

Supplies: 1 potato per student; googly eyes; pom-poms; pipe cleaners (or other materials for making a face); glue; potting soil; grass seed (lawn grass, rye grass or wheat seed are your best choices – wheat seed can be found at health food and organic food stores); a knife; a small styrofoam cup that will serve as a seat for the potato head while it is growing hair

OPENING PRAYER

TELL

- For the opening question, I'm going to ask you a question and then we'll go around the circle and say our names and then give our answer to the question.
- I'll ask the question and then I'll answer first, ok?
- Opening question: *Have you ever lost something and then found it? How did you feel?*

GO AROUND THE CIRCLE

- During this Session (Patriarchs, Joseph and Moses), we've been talking and learning about Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Moses.
- These 5 individuals had a lot to do with the beginning of who we call the Israelites.
- By learning the stories of these 5 individuals, we are also getting the chance to learn and see how the relationship between the Israelites and God starts, struggles, and matures.
- All of these stories that we're hearing and talking about in this Session are from the Old Testament. This means these things happened well before Jesus was born. Between 1600 to 2000 years before Jesus was born. This means some of these stories are 4000 years old!
- Last week we heard and talked about Jacob, who was Isaac's son (and Isaac was Abraham's son). Jacob, if you remember, was returning to see his brother Esau, but was very afraid about doing so.
- The night before he was to reunite with his brother, he wrestled with God, and God changed Jacob's name to Israel, which means "Wrestles with God."
- In today's story, we're going to hear about Jacob and Esau's reunion. This happens the morning just following Jacob's wrestling with God.

READ Genesis 33:1-11

1 Jacob saw Esau coming toward them with four hundred men. So Jacob divided the children among Leah and Rachel and the two maids. 2 He put the maids with their children in front, then Leah with her children, and Rachel and Joseph last of all. 3 Jacob then went ahead of them, bowing himself to the ground seven times, until he came near his brother. 4 And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and they wept.

5 When Esau looked up and saw the women and children, he said, "Who are these with you?" Jacob said, "The children whom God has graciously given your servant." 6 Then the maids drew near, they and their children, and bowed down; 7 Leah likewise and her children drew near and bowed down; and finally Joseph and Rachel drew near, and they bowed down. 8 Esau said, "What do you mean by all the cattle you sent to me before I saw you?" Jacob answered, "To find favor with you." 9 But Esau said, "I have enough, my brother; keep what you have for yourself." 10 Jacob said, "No, please; if I find favor with you, then accept my present from my hand; for truly to see your face is like seeing the face of God—since you have received me with such favor. 11 Please accept my gift that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have everything I want." So Jacob urged Esau, and Esau took it.

ASK

- So Jacob split his family into different groups, so that if one group was attacked, the other groups could try and get away. Did you notice, though, where Jacob placed himself? (He went out in front of all the groups - he went first, so if someone was to be attacked first, it would be him)
- As Jacob approached his brother, he bowed to the ground 7 different times. How did Esau respond to Jacob? (he ran up to Jacob and hugged him and they cried)
- So two stories ago, Jacob was trying to get things from Esau and stole the birthright from Esau. But in this story, Jacob does just the opposite and *gives* to Esau. Did you notice what Jacob gave to Esau? (cattle - which was a form of food and money)
- What did Jacob tell Esau that seeing Esau's face was like? (Like seeing the face of God)

TELL

- This is an amazing story of forgiveness and reconciliation.
- Reconciliation is when two friends or family members who were really, really upset with each other, and didn't talk to each other and avoided each other for a long time, then become friends again.
- And the whole reason this reconciliation happens with Jacob and Esau is because God tells Jacob to return to his homeland and meet with his brother.
- In the process of obeying God, Jacob also learns to better trust God, which results in his name being changed.
- And because Jacob trusted God, then he got to experience the love and forgiveness from his brother that for Jacob was like seeing the face of God.
- So for today, our activities are going to center around the line/phrase, "Seeing your face is like seeing the face of God."
- What that phrase means for Jacob is that Esau's welcoming of Jacob shows Jacob why God was calling Jacob to meet with his brother. God's desire for Jacob is visible in the welcome, smile and tears of Esau.

EXPLAIN ACTIVITY

- For today's activity, we're each going to make a potato head that will serve as a reminder for us of how, if we're seeking God, just our faces can create (or *grow*) trust in others of God.
- The first thing I'm going to do is pass out a potato to each of you.
- Then, we're going to cut a small part of the top of the potato off and then dig a small hole into the potato at that spot.
- Once we've done that, then we're going to use these googly eyes, pom-poms and pipecleaners to make a face on our potatoes. For certain things (like an ear or a nose), if you use pipecleaners then

you can push one end of the pipecleaner into the potato to make it stick. Otherwise, use glue to make the pom-poms, eyes and pipecleaners stick to the potato.

MAKE POTATO-HEAD FACE

- Now that your potato head face is done, we're going to set-up the part where your potato head will grow some hair.
- So we're going to take a spoon and put just a little bit of potting soil in the hole that you dug in the top of your potato-head.
- Once the soil is in place, then we'll sprinkle some grass seed on top.
- Now we'll use an eye-dropper to water the soil so that it's damp.
- You'll have to water the soil once a day, just like this, for 5 to 7 days and then your potato head will have hair and will look like this:



- Now, we're going to take a Styrofoam cup and plop the potato-head in it to make a stand for our potato-head.
- If the potato-head drops too far into the cup, cut the top of the cup until the narrower circumference of the cup holds the potato "sooner."
- Finally, once that's all done, we're going to make a little placard for our potato-head that we can either lean against or tape to the potato-head stand.
- I'm passing out to you a 3x5 notecard with lines on one side and no lines on the other side. Pick the side you want to use and on it, write in the line, "To see your face is like seeing the face of God." Feel free to use different color markers to make it look very colorful
- NOTE: Put the words on a dry-erase board or print it out to post on the wall to help younger kids with the spelling/writing.

TELL

- As the grass grows on the top of your potato-head, that can remind us of how just our faces can shine with God's love, mercy and grace and in so doing, be a reminder to others of God's love, mercy and grace – just like Esau was to Jacob.

CLOSING PRAYER