

**Supplies:** Three or four 8.5" x 11" transparency sheets (see **Setup**); a ping pong ball; 20 strips of newspaper (about 5 to 7 inches long and maybe 2 inches wide) per student; enough masking or scotch tape to tape each strip of newspaper to the students

**Setup:** Take a transparency sheet and roll it so that it's shaped like a cone, then tape it so that it'll keep that shape. Make sure the smaller opening is about ¼" wide and the other opening is about 3" to 4" inches wide. Do this for all three or four transparencies - each cone can only be used once, due to saliva issues.

### 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 our answer to the question.
- I'll ask the question and then I'll answer first, ok?
- Here's the opening question: *What's something that makes you angry?*

### GO AROUND THE CIRCLE

#### TELL

- During this session, we're talking about the prophets and some of the first kings of Israel.
- All of these stories that we're hearing and talking about in this Session are from the Old Testament. That means these things happened well before Jesus was born.
- Last week, we talked about the prophet Elijah being taken up by a chariot of fire and his student and good friend, Elisha, seeing him go.
- Today, we're going to read a story about the prophet Elisha. This is after Elijah has been taken up by the chariot of fire.
- In today's story, Elisha heals a man named Naaman who has leprosy. Leprosy is a skin disease. During the time of this story, though, leprosy could be many different types of skin disease.

### READ 2 Kings 5:1-14 (Elisha heals Naaman)

1 Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man and in high favor with his king, because through Naaman, God had given victory to Aram. Naaman, though a mighty warrior, suffered from leprosy, a skin disease that was very contagious that caused people to avoid and be afraid of Naaman.

2 Now the Arameans on one of their raids had taken a young girl captive from the land of Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. 3 She said to Naaman's wife, "If only my lord were with the prophet who is in Samaria! The prophet would cure him of his leprosy." 4 When Naaman heard this from his wife, he went in and told the King just what the girl from the land of Israel had said. 5 And the king of Aram said, "Go then, and I will send along a letter to the king of Israel." Naaman went, taking with him ten talents of

silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten sets of garments. 6 Naaman brought the letter to the king of Israel, which read, "When this letter reaches you, know that I, the King of Aram, have sent to you my servant Naaman, that you may cure him of his leprosy." 7 When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God, to give death or life, that this man sends word to me to cure a man of his leprosy? Just look and see how he is trying to pick a fight with me!" 8 But when Elisha the prophet heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent a message to the king, "Why have you torn your clothes? Let Naaman come to me, that he may learn that there is a prophet in Israel."

9 So Naaman came with his horses and chariots, and halted at the entrance of Elisha's house. 10 Elisha sent a messenger to Naaman, saying, "Go, wash in the Jordan seven times, and your skin shall be restored and you shall be clean." 11 But Naaman became angry and went away, saying, "I thought that for me, a mighty warrior, he would surely come out, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and would wave his hand over the spot, and cure the leprosy! 12 Are not Abana and Farpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than the Jordan? Could I not wash in them, and be clean?" He turned and went away in a rage. 13 But his servants approached and said to him, "Sir, if the prophet had commanded you to do something difficult, would you not have done it? How much easier it is, then, when all the prophet said to you was, "Wash, and be clean?" 14 So Naaman went down and immersed himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God. When he arose from the water, Naaman's skin was restored like that of a young boy, and he was clean of the leprosy.

### ASK

- So did you hear the part where Naaman was angry?
- Why was he angry? (v 11. Elisha didn't come out to talk to him and wave his hand over his skin. Plus, the Jordan river was dirty)
- Why would those things make Naaman angry? (because that's not how Naaman thought things were going to happen)
- What did Naaman's anger almost stop Naaman from experiencing? (being healed – he almost didn't go bathe in the Jordan river).

### TELL

- When we have an "expectation(s)," that means we have an idea or picture in our heads of how something should happen in a certain way, even though that certain thing hasn't happened yet.
- For example, I have an expectation for how we get from the sanctuary to Sunday School. Can you tell me what you think that expectation is? (two volunteers hold the doors open, everyone else walks behind the teacher, we stop at the end of the hallway).
- We all have expectations. For example, what should happen when you flip a light switch? (a light goes on!) Or, for another example, when you're older, you'll expect your car to start when you turn the key in the ignition.
- But sometimes, things that we expect to happen, don't happen.
- And when that happens, we often feel angry or frustrated.
- And that's what happens with Naaman.
- Naaman *expects* to be treated with respect and like a very important person (because he is).
- But Elisha does not treat Naaman in the way Naaman expects to be treated and so this makes Naaman angry.
- And that anger almost stops Naaman from being healed.

- Anger often makes us feel strong and powerful, but at the same time, keeps us from being able to receive instruction (from others and from God) and do what is best for us.

### **TELL/EXPLAIN 1<sup>st</sup> Activity**

- To help demonstrate how anger only sounds and looks powerful, but doesn't actually help us, we're going to try and blow this ping pong ball out of this cone.
- The challenge is to hold the cone up at an angle so that the ping pong ball doesn't roll out [*demonstrate the angle*] and then try to blow the ping pong ball out of the cone. To huff and puff and blow it out.
- Who here thinks they can blow the ping pong ball farther than this chair? Who here thinks they can blow the ping pong ball all the way across the room!?!]
- [choose a volunteer. The ping pong ball will not come out of the cone. No matter how hard they huff and puff. Give your first volunteer a couple of chances, then ask others if they think they can do better. Pick as many volunteers as you have cones.]

### **TELL**

- Thank you, volunteers, for your help.
- I want you to pretend that what we just saw is what happens when we get angry.
- We huff and we puff, but the problem (the ping pong ball) doesn't actually go away.
- Not only does the huffing and puffing of anger not help us, but it often gets in the way of making the problem go away. For instance, it can tire us out without getting rid of the problem.
- That's what we see happen in the story with Naaman. His anger not only doesn't heal him, but it also almost keeps him from receiving the instructions that ultimately heal him.
- This can happen to us with God too. Maybe we think something (like life) should be a certain way and then when that something doesn't happen the way we expect, we get angry at God instead of listening to what God is calling us to do in the moment.
- So when we get angry, we can think of that anger as being a reminder to ask God to help us let go of our expectations and help us move through the situation.
- And then, like Naaman listening to his servants, we will be more likely to then hear what to do instead of just being angry.

### **EXPLAIN next activity**

- Our next activity is a game where we get to run around and "clean" things off of each other.
- We each get 20 strips of newspaper and then we have to tape them on to our backs and shoulders and arms.
- Once we've done that, then we're going to run around and try to take these strips of paper off of each other.
- Boundaries for the game are: \_\_\_\_\_
- If you have no more strips left on you, then you are out.
- The person with the most strips that they've taken from others by the end of the game wins.

### **DO activity**

### **After activity, TELL**

- Alright everyone, thank you for playing! Please go sit in your seats.
- In this game, if we pretend that the strips of newspaper were diseases, what did we do for each other? (We healed/cleaned/relieved others of their diseases)
- We might have the expectation that God doesn't heal others through you, me, each other.
- If we have that expectation then just like Naaman's expectations got in the way of his healing, so might our expectations gets in the way of healing someone else.
- Expectations in general can get in the way for us. One way to avoid the disappointment of expectation is to instead practice giving thanks for the ways that we see how God is working through and in us. And to then ask that we may continue to be God's healing gift to others.

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

#### **TELL**

- This is a "repeat after me" prayer.
- After I say a line, then you say the same line as a class.
- Let's pray:

Dear God (Dear God)

Thank you for the story of Naaman and Elisha (Thank you for the story of Naaman and Elisha)

We know its easy to have expectations like Naaman (We know its easy to have expectations like Naaman)

So please help us (So please help us)

To remember to give you thanks (To remember to give you thanks)

For what you have given us (For what you have given us)

Thank you for your guidance and love (Thank you for your guidance and love)

Amen (Amen)