



Creation

Genesis 1-2

Review

If this is your first meeting, once everyone is gathered, have each person introduce themselves and share one thing about themselves.

Hook Question

What is the most creative or fun thing you have made or done?
What did you like most about it?

Tell the Story

Retell

Have the group retell the story in their own words. Work together to recreate what was just heard asking 'what's next' questions.

Personal/Group Retell

Materials Needed:

- Play Doh container/person
- Have everyone create something they heard from the Creation story.
- Let everyone share before moving on to the questions.

Introduction

The Bible says that in the beginning, God spoke and He created all things. We don't know when He created the angels, but they are spoken of throughout the Bible. While God was forming the earth, the angels were already there watching in amazement. They sang and shouted together about how great God is! With the angels cheering, God prepared the earth as a place for life.

As God spoke... creation began taking shape.

God made light... pushing back the darkness. Then God separated the sky from the oceans and seas... and gathered the waters, so there was dry land.

God made plants, flowers, and trees grow, all with seeds in them so they could spread across the earth. Water rose from the ground and nourished these plants!

Then God created the sun, the moon, and the universe that surrounds... and set the seasons and time into motion. God filled the earth with all kinds of creatures: fish that swim in the seas, birds that fly through the air, and wild animals that run and crawl across the land.

Looking at all of this wonderful creation, God thought, "This is really good!"

Then God decided to create something else, saying, "I'll make humans in my image – to be like me. They'll take care of the earth and everything that lives there."

So God took dirt from the earth and formed the first human.

Discussion Questions

Listed below are some basic questions that can be asked. You may want to supplement these questions with other Head, Heart, and Hands questions.

- What did you see in your mind as the story was being told/ listening to the story?
- What stood out to you in the story?
- What did the story tell you about God?
- Do you see any of the characteristics of God demonstrated?
- How do you feel about God after hearing this story?
- What did we learn about being a follower of Jesus from this story?

Story Continued...

When God breathed into his nose, the human suddenly came to life! This first person would be known as Adam, meaning: from the dirt.

God placed Adam in a beautiful garden, surrounded by delicious fruits and vegetables so humans would always have plenty to eat. Adam worked in the garden and took care of all living things. God even brought each kind of animal right to Adam so he could give them names!

In the middle of this garden were two special trees—the Tree of Life, and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. God told Adam, “Enjoy the fruit from all of the trees... except for one; if you eat fruit from the Tree of Knowledge, you’ll die.” (Pause)

Soon, God said to Adam, “It’s not good for you to be alone. I’ll make a partner just for you.” So God caused Adam to fall into a deep sleep, removed one of his ribs, and used this rib to create the first woman. When God brought her to Adam, Adam shouted, “At last!” Adam would call his new partner Eve, meaning giver of life. Adam and Eve were joined as husband and wife.

Although they were naked, they never felt embarrassed. Both the man and woman reflected who God was. And God would come and walk with them in the cool of the day.

After creating all of this, God thought, “This is excellent in every way!” Then God rested and set aside a day in each week for people to rest and enjoy being with God.

Closing Blessing

Read Psalm 139:14

Pray Lord, thank you for your powerful, creative hand that has crafted each of us so wonderfully and uniquely. I ask you to bless each person with a heart of thanksgiving and wonder of your amazing creation.



Genesis 3

Review

- Follow-up with decisions made from last week.
- Who can tell us the Creation story from last week?
- Were you able to share the Creation story with someone?
- Why do you think we all do things that are wrong?

Hook Question

Tell of a time when you were tricked or tricked by someone.

Tell the Story

Retell

Have the group retell the story in their own words. Work together to recreate what was just heard asking 'what's next' questions.

Personal/Group Retell

If the group is large enough, divide into 2 or more groups and have each group act out the story. If you have a smaller group, everyone can be involved in acting it out.

Introduction

There was one angel who was the most beautiful of them all. He was named Lucifer, which means Bright Morning Star. He was jealous of God, and convincing 1/3 of all the angels to follow him, Lucifer fought against God. But God knew and because there can't be sin in God's presence, God sent Lucifer and the fallen angels to the earth. God changed Lucifer's name to Satan, which means adversary or one who fights against someone else. Satan was now against God. Last week we talked about God's creation and how He thought it was "good." And that is where we will start our story today from the Bible:

The first man and woman, Adam and Eve, lived under God's care and protection in a beautiful garden.

One day, Satan disguised himself as a snake. He slithered up to Eve and asked her, "Did God really say you can't eat ANY of the fruit in this garden?"

Eve said, "Of course not! We can eat any of the fruit we'd like... except for the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge. God said if we eat that fruit—or even touch it—we'll die."

The snake replied, "You won't die! God knows that if you eat that fruit you will become as wise as God. You will know everything!"

Eve looked at the delicious fruit and thought, "Hmm... as wise as God." She was convinced. She bit into the fruit and gave some to Adam, who was with her, and he ate it. Instantly they felt embarrassed and afraid. Quickly, they made clothes out of leaves to cover themselves up. (Pause)

Discussion Questions

Listed below are some basic questions that can be asked. You may want to supplement these questions with other Head, Heart, and Hands questions.

- We may have already heard this story before. What jumps out at you as new or different?
- What do you think was going on in Adam or Eve's heart and mind in this story?
- What does this story tell us about God?
- What do you feel after reading/hearing this story?
- How does this story affect your life?

Story Continued...

Later on in the cool of the day, God came to spend time with the humans. When Adam and Eve heard God walking in the garden, they hid behind some bushes.

God called to them, "Where are you?"

Adam answered, "I heard you coming and I was afraid, because... I don't have any clothes on and so I hid."

God answered, "Why do you care about wearing clothes? Did you eat the fruit I told you not to eat?" Adam said, "Eve gave me the fruit."

God asked Eve, "Why did this happen?"

Eve replied, "The snake tricked me into eating the fruit."

God said to Adam and Eve, "Because of your choices, life will not be easy. You will feel more pain... work will be hard... you'll fight with each other, and eventually... you will die." (Pause)

To cover up Adam and Eve, God created clothing for them out of animal skins. Then, they were removed from the garden. Mighty angels stood at the entrance, and a sword of fire moved back and forth stopping humans from eating from the Tree of Life. (Pause)

Closing Blessing

Read Psalm 51:1

Pray Have mercy on me, O Lord, because of your unfailing love. Because of your great compassion, blot out the stains of my sin. Lord, we thank you for your love and forgiveness. May you bless each person with a greater understanding of your desire to be with them.



Keeping Promises

Genesis 22:1-19

Review

- Were you able to tell the Creation or Fall story to anyone this past week?
- Who can tell us the Fall story?

Hook Question

What's most valuable to you that would be hard to give up? Do you remember a time when you had to give something up that was very special to you? What was that experience like?

Tell the Story

Retell

Have the group retell the story in their own words. Work together to recreate what was just heard asking 'what's next' questions.

Personal/Group Retell

Give everyone a few moments to journal or draw some thoughts about this Bible story.

Introduction

Many years have passed since Adam and Eve have disobeyed God and had to leave the Garden of Eden. People still do not follow God and continue to rebel against Him. God chose a man named Abraham, who was married to Sarah, to be the start of a nation devoted to Himself. God promised them a son but they had to wait 25 years before he was born. They finally had Isaac when Abraham was 100 and Sarah was 90 years old. Our Bible story continues when Isaac is 13.

One day God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!"

"Here I am!" Abraham replied.

God said, "Take your son – your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah! Offer him up there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains which I will show you."

Early the next morning Abraham got up and saddled his donkey. He took two of his young servants with him, along with his son Isaac. When he had cut the wood for the burnt offering, he started out for the place God had spoken to him about.

On the third day Abraham caught sight of the place in the distance. So he said to his servants, "You two stay here with the donkey while the boy and I go up there. We will worship and then return to you."

Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and put it on his son Isaac. Then he took the fire and the knife in his hand, and the two of them walked on together.

Discussion Questions

Listed below are some basic questions that can be asked. You may want to supplement these questions with other Head, Heart, and Hands questions.

- Something new I learned today about what it means to follow Jesus is...
- How did the story describe God's relationship with people?
- How does Abraham's life inspire you?
- What can we learn from Abraham?
- How should we respond to Jesus today?
- How does this story affect your life?

Story Continued...

Isaac said to his father Abraham, "Here is the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"

"God will provide for what he needs my son," Abraham replied. The two of them continued on together.

When they came to the place God had told him about, Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood on it. Next he tied up his son Isaac and placed him on the altar on top of the wood. Then Abraham reached out his hand, took the knife, and prepared to kill his son. But the Lord's angel called to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!"

"Here I am!" Abraham answered.

"Do not harm the boy!" the angel said. "Now I know that you fear God because you did not keep your only son from me."

Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught in the bushes by its horns. So he went over and got the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah Jireh, which means, "The Lord provides."

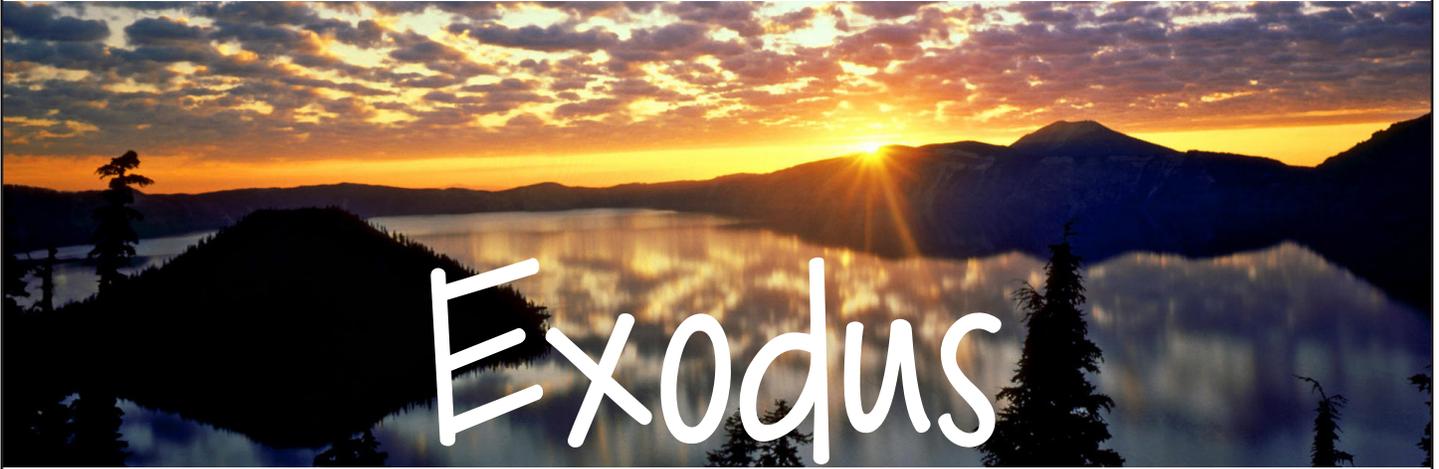
The Lord's angel called to Abraham a second time from heaven and said, "'By my own name,' declares the Lord, 'because you have done this and have not held back your son, your only son, I will indeed bless you. I will greatly multiply your children and their children after them so that they will be as countless as the stars in the sky or the grains of sand on the seashore. Your family after you will take possession of the cities of their enemies. Because you have obeyed me, all the nations of the earth will be blessed because of your children.'"

Then Abraham returned to his servants, and they set out together for where Abraham stayed.

Closing Blessing

Read Isaiah 26:4

Pray Lord, thank you that you are the Rock on which we can stand. Our trust is in you. Bless each person here with a greater confidence to follow you – to hear your voice and to respond no matter what the cost. We trust in you.



Exodus

Exodus 11-14

Review

- Were you able to tell any of our stories to someone?
- How were you able to follow God this week?
- See if anyone can tell the Abraham & Isaac Keeping Promises story.

Hook Question

When was a time when you really wanted to go somewhere and your parents said no?

Tell the Story

Retell

Have the group retell the story in their own words. Work together to recreate what was just heard asking 'what's next' questions.

Personal/Group Retell

As a group, use some kind of time measuring device and see if you can retell this story in two minutes or less.

Introduction

God's people still continue to be rebellious and not follow the ways of the Lord. Because of a famine in the land, they end up in Egypt where they are slaves for over 400 years. God selects a man named Moses, and though he had a hard time speaking, God used him to deliver the people from their bondage.

Moses and his brother Aaron go and plead with Pharaoh, "You must let the Israelites leave Egypt for just three days to worship God. If you don't, God will punish the Egyptians severely."

Pharaoh reacted, "Why should I listen to you and your god? Stop being lazy and get back to work!" Then, Pharaoh made the Israelites work harder and make bricks from mud and straw. Pharaoh was very stubborn and would not listen. So God sent a series of warnings called plagues.

This is what God did: the water in the Nile River turned into blood. All of the fish died and it smelled terrible. Then a mob of frogs hopped everywhere: in their beds, their ovens, and even inside their pots and pans! Next, gnats and flies swarmed them; they got sores on their bodies; their cows caught diseases; and strong hail storms and locusts destroyed their crops.

Then it was dark outside for three entire days. (Pause.) After each of these warnings, Moses asked Pharaoh to let the Israelites go. And Pharaoh would say, "If you stop the plagues, I'll let you leave."

But after the plagues stopped, Pharaoh still would not let them go.

So Moses warned Pharaoh about a final plague: "If you don't let us leave, every firstborn son will die, including your own. Then you'll beg us to leave Egypt." But Pharaoh still would not listen.

Discussion Questions

Listed below are some basic questions that can be asked. You may want to supplement these questions with other Head, Heart, and Hands questions.

- What do you think was going on in the Israelites' hearts and minds in this story?
- Do I see any of the characteristics of God demonstrated in this story?
- In what ways are we also like the Israelites?
- Based on this story, what do you think God desires of us? What in this story makes you think so?
- What did we learn about being a follower of Jesus from this story?

Story Continued...

God gave the Israelites a plan to be protected from this last plague. Moses told them: "Each family is to find a healthy lamb and make a special meal out of it. Take its blood and put it on the front door frame of your home. This blood will show God that you gave a pure lamb in place of your oldest son."

That night, the people of Israel carefully followed every instruction, putting blood from a sacrificed lamb on the door frames of their homes. (Pause.)

At midnight, loud screams and crying woke everyone in Egypt. The oldest son had died in every Egyptian home, including Pharaoh's own son. Pharaoh and the Egyptians begged the Israelites to leave right away. (Pause.)

God began leading the people of Israel back to their Promised Land. Before long they arrived at the banks of a wide sea. All of sudden, they heard the rumbling of horses. In the distance, they spotted Pharaoh and his armies chasing after them!

Trapped, the Israelites started to panic and screamed at Moses, "Why did you lead us out here to die?! Slavery would be better than this!" But Moses reassured the people, "Don't be afraid. God will provide a way out for us."

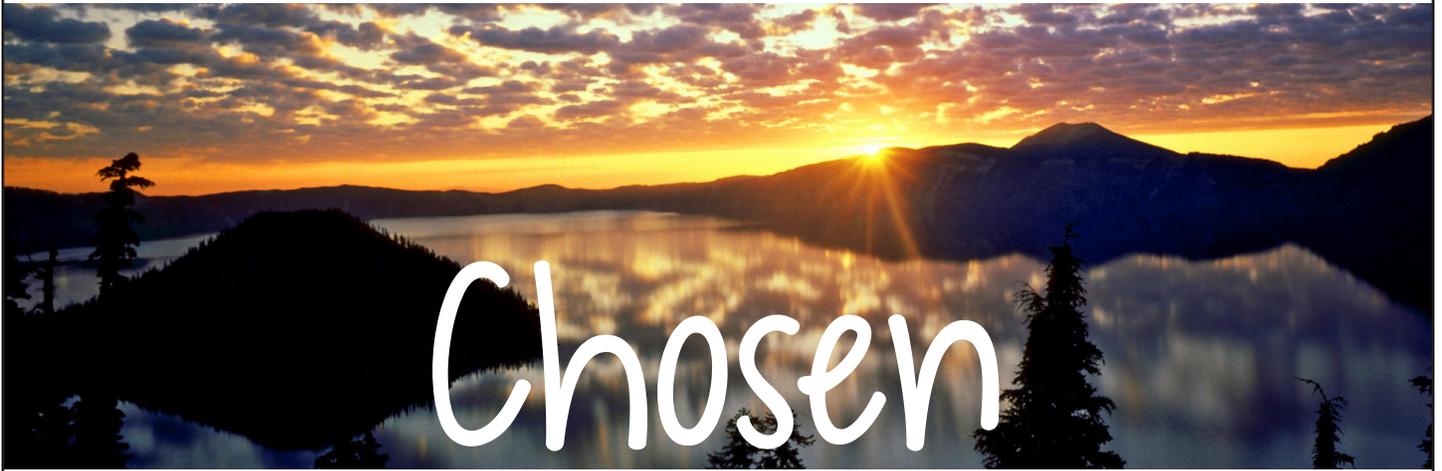
Then God told Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea." As soon as he did this, a huge wind split the waters, providing a path for them to walk across! But Pharaoh and his armies were getting close, and they began following behind the Israelites on this dry path.

As soon as the last Israelite made it to the other side of the sea, Moses stretched out his hand again toward the water. Immediately, a huge wind blew the waters back together, covering Pharaoh and his armies. The Israelites watched in amazement. Then, they burst into a joyful celebration, dancing and singing, thanking God for rescuing them! They put their trust in God and in Moses. This was a day that the people of Israel would celebrate forever!

Closing Blessing

Read Isaiah 12:2

Pray Lord, you are the Savior; the One we can depend on. When troubles come, help each one to look to you for deliverance. Bless each person with a stronger faith and trust in you especially when the hard times come.



Chosen

1 Samuel 16

Review

- After hearing our story from last time, were there ways in which you trusted and obeyed God? Can anyone retell that story of Moses and the Exodus from Egypt?
- Were you able to tell this story to someone this last week?
- What has been your favorite Bible Story so far?

Hook Question

When were you chosen for something?

Tell the Story

Retell

Have the group retell the story in their own words. Work together to recreate what was just heard asking 'what's next' questions.

Personal/Group Retell

David is known for many things - one is that he wrote beautiful songs to the Lord (written in the Book of Psalms). Write a song or change the words to a familiar song which tells this story.

Introduction

Instead of God as their King, the people decided that they wanted a king like the surrounding nations. Samuel was a prophet, a spokesman, for God and blessed the men that God would select as the nation's king. The first king was Saul and though he was very handsome, he was a king who lost his love for God. It was now time to choose another king. God instructs Samuel to go to Jesse's house in Bethlehem where he is to anoint the man God would point out to him. That is where our Bible story begins:

When Samuel arrived at Jesse's house, he noticed Jesse's oldest son and said to himself, "Surely, this is the Lord's chosen king!" But the Lord said to Samuel, "Don't be impressed by his appearance or his height, for I have not picked him. God does not look at things the way men do. People look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Then Jesse called his next son and presented him to Samuel. But Samuel said, "The Lord has not chosen this one, either." Then Jesse presented each of his other sons. But Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen any of these. Is that all of your sons?"

Jesse replied, "There is still the youngest one, David, but he's taking care of the sheep." Samuel said to Jesse, "Bring him here for we cannot do anything else until he comes." So Jesse had him brought in.

Now David was handsome with bright eyes. The Lord said, "Go and anoint him. This is the one!" So Samuel took the jar full of olive oil and anointed David by pouring the oil on David in front of his brothers. The Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David from that day on.

Discussion Questions

Listed below are some basic questions that can be asked. You may want to supplement these questions with other Head, Heart, and Hands questions.

- Who are the main characters in the story?
- What were the main events in the story?
- What do you learn about God in this story?
- How does this story affect your life?
- How can you put this insight into practice this week?

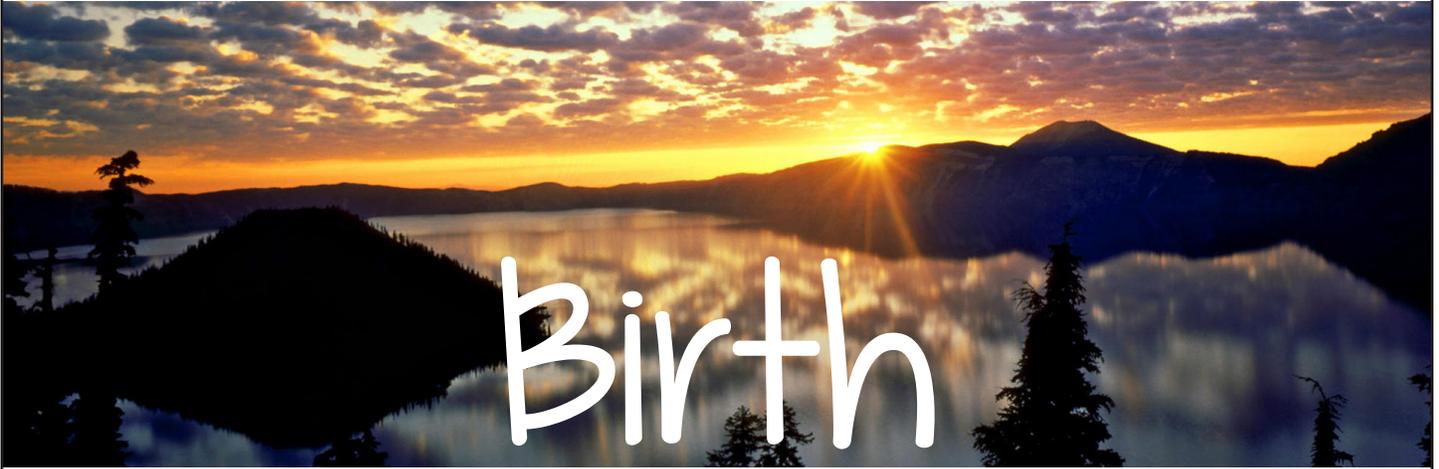
Conclusion

David became known as a man after God's own heart. He wrote beautiful praise songs, known as the Psalms, to express his love and worship of God.

Closing Blessing

Read Psalm 37:4

Pray Lord, we want to praise you today. Thank you for all you have done for us. Thank you for your power, your majesty and your might. Lord, bless each person with a heart to always be in awe and to worship you.



Birth

Luke 1-2

Review

- See if the group can give a quick retell of our first 5 stories.
- How does it feel knowing you are chosen by God?
- Why do you think we celebrate Christmas?

Hook Question

What is the best present you ever given to someone? How about one you received?

Tell the Story

Retell

Have the group retell the story in their own words. Work together to recreate what was just heard asking 'what's next' questions.

Personal/Group Retell

Have the group get into a circle. Toss a ball from one person to another and when the leader says, "Stop," the person holding the ball needs to tell what happens next in the story. Continue until the story is completely retold.

Introduction

Though God had to kick Adam and Even out of the Garden of Eden, it did not mean that God loved them any less. He had an amazing love for them and all the families that came after them. He just wanted everyone to know how much He loved them and to follow Him. But everyone continued to disobey God. He tried all kinds of things: rules to follow, Kings to rule over them, people to tell them what God was thinking and how much He still wanted to be with them. Nothing worked. Eventually God sent the most precious thing He had. It was a present for everyone if they would accept it. Christmas Day was here!

One day, an angel surprised a young woman named Mary. "Don't be afraid Mary. God has chosen to bless you! You will give birth to God's son. People will call him Emmanuel, which means 'God is with us'! He'll become a king whose kingdom will never end!"

Even though this seemed impossible, Mary said, "I am God's servant. I hope everything you've said comes true!" After that, Mary sang to God thanking Him for choosing to bless her. And just as the angel said, Mary became pregnant.

Now Mary was supposed to marry a man named Joseph. He found out that she was pregnant and so Joseph was going to leave her quietly.

One night, one of God's angels came to Joseph in a dream. He said, "Joseph, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife. The child in her is from God. You are to give him the name Jesus, meaning he will save the people from their sins."

Discussion Questions

Listed below are some basic questions that can be asked. You may want to supplement these questions with other Head, Heart, and Hands questions.

- What kinds of emotions do you think Mary was feeling?
- Why do you suppose God chose Mary?
- What amazes you the most about Jesus/God?
- How would you have felt if you were Mary or Joseph in this story?
- What did we learn about being a follower of Jesus from this story?
- After hearing the story, how will you live differently?

Story Continued...

That next year Mary and Joseph had to go to Bethlehem. There were no rooms anywhere in the town, only the stable. That is where Mary gave birth to a son.

They named him Jesus just as the angel told them to. They wrapped him in strips of cloths and put him in the animals' feeding trough.

That night, shepherds were out in a nearby field watching their sheep when all of sudden an angel appeared in front of them! They were terrified!

The angel said, "Don't be afraid—we have good news! Your new king, the one who will save you, has been born tonight! You'll find him lying in a feeding trough wrapped in strips of cloth."

Then the sky was filled with angels singing, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace and good will to all men." Immediately, the shepherds ran into town to look for the baby.

Just as the angel said, they found Mary and Joseph and their new baby, wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a feeding trough. Filled with joy and excitement, they hurried to tell everyone in Bethlehem this amazing news! (Pause.)

Wise men from distant lands were studying the stars when they noticed an unusually bright star appear. This star guided them directly to the place where Mary and Joseph were staying. As they entered the doorway, the wise men were filled with joy and fell on their knees in front of Jesus. They brought expensive gifts of gold, spices and perfumes for this newborn King!

Jesus grew up healthy and strong. He was filled with God's wisdom and loved by everyone.

Closing Blessing

Read Luke 2:14

Pray We give you all the glory Lord for you are so worth it. Nothing compares with you! Bless each one here with your peace and your favor because of your love for us.



Nic at Night

John 3

Review

- Who can tell the Christmas story from last week?
- Who were you able to tell the story to this past week?
- How might you celebrate Christmas differently now that we discovered new things about it?

Hook Question

Who is someone that you could trust with something that would be really hard to tell?

Tell the Story

Retell

Have the group retell the story in their own words. Work together to recreate what was just heard asking 'what's next' questions.

Personal/Group Retell

List out the major events in today's story. Come up with an action to help remember the 1st event. Do the same with the 2nd. Go back to the 1st & then add the 2nd event and its action. Continue until the story is retold.

Introduction

Little is known about Jesus' childhood. Luke 2:52 says that he grew in wisdom, physically, and in his relationship with God and people. He became a carpenter like his earthly father, Joseph and at the age of 30, he began his ministry. Just before the beginning of our story, a prophet, or a person who speaks for God, whose name was John, baptized him. Jesus has called the first few men to come and follow him. Jesus has also performed many miracles and the religious leaders are beginning to get jealous of Jesus. That is where we will begin our Bible story for today:

One night there was a religious leader named Nicodemus who came to speak with Jesus. "Rabbi," Nicodemus said, "we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miracles are evidence that God is with you."

Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God."

"How can an old man go back into his mother and be born again?" exclaimed Nicodemus.

Jesus replied, "I promise you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. Humans can only reproduce human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. So don't be surprised when I say, 'You must be born again.' Take the wind. It blows wherever it wants. You can hear it but you can't tell where it comes from or where it is going. You also can't explain how people are born of the Spirit."

"How are these things possible?" Nicodemus asked.

Discussion Questions

Listed below are some basic questions that can be asked. You may want to supplement these questions with other Head, Heart, and Hands questions.

- What do you think was going on in Nicodemus' heart and mind in this story?
- What do you think are the most important words in the story?
- How are you just like Nicodemus?
- What did you learn about God?
- When I hear God saying that (the last paragraph), I feel...

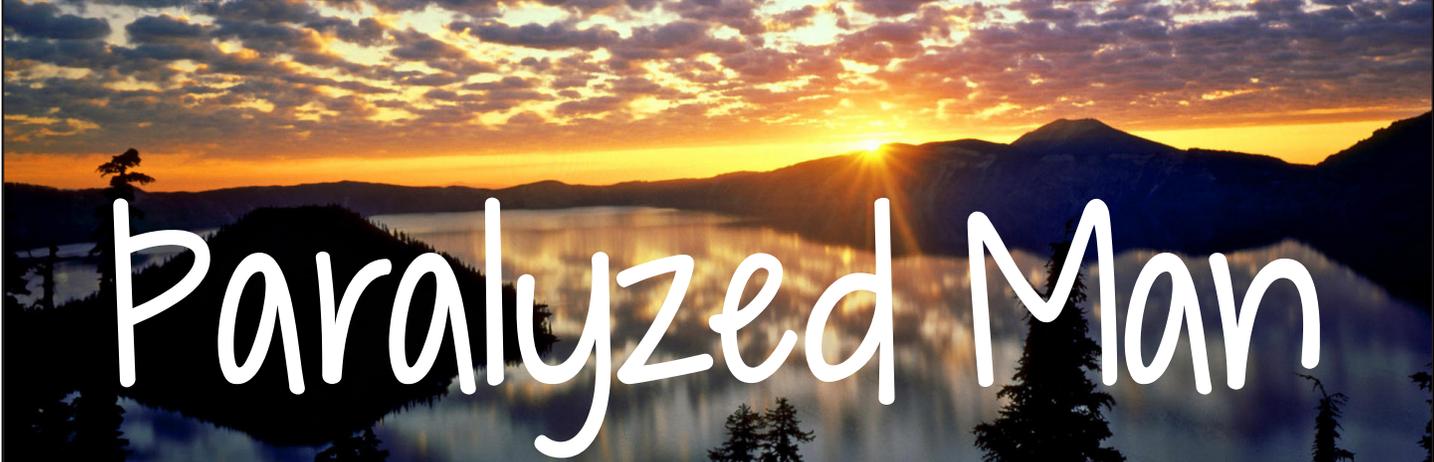
Story Continued...

Jesus answered him: For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son so that everyone who believes in him will not die but have eternal life. God sent his Son into the world not to judge, but to save the world through those that believe in him. But those who do not believe in God's one and only Son will be judged. It's based on the fact that God's sent a light into the world, but the people showed, through their evil actions, that they loved the darkness more than the light. They are afraid their sins will be exposed. But, you come to the light when you do what is right. Then others can see that they are doing what God wants."

Closing Blessing

Read John 3:16

Pray Lord, thank you for your love and for eternal life for all of us who have chosen to follow Jesus. Thank you that one day we will see You face to face. Bless us with your strength to keep running the race that is ahead of us.



Paralyzed Man

Luke 5:17-26

Review

- Who can tell us about Nicodemus and his encounter with Jesus?
- What have you noticed about Jesus in the 2 stories we have told?
- What has happened when you have told our stories to someone?

Hook Question

Assign each person a disability (blind, deaf, broken leg, disease, mentally disabled, etc) and have someone in the group share/act out how they could best help that person.

Tell the Story

Retell

Have the group retell the story in their own words. Work together to recreate what was just heard asking 'what's next' questions.

Personal/Group Retell

Art Attack! Have each person draw a different part of the story and then put it together in order.

Introduction

Jesus responded to people when they trusted him and believed that he was the Son of God. He saw their faith for God to be their healer; Jesus had the power and the desire to heal them. But he didn't only heal their bodies from sickness and disabilities. Today's Bible story will show us other things that Jesus can restore...

One day while Jesus was teaching, religious leaders from many places were sitting nearby. The Lord's healing power was strongly with Jesus.

Some men carrying a paralyzed man on a sleeping mat came to see Jesus. They tried to take him inside, but the crowd was too large. They went up to the roof and took off some tiles and lowered the sick man on his mat down into the crowd, right in front of Jesus. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the man, "Young man, your sins are forgiven."

But the religious leaders said to themselves, "Who does he think he is? Only God can forgive sins!"

Jesus knew what they were thinking, so he asked them, "Why do you question this in your hearts? Is it easier to say 'Your sins are forgiven,' or 'Stand up and walk'? I will prove to you that the Son of Man has the authority on earth to forgive sins." Then Jesus turned to the paralyzed man and said, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home!"

Immediately, as everyone watched, the man jumped up, picked up his mat, and went home praising God. Everyone was filled with great wonder and awe, and they praised God, exclaiming, "We have seen amazing things today!"

Discussion Questions

Listed below are some basic questions that can be asked. You may want to supplement these questions with other Head, Heart, and Hands questions.

- What were the main events in the story?
- What do you think was going on in the paralyzed man's heart and mind in this story?
- How would you have felt if you were the paralyzed man? The religious leaders?
- What can we learn about from the paralyzed man and/or his friends?
- After hearing the story, how will you live differently?

Story Continued...

Closing Blessing

Read Galatians 6:2

Pray May we all be blessed with the gift of help so we can encourage and carry each other's burdens. Lord, help us to be an instrument of your love and grace so we can bring each other into your presence where we can find healing and rest.



Demoniac

Mark 5:1-20

Review

- How did people respond when you told them last week's story?
- Was there a time this past week when you trusted or had faith for Jesus to help you?

Hook Question

- What is something that really scares you? **OR**
- If you had Superman's power, what would you use it for?

Tell the Story

Retell

Have the group retell the story in their own words. Work together to recreate what was just heard asking 'what's next' questions.

Personal/Group Retell

Assign different parts to people (Jesus, demoniac, herdsmen, townspeople and pigs) and act out the story. Give everyone a few minutes to practice so the story is told accurately.

Introduction

Jesus continues to do many miraculous things. He is showing the people that he is God and has power over everything. But his power is not only over the things that we can see and touch. He has power over angels, both good and bad. Let's see how he shows that in the today's Bible story...

When they arrived at the other side of the lake, Jesus climbed out of the boat where he was met by a man possessed by an evil spirit who came out from a cemetery. This man lived in the burial caves and could no longer be restrained. He was often put into chains and shackles but he snapped the chains from his wrists and smashed the shackles. No one was strong enough to hold him down. Day and night he wandered among the burial caves and in the hills, howling and cutting himself with sharp stones.

When Jesus was still far off, the man saw him, ran to meet him, and bowed low before him. Jesus said to the spirit, "Come out of the man, you evil spirit." With a shriek, the man screamed, "Why are you interfering with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? In the name of God, I beg you, don't torture me!"

Then Jesus demanded, "What is your name?"

And he replied, "My name is Legion, because there are many of us inside this man." The evil spirits begged Jesus again and again not to send them to some distant place.

There happened to be a large herd of pigs feeding on the hillside nearby. "Send us into those pigs," the spirits begged. "Let us enter them."

Discussion Questions

Listed below are some basic questions that can be asked. You may want to supplement these questions with other Head, Heart, and Hands questions.

- Who are the main characters in the story?
- What were the main events in the story?
- What do you learn about God in this story?
- How does this story affect your life?
- How can you put this insight into practice this week?

Story Continued...

So Jesus gave them permission. The evil spirits came out of the man and entered all 2000 pigs, who plunged down the steep hillside into the lake and drowned in the water.

The herdsmen ran to the nearby town and the surrounding countryside, telling people the news as they ran. People rushed out to see what had happened. A crowd soon gathered around Jesus, and the man who had been possessed by all those demons. He was sitting there fully dressed and perfectly normal. The people were all afraid. They told others what had happened to the man and the pigs. And the crowd began pleading with Jesus to go away and leave them alone.

As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man whom Jesus had healed, begged to go with him. But Jesus said, "No, go home to your family, and tell them everything the Lord has done for you and how merciful he has been." So the man went and began to proclaim the great things Jesus had done for him. Everyone was amazed at what he told them.

Closing Blessing

Read Ephesians 6:10-12

Pray May you be blessed with the power and authority that Christ gives you as a follower of Him. Lord, help us to know and engage in the spiritual fight that is always around us.



Walk on Water

Matthew 14:22-33

Review

- Who can tell us the story from last week about the man who had the demons?
- What are you discovering about Jesus through these stories?
- How do people respond when you want to tell them a Bible Story?

Hook Question

What is the biggest adventure you have ever been on?

Tell the Story

Retell

Have the group retell the story in their own words. Work together to recreate what was just heard asking 'what's next' questions.

Personal/Group Retell

Have the group stand in a circle. Toss a ball to someone in the group and have them tell you what happened first in the story. They can toss the ball to someone else who says what happened next and so on until the entire story is told.

Introduction

Jesus has had a hard day. His cousin, John the Baptist, has been killed and Jesus tries to go someplace to be alone. The people follow him and he has compassion on them. He heals those who are sick and he miraculously feeds thousands who are hungry. Jesus continually shows God's love and power as we will once again see in our next story from the Bible:

Immediately after feeding the people, Jesus insisted that his disciples get back into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake. He stayed behind and sent the people home. After that, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. Night time came while he was there alone.

Meanwhile, far away from the beach, the disciples were in trouble. A strong wind was blowing and they were fighting hard against the big waves. It was about three o'clock in the morning and Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. When the disciples saw him, they were terrified. They cried out, "It's a ghost!"

Immediately Jesus spoke to them. "Don't be afraid," he said. "Take courage. I am here!"

Then Peter called to him, "Lord, if it's really you, tell me to come to you by walking on the water."

"Come on," Jesus said.

Discussion Questions

Listed below are some basic questions that can be asked. You may want to supplement these questions with other Head, Heart, and Hands questions.

- What do you think was going on in Peter's heart and mind in this story?
- We may have already heard this story before. What jumps out at you as new or different?
- How are we just like Peter?
- What do we learn about Jesus from this passage?
- After hearing the story, how will you live differently?

Story Continued...

So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. But when Peter saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. "Save me, Lord!" he shouted.

Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. "You have so little faith," Jesus said. "Why did you doubt me?"

When they climbed back into the boat, the wind stopped. Then the disciples worshiped Jesus. "Jesus, you are the Son of God!"

Closing Blessing

Read Hebrews 11:6

Pray Lord, I ask that you bless each person with an extra measure of faith; that they trust you more each day and live lives that are honoring and pleasing to you.



Blind Man

Luke 18:35-42

Review

- As a group, retell last week's story of Jesus and Peter walking on the water.
- Where have you seen God at work this week?
- Who did you tell the story to this week and what was their response?

Hook Question

If you were standing before God & He asked you what you wanted most, how would you answer?

Tell the Story

Retell

Have the group retell the story in their own words. Work together to recreate what was just heard asking 'what's next' questions.

Personal/Group Retell

Break down into smaller groups. Have someone in each group volunteer to retell the story as though they were the blind man. Let everyone have a chance to retell the story.

Introduction

Before starting the lesson, have everyone close their eyes. Describe different objects and situations to them. Have them describe what it was like to see them in their mind without actually seeing them with their eyes. This is what it must have been like for a man that had an encounter with Jesus. It comes from the Bible...

As Jesus was coming into Jericho, a blind man was begging while sitting beside the road. When he heard the noise of a crowd going past, he asked what was happening. The people told him that Jesus was going by. So the beggar began shouting, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

"Be quiet!" the people in front yelled at the man.

But the beggar only shouted louder, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Jesus stopped when he heard the man. He ordered that the beggar be brought to him. As the man came near, Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?"

"Lord," he said, "I want to see!"

Jesus said to him, "All right, receive your sight! Your faith has healed you."

Discussion Questions

Listed below are some basic questions that can be asked. You may want to supplement these questions with other Head, Heart, and Hands questions.

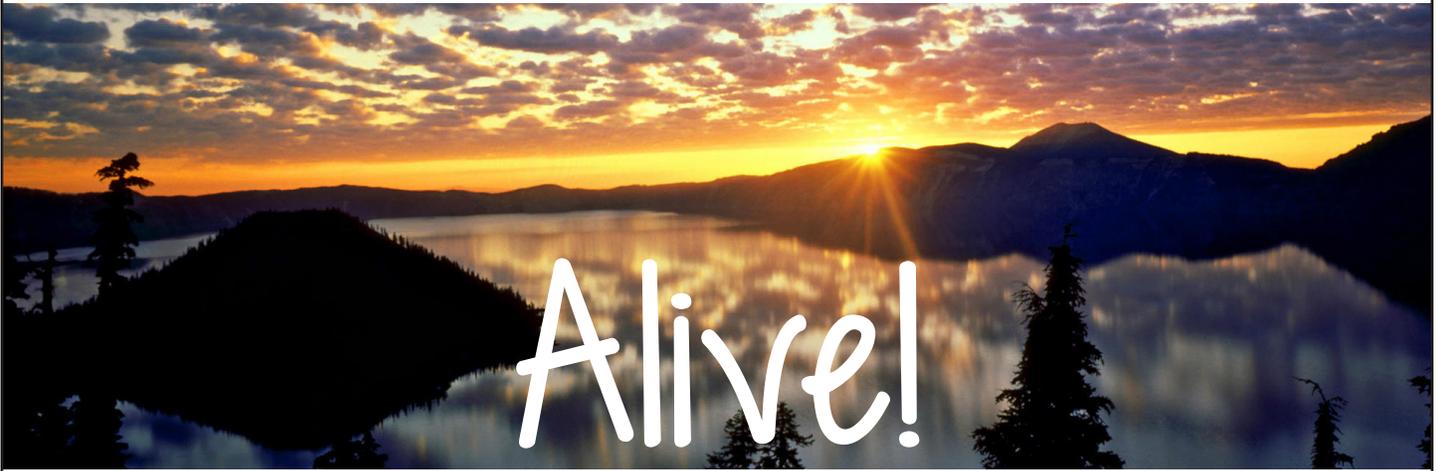
- For what purpose did Jesus heal the blind man?
- What surprised you about today's story?
- Who do you most relate to from the story?
- What can we learn about/from the blind man?
- What do you think Jesus wanted His audience to do with/in response to this parable?

Story Continued...

Closing Blessing

Read Luke 10:23

Pray Lord, bless each person with the ability to see more of you. May we all continue to grow in our faith and trust in you. Whether times are good or hard, bless each one with eyes to see things as you do.



Luke 23:33-24:7

Review

- The last several times we have met, we saw how Jesus treated people. Which story did you like the best?
- Who can tell us one of those stories?
- What changes have you seen God make in your life?

Hook Question

When did someone really surprise you?

Tell the Story

Retell

Have the group retell the story in their own words. Work together to recreate what was just heard asking 'what's next' questions.

Personal/Group Retell

Let everyone draw or journal what was the most significant thing for them from today's story. Give some time for those that may want to share what they have drawn or written.

Introduction

Jesus grew up like any other child except he never did anything wrong. WOW! He became smart. He matured like all of us do. He was in love with God and people liked him. Jesus did many amazing things while he lived on this earth. He taught people about God and how much he loved them. He healed people who were sick and hurting. He forgave people of the wrong things they did against God. He told demons to leave people alone and for a few people, Jesus raised them from the dead. He was awesome!! People loved him and came to hear him teach about God's love. But not everyone liked him...

Late one night Jesus and his disciples went to an olive grove to pray. Filled with pain and sorrow, Jesus fell face down on the ground and he cried, "Abba, Father ('abba' meaning daddy), you can do anything. If there's another way besides my death, please let that happen... but I will do whatever you ask."

Just as he had finished praying, one of Jesus' disciples, Judas, showed up with an armed mob. He kissed Jesus on the cheek—a sign to show the guards which one to arrest... You don't see it now, but this is part of God's plan, just as the prophets predicted long ago. The guards arrested Jesus and dragged him away. Jesus' disciples ran away and hid.

The guards beat Jesus and brought him before the religious leaders for questioning.

They asked, "Do you think YOU are the Messiah... the Son of God?" Jesus answered, "I AM... and soon you'll see me in the highest place of power next to God."

Discussion Questions

Listed below are some basic questions that can be asked. You may want to supplement these questions with other Head, Heart, and Hands questions.

- What kinds of emotions do you think the people in the story were feeling?
- How does this story challenge or reinforce something you already know?
- What do you feel after reading/hearing this story?
- Something I never realized before today is...
- What did you hear today that makes you think you ought to make a change in your life?
- How can you put this insight into practice this week?

Story Continued...

When Jesus said this, the High Priest tore his clothing in anger and said, “Any man who claims to be God must be put to death.”

When morning came, they led Jesus to a place where he was nailed to a heavy wooden cross that was planted in the ground next to two criminals. Hanging there, Jesus cried out, “Father, please forgive them... they don’t know what they’re doing.”

At noon, darkness filled the skies, blocking the sun for three hours. Suddenly, the thick curtain hanging in the Temple tore down the middle! At that moment, Jesus shouted, “Father! I give you my life... it’s complete.” Then Jesus breathed his last breath and died. (Pause.)

Late Friday afternoon, Jesus’ body was taken down from the cross, wrapped in long strips of cloth, and placed in a tomb given by one of the wealthy religious leaders. A large stone was rolled over the entrance to the tomb and Roman guards were posted to make sure nothing happened to Jesus’ body. (Long pause.)

Early on Sunday morning, some of the women who had followed Jesus went to prepare his body for burial. When they arrived at the tomb, the stone was rolled away and the soldiers were gone...

Suddenly, two angels appeared and asked, “Why are you so surprised? You’re looking for Jesus, but he’s not here—he is no longer dead. Jesus is ALIVE” The women, afraid and excited, hurried to tell the disciples what they saw. As soon as they got the news, some of the disciples ran back to the tomb and looked inside for themselves... Jesus was not there!

Closing Blessing

Read Acts 2:25

Pray Father God, I ask that you bless each person with a pouring out of your Spirit; that they would know you are right there with them and will never leave them.



Pentecost

Acts 1 & 2

Review

- What is special about Easter?
- See if the group can come up with 10 events that happened in the Easter story.
- Who did you share the Easter story with and what was their response?

Hook Question

What do you think Heaven is going to be like?

Tell the Story

Retell

Have the group retell the story in their own words. Work together to recreate what was just heard asking 'what's next' questions.

Personal/Group Retell

Take a 14 foot piece of rope and tie it off. Have everyone circle up, holding onto the rope with both hands. At your call, everyone starts passing it to the left. When you say "stop," the person holding the knot has to say what was next. Continue until the story is retold.

Introduction

Prior to Jesus going to the cross, he told his followers that he would be leaving them. Though they were saddened by this, Jesus told them it would be better for them because then he could send the Holy Spirit after he was gone. For 40 days after Jesus' resurrection, he was seen by over 500 eyewitnesses and he met with his disciples many times. When they saw Jesus, they were filled with joy—HE REALLY WAS ALIVE! He told them to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit to come. The Jewish people were getting ready to celebrate the Festival of First Fruits...

When Jesus sat down to eat a meal with his disciples, he told them, "In a few days, God's Spirit will come and live inside of you. This will give you power to follow my ways and tell the entire world about me!"

Soon after that, these disciples watched in amazement as Jesus went up into the sky and disappeared in the clouds. Two angels in white robes suddenly appeared and said, "Why are you staring at the sky? Jesus will return some day the same way you saw him go." (Pause.)

Ten days later, a group of 120 of Jesus' followers were gathered to pray in a home. All of a sudden, they heard a loud sound like a roaring windstorm that shook the house where they were meeting. What looked like flames of fire rested on each of their heads.

Each of them was filled with God's Spirit and able to speak in languages they never had learned! They went out into the street and began to tell people about the great things that Jesus had done!

Discussion Questions

Listed below are some basic questions that can be asked. You may want to supplement these questions with other Head, Heart, and Hands questions.

- What were the main events in the story?
- What do you think it would be like to be present during this time?
- What do you notice about Jesus in this story?
- What I think Jesus is saying to me is...
- How should we respond to Jesus today?

Story Continued...

At that time, Jews from all over the world were meeting in Jerusalem. There was a roaring sound that was heard throughout the entire city. A large crowd had gathered outside the house to see what was going on. When Jesus' followers began speaking to them, they said, "How can this happen? These are local people from Galilee, but they're speaking in OUR own languages from far away lands. This is amazing!"

One of Jesus' disciples, named Peter, stepped forward to explain to the crowds what was happening. He shouted, "You're seeing what the prophets predicted coming true! We're eyewitnesses to the reality that Jesus was raised from the dead and is the true Messiah!"

People's hearts were filled with sadness because they realized that their Messiah had come but was overlooked, tortured, and crucified. They asked Jesus' disciples, "What can we do?"

Peter replied, "Turn from your ways... to God's ways. In Jesus, you will find forgiveness, and you will be filled with God's Spirit. This is God's new way—a new covenant not just for Jews, but for everyone."

That day, thousands believed in Jesus as Messiah and were baptized, becoming a part of a new community called The Church.

Closing Blessing

Read Jeremiah 9:23

Pray Lord, thank you for filling us with your Holy Spirit. May our boastful talk always be about you and who you are. Bless each person with an awareness and desire for more of your Holy Spirit. Give us your strength to do your will!



The Church

Acts 2:42-47

Review

- Follow-up with individuals as to what has happened after obeying the Spirit's promptings from the various stories.
- What have been people's responses from the Bible stories they have told them?
- Who can tell the story of the Holy Spirit coming as Jesus promised? (This should be the introduction to today's story.)

Hook Question

If you could do one thing for God, what would it be?

Tell the Story

Retell

Have the group retell the story in their own words. Work together to recreate what was just heard asking 'what's next' questions.

Personal/Group Retell

Give each person an opportunity to journal or draw something that impacted them the most about the start of the Church.

Introduction

After retelling last week's story about Pentecost, tell today's story about the start of what is now called the Church.

That day, thousands believed in Jesus as Messiah and were baptized, becoming a part of a new community called The Church.

These followers of Jesus became deeply committed to each other and to God's ways; sharing everything they had, praying, learning together, and helping anyone in need... all with great joy and generosity. Everyday they ate together to remember Jesus' life and sacrifice.

The people were in awe as they saw God do amazing things through them –miracles and healings... and more and more people joined The Church each day.

Concluding Remarks:

This community of faith–The Church–continues today... with us. This is OUR story. We are God's blessing, a people called to give others a glimpse of God's Kingdom. We are to be different... to live in ways of Jesus, joining in God's activity to bring, hope, restoration, and healing to a hurting world.

Discussion Questions

Listed below are some basic questions that can be asked. You may want to supplement these questions with other Head, Heart, and Hands questions.

- How do you feel after hearing this story?
- What questions do you have about what you have heard?
- What did you learn about God from this story?
- Based on this story, what do you think God desires of us? What in this story makes you think so?

Story Continued...

Closing Blessing

Read John 13:34

Pray Lord, help us to be the kind of people that when others see us, they see the love and compassion of Jesus. Jesus, bless each person with the filling of your Holy Spirit; that others would see the love, the joy and the peace that can only come from you.