

February 9, 2014

Lesson 18: Healing Stories



John 4:46-54

Then he came again to Cana in Galilee where he had changed the water into wine. Now there was a royal official whose son lay ill in Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. Then Jesus said to him, 'Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.' The official said to him, 'Sir, come down before my little boy dies.' Jesus said to him, 'Go; your son will live.' The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started on his way. As he was going down, his slaves met him and told him that his child was alive. So he asked them the hour when he began to recover, and they said to him, 'Yesterday at one in the afternoon the fever left him.' The father realized that this was the hour when Jesus had said to him, 'Your son will live.' So he himself believed, along with his whole household. Now this was the second sign that Jesus did after coming from Judea to Galilee.

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Healing Stories

John 4:46-54
(5:1-18)

"The man
believed the
word that Jesus
spoke to him
and started on
his way."

The Big Story Truth: Jesus is the giver of abundant gifts... including the gift of life!

About This Scripture Passage: In this Scripture passage Jesus is approached by a royal official who's son was so ill that he was at the point of death. He is coming to Jesus because he was desperate. In the face of losing his son, he is grasping at straws to find a way to save him. What he receives from Jesus is a word and a promise, "Your son will live." The man walked away from Jesus... not knowing until the next day that the promise had been effective. Indeed, the son was healed. The official and his family received more than they knew they needed. They were given both the gift of healing and the gift of faith in Jesus!

Think back to the story of creation. The pattern was, "God said... And it was so." Here in this story we see a similar thing. Jesus speaks, and it was so. This is one more way in which Jesus is revealed as more than just a miracle worker, but as God. The point of this story is not what Jesus can do, but who Jesus is. Jesus is the giver of abundant gifts... including the gift of abundant life!*



*New Interpreters' Bible
Commentary John 4 Reflections

Making the Connection: The fact that God speaks and the result is accomplished is an important concept for kids to learn. This is what assures us that we can trust God's promises including that we have the forgiveness of sins. When the pastor stands up in church on a Sunday morning and declares that God has forgiven all our sins, the promise of God declared accomplishes that act. It is done. Kids need to know that they can trust the Word of God to do what God says God will do. Like the official heading home trusting that Jesus had healed even before he "knew" it to be true, we too can trust God and act upon that trust even when our faith is not yet sight. For kids its a little like being able to trust that a parent will do what they say they will. If a parent doesn't follow through, the child can't develop that trust. Kids need to know that God is even better at that than the best parent. God will always keep God's promises. God's word accomplishes what it says.

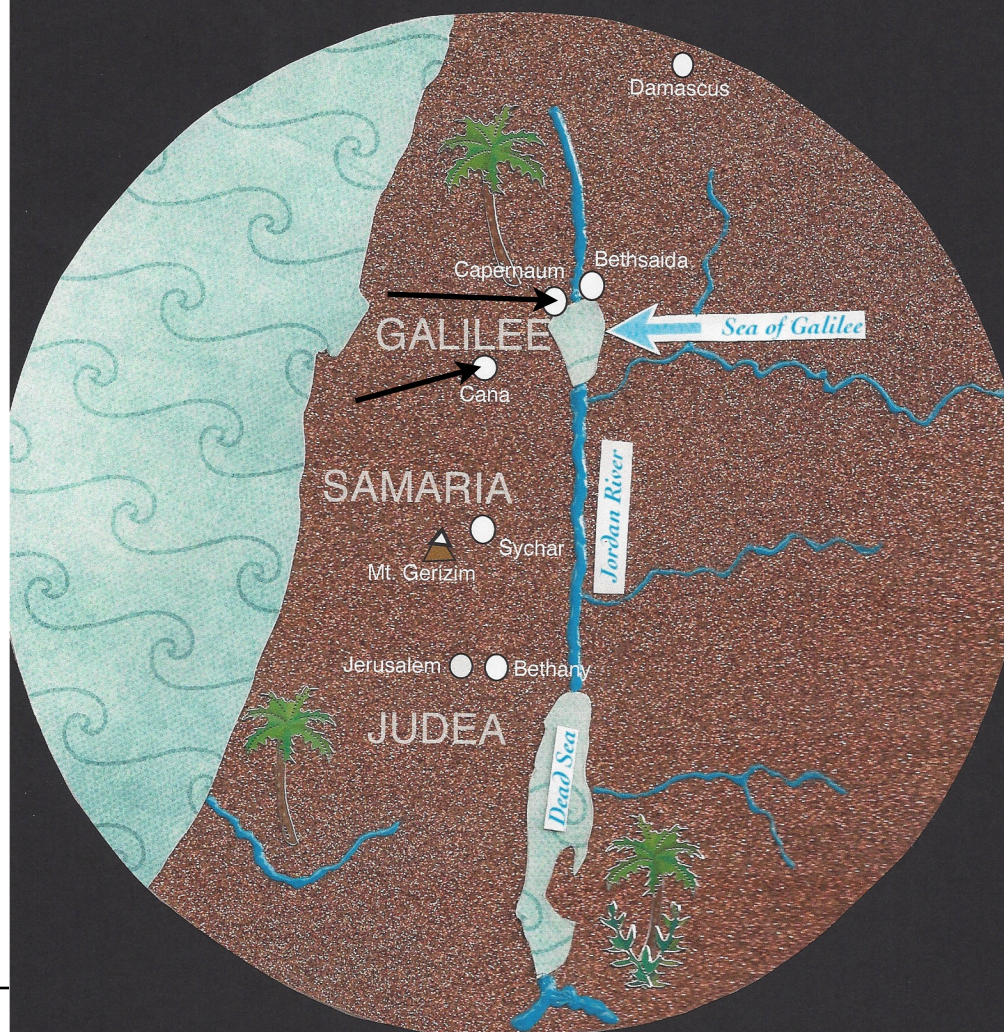
Where in the World Are We?
Jesus is back in Cana (in the region of Galilee); the child is in Capernaum.

For Your Reflection:

When have you had to trust without or before being able to see the outcome? What empowered you to trust in that situation?

What are you trusting God for right now?

How is this reading good news for you today?



Large Group Gathering

Welcome kids and their families. Have them split up into their family groups to do their Faith 5. Remember to invite anyone who doesn't have family members present to join in with your family or another group.

After giving groups 5 minutes to do the Faith 5, dismiss the adults to their class. Then say: **What do you think, from what you have learned about so far this year, does God keep his promises? YES! So what do you think about Jesus. If Jesus says he is going to do something, do you think he does? YES! Let's sing the song we've learned about all God's promises.**

Sing "All His Promises." As time allows, have kids practice the Apostles' Creed and/or other favorite songs. Then dismiss to classes.

Family Faith 5

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1. Each person shares their high and low (the best and worst things that happened this week.)
2. Read together this Bible Verse:
“The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started on his way.”
3. Talk about how the Bible verse relates to your highs and lows.
4. Pray aloud for one another's highs and lows.
5. Bless one another. Make the sign of the cross on each other's heads and say these words: _____, God's word is true for you!

Preschool

Materials Needed:

- Variety of colors of food coloring
- Straws (at least one per student plus a few extras just in case)
- Copies of Bible verse page (on cardstock)
- Construction paper
- Alphabet cookies or fruit roll-up snack

Before the Children Arrive:

Prepare photocopies of the Bible verse page printed on cardstock paper.

Experiencing the Story:

Welcome students into your room and gather them into a story telling circle.

Say: Good morning! I'm so glad to see you today! I'm always glad to see you!

We have so much fun together learning about God's Word! Today I want your help remembering something. Do you remember the very first week that you came to Sunday School this year? Do you remember what we learned about? It was the story of creation. We learned about how God spoke and the whole world was created. Like God said "let there be light" and what happened? There was light! It was so amazing to learn about how all the earth and all the plants and all the animals were created by God's word!

Well, today our story has to do with God's word too. It has to do with the words that Jesus spoke when he was visiting with a man who was very concerned because his son was very sick. In fact, his son was so sick that the man thought his son might die. So the man traveled a long way to find Jesus. While the boy was at home in bed, he walked a whole day and kept going even until the next day before he found Jesus. But do you know what? He found Jesus and he asked Jesus to heal the boy. Jesus said "Go; your son will be okay." And guess what happened? (The kids will probably say the boy was okay!) You are right! The boy was okay! Jesus said it and it happened! But the father didn't find out whether or not Jesus was right until he walked all the way back home. Even as he went though he trusted that Jesus' word was true... and it was!

We can always trust God's promises. What God says, happens. When God said at creation, let there be light... there was light. When Jesus said the son was healed, the son was healed. When God says you are forgiven, you are forgiven. That's how powerful and how trustworthy God's word is!

Activity Options:

Breath Painting- God's word accomplishes what he says. Have kids hold their hands in front of their mouths while they are talking. Can they feel their breath hit their hands as they speak? How about blowing through a straw. Can they feel their breath? We are going to make pictures that remind us that when Jesus speaks, things happen! Give students a copy of today's Bible verse. Put a few drops of food coloring (color and number of their choice) around the paper. Then show them how to blowing through their straw they are able to move the food coloring around and make a beautiful design on their paper. Talk about how God's word is a beautiful thing!

Snack Ideas- 1) Alphabet Cookies: Give kids a handful of alphabet cookies. You may need to talk with kids about how words are made up of letters and these cookies are letter shape. What letters do they recognize? Can they find the first letter of their name? As you find their name letter talk about how God's word is for them! Then eat your letter snack!

2) Fruit Roll-Up Band-aids: Jesus healed the man's son. Make your own edible band-aids out of fruit roll-ups. Talk about a time when God helped their bodies to heal from an injury or illness.

**"The man believed the word that
Jesus spoke to him and started
on his way."**

Early Elementary

Materials Needed:

-Copies of Promise Catchers (1 for each student)

Before the Students Arrive:

Make sure you have practiced how to cut out and fold the Promise Catcher so that you will be able to help the students complete theirs!

Experiencing the Story:

Welcome students into your room and gather them into a story telling circle.

Say: **Good morning! I'm so glad to see you today! I'm always glad to see you!**

We have so much fun together learning about God's Word! Today I want your help remembering something. Do you remember the very first week that you came to Sunday School this year? Do you remember what we learned about? It was the story of creation. We learned about how God spoke and the whole world was created. Like God said "let there be light" and what happened? There was light! It was so amazing to learn about how all the earth and all the plants and all the animals were created by God's word!

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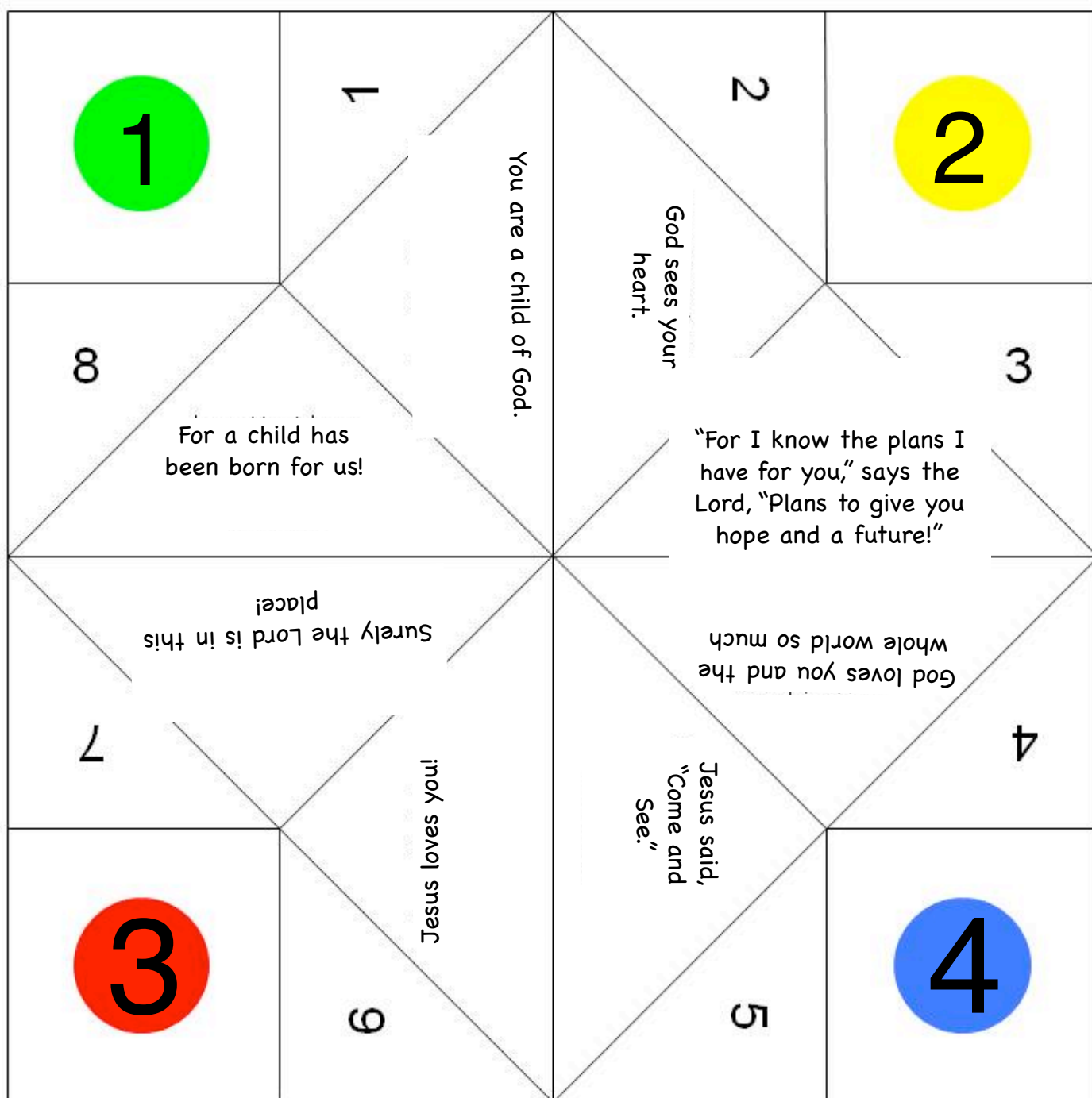
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was healed, the son was healed. When God says you are forgiven, you are forgiven. That's how powerful and how trustworthy God's word is!

Activity:

Say: **Today we are going to make a reminder of some of the promises that God has made to you that you can trust are true!** Show children how to cut out around their Promise Catcher and fold according to the directions.

To play- Hold the Promise Catcher up so that a child can pick a color/number. Open and close the catcher the corresponding number of times. Then, have them pick another number and open and close that number of times. The final time they pick a number, lift the flap and discover the promise underneath!



1. Print and cut round outside of promise catcher
2. Fold in half and in half again
3. Open out, turn over so top is blank and fold each corner into the middle
4. Turn over and repeat
5. Turn over so you can see the pictures
6. Slide your thumb and your finger behind 2 of the pictures and press together so they bend round and touch
7. Turn over and repeat with the thumb and finger of the other hand for the other two pictures
8. All the pictures should now be at the front with centres touching and you are ready to use your promise catcher.

Upper Elementary Middle School & High School

Materials Needed:

- Dominoes
- Odds and ends from around the house
- Smart phones or internet access

Before the Students Arrive:

Set up a chain of dominos on the classroom table. Do an internet search for Rube Goldberg machines. Bookmark a YouTube video or two for use during class if the kids get stuck!

Activity:

As the students arrive gather them around the table. Ask what they think will happen if you push over one of the dominos. Of course all the dominos will fall! Does this always happen? Why or why not? Ask if any of the students have heard of a Rube Goldberg Machine. A Rube Goldberg machine is a series of chain reactions that accomplishes an action. Have kids with internet capabilities on their phones google Rube Goldberg machines and see what they come up with. Then, give students some time to experiment with making their own Rube Goldberg machines (or simple domino chains) in pairs. Give the instructions that when they are ready to test one person should say “go” and the other push the first domino.

Experiencing the Story:

Say: When you were making these machines, were you surprised by the action that happened when you said the word “go?” Why? Why not? Were you ever nervous when making your own machine or watching one of the videos online that the machine wouldn’t do what the creator said that it would? When were you most thinking that it wouldn’t work?

Let's read today's story. As we read, think about how much you had to trust that when the word "go" was said, the action that you intended would happen.

Read John 4:46-54.

In today's story, the man was coming to ask for healing for his son. The catch was, the son stayed home. The father had walked for over a day to get to Jesus. When Jesus said that he was going to heal the son, and told the man to go... the man had to go without knowing for sure that the son had been healed. Here's the thing. With God, God's word is always true. God's word actually accomplishes what it says it does. So when God said "let there be light" during creation, there was light. And when God said, "Your son will live" the son lived. Even when we get together in church and hear the pastor say God's words, "You are forgiven" that is actually accomplished. We are forgiven.

God's word isn't like a Rube Goldberg machine that we have to wonder and wait whether or not all the connections will get made or guess whether or not things are arranged right for the word to be carried out. God's words are always true. God's promises are always good. What God says is already done- the moment God speaks.