



DIVE

AT SCHOOL

DISCOVERING IMPORTANT VALUES FOR ETERNITY





DIVE
AT SCHOOL

Published by Foursquare Missions Press

DIVE AT SCHOOL
Volume One
by Natalie Werking

Copyright © 2019 New Castle Foursquare Church

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any electronic or mechanical means, including information storage and retrieval systems, without permission in writing from the publisher, except by reviewers, who may quote brief passages in a review.

ISBN: 978-0-578-49701-3

Editor: Laurie De Revere

Cover Design: Jameson Werking

Printed in the United States of America

1 2 3 4 5 22 21 20 19

Published by Foursquare Missions Press

4905 E. La Palma Ave.

Anaheim, CA 92807

foursquaremissionspress.org



About DIVE at School.....5

VOLUME ONE

Intro Lesson.....9

Self-Control17

Generosity 123

Generosity 231

Ownership 149

Ownership 255

Dedicated 161

Dedicated 267

Patience73

*Dedicated in memory of Linda Banta,
a faithful DIVE at School volunteer
whose love for Jesus,
for teaching His children, and
for creative writing is still inspiring us today...*



OUR HISTORY

In 2008, a principal named Chris found himself in a spot where other principals often do: struggling with kids who needed help beyond what he could provide each day. Because of several reasons, this principal's elementary school had a high number of office visits per day, above average rates for tardiness, and several other behavioral problems, all while teachers were overworked due to demanding state testing standards. So after confiding in a community leader who told him to, "call the Foursquare Church in town because they'll help you," Chris quickly called the New Castle, Indiana Foursquare Church asking for help.

AND WHAT SHOULD A CHURCH DO WHEN A SCHOOL CALLS NEEDING HELP?!?

We decided to help! During the initial phone call with our founder, Reverend Jim Becker, Chris explained that the students at his school were lacking in character and needed moral values training. Pastor Jim knew that The Word was the answer! The church made plans to come in once-a-week and meet with kids who had parent permission to stay after school. They would play games, have fun, eat snacks, and receive values training from characters in the Bible. And so DIVE at School was born!

Then, after the first year of DIVE at School when Chris reported an 85% decrease in principal office visits, other schools began calling to ask for help, as well. So the ministry began expanding!

OUR VISION

Currently, DIVE at School has partnered with other churches and other denominations to grow beyond several elementary schools in the city of New Castle, beyond the surrounding county, and even beyond the borders of the USA. We envision every elementary school having DIVE so kids can experience the love of Jesus and come to know our creative God in an environment where they go everyday and are already comfortable!

It's life-changing - It's lasting - It's legal
diveatschool.org

GETTING STARTED

We believe DIVE at School can be a new version of Sunday school for this generation! As you embark on this journey to reach and disciple children in a new context, keep in mind that every good work begins with **prayer**.

The next step is to visit our website, **diveatschool.org**, to download a starter pack today! This starter pack will provide you with everything that is needed to get started: a sample permission slip and flowsheet, training/demonstration videos to see what the program looks like, answers to Frequently Asked Questions, and most importantly, contact with our coaching team who will assist, advise, and offer resources at every step. Because New Castle Foursquare has been doing this for over 10 years, most of the details and questions are already worked out. And we're excited to help you!

In the planning stages, it's important to find a **good team**. We suggest recruiting at least four other people who will be part of the start-up team. And then, it's best to add leaders until there is one leader for every 8 to 10 children. This could include inviting other churches to partner with your church to minister to a school! Keep in mind that some of the best leaders to serve during this time of day will be retired folks, homeschooling families, third shift workers, and high school/college students. Volunteers can serve as the teacher, a snack/hospitality person, a small group leader, the game time leader, and more! Our website has more detailed job descriptions for each leader in the starter pack.

Next, leaders will need to develop a **relationship with the school**, as we are dependent on them for a meeting space in the gym, cafeteria, library, art room, or another area. This can be done in a myriad of ways by a simple phone call, an email, and/or setting up a meeting with the principal or school counselor. We recommend serving the school in any way that is needed in order to begin a relationship with them. Or it's possible to build on an already established relationship that churches may have through teachers who work there or kids who are current students. If schools ask about legality, it's important to let them know that this program is **100% legal**, protected by a Supreme Court decision which allows after-school Bible clubs as long as the school permits any other building usage. These legal documents are more fully explained on our website.

Lastly, **determine a start-date** and get started. Be prepared to see how amazing it is for kids to meet Jesus in their school cafeteria and how easy it is to get started.

"DIVE days are the best days!"
-Third grade student

"In 20 years of teaching, I've seen a lot of programs come and go. But DIVE is one that is really changing our school!"
- Second grade teacher

DIVE at School has been surprisingly easy to begin. I thought it would be more complicated, but it's just not. The lessons are so good. Our leaders love it, and kids are responsive. They actually ask for us to do DIVE every day after school!"
-Kristin Cuffle, Terre Haute, Indiana
King's Harvest Foursquare Church



HOW IT WORKS

2. Large Group Time (15 minutes)

Large Group always begins with the DIVE Rules and Musts video, which helps set the tone for the program. After that, there is an activity to play that will lead into the value for the day's lesson. Once the activity is finished, the Bible Story begins. The lessons are intentionally low-prep and low-tech, to make set-up and preparation easier in a school facility. There are a few crucial points to know about the Large Group time for DIVE at School:

- A. The teacher should hold an actual Bible while teaching each session. This helps reinforce that the story comes from the Bible and shows children what a Bible looks like.
- B. One of the foundational parts of DIVE is that kids are taught if it's in the Bible, then it's true. This should be a part of every lesson that is taught.
- C. We work really hard to ensure that the Bible story is told in an engaging way. This is vital so that kids begin to love God's Word, instead of being bored when the lesson begins. Our God is a creative God, so be creative! If the program is called DIVE, then it should be fun!
- D. Keep in mind that students have possibly been sitting for hours during their school day. Be gracious with expectations, remembering that this is an after-school ministry — not a Sunday morning service!

1. Opening Time (15 minutes)

As kids are released after school, they make their way into the program space. It's important that they are instantly engaged through upbeat music, fun greetings, and good instructions about what to do next. This is also an opportunity to serve snacks and gather in small groups or "teams" designated by color.

3. Small Group Time (15 minutes)

Small Groups are perhaps the most effective part of this program. It is a beautiful image of the Kingdom when kids connect to a caring leader. Here are a few ideas for this time:

- A. When possible, ensure that the same leader has the same children week after week.
- B. Encourage Small Group Leaders to lean into the Holy Spirit's leading and follow the conversation with the children. Finishing the "lesson" is not the goal — connecting kids to Jesus is! Our small group time is usually when kids get saved, healed, and/or connected to a church.
- C. The Gospel message in the small group lesson cannot be skipped. It has the power to change lives!

4. Game Time

Children learn through play! So each lesson comes with a game suggestion that will help reinforce the Bible Story or character trait. Additional games are usually needed alongside of the suggested game, depending on the time schedule. The starter pack on our website has more games and more fun ideas to make this time successful - no matter what size space is available!



THEME

Intro Lesson

(This is the first lesson when beginning DIVE at a school, but could also be used at the beginning of the school year.)

BIBLE STORY

The 4 Musts in the Bible

OBJECTIVE

Kids will get to know leaders and understand what DIVE is about.

SUPPLIES FOR LARGE GROUP TIME

- Human bingo card and writing utensil for each student
- Large numbers 1 through 4*
*Print numbers 1 through 4 on large paper or cut out the numbers from card stock/poster board.

SUPPLIES FOR SMALL GROUP TIME

- Set of the “4 Musts” cards for each small group
- Small ball (like tennis or playground ball) for each small group

SUPPLIES FOR GAME SUGGESTION

- Large die and something to play music

LARGE GROUP

OPENING: Rules and Musts

ACTIVITY: Human Bingo

DO: Give each student a Bingo card. Explain that each person will collect signatures in the squares. For instance, “someone with blonde hair” means a blonde student has to put his/her name in the box. The first person to get four signatures in a row wins, then play until someone finishes the whole card. For younger children, read the Bingo card together before starting and consider asking them to get four signatures total, instead of requiring them to be in a row. *(Leaders should also play this game in order to learn names and traits about the children.)*

Intro: It’s been really fun getting to know everyone a little bit here. <Talk about a few kids you met during Bingo.> When we spend just a little bit of time talking about something, we can understand it better! Today, I want to talk with you for a little bit so you can understand what DIVE is all about.

D.I.V.E. stands for Discovering Important Values for Eternity. And we believe that God’s Word shows us a better way to live by following Jesus. These important values that we will discover more about each week are found in the Bible. And the Bible is God’s Word for us.

Every week at DIVE, we’ll say the 4 things we must do in our lives — and they all come from the Bible! It’s really important that you understand this: If it’s in the Bible, it’s TRUE! So when I say, “if it’s in the Bible, it’s...” then you say, “TRUE!” Here let’s try it. *<demonstrate it again>*

BIBLE STORY: The Greatest Commandment - Number Cards

Let’s look at our first Scripture in **Matthew 22:37** to understand our Must #1.

<Hold up the big number 1> **SAY:** Tell me something that you LOVE. Jesus said the most important thing in the whole Bible is to love God with everything. We must love God. And then Jesus said the 2nd most important thing is to love your neighbor. And everyone is our neighbor. We must love others! And lastly, we must love ourselves. This means that we take care of ourselves, talking nicely about ourselves, and staying away from things that could hurt us.

<Hold up the big number 2> **SAY:** Must #2 is about our head. The Bible says in **Philippians 4:8** that we’re only supposed to think about things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and admirable. This means we shouldn’t think about all that junk that we see on TV or on computers and phones. We’ve got to fill our minds with good things! And the Bible tells us very clearly in the Ten Commandments not to lie. Lying always hurts, so we want to be people who speak the truth!

SAY: So that brings us to Must #3. *<Hold up the big number 3>* It says I must have courage to make wise choices. Courage means doing hard stuff but with confidence. So sometimes it takes courage to make wise choices. What might be some wise choices for you? [choosing to not smoke, being kind, tell the truth, etc.] God told Joshua in **Joshua 1:7** to be strong and courageous and to be careful to obey the law that He had given. And that’s what we’ve got to do, too.

SAY: And our last must is Must #4. *<Hold up the big number 4>* I must do good to those around me. Listen to what **Galatians 6:9-10** says *<read it>*. You see, we’re supposed to use our hands to do good things for people around us. What would some good things be? [helping your teacher pick-up, carrying something for a friend, holding a door open for someone, never hitting/punching/slapping]

APPLICATION:

SAY: We want you to live out these 4 Musts EVERY DAY of your life. Each week at DIVE, we’re going to have tons of fun hanging out and discovering new character traits from the Bible, along with our 4 Musts!

<Explain that the next thing is Small Group Time, which is a quiet time to talk with their team and leader.>

SMALL GROUP

REVIEW THE STORY

ASK: Which of the 4 Musts do you remember? Does anyone remember something the Bible said about one of the 4 Musts?

APPLY TO OUR LIVES

DO: Play a Get-to-Know-You game

- Start by going around the table and everyone saying their full name.
<Be sure to tell the group to listen closely to everyone's answers.>
- Then toss the ball to one student and ask her a get-to-know-you question. (below) When that child answers, she must toss the ball to someone else at the table to answer.

Ideas: What's your favorite subject in school?
What's your favorite candy bar?
Who lives in your house with you?
What TV show do you like best?
What's your favorite food?

- [With older kids] **ASK:** Can anyone around the table "introduce" someone else and tell us that person's answer to the questions?

SAY: It's great to get to know everyone a little better. Now let's talk about how we're doing. Each week, we're going to go around our group and share the high point (or the best part) of your day/week and what's been the low point (or the worst part) of your day/week. [NOTE: We call this "highs-and-lows" and will do this during snack time each week.]

SAY: Thank you for sharing!

ASK: Do you all remember the 4 Musts? We want to build our lives on the solid Word of God by doing these four things:

DO: Lay out each "must card" when they say it.

Must #1: Heart - I must love God, I must love others, and I must love myself.

Must #2: Head - I must think good thoughts and tell the truth.

Must #3: Habits - I must have courage to make wise choices.

Must #4: Hands - I must do good to those around me.

DO: Go around the table and ask each child to tell the group which "must" they are the best at already. For instance, they may really love God, or maybe they can share an example of a time when they had courage to do the right thing, or maybe they told the truth to their teacher today, etc.

THE GOSPEL

SAY: Jesus' story is the main story of the whole Bible. So you'll hear about Him each week at DIVE. Jesus is God's Son, and He is the One who was a perfect example of how we can live our lives! (Small group time is a chance to ask children if they know Jesus and find out what they know about the Lord! This is usually the time when kids are saved and healed, so allow the Holy Spirit to lead the conversation!)

PRAYER

Dear Lord, thank You for allowing us to be at DIVE! And thank You for Your Word, the Bible, which shows us how much You love us and how we can live a better way by following You.

GAME TIME

THE FOUR MUST CORNERS

TODAY'S VALUE: Intro to DIVE

Kids will be discovering the story of the wise/foolish builders, as well as the meaning of the 4 Musts of DIVE.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Large Die, something to play music on (we recommend a phone and bluetooth speaker)

A large die can be made using a box, paper, and markers.

Or they are available for purchase for about \$5 (Search "13 inch Jumbo Inflatable Dice")

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Number the corners of the game area from one to four.
- Instruct kids to run, skip, or walk around the room when the music starts. They should keep moving until the music stops.
- When the music stops, students must choose a corner to go to.
- After all the kids have chosen a corner, roll the die to see which corner is "out." (If a 5 or 6 is rolled, that is a "roll again" choice.)
- When a number 1 through 4 is rolled, the kids from that numbered corner are "out" and must sit in the center of the room. For an added bonus, have them say the DIVE "Must" that corresponds to that corner/number.
- The music begins again for a few seconds, and the rest of the group chooses a new corner when the music stops.
- Play continues in this way until only one person is left.
- The final person wins and becomes the next dice roller.

The 4 Musts of DIVE

Must #1: Heart - I must love God, I must love others, and I must love myself.

Must #2: Head - I must think good thoughts and tell the truth.

Must #3: Habits - I must have courage to make wise choices.

Must #4: Hands - I must do good to those around me.



The logo features the word "DIVE" in a large, blue, sans-serif font. The letter "D" is stylized as a water drop. Below "DIVE" is a blue horizontal line with a dashed pattern, and the words "AT SCHOOL" are written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font underneath. To the right of "DIVE" is the word "BINGO" in a very large, bold, black, sans-serif font.

| | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Has traveled outside of the United States of America | Is born in November | Loves to read books | Is a good singer |
| Has played a sport this year | Knows every word to the "I'm a Little Teapot" song | Has curly hair | Had a birthday last month |
| Loves macaroni and cheese | Never been on an airplane | Has more than 1 dog | Is good at math |
| Knows how to floss | Is wearing black shoes | Has a video game system at home | Plays a musical instrument |

MUST #1

HEART

I MUST LOVE GOD,
I MUST LOVE OTHERS,
AND I MUST LOVE MYSELF!

MUST #2

HEAD

I MUST THINK GOOD THOUGHTS
AND
TELL THE TRUTH.

MUST #3

HABITS

I MUST HAVE COURAGE
TO MAKE
WISE CHOICES.

MUST #4

HANDS

I MUST DO GOOD
TO
THOSE AROUND ME.



THEME

Self-Control

BIBLE STORY

Moses Strikes the Rock

OBJECTIVE

Kids will discover why self-control is important.

SUPPLIES FOR LARGE GROUP TIME

- Something to play music
- White board (or poster board for each group)
- Markers to draw the Bible Story

SUPPLIES FOR SMALL GROUP TIME

- None

SUPPLIES FOR GAME SUGGESTION

- None

LARGE GROUP

OPENING: Rules and Musts

ACTIVITY: Freeze Dance

Today, we're talking about self-control. Can anyone tell me what self-control means? *<Take answers from the audience.>* Self-control is ruling ourselves in a way that helps us do what is right. So we're going to get to practice a little bit. I need all the people who like to dance to stand up! When the music starts, you can dance around to the music. When I say "self-control," you must freeze and hold that pose. You can't laugh, smile, or move. The first person who moves, losing his/her self-control, is out. *(Keep playing until you find a winner.)*

INTRODUCTION

For some of us, having self-control is easy. But for others, it's really hard. Or sometimes there are situations where it is really hard to use self-control. There was a guy in the Bible named Moses who sometimes had great self-control. But one time, he acted without self-control and it did not turn out very well for him! Let's find out why it's so important to use self-control.

BIBLE STORY: Moses Strikes the Rock - Art Attack (**Exodus 17 and Numbers 20**)

(The teacher or other adult will be drawing the story, as it is being told.)

SAY: The Israelite people were slaves in Egypt and were being mistreated.

- So Moses *<draw a stick figure on the left>* took his people out of Egypt to go to the land God had promised them.
- Because of the journey to a new land, people had to walk through the desert *<draw lots of stick people and cactuses/dry trees>*.
- After a while, they began complaining to Moses, saying they were hungry *<draw sad faces>*.
- So God took care of them and sent manna and quail from Heaven for them to eat *<draw birds and snow-like substance>*.
- And then the people complained again that they were thirsty *<draw sad faces>*.
- So Moses asked God what to do, and God said to take his walking stick and hit the rock so that water would come out. And it did *<draw Moses hitting the a big rock with water coming out!>*
- And the people were happy *<draw smiley face>*...for a little while. So they kept traveling and wandering around in the desert. And many, many years went by while they were trying to get to the Promised Land. But the people began to complain AGAIN saying, "We're thirsty! Why did you bring us out here? We're going to die!" *<draw sad faces>*
- So Moses again asked God what to do. God said to SPEAK to the rock, and water would come out *<draw a conversation bubble that says "speak">*.
- But Moses was frustrated with the people who were complaining. And instead, he HIT the rock *<draw an X on a rock>*, like last time. His anger caused him not to think clearly and not to use self-control to do what he knew God instructed him to do.
- God was not pleased about this. He told Moses because of what he had done by hitting the rock, Moses would not be allowed to enter the special Promised Land *<draw a "do not enter" sign>*.

APPLICATION:

Moses lost his self-control in that moment and didn't obey God. Because of this, he missed out on an awesome opportunity. Sometimes when we're frustrated or excited or feeling upset, we have a hard time controlling ourselves. We may act crazy or disobey what we've been told to do. But self-control means that we rule over our actions and our emotions all the time. And when we don't have self-control, we may miss out on a great opportunity or we may have to go through some sort of punishment, like Moses. We must be people who have self-control in all circumstances.

SMALL GROUP

REVIEW THE STORY

- a. **Younger kids:** Why did Moses hit the rock the first time? Why did he hit the rock the second time?
- b. **Older kids:** What would he have done differently if he had used self-control? How did Moses' one act of lacking self-control affect his whole life?

APPLY TO OUR LIVES

SAY: Today, we're going to practice self-control by playing charades.

- Assign one person to act out a word.
- Tell this person that he/she is not allowed to speak AT ALL. He/she must practice self-control and only act out the word(s).
- The other people in the group must only raise their hand if they think they know the answer. They must practice self-control by NOT blurting out the answer!
- Here are suggestions for what to have kids act out:

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| cow | duck |
| hammering something | blowing a bubble |
| singing | playing a trumpet |
| bumblebee | dog |
| eating ice cream cone | eating spaghetti |
| playing tennis | riding the bus |

AFTERWARDS,

ASK: How hard was it to hold in the answer when you knew it?
How did it feel to not be able to talk when you were acting it out?
Why do you think self-control is difficult?
What happens when we DON'T use self-control?
(We get in trouble, we miss out on good opportunities, etc...)

REAL-LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

- #1 Madison's teacher asked her to be quiet in the hallway on the way to recess. But she has a really big secret to tell her friend. How can she use self-control?
- #2 There's a boy at school who is always making fun of Joe. And Joe feels like punching him sometimes because he's so mad. Then he remembers the story of Moses getting angry and forgetting self-control. So what should Joe do?
- #3 In music class, students are always supposed to raise their hand if they know the answer. But Keldan gets so excited that he feels like jumping out of his chair to answer the question. What should he do?

THE GOSPEL

SAY: Jesus came to earth as a baby and grew up just like each of us. The example He gave us was being self-controlled, even when He was excited or angry or passionate. He always used self-control. And as He carried the cross up a big hill where He would die for our sins, people made fun of Him and spit on Him. Instead of reacting, He was self-controlled and followed God's plan. But He didn't stay dead. He came back to life 3 days later!

PRAYER *Dear God, thank You for giving us Jesus as a perfect example of living with self-control. We want to become more and more like Jesus every day. Help us to grow in Your big plan for our lives.*

GAME TIME

WARRIOR TAG

TODAY'S VALUE: Self-Control

Kids will hear the story of Moses lacking self-control when he was mad and striking the rock when God actually told him to SPEAK to the rock.

MATERIALS NEEDED: None

We recommend splitting groups into several circles to play this game. Then the winners from each circle can play in a championship round. This way, the game can be played over and over several times, so that children aren't sitting on the sidelines for an extended amount of time.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Explain that the object of the game is to hold a ninja warrior-like pose, then make a move on your turn in a way that strikes a person standing next to you. Discuss how it will take self-control to hold the pose you've chosen.

- Divide up your group and instruct each group to form a tight circle, facing one another, shoulder-to-shoulder.
- On the count of three, they jump back into a pose while yelling "HI-YA!"
- Each player holds this beginning pose.
- As play moves around the circle, each person makes one move to try and touch another person's hand in a single, deliberate action.
- To avoid being touched, the "attacked" reacts with one single move. And then has to hold that pose until his/her next turn.
- If a hand is struck, it becomes out of play. Once a person "loses" both hands, he/she is eliminated from the game.
- Play continues until only one person is left in the circle.

As kids play, keep reminding them to use self-control. Point out when someone uses good restraint, complementing him/her on his/her self-control. Talk about how God created us to be intelligent and wise and gave us the ability to control what we do! Look for ways to reiterate how we're moving in thoughtful ways, not because of emotions, etc...



THEME

Generosity 1

BIBLE STORY

Ruth and Boaz

OBJECTIVE

Kids will learn to give to those around us.

SUPPLIES FOR LARGE GROUP TIME

- Tub of ice cream, ice cream scooper, bowls, toppings (syrup, sprinkles, candy, etc.)
- Ruth video
There are several options of videos for the story of Ruth available on YouTube. Recommended videos include, but are not limited to: "The Story of Ruth, What's in the Bible?" and "God's Story: Ruth." Contact your DIVE Coach for assistance in finding a video, if needed.

SUPPLIES FOR SMALL GROUP TIME

- Two "Family" pictures for each group

SUPPLIES FOR GAME SUGGESTION

- Styrofoam plate or platter for each group (approximately 4 total)
- Objects to be carried (see game instructions)

LARGE GROUP

OPENING: Rules and Musts

ACTIVITY: Ice Cream Sundaes! ***<Food Allergy Alert>**

DO: Start by explaining that you brought some ice cream today. You are feeling generous and want to share.

DO: Gather four contestants who will make ice cream sundaes. Set out toppings on the table and put one scoop in everyone's bowls. Tell the first kid that he can have syrup or the second person can have syrup; he gets to decide who gets it. Tell the second kid to give three people one spoon of sprinkles, but give only one person two spoonfuls; he can decide to give it to himself or someone else. Let the third kid decide how many pieces of candy each person gets on their ice cream, but tell him he can't give any more than ten total between the whole group. The fourth contestant gets to choose which two other contestants get syrup. This means someone will probably finish without any syrup.

INTRODUCTION

SAY: This was a little test in generosity. Being generous means giving to others without expecting anything in return. Some of our ice cream makers were feeling generous today (review who was generous). They gave to other people without being selfish or greedy. And that's what we must do. Let's hear about someone who was very generous in the Bible, because if it's in the Bible, then it's ____ [TRUE!].

BIBLE STORY: Ruth - Video (book of Ruth)

DO: Show Ruth video

After the video...

DO: Open your Bible to Ruth, chapter 2

SAY: In Ruth's story, what is really interesting is that Boaz actually SAW Ruth following his farmers around to collect food. He noticed that she was always there to scavenge food. So he told his farmers to leave EXTRA food behind for her. Can you believe that? It was his crop. But he was telling his workers not to harvest it all. Instead, they were to leave some behind for this woman he didn't even know! He had never met Ruth, didn't know her story yet, and didn't know she was in need. He could've just ignored her. But Boaz was generous to those around him. So he made sure she would have food, even though it meant he would have less. And God rewarded Boaz for that; He gave Boaz a beautiful wife in Ruth.

APPLICATION

SAY: We must be people, like Boaz, who are concerned about those around us and who give generously. When we hold on too tight to our money or our stuff, that's being selfish. If we will take time to look around us, we can find a lot of opportunities to give! And we should take every opportunity to be generous. Do you have things that you could give to others in need, like Boaz did? He was generous without expecting any reward. We must do the same thing!

SMALL GROUP

REVIEW THE STORY

- a. **Younger kids:** Who was the generous man in our Bible story today? How was Boaz generous? And what happened when he was generous?
- b. **Older kids:** How was Boaz generous to Ruth and Naomi? Why do you think he did this? What happened in Boaz's life because he was generous to these women?

APPLY TO OUR LIVES

SAY: I want to tell you a little story about two families. It's called "A Day at the Park."

DO: Show pictures of the two families and read the story on the back.

"One family had three children named Me First, Gimme the Biggest, and That's Mine. At the park, Me First shoved to the front of the line all the time. At snack time, Gimme the Biggest took the largest chunk of brownies, leaving almost none for the other kids. That's Mine wouldn't share his kickball with the others. These kids went home early from the park because their mother was tired of intervening in the trouble they caused and stopping their fights. When they left, everyone at the park felt like cheering (although they didn't because they knew it would be rude)."

"The second family had four kids named Go Ahead, Here Take Mine, You Can Have It, and It's Your Turn. Go Ahead let others go in front of her at the slide. Here Take Mine let another child use her sweater when she got cold. You Can Have It passed around her snack of oatmeal cookies to the other kids in the park. It's Your Turn delighted the other children by sharing her new Nerf gun. When it was time for them to leave, the other children at the park begged them to stay because they had made everyone else's afternoon at the park so enjoyable."

After reading, **ASK:**

Which person are you most like? Are you Me First, Gimme the Biggest, or That's Mine?

Or are you more like Go Ahead and It's Your Turn?

SAY: The second family was the most generous, and everyone wanted to be around them.

ASK: Why is it hard to be generous sometimes?

SAY: Although it's easier to be selfish, we must look out for those around us. There are a lot of people in need, and we can be generous towards them.

REAL-LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- #1 A kid at your lunch table lost his lunch box and doesn't have anything to eat. What could you do to be generous?
- #2 There are hungry people in your town, so your school is having a canned food drive. Even though you don't have a lot of extra money, how could you be generous?
- #3 There are a lot of kids in other countries around the world who have no food. They may only eat one meal each day and do not have parents to help them. How could you help them by being generous?

THE GOSPEL

SAY: The reason Jesus came to earth was because people like us were in need. We need saving from the bad stuff in our lives so we can be friends with God. Jesus' life, death, and resurrection is the ultimate act of generosity!

PRAYER: Lord, I pray for those who are in need in our community and around the world. Give us Your heart for them, and show us how we can be generous to them.

GAME TIME

GLEANNING AND REAPING

TODAY'S VALUE: Being Generous (looking out for those around us)

Kids will play a game that will help them remember what Ruth did in the field, gleanng from the leftovers. They'll also have to demonstrate generosity in leaving any dropped items for the other teams.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- One plate for each group (approximately 4 total)
- Objects to go on the plates that could fall off

We recommend plastic easter eggs because they're light weight, easy to clean up off the floor, and in abundance for a low cost. Alternatively, use whatever you have several of, keeping in mind that they will end up on the floor needing picked up.
(i.e., Popcorn kernels would be a bad idea on a gym floor.)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Divide your group into smaller groups (2-4 depending on size) and explain that this will be like a relay, where one person from each team will play at one time.
2. Give each team a paper/styrofoam plate and a basket/bucket of objects to go on top.
3. The first student will carry the plate, with some objects on top, down the gym and back.
4. The next player then has 10 seconds to run down the lanes and collect other teams' dropped items.
5. Play continues back and forth, alternating between carrying and collecting left overs, until everyone has taken a turn.

***Explain that if one person drops an item, they may NOT pick it up. BUT, they are to leave it for other people to collect (much like Boaz did for Ruth).**

***The winning team is the team with the most collected after everyone has played.**



(To be printed on the back of the fighting kids picture)

“One family had 3 children named Me First, Gimme the Biggest and That’s Mine. At the park, Me First shoved to the front of the line all the time. At snack time, Gimme the Biggest took the largest chunk of brownies, leaving almost none for the other kids. That’s Mine wouldn’t share his kickball with the others. These kids went home early from the park because their mother was tired of intervening in the trouble they caused and stopping their fights. When they left, everyone at the park felt like cheering (although they didn’t because they knew it would be rude).”



(To be printed on the back of the picture of smiling kids)

“The second family had four kids named Go Ahead, Here Take Mine, You Can Have It, and It’s Your Turn. Go Ahead let others go in front of her at the slide. Here Take Mine let another child use her sweater when she got cold. You Can Have It passed around her snack of oatmeal cookies to the other kids in the park. It’s Your Turn delighted the other children by sharing her new Nerf gun. When it was time for them to leave, the other children at the park begged them to stay because they had made everyone else’s afternoon at the park so enjoyable.”



THEME

Generosity 2

BIBLE STORY

Rich Young Ruler

OBJECTIVE

Kids will learn to give from what they already have.

SUPPLIES FOR LARGE GROUP TIME

- 3 hats (one for Jesus, ruler, and the crowd)
- play money from a board game
- pictures of items to buy (included)
- pictures of charities (included)*
*Each ministry may want to change these pictures to include local charities or non-profits.

SUPPLIES FOR SMALL GROUP TIME

- Pen or marker for each group
- 3 labeled papers for each group (Time, Talent and Treasure papers included)

SUPPLIES FOR GAME SUGGESTION

- 2 to 4 hula hoops, laundry baskets, or something else to gather shoes

LARGE GROUP

OPENING: Rules and Musts

ACTIVITY: Spend or Give?

**PRIOR* to the game, talk with one student who will receive the smallest amount of money. Discuss with him ahead of time that he should not buy any items, but give away all of the money to charities and/or ministries.

DO: Lay out or hang up the printed items of toys, clothes, and ministries. Explain each picture. Choose one person from each small group. Pass out varying amounts of play money to the contestants. Tell the players they can choose some things to buy or choose to give some of their money away. Let each contestant “spend” his or her money one-at-a-time so the audience can observe his/her choices.

AFTER* the game: **ASK kids about their choices, why they chose to buy certain things and how much they gave away.

INTRODUCTION:

Today’s value is generosity. To be generous means to be ready to give. And what’s interesting to me today is that the student who was given the least money in our activity actually ended up giving the most money away. It seems to me like generosity isn’t really about having A LOT of money so it can be given. But it’s really more about our attitude toward giving. And there’s a story in the Bible of a young man who had a rough time giving his riches away. He did not want to give what he had.

BIBLE STORY: Rich Young Ruler - One Man Show (Luke 18:18-34)

SAY: Today’s story comes from the Bible, so we know that it is _____ [TRUE!]. This story is recorded in three different books of the Bible. And here’s what happened: One day, a young ruler <put on “ruler” hat> came to talk with Jesus <put on “Jesus” hat> and the people around <put on a “crowd” hat> were amazed at what Jesus said.

The young ruler <hat> asked, “What should I do to inherit eternal life?”

Jesus <hat> replied, “To answer your question, you know the commandments: You must not cheat on your wife. You must not murder. You must not steal. You must not lie. Honor your father and mother.”

The young ruler <hat> said, “I’ve obeyed all these commandments since I was young.”

When Jesus <hat> heard his answer, He said, “There is still one thing you haven’t done. Sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in Heaven. Then come, follow Me.”

But when the ruler <hat> heard this, he became sad because he was very rich. He said, “I’m sad.”

When Jesus <hat> saw this, He said, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God!”

Those who heard this <hat> said, “Then who in the world can be saved?”

Jesus <hat> replied, “What is impossible for people is possible with God.”

APPLICATION

SAY: The rich young ruler didn’t want to give up his possessions to help others. Even though he had kept all the other commands, Jesus knew that his heart was not generous. So we must be people who not only obey the commandments of the Bible, but also show the love of God through our generosity. You see, generosity is a picture of your heart — not of your wallet or bank account!

SMALL GROUP

REVIEW THE STORY

- a. **Younger kids:** What did Jesus ask the prince/ruler to do? How did he feel? And did he do what Jesus asked?
- b. **Older kids:** What did Jesus ask the prince/ruler to do? Why did this make him feel sad? What should he have done?

APPLY TO OUR LIVES:

SAY: The Rich Young Ruler had a lot, but he wasn't generous with it. And though it may not seem like it, you're rich too! You have your time, talent, and treasure with which to be generous!

SAY: I have three pieces of paper here labeled "time, talent, and treasure." Time is how we spend the hours in our day, talent means the things that God has made you good at, and treasure is our money. We're going to go around the circle and each person will list one way that you could be generous with what you already have!

DO: Write down the ideas your group comes up with.

<Here are some ideas to get started>

Time - help a friend clean her room, stay after school to help your principal

Talent - sing at a nursing home, help a friend with homework that you're good at

Treasure - give money to a food pantry, sponsor a child in Africa

ASK: Which one of these can you be generous to do in the next week? Let's not be like the rich, young ruler! Let's commit to being generous.

Real-life APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- #1 How can you be generous if your family is running short on money this week?
- #2 For your birthday, you got \$25. How can you show generosity to someone with your treasure?
- #3 Although you like to leave and walk home as soon as DIVE is over, you notice that there is usually clean up to do. How can you be generous with your time?
- #4 You have a talent for rapping and/or dancing. How could you be generous to someone in need?

THE GOSPEL

SAY: Jesus was generous with His time by loving people and spending time with them. He was generous with his talents by using His gifts to teach and heal those in need. Jesus was generous with His treasure by giving up everything (even Heaven!) to come to earth. And here, He gave up His whole life for those in need!

PRAYER: *Lord, I thank You for what You have given each of us. Please show us how we can be generous with our time, talents, and treasure, so that Your message will reach the world!*

GAME TIME

GIVE A SHOE. TAKE A SHOE.

OBJECTIVE: Generosity

Kids will play a game where the objective is to help others have more, instead of trying to get the most for themselves.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Each team will need a hula hoop, box, or laundry basket of their own. We recommend two to four teams, depending on your group size.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Split the group into teams at different ends or corners of the room. This is their “base.”
- Place each team’s containers in the middle of the room.
- Instruct everyone to take off their shoes and place them in their team’s designated container.
- Explain that the objective of this game is to fill up the other team’s containers, being generous in giving away the shoes in your container.
- When you give the “go” signal, each group can send one person to move one pair of shoes from their container to another team’s container. There cannot be more than one runner off his base at any given time. They must take turns running (relay style).
- When the time ends, have kids return to their groups and count how many shoes are in their container. The winner is the group with the most empty container at the end of the given time.

TIME

TALENT

TREASURE















TELL HIM ABOUT JESUS

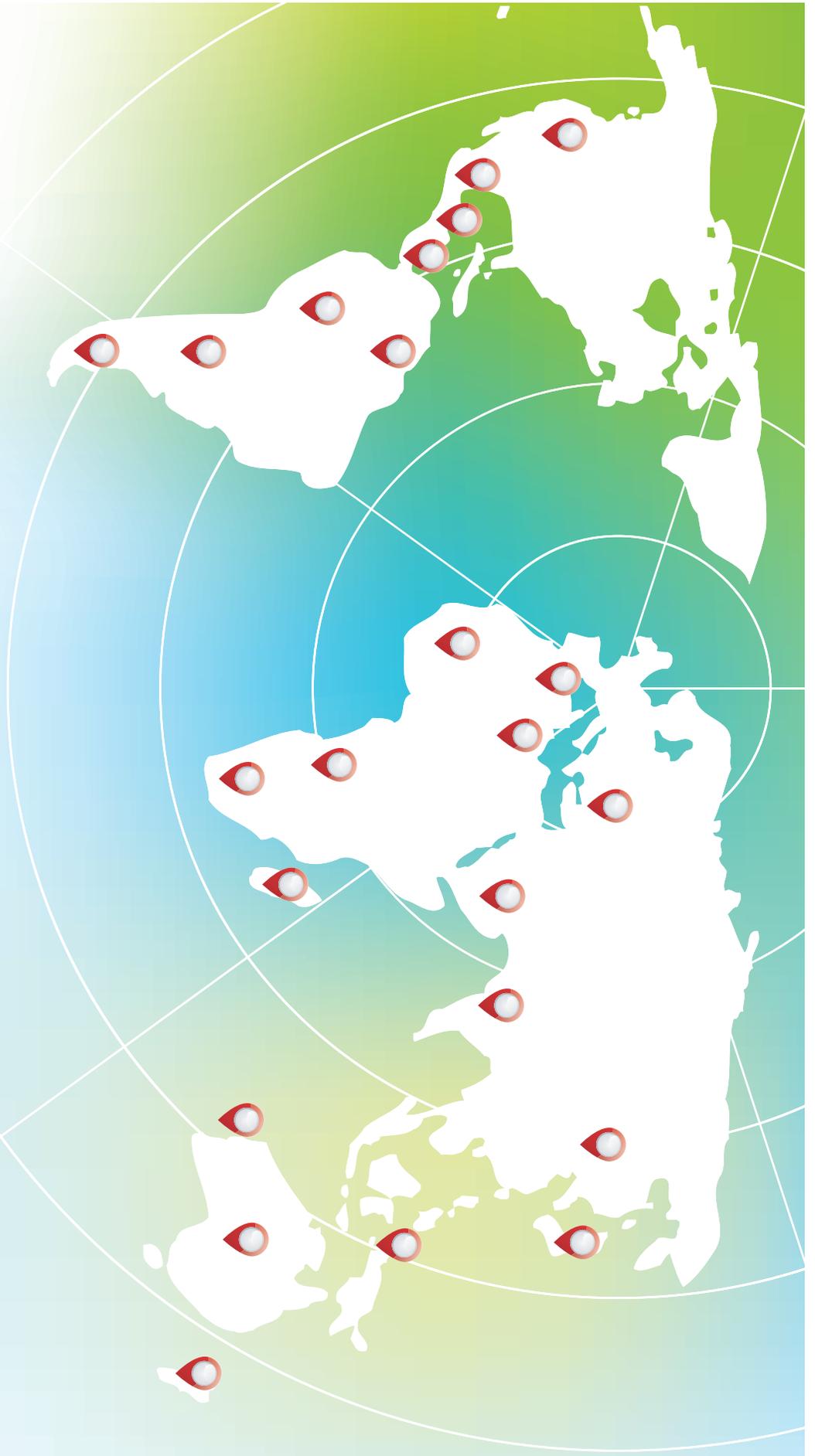
Sponsor a Box







MISSIONARIES





THEME

Ownership 1

BIBLE STORY

Prodigal Son

OBJECTIVE

Kids will learn to take ownership of their actions.

SUPPLIES FOR LARGE GROUP TIME

- Cookie supplies (30 paper circles, 2 brown crayons, 2 black markers, 2 baking sheets)
Optional: cookies as the prize
- Fancy clothes (like a boa or tie), goblet/glassware, piece of fruit, heart/home symbol (stuffed heart or HOME sign), play money, dog food, treats for when the prodigal returns home

SUPPLIES FOR SMALL GROUP TIME

- Flip paddle for each group ("It's not my fault" and "I did that" written on opposite sides)
(This could be a ruler with a paper attached, or a ping-pong paddle with the words written on either side, or a purchased dry-erase paddle.)

SUPPLIES FOR GAME SUGGESTION

- 2-4 balls

LARGE GROUP

OPENING: Rules and Musts

ACTIVITY: Assembly Line

SAY: Today we're making cookies! Well, not real cookies, paper cookies. But we're going to do this with an assembly line race. So I need a two cookie bakers (one for each team) who will color these "cookies" brown, two morsel makers (one for each team) who will add five chocolate chips to each cookie with this black marker, and two cookie coolers (one for each team) who will move the cookies onto the pan to be baked. We're going to see which assembly line can produce the best cookies...and what happens when we don't do our part.

DO: Say go, and allow the kids to move the cookies down the assembly line.

DO: After they've gotten into a rhythm, say that the cookie "cooler" on one team has called in this morning and has to sit down. Then say the baker person from the other team took too long of a lunch break and is missing (have him sit out for a few seconds). Then make the morsel person get distracted by talking on the phone while he's working, etc.

DO: At the end, evaluate which team did the best and award a prize.

INTRODUCTION

SAY: Everything was going great with making our cookies while each person took ownership of his or her actions and did them well. But when one person slacked off, it was easy to see that there was a problem. And the problem wasn't something that the other people could fix. It was up to that person to fix it! <Begin setting up a new "assembly line."> Our cookie assembly line helps us understand how important it is to take ownership of our own actions. The person in our Bible story today found this out the hard way.

BIBLE STORY: The Prodigal Son - Acting and Stations (Luke 15)

<Set up "assembly line" for the prodigal son to travel down with three stations>

SAY: Today's story is found in Luke, chapter 15, and it is a parable. That means it's a story Jesus told to help His listeners understand something about God's Kingdom that is difficult to understand. So today we're going to learn this parable and look at it in a different way. Jesus told the story that there was a son who asked his dad for all the money he could get so he could spend it however he wanted.

DO: Get a volunteer from the audience to be the "son." Give him the play money to start at station one.

<Start at Station 1: put on fancy clothes, hold fancy glass, eat piece of fruit>

READ: Luke 15:13, explaining what he did.

SAY: But after that, his money ran out.

READ: Luke 15:14-16

<Station 2: "pig" food (aka dog food) in a bowl>

SAY: The son realized this was crazy. He realized that he had made a mistake. He had a decision to make: Would he take ownership of his actions, admit his mistakes, and talk to his dad? Or would he keep making bad decisions? What do you think he did? Let's read what happened.

READ: Luke 15:17-20

<Station 3: heart and treats>

SAY: He came to his senses and went home, where his father was waiting for him with great love!

READ: Luke 15:21-24

APPLICATION

As we can see, the son who ran away finally took ownership for his bad actions, apologized, and tried to make it right with his dad. And just like God loves us, the dad in this story showed forgiveness for his son and celebrated him returning home. Things were going pretty badly for the prodigal son until he took ownership for his actions. So we must learn from him! We need to be people who take ownership of our actions, which means we must care about what happens and admit our part.

SMALL GROUP

REVIEW THE STORY

- a. **Younger kids:** What did the son do to his dad? What did he spend his money on? And then what happened to him?
- b. **Older kids:** Why did the son leave his home? What did he spend all his money on? What changed in him?

APPLY TO OUR LIVES

SAY: Today we are discovering how we need to take ownership for our own actions, which means we must “own up” to mistakes and successes. So we are going to go around and give each of you the chance to practice this.

DO: Pass around the “It’s not my fault/I did that” paddle and allow kids to answer these questions, one-at-a-time, when it is their turn, using the paddle.

1. The dog ate your homework because you left it lying by his food bowl. [I did that]
2. Your mom asked you to clean your room, but you pretended not to hear her and played video games instead. [I did that]
3. You put your bike in the right place in the garage, but now it has a flat tire. [It’s not my fault]
4. One of your shoes is missing and you don’t know what happened to it. [I did that]
5. Some of your friends wrote on the bathroom wall, but you just walked out. [It’s not my fault]
6. You were late to school because you overslept. [I did that]
7. The principal thanked you for picking up trash as you walked into school this morning. [I did that]
8. Your teacher is making the whole class miss recess for being disobedient to the substitute. You know that you weren’t the problem, but you’re willing to obey your teacher. [It’s not my fault]

Real-life APPLICATION QUESTIONS

#1 Today after school, you and your friends are walking home. But your friends decide to take a short cut and trample through your neighbor’s garden. What should you do?

#2 Sarah and Emily were talking in the hall and so you jumped in on the conversation and started talking too. But your teacher only caught Sarah and Emily. How can you take ownership for your actions?

#3 There is a group project due at the end of the week that you haven’t started working on. Since there are three other people in your group, you think you can probably just skip your part. What should you do?

#4 Your teacher is upset because you didn’t do your homework last night. How can you take ownership for your actions?

THE GOSPEL

SAY: The Prodigal Son story is one that Jesus told to help people understand how much God loves us. We are like the son or daughter who runs away and makes unwise choices. But God is always waiting for us to come back to Him because of His great love for us, just like the dad in this parable.

PRAYER: *Dear God, thank You that You love us no matter what. Help us to be people who take ownership of our actions so we can live in a way that is pleasing to You. Convict us quickly of any wrongdoings, and help us to be quick to forgive others when they own up to their actions.*

GAME TIME

OVER - UNDER

Today's Value: Taking Ownership for my Actions

Kids will learn the value of taking ownership for their actions from the Prodigal Son. They'll play a game that helps them understand how important their actions are and how they must do what they are supposed to do.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 2-4 balls

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Divide your group into different teams, depending on the size.
- Instruct the groups to stand in a straight line, all facing the same way.
- The first person will start out passing the ball over his head, and the 2nd person will pass under their legs, 3rd person over their head, and so on.
- Let them race a few times.
- Then change it up! Take out one person from each line and tell the team to adjust accordingly (to keep it over, under, over, under).
- Put those people back in and remove another person from each line.
- Play variations as time allows.

TEACH how important it is for each of us to own our actions, because when we don't, it affects a lot of people.



THEME

Ownership 2

BIBLE STORY

Adam and Eve

OBJECTIVE

Kids will learn that there are consequences for not taking ownership of our actions.

SUPPLIES FOR LARGE GROUP TIME

- Clear cups with water
- Food coloring

SUPPLIES FOR SMALL GROUP TIME

- None

SUPPLIES FOR GAME SUGGESTION

- None
- *Snack suggestion: Apples/apple slices

LARGE GROUP

OPENING: Rules and Musts

ACTIVITY: What happens if?

DO: Set up clear cups with water inside (recommend one for each small group).

Set out food coloring.

SAY: Today we're going to see what happens when we add colors to water. Let's have someone choose a color and see what happens.

DO: Choose a volunteer and have him/her choose a color. Allow him/her to add the color to 1 cup to make whatever color he/she chose. Continue to do this with the other cups of water and other kids.

After they are all colored, **ASK** the audience: What happened when one student added a certain color, and what happened when they added another, etc.?

SAY: There was a consequence or a change because of the choice he/she made.

DO: Go back and add other colors to change what they have made. For example, if they made blue water, add red to make purple.

ASK: Who is the person who made this water purple? Was it me or the first person?

DO: Continue to change the other colors of the water.

Introduction

I was the one who took action and changed the colors. I could blame the colors on the first person, saying that because he put in the ____ color, that is why the water is _____. But really it was me, and I can take ownership of that action. But in today's Bible story, we're going to learn about two people who played the blame game, not taking ownership of their actions. We're going to discover that they still had to face the same consequences or punishment for their actions, even though they tried to blame someone or something else.

BIBLE STORY: Adam and Eve - Actions (Genesis 3)

SAY: Today we're going to start at the very beginning of the Bible when God created the first two humans. Their names were Adam and Eve. And we know if the story is in the Bible, then it's _____ [TRUE!]. I'm going to need all of you to help with our story. So, when I say "Adam," all of you will do this <show action of putting fist on chin, like thinker pose>. When I say "Eve," I need you to do this <show a Barbie pose, with one hand on hair and one on hip>. When I say "snake," let's all move our hands like a snake. And when I say "blame," we will all point to someone else.

Here we go: When God created the world, He made a perfect garden for Adam and Eve and all the animals to live in. But all that was about to change.

READ pausing for the audience to do the actions:

"Now the *snake* was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. This was Satan, disguised as a *snake*. And he said to *Eve*, "Did God really say you cannot eat from any tree in the garden?" And *Eve* said to the snake, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, except for the one in the middle of the garden. We're not supposed to touch it or eat it." But the *snake* convinced *Eve* to eat that fruit. She also gave some to her husband, *Adam*, and he ate it too. Then *Adam* and *Eve* heard God coming near them in the garden, and so they hid because they were ashamed. So God asked Adam what was wrong. *Adam* blamed *Eve* saying, "The woman gave me some of the fruit, and I ate it." And *Eve* blamed the *snake* saying, "The snake tricked me, and so I ate it." This was the first sin in the world.

So God had to keep His word. *Adam* and *Eve* got kicked out of the perfect garden, away from the perfect life, where they would now have to work hard, all because they disobeyed. They couldn't *blame* their way out of it.

Application

As we can see from Adam and Eve, blaming someone else doesn't change the consequences for us. The truth will always come out, and we will have to take ownership eventually. So let's be people who own up to our actions - good or bad - and face the consequences.

SMALL GROUP

REVIEW THE STORY

- a. **Younger kids:** Who started the whole problem in the story? And who was one who made a big mistake? And what happened in the end?
- b. **Older kids:** Who started the whole problem in the story? What should Eve have done? What consequence did Adam and Eve have to face?

APPLY TO OUR LIVES

SAY: Today, we're going to continue with some actions. But I want to teach you a different set. Everyone make an "L" with one hand. When I read a scenario and you hear someone playing the lame blame game, I want you to show me an "L" on your forehead. But when you hear someone taking ownership for his or her actions, I want you to show me a big "O" with your hands on your forehead.

READ Scenario #1: Sarah dug through her mom's purse to find some change, but took a \$10 bill instead. Later when her mom was looking for it, Sarah said that she saw her brother with some cash. But when her mom found out the truth, Sarah got grounded. [L]

READ Scenario #2: A kid on the team fumbled the ball. After the game, Tyson told his family that his team lost the game because of that one player. [L]

READ Scenario #3: Anya lost her temper after she got out in kickball. When the teacher talked with her, Anya apologized and explained that she was really hoping to get a home run and that's why she was so upset. [O]

READ Scenario #4: The teacher gave out an assignment that was due in a week. But Joshua didn't start it until the night before and then got frustrated with his parents because they didn't have the supplies that he needed. [L]

READ Scenario #5: Daniel cleaned up after dinner without being asked. So his mom gave him extra time on his Xbox for being responsible. [O]

READ Scenario #6: A teacher asked the class to be quiet in the hall, but everyone was talking. So when the teacher took away recess time, Chyanna didn't complain because she knew she wasn't totally silent in the hall. [O]

REAL-LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- #1 What might happen if you blame someone else for a problem in your classroom?
- #2 What might happen if you owned up to your actions in your classroom?
- #3 What would be the consequence for lying in your house?
- #4 What might be the reward for honesty in your house?

THE GOSPEL

SAY: When Adam and Eve brought sin into the world, God had a plan to rescue us all. His plan was for Jesus to be on earth, give up His life, and come back to life so that we could be rescued from sin. Jesus took ownership for all our mistakes so we could have a relationship with God. And now, when we confess our sins or own up to what we've done, God erases them and forgives us, never changing in His love for us.

PRAYER: *Thank you, God, that when we own up to our sins, You forgive us. Please help us to be aware of our actions and take responsibility quickly.*

GAME TIME

APPLE - SNAKE - EVE

TODAY'S VALUE: Taking Ownership for my Actions

Kids will be discovering the story of Adam and Eve. They will see how Adam and Eve blamed other people for their actions, but still had to face the consequences for their actions.

MATERIALS NEEDED: None

INSTRUCTIONS:

- This game is like Rock, Paper, Scissors except the kids will act out the "apple" (taking a bite of apple), snake (slithering hands moving forward), and Eve (one hand on side of head and other hand on hip).
- Have each student find a partner.
- Once each child in the group has a partner, have them get back to back and teach them the rules in song form: "The apple beats the snake, the snake beats Eve, Eve eats the apple. You tie, you're out. 1, 2, 3, shoot!"
- When you say "shoot," each person turns around to face his/her partner while doing the motion of "apple, snake, or Eve." Each partner figures out who wins according to the rules song. The partner who lost that round, sits down. Partners who chose the same motion are both out.
- Next, match up the remaining standing winners and repeat until you get the final group and final winner.



THEME

Dedication 1

BIBLE STORY

Jacob and Rachel

OBJECTIVE

Kids will understand that they must continue to work hard, even if things don't go their way.

SUPPLIES FOR LARGE GROUP TIME

- Balance beam (such as a 4x4 piece of wood) or something similar
- Story cards* (large pictures of two men, two women, and the number seven)
*Detailed instructions provided on separate sheet

SUPPLIES FOR SMALL GROUP TIME

- Cookie (or possibly two) for each student

SUPPLIES FOR GAME SUGGESTION

- One ball for every student or one for every two or three students to share (tennis balls, baseballs, or something of similar size)

LARGE GROUP

OPENING: Rules and Musts

ACTIVITY: Balance Beam

DO: Set up a “balance beam” type structure in front of the group. One-at-a-time, allow a child from each small group to try to walk across. If they do well, then give them a challenge, such as closing your eyes or hopping. With each participant, “tilt” the beam a little (staying safe!) or walk close to them to see if they continue to try to get across or fall off and give up.

**AFTER the activity, interview the participants to ask why they kept going, even when the teacher was being unfair to them. Respond to their answers. Point out that you didn't tell them there was a prize, but they kept going, and ask why they wanted to get across.*

INTRODUCTION

SAY: Today's value is dedication. And some of your friends just showed dedication in getting across this balance board, even when it was difficult. When a person is dedicated, that means he works hard and doesn't give up, even if things don't go his way. It may mean that a person has to stick with something even when it gets tough. There's a sense of loyalty that goes with this value, as well. And today, we're going to see how that was lived out in a person's life in the Bible.

BIBLE STORY: Jacob and Leah - Story Cards (**Genesis 29**)

(Story cards can be held and turned over by the teacher or by a separate person as the teacher reads.)

SAY: Now, we know that if it's in the Bible, it's ____ [TRUE!]. You can read this story for yourself in the very first book of the Bible, called Genesis, chapter 29. Today, I want to tell you the story of a dedicated man named Jacob.

<Show Jacob story card> This is Jacob. He knew a man named Laban.

<Show Laban story card> Laban had a lot of cattle, sheep, goats, plus his 2 daughters, Rachel and Leah.

<Show Rachel and Leah story cards> And Jacob fell in love with Rachel. So Jacob told Laban,

<Show Rachel card> “I'd like to marry Rachel, so I will work for you for...

<Show 7 years card> seven years if you'll let me marry her.”

<Show Jacob card> So Laban agreed, and Jacob started looking after all of Laban's cattle, sheep, and goats. He took very good care of them and worked very hard because he was dedicated to do what he said he would do.

<Show 7 years card> When his seven years were completed, Jacob went to Laban and told him he had finished what he started and was ready to marry Rachel.

<Show Laban card> Laban said okay. But secretly tricked Jacob and didn't let him marry Rachel.

<Show Jacob card> When Jacob found out that he had been tricked, he was very upset. So he asked Laban what he had to do so that he could marry Rachel. Laban told him he would have to work...

<Show 7 years card> another seven years. Can you believe that?!? So Jacob had to make a difficult decision. What do you think he did? <ask the audience>

<Show Jacob card> He was dedicated to marrying Rachel, and so he continued to work hard another seven years, and then he finally...

<Show Rachel card> got to marry Rachel.

APPLICATION

SAY: As you can see, things didn't go exactly as Jacob had planned. It didn't really go his way at all. But he made a decision to be dedicated and continued to work hard, despite what other people did and despite how he felt. And we, as dedicated people, must do the same...and not just to win over the person we love! We must be dedicated to working hard, even when things don't always go our way.

SMALL GROUP

REVIEW THE STORY

- a. **Younger kids:** What did Jacob have to do to marry Rachel? How do you think he felt about working so hard for seven years and then seven more years?
- b. **Older kids:** How long did Jacob end up working hard to marry Rachel? How do you think he felt about those fourteen years? Why didn't he quit? What would you have done?

APPLY TO OUR LIVES (NOTE: be sensitive to food allergies in your group)

SAY: Sometimes we are faced with things that can be difficult, but I believe you all can be dedicated people who work hard even when it's tough.

SAY: Today, we're going to get to practice this a little bit. You are going to be "faced" with a cookie on your forehead. Each of you will tilt your head back to look up and place a cookie on your forehead. When I say "go," without using your hands or anything else, you will need to get the cookie to your mouth if you want to eat it!

SAY: This is not a race. This is just you being dedicated to working until you get that cookie into your mouth. At least it won't take 14 years, like it took for Jacob to finish!

DO: Give each student a cookie, instruct them to put it on their forehead, and wiggle their face muscles around until they can get it into their mouths, and tell them when to start. (If their cookie falls to the floor, give them another, while supplies last.)

SAY: That was hard work and you stayed dedicated by not giving up!

SAY: I want to challenge you to be dedicated in everything you do, just like you were dedicated to getting that cookie in your mouth. Whether it is a chore at home or schoolwork that needs to be done, let's work hard even if things don't go our way.

REAL-LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- #1 Your teacher is teaching some new math problems that are very difficult for you. How can you show dedication in class?
- #2 Last night, you stayed up really late and don't feel like getting up for school. Should you be tardy or should you show dedication by getting up on time and going to school?
- #3 Your mom told you and your brother to clean your rooms. You helped your brother clean his, but now he won't help you. You feel like you've been tricked. How can you show dedication at home?
- #4 In the beginning of the year, you signed up for soccer. But it takes a lot of running, and you would rather stay home to play video games. What should you do?

THE GOSPEL

SAY: There was another guy in the Bible who showed dedication. You see, when Jesus came to earth, people didn't like what He was doing. In fact, a lot of things didn't go well for Him. But Jesus knew that He had to finish what His job was here on earth — to give up His life and be raised from the dead so that we all could have a relationship with God!

PRAYER: *Lord, we thank You that You help us when it is difficult and that You are always with us. We want to be dedicated to what You want us to do! Be our strength and give us courage, like Your Word promises.*

GAME TIME

BALL-MANIA

TODAY'S VALUE: Being Dedicated (working hard, even if it's tough)

Kids will play with a ball to help them learn to be dedicated, even if it's something hard or if it's not going well for them.

Once they have mastered one task, give them another that is more difficult, always encouraging them to not give up when it's hard. Be mindful to not let kids get discouraged if it is going in a way that they did not expect.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Ideally, each student will have a ball. Depending on the group size, students can be paired up or put in groups of 3 to share a ball. They could spread out in the space, as long as they can hear instructions.

INSTRUCTIONS

Give a ball to each student or group. Instruct them to be dedicated to completing the tasks you are going to give them. *(Be sure to include that there is no punishment or problem if you mess up, but you must have fun!)*

Task 1: Throw the ball up and catch it.

Task 2: Throw the ball up, clap, and then catch it.

Task 3: Throw the ball up and catch it with one hand.

Task 4: Throw the ball up and catch it with the other hand.

Task 5: Throw the ball up, clap twice, and then catch it.

Task 6: Make a basket with the ball.

Task 7: Find a partner and toss it back and forth, stepping back with each successful catch.

(Depending on the group's ages and abilities, tasks can be added or changed, such as spinning in a circle while throwing it OR made more simple, like rolling it on the ground a certain distance.)

TO CREATE THE STORY CARDS:

We recommend using 11x17 size card stock for the Story Cards.

First, download images for each of the characters and then copy them to an 11x17 paper.

The five Story Cards that are needed are: two different male figures, two different female figures, and the number seven.

Images such as this one can be downloaded at freechristianillustrations.com or freebibleimages.com.



Other options include:

- Creating slides from the downloaded images to use instead of Story Cards
- Having an artist or a student draw the images onto poster board or 11x17 size paper



THEME

Dedication 2

BIBLE STORY

Hebrews 12 - Run the race with perseverance

OBJECTIVE

Kids will understand that they must continue to work hard and persevere, despite their circumstances.

SUPPLIES FOR LARGE GROUP TIME

- Empty toilet paper rolls and playground balls
- Four Props (running shoes, trophy, stopwatch, coat) in four bags (brown paper sacks or gift bags)

SUPPLIES FOR SMALL GROUP TIME

- - Cotton balls for each group

SUPPLIES FOR GAME SUGGESTION

- Scoresheet on a clipboard (suggested)
- Candy for winners

LARGE GROUP

OPENING: Rules and Musts

ACTIVITY: TP Roll Race

DO: Choose one contestant from each group. Explain that today is about racing, so we're going to have a small race. Give each contestant an empty toilet paper roll and a playground ball. Instruct them to put the ball on the roll and keep it there while they "race" through a course. If they drop the ball, they must come back to the starting line. Explain where the course is (maybe weaving between tables or people), have them line up, and say GO! Give the winners a piece of candy.

*Afterward - **ASK** the contestants: What was the hardest part of this? Why did you keep going? If anyone dropped the ball, ask why he/she didn't quit.*

INTRODUCTION

SAY: (First review Dedication #1 lesson, Jacob and Rachel, if you completed that lesson.) Today's value is dedication. And we're specifically going to look at how dedication means we should keep going, even when it's hard or even when we feel tired or even when it's not so fun anymore. Of course, being dedicated means working hard, but it also means not giving up.

BIBLE STORY: Perseverance - Props in a bag (Hebrews 12)

There's a part of the Bible that talks about being dedicated in Hebrews, chapter 12. Hebrews is a book that helps us understand who Jesus is and what it means to believe in Him. The writer wrote these words to encourage people to be dedicated to following Him. And if it's in the Bible, then we know it is ____ [TRUE!].

READ: Hebrews 12:1a <show coat> It says to get rid of or throw off everything that stops us.

SAY: Have you ever seen a successful runner run a race with a big coat on? No. They might start a race with a sweatshirt or something, but they get rid of it or take it off so they can run.

READ: Hebrews 12:1b <show running shoes> We are to run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

SAY: So are we supposed to run or walk? Run! And which one is harder? Running! But the Bible encourages us to run and keep going. That's what perseverance means. And here's what's next...

READ: Hebrews 12:2

SAY: The Bible says we should fix our eyes on Jesus <show trophy>. A lot of runners run races to win a prize, like a trophy or medal or money. They are looking forward to what they will get when they finish.

READ: Hebrews 12:3

SAY: The last item I have to show is a stopwatch <show stopwatch>. A runner keeps going as long as the stopwatch is still running. He doesn't stop or grow weary or lose heart. But he must keep running because the timer is still going.

APPLICATION Go back over each prop and apply it.

Now in our lives:

Coat: We have to get rid of stuff that keeps us from being dedicated. This might be an attitude that is bad or a person who is discouraging. We need to take that off like a runner sheds his coat.

Shoes: And we have to run! Keep going, even when it's hard. Persevering means sticking with it, no matter what. And it's not just doing it half-heartedly. We should run toward our goal of improving our grades or learning to play the guitar.

Trophy: Just like a runner keeps his eye on the prize, we have to keep our eye on the prize. For those of us who put our faith in God, the big prize is life forever in Heaven with Jesus. But it might also be winning perfect attendance, or being on the A-B Honor Roll, or getting an allowance at home for finishing chores.

Stopwatch: This reminds us not to stop. Dedicated people are loyal and don't quit or give up. And that can be you!

SMALL GROUP

REVIEW THE STORY

- a. **Younger kids:** What book of the Bible did our story come from? Did it tell us to run or walk? Did it say we should quit? What should we do instead?
- b. **Older kids:** What book of the Bible did our story come from? How did it tell us to live? Why is it not okay to give up?

APPLY TO OUR LIVES: Cotton Hockey

SAY: Today, we're going to see which side of the table can show dedication—the right or the left. I have a cotton ball here.

DO: Set up a “goal” at two spots on your table. (For example: blow it off the table or maybe get the cotton ball into the crack in the center of a table, or whatever works for the situation)

SAY: This side of the table is a team and will be trying to blow the cotton ball to the left. This other side of the table is a team and will be trying to blow the cotton ball to the right.

SAY: When I say go, we're going to see what happens.

DO: Put the cotton ball down, say GO, and play a couple of rounds, observing what kids are doing.

Take note: Are they trying hard? When the ball drops or goes the other way, how are they responding? Do they need encouragement to keep going or are they sticking with it? What difficulties are they having?

Afterwards,

SAY: Let's talk about what happened....

What was difficult about this? What made it hard?

Why did you stay dedicated?

SAY: This seems like a silly task. But just like you were dedicated to moving this cotton ball, we must be dedicated to the other tasks in our lives. We must not give up, but keep going, like a runner runs a race!

REAL-LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

#1 How do you feel after you accomplish something difficult or challenging?

#2 Alex begged his mom to let him get a dog and promised he would walk the dog every day. But so far, he's only walked the dog on the weekends. What needs to change?

#3 Sarah signed up for piano lessons and is supposed to practice every day. How can she show dedication through piano lessons?

#4 What's the goal (or outcome) of being dedicated to your schoolwork?

What's the goal (or outcome) of being dedicated to your family?

Someday when you have a job, what's the goal (or outcome) of being dedicated to your job?

THE GOSPEL

SAY: Great job everybody! Jesus is a perfect example of dedication for us. Even though He had to suffer with people hitting Him, beating Him, and then killing Him, He was dedicated to persevering through it all because He knew what He was supposed to do. He had a mission: to show God's love and make a way for everyone to have a relationship with God. And He was dedicated, completing His mission on the cross, and coming back to life!

PRAYER: *Thank you, Lord, that You don't leave us alone to get through everything by ourselves. Your Word promises that You are always with us, helping us to persevere and be dedicated! Show us the areas where we need to be more dedicated and the things we need to get rid of in order to follow Your plan for our lives.*

GAME TIME

MEGA RACE

TODAY'S VALUE: Being Dedicated (Hebrews 12 about persevering)

Kids will understand that they must continue to work hard, persevering to finish no matter what.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Score sheet/piece of paper and pen, clipboard (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS: Keep track of who the winner is for each challenge.

DO: Divide the group into two teams.

SAY: Today is all about racing, so we're going to have a race. But this is not all just about being fast. Some of the rounds will use your mind, and some of them will use your body.

SAY: There will be three rounds. The overall winning team will get a prize.

Round 1: Physical *The team finishes when everyone crosses the line of where they are skipping.

- The whole team must run a lap.
- Then they must all skip across the room.

Round 2: Mental *The team who answers correctly first wins each challenge.

- Give them an age-appropriate math problem to solve (addition, division, etc.).
- Give them a riddle: which month has the longest name? (September)
- The whole team must be involved as they make a word with their bodies.
*They could spell it out or "act" it out. (words to use: dog, car)

Round 3: Relay *The team who finishes first wins each challenge.

- Have each team spread out in a long line across the gym. Choose one person on the end to move from one side of the gym to the other by weaving in and out of his teammates in the line. When he finishes, then the person in the back weaves through to the front. And then the next person, until the line has all followed suit.
- Have Team 1 stand close together, then have Team 2 circle them and hold hands to form a circle. Then they all run down the gym. When they cross the line, the groups switch, and Team 2 gets in the middle with Team 1 holding hands to make a circle around them. Then they run back.



THEME

Patience

BIBLE STORY

Gideon

OBJECTIVE

Kids will understand that learning to wait on God can be difficult, but it's always better when we wait on Him.

SUPPLIES FOR LARGE GROUP TIME

- Two stands with a pole in between
- Approximately four donuts for session
- String to hang donuts off of pole (enough for each session)

SUPPLIES FOR SMALL GROUP TIME

- Candy for each group (two pieces per student)

SUPPLIES FOR GAME SUGGESTION

- Dodgeballs

LARGE GROUP

OPENING: Rules and Musts

ACTIVITY: Donut on a string (a DIVE favorite)

Set-up: Set up two stands with the pole resting in between. Tie four (or other number) long strings hanging down from the pole. There should be the same number of strings hanging down as the number of donuts available for this session. Next, tie a donut on each of the strings so it dangles from the pole at about the height of a kid's mouth.

To play: Get four players (or however many donuts you have). Explain that the mission is to eat as much of the donut as they can in 90 seconds without the donut falling off the string. Set a timer and let kids play.

To win: The winner is the person who eats the MOST of the donut without it falling off the string.

After the game, interview the contestants:

ASK: What was the hardest part of the game? What was the best way to take a bite?

INTRODUCTION

SAY: This game would've been a lot easier if we were all patient people. You see, if the contestants were to stop and wait for the donut to quit moving, it actually becomes very easy to take a bite. But patience is sometimes hard. What does patience mean? <To be able to accept delay, trouble, or suffering without getting angry or upset> Today we're going to hear about a guy in the Bible named Gideon who had to wait and wait until God told him when to go. But let's discover how it ended for him!

BIBLE STORY: Gideon - All in Acting (Judges 7)

SAY: Today's Bible story is from the book of Judges in the Old Testament of the Bible. And if it's in the Bible, then it is ___ [TRUE!]. This book of the Bible introduces us to a series of judges who were in charge in Israel a long time ago. And one of these judges was named Gideon. He is an example of being patient.

During this time, God's people were being mistreated, and they wanted it to stop. So God chose Gideon to help solve this problem. God told Gideon he was going to go to war to fight the Midianites, who were mistreating Gideon's people. Now I'm going to need help from all of you for today's story.

You see, Gideon had an army of thirty-two thousand men! And he wanted to take all thirty-two thousand men to fight the Midianites so they were sure to win. Let's get a whole bunch of people up front to represent Gideon's army. <Bring all the kids up front...yes, all of them.>

When Gideon and his army were ready to fight, the Lord said to wait. "You have too many men (Judges 7:2)." So Gideon told anyone who was scared to go home...and twenty-two thousand soldiers went home. <Have all the kids except ten sit down.>

So Gideon was left with ten thousand men. But God again said to wait. "There are still too many men (Judges 7:4)." At this point, Gideon must have really just wanted to go to war. But he had to be patient and wait until God told him it was time. Then God told Gideon to take the men to the nearest river for a drink. When he did that, some of the men got on their knees and drank <Have seven kids pretend to do that.> and some cupped their hands to drink. <Have three kids pretend to do that.> God told Gideon to keep the ones who cupped their hands and get rid of the rest. <Have the seven kids sit down.>

Now, after all this waiting, God told Gideon it was time to fight...with only three hundred men. But guess what happened?!? They won. They won big time! Only three-hundred men beat a big huge army because God was on their side!

APPLICATION

Gideon had to wait a lot longer than he really wanted to. He probably wondered why God was making him wait and why he couldn't just go ahead. But it turned out really well for him when his army won! We must always have patience when we are told to wait because we never know what good things may be in store for us or what God is working out for us!

SMALL GROUP

REVIEW THE STORY

- a. **Younger kids:** Why did Gideon need patience? Do you think it was easy for him to wait?
- b. **Older kids:** Why did Gideon need patience? How many men did Gideon end up with? How do you think Gideon felt about having to wait like he did?

APPLY TO OUR LIVES

SAY: We're going to take a little PATIENCE test today. I'm going to give you a piece of candy, and I want you to open it, lay it on the table in front of you, but NOT eat it.

DO: Give each student a piece of candy to open and put in front of his/her place at the table.

SAY: Let's see if we can be patient and wait to touch this piece of candy until I tell you to. Something may happen if you can't be patient, but something may also happen if you CAN be patient.

SAY: While that candy is sitting in front of us, I want you to use your thumbs to show me how you feel in these situations (thumbs up, thumbs middle, or thumbs down).

*If anyone eats the candy in front of them, take away that person's wrapper.

- A long line at the grocery store when your mom said you can eat a candy bar after checkout
- Waiting after school for your parent to pick you up
- Sitting at a restaurant when the food is taking a long time to come to your table
- Having to wait until Christmas to get the newest game

ASK: What kind of attitude SHOULD we have in these situations if we're practicing patience?

SAY: Patience is not always easy. But we must learn to be patient people who are okay with waiting and have a good attitude no matter what. Besides, you never know what God might be doing when you have to wait (like Gideon).

*There's even a verse in the Bible (Isaiah 40:31) that says those who wait on the Lord will renew their strength.

LASTLY, Go back to the piece of candy and let them eat it. If they did not touch the candy AT ALL, give them another piece of candy.

ASK: How did you feel about waiting? What happened if you weren't patient?

REAL-LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

#1 Leann is last in line at the drinking fountain and all her friends are telling her to cut in front of the other kids to hurry up. What should she do? (Be patient and wait her turn in line.)

#2 Cole's little sister really annoys him. She's always asking him questions and wanting him to wait and listen to her stories. What should Cole do? (Be patient with his sister.)

#3 Danny's team won at DIVE and is supposed to get candy. Everyone is crowding around the prize bucket to get a piece of candy. What should he do? (Wait patiently in line.)

#4 Savannah got \$10 from doing chores for her grandma. She really wants a new video game, but doesn't have enough money to buy it yet. Then she sees the candy aisle and thinks she could just spend her \$10 there. What should she do? (Be patient and save her money.)

THE GOSPEL

SAY: When Jesus was here on earth, He faced some hard stuff with people being against Him, much like Gideon. But Jesus waited on God's timing to do what He came to do — to give up His life so we could know God's love!

PRAYER: *Lord, forgive us for our bad attitudes when we have to wait sometimes. We want to be people who are patient because we know that YOU are working everything out for Your plan. We trust You with our time. Help our attitudes when we need to wait!*

GAME TIME

TODAY'S VALUE: Patience

Kids will be discovering the story of Gideon waiting on the Lord to thin out his army over and over again. But they will hear the victory of Gideon's small army!

MATERIALS NEEDED: Dodgeballs

INSTRUCTIONS:

This game time will be several rounds of dodgeball. But all rounds will be played by varying teams. Just like Gideon separated his soldiers in an odd way (whether they drank with cupped hands or not), the kids will be separated in odd ways.

Round 1: Have all the kids run 1 lap and then sit on the floor.

- Separate out the ones who cross their legs versus the ones who don't (or who do a criss-cross sit versus not).
- Then play this round, acknowledging that Gideon had a major disadvantage.

Round 2: Ask everyone to raise their hand.

- Separate them based on whether they raise their right hand or their left hand.
- Play the round, no matter how few are on one team.

*Continue playing several rounds, separating them each time, and playing the game no matter how few are on one team.

*Remind them that Gideon waited to go to battle until God shrunk his army from thirty-two thousand to only three hundred men.

*Other ideas for separating:

- Different colors of clothes they are wearing
- Color of eyes
- If they walk to school or ride the bus
- If they have a dog or a cat
- Whether they watched TV this morning before school or not

*******IF one round is really unfairly balanced and the "underdog" wins, celebrate them, reminding them that God did the same thing through Gideon's men.**

