



SUPER BIBLE GAMES

THAT EVERY SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER SHOULD KNOW

AGES 8-12

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BIBLE GAMES

Ages 8 - 12

In this book you will find instructions for 46 great Bible games for elementary-aged children. As they grow, kids are able to understand more of the messages and lessons that the Bible has to tell. With games that are a little bit more sophisticated than the games they played when they were younger, you can give them a fun and interesting way to learn about God's love, prayer, and how to live a pious life.

- Age Range: While these activities are geared toward 1st - 5th graders, all can be adapted for a wider age range.
- Completion times: All games can be completed in less than 30 minutes for limited little attention spans!
- Materials and Prep: Almost all of the materials necessary to complete these games can be found in your classroom! Some games require a little bit of before class prep, but never more than a few minutes.
- Discussion questions: Discussion questions and related Bible verses are listed at the bottom of each page. Use these to reinforce and expand learning concepts! All verses are from the New International Version.

Each game corresponds with a story or situation from the Bible. Depending on the ages and maturity levels of the students, read the story from a Children's Bible or an adult version. Next, explain the game and use the optional **bold** teaching script to make connections and guide conversation. Finally, follow up with the discussion questions and related Bible verses.

All of the games in this book provide opportunities for discussion of virtues, sin, lessons the Bible teaches, God's Word, and all about God's love.

Have fun and God bless!

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Biblical Science Discussion & Match Worksheet

God's Creation

This game offers the opportunity to get into a much deeper discussion about creation and how it actually does work with the things scientists are discovering in the secular world. So make sure you plan plenty of time for the discussion portion.

Related Bible Story:

Genesis 1-2:2

Materials:

- Copies of the game board
- Pens or pencils
- Bibles for reference

Before Class Prep:

None

How to Play:

The purpose of this game is to help you see how often science changes and how often those changes come closer in line with the Bible.

The Bible describes the creation story in days and that can be confusing for some people. Here's how the days are listed:

- Day 1 - God created Earth, space, time, and light
- Day 2 - God created the atmosphere
- Day 3 - God created dry land and plants
- Day 4 - God created the sun, moon, and stars
- Day 5 - God created sea creatures and birds
- Day 6 - God created land animals and man

Do you think it's possible to create all of those things; things that are so big and vast, in just one day? Before we start the creation game, think about this:

God used the word "day" before there was even a sun. So he may not have meant "day" as we think of it (from sunrise to sunset or 24 hours). Instead, he used a span of time that we humans could better understand. God's "day" in this story just meant a period of time that actually could mean millions of years.

Creation Match Game

Match the Bible verses with the scientific statements

| SCIENTISTS USED TO BELIEVE | BUT NOW SCIENCE SHOWS | THE BIBLE ALWAYS SAID |
|---|---|-----------------------|
| Only between one thousand and twelve hundred stars are in the whole universe. | Trillions upon trillions of stars; they cannot be counted by man! | |
| The Earth is flat. | The Earth is round. | |
| Light does not move; it is just there. | Light moves - and has physical properties; "light waves" or photons. | |
| Bad blood should be bled out to make a person well. | Blood is vital to life, sometimes a transfusion is needed to add blood. | |
| Air has no weight, it is just there. | Oxygen, nitrogen, carbon dioxide have respective atomic weights that can be measured. | |
| Winds blow straight across the Earth. | Air currents move in large, circular patterns. | |
| People just get sick; hand washing is not important. | Many diseases spread by contact; wash your hands in running water. | |
| The stars are all similar to each other. | Each and every star is actually unique. | |

King James Version

- A. Isaiah 40:22a: "It is he that sits upon the circle of the earth..."
- B. Job 38:19a: "Where is the way where light dwells? ..."
- C. I Corinthians 15:41b: "...for one star differs from another star in glory."
- D. Leviticus 17:11a: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood..."
- E. Jeremiah 33:22a: "As the hosts of heaven cannot be numbered..."
- F. Job 28:25a: "To make the weight for the winds..."
- G. Ecclesiastes 1:6b: "... and the wind returns again according to his circuits."
- H. Leviticus 15:13b: "... and wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in running water..."

Creation Match Game- Answer Key

| SCIENTISTS USED TO BELIEVE | BUT NOW SCIENCE SHOWS | THE BIBLE ALWAYS SAID |
|---|---|-----------------------|
| Only between one thousand and twelve hundred stars are in the whole universe. | Trillions upon trillions of stars; they cannot be counted by man! | E. Jer 33:22 |
| The Earth is flat. | The Earth is round. | A. Isa 40: 22a |
| Light does not move; it is just there. | Light moves - and has physical properties; "light waves" or photons. | B. Job 38:19 |
| Bad blood should be bled out to make a person well. | Blood is vital to life, sometimes a transfusion is needed to add blood. | D. Lev 17:11 |
| Air has no weight, it is just there. | Oxygen, nitrogen, carbon dioxide have respective atomic weights that can be measured. | F. Job 28:25 |
| Winds blow straight across the Earth. | Air currents move in large circular patterns. | G. Eccl 1:6 |
| People just get sick; hand washing is not important. | Many diseases spread by contact; wash your hands in running water. | H. Lev 15:13 |
| The stars are all similar to each other. | Each and every star is actually unique. | C. 1 Cor 15:41 |

Discussion Questions:

Be sure to encourage the kids to voice their own opinions and then help them find scriptures to back up what they say.

- The Bible is not a scientific journal that spells out everything specifically how it happened word for word. So what does that mean? (It is subject to interpretation.)
- Do you think that God created the earth in seven days the way we measure them?
- Who was there, other than God, to know and record exactly what happened during the Creation?
- Does it seem like science keeps changing in a way that is actually coming closer to what the Bible already says?

Related Bible Verses:

- ❖ *I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. (Psalm 139:14)*

Make-a-Square Game: God's Guidance and Protection

Noah & the Great Flood

This blindfolded cooperation game shows how much better and easier life is with God's protection and guidance. With God's help and love we can shed our blindfolds and "see."

Related Bible Story:

Genesis 6:9 – 9:17

Materials:

- Blindfolds
- 1 piece of string – long enough that the children can each hold onto it and stand or sit side-by-side

Before Class Prep:

None

How to Play

Place the string on the floor, in the shape of a circle.

Have the children sit, blindfolded, on the floor around the circle and pick it up together.

Instruct the class that, while blindfolded, they must work together to make the string circle into a giant square.

Let them work on making a square until they feel they've done their best job.

When they feel that they have made a square, allow them to remove their blindfolds.

Repeat the game, this time without the blindfolds.

If we have God in our lives and we ask for his protection, then with his love and guidance we can “see.” We ought to remember to ask God for his protection every morning and thank him for it every night. In fact, we should thank him for it whenever we realize he’s provided it during the day. It will make all of our tasks easier.

Discussion Questions:

- What were some of the problems you ran into while trying to create the square blindfolded?
- How are these problems similar to a life without God’s protection and guidance?
- How much easier was it to create the square without the blindfolds?

Related Bible Verses:

- ❖ *I sought the Lord, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears. (Psalm 34:4)*
- ❖ *For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock. (Psalm 27:5)*

Word Search Puzzle

God's Promise to Abraham

Abraham spent many years following the will of God. In the end, God followed through on his promise and blessed Abraham with a child.

Related Bible Stories:

Genesis 15:1-21

Materials:

- Copies of the puzzle for each child

Before Class Prep:

Note quotations from scripture about each person or place

How to Play:

Have the children complete the word search on the following page.

Discussion Questions:

- What did God promise Abraham? Did God follow through with his promise?
- What were some valuable traits that Abraham showed while waiting upon God's promise?
- Discuss how God may not always give us what we **want**, but that He will provide all we **need**. Ask the children to name things that they **need** in their homes versus things that they just like to have.

Related Bible Verses:

- ❖ *Then they believed his promises and sang his praise.* (Psalm 106:12)
- ❖ *We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.* (Hebrews 6:19)

God's Promise to Abraham

Word Search

Can you find the names of the people whom Abraham met in his travels before he came into the promises of God?

o o b l a n t l o t n n
 v s a a s d e r i v t e
 m e h c e h s h d p s t
 i t g m t j b e y e e e
 i i p e i z h g e i t r
 i z b h n o e e r n i n
 j z i n a a b r a m m n
 e i r h a r r i s h o t
 d r o l n a o t e o d d
 y e l l a v n a d r o j
 r p i s c a a a h a s n
 s a r a i l a n c n h o

Horan
 Bethel
 Egypt
 Hebron
 Lord
 Pharaoh

Canaan
 Ai
 Jordan Valley
 Abram
 Lot
 Perizzites

Shechem
 Negev
 Zoar
 Sarai
 Canaanites
 Sodomites

Rise Up & Walk Game

Abraham and Sarah Have a Baby

Show your students how powerful the miracles of God really are with this fun race game.

Related Bible Story:

Genesis 15:1-6

Materials:

- 2 ribbons
- Masking tape

Before Class Prep:

None

How to Play:

Form 2 teams. Have both teams stand at one end of the room. Using masking tape, tape each child's legs together at the ankles and tape their arms together at the wrists.

We celebrate miracles because they show God's goodness to all who hear the Word, but we also celebrate them because they show how God can set a person free. Let's pretend we have bound limbs and see how far we can get.

At the other end of the room have two pieces of ribbon.

In this relay race, the first member of each team will hop to the other end of the room, pick up the ribbon, tie a bow in it, turn, and hop back, bringing the tied ribbon to the next child.

That child hops up to the other end of the room away from their team, unties the ribbon, then returns with the untied ribbon, and gives it to the next child.

The next child will hop with the untied ribbon to the other end of the room, tie it in a bow, and hop back with it, and so on. Whichever team finishes the race first wins.

Discussion Questions:

- How much harder would your life be if you were bound like this all the time? Name some day-to-day tasks that would be almost impossible.
- When Jesus healed someone who had never been able to walk before, how do you think that person felt?
- What were some of the emotions Sarah probably felt when she was old enough to be a great-great-great grandmother, and God finally gave her a baby?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *He remembers his covenant forever, the promise he made, for a thousand generations, the covenant he made with Abraham, the oath he swore to Isaac. (Psalm 105:8-9)*

'God's Word vs. the World' Game

Isaac and Rebekah

God's Word is sometimes still and small in comparison with the distractions of the world. This game demonstrates that in a fun and creative way.

Related Bible Story:

Genesis 24

Materials:

- Pots, pans, and/or other noisemakers
- Index cards with scripture written on them

Before Class Prep:

None

How to Play:

Reading the Word of God is an important part of knowing God's will, but we are often challenged by outside distractions. We feel we don't have time. We have too much homework. Our friends are texting us to come over. The distractions of the world are loud, like banging, noisy sounds, and God's Word is like a still, small voice.

Give one student an index card with a scripture verse on it. He will play God. Have the other students bang and make noises using instruments (or pots and pans). They will be "the world."

The child playing God reads the scripture in a normal voice, while the others bang and hoot and holler. The child playing God will repeatedly read the scripture, always in a normal voice until one of the other children hears it and can understand and remember it. The first to repeat it back verbatim wins the game.

Keep switching children so everyone has a turn to play an instrument and play the God role.

Scriptures to Use:

- John 6:35 -- "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry..."
- 1 John 4: 7 - "Beloved let us love one another, for love is of God..."
- Revelation 21:8 - "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End..."
- John 1:1 - "In the beginning was the Word. The word was with God and the word WAS God..."
- Matthew 6:33 - "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness..."
- 1 Corinthians 13:4 - "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast..."
- Exodus 20:2 - "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt..."

Discussion Questions:

- Give some examples of daily "noise" (distractions) that may keep us from hearing God's words.
- How can we work toward turning down or eliminating these noises?
- Why doesn't God just shout over the noise?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *He says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."* (Psalm 46:10)
- ❖ *He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed.* (Psalm 107:29)

Word Scramble

Jacob & Esau

The letters in each of the words in this message are out of order. Unscramble them to find the message.

Related Bible Story:

Genesis 27:1-26

Materials:

- Paper and pencils

Before Class Prep:

Copy the scramble for each child

How to Play:

For older and more advanced students, you can add a layer of difficulty by putting the words in a different order so that they have to unscramble the letters and the words to get the message. You could also choose to write the puzzle out on a chalkboard or dry-erase board and have them work together to solve it out loud.

oGd
si
lasawy
rfai.
Semeismot

Hsi
tryso
sitr'
reov
yte.

Answer: God is always fair. Sometimes his story isn't over yet.

Discussion Questions:

- If you have siblings, describe a time when you felt like your brother or sister was getting preferential treatment over you.
- Tell me about a time when you stood up for your brother/sister (cousin/friend).
- Have you ever taken advantage or blamed something on your brother/sister (cousin/friend)?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23)*
- ❖ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: if either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10)*

The Dark Box

Jacob Works 14 Years

Students will see that, though finding your way can be difficult at times, with persistence and God's love, anything is possible, and joy can be achieved.

Related Bible Story:

Genesis 29

Materials:

- 1 box
- 30 rectangular and triangular blocks
- 1 square block
- Towel or other means to cover the box

Before Class Prep:

If you can't find a square block, find another block that's unique in shape, or you can cover a rectangular block in either electrical or masking tape to make it look and feel different. Practice searching for the block without looking to make sure this won't be too hard for the kids in your group.

How to Play:

Introduce the game by holding the covered box with all of the blocks.

We've talked about listening to God's voice. Sometimes it's not easy to find the way, but there's joy at the other end. Let's practice, using this box.

Have children take turns sticking one hand in and searching for the square block.

God's will is like the square block. There are many things in life to distract us from finding God's will, just like all of these triangular blocks. Find the square block, and you've found 'God's will'.

Repeat until each child has found the square block.

Discussion Questions:

- God's will is not always clearly apparent. What should you do if you aren't sure what God's will is? (Pray, talk to an adult for guidance, read the Bible)
- What are some life distractions that you are facing this week?
- Was Jacob patient? How was he rewarded? Have you ever been rewarded for working hard at something?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. (Ephesians 4:2)*

Persistence Spoons

Jacob Wrestles an Angel

Persisting in doing the right thing and walking with God can be hard. Sometimes we want to give up and take the easy way out, but the person who persists gets the prize!

Related Bible Story:

Genesis 32:22-31

Materials:

- 4 large tablespoons or slotted spoons
- Aluminum foil
- Small prizes like stickers or candies

Before Class Prep:

Create 2 baseball-sized balls out of aluminum foil

Clear a large open play space or play outside

How to Play:

Have the children form two relay teams at one end of the room. If there is an odd number, the first child on the team with less people can go twice.

Give the first two children on each team a large tablespoon or slotted spoon (that's four big spoons in all). Put a piece of aluminum foil, crumbled into a tight sphere like a baseball, into one of the spoons on each team (that's two aluminum baseballs).

The goal is to get to the other side of the room, but it's not as easy as just walking or running. Show the players how to toss the "ball" back and forth to each other, catching it on the spoon.

To earn a step, one child must toss the ball to the other with their spoon, and the other must catch it in their spoon without dropping it. Once they do this, both team members may take a single step. If the ball is dropped, they just have to try again until they earn another step.

Once a team reaches the far wall, they can run back with the spoons and ball and deliver them to the next set of players. Whichever team finishes first wins.

Great job everyone! Who should get the prize? (They should answer that the winning team should.) However remind them:

God is not as interested in how fast or how slow we are. He is interested in those who *show persistence*. Therefore, everyone gets a prize!

Pass out stickers or candies as prizes to the whole class.

Discussion Questions:

- Think of a time when you had to finish a task that was really difficult and you just wanted to give up. How did you feel once it was completed?
- This game involved a lot of teamwork! What are some challenges you face when you have to work with someone else to complete a task?
- Jacob was very persistent with the angel, even after his hip was hurt. Has there been a time you had to finish something when it was very challenging? What kept you going?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. (James 1: 2-4)*

Power Racing With Toilet Paper

Joseph & His Brothers

Teach your students teamwork and a Bible lesson at the same time with this racing game!

Related Bible Story:

Genesis 37

Game Materials:

- 1 roll of toilet paper

Before Class Prep:

Tear the roll of toilet paper into a stack of single sheets

How to Play:

Pair up the students and give each team one square of toilet paper. They must each hold opposing corners of the square pinched in their lips. Without dropping the square or tearing it, they have to get across the room and back as quickly as possible.

Encourage the children to work together by assessing each other's heights, abilities, and coordination, and combining them to work as a unit.

Start the race! If a sheet is torn or dropped, that team has to go back and start over. The team who gets back first wins.

If you have enough children, you can also play this as a relay race.

Discussion Questions:

- What are some of the challenges you face when you have to depend on someone else to help you reach a goal?
- Figuring out how you can best work with someone else can mean the difference between success and failure. How did you and your partner work well together? What were some of your difficulties?
- Unfortunately Joseph and his brothers did not work well as a team. Share a time when you and your sibling/cousin/friend worked well together as a team.

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10)*

'God Hears Us' Game

Moses and the Burning Bush

God is just as interested in kids today as he was in pre-Exodus Moses. You can demonstrate this to your students with a simple game.

Related Bible Story:

Exodus 3-4:17

Materials:

- Blindfold

Before Class Prep:

None

How to Play:

Blindfold one child. Have other children take turns walking up behind the blindfolded child and saying, "I am a burning bush." The speaker is allowed to disguise his or her voice if they want.

The blindfolded child guesses which of classmate has just spoken to him. For each right answer, the child gets a point.

After every child has had an opportunity to be blindfolded, the points are tallied. The child with the most points is the winner.

You were able to guess who your classmates were because you know the sounds of their voices. In the same way, God knows the sounds of our voices. We all have different voices, but God knows them all. He even knows when you're pretending to be somebody else. And guess what? He never gets it wrong!

Discussion Questions:

- When is your favorite time to talk to God?
- How do you think Moses felt when he saw the burning bush and heard God's voice?
- What is something you can talk to God about this week?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *God said to Moses, "I Am Who I Am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" (Exodus 3:14)*

Obstacle Course

Following God's Voice

Sometimes following God's will is like running an obstacle course. You don't know where you'll end up, but if you listen to God's voice in your heart and follow His will, you'll get to the other side!

Related Bible Story:

Exodus 3

Materials:

- Chairs and tables
- Blindfold

Before Class Prep:

Arrange the furniture in a haphazard manner

How to Play:

Ask for a volunteer to be the first person to go through the obstacle course. Blindfold that child.

Moses was just out tending his family's flock of sheep when God told him that he was to complete the important task of leading the Israelites out of Egypt!

Have the other children direct the blindfolded child with only four words: left, right, forward and backward.

The blindfolded child must walk through the obstacle course, listening to the commands and trying not to bump into any of the furniture chairs. Each bump gives the child one point. The leader can call out the bumps as they happen and tally them on the board.

Sometimes God's voice sounds unclear to us, like it might be in a whisper, or it might sound like many voices, and we might only be able to hear a few words clearly here and there.

Blindfold the next volunteer and then rearrange the chairs before he or she begins. Repeat the process.

The child with the least points at the end wins the game.

Discussion Questions:

- How does listening and moving slowly help you get you through the obstacle course faster?
- Can you think of situations when taking a moment and listening for God to give you the answer could help you?
- Can you give an example of when you had to do something uncomfortable or scary out of obedience?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt." But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" (Exodus 3:10-11)*
- ❖ *And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love. (2 John 1:6)*

The Listening Game

Moses and the Red Sea

If we're going to trust God to work for us to be free and happy, we first have to believe that He hears our prayers. Let's play the Listening Game to help us understand that God hears our prayers.

Related Bible Story:

Exodus 13:17-14:31

Game Materials:

- 1 quarter
- 1 spoon
- 1 Ping-Pong ball
- 1 small book
- Car keys
- 1 plastic hanger
- You can substitute other lightweight household items

Before Class Prep:

Test the objects you've chosen to drop before class to make sure that they each make a distinct noise that your students can differentiate.

How to Play:

Show all 6 of the items you've chosen for the game to your students.

Have everyone sit in a circle facing outward, or they sit with their heads down at a table or at their desks.

Take turns dropping each of the 6 items on the floor or on a table. As the item drops, it will make a noise.

Ask; was it the quarter, spoon, Ping-Pong ball, book, car keys, or hanger?

After the children answer you each time, let them look and see that they were correct, then put their heads back down for the next item.

Once you've dropped each item and had them guess which it was, explain how this is a great demonstration of how God hears them when they pray.

All our voices are different, and all of our problems and worries are different. Just like we know the sounds of different objects falling, God knows the sound of each of our voices. We can believe he hears us and wants to help us to be free.

Discussion Questions:

- You had to listen carefully to each sound to recognize what the falling object was, were there any distractions that kept you from hearing them?
- God listens to all of our problems no matter how big or small they may be. Give an example of one big problem and one small problem that you can talk to God about.
- How do you think the Israelites felt when they reached the Red Sea and the Egyptians were close behind? How do you think they felt when Moses parted the sea giving them a way to escape?

Related Bible Verses:

- ❖ *When I said, "My foot is slipping," your unfailing love, LORD, supported me. (Psalm 94:18)*
- ❖ *They confronted me in the day of my disaster, but the Lord was my support. (2 Samuel 22:19)*

Wacky Bubble Balloon Race

Bread from Heaven

Play this wacky race to show children how focusing on material desires can get in the way of following God's plan!

Related Bible Story:

Exodus 16: 1-36

Materials:

- 2 or more balloons
- 2 bubble wand bottles

Before Class Prep:

Make sure that you have enough balloons in case one or more burst during play, and you might want to have a back-up bubble wand bottle, too. Make sure that the room is clear, and that your students have a safe path across to the opposite wall.

How to Play:

Divide the class into 2 teams and have them line up at one end of the room.

Have the first two competitors each hold a balloon between their knees and a bubble wand and bottle in their hands.

When you say, “Go!” they should hop down to the far end of the room, blowing bubbles all the way, while trying not to lose or pop the balloon.

The first team of players to complete the race wins!

When we spend too much time focused on material things, asking for things that we don’t have and that we want, our lives can become like collision courses. We can “burst our own bubble” with too many desires.

It was really hard to keep blowing bubbles and keep the balloon between your knees while you tried to get to the other end of the room, wasn’t it? The balloon and the bubbles represent distractions and desires that get in the way of following God’s plan for you.

Discussion Questions:

- List some material objects that you want, but don’t necessarily need.
- What are some things that you have that a child in a third world country probably doesn’t have?
- How do you decide if something is a “want” or a “need?”

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. (John 6:33)*

Commandment Word Scramble

Moses and the Ten Commandments

Life can be really confusing, and untangling the messages can be a lot of work. Listen to God's Word and follow His will, and you'll be able to see the right answer!

Related Bible Story:

Exodus 20: 1-17

Materials:

- 1 copy of the puzzle for each student
- Pencils

Before Class Prep:

Make sure that you have enough copies of the puzzle for everyone. If you don't, you can pair students off into partners to work together. You can also write the puzzle on the chalkboard or dry-erase board and help the whole group work together.

How to Play:

Have students read the Ten Commandments below and then match which Commandment matches which scrambled message.

Here are God's Rules:

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not make graven images, nor bow down to them.
3. You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God.
4. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.
5. Honor your father and your mother.
6. You shall not murder.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's belongings.

Figure out which Commandment goes with which scrambled message below:

UYO HALLS TON IGVE SELAF EIMNSOTTY IGSAANT RUYO EROIHGBN.

OYU ALHTS. TON EMKA NYA ARVNEG SBGEMI.

OTUH STHAL ONT LESTA.

NOOHR YURO RFTHEA AND MTEOHR.

UYO TALSH ONT TVEOC ROYU SEHRIGOBN NSNOBELGIG.

Discussion Questions:

- How can you honor God every day?
- What does "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor" mean?
- Besides the commandments, what other rules do you have to follow in your house?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. (John 15:10)*

Letting Go of Idols

Thou Shalt Have No Other Gods before Me

This fun game reminds kids to keep God in their hearts above all potential idols, and it ends with a treat for everyone.

Related Bible Story:

Exodus 20:3

Materials:

- Cups (one for each child)
- Blue and red food coloring
- Punch bowl
- Lemonade mix

Before Class Prep:

Fill each cup half full of water

How to Play:

Have cups filled halfway with water. Have one child come forward and pick up a cup of water.

Think of something that you might accidentally start making into an idol and promise that you won't.

As the child says what the almost-idol is put drops of blue food coloring into his or her water.

Now shut your eyes and say a silent prayer. Try to think of what God might be saying to you.

Repeat this for each child in the class. Then go around with red food coloring. Ask each child to repeat what his almost idol was. Say:

God loves you a lot more than [soccer, football, iPhone, whatever the item was] loves you.

After the water has turned purple say:

Communing with God, mixing your prayers in with his love, will make you feel like one of his royal children. Now, everyone add their royal water to the punch bowl.

After the children pour their water in, add lemonade mix, and they can each have a drink of delicious punch!

You can keep God first in your heart and avoid worshipping or loving potential idols by talking to Him and listening to Him. When you speak to Him, He speaks back to your heart. He is kind and good, and He cares about everything you do.

Because God is the King, talking with Him can make you feel more like the children of the King. Did you know that purple is considered the color of royalty?

Discussion Questions:

- List some things that many adults seem to let become idols in their lives.
- How can you keep that from happening as you get older?
- What happens in your life once you begin to only focus on idols?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. (Galatians 3:26 NIV)*

Being a Great Prayer Partner

Remember the Sabbath Day by Keeping It Holy

Sometimes we need another's faith to bolster our own. Teach kids to help each other and to take comfort in each other's faith.

Related Bible Story:

Exodus 20:8-11

Materials:

- Light-colored construction paper
- Colored pencils, crayons, or markers
- String or curling ribbon
- Balloons

Before Class Prep:

None

How to Play:

Give each student one piece of construction paper, and pair them off into twos. If you have an odd number of students, you can partner with the last child.

One student should trace around the hand of the other, then switch, with the other student tracing. They each should cut out the handprint of the other.

Let's talk about asking God for special help for the upcoming week!

Jesus said, “When two or more are gathered in my name, I am among them.” Sometimes it’s important when asking for a prayer request to have someone praying with you. With support from a friend or family member, you’ll be more likely to have faith that your request will happen.

Have the paired students share with each other something they would like to see happen in the coming week. Have the listener write the prayer request on the back of their partner’s handprint. Then have them switch roles, with the listener becoming the teller of a prayer request, and the former teller listening and writing out the new teller’s prayer.

We’re going to tie these handprints to your Sunday Balloons. When you see it at home, it will remind you to pray for yourself and your prayer partner.

Punch a hole in each handprint, loop string or curling ribbon through it and tie it to a balloon. Each child should get the handprint of his prayer partner attached to his balloon to remind him to pray for another, as well as himself.

Discussion Questions:

- Why is it important to pray for someone else?
- Is there anything you can pray about this week for your parents or grandparents?
- What should you NOT pray about? (Nothing! You can take anything to God!)

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. (Exodus 20:8)*

Young Poets Contest

Honor Thy Father and Mother

Honoring thy father and mother through creative writing!

Related Bible Story:

Exodus 20:12

Materials:

- Paper
- Pencils, colored pencils, markers, and/or crayons
- Small prizes

Before Class Prep:

Think about prize categories to award and make sure that you have enough prizes to go around so that no one feels left out.

How to Play:

Have your students each write a poem about their mother and father.

After they've finished, have all of the children draw designs around their Mom and Dad poems, and, as they're drawing, have them take turns standing in front of the class and reading their poems.

Give out prizes, such as Funniest Poem, Best Use of Rhymes, Most Creative, etc. Prizes can be fruit snacks, ribbons, or even a simple round of applause.

Discussion Questions:

- How did writing your poem make you think about your love for your parents?
- How did everyone else's poems make you feel?
- How do you see God working through your parents every day?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" – which is the first commandment with a promise – "so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." (Ephesians 6:1-3)*

Johnny Jump Rope

Thou Shalt Not Steal

It's one of the Ten Commandments, but sometimes children (and adults) can forget about it. Teach your group to abide by one of God's most important laws.

Related Bible Story:

Exodus 20:15

Materials:

- 1 long jump rope

Before Class Prep:

Memorize the jump rope rhyme before class so that you can teach it to your kids. Write it on the chalkboard or whiteboard so that they have an aid if they forget the words.

How to Play:

Have your students take turns jumping rope as everyone sings along to the following tune.

During the verse, the students will be jumping in slow double-time with 2 jumps per rope spin. Once the song gets to the counting portion, the rope speeds up, and the student will jump quickly or 1 jump per rope spin.

JOHNNY OVER THE OCEAN

JOHNNY OVER THE SEA

JOHNNY STOLE A DOLLAR BILL

BLAMED IT ON ME.

I JUST WAITED.

DIDN'T GET HIM BACK.

I FOUND A BURIED TREASURE

ON THE OLD TRAIN TRACK.

HOW MANY DOLLARS

DID I RECEIVE?

(one jump per spin of the rope starts now)

One! Two! Three! Four! Five!... until student misses.

The student who gets the highest number of jumps wins a prize of your choosing.

Discussion Questions:

- Why is it better to earn things than to steal them?
- Is it just because you'll get in trouble, or is there a higher power watching? God loves us, and we should show him love back by respecting his laws.
- Have you ever had anything stolen from you? How did it make you feel?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *Ill-gotten treasures have no lasting value, but righteousness delivers from death. (Proverbs 10:2)*

To Tell the Truth

Thou Shalt Not Lie

Sometimes it just seems easier to lie than to tell the truth, but God strictly forbids lying. Let's see if we can detect some lies!

Related Bible Story:

Exodus 20:16

Materials:

- None

Before Class Prep:

None

How to Play:

Have one student stand in front of the group. Have the group pose questions to him or her. Brief the student to tell the truth sometimes and make up something other times.

Have you ever noticed that your parents and other adults always seem to know when you're lying? They know what to look for, and when a kid is caught, it results in embarrassment and lost trust for all.

See if students can tell from his or her expression or body language when he/she is not telling the truth. Questions should require only short answers. Some examples to get the class going include:

- What street do you live on?
- Do you play any sports?
- What school do you go to?
- What's your dad's first name?
- What's your mom's first name?
- Do you have a dog?
- Do you have a cat?

When the students think they are being deceived, have them say, "Stop!" Find out from the child if he or she was telling the truth or making up the answer.

Have the students discuss what changed about the speaker when he was lying: the color of his face, his sudden smile, his shifting around, staring at the ceiling, etc.

Discussion Questions:

- How does it make you feel when you find out someone has lied to you?
- What are a few reasons that people lie?
- What should you do when you are in a situation where you feel like you want to or need to lie?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. (Matthew 7:24)*
- ❖ *Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue lasts only a moment. (Proverbs 12:19)*

Charades: Virtues

Joshua Receives God's Promise

It's not always easy to lead a virtuous life. Talking about and acting out Christian virtues will help reinforce good morals!

Related Bible Story:

Joshua 1-4

Materials:

- None

Before Class Prep:

Make a list of Christian virtues and think of how you would act them out if you were chosen to perform them as a charade. This way you can help your students if they get stuck during the game.

How to Play:

Get your students thinking about good Christian virtues and how to live a pious life by having them play Virtues charades.

Choose one student to stand in front of the class and perform a charade of a Christian virtue without speaking aloud. The child performing the charade may, however, gesture that it "sounds like" by pulling on her ear and then acting out the syllables.

The other students should all try to guess which virtue the child is acting out. Whoever guesses first gets to act out the next virtue, or you can have the children all take turns and keep score to see who gets the most right.

Discussion Questions:

- What are virtues?
- Why is it important to be virtuous and lead a pious life?
- Jesus gave his life for us so that we could enter the Kingdom of Heaven. If he could make that sacrifice for you, do you think you can be virtuous for him?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *So the Lord gave Israel all the land he had sworn to give their ancestors, and they took possession of it and settled there. (Joshua 21:43)*
- ❖ *But as for you, be strong and do not give up, for your work will be rewarded." (2 Chronicles 15:7)*

Spy Game

Rahab Rats on the Bad Guys

Related Bible Story

Joshua 2:1-24

Materials:

- Paper
- Index cards

Before Class Prep:

Cut the paper into strips (one for each child) and write “spy” on one slip and “good guy” and “bad guy” equally on the remaining slips.

Write lines of scripture on the index cards

How to Play:

Put as many slips of paper as you have students in a hat. Half the slips should say, “good guy”, and the other half should say, “bad guy”, with one exception, which should say “spy”. (For example, if you have 21 students, you should have 10 “good” slips, 10 “bad” slips, and 1 “spy”.)

Have each student draw a slip of paper from the hat, but make sure that no one sees anyone else’s slip.

No one can know who the spy is. If the spy accidentally blabs, we have to start over and have everyone has to pull a slip from the hat again.

Tell the kids to split up into two groups: good guys and bad guys. The good guys should go to the center of the room, and the bad guys should go to the far wall with a stack of index cards. Make sure the kids know that the spy goes with the bad guys. That way the spy knows where to go, and everyone knows that the spy is with the bad guys, but no one knows which one it is.

The bad guys pass out index cards with scripture verses on them. As no one knows who the spy is, she (or he) will get an index card, too. The bad guys then move to the center of the room and start walking in a circle. The good guys form a bigger circle outside their little circle and walk in the opposite direction.

The goal is for the “spy” to keep walking in the circles with everyone until he or she feels a little bit safe. Then, quickly, the spy should yell “SPY!” She should pass off her index card quickly as possible to the nearest good guy. The good guy with the spy’s card runs to the designated spot at far side of the room and slaps the wall. The bad guys try to tag him.

If he slaps the designated spot before getting tagged, he wins and gets to read the scripture verse.

Repeat, having students draw slips out of the hat again with a new spy. Points are scored by:

- Being a spy: 1 point
- Being a good guy who makes it to the wall without being tagged: 1 point
- Being a bad guy who tags the good guy before he gets to the wall: 1 point

The person with the most points wins a prize.

Discussion Questions:

- What does it mean to be a spy for God?
- How can you fight against peer pressure and be true to yourself and to God’s love when everyone around you thinks differently?
- Tell us about a time that your friends wanted to do something that you knew you shouldn’t do.

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *He replied, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.” (Luke 11:28)*

Potato Soccer

Joshua Collapses the Walls of Jericho

In order to form an army, the Hebrews had to learn how to work together as a team. We're going to play a game of potato soccer today to show just how important teamwork can be.

Related Bible Story:

Joshua 5:13-6:27

Game Materials

- 1 raw potato
- 2 goals (these can be chairs or pieces of masking tape marking off the area the potato needs to pass through), one on either end of the room

Before Class Prep:

Clear space in the room for the game and set up the goals before your students arrive

How to Play:

Have the children form two teams. Just like regular soccer, each team is trying to kick the potato into the other team's goal (which can be two chairs placed close together, the opening between the inner legs being the goal).

Kids can kick the potato only twice before kicking to a teammate, so no one can hog the "ball." The team that gets the most goals wins.

Discussion Questions:

- Why is it important to work together?
- Are there times when you need to work together to keep your faith strong?
- How has God prepared you to work in a team?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. (Ephesians 4:29)*

Belly Ball

Joshua Forgets to Ask God

Sometimes we forget how difficult it is to get by without inviting God to help us in our daily lives. It's sort of like what I'm going to ask you to do with these balls!

Related Bible Story:

Joshua 9:1-26

Materials:

- 2 balls (beach balls, dodge balls, or soccer balls)

Before Class Prep:

None

How to Play:

Split the children up into two-person teams. Two teams will compete at a time. The winner of each of these mini-competitions will compete against the next team in line to play.

The partners will stand across the room from each other. Pass the 2 balls to one side of the room and have those 2 competitors try to move the balls across to their partners.

The ball you're carrying across the room represents our daily experiences. We have to find ways to cope with them and "carry" them in an imperfect world.

Put your hands behind your back. You *may not* kick the ball. You have to find some way to carry it to your partner at the other end of the room without using your hands and without kicking the ball. *Go!*

At first, the children will find this confusing and even confounding. They may get a little frustrated, but they should still be laughing and having a good time. Eventually, they will see that they can grasp the ball between their knees and hop a few steps at a time before it falls away again. When the first one reaches his or her partner:

To finish the race, put the ball between your bellies. You can touch each other after that, but you can't touch the ball. Walk it back to the starting line. If you drop it, you have to start from where you dropped it. Go!

Let all partnered teams try this, competing against the fastest one from each previous race.

Discussion Questions:

- Was it harder to get the ball across the room alone or with your partner?
- If the game we just played represents what life is like without God's help, what would the game be like if we had asked God for help?
- Being in partnership with God makes things a lot easier. How can you work on your partnership with Him?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. (John 14:13-14)*

Peer Pressure Game

What's Wrong with Israel's Memory?

Peer pressure is a real struggle for kids and teenagers. By teaching about how to deal with it by turning to God for support and love, and by practicing His will, you're preparing them to stay on the path to righteousness throughout their lives.

Related Bible Story:

Judges 2:6-3:6

Materials:

- None

Before Class Prep:

None

How to Play:

Have one child get in the center of a circle. Have her classmates facing outward. They should keep their hands at their sides. As their backs are to her, they should not be able to see her.

When you say, "Go!" the child in the center can wait to fool people, or she can try to make a break for it.

The goal is to get outside the circle before the two people she pushes through can tag her. She has to have at least one foot on the floor outside of them before they tag her. If they tag her, she returns to the center. If she's free, another person goes to the center.

Sometimes when you're in a crowd of kids -- at school, at a party, or at someone's house -- you can feel like you're surrounded by people facing a different direction in

life than you are. You can “get through” their pressure and still be yourself and live the way God wants you to, just like you got through in this game. But it’s not easy, is it?

Discussion Questions:

- What can you say to someone who wants you to do something you are not comfortable doing?
- Sometimes kids can be mean if you don’t go along with the crowd, how can you deal with this?
- Is it more important to be popular or is it more important to follow God’s will? Why?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. (James 1:22)*

“Who Are You?” Survey

Deborah is Underestimated

Help your students get to know each other better with this fun survey!

Related Bible Story:

Judges 4

Materials:

- Copies of the survey
- Pencils

Before Class Prep:

Make sure that there is enough space for your students to work away from each other when filling out the surveys.

How to Play:

Split the children up so they are writing on the floor, in corners, or at separate desks, facing away from each other. Nobody should be able to see what anyone else is writing, so that they can't recognize each other's handwriting.

1. Are you more outgoing or are you shy?
2. Do you have a loud laugh or a soft laugh?
3. Are you extra smart in school? yes/no
4. What sports have you played?
5. Whose house in the room have you been to?

6. Is there someone in here whose house you go to a lot?
7. What is your favorite board game?
8. Which do you like more: science fiction movies or funny movies?
9. Do you live close enough to the church that you could walk to it?
10. Do you have a dog?
11. Do you have a cat?
12. Do you have a lizard, snake, or a hamster?
13. Are you known for being artistic?
14. Do you have any food allergies?
15. What is your favorite color?
16. Are you the oldest in your family?
17. Are you the youngest in your family?
18. Do you go to the public school?
19. What is your favorite movie?
20. Do we know at least one of your parents well?

After shuffling all the surveys, put them in a stack on the table. Because they know all their own answers and can recognize their own handwriting, they should know which one is their own. **THEY SHOULD NOT IDENTIFY THEIR OWN PAPER OUT LOUD.** Instruct them to each choose someone else's sheet.

Have the children take turns reading off the questions and the answers on the sheet they've picked up. See if they can guess whose paper is being read. Take a vote at the end. See how many get it right. For those who do get it right, ask "How did you know?"

Have the person who filled out the survey share one thing about him or herself that perhaps the class wouldn't know. It can be something funny, a personal taste in something, or anything they want.

Go on to the next paper and do this for each survey.

I bet you each learned something new about at least one other person in here that you didn't know before. It's funny how you can spend time with people and not know very much about them.

Discussion Question:

- What did you learn today that surprised you?
- Is there anything else you would like us to know about you?
- Do you think God already knew all of the answers to these questions before you even answered them?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *Stop judging by mere appearances, but instead judge correctly. (John 7:24)*
- ❖ *Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. (1 Corinthians 16:13)*

Sign / No Sign

Gideon – God Uses the Smallest Again

We have to work hard to know the will of God, when to ask for signs, and when to ask for wisdom, extra love, extra courage or extra faith. Sometimes it feels like we're in a whirlwind, but if we practice long enough, we grow spiritually discerning. It's like this game...

Related Bible Story:

Judges 6 and 7

Materials:

- None

Before Class Prep:

None

How to Play:

Have the children sit in a circle on the floor and bring one child to the center of the circle. Have him shut his eyes. The children in the circle will take turns, starting with anyone you choose and then going around the circle clockwise, shouting out the word "Sign!" or "No sign!" whenever the teacher indicates it's their turn. They can choose whichever word they wish.

When the child whose turn it is to speak yells, "Sign!" the child in the middle has to spin clockwise. If they yell, "No sign!" he has to spin counter-clockwise. It's your job to point to the next child when it's their turn with about a 3-second pause between shouts. They shouldn't shout too fast, or the child in the middle won't spin in either direction for very long at all.

After every child has shouted, and the child in the center has spun sufficiently, he should try to stand on one foot. He can hop, but he can't put his other foot down. Have the children count slowly and see how long he can stay on one foot.

The winner is the one who stands the longest without putting his foot down.

Sometimes we can feel dizzy, trying to figure out God's will. It can be hard to tell when to look for signs and when to look for other things. However, the more we practice, the less dizzy we'll feel and the more sure we'll be in God's love.

Discussion Questions:

- What should you do if you aren't sure what God's will is in a certain situation?
- What are some things that life can throw at us that make us "dizzy?"
- What can we do when we get so dizzy in life that we fall over?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *I can do all this through him who gives me strength. (Philippians 4:13)*
- ❖ *He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. (Isaiah 40:29)*

Person Least Noticed

Gideon's Army

Who is the best person to send as a spy or an agent for your army in the midst of another army? The person least noticed, of course!

Related Bible Story:

Judges 6 and 7

Materials:

- Index cards

Before Class Prep:

Write "Person Least Noticed" on one card and "Army I" and "Army II" equally on as many index cards as you have children.

How to Play:

As with the game 'Spy,' have students come forward and each take an index card from your hand or from a hat. There should be one card for each student. Half should be marked "Army I" and half marked "Army II", with one oddball card that should read "Person Least Noticed." Students will read their card to themselves, leave the card with you, and then proceed to pre-determined positions.

The Armies should go to opposite sides of the room. The "Person Least Noticed" should go with Army II. *She may not say she is the one least noticed!* As in the Spy game, it is a secret for now.

The first player in Army I should step forward into the center of the room. He should pick an opponent from Army II and they should “duel.”

When they duel, they will take hold of each other’s arms and stand on one foot. Without letting go of each other’s arms, they’ll try to lean and pull on one another to the point where their opponent must put their foot down to regain balance. The player who does not either let go with his arms or put a foot down wins one point.

The next person in Army I should go to the center of the room and call out another opponent from Army II. He may *not* choose a person already chosen.

Eventually someone in Army I will be matched with the Person Least Noticed. When it happens, the Person Least Noticed should come to the center and say, “Congratulations! I’m the Person Least Noticed!” The member of Army I who called her out automatically wins a point and doesn’t have to duel.

Each time the Person Least Noticed is revealed, the round ends, and everyone returns to the teacher to pull cards again.

After two or three rounds, the person with the most points is the winner.

Discussion Questions:

- Sometimes the best way to win a battle is not to fight at all but to be “The Person Least Noticed.” We saw examples of this in the game today. Can you think of other examples?
- How could you be that person on your journey through life?
- Could you be that person and spread God’s Word? How?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.* (Proverbs 3:5)

Good Apple / Bad Apple

Samson and Delilah

The Good Apple/Bad Apple game is like a game of tag that demonstrates how easily negative influences can rub off on all of the children around the “bad apple.”

Related Bible Story:

Judges 16: 1-22

Materials:

- Masking tape or some other way to mark the game zone

Before Class Prep:

Mark off the area where the children will be crossing through the “bad apples” (approximately six feet by six feet)

How to Play:

You may have heard of the expression, “One bad apple spoils the whole bunch.” This is a truism having to do with how rot spreads from one apple to another. When one apple is mealy, wormy, and rotten, and it touches another apple in its bunch, the rot can spread through contact. Consequently, each apple that comes in contact with a rotten apple has worms and rot passed to it, too, and the whole bunch goes bad. With kids, it’s come to mean that one bad kid in a crowd can make everyone misbehave.

Pick two children to be the “bad apples.” Have them shut their eyes and stand inside the taped off area.

Tell the rest of the kids to run through that area after you say, "One, two, three, go!" See how many kids the two bad apples can tag with their eyes shut.

Everyone who gets tagged has to become a bad apple. Once they are tagged, they have to stop, shut their eyes, and try to tag the kids who avoided being tagged before and who will run through again the next time. The last kid to be tagged wins a "Good Apple" point.

Discussion Questions:

- Did you notice how it was easier not to get tagged if you were quiet? What does that say about attracting attention to yourself in real life? Sometimes the best way to get through life is quietly and humbly.
- Did you notice how the more bad apples there are, the harder it is not to get caught up and become rotten, yourselves? What does that tell you about your need for willpower when you're in a crowd? You need to be prepared, keep God in your heart, and make conscious choices.
- What are some ways to get out of a situation when you feel like you are being pressured by others to do something you don't think is right?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *Do not be misled: bad company corrupts good character.* (1 Corinthians 15:33)

Juggling: Managing Day-to-Day Life

Ruth is a Loyal Friend

Sometimes, especially in school, we can be faced with so many people, challenges and expectations that we don't know how to respond. It can feel a bit awkward, like we're juggling a lot of objects at once. Let's try some juggling to see how well we can keep our challenges in the air, or if we can do it at all!

Related Bible Story:

Ruth 1:3-18

Materials:

- Enough crumpled up foil balls or rolled up socks for each child to have 3 objects to juggle

Before Class Prep:

Make sure that there are enough juggling balls to go around and that they're all set out where you can easily give them to the kids in your group. Do a little bit of practicing, yourself, and/or find a video to show them of the basics of juggling.

How to Play:

Give each child either three foil balls or three rolled up socks. Show them how you:

- Toss one ball up with the left hand
- Toss a second ball from the right to the left hand
- Catch the ball in the air with the right hand.

Give them ten minutes or so to try to learn to juggle. Some may succeed, but others will get little more than a laugh out of it.

While juggling is fun, it's not always the best way to handle the challenges we face each day. The best way... Have a kid throw you his balls one at a time; you catch them. ...is to give your problems to the Lord, one at a time. That's something you can do anytime, anywhere, and then you don't have to worry about them anymore.

Discussion Questions:

- What are some day-to-day things that start to feel overwhelming to you?
- List some ways to cope when you start to feel overwhelmed.
- How do you decide what is a high priority in your life and what is a low priority in your life?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *...Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. (Ruth 1:16)*

Juggling with Friends

Samuel – He Became Who He Hung Out With

This is a great follow-up game to the last game, where your students got just a taste of learning to juggle. Here, we'll give them another chance and an opportunity to learn more valuable lessons.

Related Bible Story:

1 Samuel 3

Materials:

- Enough aluminum foil balls or rolled up socks so that each child can have 3 on their own or so that a pair of children may have 4 objects to juggle together.

Before Class Prep:

Take some time to learn about juggling with a partner so that you can help your students learn, too. Make sure that you have enough juggling balls (either rolled socks or aluminum foil "balls") for everyone.

How to Play

Last week we were juggling to symbolize trying to manage day-to-day challenges all on our own instead of trusting in God. This week, we're adding in the fact that we often have to consider the feelings of others. So, you get to practice your juggling from last week, but at some point we're going to add in a new element: Juggling *with somebody else*.

Give out the foil balls or rolled socks again and give the kids a few minutes to practice their juggling skills from last week. Split the group up into pairs. Two-person juggling involves four

balls, one in each hand of each person. Show them how to toss both balls at once and catch both their partner's balls a split second later. See how many get it.

While juggling together is still challenging, it can actually be easier to juggle more balls if you have help from a partner. At the same time, you have to figure out how to work together.

Discussion Questions:

- Talk about a time where you were struggling to reach a goal or complete a task and you had to ask someone to help you.
- Why do some people have a hard time asking others for help?
- What are some situations you might run into where it looks like someone could use some help and you could step up to be that helper?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."* (1 Samuel 3:10)

Tacky Tape Game

David Kills Goliath

This lighthearted game will lead to great discussions about facing challenges and being brave.

Related Bible Story:

1 Samuel 17

Materials:

- “Sticky” balls made of gaffer’s tape with the sticky side out, about the size of baseballs
- Brown paper bag
- Masking tape or something else to mark the ground where the kids will stand

Before Class Prep:

Draw a funny but monstrous portrait of Goliath’s face on a brown paper bag.

Use tape to mark an “X” on the floor about 6 feet away from the wall where you’ll tape up Goliath’s face.

How to Play:

You can use the paper bag “Goliath” as a puppet to taunt your students while they are lining up behind the “X.”

“Little David thinks he can beat me!? That’s a laugh!”

Securely tape the image of Goliath onto the wall. Have the first student stand on the "X" and throw three sticky balls at Goliath. The more balls that stick to Goliath's forehead, the more points the child gets.

What does the story of David and Goliath tell us about having faith in God? The strongest competitor isn't always the winner; sometimes it's the faithful, smart, little guy.

Discussion questions:

- What can you do when you are faced with a challenge that you don't think you can handle?
- David was very brave! Can you name another person from the bible that was brave too?
- Have you heard of someone in the news or at school recently that was brave?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?" (Hebrews 13:6)*

God's Wisdom Race

Solomon Asks God for Wisdom

This fun game shows that even though it may be difficult at times, following God's will and wisdom is always best!

Related Bible Story:

1 Kings 3:1-15

Materials:

- Clock or stopwatch

Before Class Prep:

Clear a path across the front of the classroom from one wall to the other, or you can mark off start and finish lines for the race. Arrange the children's seats so that everyone can see the racers as they go across the room.

How to Play:

Pair the students off into two-person teams. One student should stand in front, and the one standing behind should put her toes right against the front child's heels.

God's wisdom is always available to us, but sometimes it isn't easy to follow. Sometimes we want to do things our own way and in our own time, but we need to learn to go at God's pace. In the following relay, we'll pretend the person in front is the Lord, and the person behind is a human being.

The teams will try to make it across the room as quickly as possible without the follower losing contact with the leader's feet. The other children should observe and shout, "Bong!" every time their toes and heels come apart.

Time them and keep track of how many times "Bong!" is yelled as they try to walk from one end of the room to the other without the heels of the child in front separating from the toes of the child in back. The first team with the fastest time and the least "Bongs!" wins.

When we're trying to follow God's wisdom, it's best if we go slowly. Don't get discouraged or down if you mess up. Just stop, take a breath and keep trying. God knows we're not perfect, but the closer we follow Him, the more like Him we will be.

Discussion Questions:

- Have you been in a situation where you didn't listen to your parent's advice, but did it your own way instead? Was it a good or a bad outcome?
- What can you do if you feel like you are veering off of God's path?
- What can you do if a good friend is veering off of God's path?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. (James 1:5)*

The Mirror Game

Job Loves God through His Trials

Sometimes God sets challenges for us that we do not understand. Follow Job's example of perseverance and you will be granted great rewards, both in this life and in Heaven.

Related Bible Story:

Job 1-42

Game Materials:

- Mirror (at least 6" x 6")
- Index cards with scripture written on them (enough for the whole group)
- Watch or timer

Before Class Prep:

Before your students arrive, prop the mirror up on a table, either against the wall or on some books so that it is both upright and steady. Hold onto the index cards, and don't let the students see what's written on them until it's their turn to play.

How to Play:

Have one child at a time come forward and kneel in front of the mirror.

Hold one of the index cards between the child and the mirror so that child can see the writing in the mirror, but it appears to be backwards.

Ask him to read it. The child who can read the scripture verse the fastest without mistakes wins.

Was it strange to read the scriptures backwards in the mirror? The scriptures stay the same thing, whether they're shown backwards or forwards, right? Sometimes on our bad days, it's hard to feel God and figure out what He's saying to us. And yet, He's always the same – He always loves us, whether we're feeling good or bad, whether we're having trouble "reading him" or not!

Discussion Questions:

- Job was a righteous man yet many terrible things happened to him. How do you think most people would have felt if they were in Job's place?
- Why do you think God allows us to go through hardships?
- List a few character traits that help us get through hardships.

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* (Matthew 5:10)
- ❖ *To the person who pleases him, God gives wisdom, knowledge and happiness...* (Ecclesiastes 2:26)

King David's Heart

David Is Loyal

God called King David “a man after His own heart,” meaning God loved how David could manage to love his enemies. Let's play a game where we try to keep King David's heart alive and well.

Related Bible Story

1 Samuel 18:1-5

Game Materials:

- Masking tape
- Construction paper
- At least 2 red balloons

Before Class Prep:

Put a piece of masking tape across the floor to divide the play area into two equal sections. Blow up one balloon for play, though you may want to have 1 or 2 extras, in case the one in play pops. Roll up enough pieces of construction paper for each child to have a “bat” to hit the balloon with during the game.

How to Play:

Have the children form two teams. Each child should have a rolled-up piece of construction paper to use as a bat. This game will be a lot like volleyball or badminton, but instead of a net or rackets, they'll have the piece of tape dividing the teams and construction paper bats to hit the balloon with.

The children may only use their bats to send the balloon from their team to the other team, not their hands. Each team can take three swings at the balloon before it has to go to the other side. When a team lets the balloon, representing King David's heart, touch the ground, the other team gets the point.

Discussion Questions:

- How did you feel when the other team got a point?
- How did you feel when your team got a point? Remember, God loved King David's ability to love his enemies. The other team isn't your enemy. In fact, they're your friends, right?
- How we can love our enemies or people we're in competition with and how that will help us along God's path?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *You have searched me, Lord, and you know me.* (Psalm 139:1)
- ❖ *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,* (Galatians 5:22)

Turban Game

David Dances for Joy

Teach your students a lesson about staying confident and strong in the face of adversity. You and your students will both need to do a little bit of before class preparation for this one.

Related Bible Story

2 Samuel 6

Materials:

- 1 bath towel per student (ask each student bring their own)

Before Class Prep:

You'll need to prepare for this game a week ahead of time by telling your students to bring a bath towel to class this week. You may also want to bring a couple of extra towels, just in case anyone forgets.

How to Play:

The Turban Game is played in two rounds. In the first round, students throw the towels up in the air and say something they like about themselves.

Prompts:

- I play the piano!
- I'm a good friend!
- I'm not afraid of things!
- I'm nice to my mom!
- I trained my dog!

After having everyone throw the towel up and declare something they like about themselves a few times, move to round two. Students wrap their hair up in the towel, making a turban. Then the students will try to GENTLY knock the turban off each other's heads without getting their own knocked off.

Note: Warn longhaired girls to keep their hair close to their heads and not get their hair pulled! Also, keep an eye on all of your students to make sure no one is getting too rough.

Sometimes, we feel pretty good about ourselves. Then someone can come along and put us down. That's sort of like knocking our turban off. We have to make sure nobody can steal our joy! We should be proud of our faith, and we should not let anyone steal our joy about that, either! How can you hold on to your joy when someone is trying to knock your turban off?

Discussion Questions:

- How can you make someone else feel good about themselves?
- What can you do when someone says something hurtful to you?
- Give some reasons why people say mean things to each other.

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with timbrel and harp. For the Lord takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with victory. (Psalm 149:3-4)*

Doves of Peace

David Bridles His Tongue

Kids can be confrontational and say hurtful things to each other. This game allows them to practice listening for God's voice through all of that noise.

Related Bible Story:

Psalm 39 and James 1

Materials:

- Image of a dove
- Blindfold
- Masking tape
- Clock or stopwatch

Before Class Prep:

Draw or print out an image of a dove from the internet. Make enough copies for each student. Make sure that you have enough masking tape for each student to tape their dove somewhere on the wall when it's their turn. You can use the same blindfold for all of the students, since they're taking turns finding a dove.

How to Play:

Sometimes when people get in our faces and yell, we want to get even so badly that it's hard to hear the voice of the Lord, but he is always calling out to us to guide us in the right things to do. Let's practice listening through in-your-face comments.

Have the students form pairs. Each pair will have a turn to do the following:

One stands at the far end of the room blindfolded. The other has taped his dove of peace to the wall somewhere in the room. It will be the blindfolded one's job to find it, while his partner can only use the words right, left, forward, backward, higher and lower to help.

Other kids can make gross noises, say, "Blah, blah, blah!" loudly in his face and laugh at him, but he has to listen through it for the voice of his partner to find his dove of peace.

Time each of the partners and add their 2 individual times together to get their team time. Whichever team finds both of their doves the fastest wins.

It was hard hearing your partner's voice over everyone getting in your face, wasn't it? But with work you did it! The harder you listen, the easier it will be to hear God's will.

Discussion Questions:

- List some ways you can calm yourself during a tense situation.
- Do you know the "Golden Rule?" Explain what the golden rule means to you.
- Can you ever "take back" hurtful things you say? What can you do to make amends for them?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *I said, "I will watch my ways and keep my tongue from sin; I will put a muzzle on my mouth while in the presence of the wicked." (Psalm 39:1)*
- ❖ *Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. (James 1:26)*

Break Away

Elijah, God, and Baal

Use your best judgment with this game, as it may not be appropriate for younger children. If you believe your students are getting to an age where they may be affected by peer pressure to do drugs, drink, cut class, or other harmful activities, this is a good game to bring awareness to the situation and help them stay strong.

Related Bible Story:

1 Kings 18

Materials:

- None

Before Class Prep:

None

How to Play:

Have all the children form a circle.

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

Allow them to think of things. As each child says one thing, have him or her turn away so that their back is to the circle. Prompts to get them started may include:

- Cheat on tests
- Take drugs or smoke

- Laugh at somebody's hard luck (spilling something all over himself)
- Gossip
- Take something not belonging to you
- Bully
- Lie to your parents
- Cover up for a friend who did something wrong

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

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

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

Take turns until everyone has been Elijah.

Discussion Questions:

- How were the Prophets of Baal sort of like bad influences among the people we know?

They can make you feel "locked in" to something you don't want to do.

- There's an old Biblical expression to describe people involved in wrong things and leading others to do them, too. It's called "the blind leading the blind." That's why, in the game, the Prophets of Baal's eyes were shut. How did the shut eyes help you?

Let them answer, but you are working toward them understanding the following:

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

- It can be really hard to go against what your friends are doing. List some people that you can talk to and can give you advice on how to deal with a particular situation.

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.*
(Romans 12:2)

I Will Listen

Elijah and the Still Small Voice

Have children fill out the following pledge statements for their prayer life in the following week.

Related Bible Story:

1 Kings 19:11-14

Materials:

- Photocopied pledge statements
- Pencils

Before Class Prep:

None

How to Play:

Fill out this pledge.

My name is _____. I promise to do my best to pray every day and listen for the voice of the Lord. My prayer is the following question: _____? And I would like an answer. I promise to pray at this time every night: _____. I will try to listen for the voice of the Lord about this for _____ minutes. I will do so in the following room in my house: _____.

I know that God loves me. I know He is happy to hear from me. I know He wants me to gain His wisdom about the subject of my prayer: _____.

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

Discussion Questions:

- Why do you think we wrote these pledges down?
- Why is it important to give God our love and to keep our promises to Him?
- Encourage discussion of the importance of integrity and how writing a pledge can help them keep their promises. The same is true for writing down our goals.

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. (John 10:27)*

Practicing Leadership

Naaman & Elisha

It's important to practice leadership skills and to practice the best way to follow a leader. This will help your students along their path to follow God's will.

Related Bible Story:

2 Kings 5

Game Materials:

- Whiffle ball and bat
- Masking tape

Before Class Prep:

Move tables and chairs and lay down a basic baseball diamond with masking tape. This way, you have an open playing field ready for the students when they get to class.

How to Play:

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

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

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

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

Being a leader isn't easy, is it? And following leadership can be hard, too. However, when we lead in the ways of the Lord, with practice, we will become excellent leaders. We'll also recognize great leadership when we see it, and we'll understand how to work with our leaders throughout our lives.

Discussion Questions:

- Do you prefer to be a leader or a follower? Why?
- Share examples of times you have been a leader and times when you have been a follower?
- Why is it important to follow a leader, like a parent, teacher or coach, even if we don't want to?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved – you and your household."* (Acts 16:31)

Step-by-Step: Passing the Bully By

Prophet Isaiah and Fears

Bullying is a huge problem in our schools today. Openly talking about why people bully and what you can do if you see someone being bullied is extremely important.

Related Bible Story:

Isaiah 41

Materials:

- 40 pieces of balled-up newspaper
- 2 bags (plastic, paper, or cloth are all fine)
- 2 blindfolds

Before Class Prep:

If you have time before class, ball up 40 pieces of newspaper into tight balls. If you don't have time, you can get the kids to help you with this at the beginning of class. Divide the balls evenly between the two bags.

How to Play:

Pick two children to be the "bullies" and give them each one of the bags of balled up newspaper. Line all the other children up against one wall. The 2 bullies will be in the middle of the room, blindfolded.

When you say, "Go!" one at a time, the other children will try to run across to the other side of the room without being hit by any of the bullies' newspaper balls.

The child running can go around one side of the bullies or the other, or she can try to run between them. She can run like mad or she can tiptoe. Choose an assistant to collect the balls each time and return them to the blindfolded children.

Any child who gets hit by a ball has to walk over to the left side of the room. Any child who doesn't get hit gets to walk over to the right.

Let's look at the circumstances. Why are the two kids in the center blindfolded? What does that symbolize? Bullies are "blind." Bullies do not have the light of God, at least while they're bullying. They can stop us temporarily.

How did you feel was the best way to get past a bully- to run like mad and not care how much noise you made or to tread quietly? Let them talk about what was right for them. The right answer depends a lot on each child's temperament.

Those who got caught represent the way our fears can sometimes really stop us. What do we have to do next if that happens? Call upon God to help us!

Take the bags of balls away from the bullies. Take all the children who got tagged with a ball and lead them across the passage where they could have been tagged.

And what do we do with bullies? Do we forgive them? Yes! (Bring the bullies along to the winner's wall too) **Everyone wins who finds God!**

Discussion Questions:

- Have you ever seen someone getting bullied? Did anyone step in to help?
- What can you do if you see someone getting bullied?
- Why do you think some people become bullies?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (Philippians 4:6-7)*

Smacks & Consequences

Prophet Jeremiah and Judgment

Life can certainly be unfair sometimes. This game helps children explore this concept and that God always rewards his followers in time.

Related Bible Story:

Jeremiah 22 and 29

Materials:

- None

Before Class Prep:

None

How to Play:

Divide the children into pairs. Have one partner hold her hands out, palms up. The other partner puts his hands gingerly on top of his partner's hands, palms down.

Consequences often seem unfair. Someday, God will explain everything, but, in the meantime, we can't always see the big picture. We have to try to accept that life isn't always comfortable. It's like the game of hand-smack. The fastest person wins, and we don't understand why some of us are faster than others. Let's play.

The goal is for the person whose hands are underneath to quickly reach around and GENTLY smack the tops of the partner's hands before the partner can move his hands away.

If she succeeds, her hands stay on the bottom, and she can continue to try to smack her partner's hands. If she fails, her hands become those on top, and her partner gets a chance to try to smack her hands.

She only needs to make contact with one hand for a smack to be considered a hit. If neither hand makes contact, it's a miss.

The winner is the person whose hands are on the bottom for the most rounds after five minutes are up.

How many of you like that game? You should get a mixed review.

How many of you feel that the tops of your hands are sore? Some will confirm.

Are your hands sore because you were lazy and not really trying? No!

So how is that fair? You did your best, and you still have sore hands.

The point is that we aren't always going to be the "best" at every situation. Sometimes we are the "loser" in the game. But if we are patient, God will make sure we get our just rewards in His good time!

Discussion Questions:

- How does it make you feel if you aren't very good at a game, sport or school subject?
- How do you get better at something?
- Describe a situation that felt really unfair.

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. (Jeremiah 29:11)*
- ❖ *He is the Lord our God; his judgments are in all the earth. (1 Chronicles 16:14)*

Taming Life's Lions

Prophet Daniel and the Lion

This game teaches children the value of God's gifts, especially the gift of support and friendship through other people.

Related Bible Story:

Daniel 6

Materials:

- Clock or stopwatch

Before Class Prep:

At the end of the class before this one, be sure to remind all of the girls to wear shorts or pants for this class, as skirts won't be appropriate apparel for this game. If you have a girl who forgets and wears a dress or skirt, you can have her assist you instead of directly participating in the game. If you have more than one child in a skirt, just have them stand to the side for the first part of the game, and they can participate in the rest.

How to Play:

Make a space in the middle of the floor with lots of room. Tell the kids to try standing on their hands. Let them keep trying and see who can stand on their hands the longest without falling. Time them, but give them each five or six tries and use their best effort as their time.

How would you like to double the amount of time you could stand on your hands just with one little trick? Most should say yes.

Divide the students into pairs. Have one do a handstand and the other hold that person's feet so they can't fall.

Now that you have a spotter, try to walk on your hands from one side of the room to the other. Spotters, don't let go! You don't want your partner to fall!

Have all the children move to a starting point. One child in each pair should do another handstand; have the partner hold his feet. Tell them to proceed across the floor, from start to finish, and see who makes it. Applaud everyone for their attempts.

In life sometimes, we're a little like lions. We feel big and awkward, like we could hurt somebody—maybe even kick somebody in the head. But God comes along to help us. Sometimes His help comes through another person—a friend to help and guide us. Sometimes His help comes like it did with Daniel—he sends angels to help out.

With God's help, we're able to do things in a "tame" and fantastic way. We can do many things we certainly couldn't do without Him!

Discussion Questions:

- We will not be thrown into a den of hungry lions, but we can be in dangerous circumstances? Share a time you were afraid for your safety.
- God knows we will be afraid sometimes; that is why much of the Bible deals with fear. How does God want us to handle fear?
- Name a few situations where you can't complete a task by yourself and need a partner.

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.* (Ephesians 6:10)
- ❖ *When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.* (Psalm 56:3)

God Watches Over All – Tic-Tac-Toe

Ruth and Putting Family First

It's amazing what an old classic game like tic-tac-toe can teach children about the importance of family and God's love.

Related Bible Story:

Ruth 1-4

Materials:

- Tic-tac-toe sheets
- Pencils or pens

Before Class Prep:

Make sure you've copied enough tic-tac-toe sheets so that each team can have one and that you have enough pens or pencils for everyone to play.

How to Play:

Game play is exactly like traditional tic-tac-toe. Before you let the children pair off and play, though, talk to them a little bit about why you're playing tic-tac-toe today...

We've talked about family coming first and friends second, but who's missing from this picture? God! God watches over all. The world works best in threes: God, family

and friends. So, we're giving you a game that works in threes, no matter how you hold it. We'll pretend the X's are family and O's are friends. God is the grid.

Now split everyone into pairs to play. For each game, they should switch from being family (X's) to being friends (O's). The goal is to be the first team to come with a game where X's win.

We've included a sheet of Tic-tac-toe grids that you can print and photocopy on the next page.

Discussion Questions:

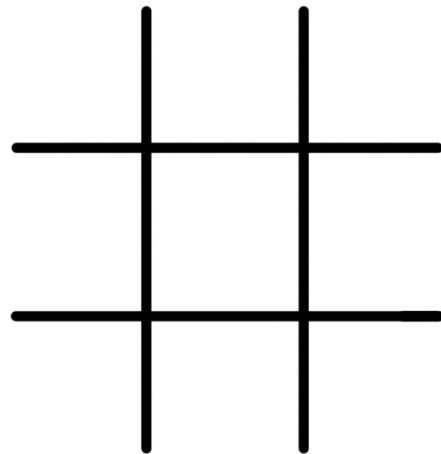
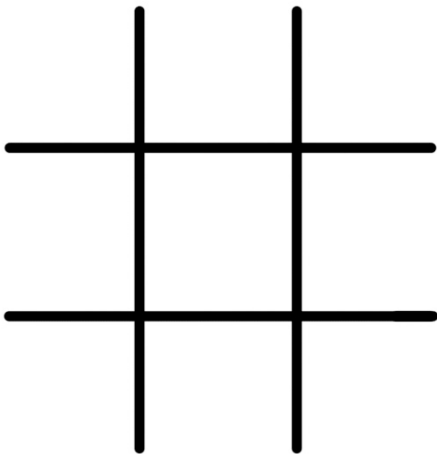
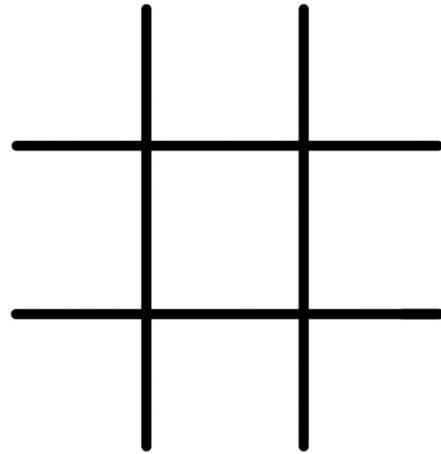
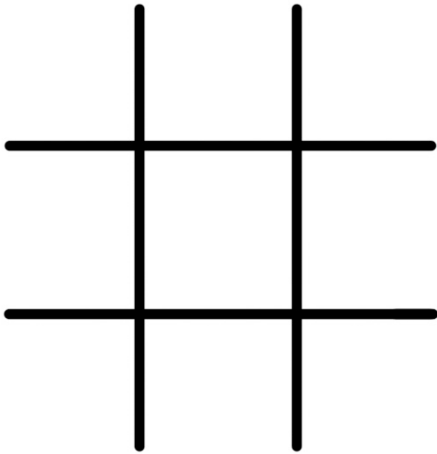
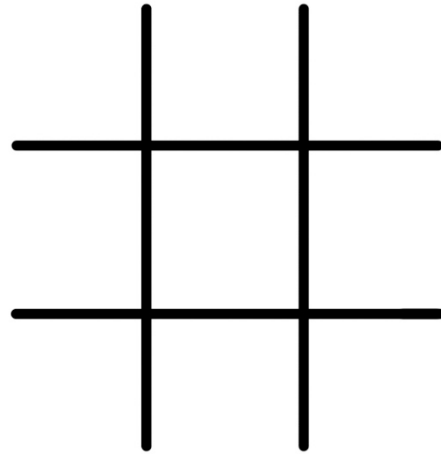
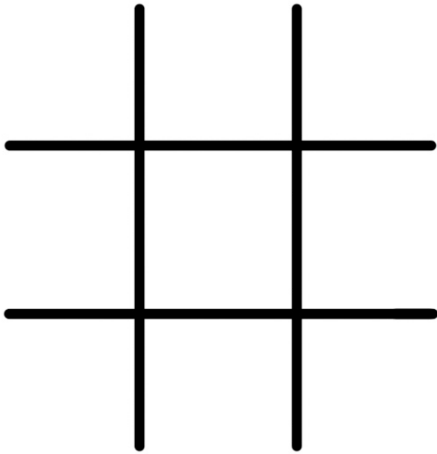
Encourage the students to discuss how God is always present and how your family is second only to Him. They can continue talking about the importance of friendship and love through God, too.

- Share some activities that you really like doing with your family.
- Does your family have any special traditions?
- How does your family include God in their lives?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother"-- which is the first commandment with a promise. (Ephesian 6:1-2)*

God Watches Over Family & Friends - TIC TAC TOE



‘God’s Will is like a Penny’ Game

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego Put God First

This exercise is a great way to prepare kids to speak to others about their faith.

Related Bible Story:

Daniel 3

Materials:

- 1 clean, empty milk carton
- 5 pennies
- 1 cardboard wrapping paper tube or empty poster tube

Before Class Prep:

Make sure that the chair you choose for this game is steady. If you are unsure it can take your weight or a child’s weight, don’t use it. If you don’t have a steady chair, you can have the children hold the pennies above their heads and drop them into the carton for the first round of the game.

How to Play:

When God asks us to do something – like stand up for Him in School, it’s not always easy. First, we’re often unprepared. We don’t know what the situation will be or how it will come up. Second, we often don’t know what to say. It’s a little bit like this

game. You have to believe that these pennies, which are like your attempts to stand up for God, will make it into a milk carton, which is like the other person's heart.

Place the milk carton beside a chair. Let one child stand on the chair with five pennies. He should aim for the opening of the milk carton and try to get as many pennies in as possible. Let all of the students take a turn and keep their own scores. Most will not get more than a couple of pennies in the carton.

Sometimes we want to be of service to the Lord, but as we demonstrated in the lesson, it takes His help and protection. Let's try this game again, only this time we'll add a few "crutches."

This time have students kneel on the chair instead of stand. Let them cover the mouth of the carton with the cardboard tube, take aim, and drop the pennies down the tube.

We're kneeling this time, which in this game is symbolic of praying. If we pray for God's strength, courage, protection, and direction, we can count on His help.

The tube is a little like God Himself, guiding the way so we can have what we want. When we rely on God to help us, it's much easier to come out a winner, isn't it?

Discussion Questions:

- Has anyone at school ever asked you about God?
- Have you ever thought about what you would say if someone asked you about your belief in God? Let's think of some good responses.
- How can we put God first in our own lives?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*
(Matthew 6:33)

Piggyback Races

Queen Esther Stands Up for Her People

The Bible says that we should support each other through tough times. Sometimes we need a little more than a helping hand. Let's pretend that time is now.

Related Bible Story:

Esther 4-8

Materials:

- None

Before Class Prep:

Make sure that the room is clear, and there's a safe, open space for this race. Mark the start/finish line clearly so that no one runs into a wall or accidentally stops before the end.

How to Play:

Divide the group up into pairs for piggyback races across the room and back. If there is an odd number, then one team will consist of 3 people. For that team, one child will carry his first partner across the room. That partner will jump off, and the other partner will jump on to race back to the start/finish line.

Sometimes two go slower when they're in the race of life together, but they are a lot stronger! Remember to rely on your spiritual family! Sometimes we need our spiritual family to carry us, and sometimes we need to carry them. It's all in God's plan.

Discussion Questions:

- Sometimes you need to talk to someone other than your parents for guidance or advice. Who else can you talk to?
- Has anyone ever asked you for advice on a situation? How did it make you feel to be asked?
- God wants us to love each other and work together. Can you think of a way that you can help someone this week?

Related Bible Verse:

- ❖ *But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*
(Matthew 6:33)

4th of July Game

Jesus Bridge to Freedom

Christ freed us from great bondage, but how can we make this freedom plain to children? What can we implement on 4th of July to celebrate it? First, a lesson using the American icon of the Grand Canyon can help students understand the power and freedom of Christ. Second, a celebration of cupcakes, prizes, and games or artwork can certainly make the lesson memorable.

Materials:

- Masking tape
- A picture of the Grand Canyon
- Measuring tape
- “Jesus Bridge” – a arrow rug or length of butcher paper, at least 6 feet long
- Games, prizes, and snacks for the “Heavenly side”

Before Class Prep:

Bring a picture of the Grand Canyon to class for this lesson so that the children can get a better idea of what they’re learning. If you use disposable material, like cardboard or paper for the Jesus Bridge, you can actually write “Jesus Bridge” on it so that the children can see it before they cross.

Before your students get to class, put down two lines of masking tape on the floor about 6 feet apart. On the far side, set up a table with games, snacks, punch, and prizes. If the students try to go there first, stop them and keep them on the opposite side of the tape “canyon” until the lesson is over.

How to Play:

Fourth of July holds special meaning to all Americans, but to Christians, it can be doubly special. While celebrating our country's freedom, we can also celebrate the freedom that belief in Christ has brought to us—both now and in eternal life with Him.

Pass around a picture of the Grand Canyon.

See this huge space between the tape lines? That is the Grand Canyon! It is over a mile deep! We are on a high peak, and we need to get to the plateau! God is over there...so let's try and jump without falling into the Grand Canyon!

Have students line up on one line. Let them take a couple of good swings with their arms and see how far they can make jump. This is called a standing long jump, which differs from a running long jump. You want them to use the standing long jump for indoor safety, so make sure they stand with their toes on the line.

You can't step backwards and take a running leap because we are standing on a peak!

No one should be able to jump the six feet, but measure their jumps with a tape measure and remark positively to the ones who make the best concerted effort. Remark on form, determination and distance to make sure everyone gets compliments.

But what's the problem? Nobody can make it to God's side by their own effort. Before Jesus, people have only their own effort to try to reach heaven. As you can see, we 'all fall short,' as Romans 3:23 says.

Then, roll out the rug, cardboard, or butcher paper to "connect" the two lines. Tell the children that this is the "Jesus Bridge."

With Jesus' death and resurrection, He bridged the gap between God and Man. He made it possible for us to freely come to God and be part of His kingdom. As soon as you ask Jesus to be your guide for life, you are truly free. You are no longer stuck. You can pass over to commune with God, using Jesus as the Bridge.

Have everyone pass over to the other side, using the "Jesus Bridge." Let them pass over a couple of times, and encourage some to do cartwheels, dance steps, somersaults or whatever they feel like. Encourage them to be creative in how they celebrate Christ's love:

We're all different! We all have different personalities, gifts, skills, abilities, and ways of thinking. We can all walk with Jesus along the Path of God's love in our own ways and with our own God-given talents. The important thing is, we are free from our prison on the cliffs, and He will keep us from falling!

Jesus is the bridge that frees us to come to God!

Now that we've all been freed, let's celebrate and have a party with God, here on the heavenly side!

Games for the party might include any that promote individuality and freedom, such as:

- Voting on the most original dance to music
- Making the most original picture with red, white, and blue paint
- Writing the word "Freedom!" with the most original bubble letters and coloring it in
- Having a Fourth of July parade (a favorite of younger children), using spoons and blocks and noisemakers for instruments.

Have snacks, cake, balloons, and inexpensive favors of your choice.

Related Bible Verses:

- ❖ *It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. (Galatians 5:1)*
- ❖ *To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32)*
- ❖ *Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. (Romans 8:1-2)*