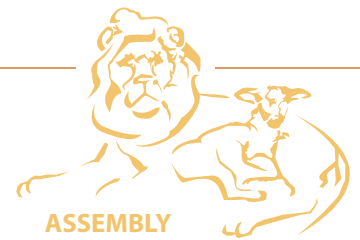


JESUS AND ZACCHAEUS

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: LUKE 19:1-10



The following are some ideas for creative ways that you can present this material.

LESSON IDEAS

A FRIEND TO SINNERS

Supplies

- table or tablecloth
- a dozen apples
- construction paper hearts

Cut large hearts out of red paper then tear them in half and staple the two pieces together. Make one for every child in your class. Cut up the apples for the children. (Make sure none of the children in the class has a fruit allergy.)

Set up a table or lay out a table cloth in the middle of the classroom.

- What is a sinner? (A sinner is someone who does something wrong.)
- Ask the children if they have ever done anything wrong. (Help the class see that we are all sinners.)

Give each of the children a broken heart telling them that the torn heart represents our sinful hearts. Invite all the sinners, everyone, to come over to the table or cloth on the floor for a snack of apples. While you share the apples with the children, talk to them about how Jesus went home with Zacchaeus even though he was a tax collector and had cheated the people. The people were upset, but Jesus knew Zacchaeus was a changed man.

JESUS AND ZACCHAEUS

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SEEK AND SAVE THE LOST

Supplies

- a puppet
- about 40 baseball cards

Prior to the puppet show hide the cards all around the classroom but make sure they are in places that the children won't see like under a throw rug or a book on the floor.

Teacher: Hi Puppet, how are you today?

Puppet: Terrible.

Teacher: Why are you terrible?

Puppet: I lost all my baseball cards.

Teacher: How did you lose all your baseball cards?

Puppet: I left them out and my little sister played with them and now I can't find them anywhere. I feel so terrible.

Teacher: Perhaps I can help.

Puppet: Can you buy me new cards?

Teacher: Well no, Puppet, I am teaching this class so I can't go out and buy you new cards.

Puppet: I knew it was too good to be true.

Teacher: I still think I can help.

Puppet: If you can't buy me new cards and I don't have my old cards how can you possibly help me?

Teacher: Well, I was thinking the class might be able to help me look around for your cards, perhaps we can find them.

Puppet: You mean the kids would really help seek out my lost cards?

Teacher: Yes, I think they would be willing to help. Right kids?

Children: (shouting) Yes!

Puppet: If you could seek out what was lost and help me find them, then you would save them from getting thrown away when the janitor comes to clean up the church building.

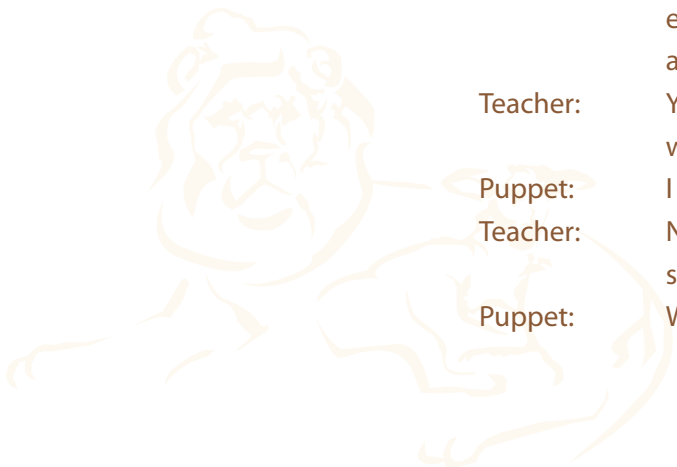
Teacher: Well children, can you all start looking around? (Teacher encourages the children to look around the room for the cards and slowly all the cards are found. Puppet is so excited.)

Teacher: You know, your lost cards remind me of the story of Zacchaeus we read today.

Puppet: I didn't know Zacchaeus had baseball cards!

Teacher: No, Puppet, Zacchaeus didn't have baseball cards, but in the story something was lost and then found.

Puppet: What was found?



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- Teacher: Zacchaeus was found!
- Puppet: Who found him?
- Teacher: Jesus found Zacchaeus! We are all lost apart from believing in Jesus. Just like the lost cards we found and saved from the janitor, so Jesus finds the lost children of God, changes their hearts and saves them from judgment.
- Puppet: I never thought Zacchaeus was like a baseball card.
- Teacher: Well, he wasn't like a baseball card silly, he was just lost like your cards and through God's salvation was found!

GAVE AWAY HALF

Supplies

- two money bags filled with about 150 pennies in each bag
- a box of re-sealable plastic snack bags (get brand-new shiny pennies from the bank for this exercise)

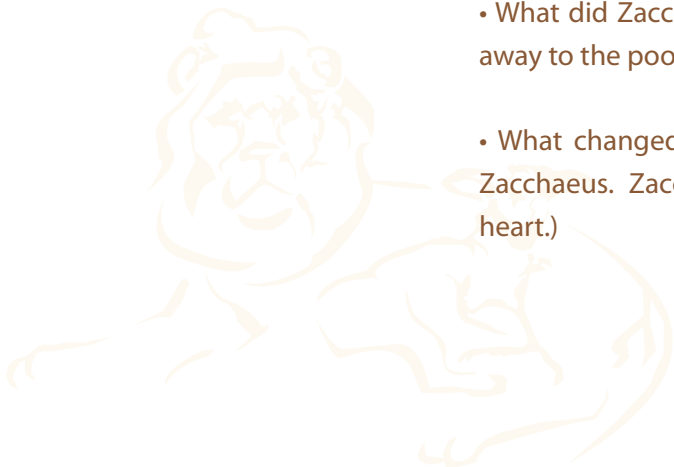
Have a person play Zacchaeus and have each of the two money bags at his side. Have Zacchaeus act sad that he has stolen money from the people. Then have him tell the class that he heard that Jesus can forgive sin.

Zacchaeus should act sad because he is short but then he should get the idea to climb the tree. Have him pretend to see Jesus and then have a dialogue with Jesus which results in Zacchaeus' salvation.

End the skit with Zacchaeus very happy and holding up the two money bags. As he declares that he will give half of his money to the poor, have him open the one money bag and begin to pour the coins all around the children. (This dramatic demonstration should help the children remember.) Let the children each keep a penny placed in a re-sealable plastic snack bag.

Then ask the children the following questions:

- What happened to Zacchaeus? (His heart was changed by Jesus.)
- What did Zacchaeus do? (He believed in Jesus and gave half of his money away to the poor.)
- What changed Zacchaeus, Jesus or giving away money? (Jesus changed Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus gave away the money because Jesus had changed his heart.)



JESUS AND ZACCHAEUS

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WHERE IS the Gospel?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

Jesus makes the connection for us in this story. Jesus tells us, "...today salvation has come to this house." We also learn that it was the "son of Man," Jesus, who came to "seek and save the lost."

Though it seems that Zacchaeus was trying to draw near to Jesus, it was in fact Jesus who was coming to save Zacchaeus. This salvation is possible because of what Jesus was about to do on the cross. The evidence of a changed heart in this story is obvious: Zacchaeus gave away half of his money.

