

THE BEATITUDES

**Anchors Scripture Resource
2024/25**

BBNI

THE NORTHERN IRELAND BOYS' BRIGADE



SESSION ONE

INTRO TO THE BEATITUDES

THE BIG IDEA

The Beatitudes tells us what it is like to live God's way. Jesus taught about this and we can find this in the Bible. It is called 'Sermon on the Mount'. It helps us to live God's way and helps us to become more like Jesus.

THE WORD

Matthew 5v2-12

Luke 10v25-37

INTRODUCTION

Ask the children to think of one thing that they have done to help someone. Ask them how this made them feel.

An example could be, 'I helped my friend when they fell down' or 'I gave my friend some of my lunch as they were still hungry.' Give the children the opportunity to tell you what they have done.

Ask the children to stand up. Read out a list of behaviours. If they think it is a good behaviour, they go to one side of the room or if they think it is a bad behaviour they go to the other side of the room. The idea is to start to read the behaviours quickly so they can run back and forth quicker each time. Explain that we are going to look at a man in the Bible called Jesus, who was perfect.

ACTIVITIES

CRAFT

What are The Beatitudes

Beatitudes Lollipop sticks

GAME

Relay Race

DRAMA

BB Attitudes

THE TALK

Jesus taught what we call 'The Beatitudes'. Let's think of this as 'good attitudes'. Over the next 10 weeks, we will be looking at each of the Beatitudes.

Can anyone tell me one thing they are grateful for? (Ask for some responses).

Jesus in the 'Beatitudes' talks about blessing, can anyone tell me what blessed means? Blessed means that God wants the best for us and he cares for us. When God blesses us He gives us everything we need to do what he created us to do.

Let's look at a story in the Bible of a time that Jesus blessed someone. When we look in the Bible we can see that Jesus blessed so many people, but we will talk about one today.

EMOJI STORY

(During this part of the story, get the children into groups and give the leaders a set of emojis – ask the group to choose what the man would have felt at each stage and the leader then holds this up).

One day a man was travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho. He was tired on his journey, imagine having hills to climb and it being really warm! As he was walking, he was stopped on his journey and was attacked by robbers! They took everything the man owned and they tore off most of his clothes. To make sure that the man didn't try to run after them, they beat him up and left him. (Emoji - sore).

We are going to learn a story from the Bible today about 'The Good Samaritan'. Does anyone know what a parable is? A parable is a story that Jesus told that taught people about God and how we should live.

Jesus told this parable as a man stood up to question Jesus. The man was very smart and asked Jesus, 'What should I do so that I can go to heaven.' Jesus asked the man, 'What do you think.' The man replied with this, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself.' Jesus told the man that he was right. But then Jesus went on to tell him this parable (if needed, remind the children of the meaning of a parable).

Now on the same road, there was a priest who was coming the man's way and when he spotted him lying on the ground, he passed by on the other side of the road and ignored the man! (Emoji - sad)

The man was still waiting for someone to come and help him when another man came walking (Emoji - hopeful). This man was called a Levite, he slowed down, looked a little more at the man and then walked away! (Emoji – hopeless).

The man was sad that everyone seemed to be ignoring him and he had decided that no one was going to come and help him. The man heard some more footsteps and this time a

Samaritan was walking down the road. Samaritans didn't like Jews as Jews weren't always very nice to the Samaritans. The man lying on the road was a Jew so he didn't think the Samaritan would help him (Emoji – sad). This Samaritan was different and he felt bad for the man lying on the road so he decided to help him. The Samaritan helped to bandage up the man and took care of him. He took the man to

an inn and paid for the man to stay there until he was better (Emoji – happy).

Jesus finished the story by saying, "Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbour to the man who fell among the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise."

APPLICATION

Nobody would have expected The Samaritan to help the man lying on the road but he did! Is there someone you can help today or is there someone in school who is on their own that you can ask to join in with your game or at play time?

With your leaders help, I want you to write one thing that you think Jesus loves about you.

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." Jesus cares for us and He loves us. Remember that when you help others and when you tell other people about Jesus, you are also blessing others.

SESSION ONE

ACTIVITIES



WHAT ARE THE BEATITUDES?

Aim: Outline & Overview of The Beatitudes—talk about how we feel when we are blessed

Instructions/Rules:

- Baking Activity - have readymade buns or biscuits
- Make all sorts of different faces e.g, a happy face, sad face on your bun/biscuit
- You can use any ingredients to decorate these



BEATITUDES LOLLIPOP STICKS

You will need:

- 15 coloured lollipop sticks
- Glue
- Small piece of ribbon
- Print out the beatitudes on paper (Matthew 5:1 -12)
- Scissors

Give each child 15 coloured lollipop sticks. Using glue, stick all the lollipop sticks together, one below each other. Cut out each beatitude and stick on to the sticks. Add some ribbon to the top so the craft can be hung up.



RELAY RACE

AIM: Relay Race to collect all The Beatitudes

Instructions/rules

Resources: Balloons, 8 words inside (meek, merciful, peace makers etc)

Laminated sheets with the corresponding part to match

Split Children into 2 teams (or more depending on your numbers)

Shout 'Go' and children have to run to the end of the room, pop the balloon and get the word inside—take back and match to the corresponding sheet—e.g. meek would go to blessed are the meek for they will inherit the Kingdom of God.

POOR

MOURN

MEEK

HUNGER

PURE

MERCIFUL

PERSECUTED

PEACEMAKERS

REJOICE

SESSION ONE

THE BB ATTITUDES



Two narrators stand to the side while the rest of the group form a line centre stage. They act out what the narrators say.

Narrator 1: Everybody knows what it takes to do well in life

Narrator 2: You've got to be big

Anchors make themselves as big as possible

Narrator 1: You've got to be brave

Strike brave, heroic pose

Narrator 2: And you've got to be tough!

Fold arms and grunt, look a bit like a tough bodyguard

Narrator 1: You've got to show people who's boss

Point both thumbs towards self and say

Anchors: That's me!

Narrator 2: That you're top dog

Howl like dogs

Narrator 1: and also that you're the most important person in the room and not an actual dog

Anchors shrug it off and say

Anchors: Yeah, we knew that!

Narrator 2: People need to know that you won't take no for an answer

Anchors: No chance!

Narrator 1: That it's your way or the high way

Pointing as if dismissing someone

Anchors: Get outta here!

Narrator 2: And if people cross you, it will not end well for them

Make a cut throat gesture

Narrator 1: That's right, these are the BB Attitudes

Narrator 2: Helping the youth of today grow into the super tough, no nonsense leaders of tomorrow

Narrator 3 + 4 enter and interrupt

Narrator 3: Excuse me, what are you guys talking about?

Narrator 4: Yeah you've got this all wrong!

Narrators 1+2: Huh?

Narrator 3: It's the Beatitudes, not the BB attitudes

Narrator 4: and even if it were the BB attitudes, I don't think they'd be like that

Narrator 3: Yeah they'd be much more like the actual Beatitudes

Narrator 4: You see, it's not about anyone becoming top dog

Narrator 3: It's about humbling yourself and following Jesus

Narrator 4: and putting others first

Narrators 1+2: Huh?

Narrator 3: I think we had better explain

Narrator 4 points to the Anchors in the line

Narrator 4: And you guys can help us out!

Narrator 3: Jesus said 'Blessed are the poor'

Anchors turn out their pockets and say

Anchors: We're skint!

Narrator 4: For theirs is the kingdom of Heaven

Anchors: Deal!

Narrator 3: Blessed are those who mourn

Every second Anchor drops to their knees crying

Narrator 4: For they will be comforted

The Anchors left standing put a hand on the shoulder of the ones on their knees and say:

Anchors: There there

Narrator 3: Blessed are the gentle

Standing Anchors give the ones on the floor a helping hand up

Narrator 4: Blessed are the hungry

Anchors hold their stomachs and groan

Narrator 3: Blessed are the merciful and the pure in heart

Make heart symbol with their hands

Narrator 4: Blessed are the peacemakers and those who are persecuted

The Anchors turn into two groups who hold fists up as if about to fight, one Anchor stands in the middle with arms out as if trying to keep the peace

Narrator 3: Jesus said all these things to show how the kingdom of Heaven works

Narrator 4: Because when we humble ourselves and follow Jesus

Narrator 3: When we put the needs of others before our own

Narrator 4: Then people become less selfish,

Narrator 3: People are looked after instead of looked down upon

Narrator 4: and the world becomes a better place,

Narrator 3: The world becomes a lot more like the kingdom of Heaven

Narrator 4: The end.

SESSION TWO

BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT

ACTIVITIES

THE BIG IDEA

Blessed are the poor in Spirit – The parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector. Jesus is the great, mighty and powerful one.

He is the one who can save us and make us part of God's family. But he can only save us if we realise we need Him.

CRAFT

Prayer Pocket

GAME

Freeze Tag

ACTIVITY

Bible Verse Challenge

THE WORD

Matthew 5v3

Luke 18v9-14

INTRODUCTION

Hold your chin up high, look down your nose at the children and say things like, "Aren't I so great! I'm better than all of you! I'm so clever and so good looking. Don't you all wish you were like me?"

If that was the way I normally talked, wouldn't you think I was very proud and stuck up!?

Well today we are going to hear a story about a man who was exactly like that.

DEFINITIONS

You may find these useful during the talk.

Temple	The building where the people went to worship God
Prayer	Talking to God
Sin	Things we think, say or do which are wrong and are not what God would want us to do
Poor in Spirit	Those who know that they need Jesus
Kingdom of Heaven	Those who are part of God's family, who have trusted Jesus to forgive them and will one day see Jesus in heaven

THE TALK

One day Jesus was with people who were very proud and thought they were better than everyone around them. So, Jesus told them a story to teach them a lesson. He said...

One day two men went to the temple to pray to God. They had both come to pray, but they were both very different. One stood up straight and tall. He worked in the temple and he thought he was wonderful. He thought he knew everything there was to know about being one of God's people. No one knew more than him! And so, he stood up tall with his nose in the air and he prayed. "God, I thank you that I'm better than everyone else. Others do all sorts of wrong things, but I don't. I am quite wonderful, and I thank you"

The second man prayed in a very different way. He wasn't a popular man and he knew he had done all sorts of wrong things, so he went away into a corner where people couldn't see him. He couldn't even look up, maybe he was crying, and he prayed, "Lord I've done so much that's wrong. I'm sorry".

Which man do you think prayed a good prayer, in a good way? Whose prayer do you think God would have answered?

(Hopefully you will get the answer – the second man)

The first man thought he was good enough as he was.

But, none of us are perfect. We all do things that are wrong every single day. This man thought he was ok...but he wasn't. He was proud and probably did lots of other wrong things too. We all do!

Do you know that God sent his son Jesus into the world to rescue us because we've all done wrong things. We've all sinned. When we come to Jesus and tell him we are sorry for our sins, He can forgive them, because He died for us. But He can't rescue us and forgive us if we don't ask Him because we think we're ok. That was this man's problem.

The second man was very different. He knew he had done wrong. So, he just prayed, "I'm sorry. Lord forgive me".

Is God able to forgive people when they come to Him? Yes, of course He is. That man went home changed, forgiven and happy.

APPLICATION

Have a think about yourself now. Have you ever thought something horrible about someone else? Have you ever told a lie? Have you ever been greedy? Have you ever disobeyed your parents? Do you ever get cross? *(Allow the children to raise their hands each time)*

Yes, we have all done things that are wrong. The Bible says, 'Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven'. That means that those who God saves and takes into his family are those who realise they do wrong, who realise that they need rescued, and who realise that Jesus is the great and powerful one who can rescue them. They are poor in spirit because they know they need Jesus. Make sure you remember that you need Jesus. Then say Thank you to God, because Jesus came into the world for you.

SESSION TWO

ACTIVITIES



PRAYER POCKET

- Choose envelope or felt/fabric (if using fabric, use glue or sew to secure in a pocket shape'
- If using envelope, cut the top flap off and tape the sides
- Add stickers or decorate
- Decorate the note card with prayer reminders or prayer requests
- Place the card in the envelope
- Encourage the children to carry around or hang in a place they will see every day
- Pray daily



FREEZE TAG

1. Divide the children into two teams
2. Team A start by trying to tag members of the other team
3. When a member is tagged they have to freeze but can call out for one of their team members to tag and unfreeze them
4. Their team can only unfreeze them if they call out for help
5. The round ends when team A tags all of the members on team B or after 5 mins. Afterwards, switch roles and play again



BIBLE VERSE CHALLENGE

You will need:

34 pages

Pens

Matthew 5v3 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'

Write out each word from the Bible verse on a separate piece of card. Make up two sets. Divide your group into two teams. Muddle up the cards in each group and start a timer to see which team is first to put the Bible verse in the correct order.

SESSION THREE

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN

ACTIVITIES



THE BIG IDEA

Sin has spoiled God's perfect world. This will make us sad, but Jesus is the answer.



THE WORD

Matthew 5v4

John 11v1-44

SONG

Action Rhyme

GAME

Lazarus Lives

CRAFT

Lazarus Collage



INTRODUCTION

Tim loved his paddling pool. He loved to fill it up on hot, sunny days and splash around in it. He loved to jump in and out, and even splashed his sister sometimes! One day, Tim woke up and saw that the sun was shining. He was so excited and jumped out of bed. He quickly put on his swimming trunks, had some breakfast, and ran outside to jump into the pool. When he got outside, his smile quickly disappeared. The day before, his pool had been filled up with water, but this morning the water had spilled out all over the grass. The day before, Tim hadn't noticed one of the thorny rosebushes scrape the side of the pool and make a hole. Now the pool was empty and when he tried to fill it up, the water just spilled out again. Tim's paddling pool was broken. It wasn't the way that it should be.

(You may choose to replace this story with one from your own life or something particularly relevant to the children and young people that you work with.)

How do you think Tim felt when his pool was broken?

Have any of your favourite things ever been broken? How did you feel?

We have been exploring 'The Beatitudes.' Our next Beatitude says:

'Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.'

The word 'mourn' means to be sad, and we usually use this word to describe how we feel when someone dies. This is a hard Beatitude to understand, because 'blessed' means happy and 'mourn' means sad. How can we be happy if we are sad? That's what we are going to find out today.

We feel sad when things are broken. We feel sad when things aren't as they should be.

But God has an answer!

THE TALK

This story comes from the Bible – the special book that God has given to us. Jesus had some very good friends – Mary, her sister Martha and their brother Lazarus. One day Jesus heard that Lazarus was very sick. Before Jesus went to see Lazarus, He heard the sad news that Lazarus had died.

Mary and Martha lived in a place called Bethany. When Jesus got close to Bethany, Martha went out to meet Him, but Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” Jesus told her that her brother would live again. She thought that Jesus meant that Lazarus would live again in heaven. Jesus explained that everyone who believes in Him can have life that lasts forever, and Martha knew that what Jesus said is true.

She called her sister Mary to come and see Jesus. She was crying. When He saw Mary crying, Jesus was very sad and asked the people to show Him where Lazarus’ body had been buried. Then Jesus cried. Lazarus had been buried in a cave and a stone had been rolled across the entrance. Jesus asked for the stone to be rolled away, but Martha said it wouldn’t be a good idea because Lazarus had been dead for four days. Jesus just asked them to trust Him.

Jesus talked to God and then shouted, “Lazarus, come out!” The people would have been shocked and very surprised to hear Him shout this, as Lazarus had died. There was a bigger surprise to come – Lazarus walked out of the cave! Lazarus had died but now Lazarus was alive again!

Why did Jesus cry if he knew that a short time later, he would raise Lazarus from the dead?

When God made the world, it was perfect.

There was no sin. Nobody was sad. Nobody was sick. Nobody died.

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the garden of Eden, God’s world was spoiled and broken by sin. Sin is the wrong things that we think, say and do that break God’s laws. We all go our own way instead of going God’s way.

We sometimes hurt each other and make other people sad. Our world is broken – there is sadness, there is sickness and people die. None of these things were part of God’s design for his perfect world.

When Jesus saw what sin had done to God’s perfect world, it made Him sad.

Jesus cried because sin had spoiled God’s perfect world.

APPLICATION

Sin has spoiled God’s perfect world. This makes us sad too. But there is good news! Jesus is the answer! Our sin keeps us away from God because He is perfect – but there is good news. Jesus died on a cross to take the punishment for our sin. Three days after He died, Jesus rose from the dead and is alive today! If you are sorry for the wrong things that you have thought and said and done, and ask God to forgive you, He will, all because of what Jesus has done. You can be friends with God and some day, when your life on earth is over, you can live with Him forever in heaven. What amazing news! The Beatitude tells us that if we are sad because sin has spoiled God’s perfect world, we will be comforted. To comfort someone means to help them feel better and to show them that they are not alone. Who will comfort us? JESUS! He is the answer!

SESSION THREE

ACTIVITIES



ACTION RHYME

Leader could read the verses while the children join in with the actions. The children can then join in with saying the repetitive refrain in bold type.

When I disobey God and it makes me cry, (*mime crying*)

Jesus is the answer. (*point upwards*)

When bad things happen and I don't know why, (*hold hands out as if asking why*)

Jesus is the answer. (*point upwards*)

Jesus is the answer (x2)

Sin has spoiled God's perfect world,

But Jesus is the answer.

When my friends leave me out and it feels so bad (*thumbs down*)

Jesus is the answer. (*point upwards*)

When someone is sick and I'm worried and sad, (*sad face*)

Jesus is the answer. (*point upwards*)

Jesus is the answer (x2)

Sin has spoiled God's perfect world,

But Jesus is the answer.

Only He can forgive me for all of my sin. (*Point to self*)

Jesus is the answer. (*point upwards*)

Because He died on a cross and rose again. (*Hold arms out to depict cross.*)

Jesus is the answer. (*point upwards*)

Jesus is the answer (x2)

Sin has spoiled God's perfect world,

But Jesus is the answer.

He keeps all His promises. They'll always be true. (*thumbs up*)

Jesus is the answer. (*point upwards*)

One day He is coming to make everything new. (*turn around with arms outstretched*)

Jesus is the answer. (*point upwards*)

Jesus is the answer (x2)

Sin has spoiled God's perfect world,

But Jesus is the answer.



LAZARUS LIVES

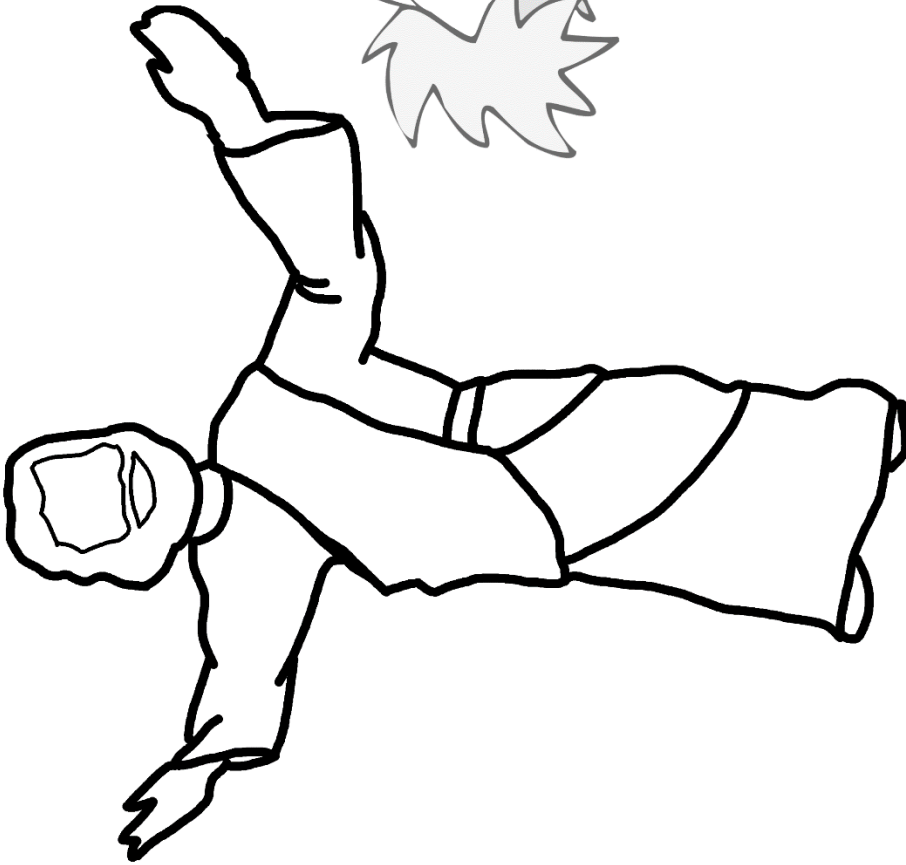
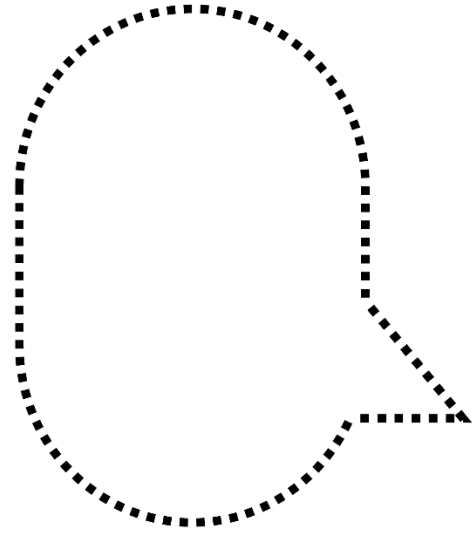
- 1 child is chosen to be 'it'.
- All children run around the room and the child chosen to be 'it' tries to catch as many children as possible
- Once caught the child 'tagged' must lie on the ground
- To get 'free' another child must kneel down beside him and shout 'Lazarus come out' being careful not to get 'tagged' himself

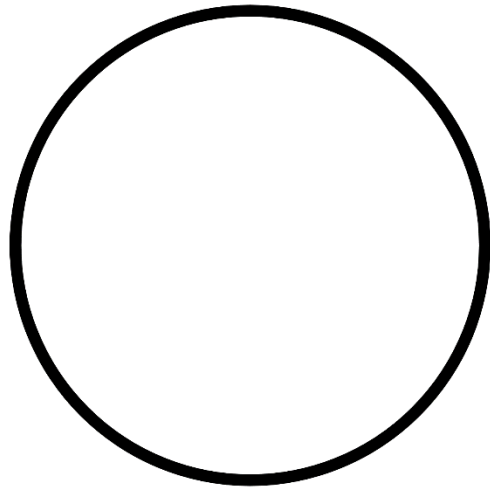
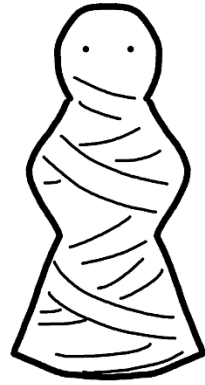


LAZARUS COLLAGE

- Print and cut out individual pieces – Mary, Martha, Jesus, Lazarus, Tomb, Speech Bubble.(Page 16 and 17)
- Colour in a blank page – Sky, Land
- Colour in pieces
- Use glue gun to stick onto page
- Use split pin to add rock over front of tomb







SESSION FOUR

BLESSED ARE THE MEEK



THE BIG IDEA

Being meek means choosing to listen to God and do what He says.



THE WORD

Matthew 5:5

Philippians 2:5-11



INTRODUCTION

In Matthew 5:5, Jesus says, “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth,” but that is quite a hard word for us to understand, so that is why I want us to think about a tiger.



DEFINITIONS

You may find these useful during the talk.

Reville	To treat badly by words or actions
Grasp	To take hold of something
Humble	Thinking of yourself less
Obedient	Doing what someone tells you
Exalted	Moving to a higher level or place of importance
Bestow	Put on or give to someone
Sin	Ignoring God and doing things our own way
Submit	Accept the authority or will of someone else

ACTIVITIES

CRAFT

Be a Humble Servant

GAME

Humble Hands

THE TALK

Tigers are really strong and fierce animals. They are pretty high up in the food chain. They are so powerful and are natural hunters – they aren't the kind of animals that you'd want to get too close to. However, you can visit some zoos or big cat sanctuaries around the world and the amazing thing is that you'd be able to see people walking into the tiger enclosures to feed them, look after them and even play with them. Who thinks that would be scary? I would be terrified – but these people who go in and spend time with the tigers have been friends with the tigers since they were born. They've looked after them, cared for them, fed them and so the tigers are happy to be nice and do what they say. In an instant, those tigers could turn on their owners if they wanted to, but they have learnt to submit to them and listen to what they say. Are the tigers in these zoos and parks weak animals? No – not at all. They are still really powerful – but they are choosing to do what they are told and control themselves. This is a good picture for us to have in our heads when we think about what the Bible means when it encourages us to be meek. Biblical meekness is all about listening to and submitting to God, the one who is in control and in charge. Meekness is choosing to not just do whatever we want, but choosing to do what is right by following God.

Now this isn't easy for us to do, because our sin makes us want to be in charge. We don't really like having to listen to other people. We want to do what we want. Being meek is hard, but Jesus gives us the perfect example to follow. If we want to see what a meek person looks like, then all we have to do is look at Jesus. Jesus was full of power and yet he chose to listen to and obey God the Father. We see that towards the end of his life on earth. When it came to the time when

Jesus would die on the cross, He listened to God the Father and did what He asked Him to because He knew that it was all part of God's great rescue plan for us. Jesus was meek. Look at what 1 Peter tells us. 1 Peter 2v23 *"When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly."* Jesus kept trusting God the Father, kept listening to Him, kept doing what He wanted Him to do because He knew it would give us a way to be saved from our sin and welcomed into the family of God. This is what Philippians tells us in chapter 2v5-11

"Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Jesus, in his meekness, went to the cross and took our place – then, because He did what the Father asked Him to, He was given the place of most importance in heaven where He now rules like a King. That means that when we trust in Jesus and do what he says, we can be sure that one day all that is His will also be ours as we enjoy living with God forever.

APPLICATION

If being meek means listening to what God says and then doing it, then what can we do this week to help us do that? How do we hear from God? (We can read His word the Bible, and we can come along to church where other people talk to us about Jesus) What can we do when we don't listen to God and we feel bad that we just did whatever we wanted? (We can pray, say sorry, and ask God to help us to follow him and do what he asks us to) What kind of things does God ask us to do? How could we try and do these things this week?

SESSION FOUR

ACTIVITIES



BE A HUMBLE SERVANT

Aim of Activity: To show and teach the children how being kind and showing kindness to others around them, is showing Jesus' love and being meek in spirit.

Needed: 2 heart templates on red card, scissors, colouring pencils, coloured paper hearts, pipe cleaners, other decorations

Instructions

- Cut out 2 heart shapes.
- Decorate the heart with verses or phrases.
- On the other heart, write ways that you can serve each other.
- Decorate as required and staple hearts together.
- Think of as many ways as you can in a group to demonstrate humility.



HUMBLE HANDS

- Pick one child to be "it"
- Everyone else runs around the hall trying to avoid being 'tagged'
- When the 'it' person tags someone they must say something nice about that person.
- Now they are both "it"
- Repeat this until everyone has been tagged.

SESSION FIVE

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO HUNGER



THE BIG IDEA

In this lesson we will look at the beatitude that states, “Blessed are those that hunger and thirst for righteousness for they shall be satisfied”.

We all get hungry and thirsty don't we! I know I do, especially when I smell really tasty food. Yum! But what does it mean to hunger and thirst after something that isn't food or drink? Let's find out.



THE WORD

Matthew 5v6

Genesis 25v29-34

Luke 10v38-42

▶ INTRODUCTION

What does it mean to hunger and thirst after righteousness? It really means to get interested and love the things that God loves. Jacob and Esau, and then Mary and Martha are brothers and sisters that give us great examples of the difference between following after righteousness and following after the wrong things!

ACTIVITIES

GAME

Martha Says

CRAFT

Time to Praise

SONG

Lord I lift your Name on High

Jesus Strong and Kind

ACTIVITY

Mary and Martha Interactive story

THE TALK

The story of Jacob and Esau can be found in the book of Genesis.

In the Bible days the first-born son received a very important blessing from their father which was called the “BIRTH RIGHT”. The birth right was made up of many physical blessings as well as spiritual blessing from God. One day Esau comes in from hunting and he is very hungry. Esau said to Jacob, “Please give me some of your food”. Esau was physically starving, but Jacob knew that there was a special blessing from the Lord that he would not have because of the fact that he was born second. Jacob then said to Esau, “If you give me your “BIRTHRIGHT”, then you can have some food. Foolishly Esau agreed. Esau hungered and thirsted after the wrong things and as a result later in the story Esau missed out on the full blessings of God because of his decision not to value and chase after the righteousness of God! He was more interested in natural food!

Another story about two sisters is brought to our attention in the book of John, Mary and Martha. These two sisters were friends of Jesus and he would go and visit them in a place called Bethany. One day Martha became very unhappy, as it came to her attention that Mary wasn't in the kitchen helping her. Jesus had come to see the family, and as was the custom

the ladies would come together and prepare food for their guests. Martha became frustrated at Mary as she wasn't helping. Mary just sat at the feet of Jesus and listened to what he had to say. Martha couldn't stand it anymore and blurted out, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me.”

To her surprise Jesus told her that He knew that she was worried about many things but that in this case Mary was doing the right thing. He said that by Mary listening to his words that she had chosen the better portion. Martha was running around trying to prepare and serve portions of food, however her sister understood that what was coming out of Jesus' mouth was a spiritual food called righteousness, and that if she listened to His word and obeyed his words then she would be filled.

In both of these examples, we see two individuals who do not understand what it is to hunger after righteousness and therefore miss what God has for them. We also then have two individuals that understand the importance of God's righteousness and so then make practical decisions to follow after what God has for them. Both Mary and Jacob end up truly blessed of God. So what does this mean for us?

APPLICATION

God wants us to do the right things. We can find out what is right by following Jesus and His teachings. When we do this God will bless us so that we will have all our needs met. This is what satisfied means. Let's make sure that we seek the righteousness of God first in our lives and everything else that we need, God will provide. Matthew 6v33 ‘But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you’.

SESSION FIVE

ACTIVITIES



MARTHA SAYS

Aim of Activity: To see that we can all get distracted and miss out what's going on.

Like Simon Says but Martha Says instead (during game have other leaders prepare another task eg, preparing a snack (decorating cookies)).



TIME TO PRAISE

Aim of Activity: To show that throughout the whole day we can take time to praise and seek God

Needed: Paper plate, coloured card, split pin, colouring pencils

Create a clock that show us we can spend time with God.

1. Take a paper plate.
2. Write around the outside things they can do to spend time with God e.g. Go to Church, pray, Bible etc.
3. Using the template on page 25, stick these on the paper plate, using a split pin.

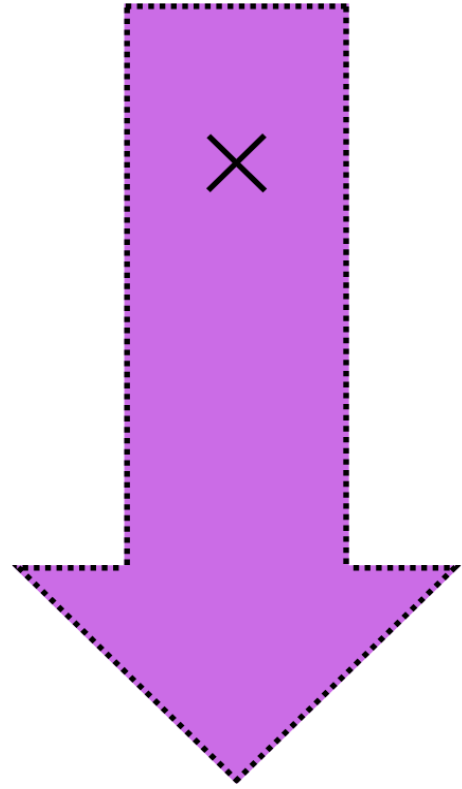
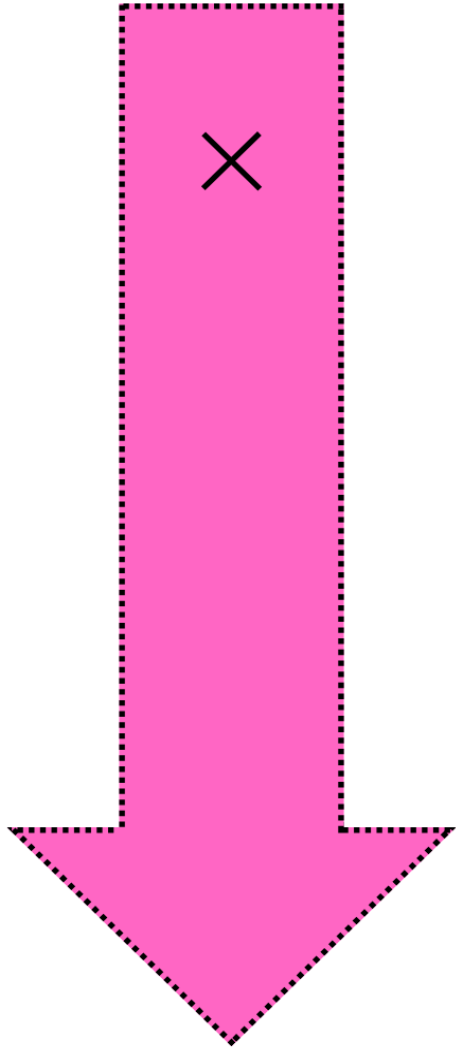


SING A SONG

Aim of Activity: To sing praise to God and thank Him for being in our lives/sing truths about Jesus and know we can come to Him

Sing:

- Lord I lift Your Name On High
- Jesus Strong and Kind



Take TIME for
Jesus! He LOVES
you!

SESSION FIVE

MARY AND MARTHA INTERACTIVE STORY



This script was written for BBNI by local Christian drama company, Play It By Ear. To find out more about them or to book a drama workshop, visit www.playitbyear.com

The Anchors stand in a line on stage while a narrator stands to the side and tells the story. The children will do all the parts in bold type with appropriate actions. If you wanted to add another layer to it, you could split the children so that half play Mary and the other half play Martha.

A long time ago, there were two sisters...Mary and Martha. Now Martha loved to keep busy...she would sweep (**swish swish**) and she would bake (**stir stir**), she would cook (**chop chop**) and she would clean (**wipe wipe**).

But Mary was very different, she preferred to look (**point finger at their eyes**) and listen (**point finger at their ears**) and learn (**hold finger up and say 'aha' as if she's just learned something**). She would look (**eyes**) and see a cat (**meow**), she would listen (**ears**) and hear a bird (**tweet tweet**) and she would learn that sometimes cats liked to pounce on birds (**Aha**).

Now one day, Martha had decided to do a very kind thing, she had invited Jesus to come to their house which meant she had to get ready...she started to sweep (**swish swish**) and she started to bake (**stir stir**), she started to cook (**chop chop**) and she started to clean (**wipe wipe**)...But while she was doing this, Mary was looking (**eyes**) and listening (**ears**) and learning (**aha**)...she would look (**eyes**) and see the post man (**special delivery!**), she would listen (**ears**) and hear a dog (**woof woof**) and she would learn that the post man was afraid of the dog (**Aha**).

But then Martha would see Mary doing nothing, so she folded her arms (**fold arms**), put on a fierce glare (**glare**) and got very, very annoyed (**humpf**), but instead of saying anything, she just got back to her work sweeping (**swish swish**) and baking (**stir stir**), cooking (**chop chop**) and cleaning (**wipe wipe**).

And that's how things went, Mary looking (**eyes**), listening (**ears**) and learning (**Aha!**), Martha getting more and more annoyed (**Arms folded, glaring and 'humpf'**).

But then Jesus arrived and the sisters welcomed him (**'come in, come in'**). Jesus sat down and Mary sat with him but Martha could not sit still, she dashed this way (**children dash one way**) and she dashed that way (**children dash the other way**), she swept faster than ever before (**swish swish**), she baked as quickly as she could (**stir stir**), she cooked in a hurry (**chop chop**) and she cleaned like lightning (**wipe wipe**) all the while getting more annoyed (**humpf**) as Mary just looked (**eyes**) and listened (**ears**) and learned from Jesus (**aha**) but still Martha didn't say anything, she just kept on going...

...she went sweeping (**swish swish**), baking (**stir stir**), cooking (**chop chop**), cleaning (**wipe wipe**)...., sweeping (**swish swish**), baking (**stir stir**), cooking (**chop chop**), cleaning (**wipe wipe**)... and getting more and more annoyed (**humpf**) until eventually she had had enough! (**I've had enough**) she said to Jesus, 'I've been working so hard (**I've been working so hard**) and Mary's been sitting doing nothing (**and Mary's been sitting doing nothing**), it's not fair (**it's not fair**)'

Jesus turned to her and said 'Martha, you are worried about all these things but they are not important...Mary has been looking and listening and learning from me and that is the best thing to do.'

SESSION SIX

BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL



THE BIG IDEA

Every single one of us has done something wrong. When we do something wrong in school we get punished in some way. When people do things that are really bad they may go to jail. But sometimes a person gets let off with something, this is called Mercy. David showed mercy to the family of his enemy. And he knew God would show him mercy after all the wrong things he had done. We will expect Jesus to show us mercy, so we should be merciful to others.



THE WORD

2 Samuel 9:1-13



INTRODUCTION

Begin the talk with an activity, ask the children what they think the appropriate punishment should be for the following scenarios.

- Your brother or sister ate all of your birthday cake and tried to blame the dog!
- A boy or girl in your class ripped up your amazing drawing that was so good the teacher was going to show the whole school.
- Someone steals an entire row of sweets from the corner shop.

Hopefully the suggested punishments are sensible, try to guide them towards what a reasonable punishment might be for all of those things. Ask the children if they would expect to receive the same punishment if they were caught doing those things. Reassure them you don't believe any of them would do those things anyway!

ACTIVITIES

SONG

Every Move I Make

CRAFT

Mercy Rocks

GAME

Mercy Tag

THE TALK

Do any of you know what mercy means? (*See if anyone knows the answer*). Mercy is when you let someone off with something even if they might deserve a punishment. For example, if a poor person stole food from a rich person, the rich person might not want them to go to jail, even though they stole the food. They would be showing them mercy.

Mercy is really important in the Bible. Jesus said, 'Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy'. You see we have all done things that are wrong and sinful, and if we want eternal life with Jesus in heaven then He will have to show us mercy. If we expect to receive mercy from God then we should also show that to others. So, let's have a look at when this happens in the Bible.

Have any of you heard of someone in the Bible called David? (*Wait and see if there are any answers*). If you have heard anything about David then it's probably about his epic fight with the giant Goliath when he won by using just a stone and slingshot! Goliath was David's most famous enemy but he had another powerful enemy, King Saul.

David knew Saul very well, not only was he the king, but the king's son, Jonathan, was David's best friend!

Saul was a good king for a while but soon he abandoned God and became a bad king. Does anyone know who will be our next King after Charles? It will be William, because he is Charles' oldest son. The odd thing is that God picked David to become the next king, not Saul's son, not Jonathan or any of his brothers! Saul was afraid that David would try to take the throne from him and he tried to kill David many times!

One day David was singing for King Saul, David

was a brilliant singer, and he played instruments too! He wrote some amazing songs, we have some of them in the Bible actually in a book called Psalms. While David was singing Saul threw a spear at him, but thankfully, David dodged it! David didn't want to harm Saul but he did have to defend himself. Eventually Saul died, he died in a war with another kingdom, and David became the king. Saul's sons didn't want David to be king though, they thought one of them should be!

Some people wanted someone from Saul's family to be king, probably because they thought they'd be given really important jobs, like being in charge of the army, or being in charge of the money, or just being so important you'd be invited to all the king's parties! There were always people plotting against David. It would have been really easy for David to send his army against Saul's family, then nobody from Saul's family could ever be king again! Then nobody would try to take David's place as king.

David sent his servant out to find anyone left from Saul's family, anyone who had survived the wars and battles that were happening. Eventually the servant came back with an old woman who was looking after a boy called Mephibosheth. That is a weird name isn't it? Shall we try to say it?

Me-phi-bo-sheth.

Mephibosheth was Saul's only surviving grandson, and he had a lame leg so couldn't walk very well, he certainly couldn't fight very well! It was fair to say he would never stand a chance in a fight against David, remember David had defeated the giant Goliath, and survived all of Saul's attempts to kill him.

So David invited Mephibosheth into his palace

and what do we think he did? (*Wait and see if there are any answers*). He asked him to sit at the dinner table! David told Mephibosheth that he would always be welcome at his table, just like someone from his own family. Mephibosheth would get to join all the king's parties but he would also be kept safe.

David showed mercy to Mephibosheth, even though his family had tried to kill David, and even though some people wanted to make Mephibosheth the king. David trusted God, he knew that God would show him mercy for all the wrong things he did, because even King David wasn't perfect, he did some bad things in other parts of the Bible but he always turned back to God. So David decided to show mercy to Mephibosheth.

David showed mercy to Mephibosheth when everyone expected him not to, his friends probably wanted him to take revenge on Mephibosheth so it was probably hard for David to show mercy, but he did because it was the right thing to do, and what God would want him

to do.

I wonder if anyone here has done something wrong, that probably deserved to be punished, but was let off. A lot of you can probably think of something, but I can think of something for everyone. I am sure everyone here has sinned before, maybe we have told a lie, maybe we have refused to listen to our parents, maybe we have taken something that didn't belong to us from our brother or sister.

Jesus died on the cross for us so that we wouldn't be punished for our sins. He has shown all of us mercy, even when we might deserve to be punished. So, I want you to remember two things. It is good to show mercy to people who do wrong things to us because that is what David did and what Jesus wants us to do, and, remember we will be shown mercy because none of us, not even me or your leaders can say we are perfect. Jesus will show us mercy and forgive our sins, so we should try to be like Him and forgive other people too.

APPLICATION

Teach the children the teaspoon prayer (TSP)

- Thank You
- Sorry
- Please

You could maybe give everyone a plastic teaspoon

Lord Jesus/ Dear God,

Thank you, that you love me even after I do things that are wrong. I am sorry for everything I have done (as a leader you can use a specific example if you want) Please help me to stop doing wrong things and to forgive people who treat me wrongly.

Amen

SESSION SIX

ACTIVITIES

EVERY MOVE I MAKE

Aim of Activity: To be reminded that in every move we make to show others mercy is from God because of His great mercy to us.

Song:

- Every Move I Make

MERCY ROCKS

You will need:

- Paper Plate (one for each child)
- Coloured Pens/Markers
- Small Rock (one for each child)
- Glue

Decorate the rock with the word 'Mercy'. Around the outside of the plate, write the words of Matthew 5 v 7. Stick the rock on to the middle of the plate.

MERCY TAG

Clear a large space in your hall. Choose 2 children to be "it". One is "Mean" and one is "Mercy." Make a sticker for Mean and one for Mercy. All the children start running around. If 'Mean' tags you, you must freeze. 'Mercy' can come and unfreeze you. After 2 minutes, stop the game and count how many are frozen and how many are running around. How many kids were frozen by Meanness? How many were set free by Mercy? Choose new "its" and continue play for as long as you have time.

SESSION SEVEN

BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART



THE BIG IDEA

During the Sermon on the Mount in the book of Matthew, Jesus tells us what it means to be a child of God and how we should behave. In Matthew 5v8 God tells us if we are His children then we should be Pure in Heart to be able to see the Kingdom of God.



THE WORD

Genesis 37:12-38

Genesis 40



INTRODUCTION

Gather the children together and tell them we are going to hear about someone in the Bible who had lots of things happen to him that could have caused him to get really angry.

Ask: Have you ever been really angry or upset at someone for something that they did to you or someone you care about? What did you do?

In today's story Joseph's brothers sold him as a slave but Joseph didn't get angry instead he chose to forgive them and remember the promises God had made him in a dream. Then later on in the story Joseph was in prison for something he didn't do and he helped a butler out by telling him what his dream meant. The butler was let out of prison, and promised he would remember Joseph and tell his boss, who was Pharaoh about him. But when he got out he forgot all about Joseph, and just like with his brothers instead of getting angry Joseph remembered God had a plan for his life. Just like He has a plan for our lives.

Ask: Has someone ever promised to do something with you or for you and then not done it? How did you feel?

ACTIVITIES

GAME

Emotions Game

CRAFT

Chalkboard Hearts

ACTIVITY

Loving Blind

THE TALK

I want you all to close your eyes and think of a really cold, cold day in the middle of winter, you wake up and it has been snowing. Imagine you are the first person to wake up in your house and go outside. You see the snow all over your garden and because no one else has been out its pure snow. Everywhere you look is white, soft snow.

People call this pure snow because that's what it is, it is snow that is just as it was made to be soft and white and cold. ASK: But then what happens, as you take that first step out of your back door onto the grass? (you start to leave footprints and it gets all slushie). The snow is still white but now it has marks on it, then the more you run around and play with it, it becomes hard and crunchy, if it gets dirty it might become grey in colour. It doesn't look as good as it did when it first fell.

The Beatitude we are learning about today talks about how we are to be pure in heart.

Pure just means that it is perfect and as it was made to be.

(You could maybe demonstrate these.) If I had a glass of water you can see through it because it is pure, it's just like it was made to be. ASK: But

what happens as I start to add some juice to it? It becomes cloudy and you can't see through it and it doesn't look like it was meant to be.

What if I take this page? It's pure white, but as I start to draw on it, it becomes dirty and marked, not as it was made to be.

The same thing can happen to us and our hearts if we get angry at people when they hurt us. But God tells us we are blessed when we are pure in our hearts.

We do this by not allowing things like anger or worries or disliking people to make our hearts sad or contaminating them by making them have anger towards other people. Instead we should keep the things like love, joy and patience that God wants us to have in our hearts, and when other things try to stop us thinking about other people how God wants us to we need to ask him to help us keep our hearts pure.

Read together Genesis 37:12-38 (Joseph Sold by his brothers)

Discuss the different things that happened in the story that could have stopped Joseph of being pure in heart and what his response was and how they can have a similar attitude.

APPLICATION

How can we be more like Joseph in our life when things don't go the way we want? If someone doesn't keep their promise how can we react as God's children to still show them his love?

Challenge the children that next time they get angry to try counting to 10 instead of getting angry.

Ask them, how can they be kinder to those around them and be more like Jesus to them and helping them see God through them? Write some of the ideas down.

Encourage the children to try and be more like Joseph this week and when people don't keep their promises or are nasty to them that they should be kind to them instead of getting angry.

SESSION SEVEN

ACTIVITIES



PURIFY OUR HEART—WHAT AM I? (EMOTIONS GAME)

Aim: To encourage children to replace negative emotions with love and happiness

Instructions:

- Draw or print out smiley faces or emotion emojis with different negative emotions on them, these could include: sad, afraid, worried, angry, guilty, embarrassed etc
- Tape the emotions on each child's forehead (even use post it notes) without letting them see what it was
- The children ask only yes or no questions to try and work out what emotion they are
- Once they have discovered the emotion, they must race around the room or hall to find the opposite emotion on the series of cards hidden in the room and replace their negative for positive
- Remind children that we want pure hearts so we have to replace negative emotions with positive ones



CHALKBOARD HEARTS

Aim: Chalkboards are a visual reminder that the children must always keep God at the centre of their lives to maintain a pure heart.

Instructions:

- Give each child a small wood or cardboard heart
- Allow the children to paint it in chalkboard paint
- Allow time to dry (possibly do this at the start of the session or over 2 sessions)
- Then have children paint the word 'God' into the middle of their heart in a different shade than the background
- Give the children chalk and allow them to write all the pure and happy/good thing they have done all week on their "Pure hearts"

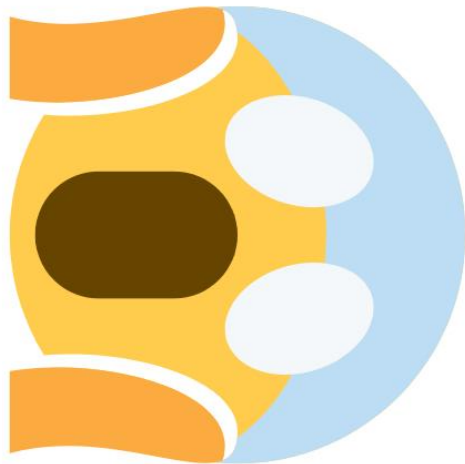
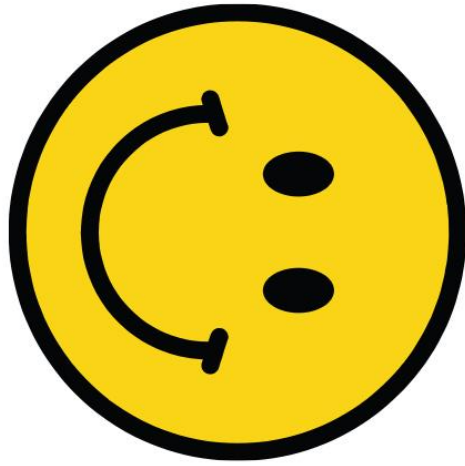


LOVING BLIND

Aim: Children understand the implications of sin and how to purify their hearts/clean up their sin

Instructions:

- Draw a large heart shape on whiteboard and write words describing sin in the heart, being sure to cover as much of the heart as possible
- Talk to the children about how we can purify our hearts. Have a child pick a word in the heart and give an example of that sin
- Cover the child's eyes with a blindfold and give them a whiteboard eraser, spin the child, and point them towards the board. Tell them they have one swipe to try and get rid of this word
- Keep playing until the words are erased
- Explain that not only are the words gone but the hearts destroyed—leads to a discussion about how Jesus can heal our hearts when we ask him to purify us. Use positive words to 'mend' the heart



SESSION EIGHT

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS



THE BIG IDEA

Jesus is the perfect peacemaker.



THE WORD

Matthew 5v9

Genesis 13v1-18

ACTIVITIES

CRAFT



Peace Rocks

Verse Balloons

ACTIVITY



Peacemaker/Peace Breaker



INTRODUCTION

Ask the children to tell you what they think the word 'peace' means.

Explain that a peacemaker is someone who tries to help people to stop arguing and fighting.

Read the following scenario and ask the children to tell you who the peacemaker in the scenario is.

- 1. Tim and Tom are fighting over a toy. They are pulling it so hard that it might break. Their friend Sam tells Tim to push Tom over so that he can get the toy. Their friend Bill helps them to find a way to share the toy. Who is the peacemaker?*
- 2. Sue is feeling left out and sad because her friends are laughing at her. Kat joins in and laughs too. Jane tells the friends that they are hurting Sue and starts a new game that everyone can play. Who is the peacemaker.*

In today's story, can you spot the peacemaker?

THE TALK

In the Bible, we read about a man called Abraham. God spoke to Abraham and asked him to leave his home and travel to a place that God would show him. Abraham did what God asked him to do.

Abraham and his nephew Lot had many animals and there wasn't enough room for them all to live together. It was much too busy! The men who looked after their animals started to argue.

The arguing made Abraham sad, so he decided that they should live in different places. He allowed Lot to choose the land that looked green and beautiful. Abraham then chose a place called Hebron to live. There, God promised Abraham that his family would be so big that it couldn't be counted – just like the number of pieces of dust on the ground!

Abraham wanted to stop all the arguing – he was a peacemaker.

A peacemaker thinks about others.
A peacemaker doesn't want to argue or fight.
A peacemaker helps others to be calm and happy.

In the Beatitudes, Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."

'Sons of God' is just another way of saying 'children of God.' We can be part of God's own family! How amazing!

There is a problem.
It isn't easy to be a peacemaker.
We often feel angry or upset when we don't get our own way.
We often argue and fight.
This is because God's perfect world is broken - we go our own way instead of going God's way.
We disobey God – this is called sin.

Sin keeps us away from God because He is perfect – but there is good news!
Jesus died on a cross to take the punishment for our sin.
Jesus rose from the dead.
He's alive!
If you are sorry for all the ways that you disobey God, He will forgive you, because of what Jesus has done. You can be part of God's family and you can have life that will never end. How amazing!

Jesus can help you to be a peacemaker.

APPLICATION

We aren't always peacemakers but Jesus is.

- He is the perfect peacemaker.
- He makes peace between us and God.

Have you trusted Him to forgive your sin?

Ask Him to help you be a peacemaker with the people that you meet this week.

SESSION EIGHT

ACTIVITIES



PEACE ROCKS

Aim: Working together for peace—looking around, each rock's design, shape and colours are different and yet they all work towards the same goal of peace.

Instructions/Rules:

- Give each child a rock, making sure they are clean and dry. Think about designs or scripture that talk about peace—it may be helpful to have some printed or available for children to look at as examples.
- Children choose a design and paint the design onto their rock. Have paper and pens on hand in case children wish to draw designs first.
- Allow rocks to dry and either let children take them home to promote peace in the home or take a walk around your community and place the rocks for people to lift and have or simply to view. Encourage the children in this way to spread peace.



VERSE BALLONS

You will need:

14 Ballons

Bible verse printed on to paper

Print out Matthew 5v9 and cut out the individual words. Blow up balloons and put each word into the balloons. Put all the balloons into the middle of the floor. Put the group into a line and take turns to run and get a balloon, burst it and take out the word. Once all the balloons are burst, have the group put the Bible verse into order.

If you have a large group, make up a few sets.



PEACE MAKER/PEACE BREAKER

Aim of Activity: To encourage children to differentiate between right and wrong and understand how our actions can hinder us from promoting a peaceful home, school or BB company.

Instructions/Rules:

- Create a table on A3 paper or printed and laminated if you wish for future use with 2 headings: 'Peace Maker' and 'Peace Breaker'
- Make a series of positive and negative behaviours. Write them on post it notes or print them out and laminate for future use and hide them all around your room or hall.
- Have the children search the hall for the behaviours and place them in the right column.
- Once they are all found and sorted, make your way through each example and have children explain why they placed it there. Discuss ways in which we could correct bad behaviour and encourage the positive behaviours instead.

SESSION NINE

BLESSED ARE THE PERSECUTED



THE BIG IDEA

Sometimes people are treated unfairly for what they believe. After Jesus died and rose again His followers were treated badly simply for following Him. Amazingly, His followers didn't give up, they knew they would receive their reward for following Jesus one day when they got to Heaven.



THE WORD

Acts 16:16-40



INTRODUCTION

Has anyone here ever been treated unfairly? (*Wait for some answers*). There were lots of times in the Bible when people were treated unfairly, all because they believed in Jesus! Some of them were beaten, some were put in prison, some were treated even worse!

They were Christians, and because they were Christians they were persecuted. Now, that's a big word isn't it, has anyone ever heard it before? (*Wait for some answers*). Can we all try saying the word 'persecuted'?

Per-se-cute-d

ACTIVITIES

GAME

Soldiers Game

CRAFT

Jail Art

ACTIVITY

Paper Chain & Word Search

COOKERY

Biscuit Jail

THE TALK

If someone is persecuted, it means they are being treated in a bad way, maybe even bullied, because of what they believe. Jesus' followers were treated badly simply because they believed in Jesus.

This happened a lot in the Bible and still happens all over the world today, but for now, I want to focus on a story we read in Acts 16 in the New Testament of the Bible.

This story takes place a while after Jesus had died and gone to heaven. His followers spent their days telling people all about Him and they went far and wide to make sure people knew the good news of Jesus. One of these men was a man called Paul. It's interesting, because before Paul became a Christian he was named Saul and he actually spent his days persecuting the Christians. Do we remember what it means to persecute someone? *(See if there are any answers)*. He was chasing the Christians to throw them in jail or perhaps worse.

Paul travelled a long way to tell people about Jesus and often he had people travelling with him, one time he was with a man called Silas. Paul and Silas made their way to a place called Philippi and they told lots of people about Jesus and some of them also became Christians. There were others who didn't like this though, Paul and Silas performed some miracles through the Holy Spirit and what they did caused people to lose money. You see some people were doing some very evil things to try to make money, but Paul and Silas were able to perform miracles that stopped some of these evil, things from happening. The problem was, that stopped some evil people from making money, and because they didn't like losing their money they

didn't like Paul and Silas. Do we think they did anything to Paul and Silas? Do we think they persecuted them? Well, they had Paul and Silas thrown in jail.

Paul and Silas were thrown into jail and had their feet locked up in stocks. *(Maybe have a demonstration of what this looked like, can you ask another leader to sit down and tie their feet together with a rope? Or can you ask the children to sit with their legs straight out in front of them to understand how uncomfortable it might have been? Maybe time them and see how long it takes to sit in a more comfortable position again)* So they couldn't really move anywhere, it also would have been extremely dark, they didn't have electricity back then and often prisoners weren't even allowed a candle in their cell. I wonder if they were afraid of the dark? I wonder if anyone here is afraid of the dark? Imagine being locked away for who knows how long in the dark, with your feet stuck in metal chains and with rats running around you! I wouldn't have liked that!

Things weren't looking good for Paul and Silas, but then they did something together just after midnight, what do we think they did? *(Ask for suggestions, they may suggest an elaborate way to escape)* Paul and Silas started singing hymns! Hymns are just what we call songs about God, like the songs we like to sing in church. Do any of you have any favourite songs about God? *(Suggest some the Company may know)*. The Bible tells us that while the other prisoners were listening to them a huge earthquake happened and immediately the doors of the prison were opened and the stocks fell off everyone. Everyone in the prison was free!

There was a Roman guard put in charge and

when he woke up he was terrified! He would have been in major trouble with his bosses if all the prisoners had escaped while he was in charge! But then he heard a voice calling from the jail cells! It was Paul, and he told him that there was no need to be worried, all the prisoners were still there!

The Bible tells us that the jailer then went in to see Paul and Silas and asked what he has to do to be saved. Paul said, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.' Isn't it amazing that he decided to follow Jesus after he saw how following Jesus helped Paul and Silas?

The jailer took Paul and Silas to his house and helped clean out their cuts and patch up their bruises. Then Paul and Silas baptised him and his family. *(Ask if anyone knows what baptism is,*

explain how a baptism might happen in your church) You see people will get baptised when they become Christians. Some of us might have been baptised as babies and so we won't remember it, some of us will be baptised when we are older, after we decide to become a Christian. When the jailer was baptised he was showing that he accepted Jesus as his saviour. The jailer then went to his bosses and made sure Paul and Silas were allowed to go free.

Paul and Silas were treated badly simply because they believed in Jesus, and they could have moaned and groaned and fought against their captors, they could have stopped following Jesus because they didn't want to be in jail. Instead, they praised Jesus and sang through the night. God made sure they were saved and more than that, the person in charge of the jail even became a Christian.

APPLICATION

Blessed are the persecuted, anyone who follows Jesus will receive their reward in heaven. Paul and Silas knew that, they probably weren't expecting to be freed from the jail, they just knew that they would get to spend eternity in heaven with Jesus when they followed Him. They trusted that Jesus was with them even when times were bad, and that is something I want all of you to remember as well. When we follow Jesus, He is always with us, so don't be afraid to ask Him for help and don't forget to keep praising Him.

If you feel it is appropriate you could have the group pray for the persecuted church in the world today. You could place pins on a map of countries where Christians are persecuted such as North Korea, China, Iran or Nigeria.

Alternatively you can lead this activity and pray yourself, modelling that it is important to pray for those persecuted today.

SESSION NINE

ACTIVITIES

JAIL ART

Aim: We have to praise God in difficult times

Equipment:

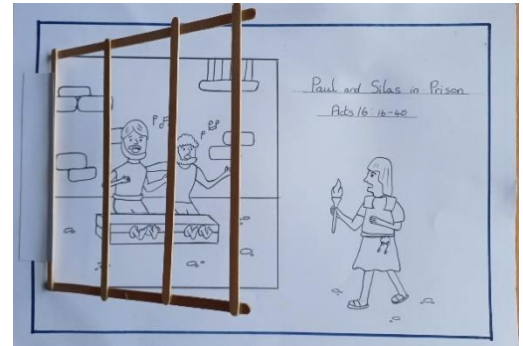
Colouring in pencils/pens

Lollipop sticks

Tape and Glue

Instructions/Rules:

- Colour in the picture on page 43. Add lollipop sticks as gate.



SOLDIERS GAME

Aim: We have to praise God in difficult times

Instructions/Rules:

- Ask the children to run around the hall. When they hear a whistle they need to freeze. The final child in the game is the winner.

PAPER CHAIN AND WORD SEARCH

Aim: We have to praise God in difficult times

Instructions/Rules:

- Cut out the template and make a paper link chain. (Page 42)

BISCUIT JAIL

Aim: We have to praise God in difficult times

Equipment:

2 digestive biscuits

3 chocolate fingers

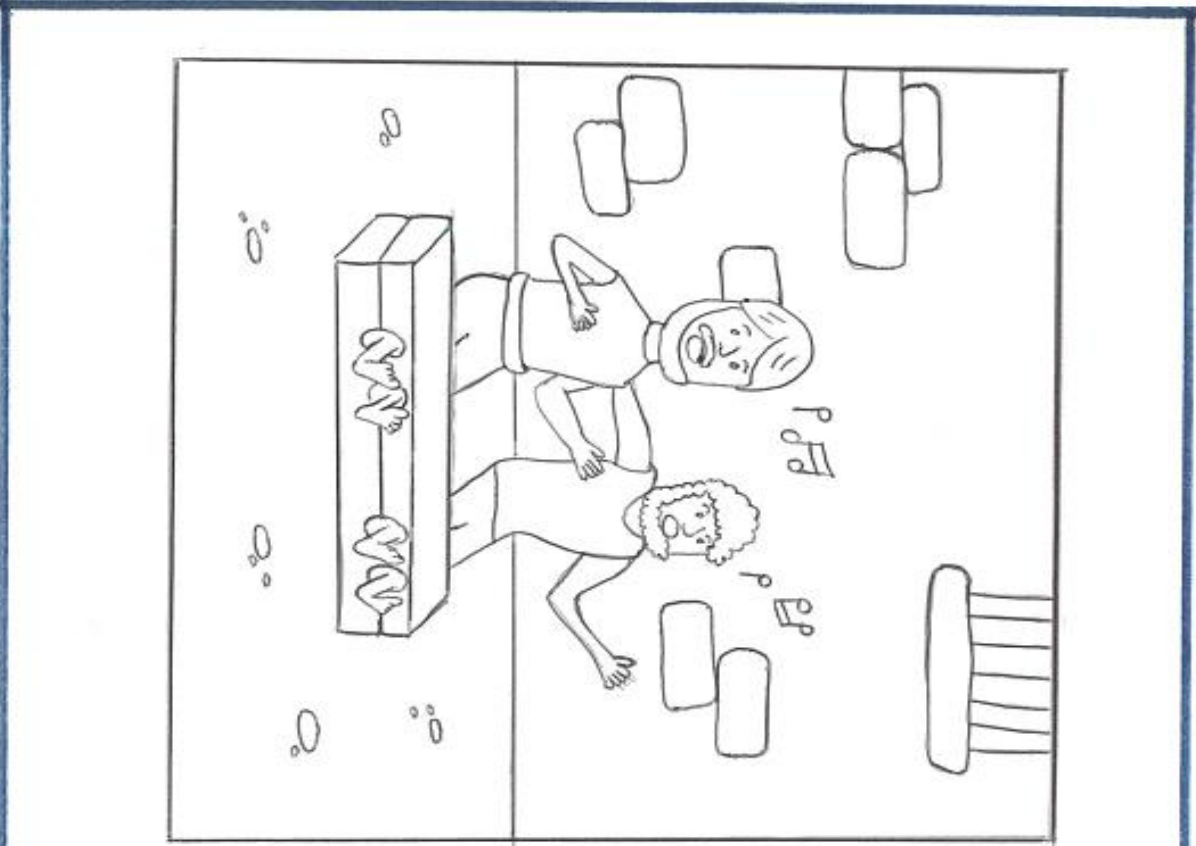
2 Jelly Babies

Piece of ready roll icing



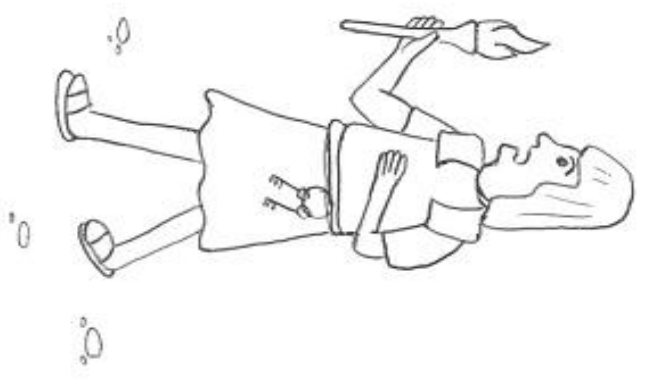
Blessed	Glue here
	Glue here
are	Glue here
	Glue here
the	Glue here
	Glue here
persecuted	Glue here
	Glue here
Matthew	Glue here
	Glue here
5	Glue here
	Glue here
Verse	Glue here

Glue here	Glue here
	10



Paul and Silas in Prison.

Acts 16: 16-40



SESSION TEN

REJOICE AND BE GLAD



THE BIG IDEA

Rejoice and be glad – The stoning of Stephen

Sometimes being a Christian can be hard, but it is always, always worth it. If troubles and difficulties come first, then we can be sure that wonderful reward comes later. Struggles first, glory later.



THE WORD

Matthew 5v12

Acts 6v8-7v60 (concentrate on Acts 6v8-15, 7v51-60)



INTRODUCTION

I wonder have you ever heard anyone say, “It’ll all be worth it in the end.”

Have you seen a footballer, runner or tennis player winning a prize? To win that prize they had to work really, really, hard. Lots of hard work, struggle and sweat came before the glory of winning. First struggle, then glory.

Being a Christian can be a bit like that. Last week we learned that sometimes it can be hard. It can be a struggle. But the Bible tells us that it will definitely, definitely be worth it because there is something wonderful to come! First struggle, then glory!

And we can even be glad, although that sounds strange, when we find it hard. Because so did Jesus, so did lots of other Christians before us. So, if we find it hard, it makes us like Jesus! First struggle, then glory.

ACTIVITIES

CRAFT

Footprints

SONG

I have decided to follow Jesus

GAME

Follow the Leader

? DEFINITIONS

You may find these useful during the talk.

Struggle	Something that is difficult and needs hard work
Christian	Someone who follows Jesus Christ and tried to be like him
Glory	Greatness and reward

☐ THE TALK

One man that shows us this is a man called Stephen. He was a Christian not long after Jesus had died and risen again and gone back to heaven. Stephen loved talking about Jesus! He could talk all day about what Jesus had done. However, this didn't make him very popular. Stephen kept on talking about Jesus in Jerusalem. Crowds were listening to him but some leaders were getting more and more angry. Eventually, one day, they arrested him and started to accuse him of all sorts of things he hadn't done. What was Stephen doing as he was being wrongly accused? It says that his face was shining, like the face of an angel. Was he worried? No. why not? Because he knew he was suffering just like Jesus had suffered, and something better was to come. Struggles first, then glory.

Stephen wasn't afraid of the men who were questioning him, in fact, he started in and gave them a whole history lesson! All about the things that God had done for his people down through the years. He told them about people

like Abraham, and Joseph, and Moses and David. Have you heard of any of those people? But, then he told them about how, all through history, there had been people who had refused to listen to God. And finally, Stephen said "And then God sent his son, and what did you do? You killed him!" Well, this made the men even more angry. They shouted and screamed at Stephen, but was he worried? No. It says that he looked up to heaven and said "I can see heaven open, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God". Stephen could see heaven! He could see Jesus! He knew that's where he was going. First struggle, then glory.

Stephen was dragged outside the city and the men picked up big stones and threw them at him. And eventually Stephen died, but he hadn't really died. Do you know where he had gone? He had gone to be with Jesus forever. He had had struggles, but now he had glory.

It says in the Bible that if you suffer because you follow Jesus you can "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven". (Matt 5v12)

! APPLICATION

Jesus promises something wonderful for people who follow Him. He promises that one day we will be with Him in heaven, where nothing is bad or hard. Isn't that amazing! Let's say thank you to God that following Him is always worth it and that, if we follow Jesus, we will one day be with Him.

This year we have learned lots of stories which tell us what it means to follow Jesus. Let's also say thank you to God for all the stories that teach us about Jesus.

SESSION TEN

ACTIVITIES



FOOTPRINTS

You will need:

Paper

Paint/markers

Scissors

Either using paint have the children make a print of their feet on a page or have the children draw around their feet. Cut out the prints. Write on one of the templates 'I will Jesus' and have the child write their name on the other one.



I HAVE DECIDED TO FOLLOW JESUS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KmqUTbzaCEQ>



FOLLOW THE LEADER

The rules of Follow the Leader are basic:

- One child is chosen to be the leader.
- The rest of the children line up behind the leader.
- They must copy all the actions and movements of the leader (run when the leader runs, do jumping jacks, turn around and take 3 steps forward, etc.)
- Anyone who does not successfully copy a movement is out.
- The last child still following at the end is the leader in the next round.



**ADVANCING
CHRIST'S
KINGDOM**