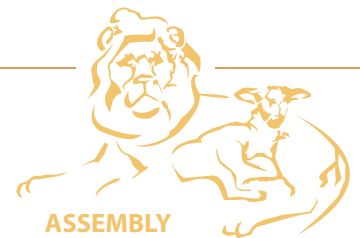


THE THIEF ON THE CROSS

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: LUKE 23:32-43



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

LESSON IDEAS

PEOPLE LIKE ME

Supplies:

felt board set

This is a great story to tell using the felt board because there are so many interesting characters. You have the soldiers casting lots for Jesus' clothing and the two men on crosses on either side of Jesus. Ask the children how we are like the different characters in the story.

The idea is to try to help them to see that we sin like each of the characters in the story. Ask about the repentant robber last. Then share the Gospel and how that sinner could be saved. The Bible tells us the way to eternal life is narrow and few find it but the way to destruction is wide and many find it, see Matthew 7:13.

SHARE YOUR TESTIMONY

This is a great class to share your testimony and how God rescued you from your sin. Whether you were a flagrant sinner or grew up in a Christian home, we all started like the mocking robber and it took saving grace for us to repent like the other thief on the cross.

Use these two robbers in your testimony, once I was like the unrepentant thief... then God touched my heart and gave me faith to believe like the repentant thief. If there are other teachers with you, take time to share more than one testimony this way.

Help the children understand that they can ask God to change their hearts as well.

- When sharing you testimony be careful to avoid details which would not be appropriate for young children.

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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.

This story is a wonderful picture of the saving work of the cross. Even a man on the verge of death, having lived a life of crime, can trust in Jesus. So effective is the work of Christ that it can take the worst of sinners from the executioner's hand into paradise. The robber didn't know the full measure of truth behind the death of an innocent Savior, but he knew this: he was a sinner deserving of punishment and in need of the Messiah. Jesus gave this man the gift of faith to believe.

One day we, and all who trust in Christ, will get the opportunity to talk with the man who hung upon a cross next to Christ. The question is who are we like: the repentant robber or the mocker?

