



Date: _____

Series: God is Our Rescuer
Summer Year 2, Lesson 11

If God Be For Us, Who Can Be Against Us?

Primary Scripture: Romans 8:31-32

Key Verse: Romans 8:31-32, "If God is for us, who can be against us? God didn't spare his own Son but handed him over to death for all of us. So he will also give us everything along with him."

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

Kids need encouragement. Encouragement comes from the "heart." Kids need strong hearts to feel valued and treasured. They need strong hearts to face challenges or adversities. They need strong hearts to witness for Jesus. By meeting Jesus, who has given his life for us, kids' hearts can be filled with his unconditional love. Because of Jesus, kids can have strong and encouraged hearts.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: Jesus gave his life for us in his death and resurrection. He has earned God's approval. No matter who comes against us, we can be sure God will love and forgive us. He will be with us and give us power.

Jesus in us: Jesus' love literally fills our hearts with the presence of the Holy Spirit. We can have encouraged hearts that help us have self-worth and confidence.

Jesus through us: Jesus chooses to work through us that we might boldly witness through his presence wherever we go.

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 Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Attention Grabber:

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

Supplies: rope

Lay a rope on the ground in the shape of a heart. In referring to the heart say:

Today we are going to talk about what it means to have strong hearts. Having a strong heart means that you feel good inside. It means that you are not afraid when bad things happen to you. It means that you want to give love to other people. Who thinks they have a strong heart?

Pick a volunteer to stand in the center of the rope heart. The volunteer comes forward and stands in the rope heart on the floor. Ask for another volunteer who thinks he can push this person out of the heart. Choose a strong child that can easily push the first child. Then say:

A bad thing that happens to a person or something that comes against him is called an "adversity." Examples of adversities could be a mean bully or mean words. These are things that make you lose heart and feel bad about yourself. Adversities can make you feel like you don't have enough courage to do what's right. Let's have this volunteer represent adversity and see if he can push (child's name) out of this strong heart.

After the second child has pushed the first out of the rope heart say:

(Name of child in heart) **needs some help. Do you remember last week when we saw how Jesus wraps us with himself? It's like a garment or robe of his holiness. He does this when we trust him as our Savior. When we are wrapped in Jesus' love, we know he loves us no matter what. That gives us a strong heart. That gives us courage. Then it doesn't matter what happens against us.**

Let's pretend that I represent Jesus. I come to the person needing the strong heart and I put my arms around him. I will hold him tightly and we will see if adversity can push him out of the circle.

Stand behind the child and hold him. Have the "adversity" push against the child you are holding but don't let the child get pushed out of the heart.

When Jesus puts his arms around us, we can have strong hearts and be encouraged to live for him.

Romans 8:31-32 from the Bible says, "If God is for us, who can be against us? God didn't spare his own Son but handed him over to death for all of us. So he will also give us everything along with him." That's what gives us a strong heart and that's what we will talk about today. Would you pray with me?

Dear God, as we worship you today, we want to have strong hearts. We want you to put your arms around us and fill us with your love. Even when we have sinned against you, you still love us and give us Jesus. Jesus, now cover us with your forgiveness so we know we are loved no matter what. Fill our hearts with courage. Help us know that if God is for us, who can be against us? We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

God is with all of us, so let's praise and worship him now.

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!

The Power of the Cross:

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

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.

Place an offering basket inside the rope heart. During the offering song, have each child stand for a moment inside the rope heart. If an offering was brought, it can be left in the basket. Tell the kids that even their song can be an offering to the Lord.

God knows we give him our hearts by telling him that we love him and we want him in our lives. He comes and fills us with his presence. That's what we do when we offer ourselves to him. Offering money is just one way of saying, "I love you. And I want you in my life."



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.

Divide into groups of six to eight children. Give each group of children an inflated balloon and a different game token to mark the team's position.

Have each team line up behind a long line made with masking tape. The first person from each team is to try to move the balloon the farthest distance from the line, touching the balloon with only his head and face. State this clearly! As soon as the balloon makes contact with any other part of the body or touches the ground, that person must mark the spot with his team's game token and return the balloon to the next teammate in line. When the next teammate advances farther than the marked position, he can move the game token to mark the new position. If one gets to the other side of the room, that person can turn and continue back.

The way a child moves a balloon is to hold it above his head, allow it to fall towards his face, and then blow the balloon upwards and forward. The child must continue the puffs to see how far he can move the balloon. Stop the activity after all children have tried. Compare distances between the teams. Choose a child that had great difficulties with the task.

This person is going to be able to beat the record. Let's watch. The rules are the same. The person may only touch the balloon with his head and face.

The balloon is set in motion and the child begins. This time when the balloon begins to lose control an adult reaches in and hits the balloon upward and forward. With the adult's continued help, this child will be able to win the game. The kids will probably say this was cheating. But if they listened closely to the rules, it was not.

The person traveling could not touch the balloon with any other part of the body. The rules did not state that a *helper* could not touch the balloon with his hand. So it is with us. By ourselves, we sometimes struggle. It is Jesus who loves us so much that he gave his life for us. How will he not also come along beside us and help us with things in our lives?

If you played the “Too Much to Carry” relay in Kids Church lesson 9 a couple of weeks ago, you might ask the kids if they remember how that game was like this one. Some things that might help them remember:

1. The adult who helped each team was just waiting to be asked for help. Sometimes God is just waiting for us to ask.
2. At other times, like with this last child today, God helps us even though we don't ask for help.
3. God loves to help us. Don't hesitate to ask him!

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.

You will need four balloons for this lesson with additional practice balloons. A balloon air pump is recommended. Stick a balloon inside another. Practice inflating the inside balloon and then tying it off to continue inflating the outside balloon.

For every good thing that happens to the main character in the story, air is inflated into a balloon. A balloon is popped when something bad happens to the character.

In presenting the story, it may be easier and more effective to have a silent partner blow up a balloon for everything that happens to the main character. Here is what this may look like: The partner stands with his back to the audience while you read each story segment. Your partner inflates the balloon for each story segment and then turns to face the kids (with a huge grin) showing the expanded balloon for each good thing mentioned.

By the time three good things have happened, the balloon should be tightly filled and your partner's face should beam with pride. When something bad happens to the main character, take a pin and pop the balloon. Your partner then makes a very sad face and turns back around.

This same pattern will be repeated for a second balloon.

The third time involves the trick. Your partner will have one balloon inside another before starting so he is actually inflating two balloons. (This is why a balloon air pump is recommended.) During the story, your partner will tie off the inside balloon after the fifth “good news” statement and continue to inflate the outside balloon as full as possible for the final “bad news” segment. If there is enough distance between the walls of the balloons, the inside balloon should remain inflated when you pop the outside balloon. This takes practice beforehand!

This illustrates that, with Jesus in our heart, we will not be destroyed when bad things happen. ****If God is for us, who can be against us?*** Not even bad things can take away God's love for us in Jesus.

Application:

To begin the lesson, read Romans 8:31-39. Ask the kids the following questions.

Who is stronger than God? *(No one.)*

Who is on our side? *(God.)*

Who can stand against us? *(No one.)*

How do you know God is for us? *(Because he didn't hold back his own Son but gave his Son for us.)*

No matter what, God will always be for us if we trust Jesus as our Savior. That's what it means to be filled up with God and have a strong heart.

During the following story, I will need some volunteers to finish a part of the story with good things that can happen to people.

As you choose six volunteers, number them from one to six.

During the story, when I hold up my fingers with your number, you should finish my sentence with something good that happens. You can make up whatever you want, but it has to be a good thing.

I'm also going to need two people to say something bad.

Choose two volunteers for this.

When I hold one thumb down the first person will finish the sentence with something bad. When I hold two thumbs down the second person will finish the story with something bad.

The Story of Emily Dieheart

This is a story of Emily Dieheart, who needed undying encouragement. And why, you ask, did she need encouragement? So her heart could stay full, so she would have a strong heart, so she would have a heart filled with love, so she would have a heart that felt good about herself and other people.

Sometimes Emily Dieheart had a heart that seemed like it died. Just watch and see.

At school, Emily had a history test. History tests scared her because she had a hard time remembering all those names and dates. But she studied hard the night before. When she finished her test, she thought she did pretty well. After recess her teacher called her to her desk and said, “I just graded the history test and I want you to know...”

Raise finger number one and child number one finishes the line by saying something positive. Your partner blows up the balloon partway and displays it proudly with a smile.

She felt encouraged and her heart filled up.

That afternoon, Emily noticed Teresa talking with another girl while she was looking at Emily. She went over to Teresa to ask what she was saying. Teresa was saying, “I noticed the blue dress you’re wearing, I think it’s...”

Hold up two fingers and inflate the balloon some more after the encouraging remark.

And Emily felt encouraged.

At recess Emily played in the kickball game with the boys. Sometimes she was afraid of what they would say. But she kicked the ball over someone’s head and when she got on base, one of the boys came up to her and said...

Hold up three fingers and blow up the balloon fully after the encouraging remark.

And Emily was encouraged.

She was having such a great day! Her heart was filled with courage. She felt like she could do anything. But then, on the way in from recess, Oscar the Bully was standing next to her in line. He was mad about losing the game. He said, “You might have won this game but that doesn’t change the way you look. I think you look like...”

Hold one thumb down. After the discouraging remark, pop the balloon. Your partner turns sadly back around.

Emily Dieheart felt like her heart had just died. She didn’t feel like trying anything else the rest of the day. How could Oscar have said such a mean thing?

The next day was Saturday and Emily was looking for her shoes. When she looked under the bed, guess what she found!

Hold up finger number four. Inflate balloon.

She was encouraged.

Later that day, Emily's friend Jane called. Jane told her that she was inviting her over to do something special. Guess what it was?

Hold up five fingers. Inflate balloon.

Emily was encouraged.

When she was up in her room getting ready, Emily's dad came in with a special gift. As he gave it to her he said, "I got you a simple gift just because I think..."

Hold up six fingers. Inflate balloon.

Emily was encouraged.

But when she was helping her mom set the table for dinner, her brother came in the room. Right in front of their mom, her brother said, "Guess what. I found a note at school that Ricky Waters wrote and do you know what he said about you? He said..."

Hold two thumbs pointing down. Pop the balloon.

Emily Dieheart once again felt like her heart died.

How could one bad thing said take away all those good things that had happened? Her heart needed encouragement. It needed to be filled with something that couldn't be popped.

On Sunday, Emily met some of her friends in Kids Church. They had a fun time talking about what they did last night. But Emily was more interested in *who* they were talking about in Kids Church.

They were talking about how God fills our hearts with love when we know that Jesus loves us no matter what. He proves his love for us by dying on the cross to take away the punishment of our sin. Jesus can live in our lives by his Spirit. Jesus thinks we are very special even when no one else thinks so. He thinks we are worth giving his whole life just so we could be with him. Even when we goof up, he is there. This is what Jesus says.

At each one of the following sayings, blow up the trick balloon a little more.

“I love you very much, Emily. I have given my life for you. I accept you just the way you are. I will forgive you of your sins and change you to be more like me. I will live in your heart.”

Tie off the inside balloon. Remember to turn your back to the audience to conceal the secret. Continue the story.

Emily Dieheart felt like her heart had been filled. There were some wonderful things that happened the rest of the day. Her brother was nice to her and helped her do the dishes.

Blow air into the outside balloon.

Her dad asked her to take a long walk with him. They counted the number of different kinds of leaves they found on the ground and tried to identify all the birds they saw. It was fun!

Blow air into the outside balloon.

Some of Emily’s friends called and invited her to go skating. One of her friends taught her how to skate backward. She even won the limbo contest by skating lower than anyone else!

Blow up the outside balloon.

Emily was so happy when she got home. She went outside and saw Oscar and Ricky. They were driving by on their bikes. They looked at her and laughed. They pointed and said, “There’s that Emily Dieheart, the only girl we know whose ears are as big as her feet and her feet are the size of her seat!”

“What a terrible thing to say!” Emily thought to herself. It seemed for a moment that her heart would pop.

Pop the outside balloon.

But then she realized she had something in her heart that no one else could take away. No matter what anyone else said, she knew that God thought she was very special. She knew Jesus gave his life for her and lives in her. If other people wanted to make fun of her, that was their problem. She had Jesus. Emily Dieheart had a heart that didn’t die because of the life that was in it. It was filled with Jesus.



Witness

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.

Object Lesson:

For this object lesson have a tack and four lightly inflated balloons. A fifth lightly inflated balloon will have a piece of transparent tape on it. Write "Jesus" where the tape is on this side of the balloon. On the opposite side of the balloon write: "the world." This trick is quite simple.

As you talk about the things in our lives that Emily might have experienced, refer to the Bible in Romans 8:35.

"Can trouble, distress, persecution, hunger, nakedness, danger, or violent death separate us from his love?"

Reflecting on these words, some of the kids might find some comparison with their adversities. Pop the four balloons as an example of an adversity is mentioned. Then continue with verses 37-38.

"The one who loves us gives us an overwhelming victory in all these difficulties. I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love which Christ Jesus our Lord shows us."

When saying this point, push a tack through the tape on the fifth balloon. The balloon will not pop and the tack will remain there. Pull the tack out and puncture the other side of the balloon marked "the world." This shows that relying on things of the world will result in "popping."

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.

Use three inflated balloons of different colors. Explain that the first balloon will remind us of the good things God says to us. Things like, "I love you," "You are my child," "I forgive you," "I'll be with you," and "My power is with you." Explain that prayer time will include a balloon toss. When the first balloon is tossed among the children, whoever catches it

should say something that Jesus says to him. Then he taps the balloon into the air for another child to catch and says aloud something that Jesus says to him. *(Be ready to help kids think of something if they're not sure. Or let other kids help them think of something.)*

After this balloon has made its rounds, a second colored balloon is launched. This balloon is our "thank you" for what God has done for us. A child should catch the balloon and say the thank you before being able to launch the balloon.

A third balloon is used to ask God about things we need help with. Have kids pray to say nice and encouraging things to one another because we have been so encouraged in Jesus. Then let the kids ask for any other prayer requests.

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:

- piece of rope (5-6 feet long)

Learning Game:

- inflated balloon for every eight children
- game marker for the floor for every eight children

Bible Event:

- four balloons not inflated – one of the balloons should be inserted inside one of the others
- air pump for the balloons (optional)
- pin to pop the balloons

Object Lesson:

- four lightly inflated balloons
- fifth lightly inflated balloon with a piece of transparent tape on it. On the side with the tape “Jesus” should be written. On the other side, “the world” should be written.)
- a tack

Prayer:

- three balloons that are different colors

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