

Bartholomew and the Oobleck

I. Background

Learners: Group of 10-12 elementary age children from the small congregation of a Presbyterian church who are meeting as one class for summer Sunday school

Setting: A Sunday school classroom in the Education Building

Time Frame: 55 minutes

II. Focus

Unit Subject Matter: Dr. Seuss books which are being used to teach biblical principles to the children. Each book will focus on a different theme.

Biblical Principal for this session: We all make mistakes because sometimes we want things that seem like they are good for us when they really are not. When we humbly say “I’m sorry”, God will forgive our sins.

Scripture: Acts 10:43

Session goals:

- Explore the meaning of the word “mistake” using the Etch-a-Sketch
- Brainstorm a list of mistakes that we can make
- Read and discuss Bartholomew and the Oobleck to see what happens when King Derwin makes a mistake
- Tie mistakes to sin and use scripture to talk about how we are forgiven
- Make beaded crosses as visible symbols of forgiveness

III. Space, set-up, and materials

Environment: A Sunday school classroom with floor space for children to listen to the story and one long table for the beaded cross project which concludes the lesson.

Materials, Resources, Equipment:

- 1 Etch-a –Sketch
- Chart paper and marker
- Bartholomew and the Oobleck
- Bibles for each child
- 1 straw per child
- Pony beads, scissors, string (see beaded cross instruction sheet attached to plan for specific amounts of beads and string needed)

IV. Step-by-Step Story Experience Plan

FEELING into the story (10 minutes)

- Ask a child to give you directions to make a picture on the Etch-a-Sketch.
- Purposely do something wrong in making the picture. Ask the children to tell you a word for doing something wrong like I did in the picture. How can I fix my Etch-a-Sketch picture?
- Use chart paper to list ways that we make mistakes. The teacher can start out the list by writing....being mean to a friend, breaking something and not admitting you did it, etc to get the children talking. Today we are going to hear a story about a king who made a mistake.

MEETING with the story (25 minutes)

Read Bartholomew and the Oobleck to the children stopping to discuss the questions below during the story. Why is King Derwin unhappy? What does he order his magicians to do? What happens when the oobleck begins to fall from the sky? How were people hurt by what the king did? Who talked the king into changing his mind? What did Bartholomew mean when he said to the king: “If you won’t say you’re sorry, you’re no sort of king at ALL!”? Was it easy for King Derwin to say he was sorry? Is it easy for us to say we are sorry?

Link the word mistake to sin and discuss what that means. When we sin, what can we do? Read and discuss the meaning of the scripture verse from Acts. How does what I did to fix my drawing on the Etch-a-Sketch illustrate what happens when we ask God to forgive us?

RESPONDING out of the story (20 minutes)

Each child will make a beaded cross hanging to take home. Use detailed direction sheet at the end of lesson plan to complete this project. The cross is to remind them that we are forgiven because Jesus died for us.

Closing prayer asking God to forgive each of us for the mistakes we have made today.

V. Rationale

Children often want things that are really not good for them just as King Derwin wanted the oobleck because he was bored with the things that fall from the sky in his kingdom. They also will say or do hurtful things to others and don’t realize the outcome of their actions until it happens. The Etch-a-Sketch is a familiar toy that can illustrate the concept of a mistake. Fixing it by erasing the picture is a simple way of beginning to plant the concept of what we as Christians can do when we sin. Listing ways that we all make mistakes is a way to talk about sin without singling out the actions of any one particular child.

Dr. Seuss illustrates the consequences of a mistake very well in the book Bartholomew and the Oobleck. Reading and discussing this story is a great way to begin to link mistakes with the biblical theme of sin. The scripture I chose will remind children that they are forgiven because Jesus died on the cross for them. The beaded hanging will be a visible reminder of this forgiveness that the children can take away from this lesson.

Beaded Cross Hanging (Instructions taken from www.dltk-bible.com) Materials:

straw

string, wool or ribbon

pony beads – any colors will do. I used:

94 yellow

22 purple

4 mauve

scissors

Instructions:

1. print out the template (it includes most of the directions on this page along with the pattern for how to make this project)

2. Cut 4 strings 1.5 to 2 feet long

3. Make a slip knot in the center of each string

4. Slip the knot over the straw

5. Put 15 yellow beads on the first strand of string. Tie the last bead tightly onto the string.

string 2 and 3: 5 yellow, 2 purple, 8 yellow. Tie the last bead tightly

string 4 and 5: 3 yellow, 2 purple, 2 mauve, 5 purple, 3 yellow. Tie the last bead tightly.

string 6 and 7: 5 yellow, 2 purple, 8 yellow. Tie the last bead tightly.

string 8: 15 yellow. Tie the last bead tightly.

6. Optional: thread the pipe cleaner through all the bottom beads. I find this helps keep the project hanging nicely.

7. Thread a string through the straw and tie in a loop to hang.

8. Trim the leftover strings