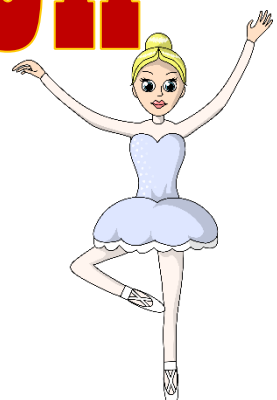


M.P. Wiggleworth's  
*Three-Ring*  
**CIRCUS**

*See incredible feats of faith!*

**TEACHER'S BOOK**





## Overview

M. P. Wiggleworth and his circus have come to town! As the performers prepare for opening night they learn lessons (sometimes the hard way) about how they should live. Over the five days of VBS kids will learn first how to begin their faith in Jesus, then be taught that when they have that faith it should be showing in their lives, particularly in their attitudes, speech, and obedience. Lastly they'll see that when their lives look different people around them will notice and they can use the opportunity to share their faith. By presenting the salvation message on day one teachers will have the opportunity to go back to it each following day and offer the children a chance to accept Christ.

## Curriculum

Each day's lesson will be split into four parts.

### Circus Cartoons

- Teachers begin their class time by playing that day's cartoon.
- The stories are simple enough that what is right and wrong will be apparent to even the youngest class, but have an element of excitement that will keep the older kids interested and invested in the characters.

### Bible Stories

- The Bible stories are written in such a way that if you wish to just read them directly to your class you can, though we suggest getting as familiar with them as possible beforehand.

### Verses

- Four of the five verses are included in our VBS songs. Music is a great way to help kids who are struggling memorize them more easily.
- All the verse are in the World English Bible version (WEB). Take some time to familiarize yourself with it if you aren't already.

### Wiggleworth's Workbooks

- **OLDER CLASSES:** The workbooks provide simple comprehension questions, then deeper ones that lead to life application. Students may not always be familiar with the terminology used (ie: salvation, sin). Take time to talk with your kids and be sure they understand what is being asked. Then they'll get the most out of the workbooks. You can also find the questions at the end of each of your lessons.
- **YOUNGER CLASSES:** The workbooks give young children a chance to be creative and make a connection between what they just saw in the cartoon and the real life application.



## Extra Time

Every day at VBS is an adventure. There are times when the kids in your class will be full of questions or jumping to get in on discussions. More than likely though, there will be at least one day when you'll have more time than you know what to do with. If you're feeling led to fill the spare time in a particular way, by all means go with your gut, but if you're feeling at a loss here are a few suggestions.

- **REVIEW THE WEEK'S VERSES:** It's the goal that by the end of VBS, every child can not only recite each day's verse, but that they also understand what they are saying. It's when kids understand the verses that they'll be able to hide God's word in their hearts and recall it when needed most.
- **USE YOUR WIGGLEWORTH'S WORKBOOKS:** How you go about using your class's workbooks is totally up to you. For some classes working on them as a group is the best way, while other groups are better off when kids have some quiet time on their own. The main purpose of the workbooks (in addition to having fun, time filling questions and activities) is to help kids apply what they learned in the lesson to their daily lives. Help the members of your class figure out what will truly make them remember the things they learned over the course of the week.
- **STORY/LIFE APPLICATION RECAP:** It's amazing how much kids remember when you think they aren't listening. Asking children to retell the Bible story to you is a great way to get them involved and to make sure they are understanding the point. Even more important though, is the life application portion of the story.
- **FOR THE YOUNGER CLASSES:** The material provided goes quite a bit more quickly for the younger classes (Preschool – 1<sup>st</sup> grade). We suggest you have additional games or activities in mind to fill the time. Here are some things we've found successful: Replaying the Circus Cartoon, practicing motions as you sing the VBS songs, making circus animals out of playdough, or even just being silly and pretending to be different types of circus performers.

## A Few Extra Things...

- Kids always start showing up early so plan to arrive approximately thirty minutes early the first day and fifteen minutes the following four days. Get ready to meet your kids.
- Classroom decorations are always encouraged as they help set the stage for the week. Don't feel like you have to tackle the whole room. If you have a large space section off an area and decorate that. Smaller spaces keep kids involved and help decorations pop.
- Creating a character for yourself is another fun way to reinforce the circus theme. Paint your face like a clown, pretend to be a stagehand as you lead them from place to place, or show your muscles like a strong man.



- Decide on a name for your class or area, for example the Lion Tamers or Clown Corner.
- Take time to familiarize yourself with the discipline and conduct policies of the church. It's important to be consistent throughout all classes and areas.
- Take every opportunity to get to know the families attending VBS, make them feel welcome, and invite them back the next day and to church.

## Final thoughts

Over the course of the week you will get to know the kids in your class better than anyone else. The most important thing you can do for them is to begin now praying for each child. If children have pre-registered ask your director for a class list so you can pray for your children by name. Ask the Lord to open their hearts to the truths He'd have them learn and show you best how to do that for each one.



## TEACHER'S DEVOTIONAL

***DID YOU KNOW THAT CIRCUS FOLKS USE THEIR OWN SPECIAL SLANG? THEY EAT IN THE 'COOKHOUSE'  
AND WHEN THE FOOD IS READY THEY SAY ...***

***"FLAG'S UP!"***

Good nutrition is imperative for circus performers. The amazing feats they demonstrate require great physical strength and endurance. They need the right fuel, and plenty of it.

As a Follower of Christ you need fuel too -- not to perform a mere physical feat for entertainment purposes, but to accomplish a spiritual act of eternal value. Your 'feat' is to demonstrate the reality of Christ's presence in and through your life. God's Word is the essential nourishment you require for that task. Read on for all the 'nutrients' it provides:

***1 Timothy 4:6 - If you instruct the brothers of these things, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, nourished in the words of the faith, and of the good doctrine which you have followed.***

***2 Timothy 3: 16-17 - Every Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.***

***Hebrews 4:12 - For the word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and is able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.***

Reading that list of ingredients should give you hope and confidence that a regular diet of God's Word will sustain you completely. The nourishment He provides will fill you up with supernatural power to model Christ in your everyday life. Read the above verses again introspectively. Envision how the Bible nourishes your courage, fuels your strength, and fills you with power to equip you for spiritual triumph.

Your life is in the Center Ring! Whether you are aware of it or not, you have an audience: friends, family, neighbors, co-workers, employers, VBS students and parents, even the strangers who cross your path. Wherever you are, people are paying attention to what you're doing! As a Servant of Christ, it is your directive to show your faith so that those people in your circle of influence can see your Lord. You need divine fuel to do that, so feast on the Word of God. Don't just snack on it. Devour it, until it becomes a part of you.



## DAY 1: YOUR FAITH SHOULD SHOW!

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**BIBLE STORY:** THE CHURCH AT THESSALONICA SHOWS THEIR FAITH 1 THESSALONIANS 1

**MEMORY VERSE:** ... HE WHO BELIEVES IN ME, THE WORKS THAT I DO, HE WILL DO ALSO. – JOHN 14:12B

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**TEACHER NOTES:** WHEN KIDS TALK ABOUT BEING SAVED THEY OFTEN START AND END WITH THE GOSPEL MESSAGE. WHILE THE GOSPEL MESSAGE IS CERTAINLY THE MOST IMPORTANT STORY ANYONE CAN HEAR, IT'S IMPORTANT FOR KIDS TO UNDERSTAND THAT BEING SAVED DOESN'T END WITH THE EMPTY TOMB AND A SALVATION PRAYER. THE SAME FAITH THAT GUARANTEES US ETERNAL LIFE WITH GOD, SHOULD ALSO IMPACT THE WAY WE LIVE OUR LIVES EVERY DAY. OUR GOAL WITH THIS LESSON, AND FOR OUR LESSONS THROUGHOUT THE WEEK, IS FOR KIDS TO BE AWARE THAT THEY CAN AND SHOULD ACT OUT THEIR FAITH.

How do you know that your parents love you? [*Allow children to answer*] Yes! Those are very good answers. We know our parents love us because they take care of us. They want what's best for us.

Did you know that God loves you too? That's right, the God who made the whole world and everything in it, loves you! Just like your parents, God shows you He loves you. He shows you by taking care of you and helping you, but the biggest way that God showed He loves you was by sending his son Jesus to earth.

God is perfect. He never does anything wrong. Do you ever do wrong things? Things like not listening to your parents or teachers, or telling a lie, or having a bad attitude. I do! Every single one of us does. Those things are called sin. Because God is perfect, all those wrong things we do keep us apart from Him. And when we're separated from God, there's nothing we can do to get back to Him.

But there is some really good news: God doesn't want to be separated from you because He loves you. So, a long time ago, God sent his son Jesus to earth to be born as a baby. Jesus grew up and the whole time he was on Earth he didn't sin. He didn't do a single wrong thing. He was perfect, just like his father God. Then, when Jesus was grown up he died on a cross. When he died, he took away every wrong thing you and I ever did or could ever do. The story doesn't end there though, after three days, Jesus came back to life!

Jesus did what we couldn't do: he gave us a way to be with God again. Not only when we're alive here on earth, but forever in heaven! It's an amazing gift, and all you have to do is accept it! When we believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sins and that he came back to life 3 days later, that is called faith. When we have faith in Jesus, it can change our whole lives!

Today in our circus cartoon, the Strongman was able to show everyone how strong he was by lifting the clown car over his head. Now, most of us may not be able to lift anything as heavy as a car, but just like the



Strongman showed his strength, we can show other people our faith by the way we act. Would you like to hear a true story from the Bible about some people who showed everyone their faith? I'll tell it to you!

After Jesus died on the cross and came back to life, he told his followers to go out into the world and tell everyone the good news! He wanted everyone to know about God's gift so that they could accept it.

Jesus's followers traveled all over telling people about Jesus. Everywhere they went, people heard the good news and believed! One of the places that people heard about Jesus and believed was called Thessalonica.

All the believers there came together and formed the church at Thessalonica. Because of their faith, they wanted to try to live like Jesus did. They wanted to try to avoid sinful things like being disobedient or lying. They wanted to make sure that every day they showed their faith.

And do you know what? It worked! Everyone who saw the church believed they had incredible faith. In fact, the church became famous for their faith. People far and wide heard about them and were amazed.

When you have faith, you can show it just like the church did. Jesus said that "he who believes in me, the works that I do, he will do also." That means that you can display your faith by trying to be like Jesus. You can try to be like Jesus in the way you act and the way you talk. The way you listen to your teachers and parents, and the attitude you have! All this week we'll be hearing true stories from the Bible that tell us different ways we can show others our faith.

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#### QUESTIONS FROM THE WIGGLEWORTH'S WORKBOOKS

- Why did Jesus die on the cross?
- What made the church in Thessalonica special?
- What are ways that people can show their faith?
- Do you have faith in Jesus? Do you think your faith shows?



## TEACHER'S DEVOTIONAL

### ***"FLAG'S UP!"***

No-one likes being on the receiving end of someone's bad attitude. Unfortunately, we experience it regularly. This week in VBS will be no different. Sooner or later we'll be faced with the external negative behaviors that result from another person's 'baditude'. The knee-jerk reaction is to let our own bad attitudes take over. Inwardly, we become critical and disapproving of the 'problem' person. Outwardly, we respond with frustration, irritation, or exasperation. That approach does not glorify God; nor does it show others what our Savior is like, or inspire change. Today's scripture lesson illustrates how a bad attitude was transformed by a good attitude.

To put it mildly, Naaman was pig-headed and uncooperative. But let's take him out of the Center Ring, and put the spotlight on his servant instead. When Naaman turned away "in a rage", the servant came near to his master, gently encouraging and coaxing him to obey Elisha's instructions. God worked through the servant's gracious attitude. The miraculous result was that Naaman was physically healed and, more importantly, began to see and know that God is real. **2 Kings 5:15 - "See now, I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel."** Isn't this what we want – for others to see God in us, so they can know Him?

You can't transform your attitude by trying harder, by exercising will power, or by wallowing in self-condemnation. But God's heart-renewing grace is available to you if you surrender, ask and trust. God will use you, just as he used Naaman's servant. Your faith will shine through so that others will see the mind and heart of Christ in you. Pray the verses below, asking God to plant, cultivate and grow these virtues in you.

**Galatians 6:9 - Let us not be weary in doing good, for we will reap in due season, if we don't give up.**

**Ephesians 4: 1-2 - ... walk worthily of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and humility, with patience, bearing with one another in love...**

**1 Thessalonians 5:14 - We exhort you, brothers, admonish the disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, be patient toward all.**

**Colossians 3: 12 - Put on therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, humility, and perseverance...**





## DAY 2: YOUR FAITH SHOULD SHOW IN YOUR ATTITUDE!

BIBLE STORY: NAAMAN HAS A BAD ATTITUDE – 2 KINGS 5:1-14

MEMORY VERSE: 1 CORINTHIANS 10:31B ... WHATEVER YOU DO, DO ALL TO THE GLORY OF GOD.

**TEACHER NOTES:** BAD ATTITUDES SOMETIMES SEEM CONTAGIOUS. OLDER KIDS ARE ESPECIALLY PRONE TO THIS. THIS LESSON ABOUT SHOWING YOUR FAITH BY HAVING A GOOD ATTITUDE IS EARLY IN THE WEEK FOR THAT REASON. IF CHILDREN ARE NOT FULLY PARTICIPATING OR BEING DISRUPTIVE (ESPECIALLY WHEN YOUNGER KIDS ARE AROUND) YOU'LL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO REITERATE THIS LESSON, AND MEMORY VERSE, HOPEFULLY TURNING THEIR ATTITUDES AROUND.

Today in our circus cartoon George the clown did not have a good attitude. Even though he was trying to look cool, in the end he was the one who looked foolish when he didn't participate. Not only that but he almost missed an opportunity to be a part of something really special. Sometimes people do that in real life too. Would you like to hear a true story from the Bible about a man who also had a bad attitude and almost missed out on something amazing? I'll tell it to you.

A long time ago there was a man named Naaman. He was an army commander that worked for King Aram. King Aram thought very highly of Naaman because he was a courageous soldier and God had given him lots of victories. But Naaman had a problem. He had a terrible sickness called leprosy. Leprosy is a disease that causes your skin to hurt badly and become covered in sores.

Now, there was a young girl who worked for Naaman's family. She felt sorry for Naaman and said, "If only he would go to Samaria. There is a prophet there who would cure him of his leprosy."

A prophet is a person who God speaks through and sometimes does miracles through. This prophet's name was Elisha.

Naaman went to the king and told him what the young girl had said.

King Aram was very pleased. "By all means go," he said to Naaman. The king gave him everything he would need and sent him on his way.

When Naaman got to Samaria Elisha heard that he was there and looking to be healed. "Have Naaman come to me," Elisha said. "Then he'll know there is a real prophet in Israel."

So Naaman took his horses and chariots and went to Elisha's house. He stopped outside and Elisha sent him this message. "Go wash yourself seven times in the Jordan River. Then you will be healed."



When Naaman received the message, instead of being happy he got angry! "I thought for sure Elisha would come out and wave his hand over me, then call out to his God to heal me. But instead he wants me to just dip in the Jordan River. The rivers where I come from are better than the water here," he said and went away mad.

Thankfully Naaman's servant had a better attitude and he spoke to his master. "If Elisha had asked you to do something big to be healed you would have done it. And if you'd listen in the big things you should be happy to listen in the little things too."

So Naaman changed his attitude. He listened to Elisha and to his own servant and dipped himself in the Jordan River seven times and when he came out his skin was made healthy and new. His disease was gone.

You see, when Naaman received his instructions from Elisha he cared so much about looking important that when he was asked to do something simple he had a bad attitude about it. But he's not the only one. We do that too. Sometimes we have a bad attitude when we are afraid of what other people might think of us. Other times our bad attitudes show when we whine or complain because we have to do something we don't want. And often our bad attitudes keep us from trying our best when it's something that doesn't seem important to us. But none of these things are right.

God wants us to have a good attitude. He sometimes calls this having a glad or happy or cheerful heart.

When you aren't in mood to obey but you give it your best anyway that's having a cheerful heart. It brings glory to God and it makes Him very happy. When we have a happy heart we don't miss out on the great things God is doing.

Having a good attitude is a great way to show our faith. Do you remember what faith is? When we believe that Jesus died on the cross for the wrong things we do and that He came back to life three days later that is faith. When you have faith in Jesus as your savior He's the leader of your life and it should show. Having a good attitude is an important way to show that faith. It's not typical for people to always do things with the right attitude, that's why God says in the Bible "... whatever you do, do it all to the glory of God." When you keep a good attitude, even when you don't want to, other people will see that and your faith will show.

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#### QUESTIONS FROM WIGGLEWORTH'S WORKBOOKS

- Why did Naaman go to see Elisha?
- What was his response to Elisha's instructions?
- What are some times that it's difficult for you to have a good attitude?
- When are you tempted to have a bad attitude? What can you do to make sure you have a good attitude in the future?



## TEACHER'S DEVOTIONAL

### ***"FLAG'S UP!"***

Most of us minimize the importance of truth. We use lies almost effortlessly to avoid offending, to create a better impression, or to hide some weakness, inadequacy or motive. We ease our guilt by referring to these deceptions as 'little white lies'. Even our VBS students, young as they are, have probably already mastered the art of the 'little white lie' to cover-up a wrongdoing or perhaps to fit in with their friends. We pretend that these infractions don't really matter; but when we lie, are we giving our students (and others in our lives) an accurate picture of Christ? Read the following verses, as you consider that question.

**John 1:14 - The Word became flesh, and lived among us. We saw his glory, such glory as of the one and only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.**

**John 14:6 - Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father, except through me."**

**John 18:37 - "For this reason I have been born, and for this reason I have come into the world, that I should testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice."**

How can we model and exemplify the One who is truth, if we so readily and thoughtlessly disregard the value of truth?

We do not understand the devastation caused by lies and liars. But God does. He knows that even our minuscule lies progressively reinforce the deceitfulness of our hearts (**Jeremiah 17:9**). He has seen the suffering of each person who has ever been a victim of deception. He knows that lies are dangerous, destructive and the product of His (and our) enemy (**John 8:44**). That's why He gave us **"the Spirit of truth, whom the world can't receive; for it doesn't see him, neither knows him. You know him, for he lives with you, and will be in you."** - **John 14:17** Ponder this verse throughout the day. Take hold of its reality: The Spirit of Truth lives in you! Through Him, the truth can shine out of you – always!



## DAY 3: YOUR FAITH SHOULD SHOW IN YOUR SPEECH!

BIBLE STORY: PETER LIES ABOUT KNOWING JESUS - MARK 14:27-72

MEMORY VERSE: COLOSSIANS 3:9A – DON'T LIE TO ONE ANOTHER...

**TEACHER NOTES:** OFTEN TIMES WHEN KIDS LEARN ABOUT LYING THEY THINK OF THE BIG EXAMPLES, BREAKING A LAMP AND DENYING GUILT FOR INSTANCE. BUT CHILDREN (AND ADULTS ALIKE) ARE SO ACCUSTOMED TO TELLING LITTLE WHITE LIES THAT THEY DON'T EVEN REGISTER THEM. WE NOTICED THIS WHILE TEACHING THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. FOR EXAMPLE, ONE CHILD WILL SAY SUCH AND SUCH A TOY IS HIS OR HER FAVORITE THEN ANOTHER KID WILL JUMP IN WITH "OH, THAT'S MY FAVORITE TOY TOO," FOLLOWED BY ANOTHER THEN ANOTHER THEN ANOTHER. OUR GOAL WITH THIS LESSON IS FOR KIDS AND ADULTS TO BECOME MORE AWARE OF THEIR SPEECH, AND TO LEARN TO SHOW THEIR FAITH BY ALWAYS SPEAKING THE TRUTH.

Today in our circus cartoon Kyle worked hard, and helped a lot of people but he didn't always tell the truth. One time he exaggerated about how long his work had taken him, another time he told a small lie because he didn't feel like helping Penelope, and twice he said he did a job that he hadn't. Unfortunately, Kyle learned the hard way that telling the truth, even in little things, is very important. Do you always tell the truth? When is a time you were tempted to lie? Would you like to hear a story from the Bible about a real person who also had a hard time telling the truth? I'll tell it to you.

Remember at the start of the week when we heard the story of Jesus and how he died on the cross so we can be forgiven for all the wrong things we do? Well, our story today begins around that same time.

Peter was a good friend of Jesus. He loved him very much. One day Jesus, Peter and the other disciples had a special meal together. While they were eating Jesus told His friends that trouble was coming for Him and when it did He knew all of them would run away.

Peter spoke up; "Surely, I won't, Lord," he said. "Even if everyone else turned their backs on you I never would. I'd go to jail for you. Or even die for you."

Jesus looked at his friend, and said, "Peter, this very night you are going to pretend you don't know me three times."

Later that evening Jesus was unfairly arrested. When he was being taken away by the soldiers most of His friends scattered but Peter followed behind to see what would happen to Him. Jesus was dragged into a place where the people who wanted him arrested were waiting. Peter stepped into the courtyard of the building and waited, warming himself by the fire. A servant girl saw him there and recognized him.

"Aren't you one of Jesus' disciples?" she asked.



"I don't know or even understand what you are talking about," Peter pretended and walked away.

A little while later Peter was standing by some others and the servant girl spoke again, "This man was with Jesus," she said.

Peter got upset. "I don't know the man," he lied a second time.

An hour later a man came to Peter. "Certainly, you're one of Jesus' followers. I can tell by your accent."

At this Peter got angry. He began to yell curses at the man and lied a third time, "I swear, I don't know the man!"

Just then Peter remembered what Jesus had said. He was horribly upset and ran away to cry.

There are lots of reasons Peter could have lied. Maybe he was too scared to tell the truth, or maybe he just wanted to fit in with the crowd, maybe it just seemed easier. No matter what the reason though, it would have been better for him to tell the truth.

The same goes for us. There are a lot of excuses we can come up with for not being honest. Sometimes when we've done something wrong it's scary to admit it. Sometimes we exaggerate to make a story more exciting. Sometimes when our friends are talking about something we've never heard of we pretend to know about it just to fit in. Sometimes we might say we did something because we plan to do it later. Our small lies might not seem like a very big deal, but they are all sin. Just like Peter, it's always better for us to tell the truth.

Being truthful is a great way to show our faith. Do you remember what faith is? When we believe that Jesus died on the cross for the wrong things we do and that He came back to life three days later that is faith. When you have faith in Jesus as your savior He's the leader of your life and it should show. That's why it says in the Bible, "Don't lie to one another." When you are honest it makes God happy. Most people tell at least some small lies. So when you always tell the truth your life will look different than everyone else. When you are honest your faith shows and people around you will notice.

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#### QUESTIONS FROM WIGGLEWORTH'S WORKBOOKS

- In our story today, what is it that Peter did wrong?
- Why did Peter say that he didn't know Jesus?
- What are some reason people might tell a lie or a fib?
- When we tell the truth our faith shows. When are you tempted to be dishonest? What can you do to make sure you are honest in the future?



## TEACHER'S DEVOTIONAL

### ***"FLAG'S UP!"***

Circus parades are spectacular! Watching all the performers in their stunning costumes circle the Big Top is truly a captivating grand finale. But how impressive would the parade be if every performer marched in a different direction, each one in a rhythm of his personal choosing?

Sometimes, that's how we are with God. We call ourselves 'Followers of Christ', but when He leads us onto a path we'd rather not take, we choose an alternate course. In today's VBS lesson, we learn (from **Genesis 6:9**) that **"Noah walked with God"**, while the rest of the world was choosing a different direction. Even though God's instructions must have been puzzling to Noah, even when God's commands were not easy or pleasant, **"He did all that God commanded him."** -Genesis 6:22

Nothing demonstrates love and faithfulness as powerfully as obedience. Why? Because obedience is hard. Giving up the freedom to follow our personal desires and preferences for the sake of surrendering to the will of another requires a loyal and fully devoted heart. That's why obedience to God sends a clear and pure a message that our faith is authentic. **But whoever keeps His word, God's love has most certainly been perfected in him. This is how we know that we are in Him: he who says he remains in Him ought himself also to walk just like He walked.** - 1 John 2: 5-6

When you walk with God, when you walk as Jesus walked, people take notice: **For your obedience has become known to all. - Romans 16:19** When you share your faith, others will know that your love for God is not just empty words. They will see, by your obedience that your love for Him and your faith in Him is the real deal! **This is love, that we should walk according to his commandments. 2 John 1:6**

True obedience is a matter of the heart, not a matter of external self-control. Since heart transformation is an ongoing process we cannot expect our walk with God to be without an occasional stumble. At those times, we can count on God to pick us right back up again the moment we reach out to Him. **Yahweh (*I Am*) upholds all who fall, and raises up all those who are bowed down. - Psalm 145: 14**

Today, keep a picture in your mind of you and God walking together and pray the following verses that He might set your heart on obedience to Him.

**Psalm 40:8 - I delight to do your will, my God. Yes, your law is within my heart.**

**Psalm 119:112 - I have set my heart to perform your statutes forever, even to the end.**



## DAY 4: YOUR FAITH SHOULD SHOW IN YOUR OBEDIENCE!

BIBLE STORY: NOAH IS OBEDIENT – GENESIS 6:5 – 7:24

MEMORY VERSE: HEBREWS 13:17A – OBEY YOUR LEADERS...

**TEACHER NOTES:** OBEDIENCE IS A TOPIC KIDS HEAR A LOT ABOUT, BUT THAT'S PROBABLY BECAUSE IT'S SOMETHING THEY CAN EASILY UNDERSTAND YET STILL STRUGGLE WITH. OUR REASON FOR KEEPING SUCH A STRAIGHT FORWARD TOPIC TILL LATER IN THE WEEK IS BECAUSE WHILE OBEDIENCE IS INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT, OUR HOPE FOR THE WEEK IS THAT TEACHERS AND STUDENTS ALIKE WILL STRIVE FOR MORE THAN THAT. AS YOU SEE KIDS NOT MODELING THE BEHAVIORS THEY'VE BEEN LEARNING ABOUT (HAVING A GOOD ATTITUDE, TELLING THE TRUTH) WE HOPE YOU'LL TAKE THE CHANCE TO SPEAK TO THEM GENTLY AND SHOW THEM THE OPPORTUNITY THEY HAVE TO DISPLAY THEIR FAITH. AND WHEN YOU SEE THAT THEY ARE MODELING SUCH BEHAVIORS WE HOPE YOU GIVE THEM THE ENCOURAGEMENT TO CONTINUE.

*UNFORTUNATELY, NOT ALL KIDS WHO ATTEND VBS COME FROM SAFE AND CHRIST-FILLED HOMES. BECAUSE OF THIS WE REALIZE THAT THERE ARE TIME KIDS MIGHT BE IN DANGEROUS SITUATIONS WHERE IT'S BEST FOR THEM NOT TO OBEY. TO ADDRESS THIS SITUATION WE'VE INCLUDED A BRACKETED SECTION IN THE SECOND TO LAST PARAGRAPH, GENTLY ADDRESSING THE SUBJECT. PRAY ABOUT THIS AHEAD OF TIME, AND DISCUSS IT AS YOU FEEL LED.*

Today in our cartoon the Ringmaster gave instructions to all the performers, but Penelope wanted to do things her own way and decided to disobey. Do you always feel like doing the things you are told? I know I don't, but God teaches us that it's important to obey Him and the people He puts in charge all the time. Do you know what it means to be obedient? Obedience is doing what you're told regardless of how you feel or if you want to. There are lots of great stories in the Bible about people who are obedient. Would you like to hear one now? I'll tell it to you.

A long time ago, God looked at the Earth He had created and all the people on it. What He saw made him very unhappy. Instead of loving God and living for Him all the people had turned wicked and were doing terrible things. They were violent and there was nothing good in their hearts. When God saw this He was heartbroken.

"I will get rid of everything I have made," He decided.

But there was one man who wasn't like everyone else. His name was Noah. While everyone else was doing wrong, Noah did right. He loved God and lived the way God wanted him to. This pleased God very much so He told Noah His plan.



"I am going to destroy the whole Earth and start again with you and your family," God told Noah. "I want you to make a big boat, called an ark. I am going to flood the entire world, but you and your family and a pair of every kind of animal will be safe inside the ark."

Can you imagine how Noah must have felt? There had never been a flood on the earth before. Making a boat to be protected from something that had never happened must have seemed crazy. What would people think of him? And what about how much work it was going to be? Making even a small boat would take a long time, but an ark that could hold his whole family and those animals must have seemed like an impossible task. But do you know what Noah did? He obeyed.

God told Noah exactly what to do. He told him how long to make the ark, how tall to make it, how many decks it should have, and even how to keep water from getting inside.

The Bible tells us that Noah did everything exactly as God told him to. Noah obeyed.

When the time came, God spoke to Noah again. "In seven days I'm going to send the flood. The rain will last for forty days and forty nights. It's time for you and your family and all the animals to get inside the ark."

Again the Bible says that Noah did all the things God commanded.

He and his family got inside. The pairs of animals gathered to the ark and they got inside too. For forty days and forty nights it rained, just as God said it would. The whole earth flooded and the water covered everything for 150 days. All the animals and people left on the earth were wiped out, but Noah and his family and the animals inside the ark were kept safe, just as God had promised.

Whenever God gave Noah instructions, Noah followed them right away. It didn't matter if Noah was busy or had other plans, or if he felt like listening. He obeyed no matter what.

God wants us to be obedient to Him and to people He puts in charge over us too. Who are some people you should obey? (Let kids answer.) [The most important person we need to obey is God. He never tells us the wrong thing to do because He is perfect and He knows best. Once in a while though because people *aren't* perfect someone will tell us to do something not right. If you ever think that someone is telling you to do something that's not right or good you should ask another adult what to do.] Do you always feel like doing what you're told? What are some reasons you come up with for not obeying?

Being obedient is a great way to show our faith. Do you remember what faith is? When we believe that Jesus died on the cross for the wrong things we do and that He came back to life three days later that is faith. When you have faith in Jesus as your savior He's the leader of your life and it should show. That's why it says in the Bible, "Obey your leaders." When we are obedient it pleases God. It's easy to do things our own way, and lots of people do, so when we obey our lives look different and our faith shows.





Noah obeyed God exactly and people all over the world are still talking about his faith thousands of years later.

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#### QUESTIONS FROM WIGGLEWORTH'S WORKBOOKS

- In our story today, what did God ask Noah to do?
- How did Noah react when God gave him instructions?
- Who are some people God wants you to obey?
- When we are obedient our faith shows. When are you tempted to disobey? What can you do to make sure you obey in the future?



## TEACHER'S DEVOTIONAL

### ***"FLAG'S UP!"***

**1 Thessalonians 1:5 - We know, brothers loved by God, that you are chosen, and that our Good News came to you not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and with much assurance. You know what kind of men we showed ourselves to be among you for your sake.**

Today, we're teaching a lesson from the book of Daniel. As you read the following verses from Chapter 2, what comes through loud and clear about Daniel? What kind of man did he show himself to be?

**v. 20 - Daniel answered, Blessed be the name of God forever and ever; for wisdom and might are His.**

**v. 23 - I thank you, and praise you, you God of my fathers, who have given me wisdom and might...**

**v. 28 & 30 - ... there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets... But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living...**

Above all, Daniel was a man of humility. He continually refused glory for himself and pointed to God, directing the glory to Him. Daniel understood and acknowledged that any good in him came from God. His life perfectly exemplified today's memory verse:

**Matthew 5:16 - ... let your light shine before men; that they see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.**

If we want our Good News to impact our students (and others), **"not in word only, but also in power"**, we need to be like Daniel -- never seeking attention, or praise or honor for our spiritual feats. We need to use our gifts and abilities knowing that **"a man can receive nothing, unless it has been given him from heaven"** (John 3:27). We need to show ourselves to be Followers of Christ, who understand that we can only shine when we reflect the light of His glory. **James 1:17 - Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights.** The ultimate goal of our service must be: **He must increase, but I must decrease.** -John 3:30

Because Daniel refused glory for himself but instead pointed Nebuchadnezzar to the glory of God, the king was lead to proclaim: **"Of a truth your God is the God of gods, and the Lord of kings".** -Daniel 2:47

We can be lights in our world -- to our students, friends and acquaintances, family, neighbors, co-workers -- if, and only if, we point to His glory, instead of seeking our own.



## DAY 5: YOUR FAITH SHOULD SHOW SO OTHERS WILL KNOW!

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BIBLE STORY: DANIEL IN BABYLON – DANIEL 1-2

MEMORY VERSE: MATTHEW 5:16 – ... LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE BEFORE MEN; THAT THEY MAY SEE YOUR GOOD WORKS, AND GLORIFY YOUR FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN.

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**TEACHER'S NOTES:** WE WANT THIS LESSON TO TEACH CHILDREN THAT SHARING THEIR FAITH STARTS WITH SHOWING THEIR FAITH. WHEN CHRISTIANS SHOW THEIR FAITH BY BEING HONEST, HAVING A GOOD ATTITUDE, AND OBEYING AUTHORITY, THEY ARE NOT ONLY PLEASING GOD, BUT ALSO PREPARING OTHERS TO HEAR THE GOOD NEWS AND START THEIR OWN RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST.

There once was a man named Daniel. Daniel was from a city called Jerusalem. When Daniel was only a teenager, he was forced to leave his home and his family to go to a place called Babylon. He was being sent to Babylon so he could serve the king whose name was Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel loved God very much. He knew that many of the people in Babylon, including the King, did not know God. God wanted people to only worship Him, but the people in Babylon worshiped made up gods. God told people how they could act to make Him happy, but the Babylonians did things that made God unhappy. God told people what kind of foods they should or shouldn't eat, but the Babylonians ate whatever they wanted.

Daniel knew that when he went to Babylon he would be expected to do things the way the Babylonians did them. But Daniel decided he would always do what God wanted him to do first. He was determined to show his faith no matter what!

After Daniel arrived in Babylon, he saw the food that the king wanted him and his friends from Jerusalem to eat. Daniel knew that the king's food was not the kind of food God wanted them to eat. Because he wanted to please God first, Daniel asked for permission not to eat the food. The official in charge of the food heard Daniel's request, but he was worried what would happen if Daniel and his friends didn't eat the king's food. He was certain that their health would suffer and that he would be punished!

Daniel understood why the official was scared so he asked for a test. He asked that for 10 days he and his friends would only eat the kind of food God wanted them to eat. After the 10 days, the official could see if Daniel and his friends were less healthy than the men eating the king's food. After the 10 days were up, Daniel and his friends were healthier than any of the other men! The official took away the king's food and let them eat what they wanted.

Daniel and his friends continued to live among the Babylonians. They studied and learned and became very wise. But even though Daniel worked for the king, he always put God first.



Sometime after that, the king was troubled by a strange dream. The king knew that this dream meant something, but he didn't know what it meant. He summoned his wise men, magicians, enchanters and sorcerers. He demanded that they explain his strange dream.

The magicians asked the king to tell them what the dream was, but the king said "No!" The king wanted to be completely sure that the person who told him what the dream meant really understood it, so he decided to keep the dream a secret. The king would only listen to the person who could tell him what the dream was.

The king's men told him this was impossible. "No person can do what you want! The only one who could know your dreams is a god!" they told him. The king was furious. He was so angry at this answer that he order all of the wise men in the whole kingdom to be put to death.

Because of this decree, soldiers came to where Daniel and his friends were to arrest them. Daniel asked why they were being arrested and the soldiers explained. Daniel did not know what the king's dream was or what it meant, but he knew that God knew. Daniel trusted that God would help him and his friends. Daniel went to the king to ask for time to determine what the dream meant. Then he went home and he and his friends asked God for help.

God answered their prayers, just as Daniel knew He would! That night, God told Daniel the king's dream and what it meant. The next day, Daniel went to visit the king. He said to the king, "no man on earth knew what you dreamed, but there is a God in heaven who knows everything! He gave you this dream and he has sent me to tell you what it means."

Daniel described the king's dream. He then explained to the king what the dream meant. The king was shocked! He fell down on the ground before Daniel and said, "Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings because He allowed you to know and explain this dream!"

The king came to know about God because of Daniel's faith!

All week we've learned about ways we can show our faith. Do you remember what faith is? When we believe that Jesus died on the cross for the wrong things we do and that He came back to life three days later that is faith. When you have faith in Jesus as your savior He's the leader of your life and it should show. When the people around us see us acting out our faith, it helps them learn about God, Jesus, and the amazing gift of salvation. That's why it says in the Bible, "... let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify you Father who is in heaven." When people who don't know about Jesus see us acting out our faith by our obedience, our honesty, and our good attitudes, they can see what an awesome God we serve!



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#### QUESTIONS FROM WIGGLEWORTH'S WORKBOOKS

- In our story today, why did Daniel not want to eat the king's food?
- Daniel had faith that God would help him. What happened saw his faith in action?
- What are some way that people around you can see your faith in action?
- When we show our faith, other people get to know more about God. When is it hard for you to show your faith? What can you do to make sure you show your faith in the future?