## VOLUME 2: OLDER CHILDREN

GAMES

Games help bring your Sunday School lessons to life for children. Below you will find games that have been "field tested" in hundreds of churches across the world; we've only included games that were "winners". The games are organized by the Sunday School Lesson we think works well with that particular game. However, feel free to mix up the games with your own lesson plans as many of the games can be used with various Bible teachings. Let your creativity guide you!

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## GOD'S CREATION

#### **Discussion: Biblical Science**

Some people are confused because the Bible describes the Creation Story in days, like this:

Day 1 - God created earth, space, time and light.

Day 2 - God created the atmosphere.

Day 3 - God created dry land and plants.

Day 4 - God created the sun, moon, and stars.

Day 5 - God created sea creatures and birds.

Day 6 - God created land animals and man.

They say nothing so big and vast could happen in a day. What does God mean by a "day" before there was a sun to rise and set?

Discussion leads to how God could mean millions of years. He obviously means "some period of time."

We don't know all the details about how the world began, because

- 2. the Bible is not a scientific journal. It is a historic record for people who truly want to understand it.
- 3. no one was there!

Look at the Creation Game on the following page. Photocopy enough sheets for your entire class. See if you can match up what scientists have believed with what the scriptures say.

## Creation Game Sheet

People who are skeptical of the creation story do not realize how often scientists have changed their minds about what is right and good.

See if you can match up the Bible verses at the bottom with what the Bible says what scientists used to believe and what science now shows:

SCIENTISTS USED TO BELIEVE	BUT NOW SCIENCE SHOWS	THE BIBLE ALWAYS SAID
Only between one thousand and twelve hundred stars in the whole universe.	Trillions upon trillions of stars; they cannot be counted by man!	
The Earth is flat.	The Earth is round.	
Light does not move; it is just there.	Light moves - and has physical properties; "light waves" or pho- tons.	
Bad blood should be bled out, to make a person well.	Blood is vital to life, sometimes a transfusion is needed to add blood.	
Air has no weight, it is just there.	Oxygen, nitrogen, carbon-dioxide have respective atomic weights that can be measured.	
Winds blow straight across the Earth.	Air currents move in large circular patterns.	
People just get sick; hand washing is not important.	Many diseases spread by contact; wash your hands in running water.	
The stars are all similar to each other.	Each and every star is actually unique.	

- Isaiah 40:22a "It is he that sits upon the circle of the earth..."
- Job 38:19a "Where is the way where light dwells? ..."
- I Corinthians 15:41b "...for one star differs from another star in glory."
- Leviticus 17:11a "For the life of the flesh is in the blood:..."
- Jeremiah 33:22a "As the hosts of heaven cannot be numbered..."
- Job 28:25a "To make the weight for the winds..."
- Ecclesiastes 1:6b "... and the wind returns again according to his circuits."
- Leviticus 15:13b "... and wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in running water..."

## Creation Game Sheet- Answer Key

SCIENTISTS USED TO BELIEVE	BUT NOW SCIENCE SHOWS	THE BIBLE ALWAYS SAID
Only between one thousand and twelve hundred stars in the whole universe.	Trillions upon trillions of stars; they cannot be counted by man!	Jer 33:22
The Earth is flat.	The Earth is round.	Isa 40: 22a
Light does not move; it is just there.	Light moves - and has physical properties; "light waves" or pho- tons.	Job 38:19
Bad blood should be bled out, to make a person well.	Blood is vital to life, sometimes a transfusion is needed to add blood.	Lev 17:11
Air has no weight, it is just there.	Oxygen, nitrogen, carbon-dioxide have respective atomic weights that can be measured.	Job 28:25
Winds blow straight across the Earth.	Air currents move in large circular patterns.	Eccl 1:6
People just get sick; hand washing is not important.	Many diseases spread by contact; wash your hands in running water.	Lev 13:15
The stars are all similar to each other.	Each and every star is actually unique.	1 Cor 15:41

## NOAH & THE GREAT FLOOD

#### Make-a-Square Game (Showing God's Guidance and Protection)

Have everyone take a seat in a circle on the floor blindfolded. Tell the class that, without seeing, they are going to make a giant square with their pieces of string. Don't let anyone look. Let the students do their best to make the square.

When they feel they have done the best job they can making the square, allow them to remove their blindfolds.

Repeat the game, this time without the blindfolds.

#### Questions:

- What were some of the problems you ran into, trying to create the square with the blindfolds on?
- How much easier was it to create it without the blindfolds?

If we have God in our lives and we ask for his protection, then we can "see." We ought to remember to ask God for his protection every morning and thank him for it every night and whenever we realized he's provided it during the day. It will make all our tasks easier.

## GOD'S PROMISE TO ABRAHAM

#### Word Search Puzzle

Before coming into the promises of God, Abraham traveled many places and met many people. See if you can find them.

0	0	b	1	а	n	t	1	0	t	n	n
v	s	а	а	s	d	e	r	i	V	t	e
m	e	h	с	e	h	S	h	d	р	S	t
i	t	g	m	t	j	b	e	у	e	e	e
i	i	р	e	i	Z	h	g	e	i	t	r
i	z	b	h	n	0	e	e	r	n	i	n
j	z	i	n	а	а	b	r	а	m	m	n
e	i	r	h	а	r	r	i	S	h	0	t
d	r	0	1	n	а	0	t	e	0	d	d
у	e	1	l	а	V	n	а	d	r	0	j
r	р	i	S	с	а	а	а	h	а	S	n
s	а	r	а	i	1	а	n	с	n	h	0

Horan	Canaan	Shechem
Bethel	Ai	Negev
Eqypt	Jordan Valley	Zoar
Hebron	Abram	Sarai
Lord	Lot	Canaanites
Pharoah	Perizzites	Sodomites

## ABRAHAM AND SARAH HAVE A BABY

#### Rise Up & Walk Game

We celebrate miracles, not only because they show God's goodness to all who hear, but because the person who received a miracle was set free. Let's pretend we have crippled limbs and see how far we can get.

Form teams. Have both teams stand at one end of the room. Using masking tape, tape each child's legs together at the ankles. Tape each child's wrists together.

At the other end of the room have two pieces of ribbon.

The goal is for team members to hop to the other end of the room, take up the ribbon, tie a bow in it, turn, and hop back, bringing the tied ribbon to the next child.

That child hops up to the other wall, unties the ribbon, then returns with the untied ribbon, and gives it to the next child.

Whichever team finishes the race first wins.

#### Questions:

How would you feel if you had to go around crippled like that all the time? When someone who had never walked as healed by Jesus, how do you think he felt? How did Sarah feel when she was old enough to be a great great great grandmother, and God finally gave her a baby?

## ISAAC AND REBEKAH

#### God's Word Versus the World Game

One way we can know God's will is by reading his Word. However, there are challenges with that. We feel we don't have time. We have too much homework. Our friends are texting us to come over. The world is like banging, noisy sounds, and God's word is like the still small voice.

Give one student an index card with a scripture verse on it. He will play God. Have two other students bang and make noises using instruments (or pots and pans). They will be the world.

Have the child playing God to read the scripture in a normal voice while the others bang and hoot and holler. Repeat several times to see if the children can get it. The first to repeat it back verbatim wins.

Keep switching children so everyone has a turn to play an instrument and play the God role.

Scriptures to use:

John 6:35 I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry...
1 John 4: 7 Beloved let us love one another, for love is of God...
Revelation 21:8 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End...
John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word. The word was with God and the word WAS God...
Matthew 6:33 Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness...
1 Corinthians 13:4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast...
Exodus 20:2 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt...

## JACOB & ESAU

## Word Search Puzzle

(To further complicate, put the words in a different order.) Unscramble the words and see what the message says:

oGd
si
lasawy
rfai
Semeismot
Hsi
tryso
sitn'
reov
yte

Answer: God is always fair. Sometimes his story isn't over yet.

## JACOB WORKS 14 YEARS

## The Dark Box

Bring out a box. You should have about thirty rectangular and triangular blocks in it, and only one square block. It's best if the box has a covering; a towel will work.

Tell Your class: **"We've talked about listening to God's voice, and how sometimes it's not easy to find the way. But there's joy at the other end. Let's practice, using this box."** 

Shake the box before each child takes his turn. Have children take turns sticking one hand in. Tell them "God's will" is like the square block. There are many things to distract us. Find the square block, and you've found God's will.

Repeat until each child has found the square block.

(note: if you don't have a square block, put a piece of masking tape or electrical tape around one block. Show them the block before the game starts, and tell them that's 'God's Will'.)

## JACOB WRESTLES AN ANGEL

## **Catching With Spoons Game**

## Sometimes it's not easy to persist. Sometimes we want to give up on something hard. But the person who persists gets the prize!

Have children form two relay teams at one end of the room. If there is an odd number, the first child on the team with less people can go twice. Give the first two children on each team a large tablespoon or slotted spoon (that's four big spoons in all). Put a piece of aluminum foil, rolled up like a baseball into one of the spoons on each time (that's two aluminum baseballs).

Show the players how to toss the "ball" back and forth to each other, catching it on the spoon. Then, they have to start moving slowly to the other end of the room while tossing back and forth.

One catch without dropping the ball earns one step forward by both teammates. A dropped ball means they have to stay where they are and try again, until a caught ball earns them a step forward.

Once a team reaches the far wall, they can run back with the spoons and ball and deliver to the next set of players.

Which ever team finishes first wins.

Ask **Who should get the prize?** They should answer that the winning team should. However remind them:

God is not as interested in how fast or how slow we are. He is interested in those who *show* persistence. Therefore, everyone gets a prize.

Pass out cookies, licorice sticks, or other available prizes.

## JOSEPH & HIS BROTHERS

## Power Racing with Toilet Paper

Have students make pairs. Each pair gets one square of toilet paper. Each party should pinch their lips on opposite sides of the square. Explain that without dropping it or breaking it, they must race to the other end of the room and back.

See what you can figure out about your partner's height, coordination, ability level and try to combine your own with those things.

Start the race.

If they tear the sheet or if one of them drops it from their lips, they have to start over again. The team who gets back first wins.

If you have enough children, this works great as a relay.

## MOSES AND THE BURNING BUSH

## God Hears Us

We like to imply that God is whole-heartedly interested in the kids, just the same as he was interested in the pre-Exodus Moses.

Blindfold one child. Have other children come up behind him and say, "I am a burning bush." The speaker can disguise his voice a bit.

The blindfolded child has to guess which child spoke to him. For each right answer, he gets a point.

After every child has been blindfolded and gathered points, explain:

You were able to guess your classmates because you know the sound of their voices. In the same way, God knows the sound of our voices. We all have different voices, but God knows them all. He even knows when you're pretending to be somebody else. And guess what? ...He never gets it wrong!

## FOLLOWING GOD'S VOICE

#### **Obstacle Course**

Sometimes following God's will is like running an obstacle course. You don't know where you'll end up and when, but the idea is to complete God's will and get to the other side.

Have chairs set up on the rug in a haphazard manner. Blindfold one child.

And sometimes God's voice sounds unclear to us, like it might be in a whisper, or it might sound like many voices, and we might only be able to hear a few words clearly here and there.

Tell other children that they can only say four words to direct the blindfolded child through the maze: Left, right, forward, backward. Younger children who don't know left and right can be split on opposite sides of the course and can say "forward," "backward," and "toward me" or "away from me." Older children can call shout at once.

The blindfolded child must walk through the obstacle course, trying not to bump any chairs. Each bump gives the child one point. When he finishes the obstacle course, the next student can be blindfolded, and the chairs then rearranged.

The student with the least points at the end wins the game.

## MOSES AND THE RED SEA

## The Listening Game

If we're going to trust God to take our problems and work with us to be free and happy, we first have to believe that he hears our prayers. Let's play The Listening Game to help us understand God hears our prayers.

Show everyone six items: a quarter, spoon, ping pong ball, a small book, your car keys, and a plastic hanger.

Have everyone sit in a circle facing outward or sit with their heads down on a table. Take turns dropping the items. When it makes its noise, ask

#### Was it the quarter, spoon, ping pong ball, book, car keys or hanger?

Go through every item, showing them after each turn that they were correct, then have them put their heads down again.

All our voices are different, and all our "Red Sea Problems" were different. But just like we know the sounds of different things, God knows the sound of each of our voices. We can believe he hears us and wants to help us be free.

## BREAD FROM HEAVEN

#### Wacky Bubble Balloon Race

# Sometimes we're so busy asking for things we don't really need or wanting things we don't have that our lives become like a collision course. We can "burst our own bubble" with too many desires. Let's have a wacky race and try to keep ourselves together.

Blow up at least two balloons, but you should have more ready in case some break. Have the children form two teams. The first two competitors should each take a balloon and hold it between their knees. When you say, "Go!" they should hop down to the far end of the room, blowing bubbles all the way, and trying not to lose the balloon or pop it.

The first team of players to complete the race wins.

## $Moses \ \text{and the Ten Commandments}$

## Unscramble the Ten Commandments

#### Here are God's Rules:

- 1. You shall have no other gods before me.
- 2. You shall not make graven images, nor bow down to them.
- 3. You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God.
- 4. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.
- 5. Honor your father and your mother.
- 6. You shall not murder.
- 7. You shall not commit adultery.
- 8. You shall not steal.
- 9. You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.
- 10. You shall not covet your neighbor's belongings.

Figure out which goes with what in the word scramble below:

UYO HALLS TON IGVE SELAF EIMNSOTTY IGSAANT RUYO EROIHGBN.

OYU ALHTS. TON EMKA NYA ARVNEG SBGEMI.

OTUH STHAL ONT LESTA.

NOOHR YURO RFTHEA AND MTEOHR.

UYO TALSH ONT TVEOC ROYU SEHRIGOBN NSNOBELGIG.

## THOU SHALT HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME

## Royal Purple Passion Punch & Letting Go of Idols

Let kids think of some things they don't want to become idols in their lives.

The way to love God more than your potential idols is to talk to Him and listen to him. When you speak to him, he does speak back to your heart. He is kind and good and cares about everything you do.

Because God is the King, talking with him can make you feel more the children of the king. Did you know that purple is considered the color of royalty?

Have on the art table cups filled halfway with water. Have one child come forward and pick up a cup of water.

#### Think of something you could almost make into an idol and promise that you won't.

As the child says what the almost-idol is, put drops of blue food coloring into his water.

Now shut your eyes and say a silent prayer. Try to think of what God might be saying to you.

Repeat this for every child at the table. Then go around with Red food coloring. Ask each child to repeat what his almost idol was. Say,

#### God loves you a lot more than [soccer, football, whatever the item was] loves you.

Add drops of blue food coloring until the color in his cup is purple.

## Communing with God, mixing your prayers in with his love, will make you feel like one of his royal children. Now, everyone add their royal water to the punch bowl.

After children pour their water in, add lemonade mix, and they can drink with their gold coins from the lesson.

## REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY BY KEEPING IT HOLY

#### Being a Great Prayer Partner

#### Let's talk about asking God for special help for the upcoming week.

Give students one piece of construction paper, light color. Have the students work in pairs. If you have an odd number, be the last person in the last pair. One student should trace around the hand of the other, then switch, with the other student tracing. They each should cut out the hand print of the other.

## Jesus said, "When two or more are gathered in my name, I am among them." Sometimes it's important when asking for a prayer request to have someone praying with you. It means it's more likely that you'll have faith to believe your request will happen.

Have the paired students share with each other something they would like to see happen that week. Have the listener write the prayer request on the back of the hand print. Switch roles, listener becoming the teller of a prayer request.

# We're going to tie these hand prints to your Sunday Balloons. When you see it at home it will remind you not only to express gratitude to your teacher, but also to pray for your friend and prayer partner.

Punch a hole in each hand print and loop through string or curling ribbon. Tie each to the Sabbath balloons from the lesson. Each child should get the hand print of his prayer partner on his own balloon.

## HONOR THY FATHER AND MOTHER

## Young Poet's Contest

Have children draw designs around their poem about Mom and Dad. As they are drawing, each should take turns standing in front of the other and reading their poem.

Give out prizes (if you have a small class, make sure everyone gets a prize). Prizes can be fruit snacks, ribbons, or even simple applause.

Prizes might be: Best Funny Poem, Best Use of Rhymes, Tried the Hardest.

## THOU SHALT NOT STEAL

#### Thou Shalt Not Steal Jump Rope

Students should take turns jumping rope to the following jump rope tune and see who can do the most double-times at the end.

Verse (for jumping double time, or slowly, two jumps per spin of the rope):

JOHNNY OVER THE OCEAN JOHNNY OVER THE SEA JOHNNY STOLE A DOLLAR BILL BLAMED IT ON ME. I JUST WAITED. DIDN'T GET HIM BACK. I FOUND A BURIED TREASURE ON THE OLD TRAIN TRACK. HOW MANY DOLLARS DID I RECEIVE?

(Double time jumping...one jump per spin of the rope)

One! Two! Three! Four! Five!.... until student misses.

Student who gets the highest number of jumps wins a prize of your choosing.

## THOU SHALT NOT LIE

## To Tell The Truth

Another great reason for telling the truth is that most people, especially grownups, can tell when a kid is lying. They know what to look for, and when the kid is caught it is embarrassment and lost trust for all. Let's see how it is grownups are so smart by watching somebody play "To Tell The Truth."

Have one student stand in front of the group. Have the group pose questions to him or her. Brief the student to tell the truth sometimes and make up something other times. See if students can tell from his expression or body language when he/she is not telling the truth.

Questions should require only short answers, and may be of the following:

What street to do you live on?

Do you play any sports?

What school do you go to?

What's your dad's first name?

What's your mom's first name?

Do you have a dog?

Do you have a cat?

And so forth...

When the students think they are being deceived, have them say, "Stop!" Find out from the child if he was telling the truth or making up the answer. Have the students discuss what changed about him: the color of his face, his sudden smile, his shifting around, him staring at the ceiling, etc. and so forth.

Hey, maybe from this we can learn about what's true and what's not from others. The bible says, "Be wise as serpents but innocent as doves." That means don't lie—but necessarily believe everything you hear!

## JOSHUA RECEIVES GOD'S PROMISE

## Virtues Charades

Have one student get in front of the others and do a charade of a Christian virtue. The other students should try to guess which virtue the student is acting out. No one acting out a virtue may speak. However, he may use the gesture "sounds like" by pulling on his ear, and acting out the syllables.

## RAHAB RATS ON THE BAD GUYS

#### Spy

Have all the children pull a slip of paper out of a hat. Half the slips should say "good guy." Half the slips should say "bad guy." One slip should say "spy." Nobody can know what the slips say. *Hence, nobody will know who the spy is. If the spy accidentally blabs, you have to start over with the pulling-out-of-the-hat.* 

Have them split up into two groups. The good guys go to the center of the room The bad guys go to the far wall with a stack of index cards. The "spy" paper should go with the bad guys.

The bad guys pass out index cards with scripture verses on them. As no one knows who the spy is, he will get an index card, too. The bad guys then move to the center of the room and start walking in a circle. The good guys form a bigger circle outside their little circle and walk in the opposite direction.

The goal is for the "spy" to keep walking in the circles with everyone until he or she feels a little bit safe. Then, quickly, the spy should yell "SPY!" She should pass off her index card quickly as possible to the nearest good guy. The good guy runs to the designated spot at far side of the room and slaps the wall. The bad guys try to tag him.

If he slaps the designated spot before getting tagged, he wins and gets to read the scripture verse.

Repeat, having students pick out of the hat again with a new spy. Points are scored by

being a spy: 1 point being a good guy who makes it to the wall without being tagged: 1 point being a bad guy who tags the good guy before he gets to the wall: 1 point

Person with the most points wins a snack prize.

## JOSHUA COLLAPSES WALLS OF JERICHO

#### Potato Soccer

One thing the Hebrews had to learn in order to form an army was how to work as a team. We're going to play potato soccer today and try to win a game that requires teamwork.

Have children form two teams. The goal is for one team to kick the potato onto their goal, which can be two chairs situated close together, the opening between the inner legs being the goal. One goal should be laid down on either side of the room.

Kids can kick the potato only twice before kicking to a teammate. Team that gets the most goals wins.

## JOSHUA FORGETS TO ASK GOD

## Belly Ball

Have the children split into two-man teams. Have one partner stand at either end of the room.

# We don't realize how difficult it is to get by without inviting God into our daily lives to help us. It's sort of like what I'm going to ask you to do with these balls.

Pass two balls down to the two competitors at one end of the room.

Put your hands behind your back. You *may not* kick the ball. You have to find some way to carry it to your partner at the other end of the room without using your hands and without kicking the ball. *Go*!

Children should find this very confounding. Eventually, they will see that they can grasp the ball between their knees and hop a few steps at a time before it falls away again. When the first one reaches his partner,

To finish the race, put ball between your bellies. You can touch each other after that, but you can't touch the ball. Walk it back to the starting line. If you drop it you have to start from where you dropped it. *Go*!

Let all partnerships try this, racing against the fasted one from last time.

Afterwards:

This ball is sort of like our daily experiences. We have to find ways to cope with them and "carry" them in an imperfect world.

To have a partnership with God makes things a lot easier, doesn't it? Things won't be perfect until we get into heaven, but it helps to know we always have a partner.

## WHAT'S WRONG WITH ISRAEL'S MEMORY

#### Peer Pressure Game

Have one child get in the center of a circle. Have her classmates facing outward. They should keep their hands at their sides. As their backs are to her, they should not be able to see her.

When you say, "Go!" she can wait to fool people or she can try to make a break for it. The game is for her to get outside the circle before the two people she pushes through can tag her. The rule is that she has to have at least one foot on the floor outside of them before they tag her. If they tag her, she returns to the center. If she's free, another person goes to the center.

Sometimes when you're in a crowd of kids, like in school or in someone's house, you can feel like you're surrounded by people facing a different direction in life than you are. But you can "get through" their pressure and still be yourself. But it's not easy, is it?

## DEBORAH IS UNDER ESTIMATED

#### Who Are You Survey

Pass out the survey below and *pencils only, so that all papers look very similar upon completion.* Split the children up so they are writing on the floor and in corners and nobody else can see their hand writing.

- 1. Are you more outgoing or are you more shy?
- 2. Do you have a loud laugh or a soft laugh?
- 3. Are you extra smart in school? yes/no
- 4. What sports have you played?
- 5. Whose house in the room have you been over to?
- 6. Is there someone in here whose house you go to a lot?
- 7. What is your favorite board game?
- 8. Which do you like more: science fiction movies more than funny movies?
- 9. Do you live close enough to the church that you could walk to it?
- **10**. Do you have a dog?
- 11. Do you have a cat?
- 12. Do you have a lizard, snake, or a hamster?
- 13. Are you known for being good at art?
- 14. Do you have any food allergies that you know of?
- 15. What is your favorite color?
- 16. Are you the oldest in your family?
- 17. Are you the youngest in your family?
- 18. Do you go to the public school?
- **19.** What is your favorite movie?
- 20. Do we know at least one of your parents well?

Collect all the papers and shuffle them up.

Having shuffled the papers, put them all on the table. A few questions bear out hand writing, so they ought to be able to identify their own. THEY SHOULD NOT IDENTIFY THEIR OWN PAPER OUT LOUD. Take someone else's paper.

Have the children take turns reading off the questions and one person's answers. See if they can guess whose paper is being read from. Take a vote at the end. See how many get it right. For those who do get it right, ask "how did you know?"

Have the subject person of the paper share one thing about him or herself that perhaps the class wouldn't know. It can be something funny, a personal taste in something, or anything they want.

Go on to the next paper.

Bet today we learned something about one person in here, at least, that we didn't know before. It's funny how you can spend time around people and not know very much about them, isn't it?

## GIDEON- GOD USES THE SMALLEST AGAIN

#### Sign / No Sign

We have to work hard to know the will of God, when to ask for signs and when to ask for wisdom, extra love, extra courage, extra faith. Sometimes it feels like we're in a whirlwind. But if we practice long enough, we grow spiritually discerning. It's like this game...

Bring one child to the center of a circle. Have him shut his eyes. The children in the circle will take turns, going around clockwise, shouting out the word "Sign!" or "No sign!" They can choose which ever word they wish.

If the child in the center hears "Sign!" He spins clockwise. If he hears "No sign!" He spins counter clockwise.

The teacher's job is to point to the next child in the circle to let him or her know when it's time for the next person to shout out. There should be around a three-second pause between each shout.

After every child has shouted, and the child in the center has spun hither and yon, he should try to stand on one foot. He can hop, but he can't put his other foot down. Have the children count slowly and see how long he can stay on one foot.

The winner is the one who stands the longest without putting his foot down.

Sometimes we can feel dizzy, trying to figure out God's will, and when to look for signs and when to look for other things. But the more we practice, the less dizzy we'll feel.

## GIDEON'S ARMY

## Person Least Noticed

As with the game Spy, have students come forward and each take an index card from your hand. There should enough cards for each student. Half should be marked Army I and half Marked Army II. And oddball card should read "Person Least Noticed." Students read their card, leave the card with you, then proceed to predetermined positions.

The Armies should go to opposite sides of the room. The One Least Noticed should go with Army 1. *She may not say she is the one least noticed, however! It is a secret for now.* 

The first player in Army 1 should step forward into the center of the room. He should pick an opponent from Army II and they should "duel."

By dueling, they should take hold of each others arms and stand on one foot. Without letting go of each other's arms, they should try to lean each other one way or the other to the point where their opponent's foot goes down. The player who is not first to either let go with his arms or put a foot down wins one point.

Proceed to the next person in Army I, who should go to the center of the room and call out another opponent from Army II. They may *not* choose a person already chosen.

Eventually someone in Army II will be matched with the Person Least Noticed. When it happens, the Person Least Noticed should come to the center and say, "Congratulations! I'm the Person Least Noticed!" The member of Army II who called her out automatically wins a point and doesn't have to duel.

Each time the Person Least Noticed is revealed, the round ends, and everyone returns to the teacher to pull cards again.

After two or three rounds, the person with the most points is the winner.

## SAMSON AND DELILAH

#### Good Apples / Bad Apples

You may have heard of the expression "one bad apple spoils the whole bunch." This is a truism having to do with how apple bruises spread from the bruised apple to a good apple when the bruise touches the good apple. Consequently, the bruises grow and more apples get touched. With kids, it's come to mean that one bad kid in a crowd can turn everyone into people who misbehave. Today we're going to play Good Apple/Bad Apple.

Mark off an area with masking tape that is around six feet by six feet. Pick two children to be the "bad apples." Have them shut their eyes and stand inside that area. Tell the rest of the kids to run through that area after you say, "One, two, three, go!" See how many kids the two bad apples can tag with their eyes shut. Everyone who gets tagged has to become a bad apple and while keeping their eyes shut, tag kids on the next time through. The last kid to be tagged wins a Good Apple point.

Did you notice how it was easier not to get tagged if you were quiet? What does that say about attracting attention to yourself in real life? Sometimes the best way to get through life is quietly and humbly.

Did you notice how the more bad apples there are, the harder it is not to get caught up in the bruising yourselves? What does that tell you about your need for will-power while in a crowd? You need to be prepared and make conscious choices.

### RUTH IS A LOYAL FRIEND

#### Juggling: Managing a lot of Behaviors & People

Especially in school, we can be faced with so many behaviors at once that we don't know how to respond. Can feel a bit awkward, like we do when we're trying to juggle. Let's try some juggling.

Give each child either three foil balls or three pair of rolled up socks. Show them how you

- toss one ball up with the left hand
- toss a second ball from the right to the left hand
- catch the ball in the air with the right hand.

Give them ten minutes or so to try to learn to juggle. Some may succeed but others will get little more than a laugh about it.

While juggling is fun, it's not always the best way to handle our many challenges. The best way... Have a kid throw you his balls one at a time; you catch them. ...is to give your problems to the Lord, one at a time. And that's something you can do anytime, anywhere, and then you don't have to worry about them anymore.

# SAMUEL: HE BECAME WHO HE HUNG OUT WITH

### Juggling II

In the last game your kids started juggling, and they would probably love an opportunity to learn some more and get a little better. Give out the foil balls again or the balled up socks

Last week we were juggling to symbolize the many choices we have in life. This week, we're adding in the fact that we often have to consider the feelings of others. Hence, you can practice your juggling from last week, but at some point add in a new element: Juggling *with somebody else*.

Set the group up in pairs. If there is an extra child, pair up with them. Two-man juggling involves four balls, one in each hand of each person. Show them how to toss both balls at once and catch both their partner's balls a split second later. See how many can get it.

### DAVID KILLS GOLIATH

### Tacky Tape Game

Tape a paper bag portrait of Goliath's face up to the wall. Roll up wads of gaffer's or electrical tape with the sticky side out to make tacky tape balls. Balls should be about as big as a baseball. Have the children stand behind a marked line, six feet away, and try to get the tape to stick on Goliath's forehead.

To complicate things: **David had to work with a sling shot.** Have them try tossing the tacky ball up in the air and hitting it with the palm of their hands as if it were a tennis racket. The places where the tacky balls end up can be very amusing.

### SOLOMAN ASKS GOD FOR WISDOM

#### God's Wisdom Relay

God's wisdom is always available, but sometimes it isn't easy to follow. Sometimes we want to do things our own way and in our own time, but we need to learn to get on God's pace. In the following relay, we'll pretend the person in front is the Lord, and the person behind is a human being.

Have students get up in front of the group two at a time. One student should stand in front, and the one standing behind should put her toes right against the front child's heels. Time them as they try to walk from one end of the room to the other without the heels of the child in front separating from the toes of the child in back. The other children should observe and make a "bong!" noise every time their toes and heels come apart. The first couple to receive the least amount of "bongs!" while moving from one end of the room to the other wins.

When we're trying to follow God's wisdom, it's best if we go slowly and not to be devastated if we mess up at first!

# JOB LOVES GOD THROUGH HIS TRIALS

### The Mirror Game

Bring in a mirror no smaller than 6 x 6 inches. Prop it up with some books at the edge of the table so that it doesn't move or wiggle. Have one child at a time come and kneel in front of the mirror. Hold an index card with a scripture verse up to the mirror so that it appears backward to the child. Ask him to read it. The child who gets which verse is before him the quickest and reads without any mistakes is the winner. An assistant can time.

How did it feel reading the scriptures backwards in the mirror? Strange.

And yet the scriptures stay the same whether they're shown backwards or frontwards, right? Yes.

Sometimes on our bad days, it's hard to feel God and figure out what He's saying to us, isn't it? Yes.

And yet, He's always the same—He always loves us, whether we're feeling good or bad, whether we're having trouble "reading him" or not!

### DAVID IS LOYAL

#### King David's Heart

God called King David "a man after His own heart," meaning God loved how David could manage to love his enemies. Let's play a game where we try to keep King David's heart alive and well.

Have children form two teams. Each child should have a rolled up piece of construction paper to use as a bat. Using a blown up red balloon, play a game sort of like volley ball only instead of a net, use a piece of masking tape that runs across the floor.

The children may only use their "bats" to send the balloon from their team to the other team. Each team can take three swings at the balloon before it has to go to the other side. When a team lets King David's heart touch the ground, the other team gets the point.

(Suggestion: Have several balloons in case one gets stabbed.)

### DAVID DANCES FOR THE ARK

#### Turban Game

Have each child bring in a bath towel for this game. The Turban Game is played in two rounds. In the first round, students throw the towels up in the air and say something they like about themselves.

Prompts:

- I play the piano! I'm a good friend!
- I'm not afraid of things!

I'm nice to my mom!

I trained my dog!

After throwing the towel up a couple times, move to round two. Students wrap their hair up in the towel, making a turban. Students try to knock the turban off each other's heads without getting their own knocked off.

Note: Warn long-haired girls to keep their hair close to their heads and not get their hair pulled!

Sometimes, we feel pretty good about ourselves. Then someone can come along and put us down. That's sort of like knocking our turban off. We have to make sure nobody can steal our joy! We should be proud of our faith, and not let anyone steal our joy about that either!

# DAVID BRIDLES HIS TONGUE

Sometimes when people get in our faces and yell, we want to get even so badly that it's hard to hear the voice of the Lord. But he is always calling out to us, to guide us in the right things to do. Let's practice listening through in-your-face comments.

Have the students form pairs. Each pair will have a turn to do the following:

One stands at the far end of the room blindfolded. The other has laid taped his dove of peace to the wall somewhere in the room. It will be the blindfolded one's job to find it, while his partner can only use the words, right, left, forward, backward, higher and lower.

Other kids can make gross noises, go "bleh bleh" in his face and laugh at him, but he has to listen through it for the voice of his partner to find is dove of peace.

The first pair to find the dove of peace first wins.

### ELIJAH, GOD, AND BAAL

#### Break Away (for older kids)

Have all the children form a circle.

# Let's talk for a few minutes about some things you could be tempted to do if the crowd of kids you were with was doing them.

Allow them to think of things. As each child says one thing, have him turn away so that his back is to the circle. Prompts:

- Cheat on tests
- Take drugs or smoke
- Laugh at somebody's hard luck (spilling something all over himself)
- Gossip
- Take something not belonging to you
- Bully
- Lie to your parents
- Cover up for a friend who did something wrong

Once all children are facing away from the circle, pick one child to be Elijah, and bring that child to the center. Have all other children be Prophets of Baal. They should lock arms and align feet so that the outsides of their feet are touching the outsides of the people on either side.

Have all children shut their eyes except Elijah. Have all of them at once shout the example they used to face out of the circle. With shut eyes and distractions of each other's shouting, they must try to keep Elijah inside their circle. They may not break their arm lock or move their feet.

Elijah's job is to look for holes or unsuspecting people, and try to dive or sneak out. Others can try to block him with their hips and bodies if they don't break their holds or move their feet to do it. If Elijah gets his body through to the outside, he wins.

Take turns until everyone has been Elijah.

How were the Prophets of Baal sort of like bad influences among the people we know? They can make you feel "locked in" to something you don't want to do.

There's an old Biblical expression to describe people involved in wrong things and leading others to do them, too. It's called "the blind leading the blind." That's why, in the game, the Prophets of Baal's eyes were shut. How did the shut eyes help you? Let them answer, but you are working toward them understanding the following:

Because the prophets of Baal couldn't see, they couldn't see the "holes" in their "power." It's sort of like when people are acting blind to what's right, they can't see the bad things that can happen. But *you* saw the holes and managed to get out.

### ELIJAH AND THE STILL SMALL VOICE

#### I Will Listen

Have children fill out the following pledge statements for their prayer life in the following week.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I promise to do my best to pray every day and listen for the voice of the Lord. My prayer is the following question: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_? And I would like an answer. I promise to pray at this time every night: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I will try to listen for the voice of the Lord about this for \_\_\_\_\_ minutes. I will do so in the following room in my house: \_\_\_\_\_\_.

I know that God loves me. I know He is happy to hear from me. I know He wants me to gain His wisdom about the subject of my prayer: \_\_\_\_\_\_.

Have them decorate their pledge with a drawing of themselves doing what they said they would do.

### NAAMAN & ELISHA

#### **Practicing Leadership**

Bring out a waffle ball and bat. Move the tables and chairs so you have a playing field. Divide students into two teams.

Now we're going to practice following the leader. I will pick two team captains. I'm the coach of both. The leader's job will be three things:

- Teach those who don't hit a ball very well the tricks of hitting
- Teach those in the field how to stay in their own territory
- Encourage people, even when they're not doing well.

The player's job will be to listen to the captain, and don't give him a hard time if he tells you to do something.

Pick to captains based on ability. Let the game ensue. Don't be afraid to pull a captain aside and give him instructions about being too nice or being too demanding; it will show the others that leadership comes with a price.

### PROPHET ISAIAH AND FEARS

#### Step by Step: Passing the Bully By

Give two children a bag of balled up pieces of newspaper. Squash each piece well to make a fairly hard ball. Have the kids help if you didn't have time beforehand. Each should have about twenty "balls." Those two children are the bullies

Line all the other children up against one wall except the two with the balls. Their goal will be to run one at a time to the other wall without being hit by a "ball." The two "fear kids" will be blindfolded in the center.

When you say "Go!" one child will try to run to the other side without being hit by any balls. He can go around one side or the other. He can run like mad or he can tiptoe. Have the assistant collect the balls each time and return them to the blindfolded children

Any child who gets hit by a ball has to stay to the left. Any child who doesn't get hit gets to stay to the right.

After all have tried: Let's look at the circumstances. Why are the two kids in the center blindfolded? What does that symbolize? Bullies are "blind." Bullies do not have the light of God, at least while they're bullying. They can stop us temporarily.

How did you feel was the best way to get past a bully? To run like mad and not care how much noise you made or to tread quietly? Let them talk about what was right for them. The right answer depends a lot on each child's temperament.

Those who got caught, they represent how sometimes our fears can really stop us. What do we have to do next? Call upon God to help us.

Take the bags of balls away from the bullies. Take all the children who got tagged with a ball and lead them across the passage where they could have been tagged.

And what do we do with bullies? Do we forgive them? Yes. (Bring the bullies along to the winner's wall also).

### PROPHET JEREMIAH AND JUDGEMENT

#### **Smacks & Consequences**

Consequences often seem unfair. Someday, God will explain everything. But in the meantime, we can't see the big picture and we try to accept that life isn't always comfortable. It's like the game of hand-smack. The fastest person wins, and we don't understand why some of us are faster than others. Let's play.

Divide the children into pairs. Have one partner hold his hands out, palms up. The other partner puts his hands gingerly on top of his partner's hands, face down.

The goal is for the person whose hands are underneath to quickly reach around and smack the tops of the partner's hands before the partner can move his hands away.

If he succeeds, his hands stay on the bottom, and he can continue to try to smack his partner's hands. If he fails, his hands become those on top, and his partner gets a chance to try to smack his hands.

He only needs to make contact with one hand for a smack to be considered a hit. A miss is if neither hand makes contact.

The winner is the person whose hands are on the bottom for the most rounds after five minute are up.

How many of you like that game? You should get a mixed review. How many of you feel that the tops of your hands are sore? Some will confirm. Are your hands sore because you were lazy and not really trying? No! So how is that fair? You did your best, and you still have sore hands.

Our point is that life requires us to do things that some people are better at. We often get beaten. But in the overall scheme of things, God will make sure we get our just rewards in His good time!

Give out snack prizes—to the sore-handed people first, and then everyone else.

### PROPHET DANIEL AND THE LION

#### Taming Life's Lions

Hopefully you won't have any girls in skirts, which is rare these days. If you do, have them stand off to the side for the first part of the game.

Make a space in the middle of the floor with lots of room. Tell the kids to try standing on their hands. Let them keep trying and see who can stand on their hands the longest without falling. Give them each five or six tries.

How would you like to double the amount of time you could stand on your hands just with one little trick? Most should say yes.

Divide the students into pairs. Have one do a handstand and the other hold that person's feet so they can't fall.

Now that you have a spotter, let's you and your spotter try to go from one side of the room to the other on your hands. Have all children move to a starting point. One child in each pair should do another handstand; have the partner hold his feet. Tell them to proceed across the floor, from start to finish, and see who makes it. Applaud for those who make it.

In life sometimes, we're a little like lions. We feel big and awkward and like we could hurt somebody—kick somebody in the head. But God comes along to help us. Sometimes His help comes through another person—a friend to help and guide us. Sometimes His help comes like it did with Daniel—he sends angels to help out.

With God's help, we're able to do things in a "tame" and fantastic way. We can do many things we certainly couldn't do without Him!

### RUTH AND PUTTING FAMILY FIRST

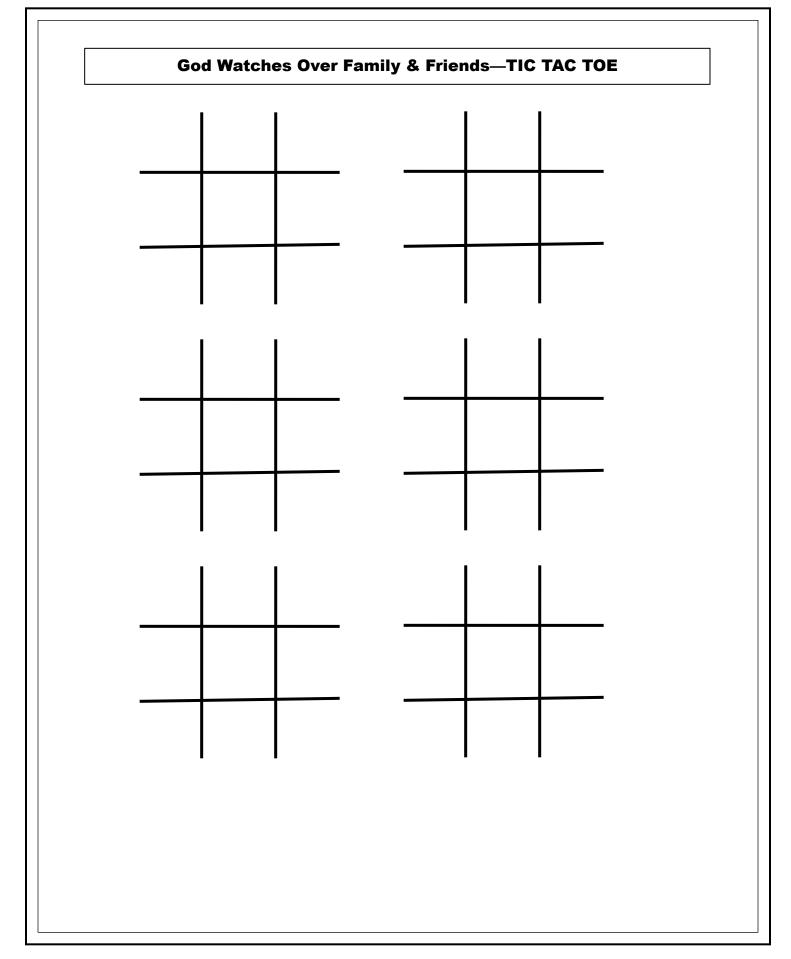
God Watches Over All—Tic Tac Toe

We've talked about family coming first and friends second. But who's missing from this picture? God. God watches over all. The world works best in threes: God, friends and family. Hence we're giving you a game that works in threes no matter how you hold it.

We'll pretend the x's are family and o's are friends. God is the grid.

Have kids separate into pairs to play tic tac toe. For each game, they should switch from being family (x's) to being friends (o's). The goal is to be the first team to come with a game where X's win.

Worksheet accompanied.



### SHADRACH, MASHACH, AND ABEDNEGO PUT GOD FIRST

#### God's Will is Like the Pennies—Game

When God asks us to do something—like Stand Up for Him in School, it's not always easy. First, we're often unprepared. We don't know what the situation will be or how it will come up. Second, we often don't know what to say. It's a little like believing that pennies, which are like your attempts to stand up for God, will make it into a milk carton, which is like the other person's heart.

Place the milk carton beside a chair. Let one child stand on the chair with five pennies. He should aim for the opening of the milk carton and try to get as many pennies in as possible. Let all students take a turn and keep their own scores. Most will not get more than a couple.

Sometimes we want to be of service to the Lord, but as we demonstrated in the lesson, it takes His help and protection. Let's try this game again, only this time we'll add a few "crutches."

This time have students kneel on the chair instead of stand. Using the long tubing from the wrapping paper, let them cover the mouth of the carton with the tube, take aim, and drop the pennies down the tube.

We're kneeling this time, which in this game is symbolic of praying. If we pray for God's strength, courage, protection and direction, we can count on His help.

The tube is a little like God Himself, guiding the way so we can have what we want. When we rely on God to help us, it's much easier to come out a winner, isn't it?

## QUEEN ESTHER STANDS UP FOR HER PEOPLE

#### He Ain't Heavy—Game

# The Bible says that we should support each other through tough times. Sometimes we need a little more than a helping hand. Let's pretend that time is now.

Divide the group up into pairs. Have piggy back races. Across the room and back. If there is an odd man, have him come back on the back of one person, while the partner jumps off.

Sometimes two go slower when they're in the race of life together. But they are a lot stronger! Remember to rely on your spiritual family!

### JESUS BRIDGE TO FREEDOM

#### 4th of July Game

Fourth of July holds special meaning to all Americans, but to Christians, it can be doubly special. While celebrating our country's freedom, we can also celebrate the freedom that belief in Christ has brought to us—both now and in eternal life with Him.

Galatians 5:1 says, "For freedom did Christ set us free..." John 8:31 says, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." Romans 8:2 tells us, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death."

Christ freed us from great bondage. But how can we make this freedom plain to children, and what can we implement on 4<sup>th</sup> of July to celebrate it? First, a lesson using the American icon of the Grand Canyon can help students understand the power and freedom of Christ. Second, a celebration of cupcakes, prizes, and games or artwork can certainly make the lesson memorable.

For the lesson, line the floor with two strips of masking tape approximately six feet apart. If you have a picture of the Grand Canyon to pass around, that is also helpful. As you pass it, tell the students, "See this huge space between the tape? That is the Grand Canyon! It is over a mile deep! We are on a high peak, and we need to get to the plateau! God is over there...so let's try and jump without falling into the Grand Canyon!"

Have students line up on one line and, taking a couple of good swings with their arms, see how far they can make jump. This is called a "standing long jump," which differs from a "running long jump." You want them to use the standing long jump for indoor safety, so make sure they stand with their toes on the line. You might say, "You can't step backwards and take a running leap! We are standing on a peak!"

None should be able to jump the six feet. But measure their jumps with a tape measure and remark positively to the ones who make the best concerted effort. (Remark on form and determination as well as distance to make sure the best athletes don't get all the compliments.)

Then say, "But what's the problem? Nobody can make it to God's side by their own effort. Before Jesus, people have only their own effort to try to reach heaven. As you can see, we 'all fall short,' as Romans 3:23 says." Then, roll out a six foot hall rug, or unfold a six-foot length of cardboard that "connects" the two lines. You can write "The Jesus Bridge" on it.

"With Jesus' death and resurrection, he bridged the gap between God and Man. He made it possible for us to freely come to God and be part of His kingdom. As soon as you ask Jesus to be your guide for life, you are truly free. You are no longer stuck. You can pass over to commune with God, using Jesus as the Bridge."

Have everyone pass over to the other side, using the "Jesus Bridge." Let them pass over a couple of times, and encourage some to do cartwheels across or dance steps or somersaults, whatever they feel like. This will impress the students with this part of the message:

"We're all different! We all have different personalities and gifts and ways that we are coordinated, and ways that we think. And the types of things we do in life on our way with Jesus can be with our own styles and God-given talents. The important thing is, we are free from our prison on the cliffs, and He will keep us from falling!

"Jesus is the bridge that frees us to come to God!"

And in conclusion: "Now that we've all been freed, let's celebrate and have a party with God, here on the heavenly side!"

Games for the party might include any that promote individuality and freedom, such as

- voting on the most original dance to music
- making the most original picture with red, white and blue paint
- writing the word "freedom!" with the most original bubble letters and coloring it in;
- having a Fourth of July parade (a favorite of younger children), using spoons and blocks and noisemakers for instruments.

Have your cake and balloons and the dollar store favors of your choice. After all, you're free to be you, too!

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