



Date: _____

Series: A Miraculous Church
Spring Year 2, Lesson 55

God Invites the Outsiders In

Primary Scripture: 2 Kings 5:1-19

Key Verse: 2 Kings 5:3, "The girl told her mistress, 'If only my master were with the prophet in Samaria...'"

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

Today's story is one of the clear Old Testament stories that show God's intention to include people from outside of his chosen people Israel. A significant part of how God reached this person was through the witness of a young girl. It's that witness and the healing power of God that this lesson captures. Kids need to know that their efforts can make a difference just as the little girl's did. They need to be aware that people on the outside of the church often feel as if nobody really invites them in. Kids really need to invite outsiders in. Kids need to invite outsiders in so God can use their witness in powerful ways just as he did in the life of Naaman.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: Jesus invites us into his family through his death and resurrection.

Jesus in us: Jesus fills us with his presence to motivate us to reach people who are unlike us.

Jesus through us: It's God's healing power that changes lives. But God works through people who are willing to give him the glory and be a witness of his truth.

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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: A bowl of Skittles candy, enough for everyone in the room.

Let's pretend that today I just heard everyone in this room is infected with a rare disease. It's called the K.I.D.Z. virus. As I look at you now, I can tell that each one of you has the K.I.D.Z. virus and you're going to die in one hour! Oh, wait, I almost forgot! This strain of the virus has only one antidote for cure and I just happen to have it right here in my bowl. It's the anti K.I.D.Z. virus pills. If you just take one of these, you won't die. Let me pass these to...

Name several students to give the pills to and visual reasons why you chose each one. For example, "Let me pass one of these pills to Stephanie because I like her dress. And here's one for Ricky for keeping his hands to himself and paying attention." Arbitrarily pass these out and give some to others because they are not raising their hands. Refuse to give some of the "pills" to other kids and entice others to want the candy.

Now we are ready to begin Kids Church today, although, hum, a number of you will be dead by the end. Oh, shall we continue anyway? What, we shouldn't? Oh, you mean the others who didn't get the K.I.D.Z. virus pills want some, too? Well, those of you who did get the pills, do you think they should have the pills also? If so, then you can come up here and help pass them out.

After candy pills are passed out, continue:

Doesn't it feel terrible when you're left out? Some of you may have felt this way when you were passed over and didn't receive these candy pills to cure your virus. But some other people who already had the pills were kind enough to share.

That's what the church does. Some people feel like outsiders, but we want to share something that brings healing in our lives, and that's Jesus.

I hope nobody today feels like an outsider in our church. I hope no one feels strange or out of place. I hope nobody feels unwelcome. If you do, I want you to know that we don't want you to feel that way. We want you to know how God feels about you. He loves you and he is glad you're here. He's listening to your prayers and your songs and he's ready to give you whatever you need for any healing you might have. Let's sing and worship him.

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 songs.

The Power of the Cross:

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

Show the bowl of candy pills again.

We passed out these pills for the K.I.D.Z. virus but we were just pretending. Nobody is really sick with our fake virus. But there is a sickness in the room that everyone does have. It's not a sickness of your body that will make you die, but it's a sickness in your soul. If you don't do anything about it, your soul could die. That means that after your body dies on earth, your soul might not live with God in heaven forever.

Does anyone know what that disease is called? Yes, it's sin. Sin is a condition in our heart that makes us want to disobey God and do whatever we want instead. But God has given us a remedy or a pill for that. Is it one of these pieces of candy? Of course not. Our spiritual pill is the healing power of the cross and what Jesus has done for us. When we trust Jesus as our Savior, it's just like taking this pill for our spiritual lives.

In many churches and when you get older, people take the Lord's Supper when they go to the front during worship. It reminds them when they eat the bread and drink the wine of what Jesus has done for them. Then the power of God's forgiveness cures the sin in their lives.

Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for not letting us feel left out. You invite us into your family and you also heal us on the inside. We need your forgiveness, we need your healing and we need you to be with us. In Jesus' name, will you please do this for the sake of Jesus who gave his life for us? In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Now, I declare to you that, if you have ever felt far away from God and you listened carefully not only with your ears but with your heart to that prayer, God sees you as close to him and he is healing your soul right now.

Song of Response:

Choose a song to help the children turn to Jesus. Or, you may want 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.

Make a rope circle on the floor or put a hula hoop on the ground. Invite kids to step into it when they give their offerings. Say:

God has invited you into his inner circle to be close to him. That is the reason we can give to him.

Tell about your current mission project.



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.

Outside the Secret:

On a board or wall, affix six 8 ½ x 11" sheets of paper numbered from one to six into two columns of three sheets.

Choose an assistant and inform him/her in advance of how this trick works. Say to kids:

I just discovered that this person (point to assistant) can read our minds. Do you believe it? Let me prove it to you.

On the board (or wall) you see six sheets of paper, each with a number. I need my assistant to leave the room.

Have the assistant leave the room.

Now kids, one of you can choose a number from one to six. When we call our assistant back into the room, he/she will be able to identify which number was picked in secret.

Who would like to make the choice?

Call on someone to choose the number or have the group decide. But, remind kids that it must be decided quietly to be sure the assistant doesn't hear through the door. Say quietly:

Okay, you chose number two (for example), now let's bring the assistant back in and see if he/she can really read our minds, just like I promised you he/she could.

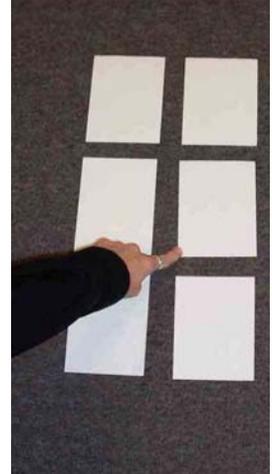
Bring the assistant back into the room.

I understand that you can read minds, is that right? Wait for answer.

Okay, then you'll know if and when I point out the correct number chosen by our group while you were out. Correct? Wait for answer.

Let's see, is this the right number? Choose any number to point out first.

The clue to indicate to the assistant what number is chosen is to point to the location on the sheet of paper that corresponds to where the number is placed in the grid on the wall or board. For example to indicate that the secret number is #3, point to any number sign in the location of the paper in the first column, second row. To indicate the number four, point to any of the second column-first row imaginary grid on any numbered paper.



You might be able to do the game a few more times to prove its validity and have fun with it. Then, let the kids see if they can guess how it is done. Kids who have figured out how it's done can whisper their theory to an adult in the room to see if it's correct. But be sure to warn kids that the game is much more fun when everyone can figure it out on their own. Everyone is told the secret at the end of the game.

Learning point:

The kids who may have been told the secret beforehand, or who figure it out on their own, are on the inside. They know something no one else knows. That is why we call it the “secret” number game. It's frustrating when you don't know the secret and would like to figure it out.

Have you ever gone into a church and felt like you didn't belong? Maybe you felt like everyone knew the secret and you didn't. Maybe they knew where to go or how to sing the songs. Maybe they knew many other kids and many of the Shepherds. Maybe you felt scared about being left out or maybe you didn't even want to go to church because you felt like it wouldn't be for you.

God wants all of us to know what it feels like to be left out and to care about those who feel that way. What are some things we can do to help people not feel left out here? What are some things we can do to help people feel welcome? Let's take some answers from the audience. (Sit with newcomers, help them read their Bibles, help explain what Jesus has done, help them to be patient if they don't understand, speak kind words to them, or explain certain traditions in church that may be different.)

Bible Reading:

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.

Option 1: Video

Supplies needed: video--Animated Stories from the Bible: Elisha, A Nest Family Entertainment Series. ISBN #1-56489-141-0—order from http://www.nestfamily.com/store/product_detail.asp?productID=ELD, and costume for the character of Naaman

To show video clip:

- Start at 7:39—“Here’s your food and drink, master.”
- Stop at 8:41—“Leprosy!”

Fast-forward the video to cue at 14:38. During fast-forwarding time, explain:

Naaman was an officer in the Aramean army who was oftentimes at war with Israel. They worshiped false Gods. The Aramean army, at one time, had captured people from Israel and one of them was a little girl taken captive as a slave in the captain’s house. She became close to the family and loved the captain as her own father. So, she wanted to help him when he became ill. She told his wife about the prophet in Israel who could heal him.

- Start 14:38—“Sir, something for you to drink.”
- Stop 15:21—“There is a prophet in Israel. A man of God.”
- Start 18:30—“He’s waiting, master, the captain of the Syrian Army.
- Stop 21:30—“Now I know there is one God – the living God.”

Total viewing time is 5:25.

Option 2: Costumed character

Have the costumed character Naaman come to tell the story. He also talks about the difference that this little girl made in his life. This can also be done along with the video.

Hello, I am Naaman, the high commander of the Aramean army. It is a great and mighty army and I am its general. We have invaded the Israelites many times and won. Now we’re at peace with them. But it is from a land in Israel that I have found life’s greatest treasure and this is my story.

Disease

I was stricken with a terrible disease called leprosy. There were spots on my skin and it began to wrinkle and dry up and it even fell right off of my bones. My fingers and toes would drop off. It was the most horrible disease of our time and I had it. There was no one who could cure me in all the land. But there was someone who knew of a secret cure that might help.

Slave girl

In my home was a slave from Israel. She had been captured during one of our invasions. She was only a slave girl, but yet, we cherished her. She thought of me kindly and told me about a mighty prophet of God in her homeland. She said this prophet could call upon his God who would do mighty deeds and perform wonderful miracles. I had nowhere else to turn and I had to see if she spoke the truth about the great power of this God.

Go to the king of Israel

I went to the king of Israel and brought with me an offering of seven hundred and fifty pounds of silver, one hundred fifty pounds of gold and ten sets of clothing. I gave it to him. I didn't belong to Israel's God. Why would he help me? And that's why I felt like I had to bring this money and riches. I said to the king, "Please, show me your God who can cure my leprosy." I brought him a treasure but the king said instead, "You're trying to trick me. You're trying to start a war with me. You know that I can't make God do anything. You know that I can't cure your leprosy."

Little did I know that this king of Israel did not follow the true God. He did not know to send me to the prophet Elisha. Instead, he worried that I had come as an army commander to defeat his kingdom. He had no answers, only misgivings. But I would not turn back; I had to find someone, anyone, who knew of the God of Israel.

I went to Elisha

Elisha, the prophet of God, heard that the king of Israel had received Naaman but did not know what to do. Elisha sent a messenger to the king. He said, "Please let Naaman come to me. He will find out that there is a prophet in Israel who knows the true and living God."

Naaman came with his horse and chariot. He came with his riches and servants. He came to my home and said, "Please heal me."

Do what God said

Then Elisha told me the most unusual thing. He told me to dip myself seven times in a muddy river. That made absolutely no sense at all! We have beautiful rivers in my homeland that are far cleaner. This prophet insulted me asking me to do such a thing and I wouldn't stand for it. Discouraged, I turned to leave. But my servant reminded me when he said, "If he told you to do something hard, would you

not gladly do it? But he told you to do something simple. Why don't you have faith and do as he says?"

"Okay," I said. So I acted on faith, and did what he told me to.

He is cured

I went to the muddy river of Jordan. I dipped myself in the water, not once, twice, or three times, but four, five, six, and seven times! By the seventh dip, my leprosy had vanished and I was cured! I realized that the river didn't cure me. It was the living God who healed me. I knew that now I needed to obey what the prophet had said. I returned to him quickly with my riches and I offered it all to him. It was a ransom, enough to be a king's treasure for a lifetime. But the prophet Elisha would not take it. He claimed that it was not he who gave it to me, but that it was from God himself.

Follow the true God

From that time on, I would follow the true God, not bow down to the God of my homeland, except that I had to help my king when he bowed down. But I knew that I would be following the God of Israel from this time forward. All of this was because a small child had led me to the living God. She helped me change my life by coming to God and she helped her entire country.

I wonder who of you out there has ever had a chance to tell another person who felt like they didn't belong about God? I once felt like I didn't belong, but God welcomed me and showed me that he could heal me. Kids, what can you do to share God's love with others so that God can welcome them into his family, as well?

Take audience responses.



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 kids tell about a time they shared the message of God's Word with another.

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 on 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:

- a bowl of Skittles candy or candy with a cross that could look like a pill

Offering:

- a rope or hula hoop

Learning Game:

- six 8 ½" x 11" sheets of paper marked with a number on each from one to six

Bible Reading:

- video: *Animated Stories from the Bible: Elisha*, A Nest Family Entertainment Series, ISBN #1-56489-141-0—order from http://www.nestfamily.com/store/product_detail.asp?productID=ELD
- costume for the character of Naaman

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