



Date: _____
Series: God in the Storms of Life
Spring Year 4, Lesson 55

God Calls— Elisha Follows

Primary Scripture: 2 Kings 2-8

Key Verse: Deuteronomy 4:29, “But if you look for the LORD your God ... you will find him whenever you search for him with all your heart and with all your soul.”

How does this address a need in our kids' lives?

God called Elisha into the service of following him. Kids need to know that God calls them into service as well. It may not be displayed with fiery chariots in the sky, but it will be significant nonetheless. Kids need to know that they can make a difference in God's kingdom as they share the love of God with those around them.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: We have the forgiveness of sins and power of new life through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Through Jesus, we can now seek the Father's will.

Jesus in us: Like prophets of old filled with the Holy Spirit, we are guaranteed God's powerful presence as well. The Holy Spirit fills us when we call upon the name of Jesus and seek what God wants.

Jesus through us: We have a message of reconciliation to share with the world because Jesus works through us.

Stamp of Excellence:

Remind the kids what excellent worship looks like. We are in God's presence to honor him. Put on your best manners. This might include wearing your name tag, participating eagerly at all times, listening when the leader is talking, raising your hand to speak, not distracting others, playing the learning game with cooperation, singing enthusiastically, and praying reverently. Offer rewards or positive reinforcement to those who worship with excellence.



Worship

Invocation:

Let kids bring forward the worship symbols such as the cross, candles, Bible, and offering plate. Invite God's presence and call by name the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Attention Grabber:

Capture the children's attention and help them focus on the worship theme for the day.

Supplies: blanket

Begin with a prayer that God opens hearts to better hear him speak through his word. Pray also that all would give their hearts of love, their praise, and their worship to him. Especially pray that distractions would be removed so that God can be heard.

Last week we learned about Elijah. What happened on Mount Carmel in the challenge between Elijah and the prophets of Baal? *(The prophets failed. Elijah's offering was totally consumed by fire from heaven. The prophets of Baal were all killed.)*

What did we learn through Elijah's experiences with Ahab and Jezebel and the prophets of Baal? *(There is only one true God, the God of the Bible, the God of Abraham, the triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.)*

Wrap yourself in the blanket and say:

Elijah left a mantle or cloak with his younger successor, the man that was prophet after him, Elisha. We, too, have a mantle that is left with us and that is a mantle of faith. When we believe in Jesus as our Savior and Lord, we are clothed with his heavenly riches and his power from on high. Let's remember this as we call upon his name and sing!

Songs of Worship:

Choose two or three songs. Briefly introduce songs so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God!

Your choice of music.

The Power of the Cross:

Jesus has given his life for us that we might have forgiveness and power to live for him.

Supplies: purse (optional)

Clasp your hands together as though you were hiding something inside.

What do you think I have in my hands?

Let kids make a few guesses.

Those are all good guesses. Are you ready to see? I'm not going to show you, because I think it's ugly. I'm not very proud of it. In fact, I'm ashamed of it.

Pretend to put the object into a pocket or purse.

There. Now you'll never see it, and I won't have to be ashamed or embarrassed about it.

Have a volunteer read 1 John 1:5-7:

"...God is light, and there isn't any darkness in him. If we say, 'We have a relationship with God' and yet live in the dark, we're lying. We aren't being truthful. But if we live in the light in the same way that God is in the light, we have a relationship with each other. And the blood of his Son Jesus cleanses us from every sin."

How did you feel when I hid my secret object in this pocket/purse?

Let kids respond.

That's the way God feels when we hide our sins from him. He doesn't like it.

Clasp your hands together again.

Let's pretend my closed hands are a closed heart. Closed hearts are stubborn hearts that do not want to let God inside. Closed hearts want to be selfish and separate or hidden from God.

Turn away from the kids but keep your face toward the kids.

Closed hearts pretend that they can hide their sin from God. Can God see inside my closed hands? (Yes.) Yes, he can because God is light. In him, there is no darkness at all. Can God see inside a closed heart? (Yes.)

So let's not try to hide our sin from God.

Turn back toward the kids.

The opposite of a closed heart is an open heart. People with open hearts want God to work in their lives.

Open your hands and cup them as though you were receiving a gift.

We open our hearts to God to show him the things that need to be changed in our lives. The things that need to be changed are our sins.

Ask some kids to share with the group specific ways their hearts have been closed recently (specific sins they have committed). Feel free to start with your own confession to set the tone—no deep confessions here, but something they can relate to, like procrastination for an important project or driving above the speed limit. As they come forward and confess into the microphone, have them cup their hands open to symbolize letting God's healing light in and receiving his grace and forgiveness.

Have a volunteer read 1 John 1:8,9.

"If we say, 'We aren't sinful' we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. God is faithful and reliable. If we confess our sins, he forgives them and cleanses us from everything we've done wrong."

Would you like to see what I had in my hands earlier?

The kids will clamor to see it. Reach into your pocket/purse and act surprised when you can't find "it."

It's gone! And that's just the way it is with our sins. Once we decide to stop trying to hide our sins from God, they disappear. God chooses to act as though they never existed. He forgives us and removes our sin from his sight.

Let's ask God to give us changed, open hearts instead of closed hearts.

Song of Response:

Choose a song to help the children turn to Jesus. Or, you may want to help them celebrate what God has done by singing a song of praise.

Offering:

Teach the importance of giving and talk about the mission activities they are supporting.

Supplies: blanket

Use the mantle (blanket) as an offering basket. Talk about how giving our offerings are a way we return our thanks to God for giving us his heavenly riches.

Talk about your current mission project and how close you are to a desired goal.



The Word

Learning Game:

Some churches dismiss children from the adult service at this time to join Kids Church. The learning game provides a fun kinesthetic activity to help kids connect with each other. The learning point will help reinforce the theme of the day.

Circle Hoop:

Supplies: two hula hoops for every 15 kids

Have the kids get in circles of 15 and hold hands. Place the hula hoops opposite each other in the circle, looped through contestants' arms.

The idea of the game is to keep everyone's hands connected while moving the hula hoops around the circle. Players squirm and wiggle the hula hoops over their shoulders and step through the bottom of the hoops to pass them along. Make sure both hula hoops travel in the same direction. See if one of the hula hoops can catch up with the other.

There is no winning team in this game. The game is more for team building and learning.

After a couple of rounds, gather kids together and say:

The more we practiced, the faster the hula hoops went around the circle. When we know how to let the hula hoop move around us and us move through it, the hula hoop moves faster. The same thing happens in our lives with God. The more we trust Jesus and say, "We want you to work through us," the more he does.

In today's Bible presentation, we will find how God wanted to work through Elisha, and did so in powerful ways.

Bible Presentation:

Help children pay attention by giving them a word or concept to listen for as you read. Consider letting a child read who could do so with excellence.

Supplies: video, The Animated Stories from the Bible: Elisha produced by Nest Family Entertainment

Application:

After the video, ask the following questions:

What did Elijah pass on to Elisha? *(His mantle.)*

How did Elisha show that the power for Naaman's healing did not come from him but came from God? *(He refused to take money for it. He said, "Miracles of the Lord are only purchased with faith." Elisha demonstrated that faith.)*

How did God take care of Elisha, even though he took no money for the miracles he performed? *(Because Elisha had faith, God always provided for his needs—food, place to sleep, etc.)*

What is necessary for God to work through someone and do powerful things? *(That person must have faith and give glory to God for what he does.)*



Witness and Tell:

Give children opportunities to share how God is working in their lives. It is best to use a microphone to ask children interview questions around the theme for the day.

Have volunteers come forward and tell about a time someone came to them for help, even if it was a small thing, and they helped that person.

Ask:

Do you think God was working through you to help this person?

Prayer:

Let the kids pray out loud. If you are using a microphone, invite children to form a prayer line and speak their thanksgivings or requests. If you have portable microphones, you can roam the audience. Kids can also go to prayer stations set up for specific types of prayer.

Options: (select one from the options below)

_____ **Prayer Line Option:** Kids line up and take turns stepping in front of the microphone to speak their prayers briefly.

_____ **Prayer Chair:** Adults or children with special prayer needs are invited to sit in the chairs. Kids gather around them, lay hands on their shoulders or knees and take turns praying.

_____ **Popcorn Prayer:** The leader moves through the crowd with a microphone and turns it toward kids who are raising their hands to pray. The kids speak their prayers into the microphone.

Lord's Prayer: Lead the children through the Lord's Prayer, phrase by phrase, or let them pray the entire prayer along with you.

Blessing:

Speak a blessing prayer over the children. Personalize this to your setting. Use a special scripture verse or blessing around the theme of the day.

Song of Sending:

Choose one song. Briefly introduce song so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God.

Supplies:

Attention Grabber:

- blanket

The Power of the Cross:

- (optional) purse

Offering:

- blanket

Learning Game:

- two hula hoops per fifteen children

Bible Presentation:

- video, *The Animated Stories from the Bible: Elisha*, produced by Nest Family Entertainment at www.nestfamily.com. Link to Children's Bible Stories in the left margin. Type in "Elisha" in the search box and enter. Order as instructed.

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