

Middle/High School Sunday School Lessons by

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Year 1: Class 26

End of Year Review

Concepts / Objectives for lesson

- Review the concepts and stories of the year
- *Optional*: Provide a visual presentation of what it means to choose to be filled with God's spirit that summarizes one of the main themes from Year 1 – choosing God's way instead of the "fight or flight" way

Materials needed:

1. Video clips (listed in a separate excel file – available for download [HERE](#) or on [rfour.org](#))
2. Computer/laptop, internet connection, and electronics that will show the video clips
3. Print out handouts (listed in a separate word .doc – available for download [HERE](#) or on [rfour.org](#))
4. For visual presentation (*optional*): A clear vase or glass, fill a third of it with water, fill another third of it with vegetable cooking oil, and then have water-based food coloring drops to put in the vase / glass.

THE LESSON

OPENING PRAYER

OPENING QUESTION

- For the opening question for today's class, I [the teacher] will ask the question, and then to give you some time to think of an answer, I will answer first.
- Once I answer the question, we'll go around the circle.
- When it's your turn, start with your name and then answer the question to the best of your ability.
- *Here's this week's question*: What's one thing that you remember/that sticks in your head from class this year?

Things we wanted you to learn this year

- That the Bible stories are weird *and* interesting – even if they are sometimes hard to understand (mostly due to how old the stories are)
- Although the stories are old, the ideas in them and what's happening in the stories are pretty timeless – which is why we matched them up every week with a movie clip – to show us how those same ideas are still in the stories we listen to today.
- Learning to recognize how the ideas in the Bible stories are also in our own everyday lives is a type of analytical thinking – which is why the opening question was meant to relate to both our own lives and to the lesson/scripture story for the day.

- We, the teachers, wanted all of us to get to know each other better and even trust one another. Which is why we had the opening question that was about our lives and also why (when we got to them), the activities were mostly built around some sort of challenge – because working together helps us get familiar with each other and trust each other a little bit more.
 - R: We’ve very much enjoyed spending this year with you and getting to know you better and thank you for all the ways in which you’ve made the class fun and interesting and educational.
- Speaking of educational – there were two main themes that we looked at.
 - First, we looked at the “Start” of the Israelites. We looked at some of the identity issues (mostly of deception and grasping) that Jacob (aka Israel) and Joseph struggled with (ie Trusting themselves rather than God). We then looked at how as a people, the Israelites had similar struggles with God as well.
 - Second, we looked at this idea of God’s way as the third choice between “fight” or “flight.” And, that it takes a lot of bravery to choose this third way. Especially when faced with arrest, fiery furnaces, lions dens and crucifixion. But on the other side of the threats, we see that choosing God’s way results in more and better life for the person making the choice as well as those surrounding that person.

And now -- a BRIEF review of the sessions and the stories in them of the whole year
(Best if you go quickly – took me fifteen minutes – I was aiming for ten.
Make sure students have the handouts so that they can read along with you.)

Session 1 Jacob – A Patriarch

- *Jacob the Deceiver* – Jacob with the help of his mother, lies to his father to steal the blessing meant for Esau – which splits the family and Jacob runs away from home because Esau wants to kill him.
- *Jacob’s name change and reunion with Esau* – 20 years after running from home, God calls Jacob to return home and reunite with Esau. On the night of reunion, Jacob is stricken with fear and wrestles with God about it. In the wrestling, Jacob (whose name means “Grasper”) has his name changed to Israel (which means “one who wrestles with God”) – In other words, Jacob is finally learning to turn to God instead of managing the situation on his own.
- *Joseph is sold into slavery; Jacob is deceived* – Jacob’s old ways have been passed onto his kids. 10 sons tire of Joseph and sell him into slavery. Then they lie and deceive Jacob/Israel in the same way Jacob lied/deceived his family.

Session 2 Joseph and his Brothers

- *Joseph Interprets Pharaoh’s Dreams* – Joseph is a slave and then thrown in jail in Egypt. His God-directed ability to interpret dreams eventually lands him in front of Pharaoh, though, and he gets himself a really important job re: food prep for famine.
- *Joseph’s dreams come true; his brothers go to Egypt and bow before him* – Joseph’s job reunites him with his brothers, only his brothers don’t recognize him. Joseph deceives them to see if they’ve learned anything since selling him into slavery
- *Joseph tests his brothers and they pass* – The brothers “pass” Joseph’s deceptive test and they are reunited. Jacob and his entire family moves to Egypt.

Session 3 Moses & the Israelites exit Egypt

- *The 10 Plagues* – 400 years after Joseph helps Egypt, Egypt has enslaved Joseph’s and Israel’s family – the Israelites. God, through Moses, tells Pharaoh to let the Israelites go. Pharaoh says No. Plagues ensue. We talked about thinking of the plagues like pollution: “Cheap” sources of labor/energy usually have such results (aka plagues/pollution).

- *Passover* – the 10th plague is the Passover, where God’s angel of death kills the firstborn in every household except for those marked with lamb’s blood on the doorway. Those houses are “passed over.” Pharaoh finally lets the Israelites go.
- *The Red Sea* – After the Israelites leave Egypt, Pharaoh changes his mind and gives chase to bring back his cheap labor force. Moses and the people pray and God shows them a path through the chaotic situation (aka the Red Sea - a symbol of chaos). The Egyptians who are not praying, do not see God’s path through the chaos and are therefore swallowed up by the Red Sea.

Session 4 Jesus’ Childhood

- *The wisemen find Jesus* – King Herod (an Israelite who is king under Roman rule) learns about a young child (from the foreigner wisemen) who is to be the next king. This frightens Herod so after failing to trick the wisemen, Herod then kills all Israelite baby boys under the age of two. But Joseph, Mary, and Jesus escape to Egypt.
- *Jesus is blessed* – In the Temple, Simeon and Anna bless baby Jesus. From this story was the line “the inner thoughts of many will be revealed” – meaning how people respond to Jesus would reveal their true thoughts and intentions.
- *When Jesus was 12 years old* – he ran away from home. Ok, not quite. But he did get separated from his family because he was so engaged in discussion with the teachers in the Temple. Certainly showed promise as a student.

Session 5 Kingdom of God Parables

- *Why Jesus Tells Parables & Treasure* – The main thing that Jesus taught about during his ministry was the Kingdom of God – and the way he taught about it was with parables. The parables in this passage were about people who sold everything they had in order to gain a very valuable thing (a field with treasure in it and a pearl).
- *Parable of the Great Feast* – In this parable, Jesus tells of a great feast that people don’t want to attend because they are busy with other things. We talked some more about the Kingdom of God (it is NOT heaven, but something that we can experience here and now) and some reasons why we might not accept the invitation to participate in it.
- *Parable of the Bridesmaids* – In this parable, there is a lack of preparation on the part of some bridesmaids (who SHOULD know better) and therefore miss out. Seems to be a story more pointed at the crowd than the Pharisees re: reasons why they might miss participating in the Kingdom of God.

Session 6 Lent according to John

- *Lazarus is raised from the dead; Pharisees decide to kill Jesus* – Lazarus, a dear friend of Jesus, dies. Jesus arrives after Lazarus dies and is blamed by *everyone* for not healing Lazarus. Jesus cries and then raises Lazarus from the dead. Lazarus did NOT stinketh despite concerns to the contrary. When the Pharisees hear the news, they decide that they must kill Jesus (at this point, it is helpful to refer back to that blessing Jesus received as a baby).
- *Jesus washes feet* – The night before Jesus is killed, Jesus has a meal with his disciples. Before the meal, he washes their feet. We talked about how the word “blessed” means to “bend at the knee” as a way to be receptive to God and how being blessed, then, factors into “serving” – including how serving isn’t about making people “happy.”
- *Crucifixion of Jesus* – In this story, the fight or flight choices the Pharisees and Pilate make win because Jesus chooses neither. Jesus chooses God’s way which means he allows himself to be arrested and does not argue with Pilate.

Session 7 Effects of Resurrection

- *Following Resurrected Jesus* – We looked at how God’s way has better results than fight or flight. And thus, why Resurrected Jesus invitation to the disciples on the seashore to follow him is an attractive invitation. We then looked at some of the things that can keep us from accepting this invitation (fear; lack of attention/commitment)
- *Pentecost* – The disciples stay focused and committed to following Jesus and his directions and thus Pentecost happens. The disciples receive God’s Holy Spirit, and the cycle/pattern of Jesus’ ministry starts over. The disciples

receive God's spirit (like Jesus did), they talk to the people (like Jesus did), some of the people sign up as disciples, some of the people scoff at the disciples, and other people are threatened by the disciples (it's like Jesus never left).

- *Peter and John heal a man* – Just like Jesus healed people, we now see the disciples (post-Pentecost) do the same thing; Peter and John heal a lame man. They were then arrested for it and 5000 people signed up as disciples

Session 8 No Fear

- *Paul and Silas sing in prison* – We are briefly introduced to Paul in this story. We see Paul do the same thing happen as Peter and John. They heal a girl and are then beaten/arrested for it. But they make the same 3rd choice. Instead of fight or flight, they choose God's way & because they do, the jail keeper doesn't kill himself after the earthquake.
- *Shadrach, Meshack and Abednego* – The three amigos say no to worshiping a gold statue of King Nebuchadnezzar knowing that they will be thrown into a fiery furnace. Another example of choosing God's way instead of fight or flight – and it works out for them in the end. News of who God is spreads because of their choice.
- *Daniel and the Lions' Den* – almost the exact same story as Shad, Mesh, and Abed but with different characters and a different type of capital punishment (the lions den!). The ending is the same though.

Extra lesson

- *Jesus and his brothers* – We looked a little at the family dynamics of Jesus' family (similar themes to the story of Jesus in the Temple when he is 12 – the family is more concerned about family stuff than God stuff)

EXPLAIN ACTIVITY

Match the movie with the Bible story (see excel file)

There are 10 links to different movie clips that we watched this past year

And in the column to the left are brief summaries of the 10 Bible stories we read this year that match with the video clips.

The summaries are written with some clues in them to help us match the videos with the stories

As a class, we'll watch a movie clip and then see if we can match the correct story with the video we just watched.

DO ACTIVITY (see excel file)

Note to teachers: *Once activity is done, and you are not doing the demonstration, skip to the very last bullet point of lesson. Otherwise, continue on.*

Optional: EXPLAIN and DO Demonstration (adapted from <http://yourlifeuncommon.blogspot.com/2010/04/jakes-object-lesson.html>)

Set-up for teachers

- Fill clear glass vase 1/3rd full of water. Then slowly pour in oil on top of the water (so that the vase is now 2/3rds full).
- Note: You'll want to do this **before** class because it will take a little bit of time for the oil and water to separate. You shouldn't start the demonstration until the two fluids are clearly separate.

EXPLAIN

- Throughout most of the year, the stories we've looked at have had terrible, awful things happen to the people in the Bible stories – both the people who are paying attention to God and the people who are not.
- And one thing I want to make sure you understand is that paying attention to God does **NOT** keep you from experiencing hardship
- If this were true, Jesus would not have been killed – instead he would've lived happily ever after, right?
- So if paying attention to God does not protect us from hard things, then what's the point of paying attention to God?
- Well, what we see in the stories is that there's a choice of what we can be filled up with.
- We can be filled with what the world has to offer: Fight, flight, things, distractions, etc
- Or we can be filled with God's spirit
- Take for example this vase – it can be filled with many things
- Today it is filled with two things, oil and water. As you can see, the oil is sitting on top of the water.
- We're going to pretend that the oil is God's spirit and the water is anything/everything else that we could be filled with.
- In my hand, here, I have some food coloring.
- We're going to pretend that the food coloring are the hardships we experience in life
- So what I'm going to do is introduce these hardships to the vase; I'm going to drop some of this food coloring into the vase
- What do you think will happen? (let ideas be shared)
- Let's find out

DO Demonstration – drop droplets of food coloring into the vase (best if you do QUITE A BIT and not just a few drops). The food coloring should sink THROUGH the oil and then disperse into the water below.

ASK / TELL

- So, what happened? (the food coloring went through the oil and then spread throughout the water)
- This demonstration helps us to visualize/think about how we respond and “handle” the hardships of life based upon what we are filled up with.
- As we see with the water – symbolic of the world's ways and offerings – we see that being filled with that stuff causes us to retain the hardship. We hold on to it and even spread it through us and others.
- But with the oil – symbolic of God's way and spirit – we see that being filled with God's spirit helps us to let go of the hardship. That it does not spread out in us or through us, but passes through us. We saw this with Joseph forgiving his brothers, with the Israelites being freed from Egypt, with Jesus and crucifixion to resurrection, with the disciples, Paul and Silas, with Daniel, and with Meshach, Shadrach, and Abednego.
- So when you think about living God's way and why you might make that choice, I hope this demonstration serves as a helpful reminder in tandem with all the stories that we've talked about this year regarding why you might choose to live God's way.
- And that's it for this week and year. It's been a fantastic year! Thank you for being part of it and we hope you have a good summer.

CLOSING PRAYER