

Naomi and Ruth

Your God Will Be My God

The story of Ruth is a beautiful love story between God and some of His faithful children. It was written during the time of the judges and is told through the eyes of Naomi, a woman who has been compared to Job because she also lost all she had.

Times were hard. A famine in the land of Israel made it difficult to survive, so Naomi, her husband, and their two boys moved to the neighboring country of Moab. Perhaps they thought they would only be there a short time and that life would be easier, but it was not.

Naomi's husband died soon after arriving. Naomi's two sons married women of the foreign land in which they now lived, but her sons also died ten short years later. Naomi found herself without a husband, living in a land that was not her home, and surrounded by people who did not serve her God.

Naomi knew it was finally time to go home!

She packed her belongings and began the journey back to her Bethlehem

Memory Verse

And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.

Ruth 1:16

Key Thought

We each have a hole in our heart that only God can fill. Ruth recognized the value of Naomi's love and the love of her God and wanted it for herself.

Lesson Discussion

- When was the story of Ruth written? Can you remember some of the judges of Israel?
- Why did Naomi's husband and two boys move to Moab? What happened while they were there?
- What were the names of Naomi's two daughters-in-law? Which one went home with her? Read the words in our memory

verse that Ruth spoke to her mother-in-law.

- What was the name of the city Naomi returned home to?
- What did Naomi want her friends to call her? Why?

home. Her two daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpha, also traveled with her. Finally, Naomi said to them, "Daughters, go back to your mother's house. I pray God treats you as kindly as you have treated me."

Ruth and Orpha protested, "We want to go with you!" But Naomi said, "I have no more sons for you to marry and am too old to have more."

With tears running down her cheeks, Orpha kissed Naomi and returned back to Moab. Ruth, however, held her mother-in-law tightly and would not let her go. Naomi tried one last time to convince Ruth to also return home.

Their conversation (*according to the ancient Jewish translation of the Bible, the Targum*) may have gone something like this:

Ruth said, "I want to go with you and become one of your people."

Naomi said, "We are commanded to keep the Sabbath and other holy days and not travel more than two thousand cubits." But Ruth answered,

"Wherever you go, I will go."

Naomi said, "We are commanded to only live among our own people."

But Ruth answered,

"Wherever you live, I will live."

Naomi said, "We are commanded not to worship strange gods." But Ruth answered,

"What your people do, I will do. I will be one of them."

Naomi said, "We have four kinds of punishment for criminals," and she named them.

But Ruth said,

"However you die, I will die, and where you are buried, I will be buried there, too."

Naomi, no doubt, wanted Ruth to go with her, but she also wanted her to know how God had commanded His children to live. Ruth stubbornly refused to go back home. She recognized value in Naomi's God, a God her own people did not serve. Her resolute words are some of the most beautiful words of loyalty and friendship recorded.

When Naomi and Ruth entered Bethlehem after many long years, the people of the city said, "Is this Naomi?" She told them, do not call me Naomi, which means *beautiful or pleasant*. She said, call me Mara, which means *bitter*. She said, "The Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I left full but have returned home empty."

It was the time of the barley harvest. What will happen? Will Naomi and Ruth find a way to survive as two widows? Will God's love and faithfulness break through the dark clouds of sad times? ■

BEING A GOOD FRIEND

The Bible has a few things to say about being a good and loyal friend like Ruth!
Look up the following verse references and copy the scripture in the space provided.
List the traits of a loyal friend the verse is talking about.



Proverbs 12:24

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

Psalms 133:1

Philippians 2:4



THERE'S A HOLE IN MY HEART!

In 1912, Clarence Crane, a chocolate manufacturer in Cleveland Ohio, USA, invented Lifesaver's as a summer candy that could withstand heat better than chocolate. The candy's name is derived from its similarity to the shape of the rings used for saving people who have fallen off of ships.

But this candy, with the empty hole in the middle, can also be used as an illustration of the emptiness people experience inside without God as the center of a person's life.

Teachers: Get enough lifesavers for each person to be able to have at least five pieces. Pass around the candy and tell each student to choose anywhere from 1 to 5 lifesavers of a color that they want. Instruct them not to eat them. After they have chosen their candy, tell them what each candy type/color represents. (Example: **Red** = Favorite hobbies, **Green** = Favorite place, **Blue** = Favorite memory, **Yellow** = Best friends, **Orange** = Wildcard – tell us about anything else you love!)

After each of you have talked about a few of your favorite things, talk about how God, like the lifesaver, created us with a “heart-hole.” People try to fill this hole with many things, but God is the only One who fits the hole “just right.”

The Moabites in our story today worshipped the “fire god,” Chemosh. The things they did to serve this god were very bad. Perhaps Ruth was unhappy with the customs of her people. She recognized in her mother-in-law, whom she loved very much, the value of her God.

It is the same way for us. God—not friends, trips, or toys—is the only One who can truly fill the hole in our heart.

THE COMPASS

Junior Sunday School ■ April 14, 2019

The Book of Ruth Series

Boaz

Kinsman-Redeemer



Scripture Reading: Ruth 2—4

It was harvest time in Bethlehem. It was a custom among the Israelite reapers to leave some stalks of grain for the poor to gather. When Ruth heard of this custom, she told her mother-in-law, Naomi, she would go gather grain so they would have food.

It so happened the field in which Ruth chose to work was a field owned by Boaz. Do you remember Rahab, the woman of Jericho who hid the spies and her life was saved?

Boaz was Rahab's son! Rahab married a prince of Israel, and so their son, Boaz, was a mighty man of wealth.

As Ruth followed the reapers, gathering grain, Boaz came from Bethlehem into the fields to check on his workers. When he saw the young woman, he asked his servant, "Who is she?" The servant explained she was the Moabite woman who had returned to Israel with Naomi.

Memory Verse

A full reward be given thee
of the Lord God of Israel,
under whose wings thou art
come to trust. Ruth 2:12

Key Thought

In the same way that Boaz saved (*redeemed*) Ruth and Naomi from a life of hardship, Jesus redeemed (*rescued*) us from the hardship that sin brings when He died for us on the cross.

Lesson Discussion

- Was it "an accident" that Ruth picked Boaz's field in which to work, or did God lead her there?
- Does God have a plan to take care of you?
- In the same way Boaz showed kindness

to Ruth, how has God showed kindness to you?

- What are some ways you can show kindness to other people who are "different" than you are (*just like Ruth was different because she was from a foreign country*)?

Boaz watched this young woman patiently work. He told Ruth, "Do not go into another field to work. When you are thirsty, drink water from my vessels." He commanded his workers to leave extra grain on the ground for Ruth to gather.

Ruth asked Boaz, "Why do you treat me so kindly?" Boaz replied, "I have heard how you left your own country and have come to this country as a stranger. I have learned how you have loved and taken care of your mother-in-law." He continued, "May the Lord reward you because you have trusted in Him."

How comforted Ruth was when she returned home that evening and showed Naomi the grain she had gathered! Every day for the rest of the harvest, Ruth worked in Boaz's fields under his protection.

Naomi knew something very important. Under Jewish law, if a man died, his closest male relative (*kin*) could pay money for the widow's land and marry the widow. In those days, women who did not have a husband had no way to take care of themselves.

In this way, the closest male relative became a "kinsman-redeemer." He was a relative (kin) who brought things back to the way they were supposed to be (redeemed).

With this knowledge, Naomi made a plan. She told Ruth to bathe, put on perfume, and go visit Boaz. She wanted Ruth to marry him. When Boaz saw Ruth and understood she wanted him to marry her, he agreed. He knew Ruth was a woman of good character and reputation. Boaz spoke with another relative and the town elders who also agreed that he should marry Ruth.

After Ruth and Boaz were married, God blessed them with a son whom they called Obed. The women of the town called the boy "Naomi's boy."

They said, "Praise the Lord, who has provided a redeemer for your family! May this child be famous in Israel. May he restore your youth and care for you in your old age."

What became of Ruth and Boaz's son, Obed? When he grew up, he had a son named Jesse, who later became the father of King David, one of the greatest kings Israel ever had. Boaz became Ruth's kinsman-redeemer. Ruth, the girl who chose to leave her country and believed in the God of Israel, became part of the lineage of King David and later, Jesus. Naomi's bitterness was once more turned into joy. ■

FILL IN THE BLANKS!

Use the following words to complete each of the following verses: Sin, Redeemer, Free, Redeemed

As for our _____,
the LORD of
hosts is his
name, the Holy
One of Israel.
Isaiah 47:4

But now thus saith the LORD
that created thee, O Jacob,
and he that formed thee, O
Israel, Fear not: for I have
_____ thee, I have
called thee by thy name; thou
art mine.
Isaiah 43:1

Jesus answered them,
Verily, verily, I say unto
you, Whosoever
committeth _____ is the
servant of sin. If the Son
therefore shall make
you _____, ye shall be
free indeed.
John 8:34, 36

REDEMPTION!



The idea of redeeming is important to understand. Boaz paid a price to redeem Ruth and bring her back into the family, giving her a lasting inheritance. The Bible tells of another way to redeem someone. Slavery was very common in Bible times. Sometimes people were forced into slavery, and sometimes they had to sell themselves as slaves in order to survive. For example, if a person lost his crops, he might have to sell all he owned to buy food. If he sold himself, he could get money to buy food for his family, but he would then be a slave. The only way he could escape slavery was if one of his relatives paid money to set him free.

Needed: Two one dollar bills

Volunteers to play the parts of a:

- Farmer with a family
- Banker who loans the farmer money
- Slave master
- Relative (Kinsman-Redeemer)—a brother, uncle, our cousin

Farmer: Pretend you have lost everything you own. Your crops have failed due to lack of rain, and you have no food in the house. Your wife and children are hungry. You go to the banker to borrow money to buy food.

Banker: Give the Farmer \$1.

Farmer: The farmer buys food (*give the \$1 back to the teacher*) and feeds his family, but has no way to repay his loan.

Banker: Time goes by and the farmer does not repay his loan, so the banker demands payment from the farmer. If he does not pay, he will go to jail.

Farmer: The farmer has no other choice but to sell himself into slavery to repay the loan (*go to the Slave Master*).

Slave Master: (*Buy the farmer for \$1. Farmer, pay the Banker the \$1 you owe.*)

The farmer's days are long and filled with hard work. Freedom becomes a distant memory which he is helpless to change.

Relative: After many long months, a relative comes to visit. He tells you that he will give his own money to redeem (or free) you. He pays the required price to the owner. (*Relative, pay the Slave Master \$1.*) You are now free from slavery. How does this feel?

This is a picture of God paying the price to redeem us. When we choose to do wrong, we become a slave to sin and have no way to free ourselves. Sin is a cruel taskmaster. We need a redeemer to pay the price to free us. Because He loves us, Jesus said, "I will pay the price," and he willingly died on the cross. If we accept Him and the payment He made, we can be redeemed from the slavery that sin brings.

THE COMPASS

Junior Sunday School ■ April 21, 2019

Samuel, Saul, and David Series

Hannah

Mother of Samuel

Gifts from God



Scripture Reading:

1 Samuel 1, 2:1-11

In the days before Israel had a king, there was a man named Elkanah. He had two wives whose names were Hannah and Peninnah, and they did not get along! Peninnah had many children, but Hannah was barren. To be barren means you can't have children. Peninnah took every opportunity to brag and make Hannah feel bad that she had no children. Elkanah showed Hannah special favor over Peninnah and made the situation even worse.

One year, Elkanah's family, including his two wives and all his children, traveled to Shiloh to make offerings to the Lord at the ark. Peninnah provoked Hannah with such cruel words that Hannah had no appetite and didn't eat any food. What a horrible way to treat someone who is less fortunate. God had a special plan for

Memory Verse

In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Key Thought

Praise God for all the gifts He gives you. If He ever asks for one back, remember to be grateful that you had it in the first place!

Lesson Discussion

- What was the name of Elkanah's other wife, and how did she treat Hannah?
- When Hannah prayed at the temple, what did she ask God to give her?
- What promise did Hannah make if her prayer was answered?
- Do you believe God wants to answer your prayers and give you special gifts? How should you act when He does?

Hannah though, and once they arrived at the ark, she fell down on her knees and prayed a fervent prayer.

She said, "Oh Lord, please look on the affliction of your servant and remember me. If you will give me a child, I will give him back to you for the rest of his life."

The Lord heard Hannah's prayer, and not long after that, she had a son. She said, "I will call him Samuel, because I have asked him of the Lord." Every year until Samuel was a young boy, Hannah stayed behind when the family went to Shiloh to make sacrifices. She spent all of her time caring for her son and teaching him the ways of the Lord.

Finally, Hannah felt that her child was ready to be given back to the Lord, so she took him and some sacrifices to the temple.

There, she offered a bullock, or a young male cow, to God and gave Samuel to the old priest name Eli. Even though he was young, Hannah kept her promise to the Lord and gave her young son back to Him so that he could learn and serve in the temple.

Hannah's words of praise and thanksgiving to God recorded in 1 Samuel 2:1-22 are some of the most beautiful in the Bible. Take some time to read it on your own! The second verse says, "There is none holy as the Lord: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God."

It's hard for us to imagine giving a such a young child to someone else to raise. Samuel was Hannah's most precious possession—he was a gift from God and a direct answer to her prayer. The little boy answered the desires of her heart. However, she had made a promise to God, and she fulfilled her promise with a heart of thanksgiving and praise. She gifted back her most precious gift.

Have you ever felt like God gave you something really special? Perhaps it was a special toy, a keepsake from someone close to you, or a beloved pet.

It gives God great pleasure to give us gifts that are close to our hearts.

Let's remember to give Him special glory for the things He's given us; and if He ever asks us to give one back, remember to be like Hannah and praise Him for the time you had it! ■

WORD SEARCH!

Eli, Elkanah, Gifts, Hannah, Peninnah, Praise, Prayer, Precious, Sacrifices, Samuel, Shiloh, Thanksgiving

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PRAYER AND THANKSGIVING

Teachers: Bring colored construction paper, glue/tape/stapler, and pens or markers to class with you.

Have each child write down three to five specific things they are praying for in the space below (could be the health of a loved one, a missionary they follow, to make a friend at school, etc.). Cut two strips of paper for each prayer, and write each prayer on one strip. Then make a “prayer and thanksgiving chain!”

Staple/glue/tape each prayer to the chain, with a blank chain following. Instruct the children to write their thanksgiving on the corresponding blank chain when God answers the prayers! Encourage them to hang the prayer and thanksgiving chain somewhere they can easily see it and remember to pray and thank God.

THE COMPASS

Junior Sunday School ■ April 28, 2019

Samuel, Saul, and David Series

Samuel as a Child

Be Young and Righteous



Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 2:18-21, 3

Samuel grew up in the temple and ministered, or worked, for the Lord. Eli, the old priest to whom his mother gave him, trained him and continued to teach Samuel about God. Every year, Hannah came with her husband, Elkanah, to the temple, and she always made Samuel a new coat and brought it to him. She still loved her little boy! Eli blessed Hannah, and she had three more sons and two daughters!

One night, as Eli and Samuel lay down to sleep, the Lord called to Samuel. The boy ran to Eli and said, “You called me! Here I am.” The priest said, “I didn’t call you. Go lie down again.” The same thing happened two more times, but the third time, Eli knew that God was calling to Samuel. He was still learning the voice of God.

Eli said, “Go and lie down, and if He calls you again, say, ‘Speak, Lord. Your servant is listening.’”

Memory Verse

Remember now thy
Creator in the days of thy
youth. Ecclesiastes 12:1a

Key Thought

Samuel was righteous and
worked for God from a
very young age, and God
wants you to do the same!

Lesson

Discussion

- Who taught Samuel about the Lord in the temple?
- Describe how God first called to Samuel and the first vision He gave to him.
- Did Samuel wait until he was grown to get serious about the Lord?
- Brainstorm how you can work for God and how you can develop righteousness at your age!

Samuel obeyed Eli. God spoke to his young heart that night and revealed His plan for Eli’s sons. Even though Eli was a godly man and served faithfully in the temple, his sons were evil and had no self-control. The Lord revealed to Samuel that judgement would fall upon Eli’s sons—they would never become priests or hold a position of authority because of their sins. Eli was grieved by this when Samuel shared his vision with him the next morning but said, “It is the Lord. Let Him do what seems good to Him.”

Time passed, and word spread across all Israel that Samuel was established in God.

He was righteous from a young age, and the Lord revealed many things to him through visions.

It’s hard to imagine being given such a big job at such a young age! We sometimes think God won’t use a young person or little child to get a job done, but as we saw through Samuel, God can call even very young boys and girls. If you do not feel like God has given you a specific calling, look around and find something kind and godly to do. Clean your chapel, do an extra chore without your parents asking, or help a younger sibling with their schoolwork. Use your imagination! There are jobs everywhere that you can do for the Lord!

We also learned that Samuel was righteous from a young age. To be righteous means that you follow God’s laws. We can struggle with obeying our parents or having a good attitude sometimes, but even as a child or young teenager, God will give you the ability to live up to His laws.

Young people can sometimes be led to believe that their youth is a time for playing around and having fun. They think, “I’ll get serious about God when I’m a little older. I just want to have fun right now!” This is a trick of the devil!

God’s desire is for you to be serious about Him from a young age, just like Samuel.

Yes, there are times to have fun and play—God wants you to enjoy your youth. More than anything, however, God wants your heart to be His and you are never too young to give your life to Him. ■

USE YOUR DECODING SKILLS

Use the key to decode the words and phrases about Samuel.

14 8 22 22 8 14

3 14 8 5 4 1 4 24 8 26 11 23 13 4 7 ?

19 15 7 26 1 24 23

24 23 15 20 23 9 7 4

19 15 1 23 24 5

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
8	16	21	4	23	17	9	14	1
J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
10	2	13	26	22	7	19	12	15
S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	
24	5	11	20	3	25	11	6	

Materials:

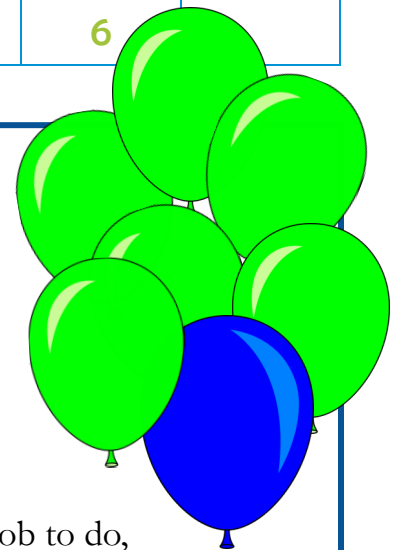
- Blindfold
- Six balloons of one color (green)
- One balloon of a different color (blue)

Blow up all seven balloons. Choose one child to be Samuel and one child to be the voice of God. Have all the children, excluding the child who is "Samuel," sit in a circle, about an arm's length apart. "Samuel" will stand blindfolded in the middle of the circle with all seven balloons around his feet. The child being the voice of God will direct him/her in full voice to pick up the blue balloon by giving directions such as, "turn right, take a step, bend down, etc." All of the other children will attempt to distract "Samuel" by whispering different directions.

THE VOICE OF GOD

It is so difficult to hear the voice of God if we focus on all the distractions around us.

But He has given you a job to do, just as He did Samuel. It takes a lot of concentration and dedication to faithfully listen to God's voice. Just remember that He does have a job in mind for you if you are willing to hear Him, and you are never too young to start working for Him!





Junior Sunday School ■ May 5, 2019

Samuel, Saul, and David Series

Samuel—A Prophet, Judge & Man of Honor

Careful Words, Honest Behavior, Value of Listening, and Prayer

Samuel grew from a young boy who served in the temple into a young man—and then an old man—who served God faithfully. He was one of the last judges of Israel and was also the first prophet in Israel. Remember, the *judges* of the Bible rescued the people from their enemies and helped lead them. A *prophet* was someone who gave the people messages from God.

Samuel lived during a time when the word of the God was not easily available. People did not have Bibles like we do today. They depended on hearing the valuable words of God through the words Samuel and other prophets spoke.

I Samuel 3:19 tells us that

Samuel grew, the Lord was with him, and none of his words fell to the ground! Every word Samuel spoke was important. He did not speak careless or useless words.

Memory Verse

And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. 1

Samuel 3:19

Key Thought

Speak words and behave in such a way that people see a clear picture of God.

Lesson Discussion

- What does “none of Samuel’s words fell to the ground” mean?
- Did Samuel’s words by themselves cause the people to listen to him, or was

there something more? If so, what added weight to his words?

- Are the words we speak important? Why or why not?
- Is it easy to say something you wish you hadn’t said? How can you do better next time?

Samuel learned the secret of listening when God spoke to him and then shared God’s words with the people—not his own opinions.

During his lifetime, Samuel rode to different cities settling problems. He listened to the people and then prayed, asking God how to help them. Sometimes, people just need a listening ear and our prayers, not a rattling tongue. He anointed Saul and then David as kings over Israel and gave them advice from God. He did not learn how to do this in one day!

He was faithful every day, from the time he was a child, to listen for God’s voice and to then obey.

When Samuel was old, he gathered the people together and said, “I am now old and gray-headed. Have I ever been dishonest with you or taken something that does not belong to me?” The people quickly answered, “No, you have not.” Because Samuel had been very careful to act and treat people fairly and honestly, they more easily believed his words and trusted him.

In this same speech, Samuel was not afraid to tell the people they had sinned. He said, “Today is the day of wheat harvest. I am going to pray and ask God to send thunder and rain so that you will believe my words and know God is not happy with your sins.” In answer to Samuel’s prayer, God sent the thunder and rain. When they people saw this, they greatly revered and respected both God and Samuel. Samuel’s close relationship with the Lord was the reason none of his words “fell to the ground” or were ignored and useless.

Although most people can now read God’s words in the Bible, the way we live and the words we speak are still important. Many people will never open their Bibles, step foot in a church, or go to Sunday school class.

We want people to have a clear picture of God when they see our lives and hear our words.

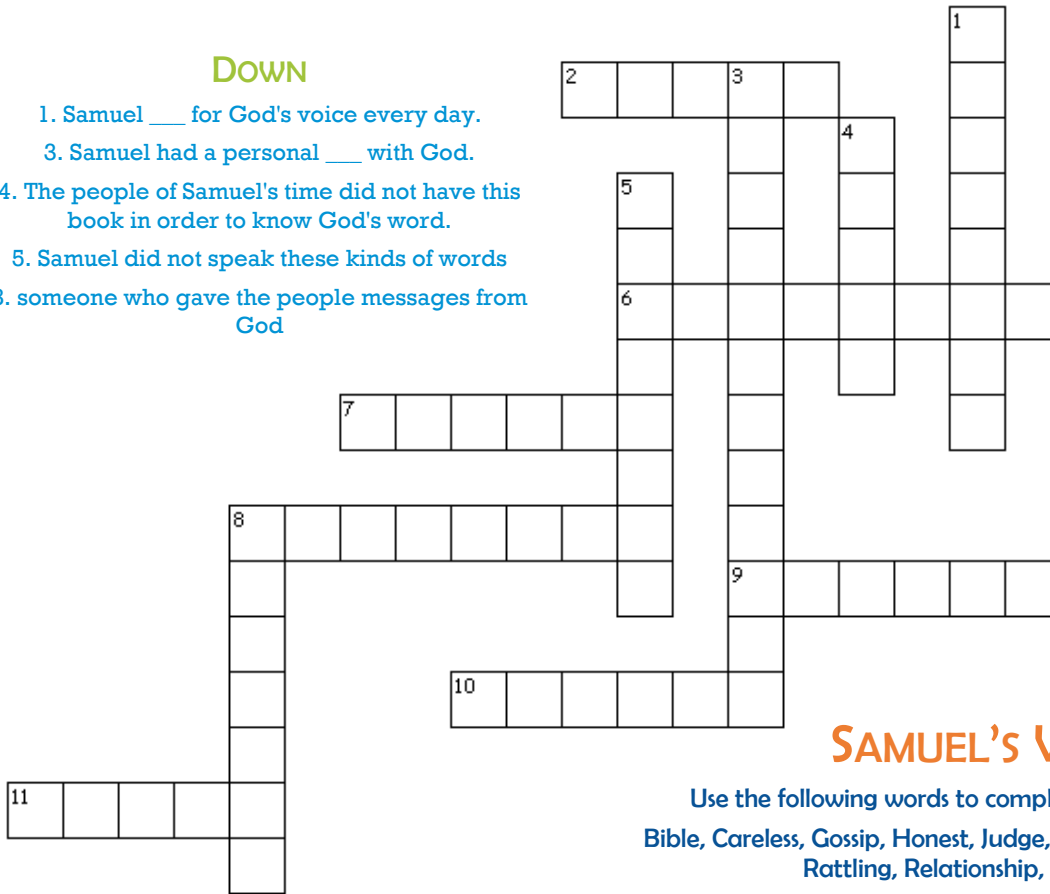
Like Samuel, let’s take the time to listen to other people and then pray for them. Gossipy words would be considered words that “fall to the ground.” God is not pleased with these kinds of words. Let’s remember the godly, consistent life of Samuel as a good example of how we should live our lives. ■

DOWN

1. Samuel ____ for God's voice every day.
3. Samuel had a personal ____ with God.
4. The people of Samuel's time did not have this book in order to know God's word.
5. Samuel did not speak these kinds of words
8. someone who gave the people messages from God

ACROSS

2. God sent this in answer to Samuel's prayer.
6. Sometimes people need a listening ear, not a ____ tongue.
7. Israel's last righteous prophet and judge
8. Samuel traveled to different cities and solved people's ____.
9. Our words need to always be truthful, or ____.
10. These kinds of words are an example of words that "fall to the ground."
11. someone who delivers the people from their enemies



SAMUEL'S WORDS

Use the following words to complete the crossword puzzle:

Bible, Careless, Gossip, Honest, Judge, Listened, Problems, Prophet, Rattling, Relationship, Samuel, Storm



CAREFUL WORDS

Needed:

- \$1 toothpaste tubes (enough for each student)
- Plastic spoons
- Plastic cups

Give students ten seconds to squeeze all the toothpaste they can out of the toothpaste tube into the cup. Then, give them a second 10-second challenge: Use the spoon to put as much toothpaste as they can back into the toothpaste tube. When they have finished ask and discuss the following questions:

- How hard was it to get the toothpaste out?
- How hard was it to get the toothpaste back in, and how much were they able to get back in?
- How are words and toothpaste alike?

It is said that people speak about 7,000 words a day and some people many more. How many do you think you have spoken today? That is a lot of words! Jesus said that we would have to answer to Him for every idle word spoken (Matthew 12:36). An idle word is a useless word. Does that mean that we always have to talk about God, or can we have fun conversations too? Of course, we can have fun conversations; but, we always need to keep in mind that our words should be true, kind, clean, and considerate. God is not pleased with filthy talking or jokes, and He says in Proverbs 6:17 that He hates a lying tongue. We should always think before we speak to make sure what comes out of our mouths are not words that we will later wish we could take back.

Captured! The Ark of the Lord

Reverence for a Holy God



A great shout of triumph sounded in the camp of the Israelite soldiers. The sacred Ark of the Covenant, the place where God dwelt, had arrived! The Israelites

had just been defeated in battle by their enemy, the Philistines, but thought they had come up with a plan that would assure them success in a second battle, and they were happy about it.

They reasoned that if they took the Ark into battle with them, then victory would surely be theirs.

Their plan was not as fail-proof as they thought, however, and trouble was about to strike. They failed to ask God for help, did not turn away from doing wrong, and allowed Eli's two wicked sons to disobey and touch and move the ark, something that was forbidden.

Memory Verse

But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.

1 Peter 1:15

Key Thought

God is pure and powerful. He is Holy. He is merciful. He lives in heaven, and we live on earth. He created us, we did not create Him. We must live respectfully, reverently, and

Fear fell on the Philistines when they learned that the Ark of

Lesson Discussion

- Why was it wrong for the children of Israel to bring the Ark of the Covenant into their battle camp?
- Was Dagon able to stand before the Ark of God? Can you think of some gods in our world today (*power, money, clothes, "self"*)? Will they be able to stand before God?
- Who won? The Israelites or the Philistines? Does disobedience ever win the day?
- Think of some ways and places you can live respectfully and obediently.

the Lord was to accompany the Israelites into battle. They said, "We are dead men. Who will deliver us from this God who parted the Red Sea and sent terrible plagues in Egypt? We cannot stand against Him." God had gained a reputation that spread far and wide. However, the Philistines determined to fight as hard as they could.

A very unexpected thing happened. The Israelites, who were sure they would win, lost a staggering 30,000 men in battle. The Philistines captured the ark and took it back home with them.

When Eli, the 98-year-old priest and judge, heard the Ark was captured, he also died. What a sad day in Israel.

The Philistines did not escape completely victorious, however. They quickly felt the consequences. The Ark was placed in the house of their pagan god, Dagon, whom they worshipped. When they entered Dagon's house the next morning, Dagon had fallen on his face before the Ark of the Lord. Was this a random accident? Dagon was placed back upright. Early the next morning, they again found Dagon on the ground. This time, Dagon's head and two arms were broken off and only Dagon's body remained. From that time on, Dagon's priests did not dare set foot in the temple of Dagon.

The Philistines moved the Ark of God to three different cities, but everywhere the ark went, their men died. The hand of God was heavy on them. No longer did they want the Ark of God. They remembered how the Egyptians had hardened their hearts against God's power and did not want their land destroyed in the same way.

Seven months later, all the lords of the Philistines gathered together. In order to appease and show reverence to this God of heaven, they built a new cart on which to put the ark and hooked it up to two young heifers who had never been in a yoke. The Ark of God was going home to Israel.

The sad story was not quite over. When the Israelites joyfully received The Ark of the Lord home, they disobeyed once more. Perhaps they could not resist, but they looked inside the Ark. In response to this irreverent and disobedient act, the Lord slew 50,070 men.

Their fearful and awestruck response sums up the whole story: "Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?"

Yes. God is a God of love. However, we cannot act or live irreverently, carelessly, disrespectfully, or disobediently and think He will not notice. We should always believe in His mercy, but remember that He is a Holy God. ■



THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

Use the following words to fill in the blanks and review facts about the sacred Ark of the Covenant!

AARON'S, GOLD, JESUS, MANNA, MERCY, PRESENCE,
SPIRITUAL, TEN COMMANDMENTS

The Ark was covered with _____ on every side.

The Ark served as the _____ seat in the tabernacle, and it is the place where God's _____ dwelled.

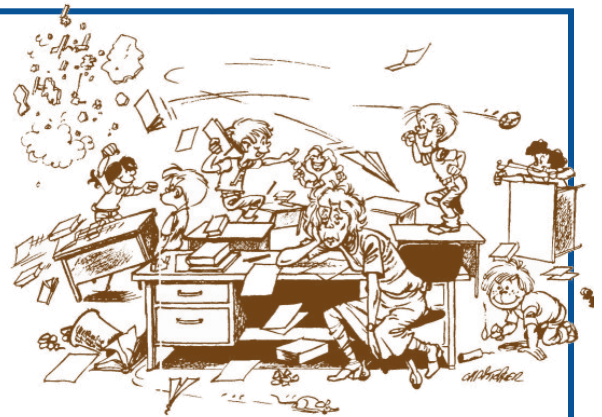
The Ark contained the Law of Moses, or the _____.

It also contained a golden pot of _____, the bread that fed the Israelites in the desert. It represents Jesus, our _____ food.

Lastly, it held _____ budding rod, which represents the power we have through _____.

CHAOS IN THE CLASSROOM!

Teachers: Have the children make a mess in the Sunday School room. Scatter papers, put your feet up on the chairs. Talk loudly. Pretend to answer your cell phone in the middle of the lesson. Whisper to another student. Use your imagination in ways to be disrespectful. Only give this an appropriate amount of time to make a point so that upheaval does not turn into out-of-control behavior.



Remind the students that God watches everything that happens, every behavior, every word, and He even knows and understands all the thoughts of our minds. Discuss how acting respectfully in the house of God (church) is important. Think and talk about behaviors that are and are not respectful during worship service (*talking, whispering, laughing, chewing gum, passing notes, sleeping—versus—paying attention, participating in singing and praying, staying quiet, and really trying to learn*). On a broader scale, talk about how God wants more than just “outwardly” respectful actions. He is a God of love and mercy, but He also has a very strong sense of justice and cannot let wrong go unpunished. Talk about how important it is repent of anything we have done wrong and ask God into our hearts and to then live carefully and respectfully, remembering that God lives in Heaven, and we live on earth.

Note that this lesson was a little more sobering than some, but talk about the importance of realizing that wrong behaviors come with bad consequences. Remind the students of a verse in Galatians 6:7 which says, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” Also remind the students that God is not sitting in heaven ready to bang us over the head for mistakes or wrongdoing. 2 Peter 3:9 says He is longsuffering to us, is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.



Junior Sunday School ■ May 19, 2019

Samuel, Saul, and David Series

Israel Demands a King

Choosing God's Way and
Heeding Godly Advice

Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 8–10

Samuel was the judge over Israel until he was an old man. His sons became judges after him, but they did not honor God or His laws. The elders of Israel gathered together and met with Samuel, saying, “You are getting old, and your sons are not righteous. Give us a king, so we can be like all the other nations!”

God desired the Israelites to rely on Him completely—for food, order, and protection from their enemies.

Still, God instructed Samuel to give the people what they wanted. The Israelites had forsaken God many times since entering the Promised Land years earlier despite the many times He had delivered them! God told Samuel to remind the people of all a king would cost them.

Samuel obeyed God, and when he stood before the people, he said, “A

Memory Verse

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. James 1:5

Key Thought

Be wise and listen to the council of the godly people around you—they will help you choose God's way over your own!

Lesson Discussion

- What was God's reason behind giving the Israelites a king when He wanted them to rely fully on Him?
- What did Samuel warn the people a king would take from them?
- Who did Samuel anoint to be the first king, and what was the young man like?
- Who do you have in your life that will help you choose God's way? Is it wise to seek advice from a godly adult you trust?

king will take taxes from you, he will take your sons and daughters to be his soldiers and servants, and he will take your fields and vineyards. If you choose to have a king, God will not listen when you cry out because of all the king takes from you!” The people still wanted a king, despite Samuel's warning.

There was a choice young man from the tribe of Benjamin named Saul. He was a humble, hardworking, and honest man, and he stood a full head and shoulders above all his peers!

This was the young man whom God had chosen to be Israel's first king. Samuel took a vial of oil and poured it over Saul's head. He gave Saul a holy kiss and said, “The Spirit of the Lord will give you a new heart if you obey His instructions. Then I will meet you at Gilgal and we will offer sacrifices to the Lord.”

Saul was a godly man in his youth and obeyed Samuel's instructions. God's spirit came upon Saul and filled his heart. Soon after, Samuel gathered all the people together and presented Saul as their new king. He said, “See this man whom the Lord has chosen? Is there any other man like him among the people?” The Israelites shouted back, “God save the king!”

The story of King Saul goes on in the next few chapters of the Bible, but as you will soon find out, it does not end happily. Saul demanded much of the Israelites, and there was constant war with the surrounding nations. God warned them not to rely on a man to fulfill their needs, but to instead look to Him for everything. Even though Samuel warned them, they decided to go their own way and choose a path that was outside of God's will. They paid a high price for choosing not to listen to Samuel's warnings.

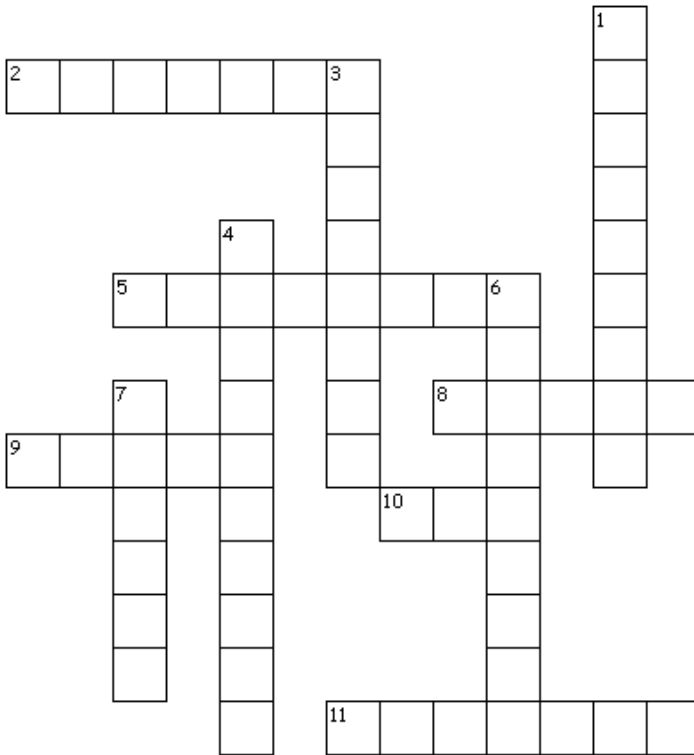
It is never wise to choose a path that is clearly outside of God's will.

There are people around you—your parents, Sunday school teachers, and pastors—who understand God's ways. They will give you wise instruction, like Samuel did for the Israelites, if you are unsure of what to do. Be willing to listen to them and obey the advice they give you! God has put them in a place of authority, like Samuel, for a reason. They want to help you avoid the heavy consequences of choosing your own way over God's. ■

Samuel and Saul!

Use the following words to complete the puzzle.

Advice, Consequences, Godly, Judge, Nations, Oil, Protection, Shoulders, Soldiers, Unhappily, Warnings



Across

2. Israel wanted a king so they could be like other ____.
5. The people did not listen to the ____ of Samuel.
8. Saul was described in the Bible as this kind of man
9. Samuel was the last godly ____ in Israel.
10. Samuel anointed Saul with this
11. There are heavy ____ for choosing your own way over God's.

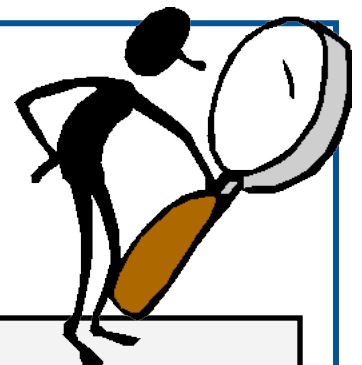
Down

1. King Saul's story ends this way.
3. The king would take the people's sons to be this
4. God wanted the people to rely on Him for food, order, and ____ from their enemies.
6. Saul stood a full head and ____ above his peers.
7. It is always a good idea to seek this from a godly adult you trust.

SEE GOD'S WISDOM!

Our memory verse today said that if you do not know what to do, you just need to ask God! He won't get you in trouble for being unsure but will give you wisdom and direction to make the right choice. Another translation of that verse says, "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you."

Watch to see what happens when you ask God for His wisdom!



For Teachers

Needed: A vase (not a square vase, but one with curved glass), a table, two signs (one reading, "God's Way" and the other reading, "My Way"), an arrow printed on a piece of paper no bigger than a 3x5 card, and a pitcher of water

Directions:

Set the table with the empty vase in the middle, one sign on the right of the vase and one on the left. Hold the printed arrow behind the vase, pointing towards the "My Way" sign from the perspective of the onlooking class. Ensure the entire class can see through the vase to the arrow. (When you pour water into the vase, the curved glass will turn the image of the arrow upside down and point it toward the sign reading, "God's Way.")

When you hold the arrow behind the vase, explain to the class that without God, we will always choose our own way, and we will pay a high price for that choice.

When you pour water into the vase, explain that the water is like God's wisdom. (The curved glass and water will turn the image of the arrow upside down and point it toward "God's Way." Demonstrate that you didn't rotate the image of the arrow, but that God's wisdom did.) When we are filled with that wisdom, we can see clearly that His way is best and are saved from heartache and pain.

THE COMPASS

Junior Sunday School ■ May 26, 2019

Samuel, Saul, and David Series

Jonathan Defeats the Philistines Courage



Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 13—15

Fear's face isn't pretty, and the Israelite soldiers were afraid. They were afraid because their enemy, the mighty Philistines, wanted to fight them. They were afraid because there were no swords or spears to be found anywhere—the Philistines had previously prevented them from making weapons of war. They were afraid because their new king and leader, Saul, did not know what to do and had taken shelter far away from the Philistine camp under a pomegranate tree. The soldiers were so afraid that all but 600 of them hid themselves in caves, thickets, behind rocks, and in pits.

The Philistines stood fearless and confident, seemingly safe from the scared Israelites. They had thousands of chariots, 600,000 horsemen, and soldiers that numbered the sand of the seashore. They would not be beaten in battle! Or would they?

Jonathan was the son of King Saul, but unlike his fearful father and the other Israelite soldiers, he was not afraid.

Memory Verse

In God have I put my trust: I
will not be afraid.

Psalms 56:11

Key Thought

God will give us the courage
to be brave even when we
are afraid.

He had bravely beat
the Philistines once

Lesson Discussion

- Why was Saul afraid to fight the Philistines? Why was Jonathan unafraid? Was Jonathan's

confidence in his own abilities or in God's

- What did most of the Israelites do because they were afraid?
- How did God help Jonathan beat the Philistines in battle?
- What kinds of things bring you fear? Is anything or anyone stronger than God? What can you do to become less fearful?

before in a battle at Geba and believed God could deliver them again. He told his young armour-bearer, "Come. Let us cross over the field to the Philistines garrison." He did not tell his father what he was doing but snuck out of the Israelite camp.

Jonathan then spoke these marvelous words to his armour-bearer, "It may be that the Lord will work for us. Nothing can hinder the Lord from saving, whether by many or by few."

As Jonathan and the armour-bearer boldly made their way to the Philistine camp with cliffs towering on either side of them, the Philistines mocked, "Look! The Hebrew men have crawled out of the holes in which they were hiding. Come, let us show you something."

Jonathan's heart sparked with the fire of courage. He was fully confident God would deliver them.

Leading the way, he motioned the young man to follow.

A baffling thing then occurred. Every Philistine man Jonathan knocked to the ground, his armour-bearer came behind him and slew. In a short time, twenty men strong men were down. The confident Philistines were now the ones unaccountably filled with terror, and their knees were shaking. In the middle of this extraordinary fear, God sent an earthquake and panicked Philistines into fighting each other.

When Saul learned what was happening, he gathered his once-fearful soldiers. He took matters into his own hands and made his men promise not to eat or drink but to follow him and fight, thinking that it would cause his soldiers to move more quickly. As the day wore on, Saul's soldiers became faint with hunger, but they dared not eat. Jonathan, battle-weary himself, did not know what his father had commanded. When he found honey, he dipped his rod in the honeycomb and ate. Saul, without thought to his own sins, angrily demanded Jonathan be killed. How proud and arrogant Saul was becoming! The Israelite soldiers protested, "Shall Jonathan die, who gave us this great victory? No! Not one hair of his head will fall to the ground!" So the people rescued Jonathan, and he did not die.

The enemy was defeated, and we can clearly see from this story that Saul's unthinking behavior contrasted greatly with that of his son's godly courage.

God used the courage of a believing man to bring victory in the face of all odds.

We, too, can find the courage to face frightening situations if we will trustingly hold the hand of the One who holds the world in His. ■



FEARLESS BADGERS!

Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Deuteronomy 31:6

Did you know the world's most fearless creature is the Honey Badger according to the Guinness Book of World Records? Honey Badgers have many reasons to be fearless. They have very thick (about 1/4 inch), rubbery skin, which is so tough it can take a full blow from a sharp machete without it cutting the skin all the way through. This skin helps protect the Honey Badger from the teeth of predators. Along with being thick and very tough, the Honey Badger's skin is also fairly loose, which allows it quite a bit of freedom of movement. This aids it when it's being attacked by larger predators and finds itself in the predator's clutches.

The Honey Badger's jaws are powerful enough to eat a turtle, including the shell, without difficulty. King Cobras can bite them multiple times with little effect. Along with its innate toughness, the Honey Badger is also incredibly intelligent. It has even been observed using tools to catch prey. They also are smart enough to follow Honeyguide birds to find beehives where they'll eat the larvae and honey.

Like the Honey Badger, God has given us many weapons to defend ourselves against our enemy. Can you name a few?

Fearsome Fires!

Needed: Candle, matches, and a candle-snuffer or cup

Light the candle and talk about how scary fires can be. Have the children put their hands close enough to the flame to feel the heat. Ask them if they have ever been burned by fire or heat and have them describe the pain. Explain that if fire gets too much fuel (wood/gas/wind) it will burn out of control. Ask them if it would be wise to touch the fire to the furniture in the room. Of course the answer is no! Take the candle snuffer or cup and put out the fire.

Many things in life can cause fear: the dark, animals, storms, standing up for what is right when everyone else is doing something different, speaking honestly, dressing modestly, not participating in ungodly talk. Some people don't like crowds and are shy, so talking in front of a group of people is scary. The future and things we don't understand can cause us worry. Can you think of other things that bring fear?

Some fear is good because it makes us careful. But too much fear—out-of-control fear—will burn, scar, and hurt us. After all, who wants to constantly live with shaking knees and a fearful heart? The good news is, God is stronger than our fear. Like Jonathan said, nothing can stop God from delivering us from our enemies! God gave us this promise in Deuteronomy 31:6.

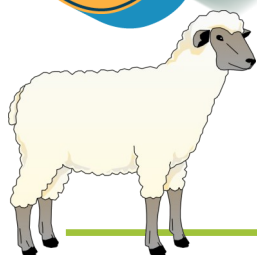


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Volume 69, Quarter 2, Week 8. Editor: Lindsey Gellenbeck. 2019.

THE COMPASS

Junior Sunday School ■ June 2, 2019

Samuel, the Prophet and Judge Series



Samuel Sends Saul to Destroy the Amalekites

Partial Obedience and Half-Truths

Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 15

Four hundred years before Saul was king of Israel, the Amalekites attacked the children of Israel as they journeyed in the wilderness. In a cowardly and cruel attack, they came up behind the Israelites, killing the weak, sick, and elderly. God was highly displeased. Because the Amalekites had set themselves against God and His people, God made a declaration of war against them that would last for many generations. It is never a good idea to go against God! God has a long memory and never forgets unrepentant wrongdoing.

Now that Saul was king, Samuel (18) knew it was time to make war on these still ungodly, idol-worshipping people. He told Saul, "Listen to the voice of the Lord of Hosts. Go and completely destroy the Amalekites

including all the animals."

Memory Verse

Lying (14) lips are abomination (16) to the Lord; but they that deal truly are his delight.

Proverb 12:22

Key Thought

Complete obedience and truthfulness are God's delight.

Saul did what many people do today. He gave

Lesson Discussion

- Did the Amalekites escape God's declaration of war against them for their cruel sin many years earlier? How long does God remember our sins if we have not prayed for forgiveness (15)? (*If we seek repentance (4), God throws them in the sea of forgetfulness (2) and removes them as far as the east is from the west!*)
- Did Saul fully obey God's commandment? Was it okay for him to tell a "half-truth" or "white lie" (8) to cover up his sin? Are "harmless" (3) lies okay?
- Talk about situations where it might seem easier to lie than tell the truth (7). Why is this?
- If we mess up—if we disobey or tell a lie—what should we do?

into temptation (12) and obeyed only the parts of the commandment that made sense to them.

Instead of fully obeying God, they spared the life of Agag, king of the Amalekites, the best of the animals, and all that was good. They destroyed the rest.

The problem was this: Saul would not be able to hide this sin. Why? Because the God of truth (13) knew Saul's heart. As He had so many times before, God talked to His faithful prophet, Samuel, through the night, telling him of Saul's disobedience.

When Samuel met Saul the next morning, Saul brightly said, "Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord." Uh-oh.

Saul's partial obedience had caused him to speak a half-truth (5) to the man of God while acting like everything was fine.

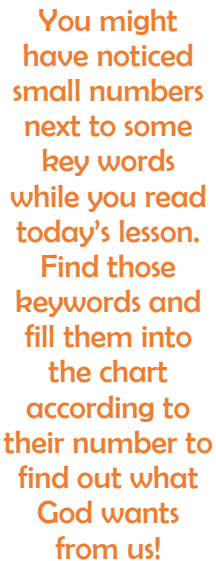
Samuel responded, "Then why do I hear the sheep bleating and the oxen lowing?" When Saul realized he had been "caught," he immediately shifted the blame (11). He said, "The people, they are the ones who have saved the best of the animals. They want to sacrifice them to the Lord." Saul tried to make it sound like the people had disobeyed for a good reason. Samuel told him, "Obedience is better than sacrifice." It is the same way today. God does not want us to say we are Christians with our mouths while, at the same time, only "kind of doing right" and telling half-lies and half-truths. This is a trick of the our enemy, the father of lies (6)!

When Saul heard Samuel's words he said, "I have sinned. I feared the people and obeyed them instead of God." The sad part of this story is that

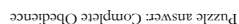
Saul had been developing a pattern of pride and sin. And God knew it. Saul started out as a good king who "was little in his own eyes," but the pride that came with his power quickly replaced the humility and dependence (17) on God he had in the beginning.

Samuel told Saul, "Because you have sinned, God has rejected you as king. He has taken the kingdom from you and will give it to your neighbor, a man better than you. Samuel no longer came to see Saul, yet he mourned greatly for him.

Consequences (1) follow pride, disobedience, and lies. Although Saul spoke words of apology and sorrow, he was not truly sorry in his heart. God places a high value on complete obedience and honesty (9), and so should we. ■



COVERING YOUR LIES



THE COMPASS

Junior Sunday School ■ June 9, 2019

Samuel, Saul, and David Series

David is Anointed

We Look at Faces, God Looks at



Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 16

As King Saul continued to choose his own way, Samuel grieved that the righteous young man he had anointed was now so far from God. Finally, the Lord asked Samuel, “How long will you mourn over Saul? Take your horn of oil and go to the house of Jesse in Bethlehem. I have chosen a new king from among his sons.”

Samuel obeyed. Jesse presented his eldest son, and Samuel thought, “Surely this is the man!”

God replied, “Do not look at how tall he is or how handsome. Man looks at the outward appearance, but I look at the heart.”

This is not the king I have chosen!” One by one, Jesse presented the rest of his sons, but none of them were to be the new king. Samuel asked Jesse, “Are these all of your sons?” Jesse answered, “I have one more son--the youngest. He is out caring for the sheep.”

Memory Verse

The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. 1 Samuel 16:7b

Key Thought

God is more concerned with what is in a person's heart than how they look on the outside. Work to make your heart beautiful to God.

When Jesse's youngest son returned, God

Lesson Discussion

- Why did God tell Samuel to choose a new king?
- Where did Samuel go, and who did he anoint to be the next leader of

Israel?

- What lesson did Samuel learn in this story? At what was he initially looking to judge the new king? What is more important to God, a person's looks and clothes or the state of their heart?

spoke again to the old judge and said, “Arise and anoint him, for this is he!” His name was David, and he was a handsome young man. Samuel took his horn of oil and poured it over David's head.

From that day forward, the spirit of the Lord was with David.

Meanwhile, the spirit of the Lord had departed from King Saul. He had chosen his own way over God's too many times, and the Lord was no longer pleased with him. Saul's heart troubled him, and an evil spirit came and tormented him. He asked his servants to find him a man who was talented at playing the harp. His servants knew of just the right person. Can you guess who they sent for? David! Soon, the young man Samuel had anointed stood before the king. Saul did not yet know that God had chosen David to be Israel's new ruler. He was very pleased with David and loved him immediately. Anytime the evil spirit came to torture Saul, David would play sweet songs about God's love on his harp and the king was soothed.

Let's have a moment of truth here: when we meet someone new, we are like Samuel in this story. Our natural reaction is to judge them by how they look on the outside. We make assumptions about the person based on if they are good looking or ugly, clean or dirty, richly or poorly dressed, or confident or shy. Is God pleased with this habit? The answer is easy--of course not. But it is sometimes harder to get rid of than we would like.

God reminded Samuel of what is important to Him. God does not care if a person's face is considered beautiful or ugly. In fact, He made each person just the way they are! All people are beautiful in God's eyes, and we need to learn to view them the same way. But even more, we need to learn to see past their looks, clothes, and outward attitude.

Are they kind? Gentle? Friendly? Tender toward God? These are the traits God sees as beautiful, and they are inward traits.

If you meet someone new, remember where God wants you to look--at his/her heart. If you see that they are unhappy or hurt, use the opportunity to show God's love.

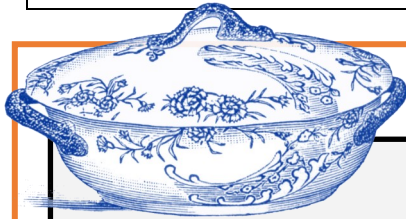
Remember, too, that God doesn't care if you are wearing the trendiest clothes or are considered the best-looking among your friends. He is watching to see if you are kind, godly, and compassionate. God is looking at your heart not your face or clothes. Work to make your heart beautiful in God's eyes. ■

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

The fruits of the spirit are listed in Galatians 5:22-23. They are the inward traits that God wants us to cultivate, or grow. Use the space below to list practical ways you can grow the fruits of the spirit in your own life!



Love	
Joy	
Peace	
Longsuffering (Patience)	
Goodness	
Faith	
Meekness (Humility)	
Temperance (Self-control)	



BEAUTIFUL ON THE INSIDE?

For Teachers

Needed: A beautiful glass bowl or jar (or some other ornamented/beautiful container)

A beat up tin container (or some other ugly, well-used container)

Cookies, candy, or another baked good/sweet

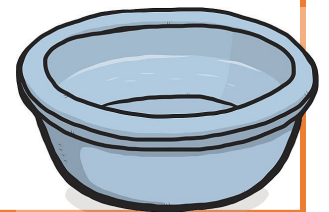
Brussel sprouts or another unwanted vegetable (If you want to take this a step further, you could even use old or rotten leftovers.)

Read the following paragraph and improvise as you are inspired or as needed.

God cares more about the traits of our hearts than how we look on the outside. Like we learned in today's lesson, He wants us to work to make the *inside* beautiful and not worry so much about the outside. Our worth in God's eyes does not increase if we are wearing the latest fashions, have our hair done beautifully, or have flawless features. It is increased when we are kind to those around us, a friend to the friendless, obedient to our parents, hardworking, and love God. Now, who wants an after-class snack? Everyone help themselves! (Remove the lid to the beautiful container and wait for the reaction to subside.) Is the beautiful container not enough to make this snack sweet and delicious? What about this container? (Hold up the ugly tin.) Who would like a snack from this tin?

(Remove the lid and pass out the snack.)

The lesson is pretty clear. The beautiful bowl did not make what was inside appetizing, just as the old ugly tin did not make the sweet treat any less delicious. Remember, it's more important to be filled with sweetness than decorated on the outside!



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Volume 69, Quarter 2, Week 10. Editor: Lindsey Gellenbeck. 2019.



Junior Sunday School ■ June 16, 2019



Samuel, Saul, and David Series
David and Goliath
A Shepherd Boy Fights the
Philistine Champion Warrior

Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 17

Israel once again found themselves where they had been so many times before, facing their enemy, the Philistines, in battle.

Every morning and evening for 40 days, the champion warrior of the Philistines, a man named Goliath, came out and shouted a taunting challenge across the valley. He said, "Choose a man to fight me! If he kills me, then we will all be your servants. If I kill him, then you will be our servants." When Saul and his men heard these words, they were greatly afraid.

You see, Goliath was a giant, standing over nine feet tall. Surely no man would win a fight against him!

In the meantime, young David was at home tending his father's sheep. One day his father said, "Take some cheese and bread to your older brothers who are fighting. Bring me a report of what they say." So David left early the next morning for the battlefield.

Memory Verse

And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands.

1 Samuel 17:47

Key Thought

God is bigger and more powerful than any giant we face.

Lesson Discussion

- Why were King Saul and his army afraid?
- What did David's father ask him to do?
- Why was David not afraid of Goliath?
- How did David fight Goliath?
- Name some giants in your life and how you can kill them.

As before, Goliath came out and issued his fighting challenge. Once again, the Israelite men fled. When David asked what was happening, the men told David that whoever killed Goliath would be given great riches and be given Saul's daughter in marriage. David did not respond to this enticing offer, but rather said,

"Who will take away the reproach of Israel? Who is this Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?" In other words, this is embarrassing because we have God on our side, and everyone is too afraid to fight!

David's brothers were angry at David's appearance and told him to "go home and take care of his sheep." Were they jealous of their little brother?

Undeterred by the anger of his brothers, David told King Saul, "Don't be afraid. I will fight this Philistine." Saul argued, "You can't fight him! You are just a young man and Goliath has been fighting since he was your age." But David confidently replied, "I have killed a lion and a bear while taking care of my father's sheep. I will kill this ungodly Philistine the same way."

Refusing Saul's armour, David chose five small stones out of the brook and put them in his shepherd's bag. When Goliath saw young David come near to fight, he scornfully said, "Are you a dog come to fight me with sticks?" David declared, "I will give your flesh to the birds of the air. You come to me with a sword and spear, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts. This battle is God's, and today He will give you into our hands."

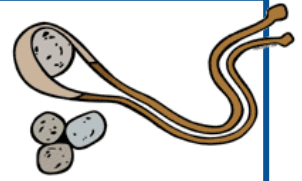
David then ran toward Goliath, pulling a stone out of his bag and putting it in his sling. As he slung the rock, it sank into Goliath's forehead.

Goliath fell forward with his face to the ground.

David took Goliath's own sword and cut off his head. When the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they ran, the armies of Israel in hot pursuit.

Goliath was no problem for God! All He needed was someone who believed in Him and trusted His power was greater than the taunting voice and bulging muscles of this large man. Do you believe God is bigger than your giants and can give you victory over them? ■

DAVID, AN UNDERDOG?

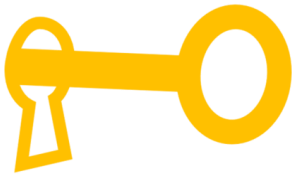


Almost everyone has heard the story of David and Goliath. I want you to think about this story in a different light and with some different thoughts than you may have heard before. We assume David was the underdog in this fight. An underdog is someone thought to have little chance of winning a fight or contest. David was a young man who was “just a shepherd,” not a warrior, and he fought with “only a sling and some rocks.” Surely he was fighting Goliath at a great disadvantage. Or was he? Think about this:

The sling is a very ancient, warlike instrument, not just a flimsy, dollar store toy! In the hands of those who were skilled in the use of it, it produced astonishing effects. History tells us of a people who lived in the Mediterranean islands called Balears (meaning to cast or throw). It is said that they did not permit their children to break their fast (eat breakfast) until they had struck down the bread they were to eat from the top of a pole or some distant height! They learned how to use a slingshot, or they didn’t eat! Strange and almost incredible things are told us of how when a leaden ball was slung from a slingshot, it melted in the air it went so fast, and could create fire. In general, a slinger could hit a bird in flight at 200 yards away---the same as the length of two football fields!

Yes, Goliath was taller and his sword and spear and armour were effective fighting weapons, but David was not fighting with an inferior weapon. He was simply fighting in a different way. The truth is, Goliath almost didn’t stand a chance.

The question is this: What made the difference? It was David’s BELIEF that God was bigger than Goliath and that GOD would grant deliverance.



GAINTS WE FACE

What are some of the giants we face and how do we fight them differently than those in the world? Prayer and BELIEF are the keys that will make us victorious over our giants! Match up the giant with how a worldly person and a Christian might react.

Giants	The World	Christian
Giant of Inferiority	Taunt with loud and sometimes cruel words. Dressing “to kill” to make themselves feel better, many times in an immodest way to get attention.	Pray and bite their tongue until their heart can catch up with what their minds tell them is right.
Giant of Fear	Become unhappy and bitter because they didn’t get what they wanted.	Realize their worth is found in Jesus. Stay silent in the face of ridicule. Dress modestly, knowing they are of “more worth than many sparrows.”
Giant of Temptation (to lie, cheat, or steal)	Want to do good on a test and don’t know the answer, leading to fear. They cheat.	Pray, asking God for grace to resist the devil and walk away.
Giant of Irritation	Scream, yell and get mad.	Pray, asking God to bring a content spirit and realize that God can see the future and knows what is best.
Giant of Disappointment	Cave under the pressure and tell a “white lie,” cheat on a paper, or take something they want.	Pray, asking God for help to keep eyes on own paper and then have the courage to leave it blank if they don’t know the answer.

The Beautiful Way (primary) and *The Compass* (junior) Sunday school literature can be downloaded at sundayschoolliterature.com or churchofgodeveninglight.com/beautiful-way. Please email questions or input to gellenbeck.lindsey@gmail.com. Contributor: Sister Julie Elwell.
Volume 69, Quarter 2, Week 11. Editor: Lindsey Gellenbeck. 2019.

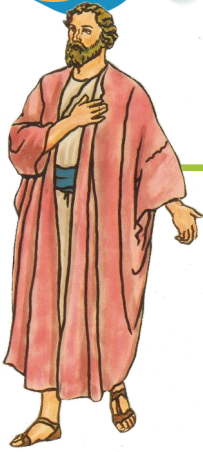
THE COMPASS

Junior Sunday School ■ June 23, 2019

Samuel, Saul, and David Series

David and Jonathan

Loyalty and Friendship



Scripture Reading:

1 Samuel 18:1-16, 19:9-11, 20:1-42

David, now a successful soldier, visited King Saul's palace frequently. Saul's son, Jonathan, soon became best friends with David. In fact, they were more than best friends. They were like brothers.

The Bible says that, “the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David.” They loved each other strongly and loyally and made a covenant to be faithful to the other.

Jonathan gifted David with his robe, sword, and bow as a sign of his loyalty. In Bible times, giving a person your robe was an outward sign of undying friendship.

King Saul sent David on many errands for the army, and wherever David went, he behaved himself wisely. The Lord was with him and showed him what to do. All of the soldiers and servants soon saw what a good man David was and respected him for it. In fact, when King Saul

Memory Verse

Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

1 Samuel 18:3

Key Thought

David and Jonathan remained true friends even through a very difficult time. God is pleased with loyalty and love between friends.

Lesson Discussion

- Why did Saul grow to dislike David?
- Was David a wise young man? Who gave him wisdom to behave so well?
- Have you ever had a friend that stuck with you through a hard time? How did it make you feel?
- Who is the best friend we can have? Does He ever leave us alone?

and the army returned from battle, having killed many of the Philistines, the women of Israel came into the streets dancing and singing. They said,

“Saul has killed his thousands, but David has killed his ten thousands.”

This caused the proud king to become very angry. He did not like that the people saw David as a mightier man than he.

Time only worsened Saul's attitude. More than once, he attempted to kill David with a javelin, or a long spear, while David played the harp for him. Saul became afraid of David, not just because David was a successful soldier, but because the wisdom of God that rested on the young man struck fear in the king's heart. Perhaps he knew his own heart was not as clear as it should be, and he felt condemned by David. Still, through all of these things, Jonathan and David remained true and loyal friends.

David became more and more afraid for his life, and eventually fled to Ramah. The next day, there were feasts at the palace, and he knew Saul would notice he was gone; therefore, he asked Jonathan to say he had gone to Bethlehem. If the king was fine with David's absence, then they would know that he did not intend to kill him. If the king was angry, they would know he had evil intentions toward David. Jonathan made a plan to tell David if his father was angry or not, saying he would shoot three arrows toward the rock behind which David hid. If the arrows reached past David's hiding place, he knew he would have to run away from Saul.

At the feast, King Saul was very angry at Jonathan for supposedly letting David go to Bethlehem. Saul even struck his son with a javelin in his anger. Jonathan knew his father intended to kill his best friend. As soon as the feast was over, he ran to where David hid and shot three arrows beyond the rock.

David and Jonathan wept as they told each other goodbye and promised that their families would always get along in the name of the Lord. Their love and loyalty was not diminished by such a hard trial.

It is hard to imagine going through such a hard time, but God is pleased when we choose to remain loyal to our friends, just as David and Jonathan did. ■

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE LOYAL?

Circle or underline the character traits that a loyal friendship would possess. Think of Jonathan!

Doesn't care what
is right/wrong

Doesn't keep
promises

Easy to talk to

Gossips

Helpful

Poor listener

Selfish

Stands up to peer
pressure

Trustworthy

Understanding

We can't *always* be there for our friends because life can get in the way! But who can we always trust to be our most loyal friend?

Look up Proverbs 18:24 and copy it in the space below to find out.

LOYALTY IN ACTION

Have the students pick parts and act out the following scenarios. Let them play-act loyal behavior to finish each story.

Scenario One:

Charlotte is playing at recess and overhears a group of girls chatting about her friend, Kara.

Girl 1: I don't think Kara even has money to shop at the mall! I'm pretty sure her mom buys all of her clothes at the thrift store.

Girl 2: Ew. Can you imagine wearing something another person has already used? It totally grosses me out.

Girl 1: Me too. I'm glad my dad is rich, so I can afford brand new clothes.

Girl 3: And you're more in style than she is! [Laughs meanly]

Charlotte:



Scenario Two:

Bryan and Tyler are playing basketball at his house when Tyler's dad comes outside.

Bryan: Good shot, Tyler! You're getting so good at this game!

Tyler: Thanks!

Tyler's Dad: [Opens the front door and shouts rudely] Tyler! I told you yesterday that you had to pick up the backyard if you were going to have friends over! What are you doing playing?! Get back there and get your work done, or you're grounded for a week. [Slams door]

Tyler: [Looks at Bryan with an embarrassed expression] Sorry, Bryan. I forgot I was supposed to do that. I'm sorry you had to hear my dad yell.

Bryan:



THE COMPASS

Junior Sunday School ■ June 30, 2019



Samuel, Saul, and David Series Saul Seeks David's Life Respecting Authority and Loving Your Enemies

Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 23-31; 2 Samuel 1

Saul, the king who had once loved and admired David, now wanted David dead. He was afraid of him because David behaved himself wisely in all things and the people loved him.

David knew Saul wanted to kill him, so he fled from Saul's presence. David was joined by his family, as well as men who were in distress, in debt, or discontented. He had the beginnings of a small army!

When Saul and his 3,000 chosen men went to hunt David, he unknowingly picked the very cave where David was hiding to lie down and rest! David's men happily wanted to kill Saul, but David told them not to. However, while Saul slept, David quietly cut off part of his robe. As soon as he did this, he felt bad.

It didn't matter that Saul was trying kill him—he was God's anointed king.

Memory Verse

But I say unto you which hear, love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

Luke 6:27

Key Thought

Respect for authority and love for our enemies are defining characteristics of a child of God.

Lesson Discussion

- Why did David have to flee from Saul?
- Did David kill Saul when he had the chance? Why or why not?
- Why is it hard to show respect to an authority figure if we don't think they deserve it?
- How does God want us to treat our enemies? How does he want us to think about those in authority?

When Saul awoke, David followed him out of the cave crying out, "My lord, the king." How surprised Saul must have been to hear David's voice. As David bowed himself to the ground, Saul's heart softened, and he wept, saying, "Is this my son, David?" He told David,

"You are a better man than I am. You could have killed me, but you did not."

After an unexpectedly good conversation, Saul returned home.

Saul soon forgot his softened heart toward David. All his hatred, fear, and envy returned full-force, and he pursued after David once more. When David learned that Saul once again sought his life, he sent out spies and learned the location of Saul's camp. When nighttime came David took a trusted friend and boldly snuck into Saul's camp. His friend wanted to kill Saul, but David again refused to kill God's anointed king. Instead, they took Saul's sword and his bottle of water, and crept back out of the camp—this feat was aided by the fact God had caused a deep sleep to fall on Saul and his men.

David then stood on a hill outside the camp, with a great distance between them, and loudly accused Saul's bodyguard of not protecting his king. When Saul heard David's voice, his heart again softened. He said, "Is this David, my son?" Saul realized how much of a fool he had been and how much he really did love David. He again promised not to hurt David and returned home.

Although God had thus far protected David from Saul's sword, David knew he would never really be safe because Saul's hatred always resurfaced. So David and his 600 men took refuge in the land of the Philistines. When Saul heard where David had gone, he did not seek to kill him this time.

Finally, the day came when the Philistines killed Saul, Jonathan, and two more of Saul's sons in battle. David tore his clothes and wept when he learned this news. In poetic words David proclaimed, "Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided...daughters of Israel, weep over Saul."

David's demonstration of God-given love and respect for his friend-turned-enemy, even in death, is a picture we should store in our minds as to how God would have us treat our enemies.

How Much Respect?

Please answer the following questions according to where you are right now.

- How respectful do you think you are, on a scale from one to ten? (One equals not at all respectful. 10 equals very respectful.)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- Which group is the most difficult for you to respect?

Government

Parents

Church Leaders

- Is there another authority figure who you should respect? Who?

-
- What would you say and how would you act if you were a completely respectful person?
-

-
- What do you need to do to be more respectful?
-

BEAN BAG TOSS!

For Teachers

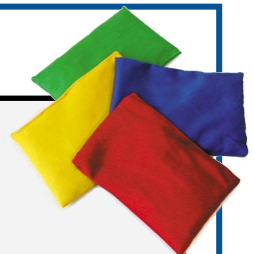
Needed: Three bean bags (or snack sized Ziploc bags filled with dry beans), three bowls or containers, three labels: (1) Friends/Family; (2) Acquaintances; (3) Enemies. Attach one label to each container.

Directions: Define a line from which the students will throw bean bags into the containers. Place the FRIENDS/FAMILY container closest to the line so it is easy for them to throw the beanbag into the container without missing.

Place the ACQUAINTANCES container a little further away, but still close enough so that it won't be too hard to make the shot successfully.

Place the ENEMIES container far enough away that the students can still throw the beanbag into the container, but not easily. It might even take a few tries.

Let students throw the beanbags a few times, giving them time to "make their shots."



It is easy to love those who love us—our parents, friends, and even acquaintances. It is harder, however, to love our enemies—those people that rub us the wrong way and get under our skin. Sometimes we might even have trouble loving those who we are “supposed” to love. Acting respectfully and speaking in a civil manner to the people we don’t really like is how we ought to act, however! If you are having a hard time—if it takes you a few times to ‘get the beanbag into the enemy’s container,’ ask God to help you. He will!

We should also respect those in authority even if it is hard—our parents, teachers, preachers, Sunday school teachers, the policemen, and the president....Can you think of more? Many derogatory names and comments can be made about those in authority. While we might not agree with everything our leaders do and while they may not always act in ways you think earn them respect, it is still right to respect their position and be careful what you say and even what you think about them.