

A black rectangular sign with rounded corners, hanging from a chain. The text "BIBLE FUN FACTORY" is written in colorful, bold, sans-serif letters. "BIBLE" is in light blue, "FUN" is in pink, and "FACTORY" is in yellow. A yellow cross is positioned to the right of the word "FUN".

**BIBLE
FUN
FACTORY**

BIBLE LESSONS FOR KIDS | Volume 9



**I KINGS 18, I KINGS 19, II KINGS 5,
II CHRONICLES 7, & JOHN 4**

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BIBLE FUN FACTORY

BIBLE LESSONS FOR KIDS

ELIJAH, SOLOMON & ELISHA

Welcome to this series of Bible lessons for students age pre-school to sixth grade. You'll find these Bible lessons introduce children to characters of the Old Testament, making their lives very personal by putting their problems in a modern-day context. The characters introduce principles students can use every day in school, at home, and in the neighborhood, while growing in Christ.

Elijah, Solomon, Jesus, and Naaman show us some great lessons for kids. Elijah tells off 450 Baal worshippers like it's nothing—then gets so afraid it's hard to believe. **Peer pressure can get to all of us, but God can show us the way one step at a time.** Solomon builds a very expensive, ornate and time-consuming temple that God accepted; Jesus said a thousand years later that God wants us to worship him in spirit and in truth. **God loves our gifts, but one of his greatest gifts was making our bodies the Temple of the Holy Ghost.** Naaman proves that **if we're to be trusted with big jobs for God, we must prove ourselves with little jobs.**

Join us with these powerful and fun-filled lessons from 1 Kings 18, 1 Kings 19, 2 Kings 5, 2 Chronicles 7, and John 4.

Lessons Included:

- Elijah, God, and Baal
- Elijah and the Still Small Voice
- Solomon's Temple
- Our Temple
- Do a Small Favor for the Lord (Naaman & Elisha)

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ELIJAH, GOD, AND BAAL

When Elijah became Israel's foremost prophet, the country was notoriously double-minded, believing in both God and that pop culture's version of idols. (Sound familiar???) Kids can see from Elijah the important fact: Popularity and truth are often not related. **Sometimes we have to choose against the crowd, even though it may be uncomfortable. Jesus, all the great prophets, and all the apostles had to make the same choices.**

MATERIALS LIST

Lesson

- Empty quart jug with lid
- Lemon, cut in half
- Lemonade mix
- Water
- Paper cups
- Cookies

Intro Activity for Younger Children

- Stuffed animals (perhaps from your own child's discards)
- Bed pillow
- Throw pillow
- Two white kitchen garbage bags
- Sharpie to draw faces on garbage bags

Intro Activity, Older Children

- Paper
- Pencils

Activity, Younger Children

- Construction paper, one sheet for each child
- Cotton balls, big handful for each child
- Craft-store eyeballs or black hole punches, four for each child
- Markers
- Glue sticks

Activity, Older Children

- Large stones or small rocks, one for each child (about half the size of a fist)
- Marker pens
- Glitter or glitter glue
- Newspaper (if you're using glitter, to keep it from getting all over)

Game, Younger Children

- No materials needed

Game, Older Children

- No materials needed

BIBLE READING/STORY: 1 KINGS 18

Excerpts

Now the famine was severe in Samaria. ⁷ As Obadiah was walking along, Elijah met him. Obadiah recognized him, bowed down to the ground, and said, "Is it really you, my lord Elijah?"

⁸ "Yes," he replied. "Go tell your master, 'Elijah is here.' "

Elijah on Mount Carmel

¹⁶ So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him, and Ahab went to meet Elijah. ¹⁷ When he saw Elijah, he said to him, "Is that you, you troubler of Israel?"

¹⁸ "I have not made trouble for Israel," Elijah replied. "But you and your father's family have. You have abandoned the LORD's commands and have followed the Baals. ¹⁹ Now summon the people from all over Israel to meet me on Mount Carmel. And bring the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table."

²⁰ So Ahab sent word throughout all Israel and assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel. ²¹ Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him."

But the people said nothing.

²² Then Elijah said to them, "I am the only one of the LORD's prophets left, but Baal has four hundred and fifty prophets. ²³ Get two bulls for us. Let them choose one for themselves, and let them cut it into pieces and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. I will prepare the other bull and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. ²⁴ Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD. The god who answers by fire—he is God."

Then all the people said, "What you say is good."

²⁵ Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one of the bulls and prepare it first, since there are so many of you. Call on the name of your god, but do not light the fire." ²⁶ So they took the bull given them and prepared it.

Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. "O Baal, answer us!" they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made.

²⁷ At noon Elijah began to taunt them. "Shout louder!" he said. "Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened." ²⁸ So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed. ²⁹ Midday passed, and they continued their frantic prophesying until the time for the evening sacrifice. But there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention.

³⁰ Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come here to me." They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the LORD, which was in ruins. ³¹ Elijah took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes descended from Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD had come, saying, "Your name shall be Israel." ³² With the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD, and he dug a trench around it large enough to hold two seahs of seed. ³³ He arranged the wood, cut the bull into pieces and laid it on the wood. Then he said to them, "Fill four large jars with water and pour it on the offering and on the wood."

³⁴ "Do it again," he said, and they did it again.

"Do it a third time," he ordered, and they did it the third time. ³⁵ The water ran down around the altar and even filled the trench.

³⁶ At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: "O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. ³⁷ Answer me, O LORD, answer me, so these people will know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again."

³⁸ Then the fire of the LORD fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench.

³⁹ When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, "The LORD -he is God! The LORD -he is God!"

LESSON (TEACHER WORDS IN BOLD): ELIJAH STANDS ALONE FOR TRUTH

How do we really know when we're doing the right thing? If there are six kids hanging out, and they all decide to do something together, does that make it the right thing? No.

But whatever it is... they all decided together. It was a unanimous choice. In other words, nobody voted against this thing they wanted to do together. Nobody spoke up and said, "I don't feel like it." What's wrong with doing something if everybody is doing it? It could be the wrong thing.

What if three of those kids decide it's funny to shout hurtful remarks to a kid riding by on his bike, who is younger and very shy? And what if the other three laugh? Since all six "agreed" that shouting those remarks is okay, what's the problem?

They're all wrong.

How could everybody be wrong? Six is a lot of people.

Sometimes everybody is wrong.

What if three of them decided to break in to a neighbor's house while the neighbor was away? And three of them were too scared to break in but agreed to stand guard and let the thieving ones know if anyone was coming?

That's wrong.

But six is a lot. Yeah, but still.

Okay. What if you were the seventh. These six kids are older than you and bigger. Let's say you feel kind of special that they let you hang out with them. Who could stand up to six people? What would you say to them?

I would tell them I didn't want to do it.

Really? That's great. Come up here, stand beside me, and practice. What, exactly, would you say?

Let any kid who wants come forth and practice. Applaud and encourage everyone else to applaud, too. Up the ante a little. Say some taunting remarks, such as **You're just a big baby! Are you going to go home and tell???** Encourage responses and applause.

You guys, Elijah stood up to four hundred and fifty very popular guys. Where do you think he got the nerve to do that? God gave him the nerve.

God can give you the nerve, too. You have to ask. You have to let him know that "good" is more important to you than "popular." And then what happens? What did God

do for Elijah? To prove himself, he started a fire under that bull, which had been drowned in water first.

God can start a fire in your heart. And he can keep it lit for a long time. Ask and you shall receive. Seek and you shall find. If you want to really be good—if you don't just want to look good—God is there to give you the courage and wisdom you need.

Hold half a lemon over an empty quart jug. **This lemon? It's like peer pressure. It looks pretty nice. It feels very smooth. But if you taste it...** Squeeze a drop onto your finger and taste. Make a sour face. **It's really, really bitter. Anyone want to try?**

Squeeze a drop onto anyone's finger who wants to try it. **Following the crowd without questioning whether the crowd is right or wrong, it will end up making you bitter.** Hold up the lemon again.

Don't eat anything sour. Don't give in to peer pressure. When kids are doing something you know is not right—whether it's gossiping or hurting others or scaring people by breaking into their property—don't bite. Here's what you do with peer pressure.

You give it to God instead of taking it into yourself. Squeeze the lemon into the quart bottle, as much as you can.

Then you ask God to give you wisdom and give you strength, like he gave to Elijah. Bring out lemonade mix and add scoops for a quart.

Then God sends his Holy Spirit to help you out. It can be with wisdom, so you'll know what to say. It can be strength so you'll be able to walk away, even if others are laughing. Add water from a jug or a sink if one is nearby.

Put the cap on, and shake up the jug. **See, what happens when people put pressure on you to do things you know are wrong...they might look big and strong and popular and happy. But inside, they're kind of thirsty—in their spirit.** Jesus said, "He who believes in me shall never thirst." He was talking about that spiritual thirst that people get when they are far from God.

But if you refuse to do wrong things—no matter how many others are doing them—you "shall never thirst." Who wants to make a promise with me right now that this week we'll rely on God every day to give us strength to resist peer pressure?

All should say yes.

Bring out cups. **Then come on and get a drink of lemonade. That's peer pressure with a few sweet prayers and the Holy Spirit giving you what you need.**

It tastes really great.

INTRO ACTIVITY, YOUNGER CHILDREN: THE MONSTER, MR. BEAR, & THE SHEEP: ROLE PLAYING

Bring in used stuffed animals (perhaps from your child's stash, or they can be purchased in thrift shops), enough for each child to have one. Make a monster out of a pillow in a white kitchen garbage bag with a scary face drawn on it. Put one chair on top of the craft table. Make a bear out of a throw pillow in a white kitchen garbage bag with a startled face and crying "o" shaped mouth. Put Mr. Bear between the legs of the chair, which is his house.

Today we're going to be talking about peer pressure, which means when kids try to get other kids to do bad things. Monster, here, is trying to make the sheep break into Mr. Bear's house.

Bring a couple of stuffed toys over to the chair. Do a back-and-forth, such as:

Mr. Bear: Please don't break in! I'm scared of robbers! I need all my stuff for my family!

Monster to sheep: Go! Break in and get Mr. Bear's stuff, you stupid, little twerps! Scaredy-cats!

Sheep: Oh, no...what do I do? The Monster is big! How do I get out of this?

It's your job until the lesson starts to help the sheep figure out what to say to Monster and Mr. Bear, because sheep love to do the right thing!

As more children arrive, let them take turns assuming the roles of Monster, Mr. Bear and the sheep.

INTRO ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: WHAT DOES THIS SAY?

Have the following code and the coded saying below it visible on your screen. As students arrive, set them to decode the coded saying

a 1	h 8	o 15	v 22
b 2	i 9	p 16	w 23
c 3	J 10	q 17	x 24
d 4	k 11	r 18	y 25
e 5	l 12	s 19	z 26
f 6	m 13	t 20	
g 7	n 14	u 21	

Coded Saying:

23 8 1 20 19 18 9 7 8 20 1 14 4 23 8 1 20 19 16 15 16 21 12 1 18
1 18 5 14 15 20 15 6 20 5 14 18 5 12 1 20 5 4.

(Answer to Intro Activity teachers only: What's right and what's popular are not always related.)

ACTIVITY, YOUNGER CHILDREN: THE GOOD LAMB

Jesus often referred to himself as a shepherd and his followers as sheep. In fact, Jesus said in John 10:27, “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.” Let’s be good sheep like Elijah and follow God instead of the crowd. We can start by making a picture of ourselves as sheep.



Draw an image similar to the one above on construction paper for each student. Give out the construction paper drawings. Give a handful of cotton balls to each child. Give out craft-store eyeballs, or if you don't have these, two black hole punches will do. Have them use stick glue to fill in the sheep's body (not face!) with cotton balls, then put on the eyes.

Underneath have them write, MY SHEEP HEAR MY VOICE AND FOLLOW ME. JOHN 10:27

ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: “YES/NO” ROCKS

One archeologist from the Institute of Creation Scientists stayed on the straight and narrow in grade school, high school, and college by keeping a rock in his pocket. It was just a small rock. But he later stated that carrying a rock all those years finally got him interested in archaeology. The point of the rock was that every time someone in class tempted him to do something he knew was wrong, he would reach in his pocket and grip the rock.

Some people call Jesus the Rock of Ages. If you don't think you can carry around a rock, at least put this one that I'm going to give you somewhere in your room where you can see it first thing every morning. It's your “yes/no” rock, meaning when you feel it or see it in your mind, you'll think to draw closer to your “Rock of Ages” and let him help you make the right choices of “yes” or “no” to what others suggest.

Give every kid a small rock or stone, maybe half the size of a child's fist. Have them lay it down, especially if it is roundish or square, to see which is the natural top and bottom.

Make markers, glitter, and craft glue available. With one dark-colored marker, kids should draw a circle about the size of a penny and write the word “yes” on it. They should turn the rock over, draw another circle, and write the word “no” on it.

They should make a swirly design on the rock with the same marker pen, leaving room to color between the swirls. They should fill in their newly-formed sections with bright-colored markers.

Finally, they can apply glitter to various colors or parts, or the words “yes” or “no.”

Before you go play with other kids, if you suspect they will ask you to do something questionable, turn your rock over so “No” is showing for that day. If you think it will be a fun day with no temptations to bother you, turn the rock so that “Yes” is showing for the day.

GAME, YOUNGER CHILDREN: BREAK THROUGH

Fortunately, we are not tempted to go with the crowd in a bad way every day, or even every week. We don’t want to get out of practice, saying “no” to bad things, so we can use our game today to practice resisting the bad choice of a crowd, like Elijah did.

Have everyone make a circle, except for one child who will be in the center. Have the children turn facing away from the child in the center. Have them lock arms and line up their feet so that the outsides of their feet meet with the person’s on the left and right. Have them shut their eyes tightly and start chanting “Be bad like us! Be bad like us!”

The child in the center should say, “No, I won’t!” and then, while everyone’s eyes are shut, try to sneak out between two children. The children, still with their eyes shut, can move their bodies to try to block her, but they can’t move their feet or unlock their arms. Her goal is to dive between two unsuspecting people and get the top half of herself out (which will enable her to pull her legs out fairly easily).

Take turns until everyone has been the person in the center and has gotten a chance to break through.

What did it feel like to be “locked inside” a group of kids? This is sort of like peer pressure. We feel like we’re locked in to what everyone else is doing. But if we keep our eyes open and our hearts with God, we can always find a way through!

GAME, OLDER CHILDREN: BREAK AWAY (FOR OLDER KIDS)

Have all the children form a circle.

Let's talk for a few minutes about some things you could be tempted to do if the crowd of kids you were with was doing them.

Allow them to think of things. As each child says one thing, have him turn away so that his back is to the circle. Prompts:

- Cheat on tests
- Take drugs or smoke
- Laugh at somebody's hard luck (like spilling something all over himself)
- Gossip
- Take something that doesn't belong to you
- Bully
- Lie to your parents
- Cover up for a friend who did something wrong

Once all children are facing away from the circle, pick one child to be Elijah, and bring that child to the center. Have all other children be prophets of Baal. They should lock arms and align their feet so that the outsides of their feet are touching the outsides of the feet of the people on either side.

Have all children shut their eyes except Elijah. Have all of them at once shout the example they used to face out of the circle. With shut eyes and distractions of each other's shouting, they must try to keep Elijah inside their circle. They may not break their arm lock or move their feet.

Elijah's job is to look for holes or unsuspecting people, and try to dive or sneak out. Others can try to block him with their hips and bodies as long as they don't break their holds or move their feet to do it. If Elijah gets his body through to the outside, he wins.

Take turns until everyone has been Elijah.

How were the prophets of Baal sort of like bad influences among the people we know? They can make you feel “locked in” to something you don’t want to do.

There’s an old Biblical expression to describe people involved in wrong things and leading others to do them, too. It’s called “the blind leading the blind.” That’s why, in the game, the prophets of Baal’s eyes were shut. How did the shut eyes help the person trying to break out? Let them answer, but you are working toward them understanding the following:

Because the prophets of Baal couldn’t see, they couldn’t see the “holes” in their “power.” It’s sort of like when people are acting blind to what’s right, they can’t see the bad things that can happen. But *you* saw the holes and managed to get out.

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, thank you for Elijah. Help us to realize that you are there, not only to help us do the right thing, but to guide us in the way through all uncomfortable situations.

Amen.

ELIJAH AND THE STILL, SMALL VOICE

1 Kings 19 finds Elijah bemoaning himself because he alone stands for Israel. God calls him out of the cave. Elijah hears an earthquake, a strong wind, and sees a fire, but God is in none of them. God is in the still, small voice that follows. God tells him where he can find 7,000 people who believe like he does. This is a great lesson for children, on how great men do not succumb to the pressures of others: **Great men find the courage to walk alone when they need to. And when they do, God rewards them with *real* friends.**

MATERIALS LIST

Lesson

- Three pie tins
- Three cardboard inserts from dry-cleaner hangers
- Three empty cans with a handful of dry rice thrown in and covered with fabric and a rubber band (homemade maracas)
- Cookies, enough for each child to have one

Intro Activity, Younger Children

- Construction or printer paper
- Yellow, orange, and red markers
- Glue sticks

Intro Activity, Older Children

- No materials needed

Activity, Younger Children

- Toilet-paper rolls, one for each student
- Red, orange, and yellow construction paper
- White dessert plates
- Stick glue
- Markers
- Scissors

Activity, Older Children

- No materials needed

Game, Younger Children

- Pie tins, drumsticks, and maracas from the lesson

Game, Older Children

- Printer paper
- Pencils

BIBLE READING/STORY:

1 KINGS 19

Elijah Flees to Horeb

¹ Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. ² So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, "May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them."

³ Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, ⁴while he himself went a day's journey into the desert. He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors." ⁵ Then he lay down under the tree and fell asleep.

All at once an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat." ⁶ He looked around, and there by his head was a cake of bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again.

⁷ The angel of the LORD came back a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you." ⁸ So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God. ⁹ There he went into a cave and spent the night.

The LORD Appears to Elijah

And the word of the LORD came to him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

¹⁰ He replied, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too."

¹¹ The LORD said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by."

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. ¹² After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. ¹³ When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

¹⁴ He replied, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too."

¹⁵ The LORD said to him, "Go back the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus. I reserve seven thousand in Israel—all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and all whose mouths have not kissed him."

LESSON (TEACHER WORDS IN BOLD): ELIJAH LOOKS FOR GOD WHEN HE IS AFRAID & LONELY

Today we're going to talk about peer pressure, and what happens after you resist sometimes!

Elijah defied 450 really bad guys in a great story 1 Kings. Here comes their queen, Jezebel, and she's more scary than all of them put together. She says she's gonna kill him.

Elijah was not perfect, and neither are we. Just a few days earlier, he set a sacrifice to God on fire in front of 450 know-it-alls. He was fine doing that. Along comes...one woman...he's scared out of his tree. He runs for it. He seeks out the voice of the Lord. And then what happened?

He heard thunder and saw a big fire, but God wasn't in that. When everything calmed down...God was in the still, small voice.

Give some students a pie tin and a cardboard insert from a dry-cleaner hanger.

Wave the pie tin so that it makes a rattling noise and flashes. **This will be our lightning.**

Bang on the pie tin with the cardboard insert. **This will be our thunder.**

Give a couple of students jars or cans with uncooked rice in them and the tops closed off (fabric and a rubber band). Show them how to turn the can sideways and shake it. **This is our rain.**

Everybody...make a storm! After a minute of storm noises have them stop. Pick one student to lay down his instrument and go to the back of the group where he will serve as your partner.

Once the storm starts up again, I'm going to say something softly. It's [student's] job to try to hear every word I'm saying or to try to read my lips. It is everyone else's job to be as loud as you can and try to distract him. Go!!

Once the storm noise reaches a loud peak, look across all the other students, directly at the student-partner in the back and say, **God wants you to hear him clearly in the noise of life.** You may have to repeat it a few times. If the student can't quite read you, bring him a little closer until he is able to understand.

You and he may stop the group. Let him repeat what you have said.

Pick another student. This time say across the storm, **You have to listen carefully to hear the voice of God.**

Pick another student. This time say across the storm, **Jesus says, "My sheep hear my voice and follow me."**

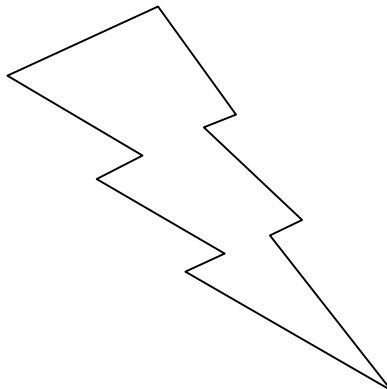
Pick another student. This time say across the storm, **"I have a surprise for everyone in the cabinet. Go and get it."**

When the student hears clearly, have him repeat and go get cookies for everyone.

INTRO ACTIVITY, YOUNGER CHILDREN: WHERE IS GOD?

Today we're going to talk about how to hear the voice of God. Elijah got very scared of a big, bad woman, and he ran off to a cave and God came to him. Was God in the thunder? Was God in the fire? We'll have to wait to hear, but in the meantime, you can paste lightning bolts on the pie tins we'll be using to make a storm.

Draw a lightning bolt on a piece of construction paper for each child. You can use the image below as a guide:



Have the children color the lightning bolts orange and yellow, then cut them out. They can paste them on the backs of the pie tins from the lesson, using stick glue. If they finish quickly, have them cut out or color lightning bolts for those who haven't arrived yet.

INTRO ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: LIP READING

We're back to discussion on the voice of the Lord today and how we have to practice to hear it. Take these Bible verses and practice "mouthing" them to another student.

Have the verses below visible on your screen. Choose the first student who comes to class to be the "mouther." That student will "mouth" the scriptures below to other students who are arriving (make their mouths move without using their voices). The students will guess what the mouther is saying. Then, have them switch so another student can be the "mouther."

These passages are from the very beginning of the Book of John.

In the beginning was the world.	And the World was with God, and the World was God.	Through him all things were made;
In him was life, and that life was the light of men.	The light shines in the darkness,	but the darkness has not understood it.

ACTIVITY, YOUNGER CHILDREN: CANDLES REPRESENTING GOD'S SMALL VOICE



These fun candles represent the story of Elijah looking for God's voice in the wind, earthquake, and fire, and finding it in a gentle whisper. Before class, write on each student's plate, along the edge: GOD'S VOICE CAME IN A GENTLE WHISPER. 1 Kings 19:12-13. Create and cut out some one-inch-tall hearts on the red paper, enough for each student to have nine or 10. Cut the yellow construction paper to fit around the toilet-paper roll so that all students have to do is glue it around. Finally, create the flame out of orange construction paper.

Have students glue the parts together for their craft.

Elijah was really listening for God's voice. He thought he would hear God's voice sounding HUGE! So when he heard a loud wind, he thought, "Here it comes!" Then he heard an earthquake, and he thought, "Now, here it comes." Then he heard a huge crackling fire. Was God's voice in any of those huge things? No. Where was God's voice? It was soft.

God doesn't want to scare us. He wants to talk to us! Let's remember this week to listen for God's voice when we need to know the way. It will be small. Like a candle with a flame.

ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

We talk an awfully lot in church—and we’ve learned quite a few lessons—about listening for the voice of the Lord. How many of you feel you have ever heard it?

Let children describe times they think that perhaps God spoke to them.

Let’s talk a little about the voice of the Lord and what it is we’re listening for:

- **It’s most often a voice that goes off noticeably “in your heart.” In other words, you don’t hear it aloud, but yet, it is clear.**
- **It often comes when we have prayed and asked to hear it. However, we may not hear it right away. We may have to listen hard and sit quietly for a while.**
- **It is a comforting voice. One way to tell if it’s your imagination is if the voice sounds scary, it’s probably your imagination.**

If kids want to get into a discussion on the difference between the imagination and the voice of God, encourage it. Kids are often closer to believing they will hear the voice of the Lord than we adults are, and they may be able to distinguish for each other. Help out where necessary. Some things you can stress:

If you ask God for something, like a win in your next game, he sometimes does not give you what you want. Sometimes we should be praying according to his will: For example, you should be praying for extra attention so you can play your best.

Some people hear the voice of God more clearly than others. That has nothing to do with how much he loves us—he loves us all the same. Perhaps it has to do with our level of faith—our willingness to believe he will speak.

Tell students you are going to bow your heads and pray about a personal matter, something they would like to receive extra wisdom about. To discourage laughter once the prayer starts, you might try to take them down to the chapel if it is available, and thereby make it seem more special and serious.

Some examples would be:

What can I do to get along better with my sister or brother?

What special thing can I do to help my mom?

What can I do to get better grades in school?

How can I find a certain class more fun?

Can I do something to help out in my community?

Tell students to pick *one* question, something they're curious about. Make sure everyone has one. Have everyone bow heads.

Father, thank you for being among us today. We want to hear you, Father. We want to know your thoughts and your ways. You are so much smarter than we are. Help us to focus, to ask with confidence and hope. We know you love to commune with us.

Tell everyone to pose their question to God. Sit for five minutes in silence. Every minute or so say softly,

If your mind drifts off, that's okay ...just bring it back around...focus on the voice of God.

After you say, "**Amen,**" ask the children to share what they may have heard. Help them decipher anything that confused them. Tell them to repeat that exercise at home, often.

GAME, YOUNGER CHILDREN: FOLLOWING GOD'S VOICE

Let's listen for God's voice today. Who wants to be the voice of God? Pick a student and have that student come to the front of the room. Have everyone else resume with their pie tins and rice shakers from the lesson.

Plan out with the student what he will say. He should speak in a normal voice. Use the verses from the beginning of the book of John, as many as you need so that every child can have a chance to be the voice of the Lord. You can repeat some if you have a lot of children:

In the beginning was the Word

The Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Through him all things were made.

In him was life, and that life was the light.

The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John.

John came to talk about the light, so that all men might believe.

John himself was not the light.

The true light was coming into the world.

Go over the line with the student in whispers until he has memorized it. Have him turn and everyone start their “storm” clattering. The “voice of the Lord” should shut his eyes and put his fingers in his ears so he won’t stumble, and then repeat the line in a normal voice. Everyone will be clattering and trying to hear at the same time.

If they can’t hear it after three times, have them stop their clatter and listen and hear the child clearly. Give every child a chance to be the voice of the Lord.

What was it like, trying to hear when you were making your storm? Very hard.

Storms are like our frantic play and busy-ness. We should try to grow quiet to hear the voice of the Lord. Was it easier to hear once we quieted down?

GAME, OLDER CHILDREN: I WILL LISTEN

Have children write out the following prayer promise for the following week.

I promise to do my best to pray every day and listen for the voice of the Lord. My prayer is the following question:

[Place question here]

And I would like an answer. I promise to pray at this time every day:

[put an option: In the morning, or at lunch, or before bed, etc.]

I will try to listen for the voice of the Lord about this for this many minutes:

[put the number of minutes you opt for]

I know that God loves me. I know he is happy to hear from me.

[Have them decorate their pledge with a drawing of themselves doing what they said they would do.]

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, thank you for your voice. We spend an awful lot of prayer time asking you for stuff, like clothes and winning and healing. This week, help us to ask for wisdom and from this, help us feel confident in our closeness to you.

Amen.

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

2 Chronicles 7 tells how, after Solomon built the beautiful Temple to God, he laid the first offering on the on altar, and fire came from heaven and consumed the burnt offering. **When we make sacrifices to God, he is happy about that. But what kind of gifts can we give the God who gave us everything?**

MATERIALS LIST

Lesson

- No materials needed

Intro Activity, Younger Children

- Paper plates, titled (see Intro Activity), one for each child
- Markers and crayons

Intro Activity, Older Children

- Laptop
- Website address for one of the many clips showing accurate drawings of King Solomon's Temple.

Activity, Younger Children

- Paper plates, titled (see Activity), one for each child
- Markers and crayons
- Glue sticks

- Multi-colored curling ribbon, four 2-foot-long ribbons of different colors for each child

- Scissors for curling ribbon

Activity, Older Children

- Pencils
- Paper
- Two Bibles, one for each team

Game, Younger Children

- No materials needed

Game, Older Children

- Cardboard box
- Gold wrapping paper
- Scotch tape
- Knife or scissors for making four slits

BIBLE READING / STORY: 2 CHRONICLES 6

Excerpts:

¹ Then Solomon said, "The LORD has said that he would dwell in a dark cloud; ² I have built a magnificent temple for you, a place for you to dwell forever."

³ While the whole assembly of Israel was standing there, the king turned around and blessed them. ⁴ Then he said:

"Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, who with his hands has fulfilled what he promised with his mouth to my father David. For he said, ⁵ 'Since the day I brought my people out of Egypt, I have not chosen a city in any tribe of Israel to have a temple built for my Name to be there, nor have I chosen anyone to be the leader over my people Israel. ⁶ But now I have chosen Jerusalem for my Name to be there, and I have chosen David to rule my people Israel.'

⁷ "My father David had it in his heart to build a temple for the Name of the LORD, the God of Israel. ⁸ But the LORD said to my father David, 'Because it was in your heart to build a temple for my Name, you did well to have this in your heart. ⁹ Nevertheless, you are not the one to build the temple, but your son, who is your own flesh and blood—he is the one who will build the temple for my Name.'

¹⁰ "The LORD has kept the promise he made. I have succeeded David my father and now I sit on the throne of Israel, just as the LORD promised, and I have built the temple for the Name of the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹¹ There I have placed the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD that he made with the people of Israel."

Solomon's Prayer of Dedication

¹² Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in front of the whole assembly of Israel and spread out his hands. He stood on the platform and knelt down before the whole assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven. ¹⁴ He said:

"O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven or on earth—you who keep your covenant of love with your servants who continue wholeheartedly in your way. ¹⁵ You have kept your promise to your servant David my father; with your mouth you have promised and with your hand you have fulfilled it—as it is today.

⁴⁰ "Now, my God, may your eyes be open and your ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place.

2 Chronicles 7:

The Dedication of the Temple

¹ When Solomon finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. ² The priests could not enter the temple of the LORD because the glory of the LORD filled it. ³ When all the Israelites saw the fire coming down and the glory of the LORD above the temple, they knelt on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave thanks to the LORD, saying,

"He is good;

his love endures forever."

LESSON (TEACHER WORDS IN BOLD): GOD LIKES HIS HOUSE

God surely liked the temple that Solomon built, didn't he? How did God show his gladness? He came down and lit the burnt offering on fire and took it. He lit up the temple so brightly that the priests couldn't go in there.

So, let's go get us a huge mountain of silver and gold so we can make a gift good enough for God. Okay? They should object. **What's wrong with that plan?** Because we're not rich. Because God wants other stuff from us.

There's three things God ask from you. "Love the Lord with all your...what?" Heart, soul, and mind.

Here's a modern-day tale of a girl who was six years old and lived in California. Her dad had left home. No one knew where was or why he had been unhappy in their house. Her mom had to work very hard. The little girl coped by telling God every day, "Well, you have to be my father." And she was very serious about this.

One day, her mom got flowers for Easter from friends who were trying to cheer her. There were a dozen white roses in the vase, and the little girl thought they smelled better than anything. Mom was cooking, and the little girl went into the kitchen and saw her mother, very busy. And she said, "Can I have a rose?"

Mom said absently, "Why not??"

The little girl took a rose, went outside, and she put the rose on one of the pretty bushes belonging to her neighbor. She said, “God. I don’t have anything to give you except this rose, which you made anyway. But it’s the nicest thing we got in a long time. It smells *great*. It is my present to you. Happy Easter.”

And she left. On her way to school the next day, she stopped on her way to the bus stop and looked, and the rose was gone. She grew into an adult and made some huge mistakes and didn’t see her mother for a long time. But she knew who her Father was. He never let her forget for too long. God always came around to straighten her out, just like a real father would have.

Do you think that God took the flower as a special gift from the little girl? Or do you think it blew away in the wind? Most will say he took it.

Why did he honor this gift from her, a flower that he had made in the first place? Because it was the best thing her family had gotten in a long time. She was giving away the best thing that she had.

Do you think the gift, this flower, told the Lord that he had her heart, soul, and mind?
Yes.

If you wanted to show the Lord that he had your heart, soul and mind...in other words, *all of you*, what would you give him? Most people like to show love of God in *actions* these days:

Prompts:

- Do something for a good charity.
- Promise some sort of good behavior like helping parents with chores.
- Promise to not fight with a sibling this week or this month.
- Extra-hard work on grades because it makes your parents happy to see you trying.

Let’s all think of a “gift” for God this month, a “sacrifice” of our time or our belongings, and we should pray for a reminder every morning to keep that promise. The Holy Spirit will remind us.

Discuss with them what their individual gift might be.

INTRO ACTIVITY, YOUNGER CHILDREN: WHAT GOD GIVES TO US: PLATE #1

Today we'll be talking about King Solomon's Temple, which was surely the largest, most expensive building anyone made for God in the history of mankind. It might be hard for us to think right away of things we could give to God as gifts. So let's start with thinking of some things he has given to us.

Give each child a paper plate divided into four equal sections. Create a title along the circular edge: Four Things God Gave Me That I'm Grateful For. Have them draw four things they are grateful for, and share with the class before the lesson begins.

INTRO ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

Today we'll be talking about King Solomon's Temple. King Solomon was King David's son and he wanted to build a really huge and beautiful temple for the Lord. So that you can see it accurately while we're talking, watch the clip of it for now.

Run a clip of King Solomon's Temple, which gives a very accurate depiction that is Biblical. There are many on YouTube that are short and good enough to keep kids' attention.

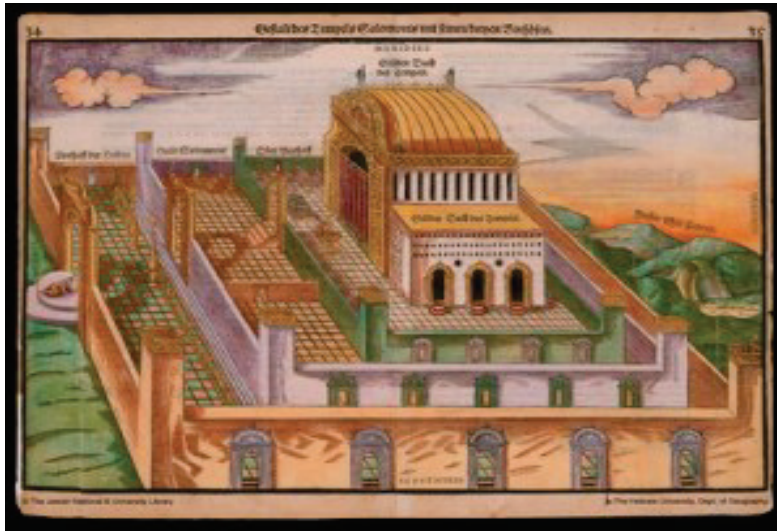
ACTIVITY, YOUNGER CHILDREN: GIFTS WE CAN GIVE TO GOD: PLATE #2

After the lesson, they should all be filled with ideas of a time commitment, charity commitment, or promise of good behavior they can give to God. Have them draw a second plate, this one with the following heading going around the outside of the plate, "My Gift to God This Week Will Be" Have them draw what they will try to do this week.

Glue the two plates together, back to back and run some colorful curling ribbon through so it looks like a rainbow is bursting forth.

ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

Have the fill-in-the-blanks form below visible on your screen. Break the students up into two teams. Have students look up in the Bible: 2 Chronicles 3 of how King Solomon built the world's first church, the Holy Temple of the Lord. Have them fill in the blanks. The first to get all 24 answers correct wins.



King Solomon's Temple: 2 Chronicles 3

The foundation Solomon laid for building the temple of God was ____ cubits long and ____ cubits wide.⁴ The portico at the front of the temple was _____ cubits long across the width of the building and _____ cubits high.

He overlaid the inside with _____.⁵ He paneled the main hall with _____ and covered it with fine gold and decorated it with palm tree and chain designs.⁶ He adorned the temple with precious _____. And the gold he used was gold of Parvaim.⁷ He overlaid the ceiling beams, doorframes, walls and doors of the temple with _____, and he carved _____ on the walls.

⁸ He built the Most Holy Place, its length corresponding to the width of the temple—_____ cubits long and _____ cubits wide. He overlaid the inside with six hundred talents of fine _____.⁹ The _____ nails weighed fifty shekels. He also overlaid the upper parts with gold.

¹⁰ In the Most Holy Place he made a pair of sculptured _____ and overlaid them with gold.

¹¹ The total wingspan of the cherubim was _____ cubits. One wing of the first cherub was _____ cubits long and touched the temple wall, while its other wing, also five cubits long,

touched the _____.¹² Similarly one wing of the second cherub was five cubits long and touched the other _____, and its other wing, also five cubits long, touched the wing of the _____.¹³ The wings of these cherubim extended _____ cubits. They stood on their feet, facing the main hall.

¹⁴ He made the curtain of blue, purple and crimson _____ and fine linen, with cherubim worked into it.

¹⁵ In the front of the temple he made two pillars, which together were _____ cubits long, each with a capital on top measuring five cubits.¹⁶ He made interwoven chains and put them on top of the pillars. He also made a hundred pomegranates and attached them to the chains.¹⁷ He erected the pillars in the front of the temple, one to the south and one to the north. The one to the south he named _____ and the one to the north _____.

Important Notes:

- A cubit refers to the ancient measurement equaling length of the average human forearm. It is said by some to be one-and-a-half-feet, by others to be 20 inches.
- Total gold used for King Solomon's Temple: 3,000 tons
- Total silver used for King Solomon's Temple: 30,000 tons

Teacher's notes for Activity, Older Children

If your Bible is not in NIV and your translation is not creating enough parallels for the children to fill in the blanks, below is a copy of the NIV version of 2 Chronicles 3, where Solomon builds the Temple:

³ The foundation Solomon laid for building the temple of God was sixty cubits long and twenty cubits wide (using the cubit of the old standard).⁴ The portico at the front of the temple was twenty cubits long across the width of the building and twenty cubits high.

He overlaid the inside with pure gold.⁵ He paneled the main hall with pine and covered it with fine gold and decorated it with palm tree and chain designs.⁶ He adorned the temple with precious stones. And the gold he used was gold of Parvaim.⁷ He overlaid the ceiling beams, doorframes, walls and doors of the temple with gold, and he carved cherubim on the walls.

⁸ He built the Most Holy Place, its length corresponding to the width of the temple—twenty cubits long and twenty cubits wide. He overlaid the inside with six hundred talents of fine gold.⁹ The gold nails weighed fifty shekels. He also overlaid the upper parts with gold.

¹⁰ In the Most Holy Place he made a pair of sculptured cherubim and overlaid them with gold.

¹¹ The total wingspan of the cherubim was twenty cubits. One wing of the first cherub was five cubits long and touched the temple wall, while its other wing, also five cubits long, touched the wing of the other cherub. ¹² Similarly one wing of the second cherub was five cubits long and touched the other temple wall, and its other wing, also five cubits long, touched the wing of the first cherub. ¹³ The wings of these cherubim extended twenty cubits. They stood on their feet, facing the main hall.

¹⁴ He made the curtain of blue, purple and crimson yarn and fine linen, with cherubim worked into it.

¹⁵ In the front of the temple he made two pillars, which together were thirty-five cubits long, each with a capital on top measuring five cubits. ¹⁶ He made interwoven chains and put them on top of the pillars. He also made a hundred pomegranates and attached them to the chains.

¹⁷ He erected the pillars in the front of the temple, one to the south and one to the north. The one to the south he named Jakin and the one to the north Boaz.

GAME, YOUNGER CHILDREN: ARK OF THE COVENANT: MEMORIZATION GAME

Teach the books of the Bible up to what these lessons have provided so far using the A-B-C Song.

It goes as follows:

A B C D E F G
Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers,
H I J K L M N O P
Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges.
Q R S T U V
Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, too
W X Y and Z
1 and 2 Kings, Chronicles, 1 & 2
Now I know some Bible books
It's much harder than it looks.

Once they get it, award with “instruments” they can use to play along: Pie tins as tambourines, rice-in-can shakers, or coffee-can drums.

GAME, OLDER CHILDREN: ARK OF THE COVENANT: MEMORIZATION GAME

One gift we can all give the Lord today is the gift of memorization. Let’s memorize the fourteen books of the Bible we’ve learned about so far.

Dress a cardboard box in gold wrapping paper. Cut slits in the bottom and run two dollar-store yardsticks through it as per the diagram.

This will be the Ark of the Covenant.

Object: Students will recite the books studied so far in the Old Testament and in doing so, bring the Ark of the Covenant to its resting place in Solomon’s Temple.

Have students form a line running from one wall to the opposite wall. Two students will hold either end of the Ark at the beginning of the line. The first will say “Genesis.” The second will say “Exodus.” The first and second student will pass the Ark down one student, so the second and third students are holding the sticks. The third student says “Leviticus.” The Ark moves to the third and fourth students as the fourth student says “Deuteronomy.” And so on.

If you have more book names than students, have them keep running to the end of the line after they say their Bible book, so that they can say another as the Ark approaches.

If any student misses, that student has to take the Ark back to the beginning of the line, become person #1, and start passing again. You can prompt or not prompt as you see fit. The Ark will pass into Solomon’s holy temple (can be the tabletop) after a student reaches “2 Chronicles” and no one has missed.

The books are:

Genesis	Joshua	1 Kings
Exodus	Judges	2 Kings
Leviticus	Ruth	1 Chronicles
Numbers	1 Samuel	2 Chronicles
Deuteronomy	2 Samuel	

Give them time to memorize aloud with each other before the game begins.

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, thank you for your rich history. Thank you for the Bible that shows it to us. Thank you for all you give to us and the chance to give back to you this week.

Amen.

OUR TEMPLE

To Christians these days, the pomp and circumstance surrounding Solomon’s Holy Temple may seem a bit mysterious. We are very accustomed to the stories about Christ, and one of the ones alluding to the Temple occurs in Jesus’ conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4. Jesus tells her that **those who worship God will do so in spirit and in truth, and temples, mountains, descendants, and traditions will have little to do with true worship.** Hence, while Solomon’s Temple was a striking gift to God, which he accepted, **he is looking to abide inside of us, and the human body is now considered the temple of the Holy Spirit.**

MATERIALS LIST

Lesson

- Small box with lid

Intro Activity for Younger Children

- Construction paper, cut into pieces, 1-inch by 1-inch, one for each child
- Crayons, markers
- Example pictures of the churches

Intro Activity, Older Children

- Paper
- Pencils

Activity, Younger Children

- Construction paper
- Crayons
- Markers

- Glue stick

- One-inch cards from the Intro Activity

Activity, Older Children

- Paper
- Pens or pencils

Game, Younger Children

- In-class musical “instruments” (pie tins, drumsticks, rice jars, etc.)

Game, Older Children

- Ball of aluminum foil or small bouncy ball to be the “hot potato”

BIBLE READING / STORY:

JOHN 4

Jesus Talks With a Samaritan Woman

⁴Now he [Jesus] had to go through Samaria. ⁵So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

⁷When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?"
⁸(His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

⁹The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

¹⁰Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

¹¹"Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? ¹²Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?"

¹³Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

¹⁵The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

¹⁶He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."

¹⁷"I have no husband," she replied.

Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. ¹⁸The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

¹⁹"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. ²⁰Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

²¹Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²²You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

²⁵The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

²⁶Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am he."

LESSON (TEACHER WORDS IN BOLD): GOD'S DWELLING TODAY: INSIDE OF US

Get a small box with a lid. Hold it up in front of the class. Pull the lid up an inch.

Here's what: I'm going to say my favorite Bible verse into this box and then shut the lid really fast. What do you think is going to happen?

Younger kids might hope for something; older children will be dubious. Say into the box:

"God so loved the world he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever should believe in him should not perish, but should have everlasting life."

Shut the lid very quickly.

There. Do you think I captured some of God in that box? Younger children might want to peek inside quickly. Older children will say no. Let them look and satisfy themselves that the box is not swirling with mist.

Let me try again. This time I'll ask more directly. Open the box lid an inch, and speak directly into it. **"Father, I want you to come live in this box. I want to carry you around—in my house, in my car when I go out—so that I always have you with me.** Close the lid tightly again.

There. Do you think God will honor my request and come live in that box? Younger children will be confused; older children will say that God is too big to fit in a box.

How what I am doing is any different than what Solomon did, when he built a temple for God in 2 Chronicles? I mean, we all know that God created and heavens and the earth.

He is infinitely vast. Solomon created a “dwelling place on earth” for God. He even said to God when he dedicated the Temple: “I have built a magnificent temple for you, a place for you to dwell forever.” And God accepted that gift. Think of it: If God is that big, why would he accept Solomon’s invitation to use the Temple as a dwelling place on earth? It’s almost like asking him to live in a box.

Let them discuss this. Some answers might arise, but return to the point:

The Holy Spirit was not released for all men until after the death and resurrection of Jesus, a thousand years after Solomon built the Temple. Today, the Holy Spirit is available to people of all backgrounds. We simply have to ask for the “indwelling” of the Holy Spirit, and God, through the Holy Spirit, can live inside of us. That makes *us* a temple.

Now, we can put all boxes, big and small, silver, gold or cardboard...aside. If we want God to come and dwell with us, we say, “Come live inside of *me*.”

Would everyone like to do that?

Have all students bow their heads and follow you in prayer:

Father, we want to love you; we want to know more and more about you. We want you to guide us through all situations. We want you to be our Father; we want to be your children. We don’t ever want to be tempted to run away from you, even when our friends who don’t believe appear to be having more fun sometimes. That kind of fun is short-lived. We want the fun that comes more slowly but never, ever leaves once we get to heaven.

Therefore, Lord, come into our hearts if we have never asked you before. Make our bodies a temple unto you. Send us your Holy Spirit, so we may always be reminded of what we need to do when we take each next step.

Be ours, Father, and make us your temple. In Jesus name, Amen.

Discuss with the children what that prayer means. Even though they have parents, their parents are not perfect. But God is. He knows what’s right even if parents are stumped.

He created us to be his; the prayer we just prayed reflects how he wants us to really feel about him.

You need only ask Jesus into your heart once for him to fulfill that. We can renew that prayer every morning, simply to put the Holy Spirit at the front of our hearts.

INTRO ACTIVITY, YOUNGER CHILDREN: GOD'S HOLY TEMPLE

This week, we'll be comparing Solomon's Temple with a different kind of temple—the kind God looks for today. Use one of the little cards on the table and draw a temple, and we'll do something with it later.

Give each child a small card, 1 inch by 1 inch. Have them draw on a church or temple. Use these as examples:



INTRO ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: GOD'S TEMPLE TODAY

In the days between King Solomon and Jesus, people were very into temples, believing that God would “dwell” in a temple if they built one. This week, we'll be discussing what kind of a temple God looks to dwell in today. There's a clue in the following verse from Corinthians. Unscramble it.

ROYU DBYO SI A PLEMET FO ETH YOHL RIPIST, HOW SI NI UYO, MOWH OYU VEAH CIREEDVE MROF ODG?

1 CORINTHIANS 6:19

ACTIVITY, YOUNGER CHILDREN: OUR BODY: TEMPLE OF THE HOLY GHOST

Instead of boxes, we now have bodies to house God's spirit. Of course, we go to church and worship there together, but our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. So we're going to put the temple inside of us.

Have each child color a picture of him or herself that takes up the whole page. Using a glue stick, they should glue a little temple in the center of their tummies. Title

On picture: God lives inside of _____ (child's name).

ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: OUR BODY: GOD'S TEMPLE TODAY

Many people today are noticing the relationship between body, mind, and spirit. If our body is to be the temple of the Holy Spirit, we should think of ways to treat it nicely. Below are a bunch of words that describe ways we can be kind to our bodies and treat it like a temple. They are missing all their vowels. Let's see how many you can identify.

sl**p, *x*rc*s*, *thl*t*cs, c*rd**, v*t*m*ns, h**lthy f**d, pr*y*r, m*d*t*t**n,
h*g, r*nn*ng, d*nc*ng, str*tch*ng, r*l*x*t**n, w*lk*ng, b*cycl*, v*g*t*bl*s,
sm*l*, l**gh, s*ng, r*j**c*

ANSWERS; sleep, exercise, athletics, cardio, vitamins, healthy food, prayer, meditation, hug, running, dancing, stretching, relaxation, walking, bicycling, vegetables, smile, laugh, sing, rejoice

GAME, OLDER CHILDREN: HOT POTATO: MEMORIZATION GAME #2

This is another exercise to help kids memorize book of the Bible. This will help them memorize the books up to and including 1 & 2 Chronicles.

Use a ball or a rolled-up, decent-sized piece of aluminum. Have the students stand in a circle and pass the ball, as in a game of hot potato. Starting with one child, have him say the first book, then pass the hot potato to the next person, who says the second book, and so forth. The first person who misses has “dropped the potato” and has to drop out. See how many rounds it takes to go all the way through the 14 books without anyone missing.

The books so far include:

Genesis	Joshua	1 Kings
Exodus	Judges	2 Kings
Leviticus	Ruth	1 Chronicles
Numbers	1 Samuel	2 Chronicles
Deuteronomy	2 Samuel	

Give them time to memorize out loud with each other before the game begins.

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, thank you for Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Thank you for living inside of us. Help us to live in ways that are worthy.

Amen.

DO A SMALL FAVOR FOR THE LORD (NAAMAN & ELISHA)

Elisha & Trusting God: In 2 Kings 5, Naaman was a great military leader of Syria, but was humbled, as he had leprosy, a rotting of the skin. Elisha told Naaman to wash himself seven times in the Jordan. Naaman felt the command was a joke, and his servants said: "If God asked you to do a great thing, would you not have done it? How much more this little thing?" **If we want God to trust us with big things, we should be trustworthy with smaller things first.**

MATERIALS LIST

Lesson

- No materials necessary

Intro Activity, Younger Children

- Drawing paper
- Crayons and/or markers

Intro Activity, Older Children

- Writing paper
- Pencils

Activity, Younger Children

- Child's chair
- Streamers, balloons, or artificial flowers to decorate the chair
- Tape

Activity, Older Children

- Lists created in the Intro Activity

Game, Younger Children

- No materials needed

Game Older Children

- Wiffle ball and bat

BIBLE READING/STORY: 2 KINGS 5

Naaman Healed of Leprosy

¹ Now Naaman was commander of the army of the king of Aram. He was a great man in the sight of his master and highly regarded, because through him the LORD had given victory to Aram. He was a valiant soldier, but he had leprosy.

² Now bands from Aram had gone out and had taken captive a young girl from Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. ³ She said to her mistress, "If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy."

⁴ Naaman went to his master and told him what the girl from Israel had said. ⁵ "By all means, go," the king of Aram replied. "I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So Naaman left, taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold and ten sets of clothing. ⁶ The letter that he took to the king of Israel read: "With this letter I am sending my servant Naaman to you so that you may cure him of his leprosy."

⁷ As soon as the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his robes and said, "Am I God? Can I kill and bring back to life? Why does this fellow send someone to me to be cured of his leprosy? See how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me!"

⁸ When Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his robes, he sent him this message: "Why have you torn your robes? Have the man come to me and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel." ⁹ So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha's house. ¹⁰ Elisha sent a messenger to say to him, "Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed."

¹¹ But Naaman went away angry and said, "I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy. ¹² Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than any of the waters of Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be cleansed?" So he turned and went off in a rage.

¹³ Naaman's servants went to him and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, 'Wash and be cleansed!'" ¹⁴ So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy.

¹⁵ Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God. He stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. Please accept now a gift from your servant."

¹⁶ The prophet answered, "As surely as the LORD lives, whom I serve, I will not accept a thing." And even though Naaman urged him, he refused.

¹⁷ "If you will not," said Naaman, "please let me, your servant, be given as much earth as a pair of mules can carry, for your servant will never again make burnt offerings and sacrifices to any other god but the LORD. ¹⁸ But may the LORD forgive your servant for this one thing: When my master enters the temple of Rimmon to bow down and he is leaning on my arm and I bow there also—when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the LORD forgive your servant for this."

¹⁹ "Go in peace," Elisha said.

After Naaman had traveled some distance, ²⁰ Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said to himself, "My master was too easy on Naaman, this Aramean, by not accepting from him what he brought. As surely as the LORD lives, I will run after him and get something from him."

²¹ So Gehazi hurried after Naaman. When Naaman saw him running toward him, he got down from the chariot to meet him. "Is everything all right?" he asked.

²² "Everything is all right," Gehazi answered. "My master sent me to say, 'Two young men from the company of the prophets have just come to me from the hill country of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two sets of clothing.' "

²³ "By all means, take two talents," said Naaman. He urged Gehazi to accept them, and then tied up the two talents of silver in two bags, with two sets of clothing. He gave them to two of his servants, and they carried them ahead of Gehazi. ²⁴ When Gehazi came to the hill, he took the things from the servants and put them away in the house. He sent the men away and they left. ²⁵ Then he went in and stood before his master Elisha.

"Where have you been, Gehazi?" Elisha asked.

"Your servant didn't go anywhere," Gehazi answered.

²⁶ But Elisha said to him, "Was not my spirit with you when the man got down from his chariot to meet you? Is this the time to take money, or to accept clothes, olive groves, vineyards, flocks, herds, or menservants and maidservants? ²⁷ Naaman's leprosy will cling to you and to your descendants forever." Then Gehazi went from Elisha's presence and he was leprous, as white as snow.

LESSON (TEACHER WORDS IN BOLD): DOING A SMALL FAVOR FOR THE LORD

Naaman was a very important guy. He was embarrassed to have leprosy, which makes you break out in scabs. He was even more embarrassed when Elijah told him to go wash in the Jordan. Naaman lived near some beautiful rivers and streams, but God told him through Elijah to go wash in the Jordan, which had a dead-fish problem and could totally smell.

Naaman was very grossed out, as if this disgusting disease weren't enough. But his servants reminded him, "If God asked you to do something totally heroic, wouldn't you do that? All he's asking is for you to sit in, well, sludge water that smells. It doesn't take any nerve...just belief."

God does not often ask us to part the Red Sea, as he did for Moses in Exodus, or to build an ark, as he did Noah in Genesis. But he does ask us small things: Don't lie, don't steal, be as nice as possible to others, most especially your mom and dad.

The Bible tells us in Ephesians 6:1-3: 1Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2"Honor your father and mother"—which is the first commandment with a promise— 3"that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." The Bible also tells moms and dads to be obedient to the Lord, but for this lesson, we focus on boys and girls like you.

How can we start to be obedient to our mothers and fathers? Let them discuss. Prompts:

- When your mom and dad ask you to do chores, snap to it.
- Go somewhere with your parents even though you'd rather be with friends.
- Drop a fight with your siblings instead of continuing on with it.

The Lord was not simply trying to embarrass Naaman. Naaman had been important for a lot of years, and God knew that some humility would actually make him stronger in character. Hence, he asked him to show some humility, or in other words, stop thinking from his pride.

For us, it's like this: You say to your mom and dad, "I want a dog." They don't want to walk the dog, they want you to walk the dog.

"But I promise I'll walk the dog, Dad!" you say.

"So, walk the neighbor's dog every day for a month," Dad tells you. He's thinking, If you can't walk that dog for a month, how will you walk *our* dog for ten years??

God asks us to do small things to prove we can be trusted with much bigger things. Let's figure out some responsible things we can do as kids to prove that we'll be ready to be

adults in the Lord.

Read the following scenarios aloud and see if they can figure out what kid responsibility goes with the big responsibility.

- **Your dad gives you \$20 allowance. But he says you have to save half and give another tenth of what you have left to the church. *Bummer?* No! What are some of the things he is trying to help you learn?** Budgeting money, making charity a part of your life, simple business math, generosity.

If you can't budget \$20 a week as a kid, how will you budget for the electric and gas bill as an adult? How will you be anything except selfish with your money?

- **Your mom makes you take care of your baby brother for an hour on Saturdays. She wants you to feed him and change his diapers, even if she's in the house. What are some of the things she is trying to help you learn?** Responsibility for others, that you're not the center of the universe, leadership, how to be part of a team.

If you can't watch your brother for an hour now, how well can you watch an entire family for years once you have your own?

- **You're on an ice hockey team. A lot of people say your coach is mean. The coach does not tolerate lateness or missed practices. If you are late or you miss, you're benched for an entire game. No excuses. He puts a lot of pressure on the captain to keep order on the rink. If someone steps out of their position to play somebody else's, the captain is supposed to tell that player what he did and to not do it again—even if that person scores. The captain and the team members are in the same age group, so sometimes it's not always fun. Kids can walk away from a game saying they hate the captain as much as the coach. What are some things the coach wants the players to learn?** How to work on a team, how to take orders, unity.

What are some things the coach wants the captain to learn? Leadership isn't all being able to show off. There's a lot of responsibility with it.

If you can't work on a team as a kid, how can you lead a company as an adult?

Let's review: What are some things we can do as kids to prove ourselves worthy adults?

Budget our allowance, give to charity, do our chores, help our parents, play on a team.

Here's a trick to keeping on the right road until you're a responsible adult: *HAVE VISION. EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS TO YOU HAPPENS FOR A REASON.* Naaman didn't have enough vision. He thought God was trying to knock him down, when God was simply trying to give him a bigger gift than his healing, which was humility. *WHEN SOMETHING HAPPENS THAT IS NO FUN, ASK YOURSELF, "WHAT KIND OF A PERSON CAN I BECOME BECAUSE OF THIS?"*

INTRO ACTIVITY, YOUNGER CHILDREN: RESPONSIBILITY

Today we'll be talking about some of the ways God makes us into responsible adults. Some of the things we're asked to do are not always fun, like chores and saving money when we'd rather spend it.

Have children draw a picture of themselves helping out with a chore around the house. Title the picture, "I have Shown Responsibility For _____."

INTRO ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPEN

Today we'll be talking about how bad times and things that are not fun can make us better able to serve the Lord as adults. For now, just make a list of things that have happened to you that were not fun. We'll talk about them later. Think through your whole life.

Prompts: Chores, homework, failing at something, losing something, illness, or injury.

Give each child a piece of paper and a pencil.

ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: DEVELOPING VISION

Take that list you wrote out before the lesson of bad things that happened to you. First thank God for all the *good* things that have happened to you. Life is good, but life is a balance. Then we're going to focus on some of these bad things.

Look at the things you wrote down. Take each one. Think of how you were affected by what happened, what changed in you so that you are now a bigger person. THIS WILL HELP YOU DEVELOP VISION.

ACTIVITY FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN: SEAT OF WISDOM

Bring a chair up to the front of the room. You can decorate it somehow if you wish, with flowers or a blanket or something to make it look special. Have everyone get the pictures they drew in the Intro Activity about their responsibility.

Now we're going to look again at the chores you drew. Only this time we're going to look at them with *vision*, which means we'll try to see what good thing that responsibility is doing for us.

Have each child come up one at a time and sit in the Seat of Wisdom and bring the picture of his chore. Ask:

How is that chore helping you become more responsible? In what ways?

What will you do better as a grownup if you keep doing this now?

Will you try to help your mom and dad even more, now that you understand?

GAME FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN: FOLLOW THE LEADER

Now we're going to play a leadership game. I'm going to bring a leader up to the front of the class. The leader is going to lead exercises—stretching, jumping, running in place, touching toes. You're to do whatever the leader says. His job is to get you doing everything at the same time by counting loudly and moving at the right pace. Who wants to be the leader?

Pick the person who is most outgoing and coordinated so children will have an easier time following.

The rest of you, your job is to listen to the leader's instructions and follow the leader as best as you can.

Don't be afraid to call the leader aside a few times as he or she leads the exercising, and correct him if he isn't watching the group or correcting the group, or if he's being too demanding. It will show that leadership is not easy.

Questions for the leader:

How did it feel to be responsible for all these people and all their actions?

Was it as easy as you thought it would be?

Did you think a couple times that you'd rather be a follower?

Questions for the group:

How did it feel to listen to somebody your own age? When you get to be a grownup, everybody sees each other as "the same age," more or less, so it's good to get your practice in now. There won't always be parents.

GAME FOR OLDER CHILDREN: PRACTICING LEADERSHIP

Bring out a Wiffle ball and bat. Move the tables and chairs so you have a playing field. Divide students into two teams.

Now we're going to practice following the leader. I will pick two team captains. I'm the coach of both. The leader's job will be three things:

- Teach those who don't hit a ball very well the tricks of hitting
- Teach those in the field how to stay in their own territory
- Encourage people, even when they're not doing well

The player's job will be to listen to the captain, and don't give him a hard time if he tells you to do something.

Pick two captains based on ability. Let the game ensue. Don't be afraid to pull a captain aside and give him instructions about being too nice or being too demanding; it will show the others that leadership comes with a price.

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, thank you for giving us responsibility. Thank you for caring enough to make us strong. Help us to become stronger with each passing week.

Amen.