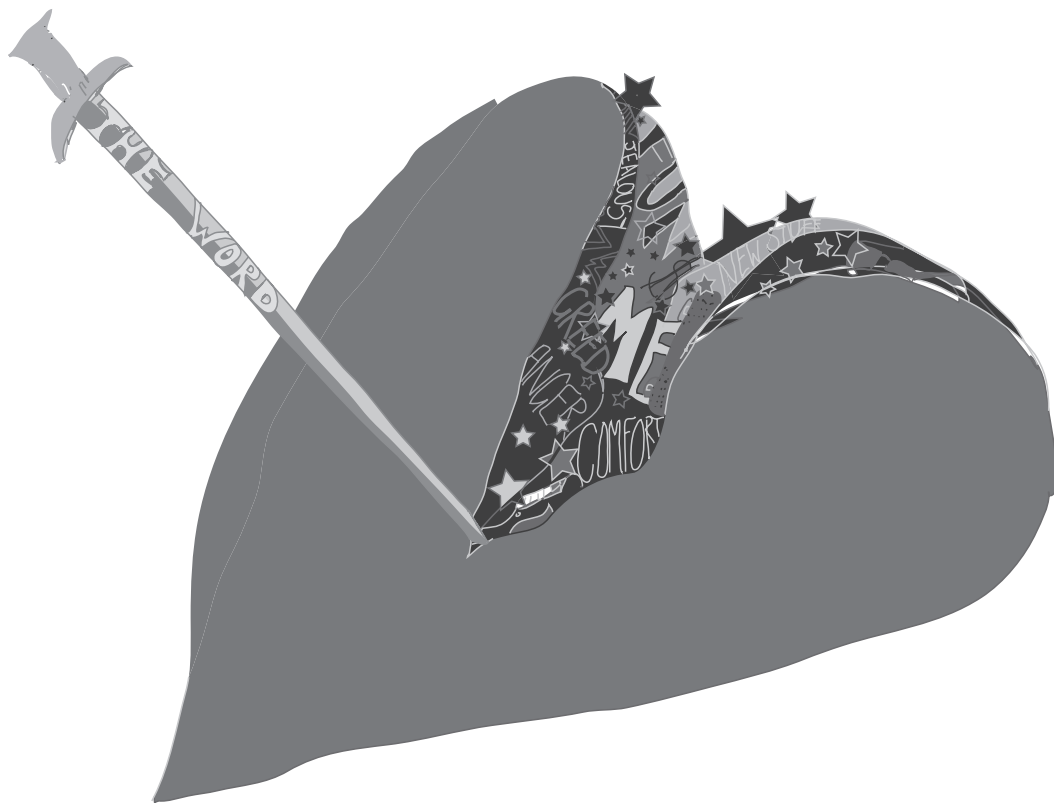


LESSON 74

God's Word Is Living

HEBREWS 4:12-13



BIBLE TRUTH

THE WORD OF GOD IS ACTIVE

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Hebrews 4:1–16 from the Scriptures or read story 152, “God’s Word Is Living,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

3. OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

A Little Un-magic

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ whiteboard and dry-erase marker
- ✓ deck of cards
- ✓ clear plastic wrap for a blindfold

4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

5. OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

The Wonder of Grace

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ large bowl of individually wrapped chocolate candy—several pieces for each student

6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

7. ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Judge of Hearts

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils

8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Reviewing the Life of Judas

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper and pens or pencils
- ✓ Bibles for the class

TOTAL 65 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

The Word of God is living—God’s Word is living and active (Hebrews 4:12). When we read God’s Word, the Holy Spirit uses it to judge our actions and our thoughts. But in order for us to benefit from God’s Word we must come to it with faith and believe it. Israel failed to enter into the Promised Land and God’s rest because they did not believe God’s word (Hebrews 3:19—4:3). It is important that when we read God’s Word and it judges our hearts, we do not turn away but believe and repent of our sin and trust the Lord.

Nothing is hidden from God’s sight—We will all have to give an account for everything we have done while we are here on this earth (Hebrews 4:13). God sees and knows everything. Jesus said, “nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known” (Matthew 10:26). God knows every sparrow that falls, and every hair on our head is numbered. Therefore, we should not fool ourselves into thinking that we can ignore God’s Word and live life any way we want, without judgment. God knows everything we do and his Word exposes our every sin. If a person has secretly stolen something, he might think he has gotten away with his crime. But every time he reads the words “Thou shall not steal,” he becomes freshly aware that God knows he is a thief. One day we will all need to give an account before God for all we have done.

Our confidence and rest is in Jesus—Once you realize that God sees all and that he is going to judge everyone, it is easy to be afraid. But the writer of Hebrews tells us that in trusting Jesus we have a place of rest from striving to live by our works. Jesus has already lived a perfect life and died for our sins. He offers us rest from our striving if we believe and place our trust in him.

We can run to the throne of grace in our time of need because we have a faithful high priest (Hebrews 4:14–16). Jesus was tempted like us in every way, so he can sympathize with our struggles. Unlike us, he did not sin. His sinlessness made him the perfect sacrifice for our sin. Now, in heaven before God, the sacrificial Lamb stands as our high priest. His sacrifice pleads for us before the throne of God night and day forever. Later in Hebrews we read the following:

The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. (Hebrews 7:23–27)

A LITTLE BIT MORE

High Priest

The high priest was selected from among men to represent men to God (Hebrews 5:1). The high priest kept the office for life and was the leader of the priests. He was set apart from the other priests as he had the privilege of entering into the Most Holy Place on the Day of Atonement to offer sacrifices for the sins of the people. Jesus offered himself as the final sacrifice for sin. He remains on duty forever, pleading our case before God our Father.

Where Is the Gospel? _____

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Immediately following the description of the probing work of God's Word, the writer of Hebrews turns our attention to Jesus, our great High Priest. This is not an accidental transition. God's Word exposes our sin, making us aware of our need for forgiveness. Therefore we should run to the throne of grace, where we can find mercy from God.

There is only one way for God to show us mercy. God can't simply overlook our sin. As a just and righteous judge, he must punish sin. But instead of punishing us, God poured out the punishment for our sin upon his Son. Now everyone who places their faith in Christ's work on the cross can rest from their labors.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Hebrews 4:1–16 from the Scriptures or read story 152, “God’s Word Is Living,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

A Little Un-magic

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ whiteboard and dry-erase marker
- ✓ deck of cards
- ✓ clear plastic wrap for a blindfold

Use this exercise as a humorous way to introduce the concept that nothing is hidden from God’s sight.

Prior to class, make sure that the plastic wrap you use for a blindfold can be seen through. You are not going to be able to bunch it up in multiple layers. If you practice, you can get good at taking a length of plastic wrap and placing it across your eye so that you can still see through it.

Ask the class how many of them like a good magic trick. Read Hebrews 4:13 and tell them that you have a trick to demonstrate this. Ask for four volunteers. Give them the deck of cards and ask them to inspect the cards and then shuffle them.

Then have each of the students select a card and look at it. Draw a large cross (an X-Y graph) on the whiteboard, dividing it into quarters. Tell the first two volunteers to go up to the top two quarters of the board and write the number and symbol of their cards in very large letters for the whole class to see while you are not looking.

When they have finished, have them take a seat and without looking, explain to the class that you are going to blindfold yourself and then tell them the cards. Take out the clear plastic wrap, blindfold yourself, and then turn and read the names of the cards to them.

They will object to your method. Tell them that you will do it differently this time. While your back is turned, have the second two volunteers write the number and symbol of their cards on the lower two squares and then sit down. Tell the class that rather than using the clear blindfold you are going to have them erase the board. (Only do this if you have a whiteboard. The markers always leave an impression even after they are erased.)

Have a volunteer erase the board. Count backwards from five and then turn around and read the residue revealing the names of the cards.

Ask the class if they can tell you the point of your trick. (Nothing can be hidden from God, who sees everything.)

TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

The Wonder of Grace

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ large bowl of individually wrapped chocolate candy—several pieces for each student

Tell the class that you are opening up your candy store for them to come up and get some candy. Before you give them a piece of candy, however, they must tell you something they did this week that impresses you. If they can do that, you will give them a piece of candy. Have five volunteers who want to give it a try line up. No matter what they say, do not let yourself be impressed. Refuse to give any of them candy.

After refusing them all, ask the rest of the class if they feel eager or confident to approach you for a piece of candy. (They will say no because nothing can impress you.)

Then read Hebrews 4:14–16 and ask them what is different about the way we can approach Jesus from the way they feel about approaching you.

The answer is that Jesus is willing to give all sinners forgiveness through his blood shed on the cross. Now, have the children line up again, only this time say that if they come telling you they have nothing impressive to share but are looking only for grace they might be more successful.

Invite five more volunteers to come forward. Give candy to each one generously and then invite the whole class to get in line. After passing out candy to everyone, have them all sit down and draw them out about how eager they were to come forward when they knew they could receive the candy by grace.

Review the connection to the passage of Scripture one more time and encourage the students to run to Jesus, confess their sin, and place their hope and trust in him.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Judge of Hearts

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Have the class draw a small heart with a sword through it and write the words, “The Word of God judges the heart.” Then have the children draw at least two other pictures that illustrate a sin they committed. (For example, they might draw a person hitting someone, or a person with an angry face because they didn’t get something they wanted.) Explain to them that the pictures surrounding the heart represent the fact that God knows all of our sin and sees everything we do and that nothing is hidden from his sight (Hebrews 4:13).

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day’s Scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 15 MIN

Reviewing the Life of Judas

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper and pens or pencils
- ✓ Bibles for the class

Read Hebrews 4:12–13 and ask the students if they have ever experienced a time when something they read in the Bible cut them to their heart with conviction. Have willing students share their stories.

Then pass out the paper and pens or pencils and ask them to look up Matthew 26:21–25 and then write an answer to this question: How did Jesus demonstrate Hebrews 4:12–13 in the life of Judas?

Give the children some time to answer the question and then discuss their answers. Ask them how the story affected them and whether they would be more likely to avoid sin in the future.

Go on to talk about Hebrews 4:14–16. Share the gospel and then ask them, When we sin, what should we do? Of course the answer is to confess it to Jesus and place our hope in him for forgiveness and salvation.