

Vacation Church School Unit: THE REST OF THE STORY!

(created by Gail McIntyre of St. Michael Orthodox Church in Louisville, KY for age 3 through Grade 5 and shared by the Dept. of Christian Education of the Orthodox Church in America)

Overview for Teacher: Many of us have listened to Paul's Harvey's radio commentaries. Along with these, he added segments called "The Rest of the Story" which told the story behind the story. Those added segments were the most interesting part of his commentaries.

Have you ever wondered what happened to some of the characters in the Bible after what is recorded about them? For example, from Jesus' parables, how did the Prodigal Son live out the rest of his life? Did he marry and have a family? Did he stay at home with his father and brother? Did his brother loosen up and accept him back home? Did the brothers grow the estate and increase their wealth? In the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, I have always wondered about the rich man's family back home. Did they continue in the same lifestyle or was someone able to reach them? How many of them joined the rich man? What about Lazarus? Did he have a family? What were their actions when he passed?

When Onesimus returned home to Philemon, how was he treated? Did he continue in the Church? Did his owner forgive him? What did he do with the remaining years of his life?

In giving us His written word, God has not given us the rest of the story - so a challenge this week is to look at what happened after what is recorded in the Bible. The stories chosen are interesting to speculate what happened next, while giving us some valuable life lessons.

Getting to know Bible characters and thinking about them beyond the written words gives us the opportunity to get to know the individuals better, and to examine our own lives to see what we can learn from them.

After reading/copying the pages (given on each session's first page) that you need, prepare to teach by listing and gathering all materials for the session, including a Bible and an icon of any saint mentioned in the text. (Most icons can be found on line.) Decide how you will present the story (perhaps defining words as needed), choose opening/closing prayers, and plan for anything you will add to the sessions (a song, game, snack, etc.) Use the blank pages in the unit for preparation notes.

Day One - Learn to Listen (pp1-16)

Emphasis or Theme: A Servant Girl's Request: The young girl's devotion to Naaman's wife led to his healing.

Scripture(s): II Kings 5

Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a great and honorable man in the eyes of his master, because by him the LORD had given victory to Syria. He was also a mighty man of valor, *but* a leper. ² And the Syrians had gone out on raids, and had brought back captive a young girl from the land of Israel. She waited on Naaman's wife.

³ Then she said to her mistress, "If only my master *were* with the prophet who *is* in Samaria! For he would heal him of his leprosy." ⁴ And Naaman went in and told his master, saying, "Thus and thus said the girl who *is* from the land of Israel."

⁵ Then the king of Syria said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So he departed and took with him ten talents of silver, six thousand *shekels* of gold, and ten changes of clothing. ⁶ Then he brought the letter to the king of Israel, which said, Now be advised, when this letter comes to you, that I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may heal him of his leprosy.

⁹ Then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha's house. ¹⁰ And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and *you shall be clean.*"

¹¹ But Naaman became furious, and went away and said, "Indeed, I said to myself, 'He will surely come out *to me*, and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy.'

¹² *Are not the Abanah^[a] and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?*" So he turned and went away in a rage.

¹³ And his servants came near and spoke to him, and said, "My father, *if* the prophet had told you *to do* something great, would you not have done *it*? How much more then, when he says to you, 'Wash, and be clean'?"

¹⁴ So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

Level: Three & Four-Year Olds

Pre-Class Activity:

As you settle in and check attendance, have a coloring page or activity ready, with the theme Learning to Listen. (Ex: play a recording of a familiar song, and ask children what they are listening to. Or Google "colorings sheets on listening.") Open the session with prayer.

Introducing the Story:

Sharing problems with others and listening to what they tell us helps us know what to do. It helps us find peace and happiness. Give appropriate examples.

Telling the Story:

Naaman was a great and powerful man in the army of Syria. He had leprosy, a terrible disease. There was no known cure.

His wife's young maid or servant girl suggested that he go see the prophet Elisha. Naaman asked his boss, who sent him to see the prophet.

When Naaman arrived at the house, the prophet Elisha told him to go and wash in the Jordan River seven times. Naaman thought this was silly. Some of his soldiers told him that if the prophet had said something that sounded more important, he would have done it. So he went to the Jordan River. When he had washed seven times, his disease was healed.

Learning Activities:

Discuss: the maid's service to Naaman's wife, her willingness to suggest that Naaman go see Elisha. After he was healed, what happened to her?

Also for discussion - what was Naaman's life like after he was healed?

Have children draw a picture of . . . the rest of the story.

Review and Closing:

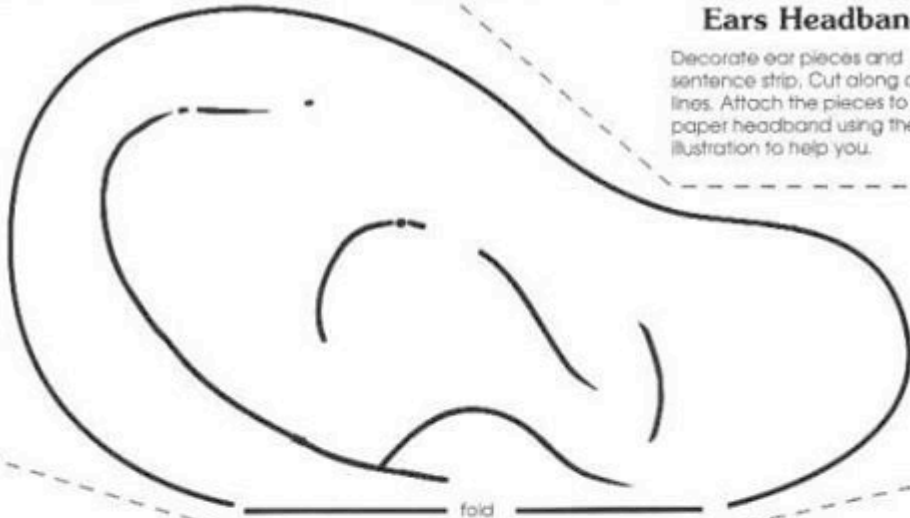
Listening to what grownups tell us will help us. We should listen to parents, teachers, our priest, etc. Help children write, on the lined page with word bank, a large letter L for "listen." (They can also "decorate" the letter with crayons.) Help them hear the sound of the letter and then the word.

Use the word bank to review the story. Hand out materials and complete the My Listening Ears activity (see sheet.) Close with prayer.

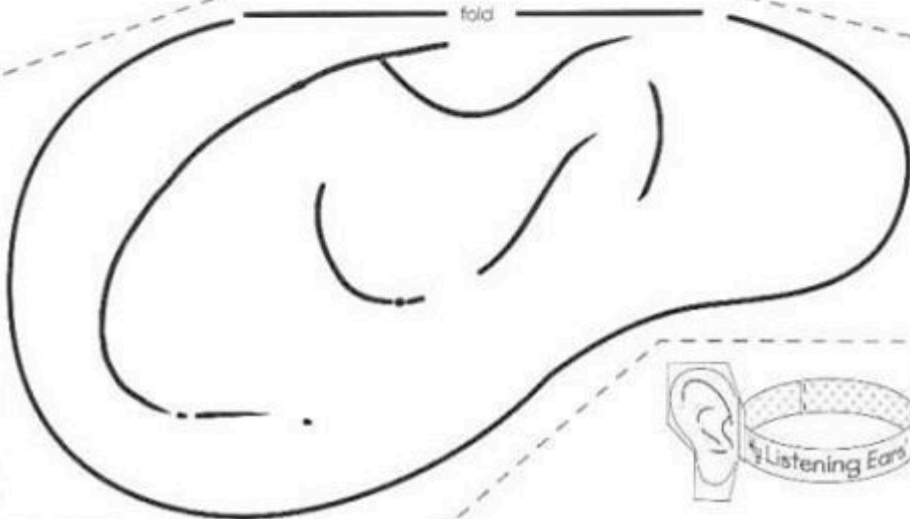
My Listening Ears!

Ears Headband

Decorate ear pieces and sentence strip. Cut along dotted lines. Attach the pieces to a paper headband using the illustration to help you.

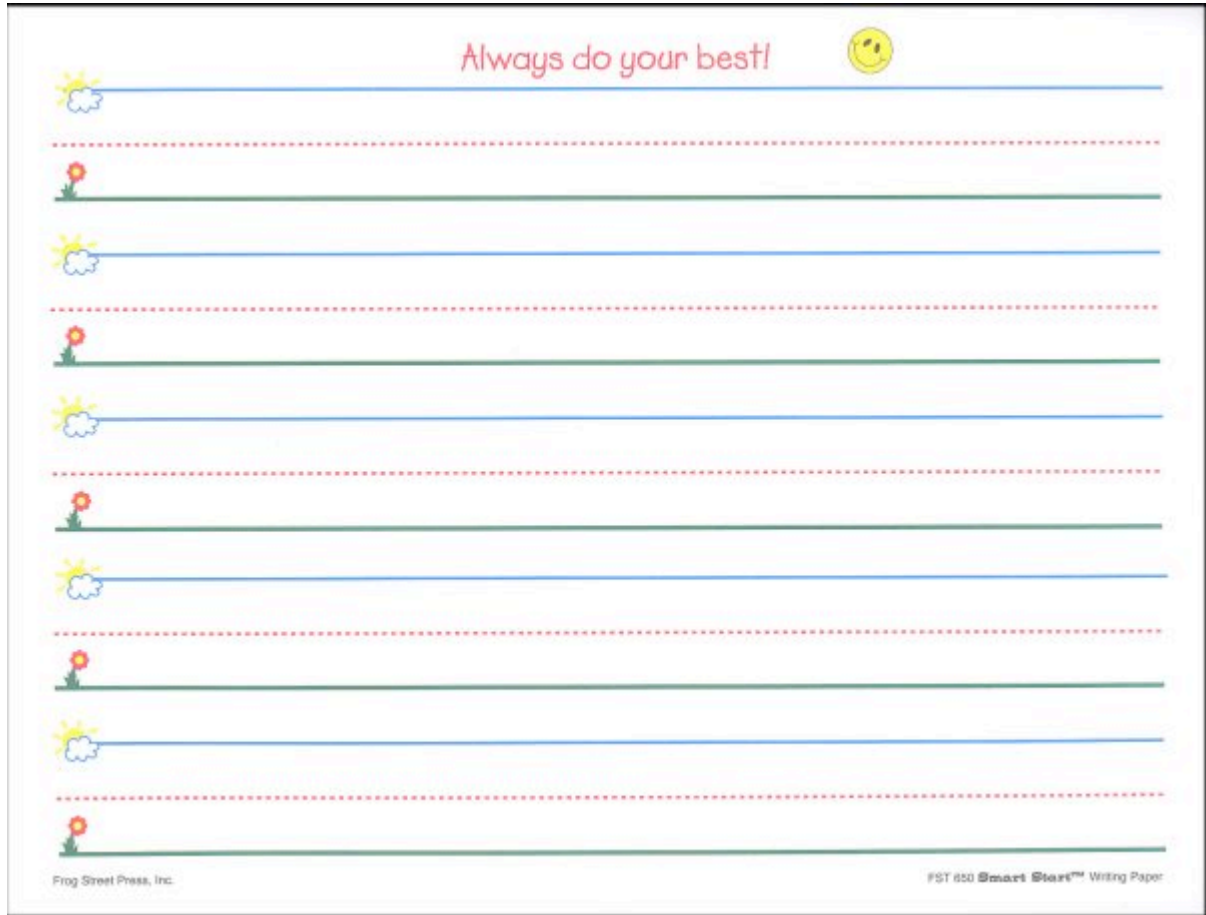


fold



fold





Word Bank:

Naaman

Servant Girl

Elisha

Jordan River

Level: Kindergarten & First Grade

Pre-Class Activity:

As you settle in and check attendance, have a coloring page or activity ready, with the theme Learning to Listen. (Ex: play a recording of a familiar song and ask children what they are listening to. Or Google "coloring sheets on listening.") Open with prayer.

Introducing the Story:

Sharing problems with others and listening to what they tell us helps us know what to do. It helps us find peace and happiness. Give appropriate examples.

Telling the Story:

Naaman was a great and powerful man in the army of Syria. He had leprosy, a terrible disease. There was no known cure.

His wife's young maid or servant girl suggested that he go see the prophet Elisha. Naaman asked his boss, who sent him to see the prophet.

When Naaman arrived at the house, Elisha told him to go wash in the Jordan River seven times. Naaman thought this was silly. Some of his soldiers told him that if the prophet had said something that sounded more important, he would have done it. So he went to the Jordan River and when he had washed seven times, his disease was healed.

Learning Activities:

Now for the rest of the story . . .

Discuss the young girl: her service to Naaman's wife, her willingness to suggest that Naaman go see Elisha, and after he was healed - what happened to her?

Also for discussion - what was Naaman's life like after he was healed?

Have students draw a picture of . . . the rest of the story.

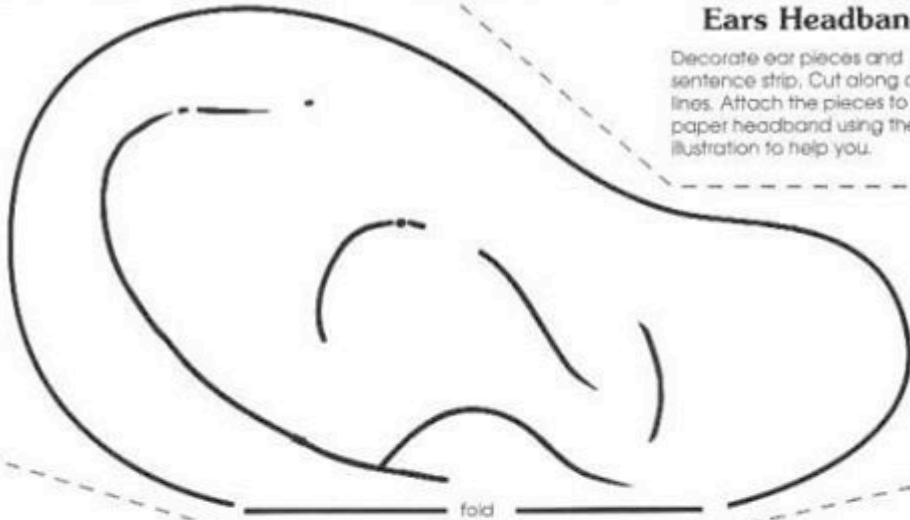
Review and Closing:

Listening to what grownups tell us will help us. We should listen to parents, teachers, our priest, etc. Help children write the word **LISTEN** on the lined page.. Use the word bank to review the story. Hand out materials and complete the My Listening Ears activity (see sheet.) Close with prayer.

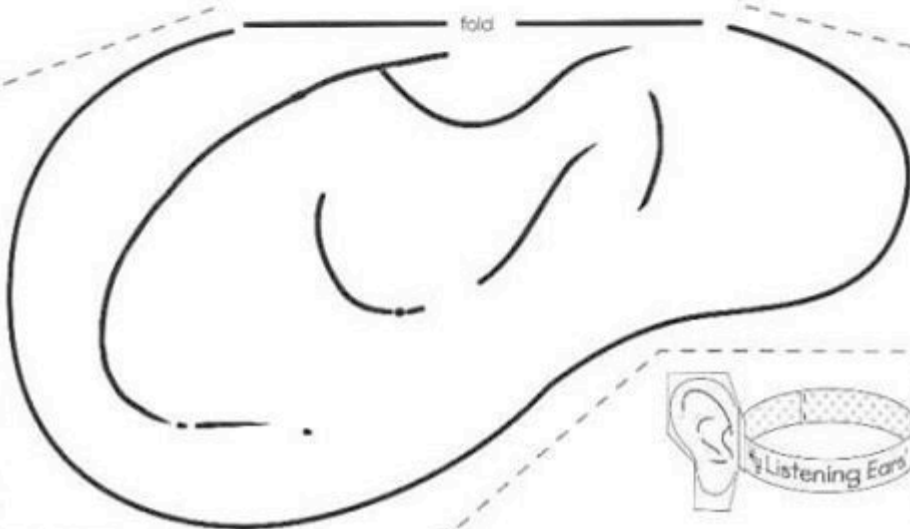
My Listening Ears!

Ears Headband

Decorate ear pieces and sentence strip. Cut along dotted lines. Attach the pieces to a paper headband using the illustration to help you.



fold



fold



Wipe-Off

Word Bank:

Naaman

Servant Girl

Elisha

Jordan River

Level: Second & Third Grade

Pre-Class Activity:

As you settle in and check attendance, have a coloring page or activity ready with the theme Learning to Listen. (Ex: play a recording of a familiar song, and ask children to raise their hands when they hear a certain word in the song. Or Google "coloring sheets on listening.") Open with prayer.

Introducing the Story:

There are often times when sharing problems with others allows others to give us information we need to proceed. Give appropriate examples.

Telling the Story:

Naaman was in the army of Syria, and was a great and powerful man, but had a skin disease called leprosy. There was no known cure.

His wife's young maid or servant girl suggested that he go and see the prophet Elisha in Samaria. Naaman asked his boss, who sent him to see the prophet.

When Naaman arrived at the house, Elisha told him to go and wash in the Jordan River seven times. Naaman thought he was too important a man to do something so silly. But some of his soldiers told him that if the prophet had said something that sounded more important, he would have done it. He thought about it again, and went to the Jordan River. When he had washed seven times, his skin was healed.

Learning Activities:

Now for the rest of the story . . .

Discuss the young girl: her service to Naaman's wife, her willingness to suggest that Naaman go see Elisha, and after he was healed - what happened to her?

Also for discussion - what was Naaman's life like after he was healed?

Have students draw a picture or write . . . the rest of the story.

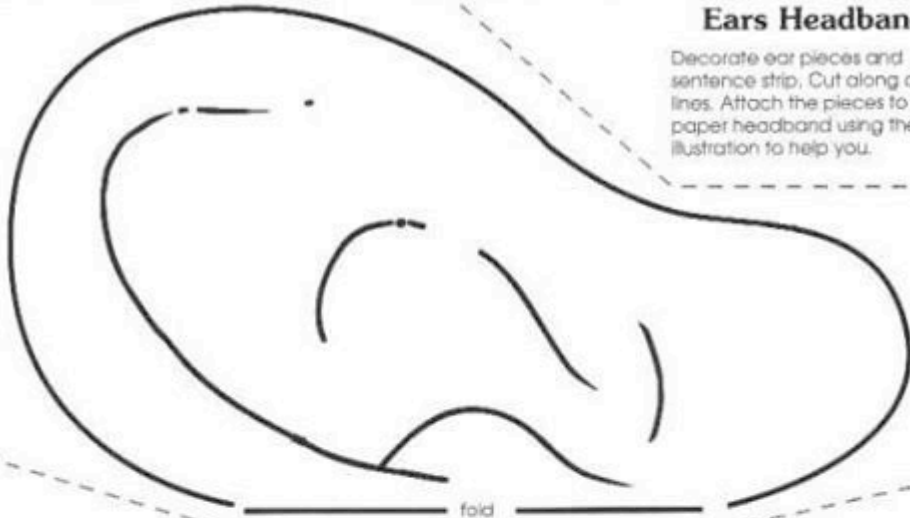
Review and Closing:

Remind students that it's important to listen to grownups in our lives—parents, teachers, our priest—because this will help us know how to live. Have them write about something they think happened after the story you have discussed, using the lined sheet. Hand out materials for and complete the My Listening Ears activity (see sheet.) Close with prayer.

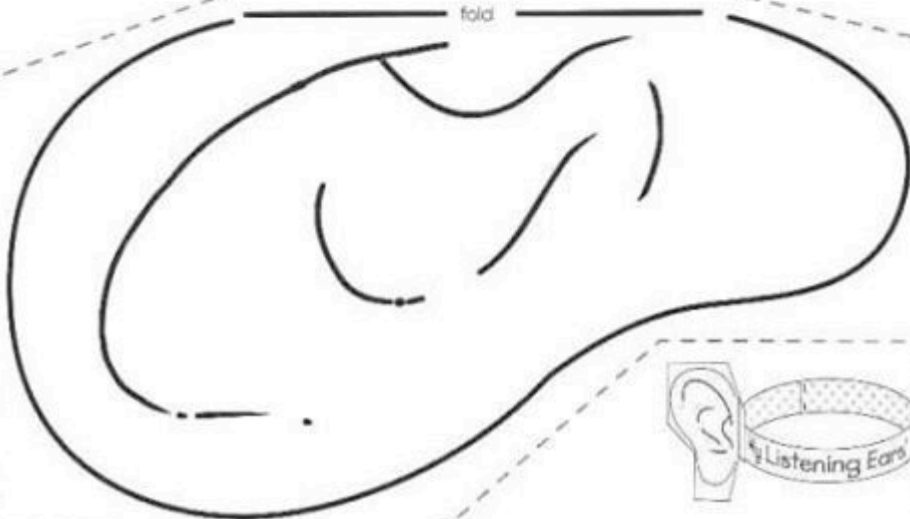
My Listening Ears!

Ears Headband

Decorate ear pieces and sentence strip. Cut along dotted lines. Attach the pieces to a paper headband using the illustration to help you.



fold



fold



Always do your best! 😊

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 15 rows. Each row has a solid blue top line, a dashed red middle line, and a solid green bottom line. A small yellow smiley face icon is on the blue line, and a small red letter 'p' is on the green line.

Level: Fourth & Fifth Grade

Pre-Class Activity:

As you settle in and check attendance, have an activity ready with the theme Learning to Listen. (Ex: Put the words "Bears and other creatures did not fear the holy Saint Herman" on the board. Verbally, but not in writing, ask students to write down the 4th and 7th words of the sentence. When you are ready to start class, see how many listened well and wrote "creatures" and "fear.") Use another activity if you wish. Open the session with prayer.

Introducing the Story:

There are often times when sharing problems with others allows them to give us information we need to proceed. Give appropriate examples.

Telling the Story:

Naaman was a great and powerful man in the army of Syria, but he had leprosy, a terrible skin disease. The disease had no known cure.

His wife's young maid or servant girl recommended that he see the prophet Elisha in Samaria. Naaman asked his boss, who sent him to see the prophet. When Naaman arrived at the house, Elisha sent a message out to go wash in the Jordan river seven times. Naaman was not happy—why should he, such a great man, do such a humble thing? But some in his company reminded him that if the prophet told him to do something spectacular, he would have done it. He thought more about it, and went to the river. Jordan River. When he had washed seven times, his skin was healed.

Learning Activities:

Now for the rest of the story . . .

Discuss the young girl: her service to Naaman's wife, her willingness to suggest that Naaman go see Elisha, and after he was healed - what happened to her?

Also for discussion - what was Naaman's life like after he was healed?

Have students draw a picture or write . . . the rest of the story, something they think may have happened after the story. Use the blank sheet provided.

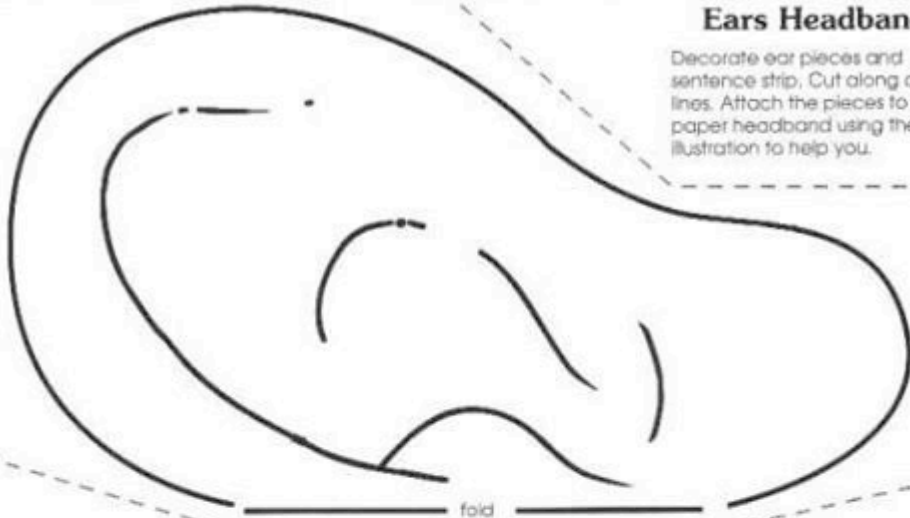
Review and Closing:

Hand out materials for the My Listening Ears activity. Ask students to write or depict on the ears some situations in which they were glad they listened to another person's advice or instructions. Close with prayer. END

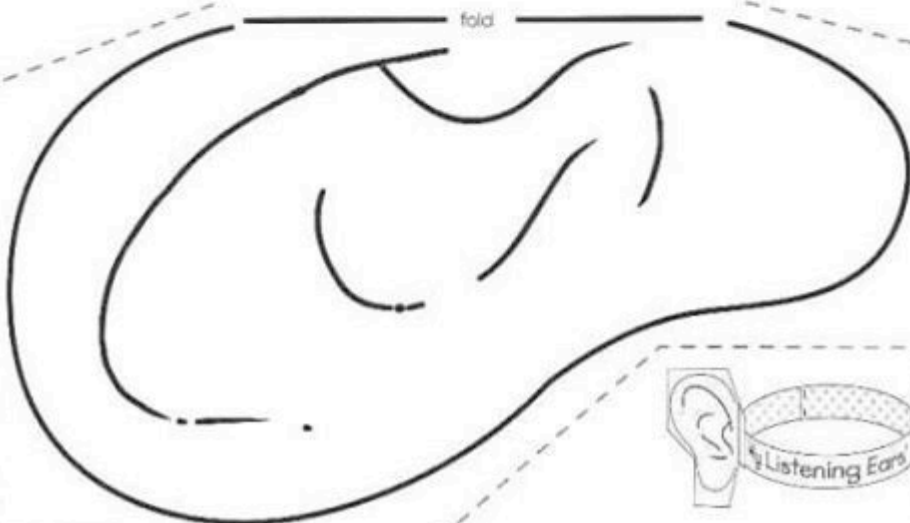
My Listening Ears!

Ears Headband

Decorate ear pieces and sentence strip. Cut along dotted lines. Attach the pieces to a paper headband using the illustration to help you.



fold



fold





Day Two - Seek Godly Advice

Emphasis or Theme: When Moses was overwhelmed leading the Israelites, Jethro gave him advice.

Scripture(s): Exodus 18:13-27, esp. v. 23

¹³ And so it was, on the next day, that Moses sat to judge the people; and the people stood before Moses from morning until evening. ¹⁴ So when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did for the people, he said, "What *is* this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit, and all the people stand before you from morning until evening?"

¹⁵ And Moses said to his father-in-law, "Because the people come to me to inquire of God. ¹⁶ When they have a difficulty, they come to me, and I judge between one and another; and I make known the statutes of God and His laws."

¹⁷ So Moses' father-in-law said to him, "**The thing that you do *is* not good.** ¹⁸ **Both you and these people who *are* with you will surely wear yourselves out. For this thing *is* too much for you; you are not able to perform it by yourself.** ¹⁹ Listen now to my voice; **I will give you counsel,** and God will be with you: Stand before God for the people, so that you may bring the difficulties to God. ²⁰ And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do. ²¹ Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place *such* over them *to be* rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. ²² And let them judge the people at all times. Then it will be *that* every great matter they shall bring to you, but every small matter they themselves shall judge. So it will be easier for you, for they will bear *the burden* with you. ²³ If you do this thing, and God *so* commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all this people will also go to their place in peace."

²⁴ So Moses heeded the voice of his father-in-law and did all that he had said. ²⁵ And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people: rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. ²⁶ So they judged the people at all times; the hard cases they brought to Moses, but they judged every small case themselves.

²⁷ Then Moses let his father-in-law depart, and he went his way to his own land.

Level: Three & Four-Year Olds (pp 19-21)

Pre-Class Activity:

As you settle in and take attendance, have a coloring page or activity ready for children; theme of coloring page/activity is seeking Godly advice. (Ex: Google "seeking godly counsel" for various coloring pages. Show the icon of Moses and tell children they will hear more about him today.) Open with prayer.

Introducing the Story:

When we have something to do, sometimes it is too much for us to do alone. We need some good advice to help us. A problem is something we need to do but can't do by ourselves, and we need help.

Telling the Story:

Moses was the leader of the people of Israel. He felt that he had to decide what to do about all of the problems the people had. This kept him busy for many hours each day.

Moses' father-in-law Jethro had an idea. Instead of Moses deciding everything, he should choose some good helpers. They would listen to the problems, and decide what to do. They would only bring the hardest problems to Moses.

So Moses set up this new way of doing things. There were many groups of people working on problems. They were able to solve many of them. They would only bring problems to Moses when they could not figure out what to do. This gave Moses time to do the other things he needed to do as leader of Israel.

Learning Activities:

What kinds of problems do you think the people were asking Moses about?
How do you think they chose the people to help hear and decide problems?
How do you think this new way worked?

Review and Closing:

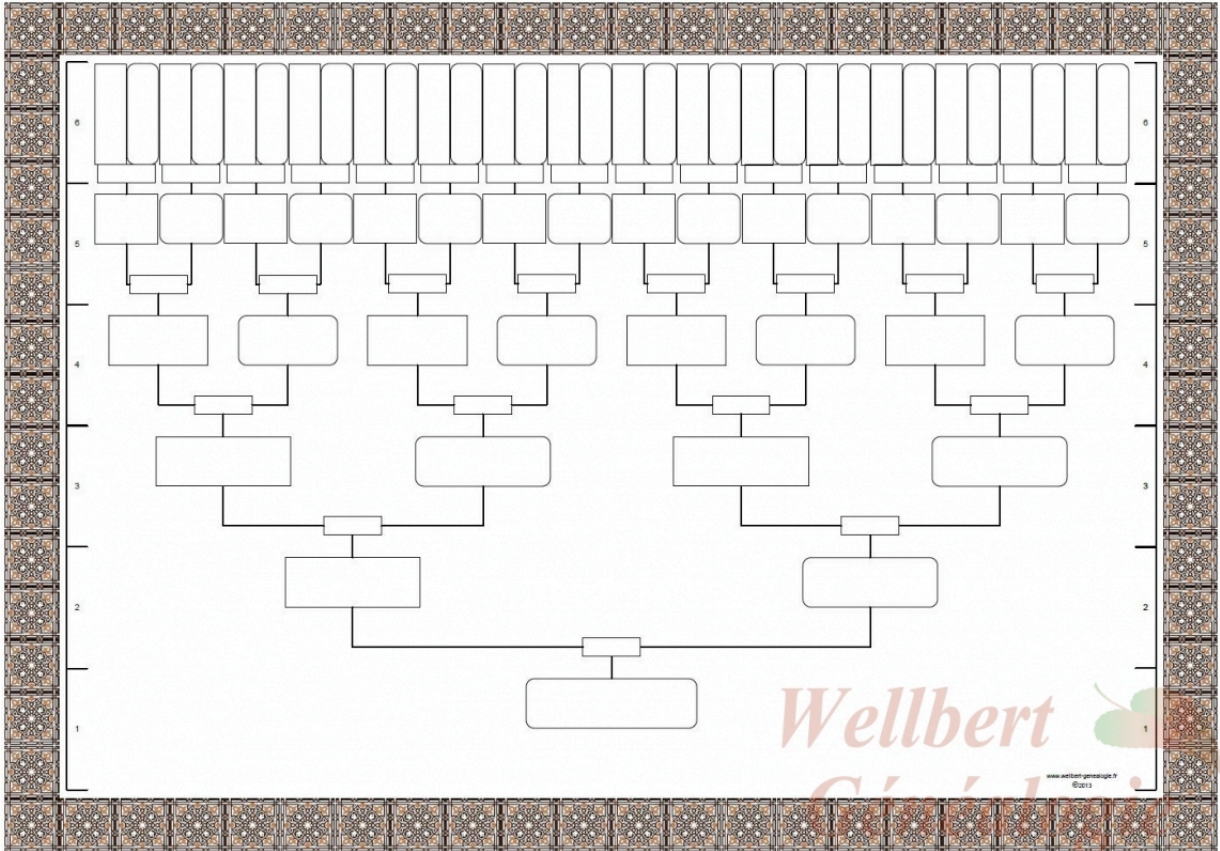
Show children pictures of a priest, bishop, and Metropolitan. (These can be found on line. Or use pictures of your own parish priest, your bishop, and your Metropolitan if you have them.

Tell children that the priest does many things. One thing he does is to help people with problems. If he needs help he goes to the bishop and if the bishop needs help he goes to the Metropolitan. This is like the way of doing things that Moses had. Show children the chart on page 21. Say that we have many churches. So there are many priests, and several bishops, and then the

Metropolitan. This chart shows how they all fit together. Let children point to the various boxes, to get an idea of groups of people working together and asking for help or advice from the person(s) on the next level.

Ask the children: Does it feel good to know there are people to help you do things you cannot do by yourself? Have them stand and show how it makes them feel. Suggest that they can dance, clap their hands, or shake hands with another child (or all three!) Remind them that they have older people they can go to for help at home and at school, and also in the Church.

Close with prayer.



This "tree" gives an idea of the various levels of authority as established by Moses

Level: Kindergarten & First Grade (pp 22-25)

Pre-Class Activity:

As you settle in and take attendance, have a coloring page or activity ready: theme is seeking Godly advice. (Ex: Google "seeking godly counsel" for various coloring pages. Show the icon of Moses and tell children they will hear more about him today.) Open with prayer.

Introducing the Story:

When we have something to do, sometimes it is too much for us to do alone. We need some good advice to help us. A problem is something we need to do but can't do by ourselves, and we need help.

Telling the Story:

Moses was the leader of the people of Israel. He felt that he had to decide what to do about all of the problems the people had. This kept him busy for many hours each day.

Moses' father-in-law Jethro had an idea. Instead of Moses deciding everything, he should choose some good helpers. They would listen to the problems, and decide what to do. They would only bring the hardest problems to Moses.

So Moses set up this new way of doing things. There were many groups of people working on problems. They were able to solve many of them. They would only bring problems to Moses when they could not figure out what to do. This gave Moses time to do the other things he needed to do as leader of Israel.

Learning Activities:

What kinds of things do you think the people were asking Moses about?

How do you think they chose the people to help hear and decide problems?

How do you think this new way worked?

Review and Closing:

Show children pictures of a priest, bishop, and Metropolitan. (These can be found on line. Or use pictures of your own parish priest, your bishop, and your Metropolitan if you have them.)

Tell children that the priest does many things. He talks to many people, and prays with them. One other thing he does is to help people with problems. If he needs help he goes to the bishop and if the bishop needs help he goes to the Metropolitan. This is like the way of doing things that Moses had.

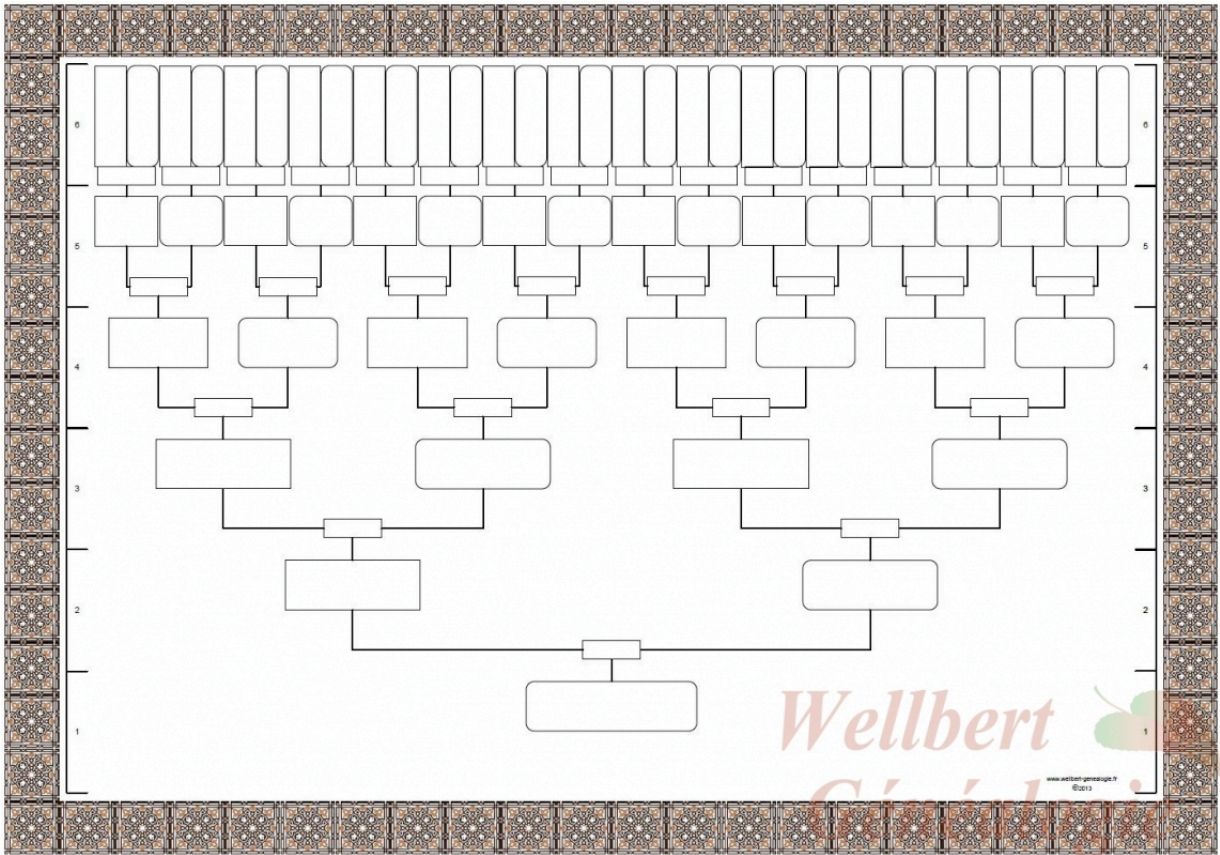
Show children the chart on page 24. Say that we have many churches. So there are many priests, and several bishops, and then the Metropolitan. This chart shows how they all fit together.

As children look at the chart, have them stand and hold their arms wide open. This is like the way our Metropolitan, our bishops and our priests hold us all together. When we are together, we can help each other and ask each other for help.

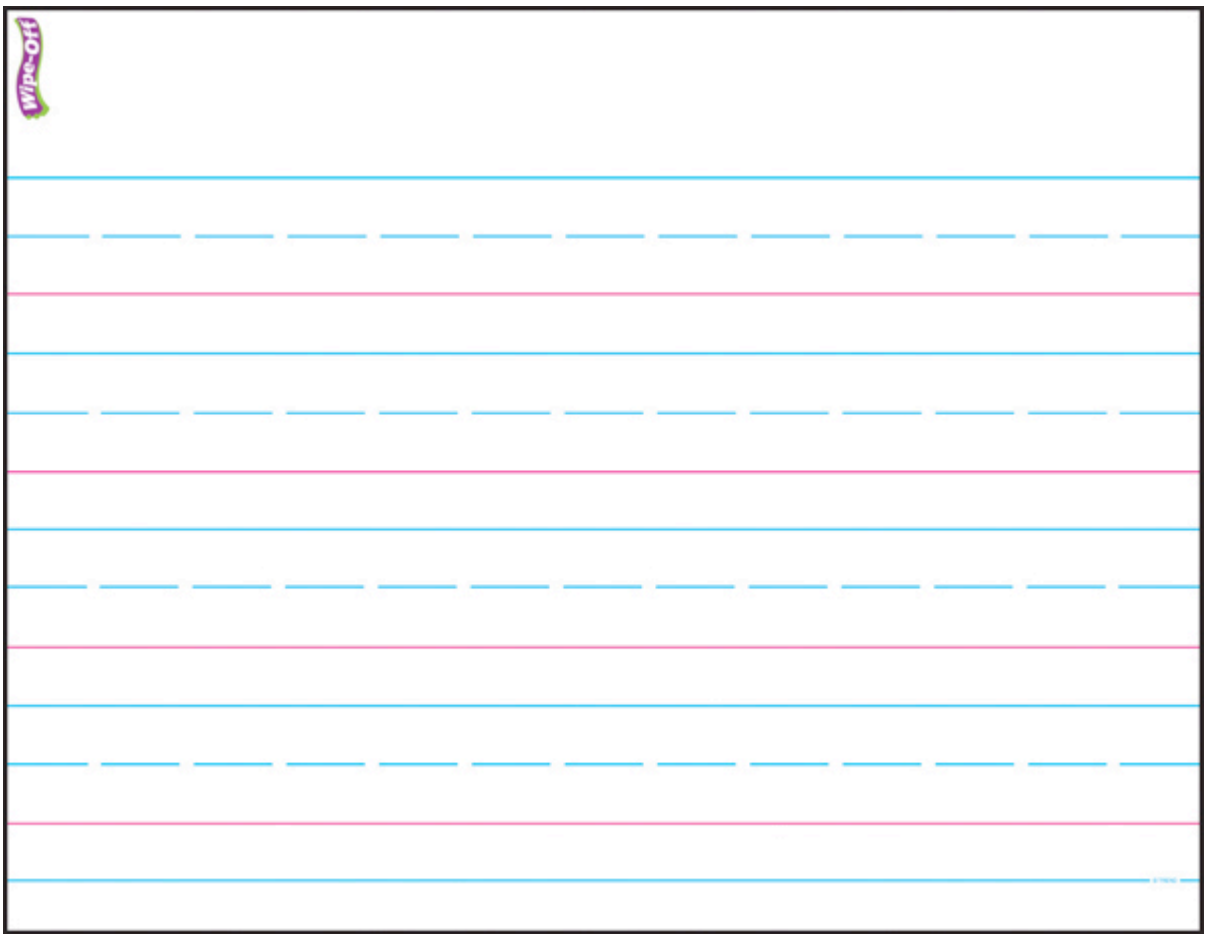
Ask the children: Does it feel good to know there are people to help you do things you cannot do by yourself? Have them stand and show how it makes them feel. Suggest that they can dance, clap their hands, or shake hands with another child (or all three!)

Review with the children: What was the good suggestion Jethro made to Moses? Have children write these two names on the lined sheet.

Close with prayer.



This "tree" shows how people can work together, as they do in the Church.



Level: Second & Third Grade (pp26-29)

Pre-Class Activity:

As you settle in and take attendance, have a coloring page or activity ready: theme is seeking Godly advice. (Ex: Google "seeking godly counsel" for various coloring pages. Show the icon of Moses and ask children whether they know anything about him. (They may remember some facts if you prompt them by talking about the people of Israel being led through the sea, or the Ten Commandments.) Tell them they will be hearing something new about him today.) Open with prayer.

Introducing the Story:

When we have something to do, sometimes it is too much for us to do alone. We need some good advice to help us. A problem is something we need to do but can't do by ourselves, and we need help.

Telling the Story:

Moses was the leader of the people of Israel. Many people would come to him with their problems. He felt that he had to decide what to do about all of the problems the people had. This kept him busy for many hours each day. Moses' father-in-law Jethro had an idea. Instead of Moses deciding everything, he should choose some good helpers. They would listen to the problems, and decide what to do. They would only bring the hardest problems to Moses. So Moses set up this new way of doing things. There were many groups of people hearing about problems and finding ways to solve them. They were able to solve many of them. They would only bring problems to Moses when they could not figure out what to do. This gave Moses time to do the other things he needed to do as leader of Israel.

Learning Activities:

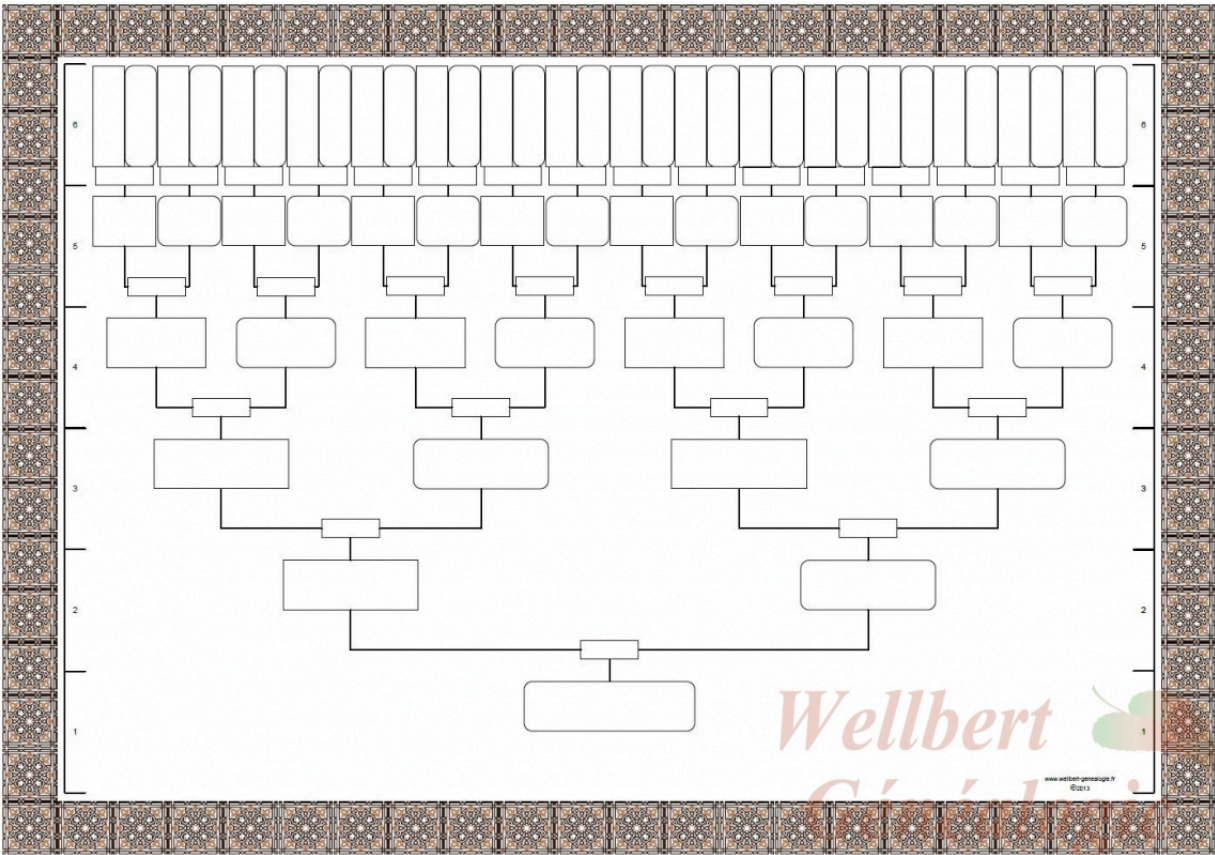
What kinds of problems do you think the people were asking Moses about?
How do you think they chose the people to help hear and decide problems?
How do you think this new system worked?

Review and Closing:

Tell children that the way people live and work together in the Church today is a lot like the system Moses had. Show them pictures of a priest, a bishop, and the Metropolitan. (Pictures are available on line; if possible use pictures of your own clergy.) Then look together at the chart on page 28. The squares near the

top are the priests—there are many churches and parishes, so there are many priests. If the priests need advice or have a problem, they go to the bishop. There are fewer bishops, so on the chart there are fewer boxes on the level where they fit. If the bishops need help, they go the Metropolitan. He is the one who holds everyone together, like the roots or trunk of the tree. Have students hold their arms out and above their heads. Your body is a little like the roots or trunk that supports the tree, and your arms are like the branches.. (This explains why the Metropolitan's box is at the bottom of the tree—not because he is the least important.) Have children fill in the words priest and bishop in some of the boxes in the rows, and the word Metropolitan in the large box at the root of the tree. They can also put in names of clergy they know, with help from you as needed for spelling.

Have students use the lined paper to write about something they think might have happened after the story you have discussed. Close with prayer.



On this "tree," show the various levels of authority as established by Moses

Always do your best! 😊

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 15 sets of three horizontal lines: a top blue line, a middle red dashed line, and a bottom green line. Each set begins with a small icon: a yellow circle with a blue outline, a red dot with a green outline, and a green dot with a red outline.

Level: Fourth & Fifth Grade (pp. 30-33)

Pre-Class Activity:

Before students come in, write the following phrases on the board: "Ten Commandments", "baby in a basket rescued by a princess" and "crossing the Red Sea." Have the Bible open and with markers (perhaps post-it notes) at the places where these events appear. As you settle in and take attendance, ask students to write down the name of the man involved in all these events, and the book of the Bible in which they all appear. (They may recognize "Moses" from the phrases on the board, and can consult the open Bible to see that Exodus is the book.) When everyone has gathered, show them the icon of Moses and tell them that you'll be learning more about him today.

Introducing the Story:

When we are involved in doing something important, sometimes it is too much for us to do alone. We need some good advice or help. Listening to that advice will help us.

Telling the Story:

Moses was the leader of the people of Israel. Many people would come to him with their problems. He felt that he had to decide what to do about all of the problems the people had. This kept him busy for many hours each day. Moses' father-in-law Jethro had an idea. Instead of Moses deciding everything, he should choose some good helpers. They would listen to the problems, and decide what to do. They would only bring the hardest problems to Moses. So Moses set up this new way of doing things. There were many groups of people hearing about problems and finding ways to solve them. They were able to solve many of them. They would only bring problems to Moses when they could not figure out what to do. This gave Moses time to do the other things he needed to do as leader of Israel.

Learning Activities:

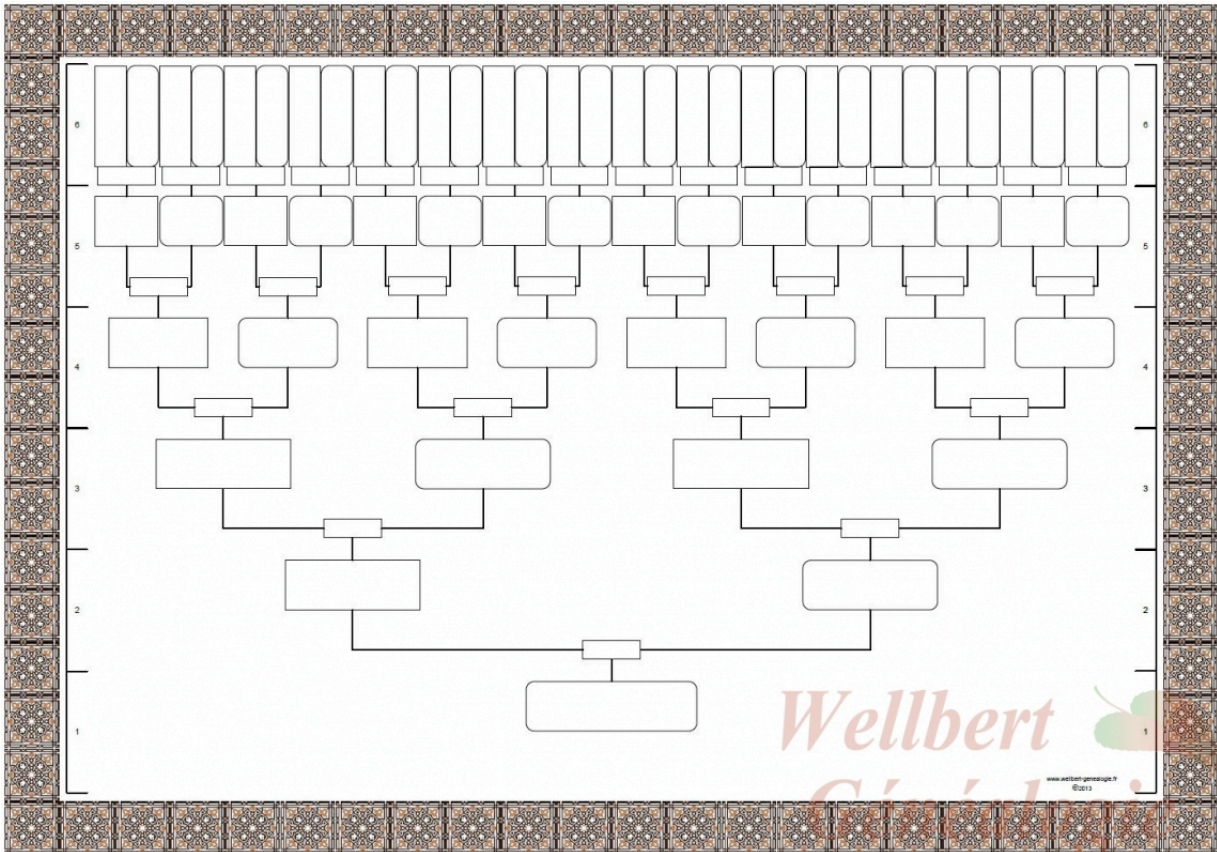
What kinds of problems do you think the people were asking Moses about?
How do you think they chose the people to help hear and decide problems?
How do you think this new system worked?

Review and Closing:

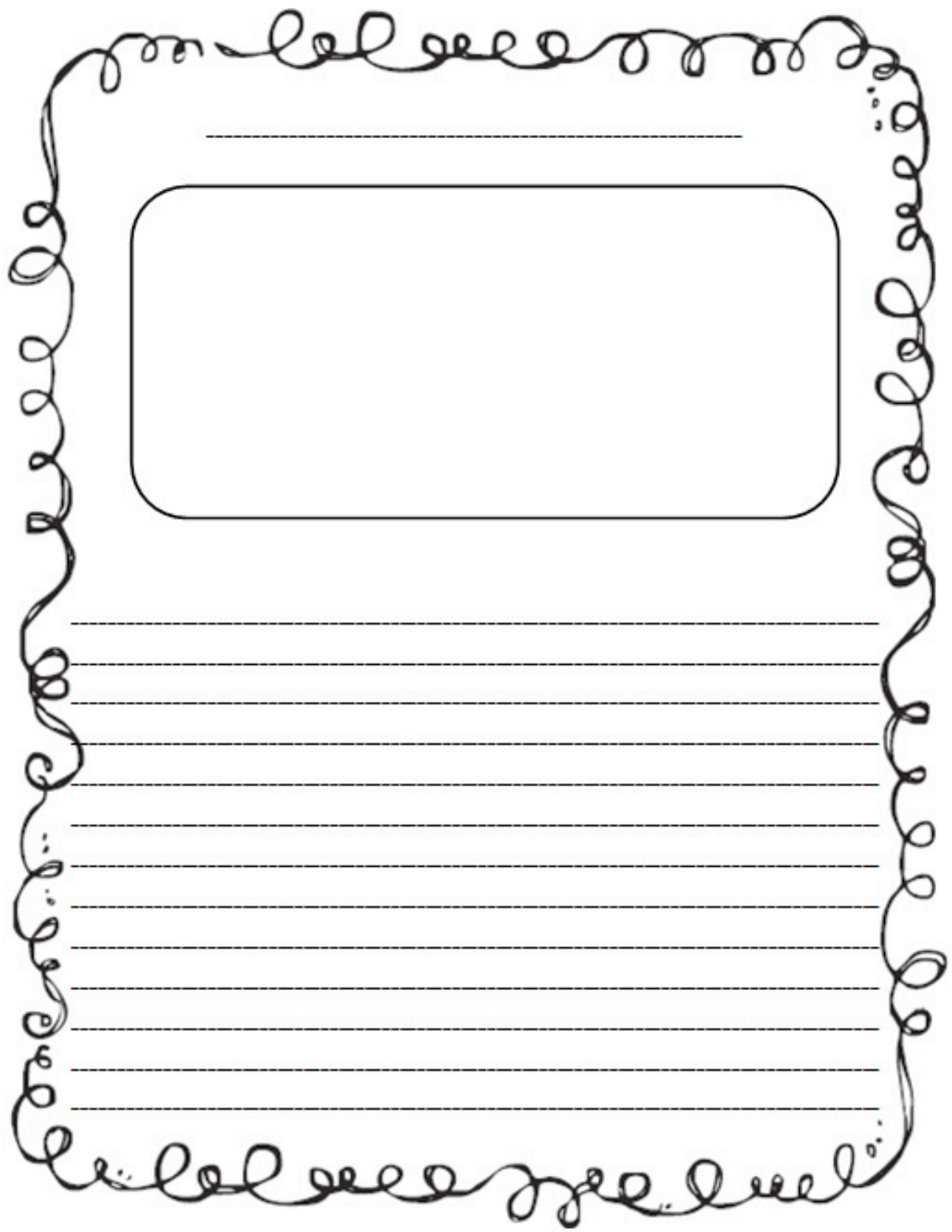
Tell children that the way people live and work together in the Church today is a lot like the system Moses had. Show them pictures of a priest, a bishop, and

the Metropolitan. (Pictures are available on line; if possible use pictures of your own clergy.) Then look together at the chart on page 28. The squares near the top are the priests—there are many churches and parishes, so there are many priests. If the priests need advice or have a problem, they go to the bishop. There are fewer bishops, so on the chart there are fewer boxes on the level where they fit. If the bishops need help, they go the Metropolitan. He is the one who holds everyone together, like the roots or trunk of the tree. Have students hold their arms out and above their heads. Your body is a little like the roots or trunk that supports the tree. Your arms are like the branches. (This explains why the Metropolitan's box is at the bottom of the tree—not because he is the least important.) Have children fill in the words priest and bishop in some of the boxes in the rows, and the word Metropolitan in the large box at the root of the tree. They can also fill in names of clergy they know.

Have students use the lined paper to write about something they think might have happened after the story you have discussed. Close with prayer.



On this "tree," show the various levels of authority as established by Moses (use any appropriate example).



Day Three - Following God's Will

Emphasis or Theme: Josiah, the Eight-Year Old King; As young as he was, he "did what was right in the eyes of the Lord."

Scripture(s): II Kings 21:26b-22:2

"Then Josiah his son reigned in his place. Josiah *was* eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath. ² And he did *what was right* in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left."

Three & Four-Year Olds (pp 35-39)

Pre-Class Activity:

Before children arrive, make copies of the "fish" picture on page 37. While you are settling in, and checking attendance, have children color it. (They needn't do the maze.) Tell children that the first men Jesus chose to be His helpers were fishermen. But when they saw His love for everyone, they were ready to give up fishing and follow Him. We are like them because we want to follow Jesus too. We want to do what He asks us to do. That is what it means to follow a leader—we do the things the leader does, because they are good things. (Take a few minutes for children to play Follow the Leader by having each child do a hand motion or action for the others to follow.) Display a copy of the Entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday) icon or the icon of Jesus with Children. Point out to the children that these icons show how Jesus loved children and they loved and followed Him. Jesus was their leader. Open with prayer.

Introducing the Story:

Tell children that today you are going to talk about a boy named Josiah who became a leader when he was very young.

Telling the Story:

"Josiah *was* eight years old when he became king, and he was king for thirty-one years in Jerusalem. And he did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left."

Learning Activities:

Josiah was only eight when he became a special kind of leader. He was a king.

What things does a king do?

What do you think King Josiah did in his free time?

How do you think he knew the right things to do?

Do you think his mother helped him?

Have ready the following or the sandal activity on page 37: a sandal shape for each child cut from card stock, multicolored pipe cleaners, a few colorful buttons for each child—make sure they can be threaded on a pipe cleaner—a hole punch, and multicolored washable markers. Tell children that one way we can follow someone is by walking with the person. This is how Jesus' helpers followed Him. As they walked with Him, they tried to be like Him. They helped

other people. They told all the people they met as they walked that God loves them.

Ask the children what we wear on our feet when we are walking. They will probably answer "shoes", so remind them that in summer we might also wear sandals or flip-flops.

Give each child a "sandal" and let them each help you press down the hole punch to make 3 holes as shown in the diagram. As the directions on page 36 indicate, let children think of people to pray for and then thread a button for each one. Secure the flip-flops, and let children draw on the completed flip-flop one way they will follow Jesus, and try to do what He wants us to do.

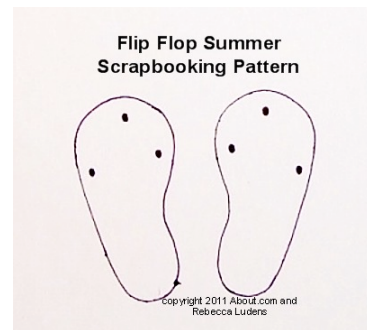
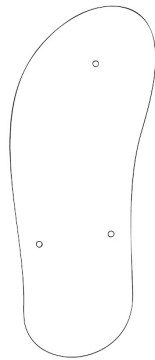
Review and Closing:

On the lined paper, help each child draw a large **F** for the word "follow" and remind them that we all—both children and grown-ups--try to follow Jesus. Close with prayer.



I wanted to get across the idea of following being an active thing so we made a sandal (or flip flop!) of ideas! This idea was done for another craft, but the designer put a discipleship slant on it!

Cut out a flip flop shape from card and make 3 holes like so...

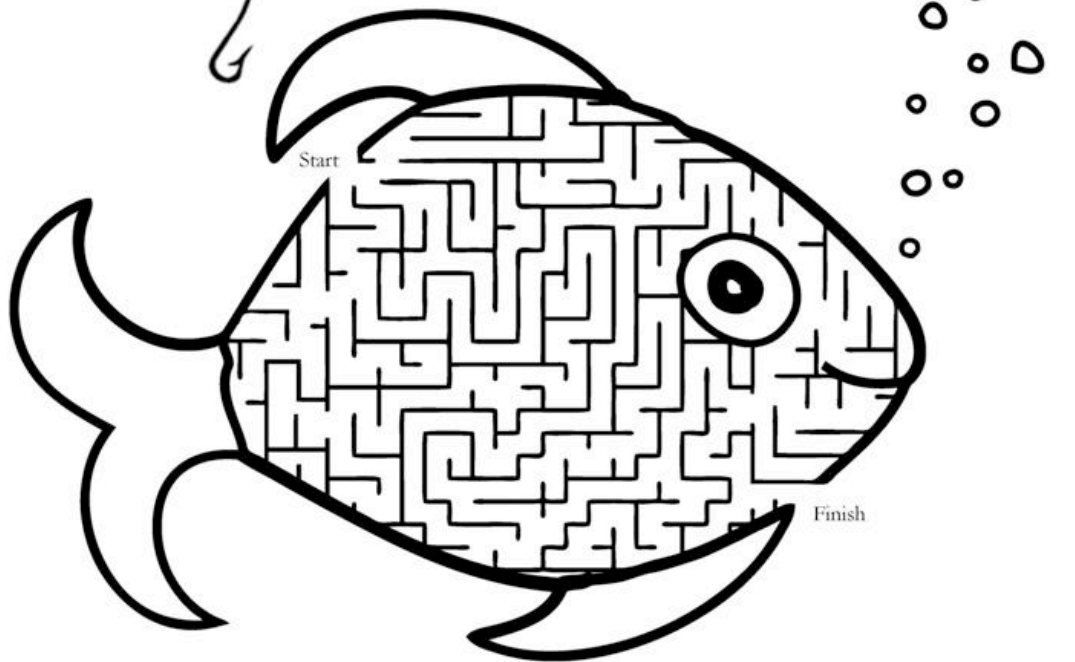


Put a pipe cleaner underneath the flip flop shape and thread one end through hole A and one end through hole B.

We chose people we would try to remember to pray for and then chose a button to represent each person, threading the buttons onto the pipe cleaner ends. We then threaded both ends through hole C to make the flip flop strap and secured them underneath.

Now we discussed things we could do (achievable things!) that would reflect the fact that we were trying to live out what Jesus taught and write them on the flip flop as a reminder. These included... Think about God at school, respect my friends, listen to my dad, read a bible story once a week, pray . . .

FISHERS of MEN



And Jesus said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.” **Mark 1:17**

© Crafting The Word Of God

Always do your best!



Level: Kindergarten & First Grade (pp 40-44)

Pre-Class Activity:

Have an icon of the Entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday) displayed for the students to see. While settling in and checking attendance, ask them to point out Jesus in the icon, and then the children (the small figures.) Ask students: Do you think the grown-ups and children in the icon are following Jesus? (Yes, some are walking after Him and all are looking up to Him. Jesus is the leader.) Open with prayer.

Introducing the Story:

Tell students you are going to talk about a boy who became a leader when he was very young. He became a king. We read about him in the Bible, and his name is Josiah.

Telling the Story:

"Josiah *was* eight years old when he became king, and he was king for thirty-one years in Jerusalem. And he did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left."

Learning Activities:

Josiah was only eight when he became a special kind of leader. He was a king. What things does a king do?
What do you think King Josiah did in his free time?
How do you think he knew the right things to do?
Do you think his mother helped him?

Have ready the following for the sandal activity on page 42: a sandal shape for each child cut from card stock, multicolored pipe cleaners, a few colorful buttons for each child—make sure they can be threaded on a pipe cleaner—a hole punch, and multicolored washable markers. Tell children that one way we can follow someone is by walking with the person. This is how Jesus' helpers followed Him. As they walked with Him, they tried to be like Him. They helped other people. They told all the people they met as they walked that God loves them.

Ask the children what we wear on our feet when we are walking. They will probably answer "shoes", so remind them that in summer we might also wear

sandals or flip-flops. (You might want to point out some of the people in the icon wearing sandals.)

Give each child a "sandal" and let them each press down the hole punch to make 3 holes as shown in the diagram. As the directions on page 42 indicate, let children think of people to pray for and then thread a button for each one. Secure the flip-flops, and let children draw on the completed flip-flop one way they will follow Jesus, and try to do what He wants us to do.

Review and Closing:

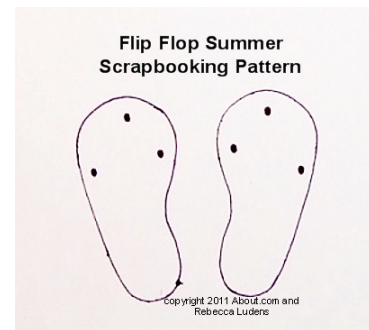
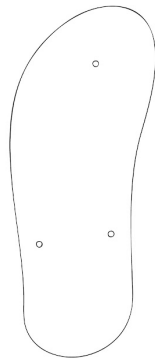
Have children write the word "follow" on their lined sheets (44.)

To reinforce the lesson, give each child a copy of the "Following Jesus" page (43) and ask them to keep track of their activities at home during the coming week. Close with prayer.



I wanted to get across the idea of following being an active thing so we made a sandal (or flip flop!) of ideas! This idea was done for another craft, but the designer put a discipleship slant on it!

Cut out a flip flop shape from card and make 3 holes like so...



Put a pipe cleaner underneath the flip flop shape and thread one end through hole A and one end through hole B.

We chose people we would try to remember to pray for and then chose a button to represent each person, threading the buttons onto the pipe cleaner ends. We then threaded both ends through hole C to make the flip flop strap and secured them underneath.

Now we discussed things we could do (achievable things!) that would reflect the fact that we were trying to live out what Jesus taught and write them on the flip flop as a reminder. These included... Think about God at school, respect my friends, listen to my dad, read a bible story once a week, pray . . .

Following Jesus

This week
I will follow
Jesus by
doing this



Colour in
the foot
day by
day as you
follow Jesus!

Lord God
help me to be a
disciple this
week.
Amen

Wipe-Off

The image shows a writing practice sheet with four sets of horizontal lines. Each set consists of a solid blue top line, a dashed blue middle line, and a solid pink bottom line. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. In the top left corner, there is a small purple and green logo with the text "Wipe-Off".

Level: Second & Third Grade (pp45-50)

Pre-Class Activity:

For each student, have an unlined 4" by 6" index card with the name JOSIAH written in large capital letters. Cut each card into uneven pieces, to make a jigsaw puzzle, and put each puzzle into a zip-lock sandwich bag. (You might want to use different colors of cards and/or different colors of markers to write the name on each card, just for variety.)

Have an icon of the Entry into Jerusalem displayed, and have ready a picture of the Temple in Jerusalem (many of these are easily found on line. Use any one that appeals to you.)

As you settle in and take attendance, have children put their puzzles together, and let them practice saying the name "Josiah." Tell them you are going to learn more about him today. Open with prayer.

Introducing the Story:

Josiah lived many years before Jesus Christ was born. He became a leader when he was very young. In fact, he became a king.

Ask students: What would you do if you suddenly became the leader of a country? How do you think you would make decisions? What kind of things would you want to do?

Telling the Story:

"Josiah *was* eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath. ² And he did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left."

Learning Activities:

Does anything surprise you about this story? (Josiah was only eight when he became king!)

What do you think he did in his free time?

How do you think he chose the right things to do? How did he do "what was right in the sight of the Lord"?

Do you think his mother helped him?

Would it be hard to be king when you were so young? What might be the best part of being king? What would be the hardest part?

As King Josiah grew up, he did many good things. One of them was to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem, after it had been destroyed. (Show the picture of the Temple.) This was the same Temple where Jesus worshipped, hundreds of years later.

King Josiah was a good king, and did as God wanted him to do. His people tried to do the same thing—to do as God wanted them to do. King Josiah was a good example for them to follow.

Many years later, when Jesus Christ came, people followed Him and tried to do the things He wanted them to do. He was not just a king like Josiah—he was God's own Son. (Look together at the icon, and note how the people are following Jesus or looking at Him. Jesus Christ is greater than any king.)

One good way of remembering how we also try to “follow” Jesus is to think of walking with Him. In His day, people wore sandals, something like our flip flops. (Note in the icon what people are wearing on their feet.)

Have ready the following for the sandal activity on page 47-48: a sandal shape for each child cut from card stock, multicolored pipe cleaners, a few colorful buttons for each child—make sure they can be threaded on a pipe cleaner—a hole punch, and multicolored washable markers. Give each child a “sandal” and let them use the hole punch to make 3 holes as shown in the diagram. As the directions on page 47 indicate, let children think of people to pray for and then thread a button for each one. Secure the flip-flops, and let children draw or write on the completed flip-flop one way they will follow Jesus by living the way He wants us to live.

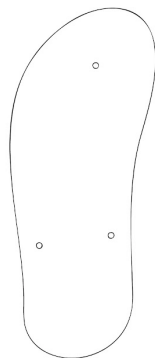
Review and Closing:

Let children write on the lined sheet (p. 50) something that might have happened after King Josiah rebuilt the Temple. Give them each a copy of P. 49 to take home, and use to keep track of the ways they will follow Jesus during the week. Close with prayer.



I wanted to get across the idea of following being an active thing so we made a sandal (or flip flop!) of ideas! This idea was done for another craft, but the designer put a discipleship slant on it!

Cut out a flip flop shape from card and make 3 holes like so...



Put a pipe cleaner underneath the flip flop shape and thread one end through hole A and one end through hole B.

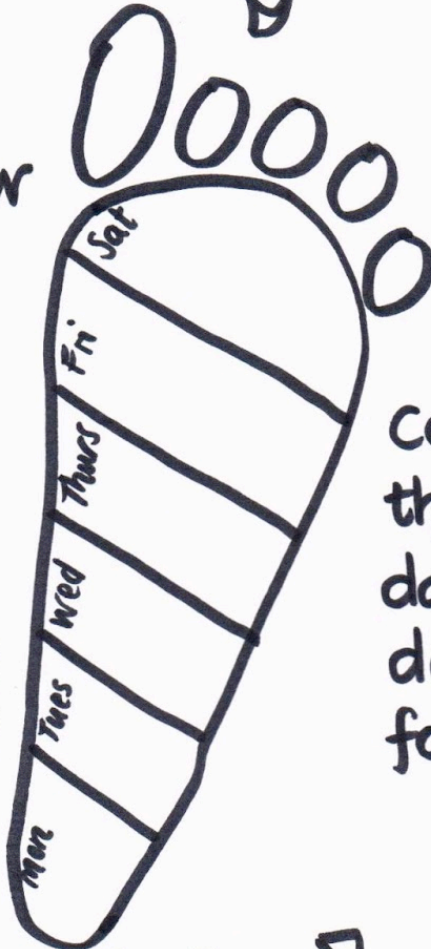
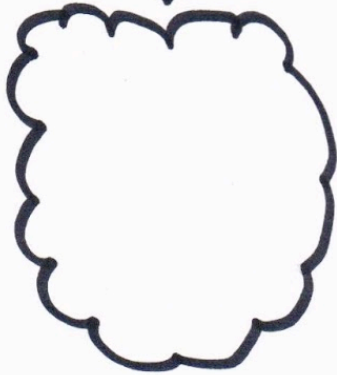
We chose people we would try to remember to pray for and then chose a button to

represent each person, threading the buttons onto the pipe cleaner ends. We then threaded both ends through hole C to make the flip flop strap and secured them underneath.

Now we discussed things we could do (achievable things!) that would reflect the fact that we were trying to live out what Jesus taught and write them on the flip flop as a reminder. These included... Think about God at school, respect my friends, listen to my dad, read a bible story once a week, pray . . .

Following Jesus

This week
I will follow
Jesus by
doing this



Colour in
the foot
day by
day as you
follow Jesus!

Lord God
help me to be a
disciple this
week.
Amen

Always do your best! 😊

Handwriting practice sheet with 12 rows of lines. Each row consists of a solid blue top line, a dashed red middle line, and a solid green bottom line. A small icon (a yellow circle with a red dot and a green stem) is placed at the start of each row on the blue line.

Level: Fourth & Fifth Grade (pp 51-55)

Pre-Class Activity:

For each student, have an unlined 4" by 6" index card with the name JOSIAH written in large capital letters. Cut each card into uneven pieces, to make a jigsaw puzzle, and put each puzzle into a ziplock bag. (You might want to use different colors of cards and/or different colors of markers to write the name on each card, just for variety.)

Have an icon of the Entry into Jerusalem displayed, and have ready a picture of the Temple in Jerusalem (many of these are easily found on line. Use any one that appeals to you.) Have the Bible open to the beginning of the New Testament.

As you settle in and take attendance, have children put their puzzles together, and let them say the name "Josiah." Tell them you are going to learn more about him today. Open with prayer.

Introducing the Story:

Josiah lived many years before Jesus Christ was born. (Indicate the Old Testament part of the Bible that tells what happened before Jesus was born.)

He became a leader when he was very young. In fact, he became a king.

Ask students: What would you do if you suddenly became the leader of a country? How do you think you would make decisions? What kind of things would you want to do?

Telling the Story:

"Josiah *was* eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name *was* Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath. ² And he did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left."

Learning Activities:

Does anything surprise you about this story? (Josiah was only eight when he became king!)

What do you think he did in his free time?

How do you think he chose the right things to do? How did he do "what was right in the sight of the Lord"?

Do you think his mother helped him?

Would it be hard to be king when you were so young? What might be the best part of being king? What would be the hardest part?

Say: As King Josiah grew up, he did many good things. One of them was to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem, after it had been destroyed. (Show the picture of the Temple.) This was the same Temple where Jesus worshipped, hundreds of years later. (Indicate the New Testament—the part of the Bible that tells us about the time when Jesus lived, long after King Josiah.)

King Josiah was a good king, and did as God wanted him to do. His people tried to do the same thing—to do as God wanted them to do.

Many years later, when Jesus Christ came, people followed Him and tried to do the things He wanted them to do. He was not just a king like Josiah—he was God's own Son. (Look together at the icon, and note how the people are following Jesus or looking at Him. Jesus Christ is greater than any king.)

One good way of remembering how we also try to "follow" Jesus is to think of walking with Him. In His day, people wore sandals, something like our flip flops. (Note in the icon what people are wearing on their feet.)

Have ready the following for the sandal activity on page 53: a sandal shape for each child cut from card stock, multicolored pipe cleaners, a few colorful buttons for each child—make sure they can be threaded on a pipe cleaner—a hole punch, and multicolored washable markers. Give each child a "sandal" and let them use the hole punch to make 3 holes as shown in the diagram. As the directions on page 53 indicate, let children think of people to pray for and then thread a button for each one. Secure the flip-flops, and let children draw or write on the completed flip-flop one way they will follow Jesus by living the way He wants us to live.

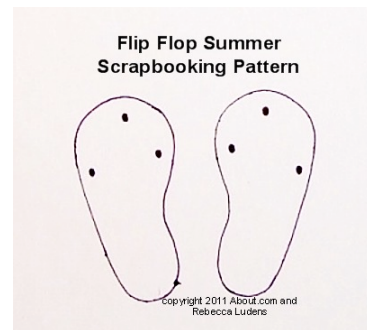
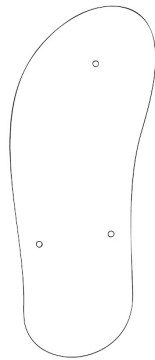
Review and Closing:

Let children write on the lined sheet (p. 55) something that might have happened after King Josiah rebuilt the Temple. Give them each a copy of P. 54 to take home, and use to think about ways they will follow Jesus during the week. Close with prayer.



I wanted to get across the idea of following being an active thing so we made a sandal (or flip flop!) of ideas! This idea was done for another craft, but the designer put a discipleship slant on it!

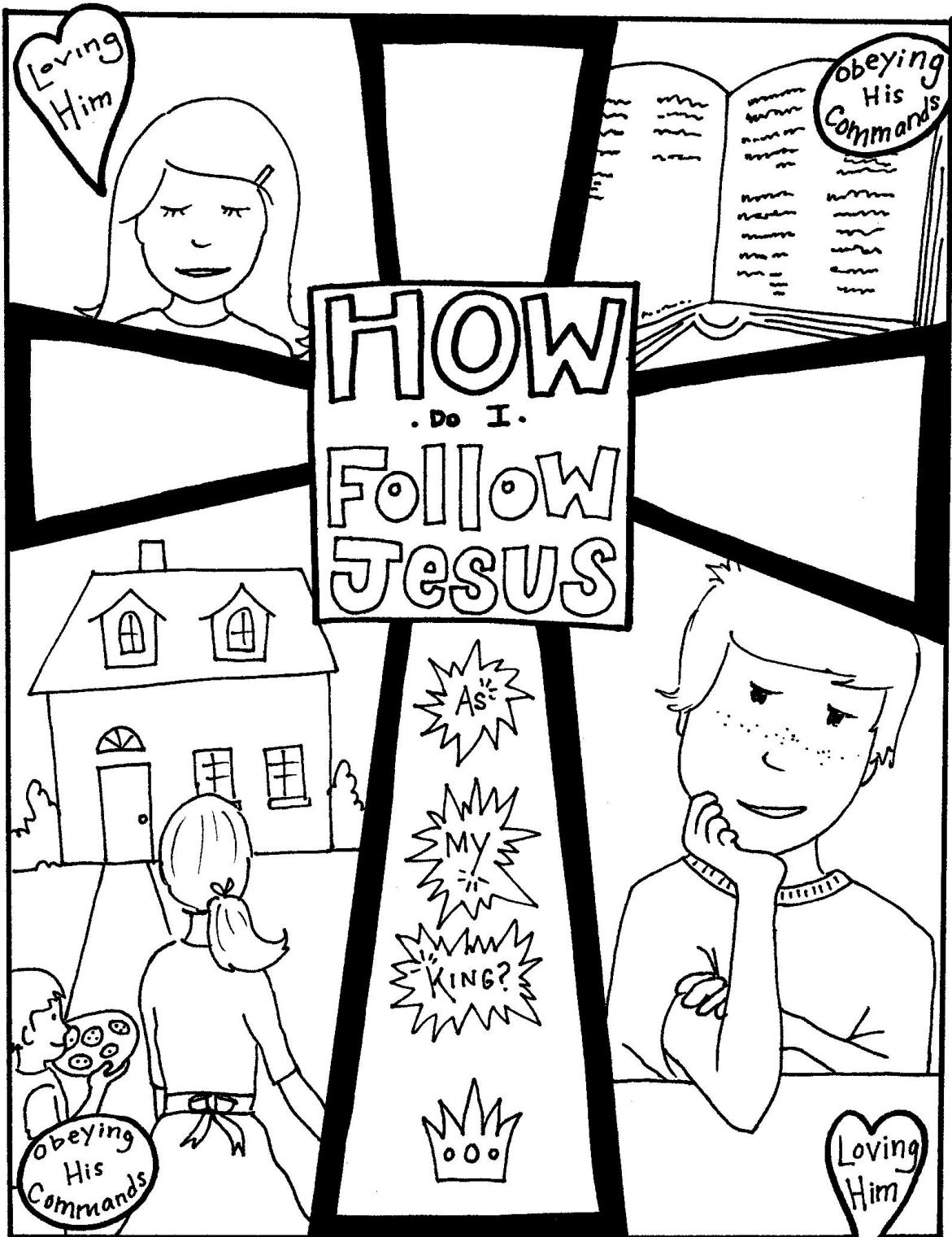
Cut out a flip flop shape from card and make 3 holes like so...



Put a pipe cleaner underneath the flip flop shape and thread one end through hole A and one end through hole B.

We chose people we would try to remember to pray for and then chose a button to represent each person, threading the buttons onto the pipe cleaner ends. We then threaded both ends through hole C to make the flip flop strap and secured them underneath.

Now we discussed things we could do (achievable things!) that would reflect the fact that we were trying to live out what Jesus taught and write them on the flip flop as a reminder. These included... Think about God at school, respect my friends, listen to my dad, read a bible story once a week, pray . . .



Mandy Groce '10

ministry-to-children.com



Day Four - Don't Do It Your Way!

Emphasis or Theme: Known for his donkey talking to him, Balaam learned to follow God's will instead of doing it his own way!

Scripture(s): Numbers 22

⁹ Then God came to Balaam and said, "Who *are* these men with you?"

¹⁰ So Balaam said to God, "Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, has sent to me, *saying*, ¹¹ 'Look, a people has come out of Egypt, and they cover the face of the earth. Come now, curse them for me; perhaps I shall be able to overpower them and drive them out.'"

¹² And God said to Balaam, "You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they *are* blessed."

¹³ So Balaam rose in the morning and said to the princes of Balak, "Go back to your land, for the LORD has refused to give me permission to go with you."

¹⁴ And the princes of Moab rose and went to Balak, and said, "Balaam refuses to come with us."

¹⁵ Then Balak again sent princes, more numerous and more honorable than they. ¹⁶ And they came to Balaam and said to him, "Thus says Balak the son of Zippor: 'Please let nothing hinder you from coming to me; ¹⁷ for I will certainly honor you greatly, and I will do whatever you say to me. Therefore please come, curse this people for me.'"

¹⁸ Then Balaam answered and said to the servants of Balak, "Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the word of the LORD my God, to do less or more. ¹⁹ Now therefore, please, you also stay here tonight, that I may know what more the LORD will say to me."

²⁰ And God came to Balaam at night and said to him, "If the men come to call you, rise *and* go with them; but only the word which I speak to you—that you shall do." ²¹ So Balaam rose in the morning, saddled his donkey, and went with the princes of Moab.

²² Then God's anger was aroused because he went, and the Angel of the LORD took His stand in the way as an adversary against him. And he was riding on his donkey, and his two servants *were* with him. ²³ Now the donkey saw the Angel of the LORD standing in the way with His drawn sword in His hand, and the donkey turned aside out of the way and went into the field. So Balaam struck the donkey to turn her back onto the road.

²⁴ Then the Angel of the LORD stood in a narrow path between the vineyards, *with* a wall on this side and a wall on that side. ²⁵ And when the donkey saw the Angel of

the LORD, she pushed herself against the wall and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall; so he struck her again.

²⁶ Then the Angel of the LORD went further, and stood in a narrow place where there *was* no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left. ²⁷ And when the donkey saw the Angel of the LORD, she lay down under Balaam; so Balaam's anger was aroused, and he struck the donkey with his staff.

²⁸ Then the LORD opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?"

²⁹ And Balaam said to the donkey, "Because you have abused me. I wish there were a sword in my hand, for now I would kill you!"

³⁰ So the donkey said to Balaam, "*Am* I not your donkey on which you have ridden, ever since *I became yours*, to this day? Was I ever disposed to do this to you?" And he said, "No."

³¹ Then the LORD opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the Angel of the LORD standing in the way with His drawn sword in His hand; and he bowed his head and fell flat on his face.

³² And the Angel of the LORD said to him, "Why have you struck your donkey these three times? Behold, I have come out to stand against you, because *your way is perverse before Me*. ³³ The donkey saw Me and turned aside from Me these three times. If she had not turned aside from Me, surely I would also have killed you by now, and let her live."

³⁴ And Balaam said to the Angel of the LORD, "I have sinned, for I did not know You stood in the way against me. Now therefore, if it displeases You, I will turn back."

³⁵ Then the Angel of the LORD said to Balaam, "Go with the men, but only the word that I speak to you, that you shall speak." So Balaam went with the princes of Balak.

Three & Four-Year Olds (pp 58-61)

Pre-Class Activity:

As children arrive, display a picture of a priest blessing the congregation. (These can be found on line, or in jurisdictional publications.) While settling in, and checking attendance, ask children to look at the picture and talk about what the priest is doing. Open with prayer, and explain that the priest is giving everyone a blessing—a sign of God's love.

Introducing the Story:

Sometimes we want to do things in our own way. But often there is a better way. Another person may help us find it. And it is always better to do things God's way than just our own.

Tell the children that you are going to hear a story about a man named Balaam, who wanted to do things his own way.

Telling the Story:

Barak was the king of the land of Moab. He did not want to share the land with anyone except his friends. But one day he saw some people from Israel on the land. "No!" said the king.

King Barak knew a strong man named Barlaam. King Barak said to Barlaam, "Go tell these people from Israel: "GET OUT!"

Barlaam said, "I must ask God if He wants me to do this."

God told Baraam, "If King Barak's men come to call you, go with them. Wait until they come—that is what I want you to do." But Barlaam did not do what God told him. He rode his donkey to meet King Barak's men and went with them.

God was angry that Barlaam did not do as he was told. God sent an angel to stand in front of Barlaam's donkey on the road. The donkey could not go ahead.

But what a surprise! Only the donkey could see the angel! Barlaam thought that the donkey was just lazy and did not want to move. He could not see the angel. He did not know that the donkey could not move. Barlaam got so angry that he hit the donkey.

Then another surprise—the donkey talked to Barlaam! The donkey said, "Why do you hit me?"

Then Barlaam saw the angel. The angel said, "The donkey did nothing wrong. You are the one who is wrong. Now, go with King Balak's men. This time, do as I tell you."

So Barlaam and his donkey went ahead on the road. He met King Balak at the place where the people of Israel were staying. But he did not tell them to get out. He told them that God is good. He told them that God loved them. He blessed the people of Israel. He even built altars and prayed to God.

King Balak was not happy. This was not what he wanted Balaam to say. But Balaam was glad that this time, he had done what God wanted him to do.

Learning Activities:

Have a tube of toothpaste, a paper plate and some wipes for cleanup. Squeeze a little toothpaste out onto a plate. Try putting the cap on and be a little messy.

Then squeeze a bunch of toothpaste out of the tube. As you do this you can chat to the children about how toothpaste is great but it can be messy. Finally, when you have a bit of a mess ask the children to help you put the toothpaste back into the tube. After a few attempts you can talk about how easy it is for the toothpaste to come out but how it is practically impossible to put it back in. When Barlaam did what he wanted to do, not what God wanted, he could not go back and do it over. That's like toothpaste in the tube—once we squeeze it out, we can't put it back in.

Review and Closing:

God told Balaam to go and do only what God wanted him to do. We should be ready to do what God wants us to do. Ask the children what they can do to be ready to do what God wants. Suggest: They can pray, hear stories from the Bible, attend Sunday School and Divine Liturgy, etc.

When we try to do what God wants us to do, He will bless us. He will give us His love. Remind the children that the priest blesses us in church, showing us that God loves us. In the story, Balaam blessed the people of Israel.

Read aloud the Dr. Seuss poem on page 60 (note: the second-last word "to" is missing in the poem text) and let the children enjoy its rhythm.

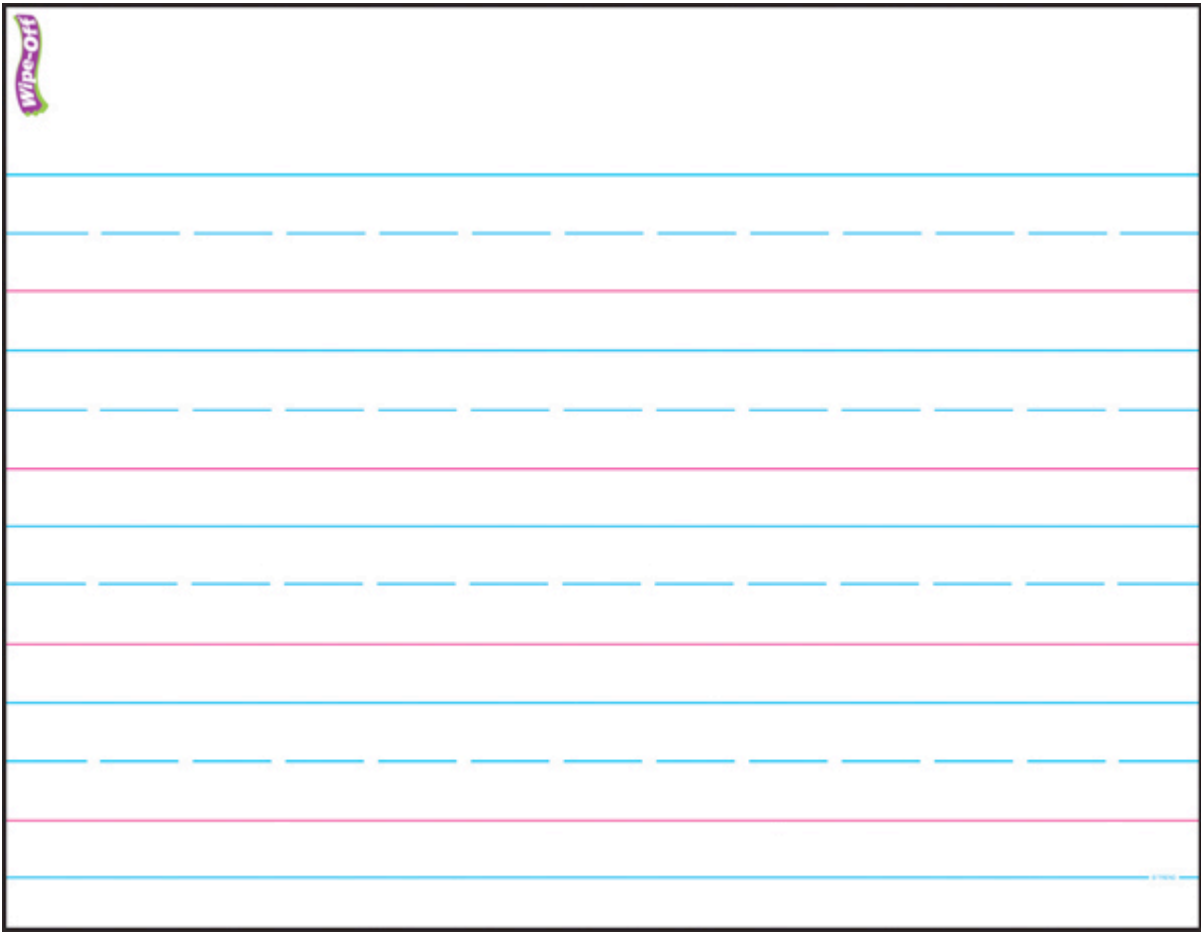
Have children write a large letter B on the lined paper (page 61) to help them remember the word "bless." Close with prayer.



"You have brains in your head.
 You have feet in your shoes.
 You can steer yourself
 in any direction you choose.
 You're on your own.
 And you know what you know.
 You are the guy who'll decide where
 go."

Dr. Seuss

Create something at LiveLuvCreate.com



Level: Kindergarten & First Grade (pp 62-65)

Pre-Class Activity:

As children arrive, display a picture of a priest blessing the congregation. (These can be found on line, or in jurisdictional publications.) While settling in, and checking attendance, ask children to look at the picture and talk about what the priest is doing. Explain that the priest is blessing everyone—showing them God's love for them. Help the children practice making the sign of the cross on themselves, and tell them that God lets us put His blessing on ourselves. Open with prayer.

Introducing the Story:

Sometimes we want to do things in our own way. But often there is a better way. Another person may help us find it. And it is always better to do things God's way than just our own.

Tell the children that you are going to hear a story about a man named Balaam, who wanted to do things his own way.

Telling the Story:

Barak was the king of the land of Moab. He did not want to share the land with anyone except his friends. But one day he saw some people from Israel on the land. "No!" said the king.

King Barak knew a strong man named Barlaam. King Barak said to Barlaam, "Go tell these people from Israel: "GET OUT!"

Barlaam said, "I must ask God if He wants me to do this."

God told Baraam, "If King Barak's men come to call you, go with them. Wait until they come—that is what I want you to do." But Barlaam did not do what God told him. He rode his donkey to meet King Barak's men and went with them.

God was angry that Barlaam did not do as he was told. God sent an angel to stand in front of Barlaam's donkey on the road. The donkey could not go ahead.

But what a surprise! Only the donkey could see the angel! Barlaam thought that the donkey was just lazy and did not want to move. He could not see the angel. He did not know that the donkey could not move. Barlaam got so angry that he hit the donkey.

Then another surprise—the donkey talked to Barlaam! The donkey said, "Why do you hit me?"

Then Barlaam saw the angel. The angel said, "The donkey did nothing wrong. You are the one who is wrong. Now, go with King Balak's men. This time, do as I tell you."

So Barlaam and his donkey went ahead on the road. He met King Balak at the place where the people of Israel were staying. But he did not tell them to get out. He told them that God is good. He told them that God loved them. He blessed the people of Israel. He even built altars and prayed to God.

King Balak was not happy. This was not what he wanted Balaam to say. But Balaam was glad that this time, he had done what God wanted him to do.

Learning Activities:

Have a tube of toothpaste, a paper plate and some wipes for cleanup. Squeeze a little toothpaste out onto a plate. Try putting the cap on and be a little messy.

Then squeeze a bunch of toothpaste out of the tube. As you do this you can chat to the children about how toothpaste is great but it can be messy. Finally, when you have a bit of a mess ask the children to help you put the toothpaste back into the tube. After a few attempts you can talk about how easy it is for the toothpaste to come out but how it is practically impossible to put it back in. When Barlaam did what he wanted to do, not what God wanted, he could not go back and do it over. That's like toothpaste in the tube—once we squeeze it out, we can't put it back in.

Review and Closing:

God told Balaam to go and do only what God wanted him to do. We should be ready to do what God wants us to do. Ask the children what they can do to be ready to do what God wants. Suggest: They can pray, hear stories from the Bible, attend Sunday School and Divine Liturgy, etc.

When we try to do what God wants us to do, He will bless us. He will give us His love. Remind the children that the priest blesses us in church, showing us that God loves us. In the story, Balaam blessed the people of Israel.

Read aloud the Dr. Seuss poem on page 64 (note: the second-last word "to" is missing in the poem text) and let the children enjoy its rhythm. They could also do appropriate motions (pointing to head, pointing to feet, turning a steering wheel, pointing ahead for the direction to go.)

Have children write the word "Bless" on the lined paper (page 65) and review what it means—a sign of God's love. Close with prayer.



"You have brains in your head.
 You have feet in your shoes.
 You can steer yourself
 in any direction you choose.
 You're on your own.
 And you know what you know.
 You are the guy who'll decide where
 go."

Dr. Seuss

Create something at LiveLuvCreate.com

Always do your best!



Level: *Second & Third Grade (pp 66-70)*

Pre-Class Activity:

As children arrive, display a picture of a priest blessing the congregation. (These can be found on line, or in jurisdictional publications.) While settling in, and checking attendance, ask children to look at the picture and talk about what the priest is doing. Explain that the priest is blessing everyone—showing them God's love for them. Help the children practice making the sign of the cross on themselves, and tell them that God lets us put His blessing on ourselves. Open with prayer.

Introducing the Story:

Sometimes we want to do things in our own way. But often there is a better way. Another person may help us find it. And it is always better to do things God's way than just our own.

Tell the children that you are going to hear a story about a man named Balaam, who wanted to do things his own way.

Telling the Story:

Barak was the king of the land of Moab. He did not want to share the land with anyone except his friends. But one day he saw some people from Israel on the land. "No!" said the king.

King Barak knew a strong man named Barlaam. King Barak said to Barlaam, "Go tell these people from Israel: "GET OUT!"

Barlaam said, "I must ask God if He wants me to do this."

God told Baraam, "If King Barak's men come to call you, go with them. Wait until they come—that is what I want you to do." But Barlaam did not do what God told him. He rode his donkey to meet King Barak's men and went with them.

God was angry that Barlaam did not do as he was told. God sent an angel to stand in front of Barlaam's donkey on the road. The donkey could not go ahead.

But what a surprise! Only the donkey could see the angel! Barlaam thought that the donkey was just lazy and did not want to move. He could not see the angel. He did not know that the donkey could not move. Barlaam got so angry that he hit the donkey.

Then another surprise—the donkey talked to Barlaam! The donkey said, "Why do you hit me?"

Then Barlaam saw the angel. The angel said, "The donkey did nothing wrong. You are the one who is wrong. Now, go with King Balak's men. This time, do as I tell you."

So Barlaam and his donkey went ahead on the road. He met King Balak at the place where the people of Israel were staying. But he did not tell them to get out. He told them that God is good. He told them that God loved them. He blessed the people of Israel. He even built altars and prayed to God.

King Balak was not happy. This was not what he wanted Balaam to say. But Balaam was glad that this time, he had done what God wanted him to do.

Learning Activities:

Have a tube of toothpaste, a paper plate and some wipes for cleanup. Squeeze a little toothpaste out onto a plate. Try putting the cap on and be a little messy.

Then squeeze a bunch of toothpaste out of the tube. As you do this you can chat to the children about how toothpaste is great but it can be messy. Finally, when you have a bit of a mess ask the children to help you put the toothpaste back into the tube. After a few attempts you can talk about how easy it is for the toothpaste to come out but how it is practically impossible to put it back in. When Barlaam did what he wanted to do, not what God wanted, he could not go back and do it over. That's like toothpaste in the tube—once we squeeze it out, we can't put it back in.

Review and Closing:

God told Balaam to go and do only what God wanted him to do. We should be ready to do what God wants us to do. Ask the children what they can do to be ready to do what God wants. Suggest: They can pray, learn stories from the Bible, attend Sunday School and Divine Liturgy, try to help others, etc.

When we try to do what God wants us to do, He will bless us. He will give us His love. Remind the children that the priest blesses us in church, showing us that God loves us. In the story, Balaam blessed the people of Israel.

Remind the children that at first, Barlaam did not follow God's directions. He went off on his own with King Balak's men instead of waiting. Have them look at the chart on page 69. They can fill in the boxes with words or pictures showing what following directions sounds like and looks like. For example, following directions sounds like listening when your parents tell you to make your bed. Following directions looks like waiting to cross the street till the traffic light tells you it is OK to do so. Simple pictures, like a made bed or traffic light, can show these things. Short phrases can do so as well.

The children can use the lined paper (page 70) to write briefly about something from the story. They might write about what happened after the end of the story, or how someone was changed (Barlaam or King Balak) or anything else that they think is important from the story. They can write from the point of view of the angel or even the donkey.

Close with prayer,

Name _____

Following Directions

Looks like:	Sounds like:
	

Doing my Best

Looks like:	Sounds like:
	

©2012 Pearson Education, Inc. or its affiliate(s). All rights reserved.

Always do your best! 😊

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 15 sets of horizontal lines. Each set includes a solid blue top line, a dashed red middle line, and a solid green bottom line. A small yellow circle with a red dot is positioned at the start of each blue line, and a small red circle with a green dot is positioned at the start of each green line.

Level: Fourth & Fifth Grade (pp 71-75)

Pre-Class Activity:

As children arrive, display a picture of a priest blessing the congregation. (These can be found on line, or in jurisdictional publications.) While settling in, and checking attendance, ask children to look at the picture and talk about what the priest is doing. Explain that the priest is blessing everyone—showing them God's love for them. Help the children practice making the sign of the cross on themselves, and tell them that God lets us put His blessing on ourselves. Open with prayer.

Introducing the Story:

Sometimes we want to do things in our own way. But often there is a better way. Another person may help us find it. And it is always better to do things God's way than just our own.

Tell the children that you are going to hear a story about a man named Balaam, who wanted to do things his own way.

Telling the Story:

Barak was the king of the land of Moab. He did not want to share the land with anyone except his friends. But one day he saw some people from Israel on the land. "No!" said the king.

King Barak knew a strong man named Barlaam. King Barak said to Barlaam, "Go tell these people from Israel: "GET OUT!" In fact, he asked Barlaam to put a curse on them, because he was afraid they were taking over his land.

Barlaam said, "I must ask God if He wants me to do this."

God told Baraam, "If King Barak's men come to call you, go with them. Wait until they come—that is what I want you to do." But Barlaam did not do what God told him. He rode his donkey to meet King Barak's men and went with them.

God was angry that Barlaam did not do as he was told. God sent an angel to stand in front of Barlaam's donkey on the road. The donkey could not go ahead.

But what a surprise! Only the donkey could see the angel! Barlaam thought that the donkey was just lazy and did not want to move. He could not see the angel. He did not know that the donkey could not move. Barlaam got so angry that he hit the donkey.

Then another surprise—the donkey talked to Barlaam! The donkey said, "Why do you hit me?"

Then Barlaam saw the angel. The angel said, "The donkey did nothing wrong. You are the one who is wrong. Now, go with King Balak's men. This time, do as I tell you."

So Barlaam and his donkey went ahead on the road. He met King Balak at the place where the people of Israel were staying. But he did not tell them to get out. He did not curse them. He told them that God is good. He told them that God loved them. He blessed the people of Israel. He even built altars and prayed to God.

King Balak was not happy. This was not what he had in mind! But Balaam was glad that this time, he had done what God wanted him to do.

Learning Activities:

Have a tube of toothpaste, a paper plate and some wipes for cleanup. Squeeze a little toothpaste out onto a plate. Try putting the cap on and be a little messy.

Then squeeze a bunch of toothpaste out of the tube. As you do this you can chat to the children about how toothpaste is great but it can be messy. Finally, when you have a bit of a mess ask the children to help you put the toothpaste back into the tube. After a few attempts you can talk about how easy it is for the toothpaste to come out but how it is practically impossible to put it back in. When Barlaam did what he wanted to do, not what God wanted, he could not go back and do it over. That's like toothpaste in the tube—once we squeeze it out, we can't put it back in.

Review and Closing:

God told Balaam to go and do only what God wanted him to do.

Remind the children that at first, Barlaam did not follow God's directions. He went off on his own with King Balak's men instead of waiting.

Ask the children: What surprised you in the story? (Probably the talking donkey.) Ask: Why do you think the angel of God gave a donkey power to speak? (Balaam needed something surprising to get his attention, and to make him understand that he needed to follow God's way, not his own. After the donkey spoke to him, and made him see that something unusual was happening, he was ready to listen to the angel and be willing to follow God's instructions instead of doing things his own way.)

Review with the children the eight points for decision-making on page 74. Let them tell about decisions they have made, and how these points might help them make decisions in the future. Perhaps some children will notice one of the eight points that they feel is especially important.

Have them use the lined page (75) to write about what might have happened after the end of the story, or how someone was changed (Barlaam or King Balak) or anything else that they think is important from the story. If the wish, they can write from the point of view of the angel or even the donkey.

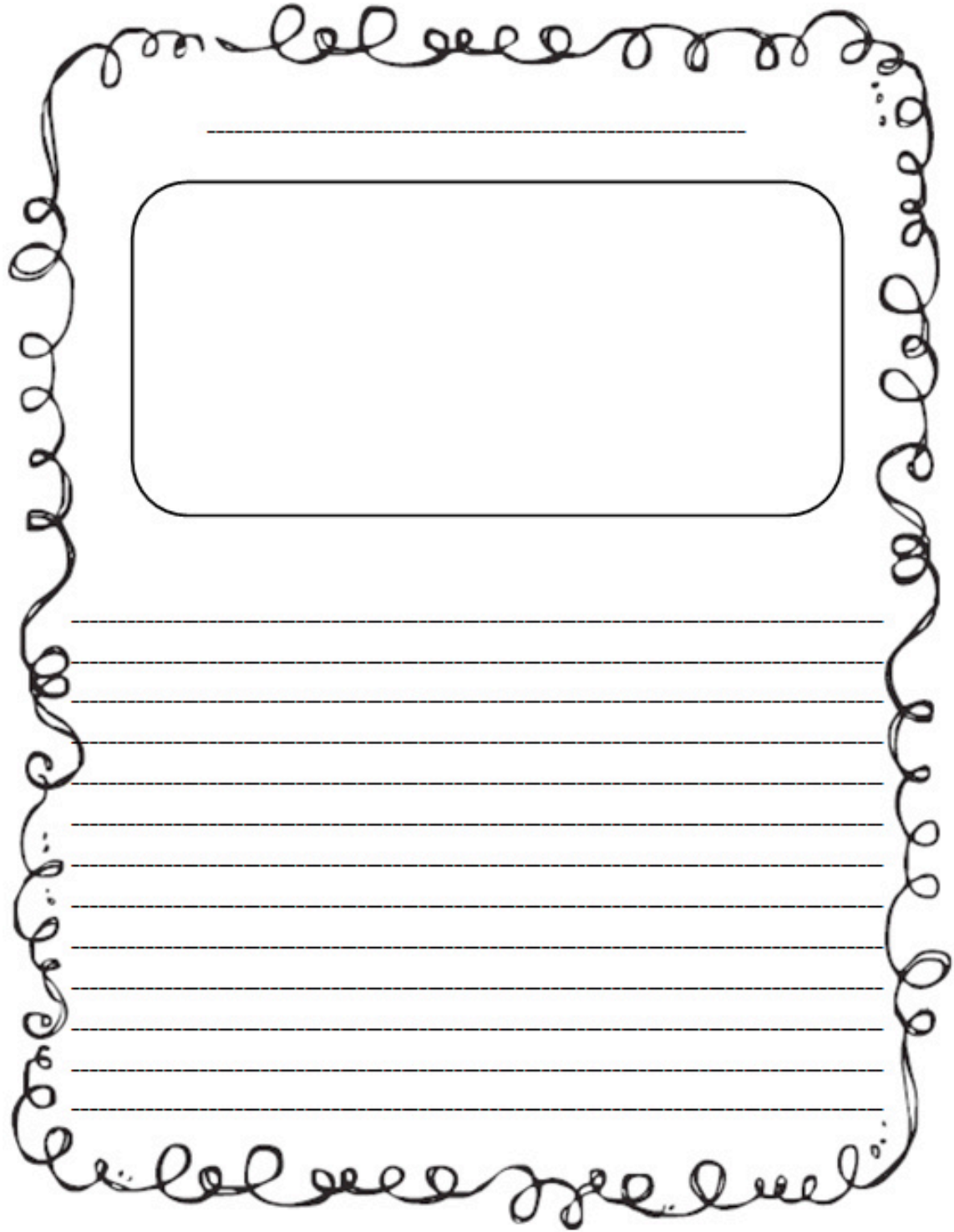
Review once more the idea of trying to make our decisions in ways that are pleasing to God, as the chart with the eight points shows. Remind the children that God wants to give us His blessing, and that He will do that when we try to follow His way.

Close with prayer.

Eight Tests for Decision Making

1. **Scriptural Test**—“Has God already spoken about it in His Word?” (2 Timothy 3:16)
2. **Secrecy Test**—“Would it bother me if everyone knew this was my choice?” (Proverbs 11:3)
3. **Survey Test**—“What if everyone followed my example?” (1 Timothy 4:12)
4. **Spiritual Test**—“Am I being people-pressured or Spirit-led?” (Galatians 1:10)
5. **Stumbling Test**—“Could this cause another person to stumble?” (Romans 14:21)
6. **Serenity Test**—“Have I prayed and received peace about this decision?” (Philippians 4:6–7)
7. **Sanctification Test**—“Will this keep me from growing in the character of Christ?” (2 Corinthians 3:18)
8. **Supreme Test**—“Does this glorify God?” (1 Corinthians 10:31)

“Walk as children of light. . . and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.”
(Ephesians 5:8, 10)



Day Five - There Is Something In This for You!

Emphasis or Theme: Jabez prayed a simple prayer of faith that was answered with many blessings.

Scripture(s): I Chronicles 4:9-10

⁹ Now Jabez was more honorable than his brothers, and his mother called his name Jabez,^[a] saying, "Because I bore *him* in pain." ¹⁰ And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, "Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep *me* from evil, that I may not cause pain!" So God granted him what he requested.

Level: Three & Four-Year Olds (pp 77-80)

Pre-Class Activity:

While settling in, and checking attendance, have copies of the coloring sheet (page 79) ready for children to color. Open with prayer.

Introducing the Story:

This story is told in just a few short verses, but has big results. A look at the prayer of Jabez and what he actually asked God for, then the results of that prayer show how much God loves us and will give us what we ask.

Telling the Story:

Tell children that this prayer was said by a man named Jabez. We don't know much about him: what he did for a living, whether he was married and had children, how old he was. He lived a long time before Jesus was born. But many things in his prayer are like the things Jesus told us to pray for, and do. All we know is that Jabez prayed this prayer to God, and God answered him. Here are some things we hear in the prayer:

--Jabez asked for God's blessing (review with the children what "blessing" means, as you talked about it in the previous session)

--he asked God to let him make new friends so he could help and do good to more people (Note to teacher: this is a very simplified definition of the phrase "enlarge his territory")

--he asked God to watch over him (God's hand would be over him)

--he asked God to keep him from doing bad things (evil)

--he asked that with all of these things he was praying for, God would help him not to hurt anyone. Many things in this prayer are like things that Jesus told us to pray for.

The rest of the story tells us that God answered the prayer of Jabez, and gave him many good things.

Learning Activities:

Have a large selection of pictures from magazines, newspapers, or copied pages from books showing various things that could fit into the petitions of the prayer of Jabez. (Examples: animals, children playing, families together, people in church and especially people praying, one person helping or serving food to or being friendly to another, etc. Include at least one picture of a person who might especially ask to be watched over by God, such as a person who looks poor, hungry, or in distress of some kind, or who is doing something difficult like

a high dive or skiing down a mountain.) Look with children at the pictures and ask them to:

- Find a picture that shows someone being friends (children together)
- Find a picture that shows someone doing a good thing (serving food to another, caring for a pet or animal, etc.)
- Find a picture that shows someone asking God's blessing (people in church, the person in the coloring sheet, people gathered around a table for a meal, etc.)
- Find a picture of someone who needs God to watch over him or her (person in distress, person doing difficult thing)

Be ready to prompt children to find appropriate pictures; no right or wrong answers. Tell them that all the pictures of people who have good things (friends, family, a pet, food to eat, people to help them, ability to do something like a high dive) are God's answers to prayers. All good things are gifts from God.

Review and Closing:

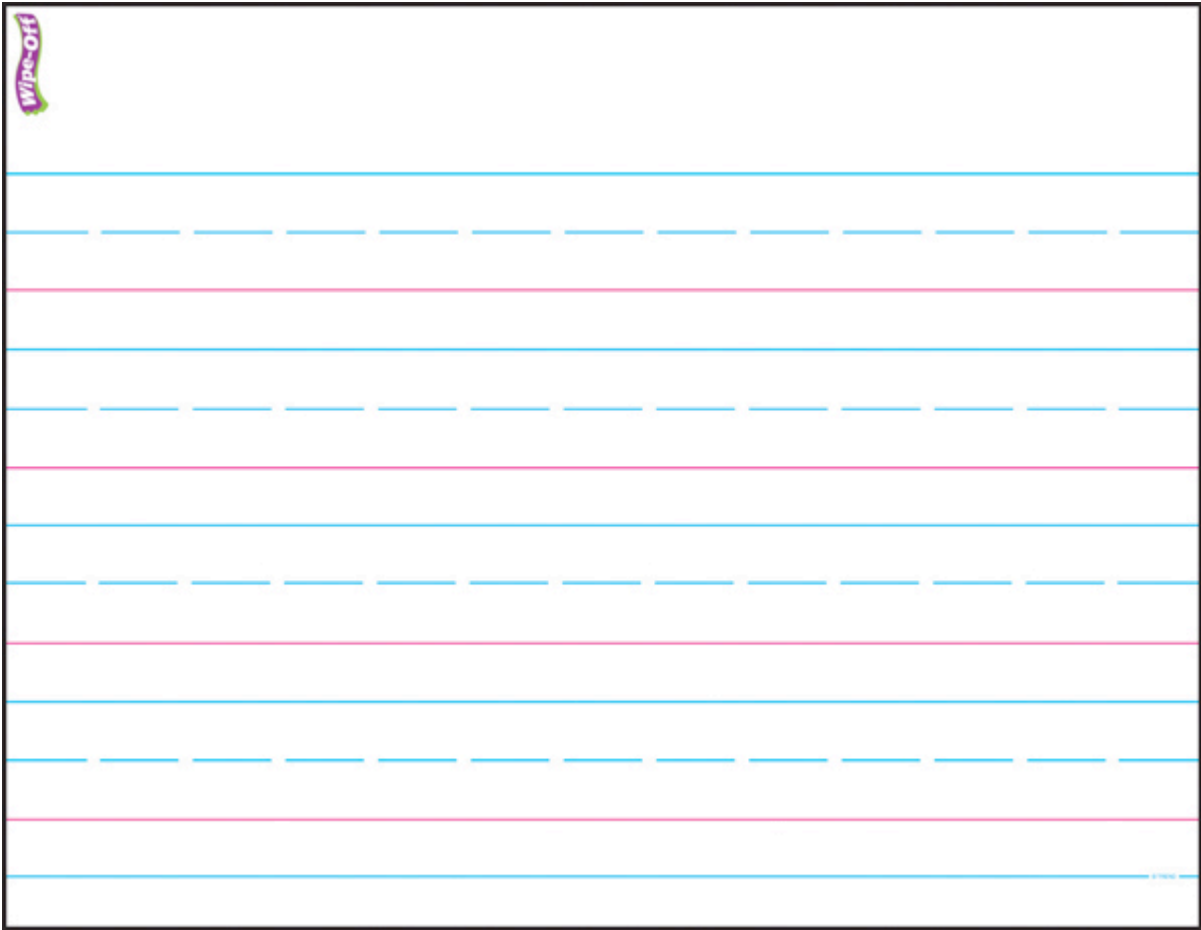
Have children use the lined sheet (page 80) to write a large letter **P** for "pray." Fill in the rest of the letters of the word for them. Encourage them to say their own special prayer, as Jabez did, each day at home, and to include specific things they want to pray for. Encourage them to continue to pray and come to church, and give them any "final message" you wish to at the end of this session.

Close with prayer.

BibleWise



Copyright © 2006, BibleWise. All Rights Reserved. Drawing by JJ Johnston.



Level: Kindergarten & First Grade (pp 81-84)

Pre-Class Activity:

While settling in, and checking attendance, have copies of the sheet (page 83) ready for children to color like a wreath. Point out the words "Jesus never leaves you" and the leaves on the page. Open with prayer.

Introducing the Story:

This story is told in just a few short verses, but has big results. A look at the prayer of Jabez and what he actually asked God for, then the results of that prayer show how much God loves us and will give us what we ask.

Telling the Story:

Tell children that this prayer was said by a man named Jabez. We don't know much about him: what he did for a living, whether he was married and had children, how old he was. He lived a long time before Jesus was born. All we know is that Jabez prayed this prayer to God, and God answered him.

Here are some things we hear in the prayer:

--Jabez asked for God's blessing (review with the children what "blessing" means, as you talked about it in the previous session)

--he asked God to let him make new friends so he could help and do good to more people (Note to teacher: this is a very simplified definition of the phrase "enlarge his territory")

--he asked God to watch over him (God's hand would be over him)

--he asked God to keep him from doing bad things (evil)

--he asked that with all of these things he was praying for, God would help him not to hurt anyone.

Many things in this prayer are like things that Jesus told us to pray for and to do.

The rest of the story tells us that God answered the prayer of Jabez, and gave him many good things.

Learning Activities:

Have a large selection of pictures from magazines, newspapers, jurisdictional publications such as *Word Magazine* or copied pages from books showing various things that could fit into the petitions of the prayer of Jabez. (Examples: animals, children playing, families together, people in church and especially people praying, one person helping or serving food to or being friendly to another, etc. Include at least one picture of a person who might especially ask

to be watched over by God, such as a person who looks poor, hungry, or in distress of some kind, or who is doing something difficult like a high dive or skiing down a mountain.) Look with children at the pictures and ask them to:

--Find a picture that shows someone being a friend (children together)

--Find a picture that shows someone doing a good thing (serving food to another, caring for a pet or animal, etc.)

--Find a picture that shows someone asking God's blessing (people in church, people gathered around a table for a meal, etc.)

--Find a picture of someone who needs God to watch over him or her (person in distress, person doing difficult thing)

Be ready to prompt children to find appropriate pictures; no right or wrong answers. Tell them that all the pictures of people who have good things (friends, family, a pet, food to eat, people to help them, ability to do something like a high dive) are God's answers to prayers. All good things are gifts from God.

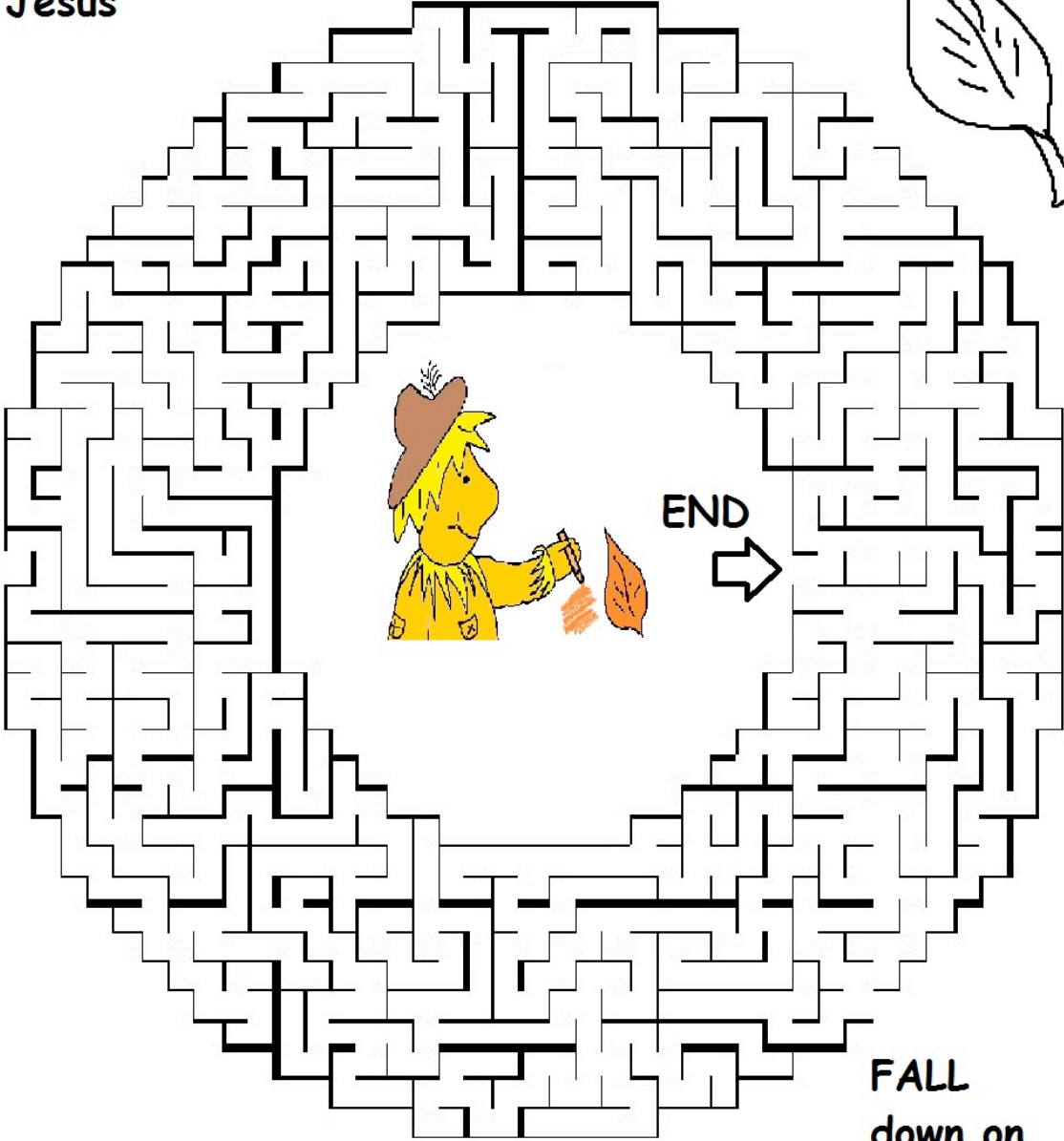
Review and Closing:

Have children use the lined sheet (page 84) to write a word that tells something they want to pray for. (Offer writing help as needed.)

Encourage them to say their own special prayer, as Jabez did, each day at home, and to include specific things they want to pray for. Encourage them to continue to pray and come to church, and give them any "final message" you wish to at the end of this last session.

Close with prayer.

**FALL-ing For
Jesus**



**FALL
down on
your knees
and pray!**

Jesus Never LEAVES you!

Always do your best!



Level: Second & Third Grade (pp 85-88)

Pre-Class Activity:

While settling in, and checking attendance, have a large sheet of newsprint attached to a wall or chalkboard. Also have 3x5 cards with single words in large letters: HELP, LOVE, HOPE, GIVE, YES, SHARE. Have several copies of each, enough for your students each to choose a few. Have tape and colored markers available. As students come in, ask them to choose one or two words that could be like short prayers to God. They can decorate the cards if they choose to, and then tape them onto the newsprint. (If students need help understanding how the single words can be like prayers, suggest such things as saying "yes" when your Mom asks you to clean your room, or trying to offer "hope" to a sad friend, or being willing to "give" a favorite toy to a younger sibling to play with, or to "share" a snack with that younger child. Telling God you will do these things can be like a prayer.) Take a few minutes to let students tell why they chose the words they did. Open with prayer.

Introducing the Story:

This story is told in just a few short verses, so it's a little like the one-word prayers we just thought about. The prayer said by a man named Jabez is also short, but it pleased God, and God gave him what he asked for. A look at the prayer of Jabez and what he asked God for, and the results of that prayer, show how much God loves us and wants to give us good things.

Telling the Story:

Not much is known about Jabez - like what he did for a living, if he was married and had children, his age at the time of this short story.

All we know is that Jabez prayed a specific prayer to God, who answered him.

--Jabez asked for God's blessing (review with the students what "blessing" means, as you talked about it in the previous session)

--he asked God to let him meet new people so he could help and do good to more people (Note to teacher: this is a simplified definition of the phrase "enlarge his territory")

--he asked God to watch over him (God's hand would be over him)

--he asked God to keep him from doing bad or harmful things (evil)

--he asked that with all of these things he was praying for, God would help him not to hurt anyone.

Many things in this prayer are like things that Jesus told us to pray for and to do. We know that people like Jabez, who lived a long time before Jesus was born, already loved God and tried to do what God wanted them to do.

The rest of the story tells us that God answered the prayer of Jabez, and gave him many good things.

Ask students to name some things that Jabez did not ask for (money, power, popularity) and ask: What does this teach us? (It teaches us that prayer for the ability to help others is good prayer. It is also good to ask God to watch over us, to guide us, to keep us from harming people or things. God will give us what we need to do these things if we mean it when we ask Him for them.)

Learning Activities:

Tell students about a woman named Hannah, another person whose story is in the Bible. She asked God for something, just as Jabez did.

Then say this simplified version of I Samuel 1: 11: "*O Lord, if You will remember me and give me a son, I will bring him to serve You all the days of his life.*" Let students answer the question: What did Hannah pray for? (A son.)

Next, read from the Bible I Samuel 2: 19, which describes Hannah making a little robe for her son each year and taking it to him as he served in the Temple. Ask students: Does this verse tell us that God answered Hannah's prayer? (Yes.) Does the verse tell us that Hannah kept her promise? (Yes, because it says that she took the robe she made for her son, whose name was Samuel, to the Temple where he was serving God as she promised he would.) You might add that Hannah then had other children, both boys and girls.

This is just one example of God answering prayers. He will always answer us and will give us what is best for us, even sometimes in ways we did not expect. As Jesus told us, "Ask, and you shall receive."

Review and Closing:

Have students use the lined page (88) to write about something that might have happened to Jabez after he said his prayer.

Have copies of page 87 for students to take home (and color if they wish to) as a reminder to pray each day. As in the picture, even a very brief prayer is a good way to begin the day. Offer children any "closing remarks" on this last day of your week together.

Close with prayer.



Bless Me

Always do your best! 😊

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 12 rows. Each row has a solid blue top line, a dashed red middle line, and a solid green bottom line. A small yellow circle with a red dot is positioned at the start of each row.

Level: Fourth & Fifth Grade (pp 89-92)

Pre-Class Activity:

While settling in and checking attendance, have ready some 3x5 cards and pens or thin markers. Ask students to write a short prayer that speaks to God about something important to them. (The prayer should be approximately 8 to 15 words.)

Introducing the Story:

This story, like the prayers we just wrote, is short. It's told in just a few verses. Yet it had good results for Jabez. So let's take a look at the prayer of Jabez and what he asked God for, and then at the results of that prayer, which show how much God loves us and wants to give us good things.

Telling the Story:

Not much is known about Jabez - like what he did for a living, if he was married and had children, his age at the time of this short story.

All we know is Jabez prayed a specific prayer to God, who answered him.

All we know is that Jabez prayed a specific prayer to God, who answered him.

--Jabez asked for God's blessing (review what "blessing" means)

--he asked God to let him meet new people so he could help and do good to more people (Note this is a simple definition of "enlarge his territory")

--he asked God to watch over him (God's hand would be over him)

--he asked God to keep him from doing bad or harmful things (evil)

--he asked that God would help him not to hurt anyone.

Many things in this prayer are like things that Jesus told us to pray for and to do. We know that people like Jabez, who lived a long time before Jesus was born, already loved God and tried to do what God wanted them to do.

The rest of the story tells us that God answered the prayer of Jabez, and gave him many good things.

Ask students to name some things that Jabez did not ask for (money, power, popularity) and ask: What does this teach us? (It teaches us that prayer for the ability to help others is good prayer. It is also good to ask God to watch over us, to guide us, to keep us from harming people or things. God will give us what we need to do these things if we mean it when we ask Him for them.)

Learning Activities:

Have Bibles ready for students to consult. Let them work together in groups of 2 or 3. Put these Biblical citations and questions on the board or a sheet of newsprint displayed for the class:

Psalm 18: 6 What did David ask God for?

I Kings 3: 9 What did Solomon ask God for?

I Samuel I:11 What did Hannah ask God for?

When students have found the answers, tell them that these people were given what they asked for (David—help, Solomon—understanding or wisdom, Hannah—a son) because their prayers were for good things. God wants to give us good things, and the things we need.

Encourage students to listen, when in church, for the words of Saint John Chrysostom's prayer, which the priest says near the end of every Liturgy: "For every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from Thee, the Father of Lights." This reminds us that everything good comes from God. Have students use the lined page (92) to write about something that might have happened to Jabez after he offered his prayer.

Review and Closing:

Have copies of page 91 for each student. Go over the sections of the page together, asking students to think about names or words they might put in each one. They can complete the page at home, as a reminder to pray.

Make any "closing remarks" you wish to on this last day, and encourage students to come to church, to attend church school, and to pray at home.

Close with prayer.

Prayer Time

DATE.....

Thank You,
Lord, for...

People in Need
of Prayer

Requests:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Answers

Working On

