears, and take us to live with Him forever.



Thank God for His amazing love and grace, and pray that we would accept this free 'treasure' that He offers us.

**For the next lesson:**

Practise the drawings.



## LESSON 7: JESUS' GLORY IN THE TRANSFIGURATION

**Bible Base:** Luke 9: 28-36

**Main Teaching Point:** Jesus is God and wants to be trusted, even when we don't always understand.

**Preparation:**

Practise the drawings.

**Memory Verse:** Luke 9: 35

*This is my Son whom I have chosen; listen to Him.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

The 'Directions' game. If there is enough space, play this with the whole group; if not, choose a few children to play while the others watch. When the leader calls a direction (North, South, East, West), the children must point in that direction. The last to do so is eliminated from the game. You can add a few extra calls for variety e.g. 'floor'; 'door'; 'nose'. The game concludes when there is one winner.

#### Bible Discovery

Tell the story of the transfiguration, drawing pictures as you do.



#### God is at work but the Disciples Sleep

Ask the children what kinds of mountains they have in their own country. Is there a village or town near that mountain?

Take the examples given by the children to relate the beginning of the story where Jesus and 3 of his disciples leave the city for a high mountain to pray. Ask why Jesus would have taken Peter, James and John? (*They seem to have been his closest friends.*)

Jesus began to pray but his disciples were so tired that they fell asleep. *Draw Picture 1.* Even though Peter, James and John were his best friends, they didn't really understand what was going on. In the same way, we often don't do what we should, but God has still chosen us.



Picture 1

## Step 2

### The Prophets appear, but the disciples don't understand

While Jesus prays, his appearance began to change. His clothes became brilliantly white. Ask the children if they can think of anything that might look like that (e.g. *tin shining in the sun*; or *when someone stands under a lamp*). The change in Jesus' appearance was even more than that. And not only his clothes!



Luke 9:29 then 30 - 33

Have a child read verse 29 to discover what else in Jesus' appearance changed. Then read verses 30 - 33, and ask the following questions:

- Who was talking with Jesus?

Draw Picture 2

- What did they look like?
- What in fact did the disciples see when they looked at Jesus? (*his glory*) What does that tell us about Jesus? (*he is not like us – he is God*)
- The clothes of Jesus, Moses and Elijah were what colour? What do you think that represents? (*Cleanness, purity, splendour*)
- Peter was so overcome with awe that he wanted the experience never to finish. So what did he suggest?

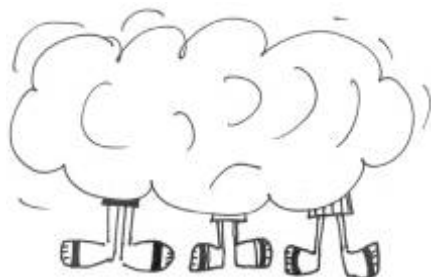


Picture 2



### God the Father Speaks but Peter says something a bit silly

While Peter is speaking, a cloud comes and covers them. *Begin to draw Picture 3.*



Picture 3

How would Peter, James and John have felt? (*Very scared?*) A voice comes out of the cloud and reassures them with some special words...

### Teach the memory verse

Teach the memory verse, by writing the words as if they 'come out' of the cloud. Have the children read the words, and then suggest actions that will help them to remember the words. E.g. 'This is my Son whom I have chosen' (the action could be to 'hug' oneself); 'Listen to Him' (a tug on the ear).

It is a hard thing to listen to and obey God. Jesus' three special friends fell asleep, didn't really understand, and then said something silly. We are like that, but let us not be put off, because God has also chosen us to climb the mountain and to listen and to obey. Ask the children how we can listen to God.



Divide the children into groups to discuss the ways in which they find it hard to obey Jesus and listen to Him. What difference would it make if we remembered his glory?

Encourage children to pray for one another in those areas where they find it hard to obey.



**For the next lesson:**

Prepare children for the drama - this requires some practice so begin early!

Draw, or practise drawing a sheep (for the memory verse)



## LESSON 8: JESUS THE KING OF GLORY DIES FOR OUR SINS

**Bible Base:** Luke 23

**Main Teaching Point:** To help the children not to seek revenge

**Preparation:**

Prepare children to be the characters in the drama.

Practise drawing a sheep for the memory verse.

**Memory Verse:** Isaiah 53:7

*Like a sheep before his shearer, he never said a word*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

**Drama:** Select the characters as follows. You tell the story and get the characters to mime as you read.

**Characters:**

Mr. Moyo: carpenter – the accused

Tabu: young man, the witness

Tabu's friends

Mr. Tembo: the judge

Mr. Chisi: defence lawyer for the accused

Mr. Gumbo: prosecutor

Witnesses

The public

The jury

Voice (a voice that is heard 'offstage'.)

Tabu is preparing for his examinations that take place the following day (pause for acting). He stays up late to revise. Then he has a few hours' sleep (pause). While snoring, he hears a voice ordering him to 'Go to the court'. He wakes up but thinking he is dreaming (pause), he goes back to sleep. Again the same voice orders him to go to court. He goes back to sleep and soon his alarm clock rings and it's time for him to go to his exams (pause). After his exams, Tabu goes to the dining hall with his friends (pause). Again he hears that voice: 'Go to court'. This time he feels he can't just ignore it. He goes to the court, though his friends think he is crazy and they all laugh at him (pause). Arriving at court, he can see that a trial is going on. Mr. Moyo is accused of having committed a murder (pause). When Mr. Moyo gives his testimony, he declares that there's a young man who can prove that he is not guilty. He was with him at the time of the murder and knows that he was repairing a broken window for a customer (pause). As he doesn't know the name of this witness, Mr. Moyo says 'May God's will be done'.

When Tabu hears this, he remembers Mr. Moyo and realizes that he is the young man. He asks the judge if he can 'witness' for Mr. Moyo. When the judge hears Tabu's testimony, he declares that Mr. Moyo is not guilty and dismisses the case.

## Bible Discovery

This compares the trial of Mr. Moyo with the trial of Jesus.



### Falsely Accused

Ask the children to describe what happened to Mr. Moyo. The same thing happened to Jesus, but the ending was different. Jesus was also accused of things that he did not do, but no-one came to his rescue, not even one of his friends.



Read Luke 23: 1 - 2

What did they accuse Jesus of? How did he react when the soldiers made fun of him? *Jesus does not say a word.* Ask the children how we react when we are falsely accused (sulk, ignore the friend, get our own back, say mean things).

*Why do you think Jesus was able to not take revenge?* He knew the truth and that was more important than anything else to him.



### Pilate gives in to the crowd



Read Luke 23: 33-43

Pilate also knew the truth, but he is more like us, he gives in under pressure. He didn't want to give in, but there was only one of him and so many of them and he really wanted to be popular with the people. Tell the children of a time you compromised on the truth so that others would like you.

### Step 3



#### Jesus sentenced to death

Jesus chose not to defend himself. He could have done, he could have called angels to defend him. Why? (*because he was the Son of God*). But he chose to die. Explain that he did this because he knew that his death was important for us. My sin deserves to be punished by death, but instead Jesus was punished for me.

Jesus' death means that I can be forgiven. And if I ask his forgiveness, he will give me the courage to be more like him. That means not taking revenge when I have the chance to get back at people who have wronged me.

#### Teach the Memory Verse

Teach the memory verse by drawing the outline of a sheep on a board or large piece of paper and write the words inside. Use actions to mime the words. Have the children repeat the verse, but after each repetition, leave out one more key word and replace it with the action.

Note: in some areas you will need to explain that sheep that are being shorn do not cry out even when it is rough and painful.



Divide the children into groups of 3. Ask them to share the things that they find difficult not to take revenge.

Then pray for one another in the group.

Invite the groups to act out some of the situations they talked about, where they offer forgiveness rather than revenge.

#### For the next lesson:

Prepare 3 children to rehearse the drama as you tell the Bible story.



## LESSON 9: JESUS THE KING LIVES AGAIN

**Bible Base:** Luke 24:13-35

The two sad unbelieving men meet with Jesus. He explains to them that it was necessary that he died. When Jesus blesses the bread, they recognise him and are filled with joy.

**Main Teaching Point:** Jesus is always with us – even when we are sad, mad, bad or glad.

**Preparation:**

Have children to rehearse the drama in the Bible Discovery below.

**Memory Verse:** Matthew 28:20

*Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Tell the story of Bridgit, a Scripture Union worker in Zimbabwe.

Bridgit had just left school and had worked so hard to pass her exams and she thought to herself that if only she could pass then she would feel good about herself. As she waited nervously for her results, Bridgit began to feel empty, as if there was something missing in her life. To fill in time, she went to work in a crèche in a country where they didn't even speak her language. The feelings of loneliness got worse and she wondered whether there was anything more to life than just passing exams and pleasing teachers. However, there was another girl who worked at this crèche, her name was Karen. There was something different about her. Bridgit was drawn to her and when she was with her she felt a kind of warmth and acceptance. There was something peaceful and safe about her, and she was kind to the children. As if drawn to the light, Bridgit asked her one day what it was that made her so different from the other workers. Karen smiled and told her of Jesus and how He alone can fill that emptiness inside. This is how Bridgit learned about Christ and became a Christian. Bridgit had seen Jesus in that girl – that is why she was attracted to her.

#### Bible Discovery

Ask the children to share about times when they have been unhappy or sad. Explain that they are going to watch a drama where 2 sad disciples of Jesus are walking towards their home about 12 kilometres outside of Jerusalem (illustrate the distance by comparing it with distances in your own surrounds).

##### Scene 1

Two children walk across the room. They are talking about Jesus but with sad expressions on their faces. They talk about how Jesus has been killed by wicked men and how that has destroyed their hopes. Before the next scene, ask the group if they would have felt the same way. Why did everything seem so hopeless?

##### Scene 2



The two continue walking but a third person joins them. He does not seem to know about the terrible death of Jesus and the disciples relate to him what has happened in the past two days. The third person explains to them that the Bible says that the Messiah would suffer. They arrive at their home and the stranger seems prepared to go further, but they insist that he share a meal with them. Before the next scene, ask the children who the 3rd person is. Explain how these disciples (like many others) had not understood what the Old Testament had said about the Messiah. They thought that he would come as a conquering King, not as a servant who would suffer and die. Many people today cannot accept that God would 'lower' himself like that to save his people. Emphasise that they did not recognise him or believe what the women had said earlier. I wonder how often Jesus has walked with us and we have not recognised him.

### Scene 3

Jesus and the two disciples are sitting at the table. As Jesus blesses the bread that one of them serves, they somehow recognize that it is Jesus. As they are talking excitedly to each other about their discovery, Jesus disappears. They run back with great joy to tell the other disciples.

Ask what caused the behaviour change in the two disciples. Point out that even after they no longer saw Jesus, they were filled with joy. They knew that Jesus' resurrection meant that he would always be with them. So it is with us: Jesus is with his followers in ALL situations: whether we are sad, mad, bad, glad.

The disciples on the road didn't recognise him until later. How can we recognise Jesus? The Bible says that He is with us all the time. Where is Jesus when we are sad? bad? glad? mad? Does Jesus come in the shape of another person as He did for Bridgit, or is He a small voice inside us?

### Teach the Memory Verse

Write the verse on a chalkboard or piece of paper. Explain that 'the very end of the age' refers to the end of this physical world and all that it contains.



Divide the children into groups of 3 and ask each group to share with one another how they see Jesus in one another. When is it difficult to show Jesus to other people?

After that, have a time of silent prayer that others would be able to see Jesus in them.

**For the next lesson:**

Ask 4 children to prepare Bible readings.

## LESSON 10: JESUS THE KING WILL RETURN IN GLORY

**Bible Base:** Acts 1:6-11; Matthew 24:30-31, 42-44.

**Main Teaching Point:** Jesus will return. We need to be ready and prepared for that day.

**Preparation:**

Ask 4 children in advance to be ready to read the following texts: Matt 24: 30-31; Matt 24:42-44; Acts 1:8; Acts 1:10-11.

**Memory Verse:** Matthew 24:11

*So then you also must always be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you are not expecting Him.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Sing the song: 'He's coming again' to the tune of 'We're together again'. The words (which can be written on the board if necessary) are as follows:

*He's coming again; Christ Jesus our Lord*

*He's coming again, with our reward*

*Something good is going to happen.*

*Something good is in store*

*He's coming again, with our reward.*

Ask the children: 'How would you know if the president was coming to your town?' (newspaper, band playing, dancing, TV?) Point out that in some places, a siren is used to proclaim the arrival of the President. Divide the children into groups to see who can make the most authentic/loudest siren noise. Ask why the arrival is preceded by the siren. (*because the President is an important person.*)

#### Bible Discovery



#### The Coming

The Bible talks about a different sound – that of a trumpet. (Children can practice the sound of a trumpet.) Like the siren, the trumpet can also be used to herald some important arrival or news.



Read Matthew 24: 30-31

Ask the children to pay special attention to the passage as you will ask questions about it as a mini-quiz. Keep the children in the groups they were in for sounding the siren.

- Who is the Son of Man?
- What will we see when he comes?
- What is going to happen?
- How many trumpets will be heard?

Point out that:

- The trumpet will be heard over all the earth from Japan to Malawi to America.
- Jesus will come in great power and glory.
- There have always been people who claim to be Jesus who has returned to earth. (Mention any 'local' examples that the children may be familiar with). But these people don't show any sign of the splendour and might of God. (Refer to the previous lesson on the Transfiguration to remind children of Jesus' glory.)
- When we say that Jesus is coming again, this means that his 'first' coming was when he came to die for our sins, and was raised again. When He comes again it will be to gather his people and to judge the world.

## Step 2

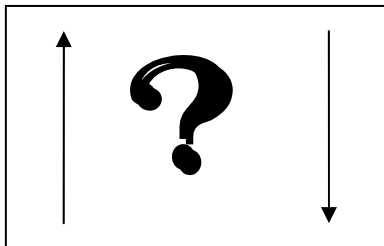


### The Timing



Read Acts 1: 10-11

Draw two arrows on the chalkboard or on paper, one going up, the other going down.



The arrows are to indicate what the angel was saying: *in the same way, as you saw him go (up), so you will see him return (down)*. Draw a question mark in between: when will Jesus return?

Ask the children how they feel when they are expecting a special visitor. How would they prepare? How do they feel if this visitor does not arrive? (Disappointed, impatient, tired). Children can be asked to mime their feelings to the group.



Read Matthew 24: 42-44

We don't know when Jesus is coming but we should not allow that to let us become discouraged. Instead, we must always be ready because He may come at any time.



### The Preparation

Read this story about being prepared.

The bell went for the end of school, and Mr Daniels reminded the children that he would be giving them a spot test in geography sometime in the next few weeks. The children begged him to tell them when it would be, but he said it was going to be a surprise and they needed to make sure they were ready and prepared. Mr Daniels was a teacher who was always full of surprises. He didn't seem to do things the conventional way, but one thing was sure, that life was never dull with Mr Daniels, although the children complained that he always made them work too hard. As Mary and Grace walked home that day, they talked about this test and Mary said that she hated the suspense of not knowing when it was going to be. Grace agreed. It was so hard to remember everything; how much easier it would be if only they knew when it would be. But inside they knew that Mr. Daniels was a good teacher, and was not trying to trick them. He always wanted them to do their best and he had a way of getting the best out of them. Mary and Grace agreed between them that they would be ready, whenever the test came, and every day they would test each other on the way to school. The day of the test came unexpectedly, but when it came Mary and Grace were not worried because they were prepared. After the test Mr. Daniels explained to the children that God can also be full of unexpected surprises and He also wants us to be ready for him, because He will return when we least expect it and we need to be at peace with him and with our friends. When we are prepared and ready we will not panic or be afraid. Mary looked at Grace and they smiled and they knew exactly what he was talking about.

### Teach the Memory Verse

Teach the memory verse by writing the words on a clock face, and as the hands point to a word, remove it. Children repeat until all words are removed.



Ask children to pray silently that they would be ready for Jesus' coming, and that the Holy Spirit would help them to 'clean up' those things that need attention.

**For the next lesson:**

Prepare name cards, memory verse, and child for Bible reading.



# UNIT TWO: OLD TESTAMENT KINGS

## LESSON 1: DAVID - THE SHEPHERD CHOSEN TO BE KING

**Bible Base:** 1 Samuel 16:1-12

**Main Teaching Point:** God knows who we really are. We don't have to try to impress Him.

**Preparation:**

Collect or make some simple props for the role-play: a shepherd's crook, a hat, a coat, some 'oil' (water) in a bowl, name-cards for each of Jesse's sons: Eliab Abinadab Ozzem Raddai Shammah Neth and David ....?

Prepare memory verse: Prepare a child to read 1 Samuel 16: 7b in the story.

**Memory Verse:** 1 Samuel 16: 7b.

*Man looks at the outward appearance but I look at the heart.*

**Bible Background:** Jesse was the father of eight sons (1 Sam 16: 10,11) but only the names of 7 are known (1 Chron 2: 13-15). Hence the use of a '?' for one of the name-cards – alternatively you can ask the children to suggest a name.

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Ask children: *What are your ambitions when you leave school?* It is likely that they will want positions that require higher education (teacher, doctor etc.).

Ask if there are any children in the group whose ambition is to be a shepherd or herd boy etc. Why not? *Because such a job needs no school education.* Can they imagine that the next President of the nation would be someone who is a shepherd now? Why not? If your ambition was to be the President, what steps would you take to prepare yourself for this?

#### Bible Discovery



#### A disappointment

Saul, the first king of Israel had disappointed God, not just once but many times. God had decided that he would be replaced by someone more willing to listen to His voice. The choice would be made now - though the person would not succeed Saul as king until the time was right.



## Step 2



### The Task

Tell the story from the point of view of Samuel. You as the leader take on the role of Samuel and direct other children to take different roles as the story proceeds.

Samuel was someone who listened often to the voice of God. He was a prophet and so it was his responsibility to share God's messages with other people. Sometimes that was not easy - he had been the one who had had to tell Saul that God would remove him as King.

But on this day, he had a much more pleasant duty. God had told him to travel to Bethlehem (Draw a signpost to Bethlehem on a chalkboard or piece of paper, put on a hat and coat for travelling, 'pack the oil' and begin walking around the room as you continue to tell the story.)



*It would take Samuel at least a couple of days to reach Bethlehem. But as he walked, he thought of the first task that lay ahead of him. First he had to find the home of a man called Jesse. It was one of Jesse's sons who would be the new king. God would tell Samuel which one and God would anoint him with oil. (Point out that anointing was a sign that the person was set apart for God.) Samuel was scared too – if Saul found out, he'd order Samuel's death!*

## Step 3



### The Candidates

*As soon as he arrived, Samuel prepared to worship God. He followed God's instructions and invited the city leaders and Jesse to join him. (Choose a child to be Jesse.)*

*Samuel asked Jesse to bring his sons. (Jesse chooses 7 'sons' – not including David – and gives them their name tags to wear.) Jesse presented his sons to the prophet. Samuel looked at this line of fine young men – and was very impressed.*

*He called out the firstborn – Eliab – and immediately thought that he needed to look no further for the new king. 'What a fine young man he is' thought Samuel. 'Surely this will be the new king!' But then he heard the voice of God. (Indicate that the child who has been chosen to read 1 Samuel 16: 17b should read God's words in a loud voice.)*

*So Samuel moved to the next son, Abinadab.. Again he thought that this was just the sort of person who would suit the crown of a king (Samuel places an imaginary crown on his head - but then removes it as he hears again the words of God.)*

Continue this for each of the remaining 5 sons: Samuel commenting on the fine attributes of the son he is 'inspecting' and the reader repeating God's words. Then shake your head and address Jesse.

*'Jesse,' said Samuel, 'are there no other sons of yours? All of these look like good men to me - but not one of these is the one whom God has chosen.'*



### The King

*And then Jesse remembered the lastborn. But surely Samuel couldn't be serious! David is so young and has no qualifications at all. He was not a soldier like some of the older sons; he didn't have their experience in life. The only thing they'd really trusted him with was to look after their flocks of sheep. Oh and he had some musical talent. But kings needed to know how to fight battles and rule people - not how to protect sheep and sing!*

*But Jesse called for David (send two of the sons to choose another child - give him the David name-tag). As soon as Samuel saw him, God said: 'This is the one. Anoint him.' (Anoint David with 'oil')*



### God's Choice

#### Teach the Memory Verse

Teach the memory verse by writing it on a folded heart shape. On the front, have the words; '*Man looks at the outward appearance*', and inside '*but God looks at the heart.*'

Ask the children: if God looks at the heart, what sort of things is God looking for? Write them on a heart-shape on a chalkboard or paper. Read Philippians 4:8 to help them but make sure they think about the meanings of those words e.g. 'true' means honest and not deceitful. Point out that these are not things that we see by looking at the 'outside' of a person. That only tells us if they are well-fed or rich or smart. They are not even the things that we see by looking at how successful a person is. That only tells us how clever they are or what a good school they went to. We are easily impressed by the way a person looks or how important they seem to be on the outside. God is not.

These are things that God sees and these are the things that we can aim for with God's help.



Sing this song to a well known tune eg 'Mine Eyes Have Seen The Glory'.


*You may not be a beauty and you may not be a star*

*You may not be a millionaire or drive a brand new car*

*To God it doesn't matter if you're thin or if you're fat*

*Or if you're poor or really rich*

*God's not impressed with that.*



*God sees right through the outside  
And He sees us deep inside  
He sees the sin that makes Him sad  
But we don't have to hide  
God loves us cause we're special and he wants us to obey  
Let's celebrate His love for us by living life His way*

**For the next lesson**

Prepare 3 children for drama



## LESSON 2: DAVID - THE KING-TO-BE AND HIS FRIEND

**Bible Base:** 1 Samuel 19, 20

**Main Teaching Point:** True friends are loyal to one another regardless of circumstances.

**Preparation:**

Prepare 3 children to act out the last 8 verses of chapter 20: Jonathan, David, the small boy.

**Memory Verse:** Proverbs 17:17

*A friend loves at all times*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Group discussion. Half of the group will discuss the Friends questions; the other half will discuss the Enemies questions. If the group is large, break into smaller groups.

#### Friends

- How can we make friends?
- What qualities do we look for in a friend?
- What are some signs of a good friendship?

#### Enemies

- How/why do some people make enemies?
- What things happen between enemies to reinforce the bad relationship?
- Can enemies become friends? Can friends become enemies? How?

#### Bible Discovery



#### Who's King?

Have a mini-quiz to review the main points of the lesson from last time when Samuel anointed David to be the next king.

Point out that while Saul had been told that God was replacing him, there is no indication that Saul knew that David was to be the next king or that God had told David when he would be crowned. So Saul continued to reign and David continued to follow God's ways.

In the meantime...

- David had such a good reputation as a musician that he was ordered to stay near Saul to pacify him when his dark moods overtook him: for this Saul was very grateful

- David had been the one to defeat Goliath and had so become very popular and admired: for this Saul was very jealous

Write the two words - gratitude or jealousy - on a chalkboard or piece of paper. Ask which is the stronger emotion. If children are unsure, ask them to think which of these 2 is more likely to provoke us to act? Are we more likely to be kind to someone because we appreciate them or to be cruel to someone because we envy them?

Like most of us, Saul found that the jealousy was stronger than the gratitude - and he began to hate David.

## Step 2



### The King's Son

When someone is being mean to you, how important is it that you have a good friend? Why?

Fortunately, David had a good friend - amazingly, it was the son of his enemy, King Saul.



1 Samuel 19: 1 - 7

Think about what the situation must have been like for Jonathan. Do you think he loved his dad? Did he love everything that his dad did? What choices did he have? *To side with his father and forget his friend. To side with David and risk his father's hatred (which may have meant -at the least - being disowned as a son and as a prince). To try to improve the situation.*

What does Jonathan do? Make sure that the children realise how brave it was of Jonathan to remind his father of the good things that David had done. What does this tell us about Jonathan?

## Step 3



### A True Friend

Although Saul had made a promise that he would no longer try to have David killed, he was too angry and jealous to keep that promise. David ran away to escape when he heard that Saul was still plotting to kill him - and once again, found his friend Jonathan. Jonathan could not believe that his father still had these intentions - but he listened to his friend.

Tell in your own words, the plan that Jonathan and David devised to let David know if Saul is still trying to kill him. Ask the 3 children (prepared beforehand) to act out the ending of the story (verses 35-42)

## Step 4



### Being a True Friend

### Teach the Memory Verse

Ask children what it means to 'love at all times'. Have them identify the ways in which Jonathan showed his love (include some of the ideas listed below if they are not raised by the children.). Compare this with the ideas that the first group recorded in the Introduction.

- He listened to David's fears. *Do we listen to our friends' concerns or do we just tell them not to be silly?*
- He took risks for David. Few of us will ever have to take the risks that Jonathan did. *But are we willing to defend our friends when others are tearing them down? How do we feel when our own friends don't stand up for us?*
- He did not try to put his own interests first. Saul reminded Jonathan that as long as David was alive, his own place as a future king was under threat. But Jonathan knew that he would rather have the friendship of David and of God than to succeed his father as King of Israel. *Do we think that being a true friend is more important than being number 1 in the group?*
- He was loyal. Regardless of the pressures, Jonathan kept his promise to David. Years later, David repaid his friendship by keeping his promise to Jonathan - but that is another story! *Can our friends trust us to keep our promises?*

## Step 5



### Being an Enemy

Look at the ideas about enemies that arose out of the discussion in the introduction.

Relate to the story of Saul. Why could he not accept the friendship that David was offering? Can we be like that?



Pray together that we will have the courage to be like Jonathan - a true friend and even someone who helps to bring peace between two who have a bad relationship.

**For the next lesson:**

Collect props for the drama

## LESSON 3: DAVID THE 'KING' WAITS

**Bible Base:** 1 Samuel 24

**Main Teaching Point:** We can trust God to defend us.

**Preparation:**

Props for the drama: a scrap of cloth, tables/ desks for a cave.

Draw large question marks on a chalkboard or on paper and write the caption questions for each step inside the question mark (see example below).

**Memory Verse:** Exodus 14:14:

*The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Imagine that at the end of Form 3, the head teacher of your school takes you aside and tells you that you would be the Head Boy/Girl of the school in the following year. But it has already been announced a few days before that Simon and Rachel would be the new Head Boy and Girl!

You arrive at school at the beginning of the next year. Simon and Rachel are in their positions as Head Boy and Girl. You feel disappointed and confused. The head teacher is a man of great integrity but the situation is unchanged. Does he intend to keep his promise? Is he able to?

To make things worse, Simon and Rachel are jealous of you and make your life miserable. They want you expelled from the school and seem to be prepared to spread lies - and worse - to achieve this. The head teacher does nothing.

But you have your own friends who believe that you would make a much better Head Boy/Girl. They want to form a delegation to the head teacher with a list of all the bad things that Simon and Rachel have been doing. More than that, they can counter Simon and Rachel's lies with a few lies of their own.

Ask the children: How do you feel about Simon and Rachel's tactics? How do you feel about the head teacher's lack of action? Is there any reason not to follow the advice of your friends? After all, it would achieve the head teacher's aim - it seems that he's just been too preoccupied with other school matters to remember his promise to you. Is this the time to take things into your own hands and at the same time, show up Simon and Rachel for their schemes?

#### Bible Discovery



**Has God forgotten?**

Remind the group that God had promised David the kingship many years earlier. Maybe when he had lived as musician in Saul's royal household, or when Saul had honoured him killing Goliath, the time had seemed close. But now it is an impossible dream to David! Not only has no progress been made towards becoming King - but because of Saul's hatred, David is now being hunted like an outlaw.

**ASK??:** Are there times when we feel as if God has forgotten us? Allow the children to share examples.

## Step 2



### Does God need a 'helping hand?'

One day, Saul receives word that David is hiding in a desert - and takes 3000 men to find him! Saul reaches the desert and stops to relieve himself in a cave. What Saul doesn't know is that David and his men are hiding in the same cave!

Divide the children into 2 groups (if the group is too big, choose a few children to act out the story in front of the whole group).

Group 1 is David and his men. They need to make a 'cave' out of tables and benches or chairs (or use any other furniture you have available) so that they are hidden. Group 2 (Saul and a few of his army) approach the cave and Saul goes inside.



1 Samuel 24: 4 - 8

As you read the story have the children act out the parts. This will need some direction on your part and some imagination on the part of the children e.g. have Saul's men standing guard outside - unaware of the drama taking place inside! Encourage David's men to add their own encouragement to him to take revenge and to offer to attack. When David feels guilty over his actions, how do his men react? As you read, give time for the children to interpret the story.

**ASK??:** How reasonable was the advice that David was given? Saul was God's enemy as well as David's. To kill him would have been to rid Israel of a leader who was deliberately disobeying God, and to proclaim as king, the man God had already chosen. Wasn't this exactly what God wanted?

## Step 3



### Whose advice should I follow?

So why did David NOT take the advice of his men? Re-read verse 5. *His conscience told him otherwise.*

Have you ever been in a situation when it seems that your friends are giving you what seems like good advice but you just *know* that it is wrong. We need to learn to follow that 'voice' within us - it is one of the ways that *God* speaks to us.

Share a personal testimony of how you have been convinced by your own conscience, even when others your friends were giving you opposite advice. How easy is it to refuse such pressure?

David's conscience told him that it was up to God to decide on the timing of the transfer of the kingship. Until then, David should wait and trust God's promise. He wouldn't improve things by trying to help God in a wrong way.

## Step 4



### Do I do nothing to oppose wrong?

Saul was threatening David completely unfairly. David had done nothing to deserve this. By obeying his conscience, David had refused to take revenge. But does that mean that Saul had 'won'?



Read 1 Samuel 24: 8 - 14

David made sure that Saul did *not* leave without knowing of his close escape from death. What sort of attitude did David display towards Saul? *Respect even love - notice especially the way that David addresses Saul.* Why did David confront Saul like this when he had refused to take revenge? *By letting Saul know that he had refused to take revenge, he was demonstrating his own wish to restore their relationship. Saul could now be in no doubt that to continue in this course of action would be very wrong.*

## Step 5



### When is repentance genuine?

Saul even acknowledged his wrongdoing (verse 17 and 18). He seems to repent but his repentance is short-lived. Not long afterwards, he is back to his old ways. Why? *He is too stubborn and fearful to change his ways; he is more concerned with preserving his power than listening to God.*

How can I tell when repentance including my own - is genuine? *By the change that follows it.*



Discuss Nelson Mandela's release from prison and his refusal to take revenge on those who had done him wrong. There must have been many who were also persecuted along with him, who strongly pressured him to take revenge but he withstood their influence.

But he has not tried to pretend that those things didn't happen or that they don't matter. Instead, he has spoken out strongly against the injustices and continues to work hard to correct them.



Pray for the courage to speak out against people doing wrong without seeking revenge and without thinking that only I am in the right.



**For the next lesson:**

Prepare a child for the introductory activity.

Practise telling Nathan's story

Prepare the memory verse

## LESSON 4: DAVID THE KING WHO FAILS

**Bible Base:** 2 Samuel 11,12

**Main Teaching Point:** God knows our failures - but still loves us.

**Preparation:**

Prepare a child for the introductory activity.

Practise telling Nathan's story with passion; simple props so that you look like a prophet

Prepare the memory verse

**Memory Verse:** Psalm 139:1&3:

*O Lord you have searched me and you know me....you are familiar with all my ways.*

**Bible Background:**

This lesson and the one following cannot easily be separated because David's sin, his repentance and God's forgiveness are part of the one story (just as they are for us.). The emphasis this lesson is that sin cannot be hidden from God and that God loves us despite our sin. Next lesson, the aspect of forgiveness will be explored.

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

As soon as you arrive in the room, put your papers on the table and begin to look through them as if you have forgotten something. Excuse yourself from the room for a few minutes. While you are out, one of the children who has influence in the group, disturbs the things on the table and spoils them - e.g. spills some water over papers. *This has to be pre-arranged.* He/she then asks the rest of the group not to say anything on your return.

Re-enter the room and when you 'discover' the damage, ask the responsible person to confess. No one does so. Express your disappointment, and point out that although you may not know the truth, God does because *He* knows everything about us.

#### Bible Discovery



#### God Knows

#### Teach the Memory Verse

Write the memory verse before the lesson on heart, head and hand shapes (to indicate our feelings, our thoughts and our actions).



Each time the children repeat the verse, remove one of the shapes until they 'know' the verse. Point out that God not only knows us but understands us: we cannot hide from Him and we don't need to because He loves us even with our sin. It is important at this point to inform the group that you had prearranged the episode at the beginning - if you do not, children will feel anxious about their responsibility in hiding the 'culprit'.

## Step 2



### Nathan's story

Explain that God sometimes sends us other people who are prepared to show us where we are doing wrong (sin) especially when we seem blind to it ourselves....like the prophet Nathan.

Throw a coat over your shoulders and carry a walking stick that you can also use to point for emphasis, and retell 1 Samuel 11 and 12 in the first person.

It's not easy being a prophet. I know that some people think that it must be exciting having the responsibility of telling out God's message but a lot of people don't want to hear what God wants to say to them. That's why a lot of people who call themselves prophets are liars - they just tell people what they want to hear. Oh no, being a true prophet of God can be very hard - sometimes very scary! There was once when I was terrified. God expected me to go to King David – a really popular king too - and tell him that God was very angry with him. I tell you, not too many people even tell the king that his crown is crooked so you can imagine how I felt. Didn't even know if I'd live to see the next morning.

God knew that it would be next to impossible for a king to listen while someone like me delivers such a strong message, so He gave me a story to tell. I've written it down.



2 Samuel 12: 1b - 4

Well David has always been a fair man and he's always had a soft spot for the poor. Probably because he spent so many years like an outlaw. You remember, when Saul was trying to kill him. Even though he became king after Saul's death, he has a heart for ordinary people. So while I was telling the story, I could tell that David was furious. I wasn't at all surprised when he stood up and shouted: That rich man deserves to die! At the very least, he will pay back 4 times as much as he has stolen from his poor neighbour!

And then I pointed straight at him (use your stick) and with all the courage God gave me, announced: YOU ARE THAT MAN! God has given you so much - family, kingdom, protection - and if you'd wanted more, He would have given you that too. And what have you done in return? You have broken His laws. You slept with Bathsheba and had her husband Uriah killed. You will be punished! You thought that you could sin in secret but your punishment will be public.

To be honest, I can't really remember the next few minutes. Maybe there was complete silence. But what I do remember was David's next words: I have sinned against the Lord. No attempt to lie or to cover up or to blame his advisers or to send me off to prison. He simply admitted his guilt. Imagine - the King of Israel admitting his sin like a child.

## Step 3



## David's Honesty and Understanding

David had committed the two sins that we probably think are the worst we could do: adultery and murder. Briefly retell the facts from chapter 11.

When God said that David was a 'man after His own heart', he certainly didn't mean that David was perfect, or that David was better than others. Can this story give us a clue? *David admitted his failure and did not try to pretend that it didn't matter. He was honest before God.*

David knew that there was no point in trying to deny his guilt because God knew everything about him. But David also knew that God loved him. Remind the children of the memory verse - it was David who wrote it.

Next lesson we'll see how truly sorry David was for the way he had grieved God by his sin and how kind God was.

### Step 4



#### God knows us

When someone rightly accuses us of some wrong thing that we have done, why do we try to cover up or lie? Refer to the drama at the beginning of the lesson. *We are ashamed. We don't want people to know what we are really like. Maybe we don't want to admit to ourselves that we are like that.*

Repeat the memory verse: God knows exactly what we are like, he understands and best of all, he forgives. Other people may find it hard to forgive us but God always will when we are truly sorry. He is just waiting for us to turn to Him.



Ask the children to close their eyes and think silently of how well God knows them. Assure them that while this may be a frightening thought when we have done wrong, it is also a very comforting thought because God continues to love us and to wants to draw us back to Him. If there is nothing He does not know about us, there is also nothing He will not forgive.

Encourage children to talk to God silently about the secret things they are ashamed of - knowing that He understands.

#### For the next lesson:

Select children to prepare the play for the Introduction.

Prepare drawings for memory verse.

## LESSON 5: DAVID THE KING IS FORGIVEN

**Bible Base:** Psalm 51

**Main Teaching Point:** God will never turn away anyone who comes to Him in true repentance.

**Preparation:**

Select children to prepare the play for the Introduction.

Prepare drawings for memory verse.

**Memory Verse:** Psalm 51:17.

*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart O God, you will not despise.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

**A Play:**

Mother gives the order for the children not to play too close to the house in case a window should be broken. One day, John disobeys, and while playing a ball game with his friends, he breaks a window. With great trepidation, John waits for his mother to return home. His friends give him ideas of how to approach his mother: tell her that the window was broken when they arrived home from school; or that someone threw a stone from the road; or say that he's been inside doing his homework ever since he came home and had not even noticed the broken window.

As soon as his mother arrives, John shows her the ball and cries: "Mummy, don't be cross with me. I played where you told me not to and now the window is broken. Please Mummy forgive me. I won't do it again."

With great tenderness, the mother wipes away her son's tears and forgives him.

#### Bible Discovery



**Review**

Use a quiz to remind the children of the main point of last time's lesson: David's sin, God's anger, David's acknowledgement of his sin.



**David's Choices**

Explain that after Nathan confronted David with his sin, it was up to David to decide what to do. What were his choices? (Write on a chalkboard or piece of paper)

- **Ignore:** He could refuse to listen to Nathan and continued sinning. After all, he was the king surely the rules for him were different than for others. No one tells the king what to do.
- **Pretend:** He could pretend to be sorry and keep away from Nathan for a few days, go to the temple etc. but then continue as if nothing had really changed.
- **Repent:** He could repent and change his wrong attitude and behaviour.

### Step 3



#### David's Decision



Read Psalm 51: 1 - 4 and 8 - 12

Out of the 3 choices that David had, which one did he take? What is repentance? (*It is not just saying that you are sorry – it is being so sorry that you change your behaviour*).

#### Teach the Memory Verse

Teach the Memory Verse with actions. The sacrifices of God (palms open and facing downwards) are a broken spirit (palms facing ground, head bowed); a broken and contrite heart O God, you will not despise (palms raised high in thanksgiving).

### Step 4



#### God's Response

Use the acrostic to the below to explain how, when we fail to obey God's rules, we need to repent before God. God will forgive because he is incredible in his love for us. He will give us victory over sin, and eternal life forever.

**F**ailure  
**O**bey  
**R**epent  
**G**od  
**I**ncredible  
**V**ictory  
**E**ternal Life

Refer back to the play at the beginning. The boy could have lied or pretended that it wasn't him. Instead he admitted it, and his mother forgave. God did the same with David.

What about us? What do we do when we've done something wrong? What is the easiest thing? What is the best thing? (have the children suggest real-life experiences).



Have a time of silence. Ask every child to be silent before God and think about the things that they have done that have hurt Him. Invite them to confess and receive God's forgiveness.

**For the next lesson:**

Prepare or practice drawing the pictures

Prepare memory verse shapes

## LESSON 6: SOLOMON - THE KING WHO MADE A WISE CHOICE

**Bible Base:** 1 Kings 3: 4-15

**Main Teaching Point:** When our main concern is to do what God wants, we can trust Him to give us many blessings.

**Preparation:**

Prepare memory verse shapes.

Prepare or practice drawing the pictures

**Memory Verse:** Matthew 6: 33

*Instead be concerned above everything else with the Kingdom of God and of what He requires of you, and He will provide you with all these other things.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Ask the children to close their eyes and imagine this situation: "Imagine rebels attack your village. You are running without shoes. You have not eaten for 2 days and your only water has been at rivers that you have passed. The last one was some hours ago and you are again very thirsty. You are frightened. You don't know where your family and friends are.

Then by some miracle, you are given the opportunity to ask for one thing - only one thing. Whatever you ask for will be given to you. What would you ask for?"

Write all the answers on a chalkboard or piece of paper without giving an opinion. *Food.. Clothes.. Water.. That the rebels are killed.. Peace.. Finding my father.* Point out that when we are faced with choices, we will give different answers depending on what is most important to us at the time. Hundreds of years ago, a king in Israel was faced with an important choice...

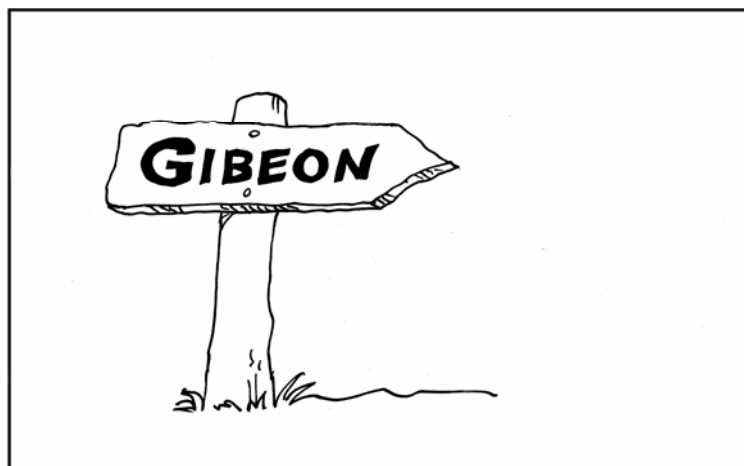
#### Bible Discovery



##### God's Offer

Show or draw Picture 1

Picture 1



Read 1 Kings 3: 4 and 5.

**ASK??** Why did Solomon go to Gibeon? What does this tell us about Solomon? *Solomon was someone who was ready to hear God speak.*

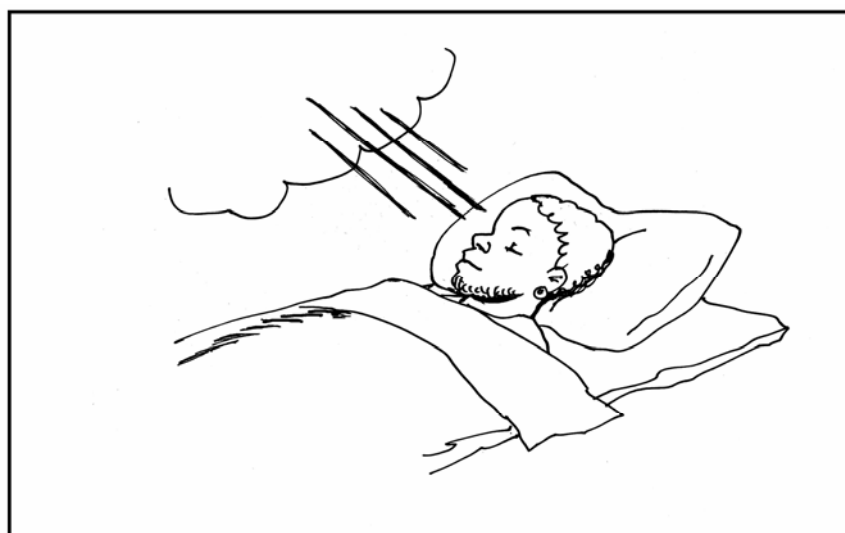
**ASK??** How can we be ready to hear God speak? How might we expect God to speak to us?



### Solomon's choice

Show or draw Picture 2

Picture 2





Read 1 Kings 3: 6 - 9.

List on the picture, some of the things that Solomon said to God. You showed your love to my father David. You have allowed me to rule even though I am young. I cannot rule without you. *Please give me wisdom.*

What do you think of Solomon's choice? What does it mean to be wise?



### God's answer

Show or draw Picture 3

Picture 3



Ask various children to come up and add to the picture as 1 Kings 3: 10 - 14 are read. By the end of the reading, the picture of Solomon should be surrounded by pictures or words that indicate long life, money and riches, a great army that defeats its enemies.

**ASK??** Why did God answer in this way? *Because Solomon's request was unselfish.*

**ASK??** Were there any conditions attached? *Continued obedience*



### Solomon's Next Step

What was Solomon's first action when he had been given his request?

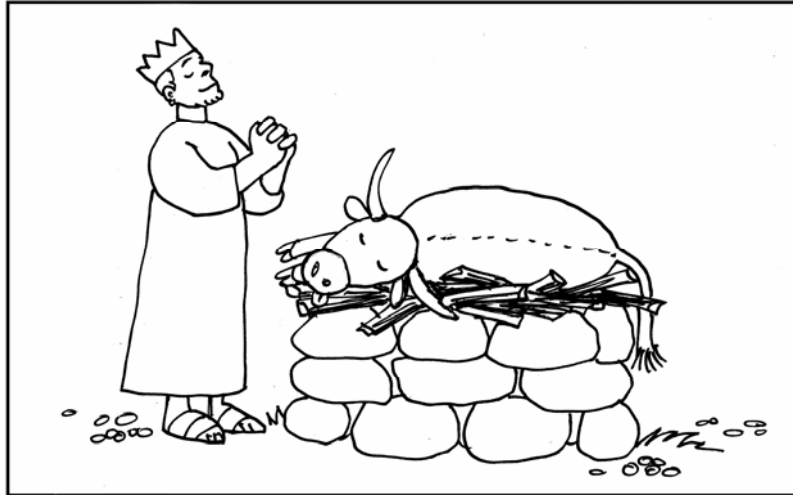




Read 1 Kings 3:15

Draw or show Picture 4.

Picture 4



### What about me?

Solomon is nothing like you and me! He was born into a royal family and people already took a great deal of notice of what he said and did. He was important.

So how can his story help me? I'm an ordinary person. How could I please God in the things that I ask from Him? Ask children to divide into groups of 3 and make two parallel lists:

- Things I want
- Things God would want me to have

### Teach the Memory Verse

Cut paper into cloud (dream) shapes, and write the words of Matt 6:33 in the clouds (one word per cloud). On the other side of these pieces, write the things children want from List 1 e.g. shoes, toys, education etc.

Point out that as we seek the things that are most important to God kindness, honesty, wisdom, purity he will give us more than we ask for. What might it mean when He doesn't give us everything on List 1? Does it mean that He has stopped loving us? No. Does it mean that we have been disobedient? Maybe - but not always. God gives us those things that will bring us the very best; not all the things on our List 1 will do that. We have to trust Him.



With the help of the pictures, challenge the children that..

- Solomon was ready to listen to God. Are we?
- Solomon's request was unselfish. Are ours?
- God gave Solomon much more than he asked for. Can we trust him to do the same for us?
- Solomon thanked and praised God. Do we remember to?

Sing the song 'Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God'.

**For the next lesson:**

Practise drawing/prepare the pictures.

Ask several children beforehand to practise the Bible readings.

## LESSON 7: JEHOSHAPHAT THE KING WHO PRAISED GOD

**Bible Base:** 2 Chronicles 20:1-30.

**Main Teaching Point:** We can praise God even in the most difficult situations, when we remember His goodness.

**Preparation:**

Practise drawing/prepare the pictures.

Ask several children beforehand to practice the Bible readings.

**Memory Verse:** 2 Chronicles 20:21:

*Praise the Lord; his love is eternal.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

**ASK??** Have you ever seen a war movie or read a war story? When it came to the final battle, how was the enemy defeated? Most children will share examples of large armies, spies, counter attacks, superior equipment etc.'

Be sensitive to children who have been in a real conflict situation.

Let's read about a battle that was won in a very different way.

#### Bible Discovery



#### The Battle

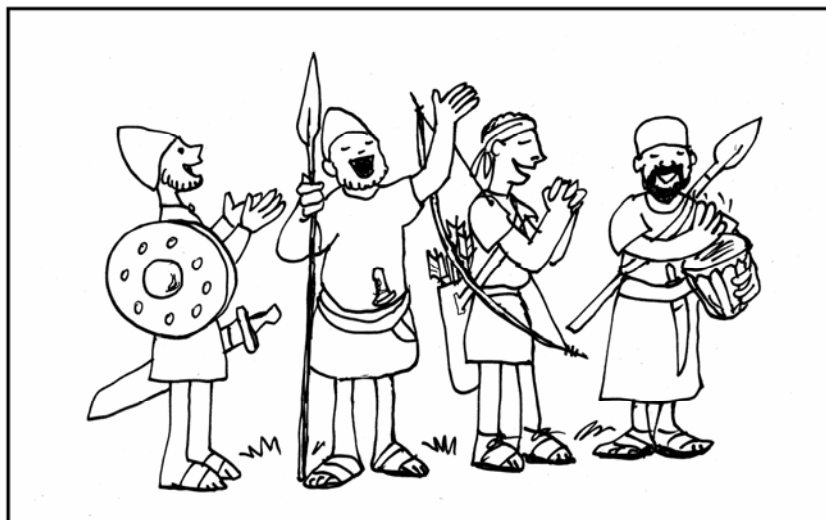


2 Chronicles 20: 20 - 24

Have a child read these verses. What was the main weapon of the Israelite army? *Praise*

Show or draw Picture 1

Picture 1



What was the effect of this praise? The enemy was confused. They fought amongst themselves so that the Israelites did not have to fight at all!

This is a difficult battle to imagine. Maybe we would imagine that this was only a very small battle and the enemy was weak.

So let's go back and read a few more details.

## Step 2

### The Enemy



2 Chronicles 20: 1 - 2

Have a child read these verses. Ask questions to reinforce the details:

- Who was the King of Judah?
- How many enemy armies had combined?
- How serious was the invasion?

## Step 3

### Jehoshaphat's 'tactics'

Divide the children into groups and have each group look up a different set of verses from 2 Chronicles 20 to discover Jehoshaphat's reaction to the news of the invasion.

- Verses 3-4; prayed for guidance because he was afraid; ordered a fast throughout Judah so that all could seek God *Show or draw Picture 2.*

Picture 2



- Verses 5-9; reminded God of His promises to Israel.
- Verses 10-12; reminded God of their problem and their weakness - no pretence.
- Verses 13-17; accepted God's unlikely message that they would need to do nothing in battle.
- Verses 18 -19; led the people in worship.

## Step 4

### The Battle Cry

#### Learn the Memory Verse

Instead of the army launching into battle, the choir led them! Can you remember the battle cry? *Praise the Lord. His love is eternal.* These are the words of the memory verse. Repeat them together in a loud shout! Still in the same groups, ask the children to use those words as a starting point to compose their own songs of praise. You could help them by...

- Suggesting that their words follow Jehoshaphat's example of remembering the good that God has done for them and the promises He has kept.
- Suggesting some well-known tunes they could 'borrow'.
- Encouraging that they sing it in their mother tongue/s.

Groups will need to find a space outside or in other room so that they can 'create' without disturbing each other.

Allow time for each group to share its song.



We are often faced with situations that are difficult. Let the children share some of those situations. *You might mention some situations that may be present which children do not feel free to share e.g. abusive families, bullying.*

Comment that these may seem like 'battles' to us because we are afraid and cannot see a way out. We find it hard to praise God.

Encourage the children to trust the promise in 2 Chronicles 20:17: 'Do not be afraid.... the Lord will be with you.'

Make a point of offering to talk and pray with children who are struggling with battles that are so tough that they find it *difficult* to trust God and even harder to praise Him. Be sure to remain behind quietly to allow children to come.

**For the next lesson:**

Draw a temple and cut it into pieces and use at the beginning of the lesson to put it together.

In advance, think of different project ideas you can do as a group in your community.

## LESSON 8: JOASH - THE KING WHO PLEASSED GOD

**Bible Base:** 2 Kings 12.

**Main Teaching Point:** That it pleases God when we are honest and fair with other people and when we work together as a community.

**Preparation:**

Draw a temple and cut it into pieces and use at the beginning of the lesson to put it together.

In advance, think of different project ideas you can do as a group in your community.

**Memory Verse:** Psalm 133 verse 1.

*How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity.*

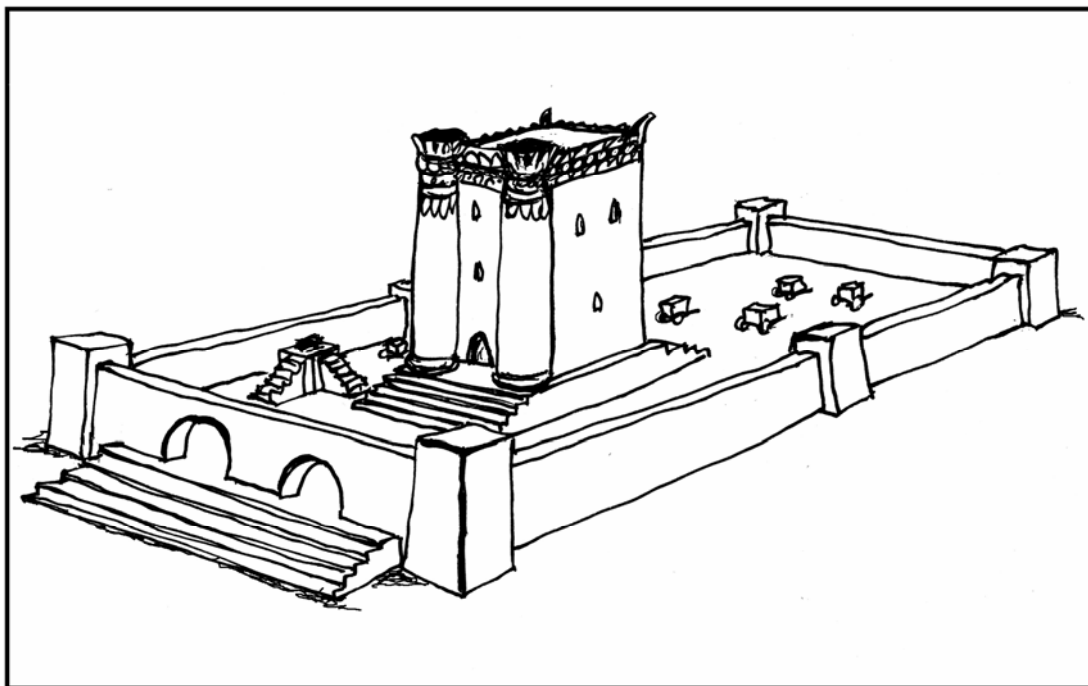
**Bible background:**

Past kings had neglected the temple. The people along with the kings had turned to worshipping heathen gods (like Baal), and there had been a terrible massacre of the Royal family. Joash was hidden by his grandmother and so escaped being killed.

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Draw a picture of the temple using the example below. Cut up and then scatter the pieces of the temple picture across the room and ask the children to search for them, piece them together and pin on a chalkboard, tape them to a piece of paper or use the floor.



## Bible Discovery



### The temple in disrepair

Show the picture of the temple, which has now been put together. Talk about why the temple had become so neglected.... *People were not interested in worshipping God, they had turned to other gods.*

Joash knew what to do – and did it! He had collected money to repair the temple, and had asked the people to do the work.

How long do you think Joash waited for the work to be done, before he got impatient? (2 Kings 12: 6) *23 years.* He had been so patient, and the money was collected, but it still wasn't done. Apply this to the children's lives. So often we know what we should do, but we don't do it. *Ask for examples helping at home, preparing for a test, telling the truth, doing kind things for others.*



### The Temple is repaired

Joash didn't just leave things as they were. He took responsibility and organised the workmen to do the work. He seemed to remember everyone. People respected him and were honest. He paid fair wages for the workers and treated them with respect. No wonder he was seen as a 'good' king and people looked up to him.

We don't have a temple to fix up, but what about things in our own lives that need mending?

How can we learn to make repairs in our lives? Who are we not fair to? Who are we not honest with? So often we know what we should do, but we find it so hard to do.



### Working together

Challenge the children to take responsibility for a 'helping project' as a whole group. Talk about it together.

It might be making a vegetable garden at school to help feed some very poor families in the area. It might be to collect old clothes for a children's home. You could take responsibility for making your school better in some way. You could offer to clean a local church or weed the garden. Whatever you decide to do as a group, agree together, and talk about all the ideas that the children bring up, because, even if they have unrealistic ideas, they can still be talked about even if you decide to do something different. Joash seemed to have a way of not upsetting the community.



## Teach the Memory Verse

Link arms together as a group and learn the verse. Divide the circle into two with half on the inside and half on the outside. Say the verse again with each group walking in the opposite direction. When you call 'Stop', those on the inside circle each say the verse to the person opposite them and the outside circle repeat the reference. Then change it around. You can add variety by having them clap hands with their partners etc.



This is a true story about Scripture Union in Rwanda:

Rwanda is a small mountainous country in Central Africa. It is a country that has suffered greatly in the last few years with a civil war, where two tribes have fought and killed.

Many people have been killed and there is hardly a family in this small, fertile land, that has not suffered a death. Beatrice, a Scripture Union worker has been put in charge of a centre where widows and orphans can come. In this centre they are welcomed and the widows are taught skills, so that they can earn money to pay for school fees. The children can come and get some food and have a wash. It is a place where Christianity is practiced and people can see that love can conquer hate and hurt and pain. Scripture Union in Rwanda is busy repairing the damage that the war has done, bringing love, where there once was hate, kindness, where there once was cruelty and skills, where there were none. It takes time and patience, money and a vision to develop such a program. Pray today with the children for this program and Beatrice, who herself has lost her husband, brothers, parents and her baby in this terrible war. What a testimony to repay evil with good!

### **For the next lesson:**

Collect newspaper cuttings of news on witchcraft, horoscopes, false prophets etc. Or invite a speaker to give personal testimony.

Bring equipment a witch-doctor might use – feathers, axes, spears, cow's tails, funny hat, sticks, etc.

## LESSON 9: MANASSEH - A LESSON IN SIN AND FORGIVENESS

**Bible Base :** 2 Chronicles 33:1-17

**Main Teaching Point:** For the children to know that God is a loving and forgiving God who does not hold our sins against us when we ask His forgiveness

**Preparation:**

Collect newspaper cuttings of news on witchcraft, horoscopes, false prophets etc. Or invite a person to give personal testimony.

Bring equipment a witchdoctor might use - feathers, axes, spears, cows tails, funny hat, sticks etc.

**Memory verse:** 1 John 4:4.

*The one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.*

**Bible background:**

Manasseh was king for fifty five years. He was Hezekiah's son. Hezekiah was an outstanding king, godly and good, but Manasseh was not. He reigned at a hard time when the countries around were a great threat and very powerful. The people started to worship other gods (Baal), thinking that the more gods they had, the more powerful they would be. Manasseh introduced Baal worship in the temple and diluted the truth. Although he repented, he did great damage.

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Present the items a witchdoctor might use.

**ASK??** Have you seen these things anywhere other than the tourist shops?

Point out that what is happening in the newspapers with regards to witchcraft, practicing sorcery, divination, and consulting mediums/ spirits, and sacrificing children to Baal also used to happen in Bible times. In 2 Chronicles 33:1-6, we read about a king of Judah called Manasseh.

#### Bible Discovery



#### Manasseh sins against God

Manasseh was 12 years old when he became king, and he did much evil in the sight of God.



2 Chronicles 33: 5 - 6

**ASK??** Why do you think that Manasseh 's actions made God angry?

Refer to the newspaper clippings and ask: What are some of the things done to-day which are similar to what Manasseh was doing?

Point out that we often think that things like horoscopes and charms look harmless. Why are they a danger? *Because we are relying upon somebody else other than God, to tell us the future and to protect us.*

## Step 2



### God punishes Manasseh

God warned Manasseh but he did not listen.



Read 2 Chronicles 33: 10 - 11

**ASK??** the children what action God took.

## Step 3



### Manasseh repents



Read 2 Chronicles 33: 12 - 13

Manasseh repents of his sin, and God forgives him.

**ASK??** Do you think it is fair that God would forgive someone so wicked.

What does this tell the children about the qualities of God? He is kind and forgiving, slow to anger and hopes the best for us.

## Step 4



### What about us?

It is easy to hear a story of someone like Manasseh and be proud because we're not as bad as he was! But any sin separates us from God – whether it be big or small - and so it needs to be forgiven. We too can repent and turn to God, and He will forgive us.

## Step 5



### What about fear?

It is easy to go back to old habits when we are under pressure.

What are the sorts of things that cause people today in Africa to return to traditional witchdoctors? *Fear of the family, fear of ancestral spirits, fear of being different, fear that God is not as powerful as traditional witchdoctors, fear of loss of cultural identity.* These are very real issues and the children need to know that these are struggles that we all go through and that life is not easy because FEAR and the power of EVIL are very real.

You could read them the following story about the power of magic, or you could tell them a similar story about someone in your own country. Mercy lived in a rural area in Malawi. She was 18yrs old and her parents had arranged a marriage with a family in another village. It was a family that had connections with the chief and the boy Nandi, was well thought of in the village. Lobola was being negotiated, but Mercy had met another boy called Wellmore, a boy that she had met at a Scripture Union camp. She was in a dilemma as she knew that if she didn't marry Nandi, her family would lose face and Nandi's family would be angry. She eventually plucked up courage to tell her parents and they invited Wellmore to visit them. They allowed Mercy to marry him and had a lot of trouble appeasing Nandi's family especially as they felt that they had been made to look foolish.

Nandi found it especially hard to forgive and went to the witchdoctor. He paid for a spell to be put onto the newly wed couple that their firstborn would die. Wellmore and Mercy were not aware of the revenge and the spell, but it happened as the witchdoctor had said. Their firstborn died at the age of 1yr. The pattern continued and they lost 3 more children. Then one day they discovered what had happened and knelt before God and cried out to Him as the only God of 'Power and might' the one who is greater than the power of darkness. Their next child was a son, they called him Jacob and he grew along with his other three younger brothers and sisters with no problem. Jacob came to love and serve the Lord and today serves on a Scripture Union committee. He is very aware of the power of witchcraft, but he also knows that the One True God of love is more powerful than anything that the witchdoctor can do or say. He knows that 'At the name of Jesus, every knee has to bow in heaven and on earth'.

Talk about the story together. Emphasise the power of God over the forces of evil.

### Teach the Memory Verse

Teach the memory verse by writing the phrases on pieces of paper to form a chain. Then as the children repeat the memory verse, break the chain and celebrate the power of God.



Make sure that the children understand that we are only able to resist sin and evil forces if we have Christ living in us. Spend time praying with the children for spiritual forces that seem more powerful than God.

Be prepared for children to come up to you after the lesson with stories and fears of their own. Invite them to do so.

**For the next lesson:**

Buy a few sweets.

Prepare the 4 pictures for display or practice.

## LESSON 10: JOSIAH -THE KING WHO OBEYED GOD

**Bible Base:** 2 Chronicles 34

**Main Teaching Point:** The word of God can change our lives when we read it and obey it.

**Preparation:**

Make sure that the room you are using is unusually untidy!

Hide sweets so that children will find them as they tidy the room.

Prepare 4 pictures of a book (see below), with the captions: the Book lost; the Book found; the Book read; the Book obeyed. Or practice so that you can draw these on a chalkboard or piece of paper.

**Memory Verse:** James 1:22:

*Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.*

**Bible Background:**

Josiah had had bad examples in his father and grandfather. Yet his heart was turned towards God. Not only did he find the lost Book of the Law in his cleanup of God's house, but he also ensured that:

- 1) it was read to all the people.
- 2) he led the people in their repentance and obedience in the light of what the Book had said.

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Game: a Treasure Hunt. Send the children to tidy up the room. Warn them that they might find some treasure that you have previously hidden. (sweets?)

#### Bible Discovery

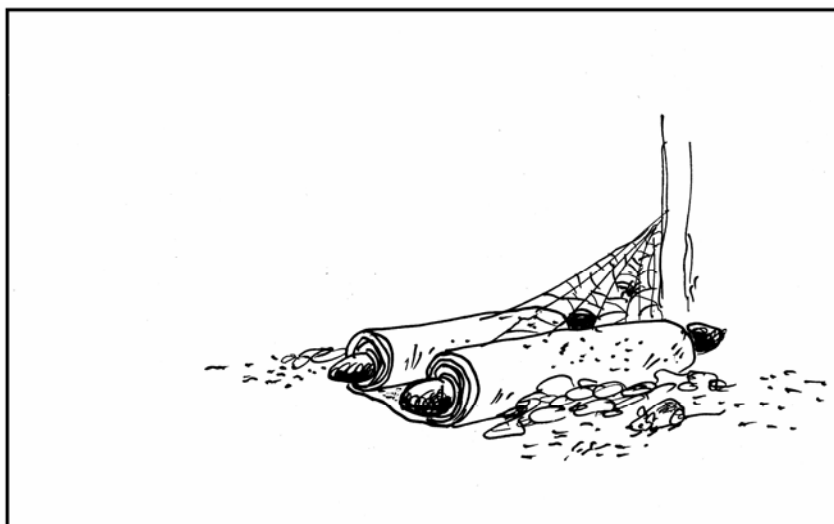


#### The Book Lost

Josiah was very young when he became King – just 8 years old. His grandfather and father had set bad examples for him, (read 2 Chron 33:21 to the children). Somehow in their time – or maybe earlier, the Book of the Law was lost. You may need to explain that the Book of the Law was that part of the Bible that they had at that time: the first 5 books.

*Draw or show Picture 1.*

Picture 1



## Step 2

### The Book Found

But Josiah did not follow those examples in his family.

**ASK??** How hard would it be to follow God when your family does not?

(You may divide the children into groups to discuss this; alternatively, invite children to share from their own experiences. Take them seriously – some children may need individual times of prayer and counselling with you later).

Instead, Josiah set about cleaning up God's house, and in that process, his workers found something very precious.



Look up and read 2 Chronicles 34:14 to find their discovery.

*Draw or show Picture 2*

Picture 2



**ASK??** What is so special about this book? What difference would it make if we did not have it?

### Step 3

#### The Book Read

Josiah immediately had the book read to him and it made him so ashamed of his attitude towards God.

*Draw or show Picture 3*

Picture 3



**ASK??** How did Josiah show that he was ashamed? Who else read the book? (read 2 Chronicles 34: 29 – 30).

## Step 4



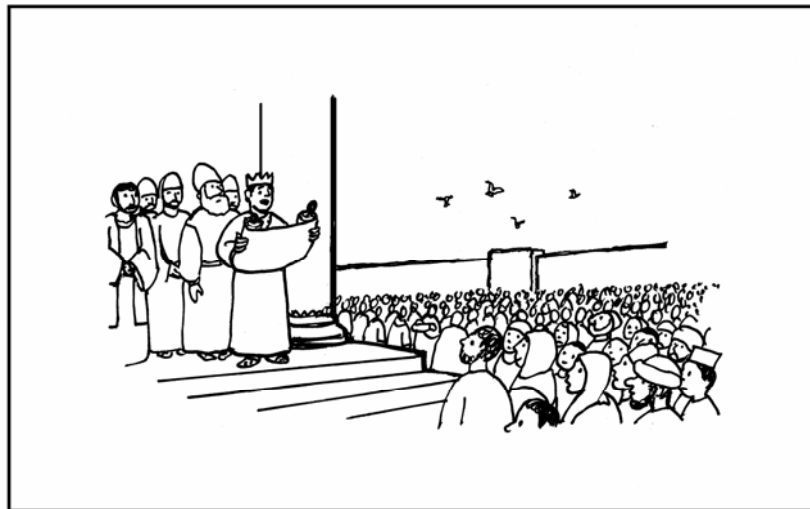
### The Book Obeyed



2 Chronicles 34: 31-33

Draw or show Picture 4

Picture 4



**ASK??** What difference will it make in your life if you obey the Bible? What are the parts that you find hard to obey? Accept answers without condemnation. Add your own experiences.

### Teach the Memory Verse

Use a mirror to illustrate its meaning. Make a dirty mark on your face. It is the same for us as we read God's Word. Demonstrate that you can look into the mirror and ignore what it 'tells' you. Or you can take its advice. The choice is clear - but it is your choice.

It is the same for us as we read God's word.



**Review the 'helping' project** that the group decided on 2 lessons earlier. Encourage it as an act of love for God.





Divide the children into pairs, each with a friend. Have them pray for each other that they would make the choice to obey the things that they read in the Bible.

**For the next lesson:**

Make 2 signs:

One has Father on one side; God on the other.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> sign has Father on the other.



# UNIT THREE: LIVING IN THE KINGDOM

## LESSON 1: ME AND MY GOD

**Bible Base:** Luke 15:11-24

**Main Teaching Point:** God loves me even when I've sinned. He wants me to always return to him.

**Preparation:**

Make 2 signs: one has Father on one side and God on the other.

The 2nd sign has Father on the front only.

Prepare 2 children for the roles in Step 2.

**Memory Verse:** James 5: 11

*The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

**ASK??** What would it be like to have the best dad in the world? What sort of qualities would he have? What would you do together?

Be sensitive to the fact that some children don't have fathers or their fathers cause them pain.

Point out that even the best dad will sometimes let us down e.g. break promises or punish us when we didn't deserve it.

#### Bible Discovery



##### The son leaves

Retell the story of the prodigal son, but set it in contemporary time and place. For example, talk about some of the towns that the children would know to describe where the son went; talk about the sorts of things that he would have wasted his money on now. Stop the story when the son is on his way home.



## The father loves

Choose two children to act as 'fathers'. Each will have a sign around his neck (see preparation).

*Child 1:* very cross, arms crossed, frowns, standing still (card with 'Father')

*Child 2:* looking down the road anxiously, then runs with open arms, smile on his face! (card with 'Father' and 'God')

**ASK??** the children to vote on which father would you be more likely to go home to? Why/why not?



## The son returns to the family

The son thought that he would just return to the family as an employee. Why? What do you think he deserved?

Finish the story up to the party that the father gave.

**ASK??** Why did the father not treat him as he deserved? Write the word 'sin' in very large letters on a chalkboard or piece of paper. Talk about how much the rebellion of the son must have hurt his father.

Then write the word 'love' in much larger letters and point out that even though the son's sin was great, the love of the father was even greater!



## God and us

**ASK??** for the 2 children who were wearing the signs to come forward again. Ask them to stand as they had before – and then turn over the signs. Only one of them is a picture of who God is.

**ASK??** How are we like the son? (*We do wrong things, we go far from God, we are ashamed to come back, we don't believe that God could take us back.*)

**ASK??** How is God like the Father? (*He is waiting for us to come back, he wants to forgive, he loves us so much.*)

## Teach the Memory Verse

Explain the words 'mercy' and 'compassion' by referring to the story.

Invite the children to imagine how disappointed God is when we sin. Then ask them to close their eyes and picture him with his arms open wide, running to meet them and forgive that sin.



**ASK??** each child to quietly talk to God now, thanking him for his love and forgiveness.

### For the next lesson:

Practise drawing the pictures.

Ask children to bring pencils and a piece of paper.

Buy a sweet or a fruit as a prize.

## LESSON 2: ME AND MY ATTITUDES

**Bible Base:** Luke 15:25-32

**Main Teaching Point:** It's easy to feel hurt or jealous, but it's not right to turn that into hatred and unforgiveness.

**Preparation:**

Practise drawing the pictures.

Ask children to bring pencils and a piece of paper.

Bring a sweet or a fruit as a prize

**Memory Verse:** Philippians 2:5

*Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

**ASK??** the children to draw a picture of a boy working in the fields (secretly ask one child to do a bad drawing). They can each do one, or you can select a few children to do a drawing. Tell them you are running a competition and there is a prize. Give them 5 minutes and then deliberately select the one that **is not as good as the rest**, and tell them that you like that one the best. Give that child a sweet.

**ASK??** the rest of the children...

- Did they think your choice was fair?
- Are we allowed to feel it isn't fair? (*Yes Jesus felt hurt and angry at times*)

Point out that feelings are not right or wrong - they are there to tell us something. It is what we do about our feelings that is important.

Tell the children of a time in your life, when things were not fair in your family, or when you felt that an older or younger sibling was favoured. How did you feel? Did you sulk? Did you get your revenge? These are normal human reactions. There are many stories in the Bible about people who felt hurt; can the children think of any? (like Martha, when she did all the work, and Mary sat at Jesus' feet. Jesus understood how she felt).

#### Bible Discovery

Have a quick quiz to review the main points of last time's story. Tell the second part of the story of the Prodigal Son, drawing the picture as you go. (It will be easier if you give the older brother a name.)



#### An unwelcome surprise

The older brother has been working hard in the fields. He's tired and hungry and looking forward to his evening meal, as he walks towards the house. *Draw or copy this picture of a Farm scene. Add 'smell' (zig zag) coming from the distance. The brother smells meat cooking and he thinks to himself 'That is very odd, we only eat meat for a feast. And what's that noise?' Add music notes to the scene.*

Picture 1 –



**ASK??** the children why they think he can smell meat cooking.

## Step 2

### The older brother fights back

When the brother hears that this is a celebration for the return of his younger brother, he is very upset and cross. *Draw or copy this picture of the older brother with his hands on his hips, and an angry expression.*

Picture 2



**ASK??:** the children why they think he is cross? How would they feel if they had a young brother and their father was giving him a party for no good reason? And then to make matters worse, they weren't even told about.

Talk about the things that the brother said in verse 29: were they right? Explain to the children that it *wasn't* fair – he had a good point!

### Step 3

**The father shows equal love**



the words of the father from verse 31

Point out that the father listened and understood how his son was feeling. And then he comforted and reassured him of his love. He loved both sons equally.

### Step 4

**God and us**

When we are hurt or resentful, we can tell God how we feel, just as the son did in the story.

But we also need to be able to leave our pain with him, so that it doesn't turn to bitterness or hatred. To ask God to help us not to be jealous.

What do you think the son did with his feelings? We are not told in the story, but he had a choice to accept his brother back or perhaps to sulk. What do you think he did?

### Teach the Memory Verse

Remind children that Jesus understands perfectly when things seem to be unfair – a lot of really unfair things happened to him too. Draw 2 lists on a chalkboard or piece of paper: how we want to react when things are unfair/how Jesus reacted when things were unfair. Point out the opposites: revenge/forgiveness; jealousy/kindness; anger/peacemaking.



Divide the children into small groups to share and to pray for hurt feelings and things that are unfair.



Let them pray for each other, that they may have the courage to do the will of God, even when they feel misunderstood and hurt.

**For the next lesson:**

Ask four children to prepare the play

Make 'talent cards'

Collect bottle tops.

Prepare the Memory Verse

## LESSON 3: ME AND MY ABILITIES

**Bible Base:** Luke 19:11-26; Matthew 25:15

**Main Teaching Point:** God has given each of us a gift. He wants us to use it to bring honour to him.

**Preparation:**

Ask 4 children to prepare the play in Step 1.

Make talent cards to involve each child.

Bring bottle tops to serve as minas (talents).

Prepare the memory verse.

**Memory verse:** Matthew 25:15a.

*His master replied: Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Divide children into small groups and ask them to complete a short activity. For example, to collect 5 things that will together make a picture of their choice. Point out that some people had the ideas, some did the collecting, some made the picture. Everyone was important.

#### Bible Discovery



##### The Parable

As you read out Luke 19:11-26, have 4 children act it out (*they have been prepared before*). Use bottle tops for minas (talents).

Discuss together the master's reaction. Why was he generous? Why was he angry? Make sure that the children realise that he expected the servants to use what they had – the size of what they were given was not important. What was important was what they did with it.



##### Our Talents

On some cards/papers, write out some gifts or talents that children have. For example, playing football, being strong, good at schoolwork, a loyal friend. Make sure that it is a mixture of 'skills', and attitudes.



Divide the children into groups, and give each group a card. Have them discuss how that gift could be used well. How could it be used badly?

For example: playing football. You could tell other team members about Jesus, keep your body fit, show good sportsmanship, OR you could be proud of your talent, play unfairly just to win etc.

**ASK??:** the children what a 'talent' is. (*any ability or skill that is useful*)

Who has them? (everyone) We may not think we are particularly good at anything but God has given everyone a gift.

**ASK??:** What are we supposed to do with them? (*use them to help others and to bring honour to God*)

Choose some of the cards and ask how those talents could be used to bring honour to God.

## Memory Verse

Have the memory verse written out on a very large piece of paper. Cut it into about 6 pieces before the lesson. Choose 6 children to come and assemble the pieces. Explain that being faithful means to use what you have been given to the best of your ability.

As children repeat the verse, remove the pieces, one at a time.

Leave the one with the words 'a few things' to the last. Now ask children to say the verse, replacing 'a few things' with their particular talent.



Have children find a friend/partner, and talk together about what gift they think they have – something that they are good at and can be used to bring glory to God in their lives. Pray together that God will help them to use it wisely.

**For the next lesson:**

Collect a salt shaker and any food that needs salt.



## LESSON 4: ME AND MY COMMUNITY – BEING SALT

**Bible Base:** Matthew 5:13

**Main Teaching Point:** We can make a difference amongst our friends and communities.

**Preparation:**

Bring a salt shaker, and a type of food which needs salt (boiled egg?)

**Memory Verse:** Philippians 2:13

*God is always at work in you, to make you willing and able to obey his own purpose.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

##### Tell the story of Lucy and the List

Lucy was a very popular girl in the grade seven class. She was very bright, with an attractive personality. She was captain of the athletics team. The others in the class admired her, and she was also popular with the teachers. Naturally she was a prefect too.

One day when Lucy was bored during a maths class, she had what she thought was a really good idea. Why not make a list of all the names of the children in the class and comments beside each one? So she began making notes: Mary had torn clothes; Luke was very slow at schoolwork; Hope was too shy; Miriam never had sweets to share; Peter was so clumsy at games....the list continued.

When the bell rang for lunch, she gathered her friends together, and explained her idea. It was about time, she said, that they were honest with each other. So let's start by writing down comments about each other - it would be such a good way of getting to know one another better. Since it was Lucy's suggestion, everyone agreed. She said that since it was her idea, she would begin.

The first child on Lucy's list was Mercy. She was rather overweight and shy. Most of the class quite liked her though, because she was kind and not bossy. Lucy thought carefully about putting down her comment, and then wrote: 'Mercy is a fat cat. She sweats a lot and eats a lot. We could help her most by not sharing our lunch with her'. Lucy was quite satisfied with what she had written. She carried on writing comments about each girl none of them were kind or helpful. She passed the list first to Linda, who giggled when she saw the first comment and tried to write something equally clever. You see, it was important for her to win Lucy's approval. Finally she wrote down: 'Let's make a diet plan for Fat Mercy and also make her run around the field each day'. So the list continued around the class, and each girl thought of something to add until the list came to Hope.

Hope said something very courageous at the end of the list. It was this... 'I admire you Lucy because you are a leader but I think that this list was not a good idea'.

It was very brave for Hope to write what she did, and although Lucy was furious with her and sulked, the other girls inwardly admired and respected her because she had stood up against what they knew was wrong.

Jesus challenged his followers stand up for what they knew to be right - even when it was really tough to do so. He explained it like this.....

## Bible Discovery

### Step 1



#### Salty Food

Have a couple of children taste the unsalted food, and ask them what could be done to improve it. Show the salt-shaker. Ask the children what difference the salt makes while it is still in the shaker. What must we do to the salt? *We must put it in the food.* What if the salt is dirty or tasteless? *It becomes useless.*

Write on a chalkboard or piece of paper: **Salt makes a difference.**

### Step 2



#### Being Salty Children

Refer specifically to the story of Lucy and Hope.

**ASK??:** How did Hope make a difference not only to Mercy, but to Lucy and the other girls in the class?

Remind the group of the other children on Lucy's list and the comments that she had made. How would these sorts of comments affect the children who are hurt?

How can we be 'salt' in making a difference in the lives of children who are in danger of being hurt in ways like this?

Divide the children into groups to discuss how they can make a difference to:

- A child who is being bullied.
- A child who is mocked because of the way she looks.
- A child who is rejected because never has anything to share with others.
- A child who is laughed at when they fail at school or sport.

Write on the chalkboard or a large piece of paper: **I can make a difference.**

### Step 3



#### It's not easy being salt!

Refer to the part that Hope played in the story. What risks did Hope take? Is it easy to be 'salt'? Sometimes it's scary to stand up for truth or to refuse to do wrong and it's tempting not to do so. Friends might laugh at us or exclude us. Ask children to share testimonies from their experience. But if we don't stand up for what we know is right, we'll become like useless salt.



Read verse 13b to the children.

Point out that, just as salt needs to perform its 'work' of making a difference to the food, so Jesus' followers need to be at work making a difference to the people that are around them. Otherwise, we are 'useless' to Jesus.

### Teach the Memory Verse



Read together Philipplians 2:13

Point out that 'obey his own purpose' means to do and be what He wants, and that God will give us the courage that we need to 'be salt'.



Have the children read together the two statements that have been written on the chalkboard or on paper, shouting the second one with confidence to indicate that it is God who will give us the courage that we need.

Challenge them to think of practical ways in which they can make a difference in their schools or families.



Pray together that they will trust God to help them do so.

**For the next lesson:**

Collect candles, matches and a small bowl.

Prepare memory verse.

## LESSON 5: ME AND MY COMMUNITY - SHARING THE LIGHT

**Bible Base:** Matthew 5:14-16

**Main Teaching Point:** We can share the love of God with others through the good that we do for them.

**Preparation:**

Bring candles and matches; a small bowl or tin

Prepare the memory verse.

**Memory Verse:** Matthew 5:16.

*Let your light so shine before men, that they can see your works and glorify your father who is in Heaven.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Take the candle and light it. (*Observe safety rules*)

Imagine that it is nighttime. Where would we put a candle for effective light - under a basket? under a table? hide it away? Demonstrate as you mention these things. We would put it on top of the table.

Put a small bowl or tin can over the candle and leave it for a few seconds. What has happened? The light has gone out.

Write on a chalkboard or piece of paper, 2 things we have learned about light.

#### Bible Discovery



#### Being Light

Divide the children into discussion groups of about 6 people.



Read together Matthew 5:14-15.

**ASK??:** what Jesus might have meant by those words.

- What does it mean to be the 'light of the world'?
- Who needs to see the light?
- How can we show the light of God to others?
- What difference might it make?

As the groups report back, point out that;

- God's light means the love, truth and forgiveness of God.
- For many people, even some children, the world can be like a very 'dark' place: frightening or lonely. They need God's light because God can make them safe.
- Jesus said that we are the light of the world. Those of us who follow Jesus are to show the light of God to others so that they can see it; not hide it or keep it to ourselves. We can do that by showing in our actions and words what Jesus is like.



### **Peter's Story**

Peter lived in a very difficult family. He was 12 years old and had an older brother and sister. His parents were always arguing and fighting. One day, his father beat up his mother and ordered her out of the house. His mother didn't go, but she was very unhappy. Sometimes she was so upset that she was hard and upset on the children. They were all unhappy.

Then Peter started going to a Christian Club at his school. He saw how people cared about each other there in a way that he had never seen before. And learned that a child could be a big power for good in a home. He decided he would do his very best to live in a good and loving way at home. When he felt angry, instead of shouting at his mother, he told her he was sorry and understood how she felt. He began to do tasks at home without complaining. Of course, he wasn't perfect but he tried. Everyone saw the difference. Soon the family began to change. His brother, his sister and his mother all decided that it would be better if they also followed God's command to love. They told God that they were sorry for the way they had been living and asked Jesus to forgive them. They asked God to help them and started going to church. All this made the father even more furious but the home was still much happier. After 2 long years, even the father changed. Today he sings in the church choir. The family is happy together. It was Peter, the smallest child, who made the difference, by sharing the light of God's love in his family.

**ASK??:** questions to ensure that the children understand how Peter showed God's light to his family.

- Who showed the light of God's love to Peter?
- What did it mean for Peter to be the 'light of the world' in his family? Was it easy?
- What difference did it make?
- Do you think that this could be a true story?
- Can you think of children in the Bible who made a difference? (*boy with his lunch, the servant girl for Naaman's wife.*)
- How does the way you act makes a difference in your family or neighbourhood?



### **Showing God's Light**

Write the memory verse on three cards.

**ASK??:** the children how Jesus suggests that we show God's light to others? *By our good deeds - like Peter.*

List on the back of the cards, some of the good that we can do for other people.

Point out that when we make the effort do good for others, they will see that it is God who is in us and worship Him.

Remind children of the candle that went out when it was hidden under the bowl. When we won't share the love of God with other people, soon they will no longer see Jesus in us at all. The light has gone out.

## Step 4



### My Story

Some of us live in difficult situations like Peter; others live in very happy situations. But all of us know someone who needs to see the light of God so that they will not feel so lonely and lost. Maybe it is a relative or neighbour or someone at school (even a teacher).

**ASK??:** each child to write on a piece of paper the answers to these questions. This is to be done privately.

- Who do you know who needs to see the light? *Write a name.*
- How can you show the light of God to that person? *Write one or two 'good deeds' you could do for that person to help them know that God loves them.*
- What difference might it make?



Lead the group in silent prayer as each child prays for the person on their paper and the opportunities to 'be light'.



Sing the song: 'This Little Light of Mine'.

Light candles as visual aids, or have children use fingers to do the actions.

#### For the next lesson:

Prepare enough pieces of paper for the matching activity in Step 1.

Prepare the memory verse words.

Arrange for multiple Bibles.

## LESSON 6: ME AND MY VALUES – THE ‘BE’ ATTITUDES

**Bible Base:** Matthew 5:3-10

**Main Teaching Point:** We can be truly happy regardless of outward conditions, if we value the things that God values.

**Preparation:**

Prepare enough pieces of paper for the matching activity in Step 1.

Prepare the memory verse words.

Arrange for multiple Bibles.

**Memory Verse:** Psalm 112:1.

*Praise the Lord. Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who finds great delight in His commands.*

**Bible Background:** In God’s eyes, ‘blessed’ means: to be congratulated, envied, imitated, to be spiritually prosperous, to have joy and satisfaction in God’s favour, regardless of outward conditions. In other words, someone may not have many things materially or physically, but they can be blessed/happy because they are in a right relationship with God. That is what is most important in life.

‘Mourners’ are those who are sad about sin – their own and that around them.

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

**ASK??:** How many of us hear people saying “That person is very blessed”? How would you describe a person who is truly ‘blessed’? List - or draw - answers on a chalkboard or piece of paper.

Explain that many people would consider that a person is blessed if they have a good education, money, career, house, a healthy, obedient family etc.

Most people value these things because they are the things that make us successful or important.

#### Bible Discovery



#### Jesus’ definition

Jesus didn’t use those definitions above to describe a person who is blessed. Matthew tells us Jesus’ definition.

Divide the children into small groups. Give each group a large piece of paper with the following words/ phrases on it.



What God Values

What God Promises

Each group is to read Matthew 5:3-10, and then to draw lines to match the phrases on the left with those on the right.

Collect the papers and exchange them. Use a chalkboard or large piece of paper to record the answers from the groups.

Alternatively this activity can be done as a whole group activity on the chalkboard or large piece of paper if necessary.

Point out that they don't have to be older or important to have these attitudes.

## Step 2



### The BE attitudes versus the DO attitudes.

God's values are very often the opposite of the world's values.

How do you feel when people keep telling you that you must 'be a winner' even when you are trying your hardest but not succeeding.

Jesus looked for people who were very ordinary – like us! He looked for inner qualities. **ASK??:** the children what these qualities were? *Gentleness, love for others, respect for others, people who listened.*

**ASK??** the children if they can think of people who Jesus spent time with although other people might have ignored them. (the Samaritan woman, Peter, Mary and Martha, Zacchaeus). Why did Jesus do that? *Jesus is interested in who we really are, not how clever or rich or popular.*

**ASK??** the children to think of someone they know who is just very nice to be around: they don't make you feel bad or guilty, you can talk to without feeling lectured at. They always bring out the best in you. It might be a friend or a teacher or leader or someone in your family. These are people who have learnt to BE happy with who they are and don't depend on 'outward appearance' or do things to get approval

## Step 3



### A story

More than 100 years ago in England, lived a woman whose name was Gladys and she was very poor. She left school when she was 12 years old and went to work as a maid to a big grand house. No one noticed her very much.

But inside she stood tall. She went to church and felt that God was calling her to be a missionary in China. When she told the elders at her church that she wanted to go to China, they all laughed at her 'What, an uneducated girl like you... no way'. But Gladys was not put off. She had a deep sense of peace inside her that did not depend on what others said. She thought to herself 'If no-one will pay for me to go, I had better save up and go on my own'. So that is exactly what she did. She earned very little, but each week she would put a little money away. Then after many years she went by ship to China. People said she would never be able to learn Chinese as it was such a difficult language, but again she was not put off. She went to China and she worked with abandoned little girls. People in China at that time didn't want girls, they only wanted boys and so girls were often abandoned. Gladys became very famous and a film was made about her and a book was written. She knew that God had a special plan for her life and had some very good BE attitudes.

### Teach the Memory Verse

Psalm 112:1 can be divided into these six phrases.

Praise the Lord.

Blessed is the man

who fears the Lord,

who finds great delight

in His commands.

After the children have learned it together, divide them into 6 groups. As you point to them in random order, they must stand and repeat the next phrase, then quickly sit before the next group's turn.



Being blessed means having the true happiness and joy that comes from knowing God and doing what He asks. Invite the children to suggest songs that would remind us of this e.g. 'The joy of the Lord is my strength', 'Happiness is to know the Saviour', 'I have the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart'.

**For the next lesson:**

Make signs with the words: food, clothing, education, money, sport, friends.

Prepare 2 children for the Bible reading.

## LESSON 7: ME AND MY GOALS

**Bible Base:** Matthew 6: 25-34

**Main Teaching Point:** God will look after all the worries that we have if our goal is to seek Him.

**Preparation:**

Make signs with the words: food, clothing, education, money, sport, friends.

Prepare 2 children for the Bible reading.

**Memory verse:** Psalm 37:4.

*Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

##### Game

Play any game where the aim is to reach a particular goal – e.g. for each team has to capture a flag from another team. Teams can defend the flag. After the game, talk about how important it was to reach the goal. It meant that some people became angry, others broke the rule – reaching the goal was the most important thing.

#### Bible Discovery



##### What's important?

Write the 6 words; food clothing education money music friends on a chalkboard or piece of paper. Divide the children into small groups and ask them to rank the words in order of importance.

Give the 6 prepared signs to different children to hold. Now ask the whole group to arrange them in order of importance, according to their small group discussion. Talk about the differences. For example, when you are well-fed, food may not be important, but when you are hungry it is **very** important.

Point out that we all have goals. And that you can usually tell what someone's goal is by how he lives his life. For example: What is the goal of a beggar? *Food*. What is the goal of someone who is always buying sweets for other children? *Popularity/friends*. What is the goal of someone who trains hard at football every day? *To be a sports star*.



##### In Jesus' time

Many of the people who listened to Jesus were the poor people. Why do you think that these were the ones who spent time with him? He cared about their everyday lives. He was also poor. Ask the children to listen for 2 'pictures' that Jesus painted to explain why we shouldn't worry about the daily needs of life. They are pictures of things that we see every day. Have 2 prepared children read - (1) Matthew 6:26 and - (2) Matthew 6:28-30. Ask two children to come to front and draw a picture on the chalkboard or on paper that explains: Why we shouldn't worry about food? Birds Why we shouldn't worry about clothes? Flowers

**ASK??:** the children what Jesus meant by each of these pictures. That people are much more important to him than birds or flowers – we can trust him to care for us.

### Step 3



#### Putting God first

Refer again to the rankings of the cards in Step 1. Jesus says that the most important goal has been left out.

**The Right Goal** game: divide the group into 2 teams (or if the numbers are large, choose two teams of ten. All those chosen should be those who have been present when the group learned Matthew 6:33). Line them up in front of the room as for a relay. Each team has a piece of chalk. The 'goal' is to write the words of the verse on the chalkboard or on a large piece of paper– each team member writes a different word. The rest of the group members can help by shouting out the words and the spelling.

### Step 4



#### A story

Tell the story of George Mueller who ran an orphanage for many children. For all their needs, Mueller trusted God completely – he had no regular source of income. One day, all the children and their carers sat down for a meal knowing that they had no food at all in front of them. They said grace, thanking God for what he would provide. Just as they finished, there was a knock on the door. There was a baker with a whole load of bread!

#### Teach the Memory Verse

Ask children to share testimonies of how God has provided needs when they have put him first. Share your own experiences. Divide the children into groups and they will put the words of the verse to song or rap.

#### For the next lesson:

Prepare 2 children for the introduction activity.

Prepare memory verse.

## LESSON 8: ME AND MY GOOD DEEDS

**Bible Base:** Matthew 6:1-4

**Main Teaching Point:** When we do good it is not so that other people will notice. We do it for God.

**Preparation:**

Prepare 2 children for introduction.

Prepare memory verse.

**Memory Verse:** Matthew 6:4.

*Your Father who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Child 1: comes into the room very proudly with a long list! She should not read what is below, but tell it in her own words. After each 'good deed' she mentions, she should be sure to say how grateful the person was.

You'll never imagine what I've done this week! I have been just so good! On Sunday, I put twice as much in the church offertory plate as I usually do – probably more than anyone else! I hope the minister noticed! On Monday, I helped my neighbour to do her shopping because she has broken her arm, and can't carry things. She was very grateful. And on Tuesday, there were some street children I passed outside and I gave them some bread. They thanked me and said 'God bless you! And on Wednesday, I cleaned the house of my sister because her maid is sick and she needed to go to work. Even her husband rang me to say thank you. Then on Thursday, I looked after the children of a friend while she went to visit her mother. She gave me some maize as a thank you present. And on Friday, I baked a cake for the children in my son's class because it was his birthday. They said it was the best cake they'd ever eaten. Well, today is Saturday, and I'm off to help to sew uniforms for the church choir. I don't know what they'd do without me at that church! She walks busily out of the room.

Child 2: reads slowly Matthew 6:1-4

#### Bible Discovery



#### Group discussion

Emphasise that these were good deeds. But what is the problem according to Jesus? She has done it so that people will notice. In groups, have the children list all the things that the woman did, and the reward that she received or hoped to receive.

## Step 2



### Doing good when no one is watching

Which is easier?

- To pick up litter when you are alone or when the teacher is watching?
- To give a coin to a beggar when you are with a friend or when you are alone?
- To play with your baby sister when your parents ask you or without being asked?
- To play fairly when you know the referee is watching, or to play fairly - without cheating - all the time?

It is much more natural to do good when someone else notices. Why? Why is it easier to avoid doing good if no one is around?

We all like to be noticed – but we forget that someone notices us all the time – even when we are alone.

### Teach the Memory Verse

Have the words 'hidden' around the room on pieces of paper. As the children find them, they come to the front, and the rest of the group tries to put them in the right order.

## Step 3



### The rewards!

Go back to the list in Step 1. Ask the children what sort of reward the woman got.

Go back to the scenarios in Step 1: what sort of reward do we get if we do good things when we know we are being watched? *Their approval, thanks, maybe some recognition or gift.*

God has said that he will reward us when we do good that no one else sees. How might he do that? Point out that these rewards are the ones that last.

So the question is: whose reward do you most want?

Share a testimony of God's faithfulness when you have felt unnoticed.



Ask each child to write on a scrap of paper the name of one person and an act of kindness that they could do for them without being noticed. Tear up the paper because it is a secret.



Now pray that the children will have the courage to do what they decided.



**For the next lesson:**

Prepare fake money for introduction.

## LESSON 9: ME AND MY POSSESSIONS

**Bible Base:** Luke 12:13-21

**Main Teaching Point:** make God your priority, not the things that you own.

**Preparation:**

fake money for introduction.

**Memory verse:** Matthew 6:20.

*Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy and where thieves do not break in and steal.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Play any game that the children enjoy, and have as prizes, pieces of paper that will represent money. This purpose of the game is to accumulate as much money as you can. Count the money that the winner has won, and congratulate him: pronounce him the 'richest' person in the room. Ask him to keep the money safely.

**ASK??:** children to finish this sentence: If I had \$\_\_\_\_\_ (name the amount that the winner has), I would \_\_\_\_\_.

Point out that the way we use our money shows what we think is important.

### Bible Discovery

#### Step 1

#### A story Jesus told

Money causes problems! One day a man came to Jesus and complained that his brother would not share with him, the money that their father had left to them.

How do you think that Jesus might have answered him? Invite responses.

In reply, Jesus told a story. Read it directly from the Bible text.



Read Luke 12: 13 - 21

#### Step 2

#### Some questions



**ASK??:** the children.

1. What sort of 'treasure' did this man collect?
2. Is there anything wrong with those things?
3. Is it wrong to plan?
4. So why did Jesus call him a fool?

It is important that the children understand that Jesus is not condemning a person who plans for the future. The issue is whether we plan with or without God.

### Step 3



#### In your own words

Before Jesus told the story, he answered the man by saying this: watch yourself. Be on your guard against all kinds of greed. A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.

Write this on the a chalkboard or large piece of paper, and then ask the children (in groups or with a partner) to re-write it in their own words.

### Step 4



#### What lasts?

Ask the winner of the game in the introduction, to bring all the 'money' to the front of the group.

Remind the children of what they were going to do with all this. Then put it into a tin, drop in a match, and let it burn up.

**ASK??** how this reminds the children of the story that Jesus told. *That the things that we own only last for a short time – we have no idea how long.*

**ASK??** If a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions (use the paraphrases that the children wrote), what *does* it consist of?

#### Teach the Memory Verse:

This would be a good verse to encourage the children to invent actions. They can do this in groups.



Revise the memory verses from all the lessons so far in Unit 3. They are all reminding us about the things that God thinks are the most important things.

**For the next lesson:**

None

## LESSON 10: ME AND OTHERS

**Bible Base:** Matthew 6:38-47

**Main Teaching Point:** It's easy to be nice to friends, but Jesus asks us to be good even to our enemies.

**Memory Verse:** 1 Corinthians 10:24.

*Nobody should seek his own good but the good of others.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

##### Opposites Game

Divide the group into 2 or more teams.

Call out one of the first words in each pair below. The first team to shout out the word with the opposite meaning scores a point for their team. tall/short; big/small; heavy/light; boy/girl; man/woman; dark/light; go/stop; open/shut; high/low; poor/ rich; in/out; up/down; sharp/blunt; good/bad; straight/crooked; shallow/deep; lost/found; smooth/ rough; mine/yours; enemy/friend

#### Bible Discovery



##### Enemies and friends

**ASK??:** If you saw me with someone, how would you be able to tell if that person was my friend or my enemy? *By the way that we treat each other.*

In the Bible, we read of some friends and enemies. Can you think of any? *Enemies: Moses and Pharaoh; David and Goliath. Friends: Paul and Silas; Jesus, Mary Martha and Lazarus.*

When David was a teenager and adult, he had a special friend. How could you tell? *Children might remember about their loyalty to each other – and David's care for Jonathan's family.*

But to Jonathan's father, David was an enemy. Did David see Saul as an enemy? Briefly tell how David had the chance to kill Saul and his friends even encouraged him to do it, but he refused.

David showed that, just because someone sees me as an enemy, doesn't mean that I have to treat him the same way.



##### Jesus' words



Read together Matthew 5: 38.

**ASK??:** the children what it means. Explain that this is how a lot of people (and our law system) operate. If someone has done wrong to you, you are entitled to pay him back.

Now continue to read verses 39-42. Again ask the children what it means. *Do good to people rather than repay evil.*

Jesus' words become even stronger! As you read out verses 43-47, ask the children to listen for the 2 things that we should do for our enemies. *Love and pray.*

### Step 3

#### A story

Matthew and Jeremiah were in the same class at school. They were the same age and even the same size, but they were very different people.

One day as Matthew was walking to school, a bigger boy James, who was often mean to the younger kids, rode his bicycle too close to Matt and knocked him over. He laughed loudly at Matt who was furious as he picked up his scattered books and lunch. 'I'll get you back!' he shouted.

Later after lunch, he had his opportunity. He waited quietly as James was lining up for a soda, and then he put out his foot and tripped him – the soda went everywhere and the boy fell on his face.

Everyone started to laugh as James lay on the ground, covered with drink and dirt. A few even congratulated Matt for getting back at the bully.

Then out of the crowd of children, came Jeremiah. He bent to help the James. Everyone just stared! Matt was angry that someone would act like that when it was the older boy who had started the problem. He walked up to Jeremiah and pushed him hard backwards. Jeremiah slowly got up, and then continued to help the bully. Matt couldn't believe what he was seeing!

Matt pushed him again. Jeremiah just smiled. The bully was also amazed, especially when Jeremiah helped him to his feet and offered him his own soda. 'Would you like one as well?' he asked Matthew.

Ask the children to discuss the actions and reactions of the children, including the children in the crowd. Who was right, who was wrong?

### Step 4

#### Work out the ending

Divide the children into groups and have them work out a drama that would describe what happened next in the story. The ending can be along the lines of verse 38 or verse 44. Give each group a chance to act out their ending to the group. Have them explain which verse their ending is like.

#### Teach the Memory Verse

Teach the Memory Verse through actions. Nobody (shake head) should seek his own good (point to self) but the good of others (arms out to others).



In pairs, pray for each other to put this into practice. Share particular situations.

**For the next lesson:**

Prepare Happy Families

Write the words of Ephesians 6: 1 – 3 in the form of a letter.

Make up a traffic light with red = STOP, orange = be careful and green = GO (if children are unfamiliar with traffic lights, use ✓ ? ✗ □)

## LESSON 11: ME AND MY FAMILY

**Bible Base:** Ephesians 6:1-3

**Main Teaching Point:** God wants us to respect and be obedient to our parents, as long as they do not go against God's laws.

**Preparation:**

Prepare Happy Families

Prepare a few children to play the part of being a family, mother, father and two children, a boy and a girl. Have the parents say things like "Please bring me the newspaper, wash your hands, now it's time for bed, eat your vegetables. I don't want you playing with Magdalena she is a bad influence etc". You could get one group where the parents ask kindly and another group where they ask unkindly.

Write out the words of Ephesians 6: 1 – 3 in the form of a letter. The letter can be written on a chalkboard or piece of paper.

Make up a traffic light with red = STOP, orange = be careful and green =GO (if children are unfamiliar with traffic lights, use ✓ ? ✗)

**Memory Verse:** Ephesians 6:1

*Children obey your parents for this is right.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

##### Happy families

Give each child a 'label' (these don't have to be written, they can just be verbal instructions) The labels are Mother, Father, Brother, Sister, Baby, Uncle, Aunt. Have the children move around the room to the beat of a drum. When the beat stops, they must form a 'family' of 7 members. In the next turn, at least 2 of the family members must be different!

#### Bible Discovery



##### Drama

Have the children act out the family scene. Ask them how they would feel as children in those scenes. Is it right to always obey your parents?

**ASK??:** the children what they appreciate about their parents. When do they find it easy to obey and when do they find it really hard? In the drama, which parents were easier to obey?



## Step 2



### An instruction from God

You can read the letter slowly as you are writing it on the chalkboard or have it prepared before the lesson on a piece of paper. Point out that these words were actually written by the apostle Paul, but the words were given to him by God. So really this is God's letter to us.

## Step 3



### Obeying

Show the children the traffic light with the GREEN on it.

Paul is asking children to obey their parents and respect them. It is one of the Old Testament commandments, and the only one that has promises attached.

**ASK??:** the children what the promises are. We can be a real testimony in our families by being kind and helpful and not sulking. A part of obeying God's commandment it to show appreciation for what our parents/ guardians do for us. It doesn't mean that it is always easy to obey, especially when a child is picked on (or they see it this way).

## Step 4



### When it's unfair

Now point to the ORANGE on the traffic light.

Orange means be cautious. God has placed us in families for a reason. We don't choose our families and parents are not perfect. Sometimes we have to think about the instruction.

Perhaps we have been asked by our parents to do something that is not fair. Ask the children what they would do in an unfair situation e.g. they are always told to clean the garden, but their brother is always allowed to play with his friends. What are their choices?

- To say that you'll do it but not do it well.
- To be silent and obey
- To do it and then take it out on the brother.
- To do it and hold a grudge.

**ASK??:** the children to discuss these options. *Is there a way to talk with your parents when you are upset about their instructions?*

*Ask the children how Jesus reacted to unfairness.* When it was directed against him, he didn't defend himself. When it was others who were being treated unfairly, he helped them.

**ASK??:** *Would that pattern work in a family?*

Help children to understand that parents get tired and stressed and need us to understand that.



## Step 5



### When it's wrong

Point to the RED.

There are things that parents ask their children to do which are WRONG. Ask the children what sort of things they have a right to say NO to. For example, to steal or to cheat.

For the leader: *This can be a difficult area. You will need to be sensitive to the answers that the children give. There may be some children in your group who are suffering abuse. Children need to know that there are some things that they have a right to say NO to. If they have been abused, it is not their fault, and as a leader, you may be seen by the child as a safe person to tell. Be prepared after this lesson for children to come up to you to tell you about things that are not right in their families. Prepare them by saying that you are available for them to talk to.*

### Teach the Memory Verse

Divide the children into lines of 10 children in each. Play 'Chinese whispers'. You whisper the memory verse and the reference into the ear of the first child and they whisper it to the second one and so on till the end of the line. The rule is that they only say it once and the child, even if he or she hasn't heard correctly has to whisper what he heard to the next in line. The child at the end of the line repeats it to the group. Somewhere in the line the message will get distorted and when it is repeated it sounds wrong and funny. Then have the whole group repeat the verse correctly all together.



Pray with the children that they might shine as bright lights for Jesus in their families. Offer to pray with children who are facing family difficulties.

**For the next lesson:**

Bring a Newspaper


# UNIT FOUR: CELEBRATING GOD

## LESSON 1: A SONG OF GOD'S GREATNESS

**Bible Base:** Psalm 144

**Main Teaching Point:** God is a strong rescuer of those who trust him.

**Preparation:**

Bring a newspaper for the introduction.

**Memory verse:** Psalm 144: 2: He is my loving God and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Ask for the best artist in the group. When they are selected, ask them to draw a picture of God.

They should complain that this is impossible! So instead, ask all the children to go outside and collect one thing that tells us something about God.

For example, to start them thinking, you might bring a newspaper because God knows everything that is happening right now.

Ask the group to work in 2's or 3's. After 3 minutes, invite them to show what they collected and why.

#### Bible Discovery



##### Songs about God

Explain that no one has ever been able to draw God because he is spirit. But for thousands of years, people have sung songs about God to describe to us what God is like.

Ask children to suggest some of these songs, and choose 2 or 3 to sing.



##### What is God like?



David wrote lots of songs about God. They are called Psalms. Ask children if they know any memory verses from Psalms that talk about what God is like e.g. Psalm 23:1.



Read Psalm 144: 2

**ASK??:** what sort of picture they give us of God. This is a God who is very powerful and strong.

### Step 3



**What does God do?**



Read Psalm 144: 5 - 8

Talk about the pictures here of a God who creates volcanoes, controls weather and rescues his people.

**ASK??:** the children if they can remember stories in the Bible of God rescuing his people. Give them clues like: lions (*Daniel*); water (*baby Moses*), flood (*Noah*), pit (*Joseph*), jail (*Peter*).

Invite children to talk about times when God has rescued them or someone they know from a situation of danger.

### Teach the Memory Verse

Teach the memory verse by putting it to a strong rhythm, like drums beating as people prepare for a battle.

### Step 4



**What do we do?**

Imagine! This is the God of the universe, but he cares about the problems of people like us. David puts it this way: read Psalm 144: 3 - 4.

We simply have to trust God. He is great, and we are small – so we are strongest when we put our hand in his hand.

### Step 5



**And what will happen?**

When God is on our side, it is not just about winning battles or being rescued.

Divide the children into 3 groups. Give each group a verse: 12, 13, 14. Ask them to work out what God does for a nation who really trusts and obeys him.

Tell them to work out what their verse means in ordinary language (remember this is written as a song or poem!)

For example:

1. health for the children v 12
2. land that produces well in crops and animals v 13
3. peace and protection v 14

Why do we not have these things? Because our nations do not honour God.



Pray for the nation and its leaders.



Look at how David responded to God's greatness (v 9,10). Divide the children into groups and have each group put the memory verse into a song of praise to God, using the beat they learned before.

**For the next lesson:**

Prepare a child to read the verses

Outline of a tree drawn on paper

## LESSON 2: A SONG OF CONFIDENCE IN GOD

**Bible Base:** Psalm 1

**Main Teaching Point:** God keeps his people secure.

**Preparation:**

A child to read verses 1-3

Outline of a tree drawn on paper

**Memory Verse:** Psalm 1:6

*For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Bring some old dry leaves. Place them on the table and ask if anyone thinks they can blow them all off the table.

The first child who says he could, has a turn to see if he can blow them all off with one breath. If he does not succeed, challenge other children until you have a 'champion'.

Now take the group outside to a tree. Ask the champion to blow it away. Try a smaller tree. Try even some green grass.

Why can they not be blown away? Because their roots go deep!

#### Bible Discovery



##### The person who obeys God

**ASK??:** how is a good person like a tree beside a good water supply? Record the answers on an outline of a tree.

Ask a prepared child to read Psalm 1: 1-3. Are there any other reasons?

He has 'roots' in God. He grows 'fruit' of a good life. He grows well.

What sort of fruit might he grow? (Some children will know Galatians 5:22. Encourage them to remember by offering the initial letter of each fruit e.g. l – love; s – self-control). Read the verse to check that you have all the fruit mentioned



##### The person who does not obey God

**ASK??:** what about the unrighteous man? He bears no fruit.

**ASK??:** how is he like the dead leaves that we blew away before? *He has no life. He may seem OK for a short time, but it will not last.*

Where did those dead leaves come from that we blew away before? Point out that they came from a tree that once had life – but perhaps the tree is dying or the leaves were broken off. If the leaves are to remain strong, they must stay attached to the tree.

Those of us who are trying to obey God, have to be careful that we stay close to him.

### Step 3



#### Staying away from things that will 'kill' me!



Read verse 1, and ask the children to recall the 3 verbs Walk, Stand, Sit.

These are words that describe every day actions.

Ask the children what it might mean to 'walk in the counsel of the wicked' (*follow bad advice*); to stand in the way of sinners (*to hang around with bad people*), to sit in the seat of mockers (*spend time with those who make fun of God*).

We become like the people that we spend time with. If we choose the wrong people as in verse 1, then we can become dead like those leaves.

### Step 4



#### Staying close to the water source!

In groups, ask the children to work out how the righteous person would: Walk, Stand, Sit. For example: *he walks with wise people; stands up for what is right; sits with those who need help.*

Share ideas. If we want to keep growing strong, then we must 'walk', and 'stand' and 'sit' with people who will encourage us.

How important is it that a tree has a water supply? *Essential - water gives life.* Read verse 2, and ask how we can stay close to our 'source of life'. Mention also that if our roots are to go down deep, then we should read the Bible, talk with God, and spend time with other Christians. Coming to a Sunday School or Christian Club can help us to do that.

#### Teach the Memory Verse:

Turn it into a prayer of thanksgiving and commitment to stay close to God.

##### For the next lesson:

Prepare at least 5 children to read verses Psalm 104: 5-14, 24 in sequence.

## LESSON 3: A SONG OF PRAISE TO GOD

**Bible Base:** Psalm 104

**Main Teaching Point:** That the children, like David, can see God in their daily lives and give Him praise.

**Preparation:**

Prepare at least 5 children to read verses 5-14, 24 in sequence.

**Memory Verse:** Psalm 104:33

*As long as I live I will sing praises to my God.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

##### Tell the story of Ann

Ann lives in Zambia and she works in the big city of Lusaka. Every day she cycles to school and the roads are busy with traffic and with smoke from the vehicles. But today Ann doesn't notice the noise and the dirt, the heat and the smoke. She is imagining herself as a princess cycling on a carpet of Royal purple with gold threads running through it. You see it is the month of October, and the jacaranda trees are in full blossom. The branches that were bare a few weeks ago are now covered with dense purple and the gentle breeze has blown some of the blossoms to the ground and as she cycles, she can feel the crunching of the blossoms under her tyres. The tipuana trees are also in flower and have glorious golden blossoms that mingle on the ground with the jacaranda. Then, as Ann looks up, she sees the brilliant blue sky and she thanks God that she is a princess in His creation.

Ask the children what they noticed about God's creation as they came to your group this morning and then get the children to create a big picture on the floor (or you can do it outside) that will depict the things that they see in nature. Take them outside to collect flowers, stones, leaves, etc., which they then use to 'create' the picture. If the group is big, divide them into smaller groups, each small group making its own picture.

#### Bible Discovery



##### God's power creates the world

Seat the children around the picture/s. Have them listen to the readings of Psalm 104:10-24, to discover what things they were not able to put in their pictures e.g.

- animals
- rivers, lakes, seas (have them name the local/national; ones.)
- sun, moon and stars

These can be drawn in as they are discussed. Then challenge the group to consider: Who provides food for the animals? How do the sun, planets and stars hold their orbits? What makes the water flow in the right direction?

## Step 2



### God's power creates us

The same God who created all these amazing things also created us.



Read Psalm 139:13.

God created every part of us. Bring a child to the front and show how his different limbs and organs show God's creative work.

- People are creative. God has given us the power of imagination and the ability to invent because He has made us in His image.
- People are intelligent. No-one is a 'zero'. Everyone is intelligent, but not always in the same way. When we laugh at someone, call them names or think them stupid, it hurts God as well as that child. List the many different examples of intelligence and creativity in this group: drawing, singing, acting, talking, schoolwork, sport etc.

## Step 3



### God deserves our praise



Read Psalm 104:1, 33-34

**ASK??:** the children...

- What is praise? (*telling God how good and great He is.*)
- When does David praise God? (*'all my life' – every day!*)
- Why does David praise God? (ask a child to read Psalm 104:28. He provides for our needs.)

Write the word 'praise' vertically on a chalkboard or piece of paper, and have the children list things starting those letters, for which they should give God praise. For example

- P prayer, protection
- R relatives, rain
- A animals, air
- I inventions
- S sun, school, sports
- E Elizabeth, energy

### Teaching the Memory Verse

Teach the memory verse by writing it on a chalkboard or on decorated card.

Then refer back to the list on the you made previously and turn these things into prayer, asking children to give 'sentence' prayers of praise. After each prayer (or on a cue from the leader), the whole group repeats the memory verse.



Praise God with some songs of praise that the children know. Finish by shouting the memory verse .

#### **For the next lesson:**

Hide some sweets in the area you meet in before the lesson

Prepare some children to be involved in the Bible reading and re-enactment.

## LESSON 4: A SONG OF GOD'S COMFORT

**Bible Base:** Psalm 77

This psalm was written by Asaph when he was troubled and looking for an answer. He feels as if God has forgotten to be compassionate and loving and is angry instead. Then he says to himself: I will remember and meditate on what God has done for the children of Israel and how He has delivered them.

**Main Teaching Point:** We can trust God and be honest about our feelings, whether we are feeling up or down: happy, angry or sad.

**Preparation:**

Hide some sweets in the area you meet in before the lesson

Prepare some children to be involved in the Bible reading and re-enactment.

**Memory Verse:** Psalm 116:1

*I love the Lord because He hears me; He listens to my prayers (GNB)*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Begin the lesson with a 'Treasure Hunt'. The room you are in or area where you meet must be messy and the children are asked to tidy it. Alert them to the possibility that they might find some 'treasure' (sweets that you've previously hidden.). Explain that sometimes life seems like one big mess, but hidden in that mess are the treasures that can get us out of the depressing situation.

#### Bible Discovery



##### Coping with Trouble

Explain that you are going to look at a psalm written by a man called Asaph who was very depressed. Ask a child to read Psalm 77:2. **ASK??:** What did Asaph do? What sort of trouble makes the children very discouraged? *being ill, afraid of rejection by friends, having no pocket money*

Share one of your own experiences (recent or in the past) when you were in trouble and you prayed but God did not seem to hear. You even wondered if God was listening. How did God help you?



##### The Trouble Worsens



Ask the children to form a circle around you to form a 'prison'. You want to be free from the enclosure; you struggle from side to side, you cry for help – but nothing succeeds. Ask the children what they would do when, like this, there seemed no way of 'escape'?

Asaph felt the same way. Have a child read Psalm 77:3-9 and discuss Asaph's desperate situation.

### Step 3



#### Remembering Previous 'Good Times'

What did Asaph do? Have a child read Psalm 77:11-16. He chose to remember God's goodness and kind acts towards his people. So he was comforted and full of hope although his situation did not immediately change.

### Step 4



#### Thinking Personally

Challenge the children about their attitudes when they are depressed, hurt, in difficulties with a friend etc. God is a good listener but it often helps to share our sadness with someone else, someone else who is a good listener. Who is there that you can talk to, who will give you wise and godly counsel? How has God helped them in the past?

#### Tell the children the story of Tobias

Tobias was 10 years old and not very popular at school. He was shy and not very good at reading. His only real friend had left the school the previous term, and he felt so alone and unhappy. No-one seemed to notice or care. His school work was suffering, and the teacher said he should pay more attention. During the lunch break he sat on his own and he felt as if life was just not fair and that no-one understood or even cared about him. He waited for other children to come and talk to him and notice him, but they seemed to just look right through him and he longed to be selected to play soccer in the school field at break-time, but no-one asked. Then one day, he made a decision. He remembered how Alan, his friend, had befriended him on their first day at school and had shared his bread with him. He remembered how his second grade teacher had been so kind and encouraging to him and he also remembered how that same teacher had introduced him to Jesus. He remembered how he used to talk to Jesus and how much braver he felt when he knew that Jesus cared. That day Tobias thought to himself 'yes I do remember when times were better and how much it helped having a friend. If the other children won't come to me, I'll find someone else who is sad and lonely'. The next day, instead of sitting under a tree and feeling sorry for himself, Tobias looked out for another lonely child, befriended him. He also went to talk to his grade 2 teacher. Some-how life got better after that and most of all he remembered how much God loved him.

#### Teach the Memory Verse

Teach the verse getting the children to answer you e.g. you say 'Why do you love the Lord? ....

The children then say 'Because He hears me'. You say 'what else does he do? Children respond 'He listens to my prayer'. You say: Psalm 116 and the children say 'verse 1'. Say it over a few times.



Divide the children into groups of 4. Encourage them to share with one another, something that has encouraged them to trust God during hard times.

Conclude with a joint time of general sharing and thanksgiving for God's help and comfort.

**For the next lesson:**

Prepare 'Obedient' and 'Disobedient' signs for the game in the Introduction



# UNIT FIVE: TRUSTING THE KING

## LESSON 1: OBEYING GOD THE KING WHEN IT'S HARD

**Bible Base:** Genesis 6:9-7:5

**Main Teaching Point:** Obey God because it's the right thing even when it's not the easy thing.

**Preparation:**

Prepare 'obedient' and 'disobedient' signs.

**Memory Verse:** Psalm 119:33

*Teach me O Lord to follow your decrees; then I will keep them to the end.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Place the 'obedient' and 'disobedient' signs at opposite ends of the room.

Divide the group into two teams. Choose a member of each team, and have them stand facing each other about half way between the two signs.

When you say the name of a Bible character, the 2 children have to decide whether he was obedient or disobedient, and run to the correct sign. The first one to the sign, wins a point for the team.

Characters: Solomon, Eve, Josiah, David, Pharaoh, Judas, Cain, Noah. After each one, ask the children why they ran where they did (some of the characters were both obedient and disobedient, and as long as children can justify their answer, the point can be awarded).

Conclude the game with Noah

#### Bible Discovery



#### The story

Read the Bible verses – this will be a familiar story for most children. **ASK??:** the children the following questions to review the story:

- What 3 things did God ask Noah to do? *To build the ark, to go into it, to collect the animals*

- Why did he want Noah to do that?
- Why did God choose Noah?
- How did Noah feel? *We're not told – go back to the answers to Q1 and ask the children what the reaction's of people would have been as they saw this happen. Remember, Noah did not live near the sea!*
- What did Noah do?



### Noah's reasons to obey, reasons to disobey

Noah had a choice: all we are told was that he did what God said. Draw the table below on the a chalkboard or large piece of paper, and fill the first column with the answers that the children suggest.

REASONS TO OBEY	REASONS TO DISOBEY

It is God who asks

God knows what is best.

God blesses those who obey him.

People will \_\_\_\_\_ (galuh)

I don't \_\_\_\_\_ (ntnedsdrau) what to do.

It's \_\_\_\_\_ (drah kwor)

It's \_\_\_\_\_ (nto iarf)

Then add the answers to the right hand column and have the children work out the missing words (laugh, understand, hard work, not fair).



## Step 3



### My reasons to obey, reasons to disobey

God doesn't usually ask us to do something as unusual as he asked of Noah. But he does ask us to obey. Obey what? What does it mean to obey?

Describe the following scene to children: *You are walking home from school with two good friends. As you go past a row of shops, one of them notices that there are sweets there on display near the counter. He has an idea: Why don't you start asking the shopkeeper some questions about anything to get his attention away from us, and we'll steal some sweets. He won't even notice they're gone.*

Divide the children in groups. Some groups will act out the story where you refuse to do what your friends suggest; other groups will act out the story where you agree.

From the story, add other suggestion to either column above e.g. reasons to obey (*you don't get into trouble*) reasons to disobey (*I'll lose friends; it's fun*)

## Step 4



### Easiest or best? Think long-term!

What if you do what your friends suggest and the shopkeeper doesn't notice. Is there any reason to obey if you don't get into trouble?

Most of us disobey because it's the easiest choice right now. (I'd enjoy those sweets; I don't want people to laugh at me)

God asks us to obey because it's the best choice. He sees way past what is happening right now – and he knows what is best for our future.

This applied to Noah (what was the end result of Noah's obedience?) It applies to us. (what is the end result of cheating/ stealing even if we don't get caught now?)

### Teach the Memory Verse

Have half the children say the 1<sup>st</sup> phrase, and the other half add the 2<sup>nd</sup> phrase. Reverse. Turn it into a prayer.

<b>For the next lesson:</b>
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Bring bread
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Prepare the memory verse.
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## LESSON 2: GIVING WHAT YOU HAVE TO THE GOD THE KING

**Bible Base:** John 6: 1-13

**Main Teaching Point:** God can use the things I have and the person I am to become someone great for Him.

**Preparation:**

Bring bread

Prepare the memory verse.

Phrases are written on pieces of paper and wrapped up as a 'gift'.

**Memory Verse:** Proverbs 18:16

*A gift opens the way for the giver, and ushers him into the presence of the great.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

In pairs, have the children work out the answer to this puzzle:

- ADD together the number of disciples that Jesus had (12)
- PLUS the number of days it took God to create the world (6)
- PLUS the number of plagues God sent on Egypt (10).
- PLUS the number of sheep that were lost when the 99 were safe (1)
- MINUS the number of days that Jesus' body was in the grave (3)
- MINUS the number of the 10 lepers that thanked Jesus for healing them (1)
- MINUS the number of loaves of bread that the boy offered Jesus to feed the crowds (5).

Give some bread to the first pair with the correct answer.

#### Bible Discovery



#### Feeling like nothing: 0

We're going to look at numbers today. The first one isn't worth much – its zero! Draw a large 0 on the chalkboard or a piece of paper.

Have you ever felt as if you're worth nothing? People say things like: .....

Record your suggestion and others from the children on a chalkboard or piece of paper

How do you feel? Kids often feel useless – but not to Jesus!

The disciples had a huge problem – 5000 hungry people (write the number on the board). And that's just the men!

## Step 2



**Size of the Problem: 5000**



Read verses 1-5 (and Matthew 14:21 for the exact number).

Imagine you were one of the disciples – what would you have told Jesus?

## Step 3



**The Size of the Gift: 5 + 2**



Read verse 8.

Would you have offered Jesus your lunch – be honest! You are hungry and perhaps the only one with any food. What would you do with it? Write the numbers on the board. This was a gift from the boy to Jesus the King– so that he could use it.

## Step 4



**The Size of the Solution: 12**



Read verses 10-13

**ASK??:** How many were fed?

**ASK??:** What was the result? Write a large 12 on the board. Remind the children that this maths doesn't up: too many people, not enough food, and more leftovers that you started with!

## Step 5



**God's Mathematics: 1+1+!!!!**

**ASK??:** Who fed the crowd? *Jesus and the boy*. Could Jesus have done it on his own? How do you think that the boy felt as he watched his lunch keep going and going and going?

Point out that Jesus uses willing people to do his work. That means that when we offer what we have to Jesus, amazing things can happen!

Ask the children to share testimonies of how God has used them to help other people. Maybe not 5000, just one is enough.

### Teach the Memory Verse

The phrases of the memory verse should be written on pieces of paper, and wrapped up as a present. Have different children unwrap the present, pull out the phrases one by one, and then stand in the right order (the whole group can help).

Explain that the word 'usher' means to 'lead'. The boy was willing to give and this led him to Jesus.



Have children repeat: *God plus me makes a big difference.*

Actions: God (one finger) plus me (one finger on the other hand) makes a big difference (flash all fingers like a sparkling light).



Pray together that we would be generous with what we have, because with Jesus, we can make a huge difference to people.

**For the next lesson:**

Prepare children for interviews.



## LESSON 3: TRUSTING GOD THE KING IN IMPOSSIBLE SITUATIONS

**Bible Base:** Acts 16: 16-35

**Main Teaching Point:** When I am in a situation that is terrible, I can call out to God for help and he will answer.

**Preparation:**

Prepare children for the interview in Steps 1 and 3.

**Memory Verse:** Psalm 145:18.

*The Lord is near to all who call on him.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Tell the children that they have 30 seconds to look around the room. Then ask them to close their eyes and call out all the things that they saw. It will be a long list. Now ask them to keep their eyes closed, but be completely silent. After a few seconds (and with their eyes still closed), ask them what they can hear. What can they feel?

Point out that our senses are very important. Draw an eye, and ear and a body on a chalkboard or piece of paper to represent 3 of our senses.

#### Bible Discovery



#### Listening to Opinion

Let's use our ears to discover what people in Philippi thought about Paul. Conduct interviews with:

a) The slave girl

- What was your job? (*Telling fortunes*),
- How were you able to do that? (*a spirit*)
- Who collects the money that you make by fortune-telling? (*my owners*)
- What did you know about Paul? (*he served God and because of that, was able to get rid of the spirit*).

b) The owners of the slave girl

- Why are you so angry? (*When Paul ordered the spirit to leave her, they no longer had that source of income*)
- What did you do about that? (*We dragged them to the authorities and accused them of creating chaos*)

- What was the result? (*Paul and Silas were thrown into prison.*)

## Step 2



### In Prison



Verses 23 - 28

**ASK??** the children: if we had been there, what would we have heard? What would we have seen and what would we have felt?

Write their answers under the 3 pictures on the board (body, ear, and eye)

Ask which of these things were miracles. Point out that it was also a miracle that Paul and Silas would have been so calm in prison that they sang hymns!

Maybe the jailer had the biggest miracle of all! He became a Christian!

## Step 3



### Another Interview

With a third child, interview the jailer.

When you woke, what were your thoughts? (*Where the prisoners were*)

Why were you so afraid (*because if they have gone, I would be killed*) How did you feel when Paul shouted out that they were all still there? (*Amazed – why hadn't they escaped?*)

What did you do next? (*I asked Paul how I could get saved because I want to follow their powerful God*)

What did Paul reply? (*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ – he is the one who can save me*)

## Step 4



### Trusting God

**ASK??** the children to think about 3 of the main characters, and complete the table below on the board. The answers below are just suggestions:

PERSON	IMPOSSIBLE SITUATION	WHAT GOD DID
Slave Girl	Slave, Evil Spirit	Rescued her by His Power
Paul and Silas	Beaten, Imprisoned	Rescued them by His Power
Jailer	If the prisoners are gone, he will be killed	Saved from death, and saved from sin.



## Step 5



### My Impossible Situation

What sort of impossible situation do you face? Whatever it is, it is not impossible for God. Perhaps you need rescuing from your own sin (like the jailer). You can believe right now that Jesus can forgive your sin – just tell him that you are sorry and ask him to come and live in your life. Or perhaps you need rescuing from the sin of other people (like Paul). God is always ready to help those who call out to him. Talk to him now.

### Teach the Memory Verse



Allow for a few minutes of silence. Then lead the children in silent prayer as they invite God to deal with their problem. Remind the children that you are available to talk with any of them who have issues to share.

**For the next lesson:**

Prepare two cards 'stay loyal' and 'stop following'

## LESSON 4: LOYAL TO GOD THE KING – TO THE END

**Bible Base:** Acts 6 and 7

**Main Teaching Point:** Following Jesus is costly. But Jesus is with us, and Jesus is waiting for us

**Preparation:**

two cards:

Stay Loyal

Stop Following

**Memory Verse:** John 16:33

*In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

##### A Game

All the children should be standing in front of you. Explain to them that it is very important that they be honest, and not follow the crowd. Ask the following questions, and wait for them to move before you go on to the next question.

**Move forward if:** you would always be loyal to your best friend.

**Move backward if:** you would be loyal to your best friend even if you were teased about the friendship

**Move forward if:** you would be loyal to your best friend, even if other friends turned against you.

**Move backward if:** you would be loyal to your best friend even if people threatened to hurt you.

**Move forward if:** you would be loyal to your best friend. Even if you were beaten for it.

**Move backward if:** you would be loyal to your best friend even if it meant you might die.

Point out that if we were honest, it became harder and harder to move. With every question, there was more sacrifice involved.

#### Bible Discovery



##### Jesus warned us

Not long before he died, Jesus warned his disciples that it would be tough for them to follow him. The same people who had opposed Jesus, would oppose his followers.

##### Jesus is with us

Not long after Jesus died, and came alive again and returned to heaven, we read about a follower of his called Stephen.



Read together Acts 6:5 - 6 to find out what he was like.

He was given a very trustworthy position.

**ASK??:** How do you know that Jesus was with him? (*because the Holy Spirit lives in the lives of Jesus' followers*)

Jesus' warning came true for Stephen:



Read verses 10-15.

Point out that Stephen had a choice: to stay loyal or to stop following. Place the 2 cards in view:

Stay Loyal

Stop Following

Stephen made his choice. He reminded them that all through history, God had promised that he would send a special person. But they had always refused to obey God – and had killed that special person, Jesus.

**ASK??** the children what was so special about Jesus (*he was God's own Son. He was perfect, he died so that we could be forgiven.*)

The people didn't want to hear!



Read aloud Acts 7: 54-60.

**ASK??** the children to describe the scene in their own words.

**ASK??** Why were people so angry?

How would the children have felt if they were Stephen? Remind them of the choices: stay loyal or stop following.

Would they have remembered Jesus' words?

### Teach the Memory Verse

Teach the children the words of the Memory Verse.



#### Jesus waits for us

Ask children to close their eyes and imagine what Stephen saw, as you re-read v.55-56. Jesus was there waiting for him.

That is God's promise to us:

- the Holy Spirit with us now
- Jesus waiting for us in heaven!

What difference does it make to our choices (stay loyal stop following) if we really believe that both of those things are true?

**Another True Story.** Recount the story of someone in your own country who has made a costly choice to stay loyal to Jesus (it may not be his life, but his job or his reputation or his friends that were sacrificed).

Or tell the story of Archbishop Luwum who stood up against the evils of the Idi Amin regime in Uganda, knowing that it could cost him his life. He refused to stop speaking up for truth – one day, he was taken away by Amin's men and was never seen again.

But Jesus was with him, and Jesus was waiting for him.



Spend a few moments talking about the choices on the two cards. Pray together, that, whenever we have a hard choice to make, we will remember that Jesus is with us, and waiting for us.

**For the next lesson:**

Bring money, football, family photo, book.

## LESSON 5: LIVING WITH GOD THE KING

**Bible Base:** Proverbs 3:5-6

**Main Teaching Point:** Trust God wholeheartedly. You are safe with him.

**Preparation:**

Bring money, football, family photo, book.

**Memory verse:** Proverbs 3:5-6.

*Trust on the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.*

### LEARNING SEQUENCE

#### Introduction

Have a quiz that covers the memory verses and Bible stories that the children have learned over the forty lessons.

Keep reminding them of the themes:

- Jesus is King
- Bible kings teach us important things about God and us
- Children of the King live as Jesus lived
- Celebrate the King
- Following the King is safe

#### Bible Discovery

##### Who should I trust?

Display some money and a family photo.

Talk about the different things that we trust in.

Why is God better than these? *He will never let you down or break a promise.*

Remind children of Solomon's choice.



##### How should I trust? (1)

What does it mean to trust God with all your heart? Remind children of stories of David and Stephen.

Display football and a music cassette.

Loving with all your heart means not letting anything become more important – even sport or the things that we enjoy most.

### Step 3



#### How should I trust? (2)

Display book

Talk about how hard it is for clever people to believe in God because they think they know everything they need to know.

Point out that God is more interested in how willing we are to serve him (like the boy with the lunch, or Josiah)

### Step 4



#### What does it mean?

Whatever you are involved in and whatever you do, admit that God is the one who has made it all possible. Even in times of great difficulty, thank him and give him praise. Remind them of Jehoshaphat and Paul.

### Step 5



#### Why is it important?

God is the King. When we keep his rules, then he will bless us – now and forever.

Talk about the rules of the kingdom from the Sermon on the Mount.

There is no better way to live.

### Teach the Memory Verse

Put all the phrases together and learn the verse. Ask children to share



Ask children what they have discovered about God through the Living in the Kingdom Units

Praise God together that he is a King worth serving.



Pray for each other, that we will live like children of the King.