



Bible Maths

SPIRIT



God and me



No maximum number
depending on adequate
supervision



15 minutes

Level:
2nd & 3rd year

Aim: To help boys get to know the layout of the Bible by using a quiz based on numbers

This activity could be used as an introduction to the layout of the Bible. You may need to explain about chapters and verses, and how to find the different books in the Bible.

You will need to ensure that your boys have sufficient reading ability for this activity, this activity could be done in pairs as a written activity or be done as a whole group verbally.

Equipment:

- Maths Quiz per boy as set out below (if required)
- Pens
- Bibles

Bible Maths!

Find the missing numbers in the sentences below. The numbers are all between 1 and 20.

1. Laban changed Jacob's wages _____ times. *Genesis 31:41*. (Answer: 10)
2. Hezekiah, when very ill, prayed and had _____ years added to his life. *Isaiah 38:5*. (Answer: 15)
3. Naomi had _____ sons. *Ruth 1:2*. (Answer: 2)
4. There were _____ thankless lepers healed. *Luke 17:17*. (Answer: 9)
5. There were _____ generations from Abraham to David. *Matthew 1:17*. (Answer: 14)
6. There were _____ lepers at the gate of Samaria. *2 Kings 7:3*. (Answer: 4)
7. Solomon took _____ years to build his own house. *1 Kings 7:1*. (Answer: 13)
8. Joseph was sold to the Ishmaelites for _____ pieces of silver. *Genesis 37:28*. (Answer: 20)
9. Other sheep will be brought, but the number of flocks and shepherds will be _____. *John 10:16*. (Answer: 1)
10. The tower of Siloam killed _____ people when it fell. *Luke 13:4*. (Answer: 18)



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30 minutes

Miracles and Parables

Aim: To explain the difference between miracles and parables, and why Jesus used both

Equipment:

- Template
- Short videos or books

Outline:

Explain the difference between a miracle and a parable – a miracle was an event that actually happened that we cannot explain, whereas a parable is a story Jesus told to help us understand something about God or how we should live. Explain that Jesus used miracles to show us how powerful God is and that he was God's son.

You could play a simple game to highlight miracles and parables in the Bible. Photocopy the enclosed template onto card and cut out the different squares. Split the boys into two (or more) teams. You'll need one set of cards per team. The teams race to separate the cards into miracles and parables.

If possible, show a video or tell a story showing a miracle and a parable (you may want to split this over two weeks).

Suggested ideas for progression for 1st/2nd/3rd year boys:

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| First year: | Use a video or story to show miracles or parables. |
| Second year: | Use the game described above (or your own variation). |
| Third year: | It may be useful to ask this age group to look up some of the parables or miracles in the Bible. |

Hints and tips on accessibility:

If using the game or the Bible, make sure that reading skills are sufficiently well developed.

Discover the Bible

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15-20 minutes

Aim: To introduce boys to the Bible, and for them to understand how it is laid out

Equipment:

- Template (Bible Library)
- A selection of books including subjects such as adventure, war, poetry, songs, instruction manuals, history etc (including Bibles)
- Colouring pens/pencils

Outline:

Talk with the boys about the following points:

1. How do we get to know other people? – By talking to them, listening and watching. We get to know about people from other countries by reading about them and by watching TV.
2. Lay out a selection of books. What do we get from the books on display? Enjoyment, interest, guidance, encouragement, knowledge etc.
3. Explain that the Bible is the world's best-selling book. Actually, it's a collection of books divided into two sections – the Old Testament (dealing with before Jesus was born) and the New Testament (dealing with Jesus' life and beyond). There are many different kinds of books in the Bible, like in the display here. People turn to the Bible for enjoyment, help, and information just like they do with all other books.

Choose a selection of books in the Bible (try to choose the more known ones – with easy to pronounce titles!) and write their names on cards. Ask the boys to split the cards into Old and New Testament. You could do this as a competition between two (or more) teams. You may need to have contents pages to hand! Alternatively, create another set of cards with selected Bible stories – and see if the boys can correctly assign them to Old or New Testament.

Finish by colouring in the books of the Bible on the Bible template.

Additional Activity:

This makes a great item for a display or parents' night if done as a relay race. The various "books" are made up from different sized boxes and covered in paper; cereal boxes are ideal. The "book" title is then written on the spine ie. Luke, Acts, Kings, etc. One set of "books" is required for each team. Each boy runs in turn to collect a "book" and brings it back for the team to put into the correct order. If the whole Bible is too much, you could do this activity using the books of the New Testament.



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10-15 minutes

Level:
2nd year

The Lord's Prayer

Aim: To understand the Lord's Prayer

Equipment:

- Phrases of the Lord's Prayer on card
- Full version of the prayer

Prepare the various phrases of the prayer on cards (use the version of the Lord's Prayer used at your church). You may also want to prepare a board or OHP with the words on.

Talk through the Lord's Prayer with the boys. See how many of them know it. Go through each phrase, explaining the meaning.

You can use team game to help the boys learn the prayer. Split the group into a number of teams (team size of 3 – 4). Give each team a complete set of phrases that have been mixed up. The teams race to see who can put the prayer back together in the right order. This could also be done as a relay race, or with the cards hidden around the hall and collected.

This activity could be used in the second year. As a progression for third year boys, they could do the activity "Talking with God". (See S-5.)

Talking with God

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10 minutes

Aim: To help boys understand that prayer is 'talking with God'

Equipment:

- Mobile phone
- Paper
- Pens
- Picture of a set of traffic lights

Outline:

Introduce the topic of prayer by asking a few questions about the mobile phone: "What do we use this for?", "Have you ever phoned somebody in another country?" etc. Explain that we use a phone to communicate with other people – even when they are far away. We can phone people from anywhere. Explain that this is like talking to God. Wherever we are, we can talk to God by praying.

Ask the boys "How do we pray?" Do we close our eyes? Do we kneel? Do we speak out loud? Explain that we don't have to do any of these to pray, but some people do them because they find it easier to talk to God that way.

Why do we say "Amen"? What does it mean? – "We agree with what has just been said".

What sort of things do we speak to God about? We can thank him for doing so much for us and for being there with us. We can say sorry to him for things we've done that we shouldn't have. We can ask him for things – to be with people who need his help, or situations where we need his help.

Ask the boys to write their own short prayer. They may want to include some of the things discussed above. A template would help with ideas on 'Thanks', 'Sorry', and 'Ask for'.

Explain that God always answers our prayers in ways that he thinks best. Explain God's answers in terms of the traffic lights.

RED – No: God knows that what we've asked for is not the best for us.

AMBER – Wait: We have to be patient and carry on praying until we see his answer.

GREEN – Yes: We see the answer very quickly.

His answer is not usually "heard", but we feel guided by God. God can answer in many different ways.

Finish by praying some of the prayers that the boys have written.

If you're going to ask the boys to write the prayers down, make sure that their reading/writing skills are sufficient.



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10-15 minutes

Resources:

Video – cartoon of
David and Goliath

Aim: To help boys understand the story of David and Goliath and its relevance to each of us

Equipment:

- Pictures/posters of Gladiators
- Picture of David & Goliath
- Gladiator Chart
- 3 strips of paper written with 'OBJECT', 'RESPOND', 'SAVIOUR'

Bible Text: 1 Samuel 17

Song/Hymn: My God is so Big
Only a Boy called David

Outline:

Gladiator Chart: Prepare a chart as below, and cover the words with blank strips of paper (except for the initial letter of each word). As you tell the story reveal each of the words as indicated in the outline. This could be done on an OHP and screen.

G OLIATH

L ITTLE

A FRAID

D AVID

I SRAELITES

A TTACKED

T RUSTED

O VERCAME

R ESPONDED

S UCCESFUL

Tell the boys that you are thinking about a particular film. Give some clues and ask them to guess. When they have guessed the film ask the boys to tell you the words that describe Gladiators, eg big, strong, powerful, tall. Ask them if they can think of a story in the Bible where we meet a "Gladiator".

Story Outline

The words which we used to describe the Gladiators could also be used to describe Goliath. In the Gladiators' programme contenders compete against the Gladiators. In the story a young boy was the contender. *Show picture of David and Goliath.* We are going to tell the story of David and Goliath using the letters which make up the word Gladiators.



Reveal the words in the following order:

GOLIATH – was a giant who challenged the soldiers in the Israelite army to fight him.

ISRAELITES – were fighting against the Philistines. Goliath was a Philistine.

AFRAID – the soldiers in the army were afraid of Goliath.

LITTLE – a little boy came along to bring food for his brothers.

DAVID – was a young boy but was brave enough to take on Goliath.

RESPONDED – David responded to Goliath's call.

TRUSTED – David trusted in God and knew that God was with him and would keep him safe.

ATTACKED – David attacked Goliath with his sling and stone.

OVERCAME – David overcame Goliath.

SUCCESSFUL – David was the winner.

Conclusion:

The contenders who take on the Gladiators are usually very fit people – they do a lot of training to build up their muscles and strength. When the King told David that he was only a boy David replied that although he was only a boy he had looked after his father's sheep and had killed a lion and a bear – in a way he had been in training to take on the giant.

What you do when you are young could be considered training for life

- how you look after your body, food/exercise
- how hard you work in school may affect your life in later years
- your attitudes and behaviour are all being formed now, while you are young.

Goliath challenged the soldiers in the Israelite army. Gladiators challenge contenders. During your time in the Junior Section leaders are challenging you. The last three words in the Gladiator chart could be changed to: **OBJECT** of the BB is to encourage boys to put trust in Jesus and **RESPOND** to Him and make Him their **SAVIOUR**. Add these 3 words to the appropriate letters.



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supervision



10 minutes

“Excuses! Excuses!”

Aim: To teach that we must not make excuses for not following Jesus

Bible Text: Luke 14 v 16-24

Song/Hymn: He Brought Me to His Banqueting House
I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

Outline:

Do you ever make excuses?

A boy comes to the Junior Section with no uniform. – It's in the wash.
Or he comes without something he should have done for badge work – the dog ate it.
Or he arrives late – I was at my girlfriend's.

Ask boys to make up excuses for things, e.g. being late.

We are all very quick to make excuses but I wonder if you would say no to a party. Read Luke 14 v16-24.

They all made excuses:

- 1 I have just bought a field and I want to go to see it.
- 2 I have just bought some oxen and I want to try them out.
- 3 I have just got married.

God invites us to give our lives to Him and serve Him but some boys make excuses just like the people in Jesus story.

- I'm too busy playing football to go to church or Sunday School;
- I'm too young. Maybe when I grow up;
- my friends will laugh.

Now is the time to accept God's invitation. We mustn't make excuses. The Bible says in 2 Cor 6 v 2 "Now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation".

Jesus goes on to tell in his parable that the King stopped inviting his friends and the important people and invited all the poor people, beggars, strangers and unimportant people and his own friends were left out. Can you imagine how his friends and the important people felt then when they were left out! Maybe they expected the King to change the date to when they would feel like coming but he didn't and they missed out.

Don't be like them. Don't miss out on eternal life. Don't make excuses.

We can say, "No thank you," but we may never be invited again.

It is the prayer of the leaders here that you will think about God's invitation to you.

John 3 v 16 – the "whosoever" is you if you will accept Jesus as your saviour and learn to love and serve him.

Cups

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God and me



No maximum number
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supervision level



10 minutes

**Aim: To teach that God looks at the heart; all have sinned;
God is there to help us; God is generous**

Equipment:

- Picture of World Cup Football Trophy
- Plastic cup with hole in bottom
- Dirty cup
- Broken cup
- Baby's cup
- Prize cup
- Big cup
- Cups with letters J, O, and Y on them
- Water

Bible Text: Psalm 23v 5: Romans 3 v 23

Song/Hymn: My cup is full and running over

Outline:

Do you like riddles? Here is a riddle. "When is a cup not a cup?"
When it's the World Cup, the World Cup football trophy is not a cup!

Picture of World Cup

A cup should hold liquid. You should be able to drink out of a cup. There are all sorts of cups. Let's look at some.

Cup with Holes

This cup looks useful. *Fill with water.* It doesn't hold any water. The water goes in the top and out the bottom. Many Junior Section boys are a bit like this cup. They hear about God's love and what Jesus has done for them but it goes in one ear and out the other just like the water in the cup. I hope that won't apply to any of you because the things you hear about God and His Gospel are the most important things you'll ever hear.

Dirty Cup

Would you like to drink out of this cup? *Show inside.* Maybe not – it's been used for things cups shouldn't be used for (scooping soil) and it's not fit for use as a cup any more. This reminds us of sin – the wrong things we do that dirty our lives and make us unfit for God's purpose – unfit for heaven. This cup looks all right on the outside but inside it's dirty and bad. The Bible says that man looks on the outside but God looks at the heart – at what we are really like.

Broken Cup

Cup 1 might say to this cup "I'm better than you. I look like a good cup" and Cup 2 might say the same. Which is right? Some people think their sin is not as bad as other people's sin but if we have broken God's law in one part we have broken it in all. The Bible says all of us have sinned and fall short of God's standard.

Baby's Cup

Who would use a cup like this? – someone who needs help to drink. We all need help from time to time. Help to understand what God wants us to do with our lives. God is there to help us – Bible and prayer. BB Officers and Sunday School teachers are there to help. We just have to ask.

Prize Cup

Once we have given our lives to God and become His children the Bible says we begin to run in a race for a prize. And we are to leave aside everything that would prevent us running as fast as we can. That prize is eternal life. God will reward us for all we do – telling others about His love and living to please and obey Him.

Big Cup

This is my favourite cup because it holds a lot. I hate it when someone offers a cup of tea and then pours out half a cup. God isn't like that. In Psalm 23 we're told God is generous and he fills a cup until it is overflowing. God is generous and kind. When we are Christians we know we are forgiven and can depend on God whatever we are doing, wherever we are.

Cups with letters J, O, Y on them. He will give you Joy overflowing when you put **J**esus first, **O**thers next, **Y**ourself last.

"I Forgot!"

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God and me



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10 minutes

Aim: To teach that we must remember God in all we do

Equipment:

- Knotted handkerchief
- Electronic diary

Bible Text: Ecclesiastes 12 v 1; Proverbs 3 v 6

Song/Hymn: Follow Him, Follow Him

Outline:

I forgot to bring my notes for this talk and I don't know what I'm going to say. (*Wipe forehead with knotted handkerchief*) I have a terrible memory.

(*See knot in handkerchief*) Oh yes! I was to do something today so I tied a knot in my handkerchief to remind me. Wasn't that clever? Except... I don't remember what it was.

But it's all right I wrote it on the back of my hand as well. (*Search hands*) Oh I forgot I washed my hands!

Maybe I put it in my electronic personal organiser. (*Take out organiser and work with it*) Clever things these, aren't they? You can call up any day at a touch of a button and see what you were to do.

Except ... I forgot to put new batteries in it.

Are you good at remembering things?

Have you ever listened to older people talking about the good old days – and some not so good (*give examples*).

I read of a girl of 13 when asked about remembering things she replied "I remember the flavour of ice cream my gran and I shared at Disneyland but sometimes I don't remember what day of the week it is. I guess it depends on what you think is important. I wonder what you will remember about tonight. (*Give examples of possible things ending with the worship time*) I guess it depends on what you think is important.

In the Bible we read of God remembering – not in the sense of having forgotten but in the sense that people were in His mind.

e.g. Noah in the ark. It rained for 40 days and nights. God remembered Noah and his family and dried the land. God gave a rainbow to help people remember His promise.

Have you ever written anything on your hands to help you remember things? The Bible says that God has written our names on the palm of his hands and He will not forget about us. (Isaiah 49 v 16). In fact unlike me God will not be able to wash our names off because he says He has engraved them on the palms of His hands.

(*Hold up own hands with Bible texts (Ecclesiastes 12 v 1; Proverbs 3 v 6) on each and ask boys to look up Bibles and read out the texts.*)

(*Explain meaning of texts for the boys and the importance of remembering God in everything they do.*)

I hope when you think of tonight this is what you will think is important and this is what you will remember.



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10 minutes per activity

Aim: To show that judging by outward appearances can deceive.
To explain the importance of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Equipment:

- A selection of pens as follows (or similar):
 - posh ink pen (empty);
 - smart ball point pen (empty);
 - quill/large feather (without ink);
 - felt tip/marker (dried up);
 - old, cheap biro (broken/battered in appearance but working).
- Paper

Outline:

Show the boys the pens and give a brief description of each, giving least attention to the broken biro. Ask a volunteer to select a pen and use it to write (his name?) on a piece of paper. Repeat until all the pens have been selected. It is normal for the boys to select the nicest pens first although it doesn't really matter if this is not the case.

Explain how the nicest pens were no use. Ask why? What do these pens need to make them useful? You could, at this stage, fill the ink pen or put a new refill in the ball point. Ink makes the difference. When a pen contains ink it can be used to write.

How can we be useful to God? We need to be filled with His Holy Spirit. If we ask God, He will give us His Holy Spirit and, if we keep asking He will keep us filled (an ink pen can be refilled again and again).

Summary:

God doesn't look at the outside to "see" what we are like. He "knows" what we are like on the inside and He wants us to be filled with His Holy Spirit.

Suggestion:

You may want to find a suitable reading or/and chorus to accompany the talk (there are plenty to choose from).

Follow-up activities:

Boys love pens – perhaps you could do a project – see how many different types of pens they have or can describe. There are lots of different types of people in the world too but, like pens, they have lots in common. You could use pens to give a talk on diversity,

Presents

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God and me



No maximum number
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10-15 minutes

Aim: To teach that God is more interested in what we are like on the inside

Equipment:

- Present A – 1 large, beautifully wrapped
- Present B – 1 medium, nicely wrapped
- Present C – 1 small, odd shaped, wrapped in old tatty paper

Bible Text: 1 Samuel 16 v1-13

Outline:

Ask boys to choose which present they would pick if given the choice – tell the boys you will choose some of them to open the presents at the end (to keep interest).

Tell the story of Samuel choosing David from 1 Samuel 16 v 1-13

Emphasise that we cannot tell what a person is like just by looking on the outside. You have to get to know them to find out what they are like on the “inside”.

Choose boys to open each of the presents in turn:

- A should have something cheap and nasty, or broken in it
- B should have something cheap, perhaps with bits missing
- C should have something expensive, or the “toy of the moment” in it.

Emphasise that we could not tell what the presents were just by looking at the outside.

Explain how God is more interested in what we are like on the inside.



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10 minutes

Badges – Pinning our Hopes

Aim: To use the theme to illustrate the meanings of The Boys' Brigade Motto

Equipment:

- Red Cross Badge
- Union flag
- BB Badge

Outline:

A red cross is an internationally recognised symbol especially in areas of trouble or crisis. *(Show Red Cross badge)*

During the Red Cross organisation's Red Cross Week, one of the slogans adopted by the organisation was "We're pinning our hopes on You" – by buying a red cross badge people were supporting the work of the Red Cross. They were depending on the support of ordinary people to be able to continue their work.

When athletes represent their country in the Olympic Games, that country is pinning its hopes on its athletes to win medals on their behalf. *(Show Union flag and point out that there is also a red cross on it)*

When boys represent our Junior Section or BB Company in activities, events or competitions, the leaders are pinning their hopes on them to be good representatives. *(Show BB Badge)*

The leaders are also pinning their hopes on the present members for the future of our BB Company.

The BB badge consists of an anchor with a red cross behind. The cross represents the sacrifice, which Jesus Christ made for each of us by dying on the cross – each of us should be pinning our hopes on Jesus Christ. Our BB motto talks about the hope which we can have if we put our trust in Jesus Christ – "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both Sure and Steadfast" Hebrews 6 v 19 (Authorised Version).

Christmas Cracker

SPIRIT



God and me



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10 minutes

Aim: To remind the boys of the Christmas story

Equipment:

- Box of Christmas Crackers
- Pictures of shepherds and wise men from the Christmas story

Outline:

Give out a few crackers and let the boys pull them. Talk about what is inside them. Tell the boys that a Christmas cracker can remind us of the Christmas story.

- Bang –** There is a bang when the cracker is pulled. The bang can remind us of the surprise which the shepherds had when the angels told them about the birth of Jesus.
- Present –** Inside each cracker there is a gift or a present. The present reminds us of the gifts which the wise men brought to Jesus – gold, frankincense and myrrh. It also reminds us that God gave Jesus to the world as a present.
- Paper Hat –** The paper hat is usually in the shape of a crown. The crown reminds us that Jesus was a King – a very special King. He was King of all the world.
- Motto –** There is usually a motto or a message on a piece of paper. The message which we can remember from the Christmas story is that God gave us His Son Jesus to be with us.

Tell the boys to remember these points as they pull their crackers at Christmas.



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This activity could be
spread over several weeks

The Lord's Prayer Activity & Collage

Aim: To help the boys understand the meaning of The Lord's Prayer

Equipment:

- A large sheet of paper (2 flipchart sheets side by side is ideal)
- Colouring pens/pencils
- Coloured card and paper
- Glue
- Scissors

Outline:

This activity can be created by the whole section, allowing differentiation, e.g. those who are good at writing might prefer to do the writing bits, whilst those who are better at drawing and colouring can do that activity. There is something here for everyone.

Divide the paper into 8 sections. Give each section the following titles:

Our Father in Heaven
 Your name is holy
 Your kingdom come
 Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven
 Give us today the food we need
 Forgive us the wrong things we have done as we forgive wrongs others have done to us
 Do not lead us into temptation but keep us safe from evil
 For Yours is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, For ever and ever.

Label each section with these titles.

The Lord's Prayer	Banner – create using any suitable software programme or make own using large writing. If not printed in colour, ask boys to colour the banner, adding their own pictures or any that you may have downloaded ready for them to cut out, colour if necessary and paste on to the banner. Use this banner to attach to the top of the flip chart sheets.
Our Father in Heaven	Speech bubble and picture of boy. It is special to be able to call God 'Father'. God loves to listen to us, so in the speech bubble ask boys to say something to God. Boys can then colour the picture. Fix all the speech bubbles to the labelled section.
Your Name is Holy	Create a patchwork collage. Use the attached examples of 'words' we can use to say that God is very special. Colour, pattern and cut out the patchwork shapes. Paste then on to the labelled section, but put them together as you would a patchwork quilt.
Your Kingdom Come	Our prayer is that more and more will become friends of Jesus and be part of God's family. Boys to draw round their hands. Each finger to represent part of prayer ie promise, thankyou, forgiveness, others, themselves. Cut out the hands, colour them and fasten to the labelled section of the collage.



This activity involves the
use of scissors and glue.
Leaders should exercise
appropriate caution

Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven	Draw pictures of the world as God would want it.
Give us today the food we need	Cut out the fish/bread shapes, colour them in and fasten to the collage.
Forgive us the wrongs	Write a sentence about things we are sorry for.
Do not lead us into temptation	Pictures of things that are wrong. Put a large cross over the pictures.
For Yours is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, For ever and ever.	Boys write their names and 'customise' the collage, with their own ideas and creations. This gives Glory to God by the boys having taken part in the activity and created something special for the Church/meeting place.

These are only ideas. Shapes, banners, titles etc can all be customised using colour, patterns, wavy scissors etc. The possibilities are endless. The boys will provide their own ideas also, so leave them to add the 'xtras'



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Themes for Bible-based Talks

OPPOSITES

	TITLE	BIBLE BASE
1.	Wise & Foolish	Matthew 7 v 21 & 24-27
2.	Lost & Found	Luke 15 v 1-7
3.	Rough & Smooth	Genesis 25 v 27-34 & 27 v 1-28
4.	Little & Large	1 Samuel 17
5.	Storm & Calm	Mark 4 v 35-41
6.	Greedy & Generous	Luke 19 v 1-10
7.	Hungry & Full	John 6 v 1-15
8.	Ungrateful & Thankful	Luke 17 v 11-19
9.	Tears & Smiles	Mark 5 v 22-24, 35-43
10.	Light & Dark	John 8 v 12

FRIENDS

	TITLE	BIBLE BASE
1.	Determined Friends	Mark 2 v 1-12
2.	Forgiving Friends	Matthew 18 v 21-22
3.	Frightened Friends	Peter's denial from John 18 & 21
4.	Faithful Friends	1 Samuel 20
5.	Forever Friends	Mark 10 v 13-16

Billy the Balloon

SPIRIT



God and me



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10-15 minutes

Aim: To teach that we must not leave God out of our lives or take things for granted

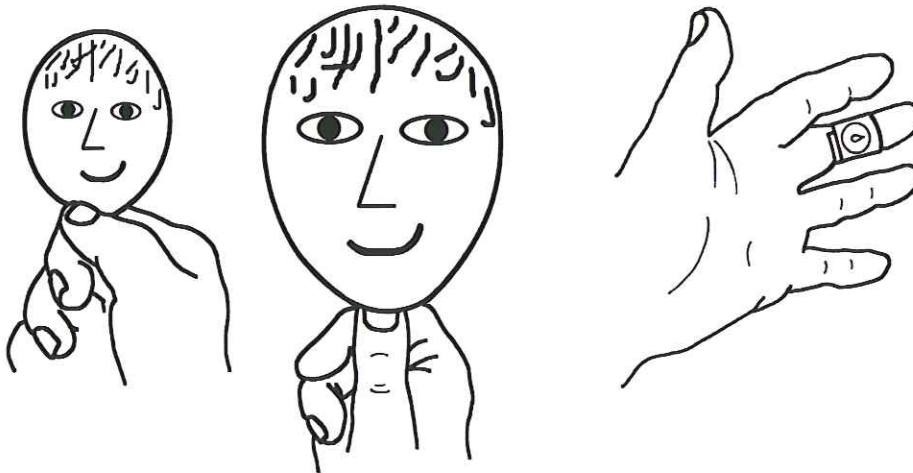
Equipment:

- Balloon and drawing pin (see illustration below)
- Sticky tape
- 'Permanent' marker pen

Relevant text: Luke 12 (The story of the Rich Fool)

Preparation:

Take a round balloon and blow it up to about two thirds of full size and, holding the neck closed, draw a face on the balloon using a permanent marker. Making sure the ink has dried, release the air from the balloon. Take a drawing pin (thumb tack), hold the flat head against the inside of the middle finger on your left hand (or right hand if you are left handed), and attach the pin to your finger using two or three turns of sellotape, allowing the pin to pierce the tape. The purpose of this is that you can suddenly pop the balloon without any risk of losing or dropping the pin. The illustrations below show Billy as a baby, and nearly fully-grown, and the drawing pin taped to the middle finger.



Outline:

 in three stages:-

1. A brief summary of the story in Luke 12, stopping short at the point where God said "you fool"
2. A short story in which Billy the balloon replaces the rich fool.
3. A brief application.

Typically it would be presented as described below. The details of the balloon story can be varied to suit individual circumstances. The idea is to make the story as relevant as possible to the listeners.

Talk:

In the 12th chapter of Luke's gospel Jesus told a story about a rich man who left God out of his life, and was only concerned about himself. He was a successful farmer, whose crops grew so well that he had to pull down his barns and build bigger ones to store all the grain. Eventually he made so much money that he didn't need to work any more, so he decided to retire and enjoy himself. But then God spoke to him, and said to him.... I'll tell you what God said to him in a few minutes.

But before that, I'd like to tell you a story about someone else – here he is – *(blow a small amount of air into the balloon and hold it so that the boys can see the face)*. Billy the balloon was born at a very early age, and his mum and dad were very proud of their new baby, and everybody who saw him said "O what a cute little balloon". As he grew into a toddler *(blow a bit more air into the balloon)* it soon became clear that young Billy was going to be a clever balloon. When he was older *(more air)* he went to the school in Balloonville and started to think about what he would like to be when he grew up *(more air)*. He did really well at school, and then went to university where he got a degree in balloonology *(blow more air into the balloon to make it the final size, but avoid making it so big that there is a danger of bursting it prematurely)*. When he left university he set up his own business. Then Billy met Brenda, and fell in love and after a while they got married and had some little balloons. Billy's business was going really well and making loads of money, although he didn't seem to have much time for anything else. But then one day, when the little balloons had all grown up, he said to Brenda "Let's go on a world cruise. Then when we come back I'll retire. I don't need to work any more, we've got enough money so we can enjoy life." And Brenda was very pleased about that. The day of the cruise came. Billy watched as the taxicab arrived to take them. The suitcases were all ready, and then ... *(at this point burst the balloon suddenly without any warning)*.

You know what it was that God said to that man in Luke 12? "You fool. This night your soul will be required of you." Some of you may have realised that Billy was just like that man in the story that Jesus told.

Application:

None of us can be certain about tomorrow, and we mustn't take it for granted. Most important of all, we mustn't leave God out of our lives. We must get right with Him while we still have an opportunity, and love Him and serve Him.

Celebrations

SPIRIT

God and me



No maximum number
depending on adequate
supervision



10 minutes

Aim: To teach Bible truths using a box of Celebrations chocolates

Equipment:

- Box of 'Celebrations'



Outline:

There's nothing I like better than curling up on the settee with a box of my favourite sweets – CELEBRATIONS! Forget about the calories; just enjoy the taste of the chocolate, the nuts, coconut and caramel. And yet this box of "Celebrations" has much to teach us about ourselves and God. So sit back, relax, have a sweet and listen!

Topic: The name "Topic" always reminds me of the Maths topic I had to study in school and not the delicious sweet in the box. But there is one topic I cannot forget – and that is that God loved me so much, that He sent Jesus to save me. Now there's a topic to get your teeth into!

Malteser: Maltesers are the light way to eat chocolate because their centre is filled with tiny air bubbles. Eating them won't make you float into the air but we need someone to keep our feet firmly on the ground. The Lord Jesus is the Rock and Anchor for our lives.

Caramel: I like the sticky taste of the Caramel sweet. Some people might think it becomes a bit of a mess but I enjoy! Sometimes we don't need a sweet to make a mess though. What I say, think or do is enough to make a real mess, and then it is time to admit I'm wrong and to put things right. I know God expects me to do this; any mess, sticky or not, needs to be cleaned up.

Galaxy: The "Galaxy sweet reminds me of the galaxy of stars who are idolised by lots of people. The Bible tells us that we are to place no one before God. We know that heaven will be filled with all those who have faithfully served God and they are the true galaxy of stars!

Bounty: Bounty has been called the taste of Paradise. God has promised a paradise for those who love Him and have put their faith in Jesus Christ. God's heaven will have many things which can't even be imagined and which will be better for us than a chocolate and coconut sweet!

Truffle: The truffle is a mixture of chocolate, nuts and soft caramel. Some people might find it a bit too sweet and sickening. It's funny how sometimes the things that seem so sweet can turn out to be bad for us. Adam and Eve learnt this lesson the hard way in the Garden of Eden. We need to learn to avoid those things which can be bad for us as well!

Mars: "A Mars a day helps you work, rest and play". But a daily diet of "Mars" would be bad for us. Jesus said we should not live by bread, or food or sweets alone, but by the Word of God. So we need to read the Bible daily, and allow it to change us and help us live for God each day.

Snickers: People who like nuts will like the "snickers" sweet, but eating nuts can be a problem for some people. The Bible tells us that sin causes big problems. We need to say "no" to temptation, and look to God to help us live His way and so avoid the nuts which would cause us to fall from following the Lord Jesus.

Milky Way: A "Milky Way" is a small sweet indeed which takes its name from the huge sweep of stars to which we belong. How can we even imagine the number of stars or the distances involved in the real Milky Way? But the God who made the star systems is the same God who made the grains of sand on a beach, and cares for all things great and small.



Leaders should be aware
of any food allergies that
their boys might have
particularly to nuts



No maximum number
depending on adequate
supervision



10 minutes

This is Your Life

Aim: To help boys choose how to live their lives

Equipment:

- Card with the four illustrations on them
- Red "This is your life" folder

Talk:

This is Your Life – (red file)

– TV Programme that told the life of some well-known person.

I wonder if someone was to say to you, 'this is your life', what sort of life it would be.
What is your Life?



Life with a capital I. (put this word on the large card)

You know the sort of life – I want, I want...

The sort of life where you're suffering from that disease – "The gimme, gimme, want wants".
Is that you?

I want ... more pocket money

A new Game Boy

A new Micro scooter

A better computer.

I...I...I...

Always thinking about number 1 **(Draw a number one in the centre of the large card)**

Or maybe this is your life.



If only (put this word on the large card)

If only.... I was better at maths

I was the best at football

I lived in a bigger house

My parents were rich.

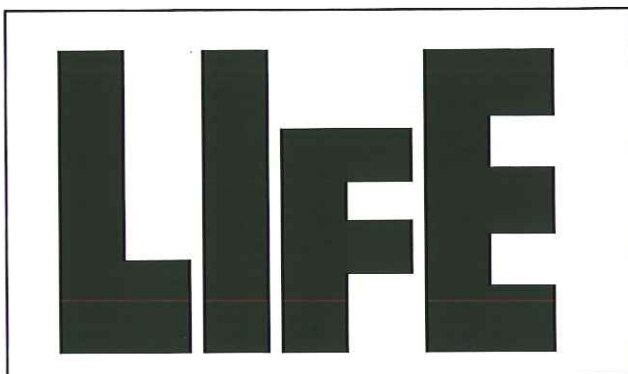
We're all a bit like that. Aren't we?

Always thinking life would be better if only...

But would it? Wouldn't there always be something else to think – if only?



Or is this your life, a **LIE**? (*put this word on the large card*)



Pretending to be something you are not. Or even fooling yourself into thinking you're something you're not.

Maybe because you go to the BB, Church or Sunday School you think that you are OK – you're a good guy – a pretty decent chap – you've never done anything wrong.

But we have all done things that displease God and that make him unhappy with us. The Bible says "all have sinned and come short of God's standard" and "there are none righteous, no not one".

You see we can pretend to other people and even ourselves all we like but God knows what we are really like. The Bible says "Man looks at the outward appearance but God looks at the heart"

That's why the next type of Life is so important. Is this your Life? (*put this word on the large card*)



Life with a capital **L**

If you see a big L like this you know that the person driving the car is a learner. And you know he can't go out on the road unless there is someone with him who knows how to drive and is experienced.

That's what Jesus came to do. To be with us and to show us how to live the sort of life He wants us to live.

You see He died on the cross to wipe out the no 1 in our lives (*Put a line across the number 1 and turn it into a cross*)

To stop us needing to think "If only..."

To give us real Life.

Life with a capital L.

Isn't that what Jesus said He had come to do?

"I have come to give you LIFE in all its fullness"

The Bible also says, "He who has the Son has Life"

This is the life I wish for you.
This is the life your leaders want for you. That's why they are here each week.
Why don't you talk to them about it? I know they would be only too happy to explain to you how Jesus can give you this life.
And it's eternal life – it has no end – you will live with Jesus in Heaven forever.

This is your Life.

- Which one will it be?
- A selfish life
- An envious life
- A pretend life
- Or real life because Jesus is no 1!

Snakes & Ladders

SPIRIT



God and me



No maximum number
depending on adequate
supervision



10-15 minutes

Aim: To use the game of snakes and ladders to illustrate those things that help and hinder us in the Christian life

Equipment:

- Toy snake in a box
- Snakes and Ladders board game (large version if possible)
- Cards with the words 'Christian Life', 'Heaven', 'Jesus'

Outline:

Produce toy snake from box, cautiously, wearing gloves.

I have brought my pet along for you to see. His name is "Curly".

Handle snake gently and make it wriggle.

He doesn't say very much.

Show the boys that it is not a real snake.

I assure you if it were real I wouldn't be anywhere near it. I would hate to live in a country that had snakes. There is a mansion in Sydney that had been built by an Irishman who had been transported to Australia and had made his fortune. When he was building his house he dug a trench around it and filled the trench with tons of soil delivered from Ireland. Because there were no snakes in Ireland he thought the soil would keep snakes out. Of course, it didn't work! No, snakes are not for me!

There are all sorts of types of snakes aren't there? There are the ones that inject venom into their prey when they bite. There are those that spit venom into the eyes of their prey. And there are those that wind themselves tighter and tighter around their prey to crush them (constrictors)

There is a game I like to play. I wonder if you can guess what it is.

– Snakes and Ladders

Show large snakes and ladders

How do you play? The object is to be the first to get to the top of the board.

Put up on wall.

What happens when you land on the mouth of a snake?
What happens when you land on the bottom of a ladder?

Put word "Christian Life" at bottom of board.

The Christian Life is a bit like a game of snakes and ladders.

Put word "Heaven" at top of board.

The aim of the Christian life is to get to Heaven. But just like in the board game there are obstacles in the way which hold us back and slow us down.

Put up snakes with words "lies", "wrong friends", "greed", "envy", "temper"

Discuss each and how they slow us down and prevent us from living the sort of lives God wants us to live and which please him.

Put up ladders with the words "prayer", "bible", "right friends", "Church", "The Boys' Brigade"

Discuss each and how they help us live the right sort of lives which please God.

Put the word "Jesus" at the start of the board.

We can't possibly start out on the road to Heaven unless we have Jesus in our lives. In the Bible Jesus says "No-one can come to the Father but by me"

We have to ask Jesus to come into our lives and take control of everything we are, everything we have and everything we do.

We hope you will think about these things. About Jesus and that you will give your lives over to Him.

The Pencil

SPIRIT



God and me



No maximum number
depending on adequate
supervision



10 minutes

Aim: To help boys understand characteristics of the Christian life

Equipment:

- Various types and sizes of pencils (include one with no lead)

Outline:

The thing we are going to talk about tonight is:-

- Thin and long
- Everybody here has used one
- It comes in different colours but 75% of them sold in America are yellow
- 2.8 billion of them are used in America every year
- These days they are made from wood and graphite.

It is of course the humble pencil!

History of the Pencil:

Before the pencil was developed the ancient Roman scribes used a metal rod called a Stylus to write on wax. Some of the early styluses were made from lead but today a substance called Graphite is used. Because Graphite is very soft and brittle, it needs to be wrapped in something. In the 1560's string used to be wrapped around the Graphite but by 1812 wood was used.

The early wood pencils weren't painted so as to show off their high quality, but by the 1890's many manufacturers were painting and giving their pencils brand names.

In China in the 1800's, where the best Graphite came from, the colour yellow was used. This was because the colour yellow was associated with royalty. That's why even today 75% of the pencils sold in the USA are painted yellow.

Today the centre of the pencil is a mixture of Graphite and clay. By varying the ratio of Graphite to clay, pencil makers can adjust the hardness of the pencil. Some manufacturers use the letter "H" to indicate the hardness and the letter "B" to indicate the blackness. The letter "F" is also sometimes used to indicate the fineness.

Application:

So what can we learn from the pencil?

1. If I were to give you this pencil (the one with no lead), could you use it to write with? Why? Because it doesn't have a lead in the middle of it – it would be a bit "pointless".

That's like a lot of people today who aren't Christians – they don't have Jesus in their life. Without Jesus in your life you're missing the most important ingredient. He can fill the emptiness. Matthew 5 v 6 says "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they will be filled".

2. What good is this pencil if I leave it lying here on the table? It's of no use, I need to pick it up and hold it.

Our lives are like that because we need God to take hold of our lives and allow him to work through us. Psalm 9 v 9-10 says "If I settle on the far side of the sea, even there

your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast". So we're only of some use when God is controlling us.

3. So we've got a pencil with a lead and we've got it in our hand – what do we need to do now? We need to use it to make a mark – to write with it.

You use one every day at school to do your Maths, spelling, artwork, Science and English. If we are followers of Jesus then we should be making a mark for Jesus – telling others about Jesus, supporting missionaries, caring for the sick and elderly, giving gifts to help the poor to name but a few. The work we do for the Kingdom of God is worthwhile work, 1 Corinthians 15 v 58 says "Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain".

4. Finally, what can happen to your pencil if you have been using it all day? It loses its sharpness and you need to get out your pencil sharpener to sharpen it.

Followers of Jesus need to keep sharp too. What sort of things can Christians do to stay sharp or focused on God's work?

- Read the Bible and other Christian books
- Go to church and Sunday school
- Pray and ask God for help
- Meet with other Christians in small groups to study the Bible

So the next time you pick up a pencil, remember what it can teach you!

Heroes:

Noah – The Flood

SPIRIT



God and me



No maximum number
depending on adequate
supervision



15 minutes

Resources:

Video – cartoon of
Noah and the Ark

Aim: To show how a good man lived

God was very worried about the number of wicked people there were on the earth and he decided that he would start afresh with a man named Noah and he would get rid of everything else – animals, men and creatures would be wiped from the face of the earth.

However, Noah had found favour with God. He was a good and righteous man and he loved God. Noah had 3 sons named Shem, Ham and Japheth

God said to Noah 'I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is full of violence and wickedness'

"I want you to build an ark of cypress wood, make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out. This is how you are to build it. The ark is to be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. Make a roof for it to keep out the rain. Put a door in the side of the ark and make a lower, middle and upper deck.

When you have finished the ark I am going to bring flood waters on the earth which will destroy everything except you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you.

You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female to keep them alive with you. Two of every kind of bird, of every animal or creature that moves along the ground. You are also to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away for you and your family."

Noah did everything the Lord asked him and floods lasted for forty nights and days before Noah and his sons and family could come out and rejoice because they were still alive.

As an additional activity, the boys could make a model ark from cardboard boxes with animals from card.

A number of children's songbooks have the words and music for, 'The Arky Arky Song', this can be great fun especially when done with the actions. It also makes a good item for a parents' and friends' night. The words can also be found on the Internet on several sites including:

<http://www.kids-teens.org/RHYMES/arky.htm>



No maximum number
depending on adequate
supervision



10 minutes

Heroes: Zacchaeus

The Tax Collector

Aim: To teach the boys how to share what they have with others

Zacchaeus lived in Jericho and he was really a very unpleasant little man. No one liked him and had very few friends.

Zacchaeus was a very wealthy man as he was a Tax Collector for the Romans but that did not mean he shared anything with anyone else. He kept his money all to himself; and he even took some extra tax from people and kept it for himself.

He had heard that Jesus was coming to Jericho and he was determined that he was going to see him – it might be that this Jesus could make him even richer. However, Zacchaeus was a very small man and with all the crowds about there was no way that he could see this Jesus person so he decided to run ahead a little way and climb a Sycamore tree so that he could get a sight of this man everyone was talking about.

Jesus arrived in Jericho and as he drew level with the tree where Zacchaeus was sitting he looked up and said 'Zacchaeus, come down immediately, I must stay at your house today.' Zacchaeus was amazed, fancy this person wishing to see him and come to his house.

All the people who had been waiting to see Jesus were very cross when they saw whose house Jesus was going to, saying 'He has gone to the house of a sinner to have a meal with him. That is surely not right.'

However, inside the house Zacchaeus found himself saying (to his surprise) 'Look Lord, here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor; and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.'

The people outside were amazed at the change in Zacchaeus.

This story is ideally best done as a Mime or a drama. It is a good display piece and you could also do the Zacchaeus song to finish it off with the actions

Now Zacchaeus was a very little man
And a very little man was he
He climbed up to the sycamore tree
For the Saviour he wanted to see
For the Saviour he wanted to see
And as the Saviour passed that way
He looked up to the tree
And said NOW Zacchaeus you come down!
For I'm coming to your house for tea
For I'm coming to your house for tea

The Easter Story

Aim: Coinciding with the Easter activity of the church this activity is to enable boys to understand the events leading to, during and after the Easter services

Equipment:

- Various versions of Bibles, tapes, slides, videos, books, posters
- Pens, paper

There are many bible readings leading up to the Easter Story but do try to get one that the boys will understand – perhaps a children's version or The Youth Bible.

First of all find out what the boys know about Easter. Many of our boys do not come from Christian backgrounds and many of them today do not get much Christian teaching in schools so for them it might be just Easter Eggs and how lovely they are.

You might want to do Easter over more than one session if you look at any of the following:

- The triumphal entry into Jerusalem
- The disciples weakness in the Garden of Gethsemane
- Peter's denial of Jesus
- The trial of Jesus
- The Last supper
- The crucifixion
- The resurrection
- Jesus appears to his mother
- Jesus appears to his disciples for the last time

There are so many resources to be had for this subject, illustrated books, posters, flannel graphs, slide/tapes, videos etc. Local Christian Bookshops seem to cater especially for young people or ask Sunday school teachers what they use or your local church school.

Radio Israel must have made fascinating listening as the story unfolded. Crucifixion at the time was not unusual but when it came to the empty tomb everyone must have been listening for the next instalment. Who was this man who had everyone wondering what was going to happen next?

A good way of re-emphasizing the main points would be to do a radio broadcast with the boys doing their version of the news way back in the time of Jesus.

What about drama? Can the boys put themselves in the position of Thomas. Try acting out the scene with Thomas – Doubting what was going on – it would be hard to believe, he wanted proof.

The boys could draw pictures depicting what happened on 'Road to Emmaus'. Each boy could do a separate picture for each part of the story. Put it all together and make a book named 'On the Road to Emmaus'.

Additional activity:

The boys could make a collage showing the Easter Story.



No maximum number
depending on adequate
supervision



15 minutes this could be
done over several weeks



No maximum number
depending on adequate
supervision



15 minutes over
two weeks

How can we help keep God's World?

Aim: To give boys some knowledge of how the world was created and to encourage them to appreciate its beauty and to care for its future

Week One

Equipment:

- Video-tape player and TV, (or an OHP Projector and overhead foils)
- Craft materials (card, paper, pens, glue, scissors etc)

Rather than just tell the story straight from Genesis about how God made the world, try and get a copy of 'The Creation' in Hanna-Barbera's 'Greatest adventure stories from the Bible'. Some Christian bookshops do hire out Christian videos or you could borrow a copy from your local library. Alternatively, you could tell the story by using illustrations drawn onto overhead foils and an OHP or drawings showing the various stages that God made the World.

The first part of God's plan was to make light – he was very pleased with it but decided not to have light all the time. He wanted light for part of the time and darkness for part of the time. He divided light from dark, calling light 'day' and darkness 'night' He also made the sun to shine during the day and the moon at night. When we see light shining through our curtains in the morning we know it is time to get up and we can then go to school or out to play. We can look at books or visit the park. After a day of seeing, doing and talking, the light turns to dark and we know it is time to rest, to sleep.

However, God still had a lot to do. All the world was covered with water and God wanted some dry land because he had special plans for it. God also made volcanoes and earthquakes. They pushed the earth and rocks from underneath the water. He sent strong winds and heavy rain. Some of the land grew very high and became high mountains. Water ran down the mountains, rivers and lakes were formed and God was very pleased.

God had done all of those things so what could he do next? He made plants and trees – tall trees, short trees, trees with leaves, trees with fruit. He made bushes and flowers. The flowers and trees gave colours to the world and fragrances.

He was still not finished – he made the fish, then birds, animals. He then made man to rule over and care for all that had been made. He gave man sight to see all the beautiful things. He helped us to hear and smell and taste, hands that we could to look after God's world.

Not least he gave humans a mind so that they could think for themselves and choose to do right or wrong.

Having talked about all the things that God made, ask the boys to use some of the materials you have provided to make something that God gave to the World.

What did the boys create? These things they have made were created out of virtually nothing. When the world began there was nothing – no world, no plants, no animals, no people. God had a plan. He was going to make a world. Perhaps we cannot understand exactly how it happened but what really matters is that it did. We believe that it happened because God wanted it to happen. God IS the creator of the world.



This activity requires the
use of scissors and glue.
Leaders should exercise
appropriate caution



Week Two

Equipment:

- Flip chart
- Paper
- Colouring pens/pencils

Cover the main points of the story last week that God made the world and everything in it, and when He had finished, he was very pleased with what He had made. God created a beautiful world yet sometimes we do not often look after it well. We take the world for granted and think that it will always last forever.

Ask boys the following questions: So what do we do that spoils God's World? Write their answers up on the flip chart.

- We cut down trees which ought to remain planted
- We drill for oil and gas in the wild areas of the earth
- We throw rubbish on the streets
- We throw rubbish in the rivers polluting them
- We throw out fumes from all our cars polluting the air around us
- We throw out smoke from chimneys – home and factories
- We use chemicals that harm the atmosphere
- We bury waste products which harms the water supply

Once you have given them the idea, I am sure the boys will come up with some more ways in which we spoil our world

Ask boys the following questions: So what can we do to help to protect God's world?

Look at all the ways that your local area uses to protect the environment such as:

- Bottle Bank and glass recycling
- Recycling plastic
- Aluminium collection point
- Waste Paper collection
- Clothes for charity
- Books for charity
- Sewerage treatment

Working in small groups, boys could make large posters about the things that spoil God's world, or a collage of smaller drawings showing how we can help to protect God's world

As an additional idea, you could get someone from your local council to visit the section to talk about the importance of recycling and what the boys can do to help.

If your local authority has a recycling depot, it might be possible to have a guided tour to help the boys to learn about all the things that can be recycled. An escorted visit to a sewerage treatment works can also be very interesting, despite the initial responses from the boys and staff!



No maximum number
depending on adequate
supervision



15 minutes over
several weeks

Aim: To help boys understand the real meaning of Christmas

Equipment:

- Bibles
- Church calendar
- Tape recorder and tapes
- Scripts
- Pens

Christmas is about giving and receiving gifts but today we seem to give more and more extravagant gifts to the extent that people get into debt.

It is important to try and explain Christmas as a time for giving but it need not be a large gift – it's the thought that counts. This is quite difficult to get over to boys as we now live in a very material world.

However, there are lots of different stories that can be told about Christmas:

- The Angel's visit to Mary
- The Census and the journey to Bethlehem
- No room at the Inn
- The story of the Shepherds
- The time in the Temple
- The visit of the Wise Men
- The flight to Egypt

And many more from all versions of the Bible. Try different ones, as some of them are better than others for young people.

There are lots of activities going on in our churches at Christmas, often offering opportunities for boys to get involved in the actual work and activities of the church. Do please try and make the effort to involve your boys as they then feel part of the Church. Perhaps they could help with the decorations or decorate the Christmas tree. Help distribute the gifts from the toy service or visit wherever they are going to so they can see for themselves how much need there is in their local community. This sort of activity could be an achievement in itself but what is really does is help the boy understand the needs of others.

Instead of doing a Nativity play this year, why not get the boys to write the story in their own words and make an actual recording of a 'radio play' on a tape recorder or you could be more ambitious and video it. (Do not forget to have parents' permission if you are using the video). However if you use the 'radio play' style, it is fairly simple, no costumes needed or lines to learn and the boys really will enjoy hearing their voices coming across from the tape recorder. You could even start or end with a Christmas Hymn/Carol.

You might need to do it more than once before you get it right and the boys could have a copy of the tape to take home.

Food for Thought

SPIRIT

God and me



8/10



20 minutes

Aim: To help boys understand about other people's ways of life

Equipment:

- Various foods
- Cooking equipment
- Map of areas to be talked about

You could start this evening with a selection of foods that boys like – e.g. Hot dogs, pizzas, baked beans, crisps etc.

Once it is all eaten, put up a list and talk about what poor people eat as their every day diet. To have gravy or sauces poured over their rice may well be unheard of. They will also nearly always have the same diet day after day.

If you can bring along some examples of 'Third World' food.

- Beans – Grown in many parts of the world and prepared in different ways (not out of tins)
- Ugali – A thick porridge of maize flour, made in various African countries, especially Uganda
- Yams – Root vegetables grown in tropical countries
- Pilau – Dish of onions, peas, raisins, rice, ginger and cinnamon from Bangladesh
- Rice – Corn – Wheat are often staple foodstuffs.

These people have to grow and harvest the food themselves. There are no such things as supermarkets, no packets of cornflakes, soups, chocolate, biscuits etc. Food is often difficult to grow because of poor soil and little water. Sometimes there is too much water and the crops are flooded and rot away. If there is not enough food, then famine results and people die.

Sometimes they have to decide if they should eat what they have got or keep it to plant for next year – so this means they either go hungry this year or next. Many people suffer from malnutrition and when this happens they get many diseases and again deaths are very numerous in these poor countries.

Ask the boys if they have ever heard of any famines – the African countries around the Sahara are amongst the most frequent sufferers (from droughts) and Bangladesh (typhoon and floods).

Making your own Third World Food – the boys will enjoy doing it but will not necessarily like it.

Groundnut Stew – A West African Food

Ingredients: 1-3 cups of unsalted raw peanuts, onions, 2 tomatoes, 2 cups of water, cooking oil.

Crush peanuts into fine powder (tie in plastic bag and hit with rolling pin). Dice onion. Fry onions and tomatoes in small amount of oil (full supervision required). Add peanuts and water with little salt. Simmer for 15-20 minutes – Serve on its own or with boiled cabbage. (This could be done first and whilst it is cooking you could have your talk.

Check that no-one has a peanut allergy.



Boys should wash their hands before preparing food, and care be taken when in the kitchen. Leaders should be aware of boys with any nut allergies



No maximum number
depending on adequate
supervision



15 minutes

Heroes: David

Aim: To show the boys that there are many Bible heroes in the Old Testament

The meal times at Jesse's house were very noisy affairs! Jesse had eight sons and when they all sat down for their meals they would talk and sometimes shout, argue and laugh as well. They would try to tell their father what they had been doing during the day, all at the same time. Poor Jesse could not hear what they were talking about they were so noisy. They were all very different, some were handsome, some quick to pick a fight, some liked a joke, some were very big and strong, the younger ones not so big – yet.

However, there was one time when they did not all talk at once, in fact they were all very quiet. A very important man, named Samuel, was visiting the town of Bethlehem where Jesse lived and no-one knew why he was there. Of course Samuel knew and God knew as he had sent Samuel to Bethlehem.

God wanted Samuel to choose a king for Israel from one of Jesse's sons. There was a problem. Israel already had a king, but he was not a good king and God told Samuel to choose another. Of course the king would be furious if he found out, so Samuel had to keep it a secret.

At first Samuel did not know which son God had chosen, but when he saw Jesse's sons he knew it would be easy.

He looked at the first, he was tall and handsome. This must be the one God has chosen, thought Samuel, but God said to Samuel 'No! you are looking at what he looks like on the outside, but I know what he is like as a person, inside'

Samuel looked at the second son, he was big and strong. This must be the one thought Samuel, but God said to Samuel 'No' You are still looking at what he looks like on the outside, but I know what he is really like on the inside.

So Samuel looked at the third son and again God said 'No' Not this one. Then Samuel looked at the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh sons, but God did not want any of these to be the new king either.

So Samuel turned to Jesse and asked 'Do you have any more sons?' Jesse said 'I have one more son called David, but he is the youngest of my sons and is taking care of the sheep while we enjoy the meal'. Samuel told Jesse that the meal would not start until all his sons were there and so someone dashed out into the fields to find David.

As David walked in Samuel saw that he was young and handsome, with a sparkle in his eyes and Samuel could see David loved God.

God said to Samuel 'That's the one! I have chosen him to be king when he grows older. And so Samuel told David that God had chosen him to be king and that God would with him always.



Aim: To learn another story about David**Equipment:**

- Rolls of wallpaper or lining paper
- Paper, pens

At the end of tonight's story I will be asking you a question. If you listen very carefully you will know the answer.

David was a Shepherd and although he was only young he spent all his time in the hills looking after his father's sheep. He knew where to take them for fresh water and good grass. He knew exactly how many sheep he had and if any hurt themselves or got lost he would seek them out. However, the hills could be dangerous. Hungry, wild animals roamed around looking for their next meal and one of their favourite meals was sheep or lamb! So if a bear or a lion came after the sheep David would use stones to frighten them away. Now, throwing stones can be very dangerous and we should never do it, in case we hurt someone or perhaps break a window! But David became very good at using a sling shot to throw stones and could hit a target from a long way off.

Some of David's brothers had left home to fight for the King of Israel. One day, David's father asked him to take his brothers some food and find out how they were getting on. He was very excited and off he went, but when he arrived he didn't find the brave army he 'd expected to see. Instead everyone, including the King and his brothers, were afraid.

You see their enemies had a real giant called Goliath; he was huge, nearly 3 metres tall! Every day he came out roaring and shouting wanting someone from the King of Israel's army to fight him. 'If they beat me we will be your servants, but if I beat him you will be our servants' he shouted. No one wanted to become his servant but none of them thought they could beat him, so they were all afraid.

All except David that is, he was furious. 'Doesn't he know that we follow God and that God will help us to beat this man' he said. A servant of the King overheard David and took him to the King. 'I can beat him' David told the King 'I can fight lions and bears, I can fight this giant and God will help me to win'.

David went out to face the giant and on the way he chose 3 small shiny stones from a nearby stream. As he got close to the giant, David put one of the stones into his sling, special things shepherds used to make the stone travel faster. The giant roared with laughter when he saw David – who was little more than a boy, but David shouted at the giant 'You come with all your strength and mighty armour, but I come to fight you in the name of the Lord God. He is helping me!' and with that he twirled the sling shot around his head and just at the right moment, the stone left the sling and went up and up and up, and it hit Goliath on the side of his head and he fell down in front of David.

David had trusted God to help him and he had won.

Now who can tell me how tall the giant was and what was his name?

A good exercise after this is to have a roll of wallpaper or lining paper and for the boys to work in pairs to draw a huge picture of how they think Goliath looked as he lay on the ground after being hit by the stone from David's sling.



No maximum number
depending on adequate
supervision



15 minutes

Heroes: Joseph is sold by his brothers

Aim: To try and show the boys that jealousy of what others have is wrong

Equipment:

- Template (Joseph's coat)
- Colouring pencils and pens

Joseph had been sent by his father to see if his brothers were all right tending the flocks at Shechem. He said, 'Please bring me back news of your brothers'. So Joseph set off from the Valley of Hebron where the family lived. However when Joseph arrived at Shechem he could not find his brothers but heard from another traveller that they had moved further up the valley with their sheep.

As Joseph walked up the valley to his brothers, they saw his beautiful multi-coloured coat in the distance and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him and tell their father that he must have been devoured by a ferocious animal. This did sometimes happen in wild country if you had nothing to protect yourself with. His brothers were very jealous of Joseph and his beautiful coat, Joseph was his father's favourite son.

However, Reuben who was the oldest pleaded with the others not to kill him – let's just throw him down this hole in the ground and leave him there – he can't get out. Reuben's intention was to come back later for Joseph and rescue him, he knew how upset his father would be if Joseph had been killed. So when Joseph approached them they grabbed hold of him and tore off his beautiful coat and threw him into the hole.

As the brothers sat down to eat their meal they saw approaching a caravan of Ishmaelites, (you will need to explain to the boys what a 'caravan' was) with their camels loaded with spices, balm and myrrh; they were on their way to Egypt. Judah said to his brothers – 'Why don't we sell Joseph to the Ishmaelites and his blood will not be on our hands.' So the brothers sold Joseph twenty shekels of silver and he was taken away to Egypt.

Reuben was very upset when he returned from the sheep and saw that Joseph had disappeared. What are we going to do? What are we going to say to our father? After thinking about this, the brothers tore up the multi-coloured robe, killed a goat and smeared its blood on the robe and took it home to their father. Jacob was devastated by the death of his favourite son and remained in mourning for the rest of his days.

The brothers, however, with the exception of Reuben were quite pleased to get rid of Joseph and they promptly forgot about him. That was a pity as they were to hear of him in the future.

Boys could colour in the picture of Joseph's famous coat using the template.

Jesus – The Birth

SPIRIT



God and me



No maximum number
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supervision



15 minutes

Aim: To tell the story of the birth of Jesus

Based on the bible passages of Matthew Ch 1 & 2 v 1 –18 and Luke Ch 1 & 2 v 1 – 20.

Equipment:

- Template
- Bibles
- Paper
- A map of Israel
- Colouring pens/pencils
- Glue

Optional:

- Video/DVD player, CD player with appropriate videos/dvds/cds about the birth of Jesus

The story of the birth of Jesus will be well known to the boys but it is still important for the boys to realise where the story is recorded and this could be a chance to encourage them to read the bible.

It is suggested that either you, or even better, the boys read the story from a modern translation of the Bible such as a Children's Bible, the Youth Bible, the Contemporary English Version or The Message.

In addition there are also a number of videos and CD's that could be used which will bring and tell the story in a visual way.

If you have a world map then you could look at where the key places are located. This could also be done if you have a globe and it would however be much better if you had a map of Israel. The boys could calculate the distance Mary and Joseph would have had to travel.

Pictures or photographs of the key places could also be helpful and there are a number of websites where photographs can be downloaded showing them.

Whichever way you share the story it is important to affirm the key points and the following are some suggestions:-

- The boys could draw or paint a picture(s).
- A collage could be produced of their pictures.
- The story could be written in the boys' own words.
- A wordsearch (see template).
- The boys could take part in a drama or mime see "Extras" pages for suggested web links for drama topics.
- A quiz (see quiz with answers on next page).

Jesus – The Birth Quiz

Questions	Answers
1. Where was Jesus born: Bethlehem or Nazareth?	Bethlehem
2. Who said "I am the Lord's servant; may it happen to me as you have said": Elizabeth, Mary or Joseph?	Mary
3. Who appeared to the mother of Jesus: God or The Angel Gabriel?	The Angel Gabriel
4. Where did Mary and Joseph live before the birth of Jesus: Galilee or Nazareth?	Nazareth
5. Who was the mother of Jesus: Mary or Elizabeth?	Mary
6. Joseph was a descendant of whom: King David or King Herod?	King David
7. What was the name of Elizabeth's child: James, John or Peter?	John
8. Who did the wise men go to see first: Jesus or Herod?	Herod
9. Who decreed that a census should be taken: Herod or Augustus?	Augustus
10. What were the gifts given to Jesus?	Gold, frankincense and myrrh
11. What was special about Bethlehem: Was it the ancient home of Mary, Elizabeth or Joseph?	Joseph
12. Who were the first visitors to see Jesus: the Wise Men or the Shepherds?	Shepherds

Jesus – The Boy

SPIRIT

God and me



No maximum number
depending on adequate
supervision



15 minutes

Aim: To look at the boyhood of Jesus

This is based around the following bible passage: Luke Ch 2 v 41 – 52

Equipment:

- Bible
- Modelling clay or plasticine and short pointed sticks (as long as pencils)
- Unleavened bread, fruit, cheese
- Map of Israel

Background – what it was like for Jesus as a boy?

Teaching – mothers taught at home with stories as well as boys going to school for part of the day often outside the synagogue. The Rabbi (teacher) and pupils sat on the ground in a semi circle and they learnt how to read and write. Clay slabs would be used with a pointed stick or they would use the sand. All the teaching would be from the Old Testament in the Bible and they would all read aloud from the scriptures.

Food – this was stewed outside in a simple oven and hot surface over a fire.

Breadmaking – each day they would make leavened and unleavened bread using fermented dough from the previous day and they would eat it with cheese, dates or stewed vegetables.

Water – this was scarce and would be carried from a spring or well in a leather bucket or water pot carried on the head.

Milk – this was from goats and sheep (the sour milk was thought to be better for quenching the thirst). Cheese was made from the milk.

Vegetables – these would have included: cucumbers, melons, leeks, onion, garlic, spices.

Wine and fruit – grapes, raisins, figs, dates, pomegranates.

There were no eggs because hens were not known in the Middle East at the time of Jesus.

To do

- Make clay or a plasticine slab to represent the clay writing tablets or have a tray of sand and try writing in it using a pointed stick.
- Read a story from the Old Testament explaining this is how they would have been taught.
- Discuss with the boys what it would have been like being taught in the time of Jesus and how different it is today.
- Try some unleavened bread, cheese, and fruit.
- Try to balance a plastic bucket on the head and walk a short distance.
- Look at a map of Israel and find Nazareth and Jerusalem.

Jesus visits the Temple in Jerusalem

Read the passage in Luke 2 verses 41 – 52

Jesus was taken when he was twelve to the Temple in Jerusalem for the initiation into manhood. Describe the journey back when Mary and Joseph realise that Jesus is missing. His parents are very concerned and worry and journey back to find him. When they find Jesus he is very sorry that that were worried but he explains that he was being obedient to God.

Discuss being lost – have any of the boys being lost at any time? How did their parents feel? How would Mary and Joseph have felt? What did Jesus mean when he said that “he was being obedient to God”.



No maximum number
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supervision



10 minutes

Jesus – The Teacher

Aim: To look at the teachings of Jesus

Jesus has been referred as the 'Master Teacher' – so how did he do it?

How Jesus taught

- Others referred to him as 'teacher' (see *Nicodemus, John 3*)
- He refers to himself as teacher (*Matt 26:18*)
- Story of temple guards (*John 7:45ff*)

In the first instance, you can spot a leader because people look to be led by them. In the same way, you will want to come and listen to a good teacher.

Why did people want to listen to Jesus?

- He went to the people to speak to them.
- He talked to everybody, even the 'undesirables'. He was a champion of the people.
- He was a fantastically skilled communicator who used various methods to convey his point.

Why did Jesus use Parables?

- Parables helped people to remember what Jesus said
- Parables helped people to focus on important issues
- Parables got people to think about the way they lived and treated others
- Parables were easy to understand, people could see themselves in the stories

Jesus did not just "tell" stories, imposing them on the listener. The listener was involved, perhaps presented with a puzzle to solve or a question to answer, or challenged to pass judgement on the situation described. They had to face the responsibility of making a decision for themselves about the morality of the situation, or about the way they lived their own life.

The whole idea was not to "entertain" the listeners, or to spoon-feed them the meanings, but to include an element of the unexpected; to make them confront implications, to reflect, to do the mental work necessary to appreciate the meaning and significance of the story and relate it to their own lives and attitudes.

Jesus did not invent the parable. Such tales were used by other Jewish teachers. However, rather than using them as an addition to other teaching methods, the impression we get from the Gospels is that Jesus made them the central feature of his teaching style.

To do

Explore some of the parables that Jesus used – see the list overleaf.

- The boys could retell one of the parables in their own words.
- A drama item could be undertaken using one of the parables, see "Extras" pages for suggested web links for drama topics.
- A painting, drawing or collage could be produced to depict one of the parables.
- They could write a 'modern day' parable.

Parable	Matthew		Mark		Luke	
	Chapter	Verses	Chapter	Verses	Chapter	Verses
Lamp under a bowl	5	14 – 15	4	21 – 22	8 11	16 33
Wise and foolish builders	7	24 – 27			6	47 – 49
The Sower and the soils	13	3 – 23	4 4	3 – 8 14 – 20	8 8	5 – 8 11 – 15
Weeds	13 13	24 – 30 36 – 43				
Mustard seed	13	31 – 32	4	30 – 32	13	18 – 19
Yeast	13	33			13	20 – 21
Hidden treasure	13	44				
Valuable pearl	13	45 – 46				
Net	13	47 – 50				
Owner of the house	13	52				
Lost sheep	18	12 – 14			15	4 – 7
Unmerciful servant	18	23 – 24				
Workers in the vineyard	20	1 – 16				
Two sons	21	28 – 32				
Tenants	21	33 – 44	12	1 – 11	20	9 – 18
Wedding banquet	22	2 – 14				
Fig tree	24	32 – 35	13	28 – 29	21	29 – 31
Faithful and wise servant	24	45 – 51			12	42 – 48
Ten virgins	25	1 – 13				
Talents	25	14 – 30			19	12 – 27
Sheep and goats	25	31 – 46				
Growing seed			4	26 – 29		
Watchful servants			13	35 – 37	12	35 – 40
Money-lender					7	41 – 43
Good Samaritan					10	30 – 37
Rich fool					12	16 – 21
Unfruitful tree					13	6 – 9
Lowest seat at the feast					14	7 – 14
Great Banquet					14	16 – 24
Cost of discipleship					14	28 – 33
Lost coin					15	8 – 10
Lost (prodigal) son					15	11 – 32
Shrewd manager					16	1 – 8
Rich man and Lazarus					16	19 – 31
Master and his servant					17	7 – 10
Persistent widow					18	2 – 8
Pharisee and tax collector					18	10 – 14



No maximum number
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supervision



10 minutes

Aim To look at Jesus as our friend

Equipment:

- Flip chart
- Drawing paper
- Felt tipped pens, pencils

The story of Jesus and the children is in the Bible:

- Matthew 19: 13-15
- Mark 10: 13-16
- Luke 18: 15-17
- Tell the story of the children being brought to Jesus.
- *Why did the disciples try to stop this? Why did Jesus want the children brought to him? Why did Jesus say that everyone should be as a little child? Why were children special to Jesus?*
- Discuss with the boys what makes a good friend. Use a children's book or story which illustrates friendship as a starting point. *Were the characters in the story good friends or not? Why?*
- Make a collective list of good and bad qualities (you might want to write these up on a large piece of paper or flip chart). Discuss how children can be a good friend to others and how they can make new friends.
- Ask the boys to make a montage of friendly faces, a collage of friendly pictures or posters showing friendly actions.

The story of Jesus calling the disciples is in the Bible:

- Matthew 4: 18-22
- Mark 1: 16-20
- Luke 5: 1-11
- Tell the story of Jesus calling the fishermen to be his helpers and followers (disciples). Discuss how the disciples felt at various points in the story.
- *Why do you think Jesus chose these fishermen to be his disciples?*
- Introduce the boys to the 12 disciples.
- *How many friends do you have? What are their names and how do they compare with the names of the disciples?*
- Ask the boys to make a collage of their friends, or make a display using the names of the disciples and the names of their friends.

The story of Zacchaeus is in the Bible:

- Luke 19
- Tell the story of Zacchaeus the tax collector.
- *Why was Zacchaeus unpopular? Why didn't Zacchaeus have any friends? Do you think Zacchaeus was lonely? Why did Zacchaeus have to climb a tree? Why did Jesus choose Zacchaeus to be his friend?*
- *What happened to Zacchaeus because of this event? What can we learn from this story?*
- The boys can then illustrate or write about their favourite part of the story.
- Act out the story; see "Extras" pages for suggested web links for drama topics.

“How do you eat yours?”

SPIRIT

God and me



No maximum number
depending on adequate
supervision



10 minutes

Aim: To show that there are many ways to come to Jesus

Equipment:

- Cadbury's Crème Egg



Outline:

Ask the boys if they can identify some products by the slogan used to advertise them.

- E.g. “Cleans in half the time” – Flash
“Does exactly what it says on the tin” – Ronseal
“The taste of Paradise” – Bounty.

Ask what is advertised with the slogan “How do you eat yours?”

Show the Crème Egg and ask the boys how they like to eat theirs.

Discuss how some people like to eat them such as sucking off the chocolate first, biting straight in or eating it like a boiled egg using a spoon.

Talk:

The Bible describes the way some people came to Jesus.

Tell the boys about some people such as Nicodemus (John 3) coming to Jesus in secret; James and John (Matt 4 v 21 & 22) dropping everything and following Jesus; Andrew (John 1 v 40) going to find his brother to bring him too.

People today still come to Jesus in different ways. Some come as soon as they hear about him. Some come only after they have thought about it for a long time. Some can tell the very day they became Christians while for others it happened gradually. The important thing is that they knew they needed Jesus in their lives to cleanse them from their sin and to help them live the sort of lives God wants them to live.

Unfortunately, the Bible also tells of others who didn't follow Jesus. Tell the boys about the Rich Young Ruler (Matt 19 v 16 – 24) who walked away and Agrippa (Acts 26 v 28) who was “almost persuaded”.

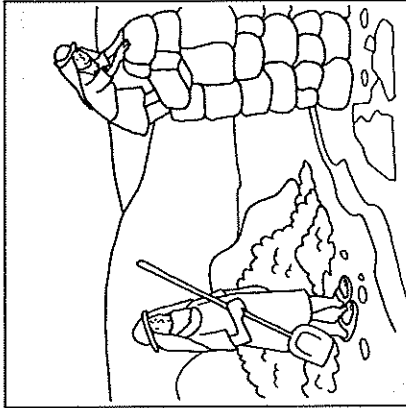
“How do you eat yours?” – whatever way they are great to eat.

Point out that it doesn't matter how they come to Jesus, the important thing is that they do come and ask Jesus to forgive their sin and to take charge of their lives.

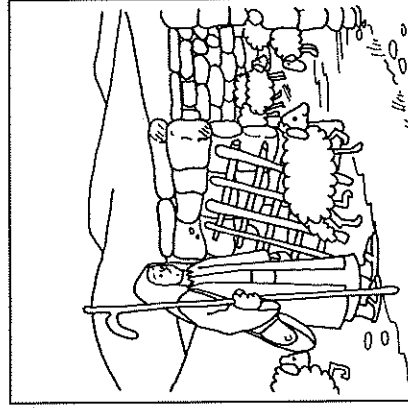
Give the boys a crème egg to take home to remind them of the story.

Template S-2

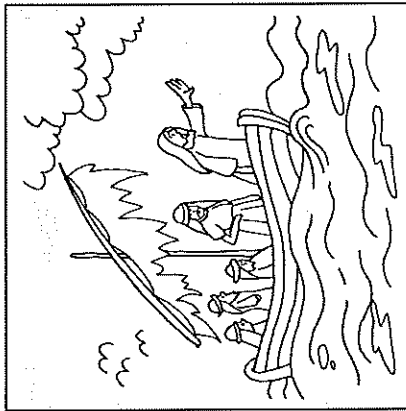
Miracles and Parables



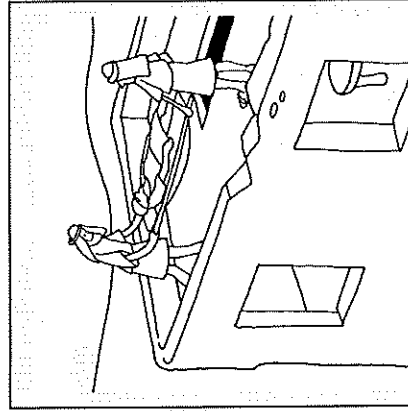
The Two House Builders
Matthew 7:24-27



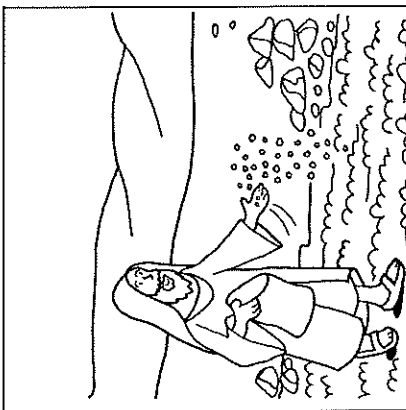
The Lost Sheep
Luke 15:3-7



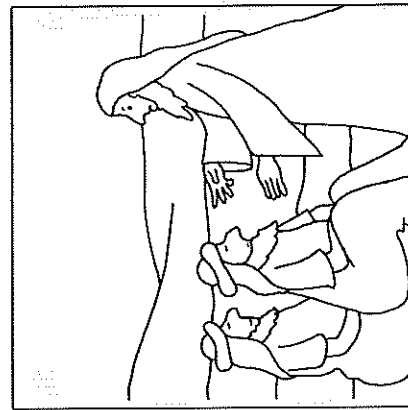
Jesus Calms the Storm
Luke 8:22-25



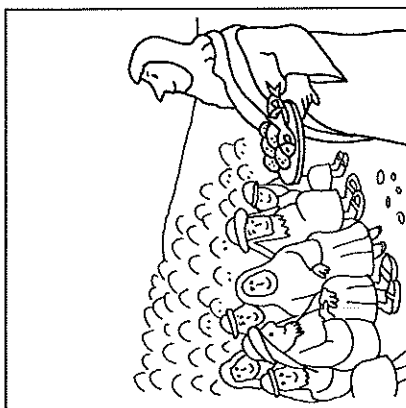
Jesus Heals the Paralysed Man
Mark 2:1-12



The Sower
Mark 4:1-9



Jesus Heals Two Blind Men
Matthew 9:27-31



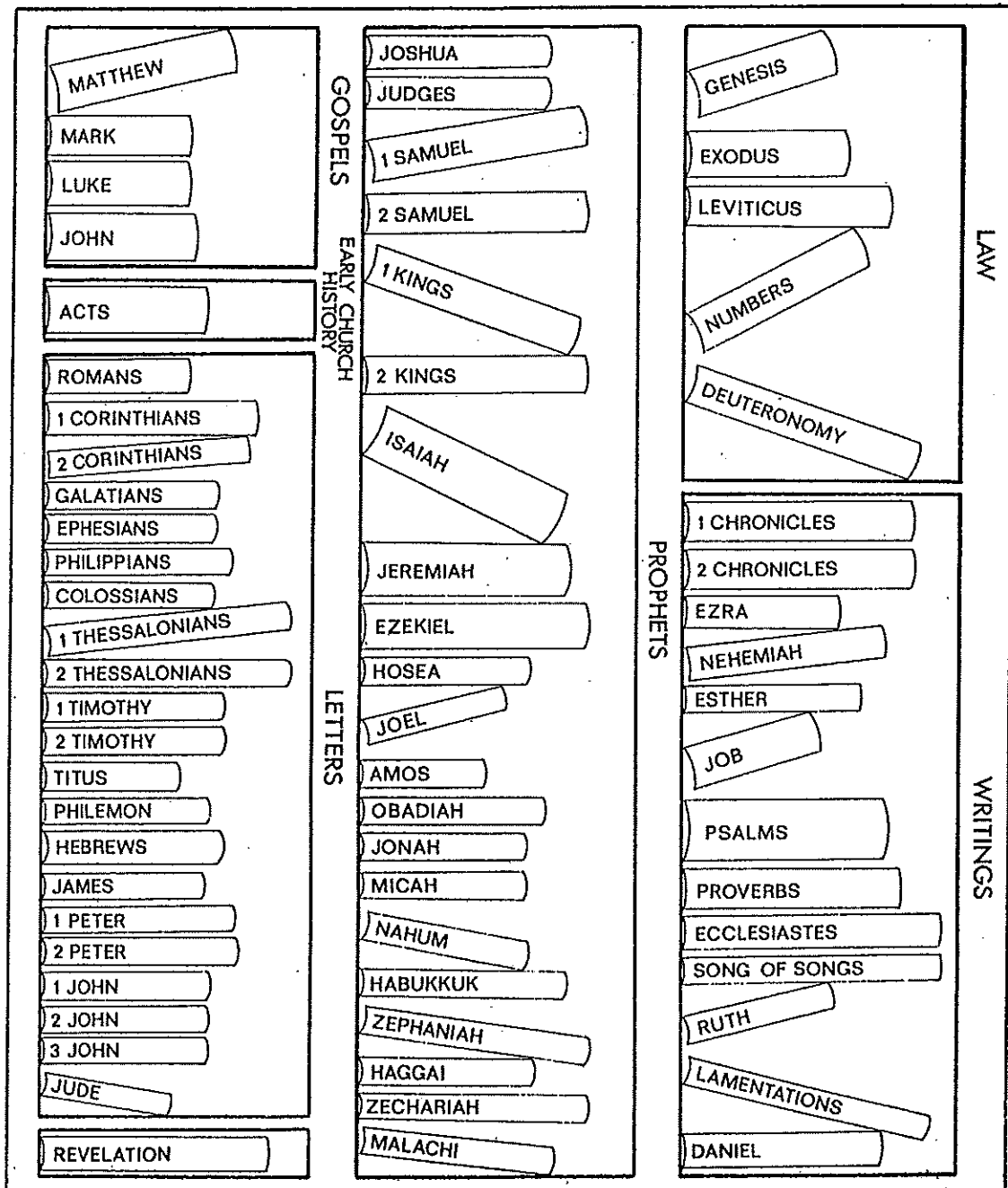
Jesus Feeds 5000
John 6:1-14



The Good Samaritan
Luke 10:25-37

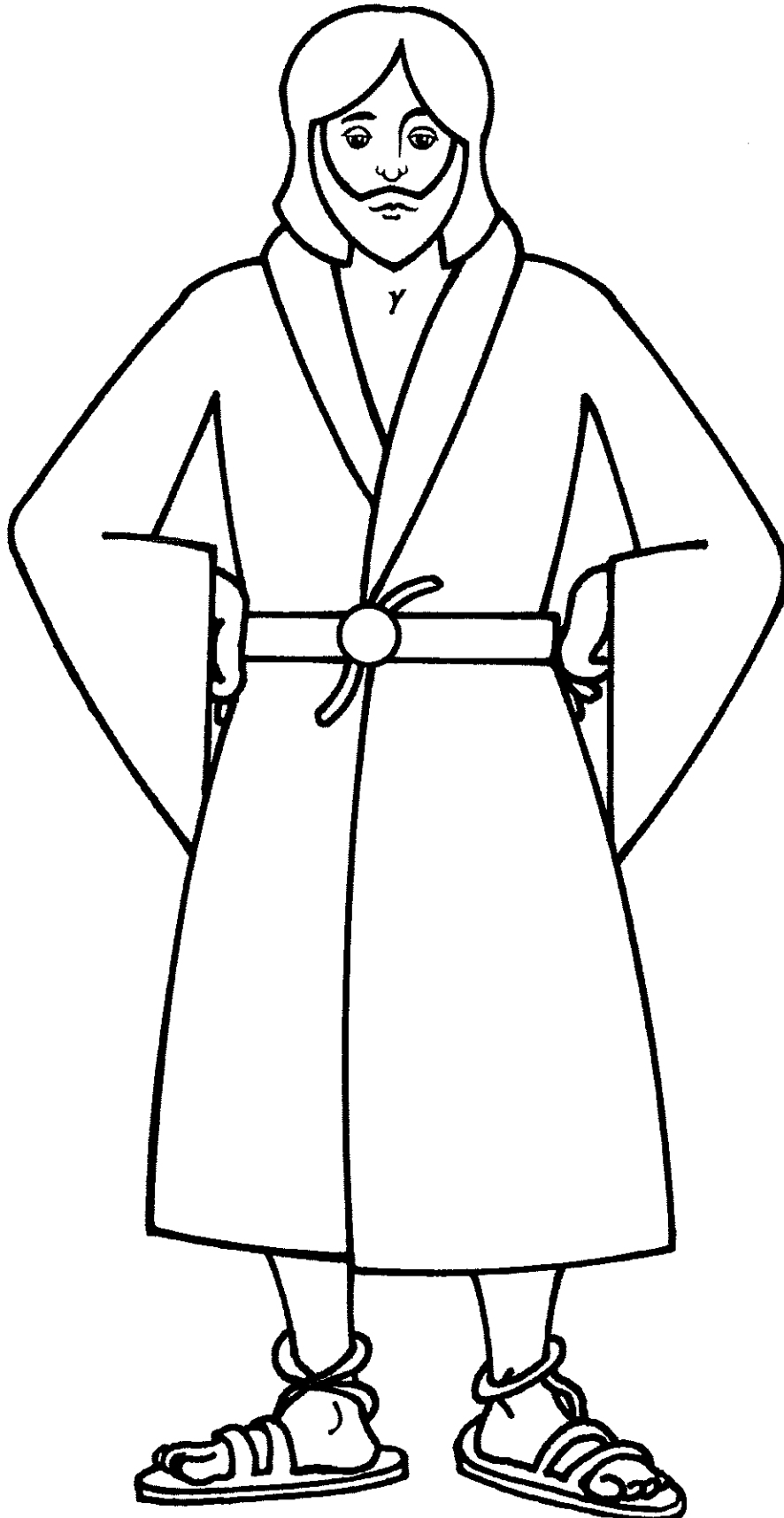
Template S-3

Discover the Bible



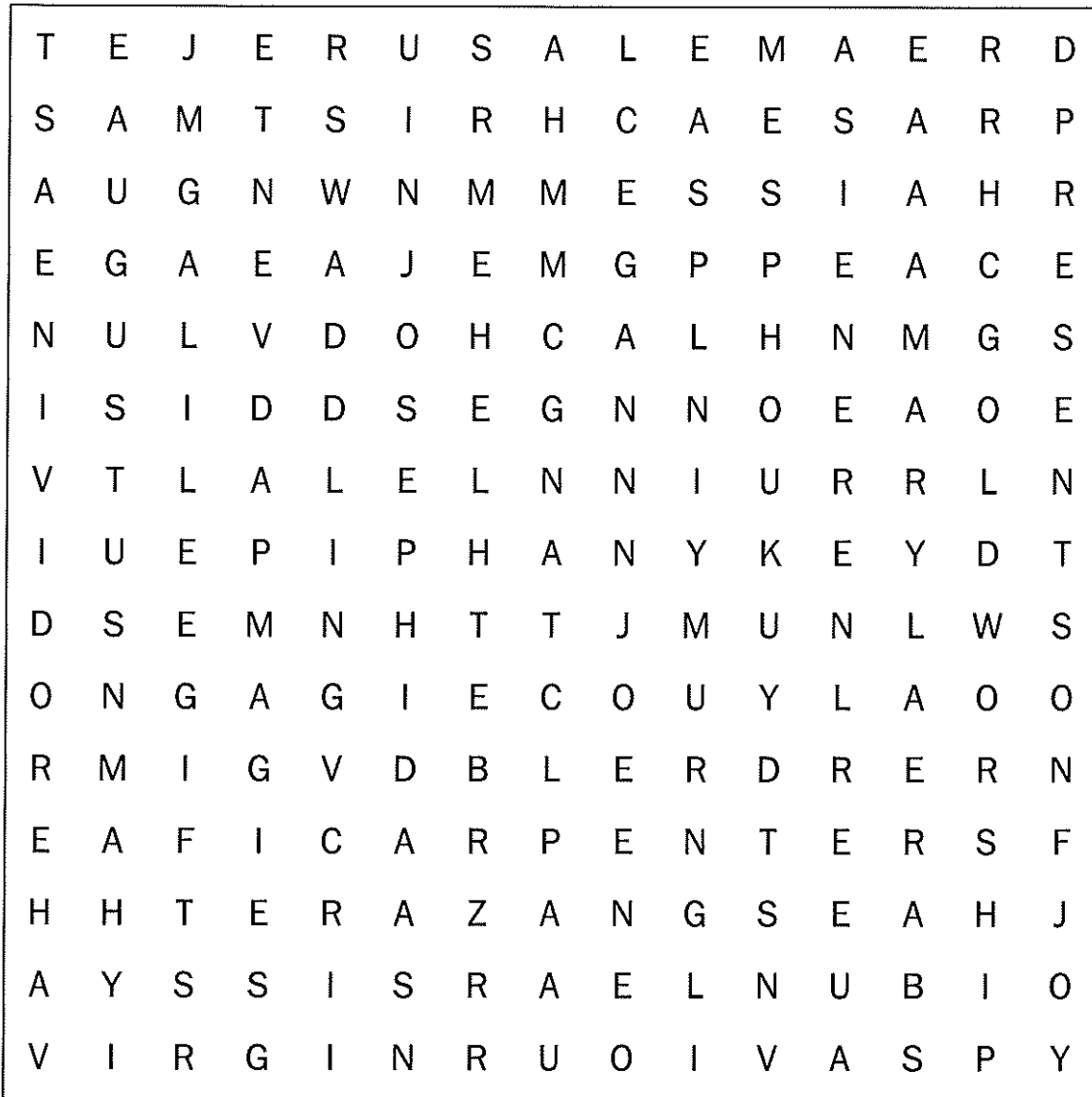
Template S-28

Joseph is sold by his brothers



Template S-29

Jesus – The Birth Wordsearch



Words

Advent	Dream	Israel	Peace
Angel	East	Jerusalem	Presents
Anointed	Epiphany	Joseph	Saviour
Augustus	Frankincense	Joy	Shepherds
Bethlehem	Galilee	Judea	Son
Betrothed	Gifts	Magi	Star
Caesar	Glory	Mary	Swaddling
Carpenter	Gold	Messiah	Virgin
Census	Herod	Myrrh	Worship
Christmas	Immanuel	Nativity	Yule
Divine	Inn	Nazareth	

Template S-29

Jesus – The Birth Quiz

Questions	Answers
1. Where was Jesus born: Bethlehem or Nazareth?	
2. Who said “I am the Lord’s servant; may it happen to me as you have said”: Elizabeth, Mary or Joseph?	
3. Who appeared to the mother of Jesus: God or The Angel Gabriel?	
4. Where did Mary and Joseph live before the birth of Jesus: Galilee or Nazareth?	
5. Who was the mother of Jesus: Mary or Elizabeth?	
6. Joseph was a descendant of whom: King David or King Herod?	
7. What was the name of Elizabeth’s child: James, John or Peter?	
8. Who did the wise men go to see first: Jesus or Herod?	
9. Who decreed that a census should be taken: Herod or Augustus?	
10. What were the gifts given to Jesus?	
11. What was special about Bethlehem: Was it the ancient home of Mary, Elizabeth or Joseph?	
12. Who were the first visitors to see Jesus: the Wise Men or the Shepherds?	