

## **BIBLE TRUTH 8, LESSON 1: PLANNER/OVERVIEW**

### **GETTING STARTED: Welcome and Opening Songs** (*introduce unit and get kids moving with these songs*)

**Welcome to Praise Factory:** PFI: Praise Factory Investigators Theme Song *PFI NIV Songs 12, Track 1*

**Rules to Help Us Worship God and Love One Another:** WoGoLOA Classroom Rules Song  
*PFI NIV Songs 12, Track 2*

**Big Question Under Investigation:** Big Question 12 Songs *PFI NIV Songs 12, Tracks 3,4*

**Big Question Bible Verse:** Ephesians 5:1-2 Song *PFI NIV Songs 12, Track 5*

### **DIGGING DEEP DOWN: Key Concept and Story** (*introduce the Bible Truth and tell the related story*)

**Bible Truth 8:** God's People Read His Word, the Bible

**Bible Truth Hymn:** Trust and Obey, v.1 *PFI NIV Songs 12, Track 24*

**Bible Verse:** Psalm 119:11,15-16

**Bible Verse Song:** I Have Hidden Your Word *PFI NIV Songs 12, Track 25*

**Lesson 1 Old Testament:** The Case of the Missing Words Deuteronomy 6,9,31; Ezra; Nehemiah 8-10

### **TAKING ACTION: Response Activities** (*choose from among these activities*)

**Snack and Discussion Planner:** Feasty Fig Cakes and Fizzy Fruit of the Vine

**ACTS Prayer:** Prayer Sheet

**Bible Truth Review:** Discussion Questions and Game: Rush to Safety

**Bible Truth Hymn:** Trust and Obey, v.1 *PFI NIV Songs 12, Track 24*

Song, Sign Language and Song Game: Big Voice, Little Voice **PFI NIV SONGS 12 BOOK or ONLINE**

**Bible Verse Review:** Psalm 119:11,15-16 Discussion Sheet and Game: Memory Verse Limbo

**Bible Verse Song:** I Have Hidden Your Word *PFI NIV Songs 12, Track 25*

Song, Sign Language and Song Game: Sign It, Say It, What Does It Mean? **PFI NIV SONGS 12 BOOK or ONLINE**

**Story Review:** Discussion Questions and Game: Spoon and Ball Relay

**Case Replay, Jr: Drama Activity for Youngest Children** (children do same story actions together)

**Case Replay, Sr: Drama Activity for Most Children** (children re-tell story with individual parts)

**Craft:** Tabernacles Made of Wood and Tree Branches

**VIPP (Very Important Prayer Person) Prayer Time:** Coloring Sheets (back of book) and Game: Hit the Wall

### **TAKING IT HOME: Take Home Sheet for Review and Family Devotions**

**PFI Pronto:** Bible Truth 8, Lesson 1 **PFI NIV PRONTOS 12 BOOK or ONLINE**

**The Case of the Missing Words** Deuteronomy 6,9,31; Ezra; Nehemiah 8-10

by Connie Dever

**Our story is called:****The Case of the Missing Words.****As you listen to the story, see if you can figure out:**

1. What were the missing words? Why did they go missing?
2. Why was it so important that these words be found?

This story takes place over many years in Old Testament times, in the years before Jesus came to live on earth.

For forty years Moses had led the Israelites through the wilderness, waiting to enter Canaan, the land the LORD had promised them. Now at last the time had come! At the LORD's command, Moses was handing the Israelites into Joshua's care. Moses was going to be with the LORD forever. But before he did, Moses gathered the Israelites together to speak the LORD's words to them one last time.

"Never forget the words I've given you to live by," the LORD urged the Israelites through Moses. "Teach them to your children, too, so they will know and obey them, too," He told them. "Don't follow other gods. Remember my commands and worship only Me. If you do, I will bless you and take care of you. If you don't, then I will discipline you by destroying Jerusalem and taking away from you all the beautiful land I have given you. Crash, bang, boom! It will all be in ruins. You will be taken away from it and will be the prisoners of people from another country for a long, long time--until at last your hearts turn back to obey and worship Me," the LORD warned them through Moses. "You are my treasured people whom I love. As a father disciplines the child he loves, so I will discipline you."

To the leaders the LORD gave special instructions about the big scroll of His words that Moses had written down for them: "Take good care of this copy of My word. Keep them right next to the Ark of the Covenant in the Tabernacle.. Teach the people how to make the offerings to Me to stay in fellowship with Me. Teach them to hold the special celebrations to Me," the LORD told them.

"Teach the people all My words so that might know and obey Me. Every seven years, gather all the people. Have them make tabernacles for their families--tents

made out of branches and leaves. Have they all camp out together, like you used to do when you wandered in the wilderness for forty years. When all the children, the parents and even the foreigners (people from other countries) are all settled in their tabernacles, I want you to read this whole, big scroll of my words to them, even though it will take days to read the whole thing. It will never be enough for My people to have the beautiful land I am giving them or a place to make sacrifices and hold celebrations to Me. They must know My words, if they are to obey and worship Me."

Sometimes the Israelites obeyed and worshiped the LORD. How richly He blessed them when they did, just as He had promised!! He gave them bountiful crops of figs and olives, pomegranates, wheat and barley. Lots of sheep and goats, lots of children and happiness. He gave them victory over all their enemies. He gave them good kings, like David and Solomon, to lead them and to build Jerusalem. Jerusalem became a splendid, mighty, walled city. It was the home of the palace of the king and the magnificent Temple to the LORD—the center of all worship to the Lord and the resting place of the very Ark of the Covenant itself. How they loved Jerusalem—the city of the kings, the city of the LORD! Oh, how good things were when the kings and the people remembered the LORD and obeyed His words!

But all too often, the Israelites forgot God's words and they didn't teach them to their children, either. They turned away and worshiped other gods instead.

Even the leaders forgot the LORD. They didn't remind the people to hold celebrations to the LORD or offer worship sacrifices to Him. They even set up idols in the Temple and worshiped them instead. Worst of all, they

**Story-telling Tips**

## Ahead of time:

1. Read the Bible verses and story. Pray!
2. Create story cue cards on index cards (or highlight text).
3. Practice telling story dramatically, timing your presentation. Shorten, if necessary to fit your allotted time.
4. Decorate area with story props that help bring your story alive.

## During your presentation:

1. Maintain as much eye contact as possible as you tell the story. Point to/use props at important points in the story. Include the kids in your story with a few questions about what they think will happen or words/concepts that might be new to them.
2. Watch the kids for signs that their attention span has been reached. Shorten, if necessary.

didn't gather the people together to camp in tents and read His words aloud to them. Instead, they put the big scroll of His words away until finally almost everyone forgot about it.

The Israelites may have forgotten the LORD, but the LORD did not forget about them. They were His treasured people. He would discipline them like a good father disciplines His children, just as He had promised. Crash, Bang, Boom. Everything in the beautiful land the LORD gave His people was about to come down.

Far to the north and east a powerful people led by fierce, warrior kings had arisen. The LORD would use them to discipline His people. The kings eyed the land of Israel with interest. They told the Israelites to obey them; and, when the Israelites refused to, they sent their warriors in to attack.

Crash! Boom! Bang! Down went the walls of Jerusalem, the Temple and all the people's houses. Then the soldiers grabbed all the golden treasures of the Temple and many of the people, carrying them back to their capital city, Babylon and forced them to be their slaves.

At last in Babylon, the hearts of the Israelites began to soften: "How we miss the beautiful land the LORD gave us!" they cried. "How we miss Jerusalem and the Temple! We have sinned against the LORD! Didn't He warn us that this would happen to us, if we didn't obey Him and His words? We deserve this punishment and more," the people sadly admitted. "We have broken our solemn covenant promise with Him. We don't deserve to be rescued by Him. Yet, perhaps He will have mercy on us if we confess our sins and return to Him. Perhaps He will free us from slavery and bring us back home," they hoped.

The Israelites were right to hope. The LORD had promised to rescue them after 70 years in slavery and so He did. On the last day of the seventh year, the LORD worked in King Cyrus' heart to send the Israelites back home to rebuild Jerusalem.

Crash, bang, boom! What had once been the sound of destruction now is the sound of construction. First, the Temple and the houses were rebuilt. Then eighty years later, the mighty walls of Jerusalem rose high once more. How happy the Israelites were to be living

back in their beautiful land with their newly-built houses and plentiful crops! How wonderful it was to enjoy the Temple and to see Jerusalem's strong walls in place again!

Yet something was very wrong. Something was missing that they needed more than their land, houses, and fields. Something they needed more than the Temple and great walled city, "We need the word of the LORD!" they realized. "It will never be enough to just have our beautiful land and our beautiful Temple. How will we ever obey and worship the Lord if we do not know His Word?" they exclaimed. "Get Ezra the scribe. He has the book of the Words of the LORD. He must read them to us!"

Crash, bang, boom. Men cut down trees and built a high, wooden platform in the big, open square near the Jerusalem's Water Gate. When all was finished, Ezra and thirteen other readers climbed up the tall platform and stood before all the thousands of Israelites gathered below. When Ezra picked up God's Word and opened it, the whole, great crowd rose to their feet out of honor. "Praise the LORD, the great God!" Ezra exclaimed.

"Amen! Amen!" the people shouted back, and they all bowed down and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. Then the people stood back up and listened as Ezra and the other readers took turns reading from the Word of God, They read it from start to finish, reading a section, then explaining it, so that everyone would understand what was read.

As the Israelites listened to God's Word, the Holy Spirit worked in their hearts. One person after another began weeping as they all came to realized how they had sinned against the LORD."

"Don't weep! This is a good day, one holy to the LORD!" Ezra told them. "You are wanting to please Him by hearing His Word and wanting to obey it. Go now, celebrate with rich food and sweet drinks and make sure to share with others who cannot provide for themselves. The joy of the LORD is your strength!"

Then all the people went away to eat and drink to send portions of food and to celebrate with great joy, because they now understood the words that had been made known to them.

Ezra and the leaders of the people read on in God's

Word to find out what they should do next.

“Every seven years have all the people gather together and camp out in tabernacles of branches and leaves and listen to all of the words of the LORD. This is how they will know how to obey and worship Him,” they read in the Bible.

“This is what we must do,” the leaders exclaimed. “The people must go out and get branches to make their tabernacles, like in the old days then listen to all of God’s Word.

Crash, bang, boom. Out into the countryside the people went, gathering olive branches and leaves and dragging them back into the city. In streets, on the tops of houses, in the courts of the Temple, itself, all of the people built their tabernacles. Every day the people gathered to hear God’s Word; and every day, the LORD worked in their hearts. “Forgive us for sinning against You, O LORD,” the people prayed. “We want to serve You alone. Bless Your people, once more,” they prayed. And the LORD did just that!

### Cracking the Case:

**It’s time to answer our Case Questions.**

#### Case Questions

**1. What were the missing words? Why did they go missing?** God’s Word. The Israelites chose to ignore and forget them. They didn’t teach them to their children.

**2. Why was it so important that these words be found?** The Israelites needed God’s Word to know who God is and how He wanted them to live. They needed to know God’s Word if they were to be His people.

### Something for You and Me

**Our Bible Truth is:**

**God’s People Read His Word, the Bible**

**Our Bible Verse is: Psalm 119:11,15-16**

“I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you...I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.”

That was a great day that was when the Israelites repented of their sins and turned back to worshipping the LORD! At last the Israelites treasured the words of God as they always should have! They knew that it was

only His words that could show them how to live for Him and help them live them out. They hungered to know His Words and obey them.

What about you and me? Are we bored with God’s Word or try to ignore it like the Israelites did before they were slaves in Babylon? Or, are we hungry to know what it says so that we can please the Lord, like the Israelites who stood listening to the Word of God for long hours?

I’m afraid that too many times our hearts are as hard and bored with God’s Word as the Israelites had been. Yet God offers to forgive us, too, when we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Let’s praise God for giving us His Word so that we can know, worship and obey Him. And let’s ask Him to work in our hearts, helping us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Let’s ask Him to send the Holy Spirit to give us a hunger and thirst to know His Word and a desire to obey it.

*Close in prayer.*

### Closing ACTS Prayer

**A** God, we praise You for being the Giver of Your Word and the Keeper of All Your Promises.

**C** God, we confess that even though we have Your Word that we are often like the Israelites were: we do not read it like we should or could. Our love for You and for Your Word is often cold.

**T** God, we thank You for being so good to Your people! Even though they do not love you or your word as they should, you are patient with them and even discipline them so that they will turn and seek after You. Thank you for being faithful to Your promises even when they are so unfaithful to You!

**S** God, work in our hearts. Help us to turn away from our sins and trust Jesus as our own Savior. Help us to read, understand, love and obey You and Your wonderful Word, the Bible.

### Special Words

**Tabernacles:** Tents made of wooden poles, leaves and branches that the Israelites slept in during the Feast of the Tabernacles, one of the special celebrations the LORD commanded them to hold each year. (Not to be confused with Tabernacle, the special worship tent of the LORD, used before the Temple was built.)

# **ACTS PRAYER ACTIVITY**

Use this sheet to write down your ACTS Prayer

## **Instructions:**

Use this sheet to help the children apply the Bible Truth into a prayer. You can use the ACTS provided or even better, have the kids think of their own applications. Also have the children add their personal requests to the prayer, too. Lead the children in the prayer or let them pray sections, with your help. Never force a child to pray! Non-readers can participate by you whispering a section of the prayer into their ear and allowing them to pray it aloud for the group.

## **ADORATION:**

Praise God for being the Giver of His Word, the Bible.

God, we praise You for being.....

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Add your own Adorations:

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## **CONFESSION:**

Confess that many times we do not want to read His Word. We would rather do other things. Confess that we don't love or follow His Word as we should. We need a Savior to save us from our sins!

God, we have sinned against You....

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Add your own Confessions:

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## **THANKSGIVING:**

Thank God for His Word that tells us what He is like and how He wants us to live. Thank Him for His Holy Spirit who helps us understand it and uses it to change us.

God, we thank You for...

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Add your own Thanksgivings:

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## **SUPPLICATION:**

Ask God to use His Word to help us turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Ask God to help us read the Bible more. Ask God to use it to help us know, love and obey Him. Ask Him to use to grow our faith in Him.

God, we need Your help...

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Add your own Supplication:

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## **SNEAKY SNACK**

Can you figure out how this snack ties in with our case?

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### **Snack: Feasty Fig Cakes and Fizzy Fruit of the Vine**

Serve fig cookies (such as Fig Newtons) for fig cakes and white grape juice with sugar-free lemon lime soda for "wine."

This is only a suggestion. Feel free to modify. Be mindful of allergy issues among your children!

**Case Tie-in:** Fig Cakes and wine would have been two celebration foods like what the Israelites would have enjoyed after hearing God's Word the first time after the exile.

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## **SOUL FOOD**

Food for thought during snack time

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1. What does the snack have to do with the story?

Choose a few questions from the other activity discussion sheets to talk about during this snack time.

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Directions: Read and discuss Bible Truth, using a FEW of the questions. Play game. Feel free to modify the game to fit your children.

### **God's People Read His Word, the Bible**

The Bible is God's Word. It tells us about God and His wonderful plans. It tells us about this world, about who we are and what Jesus has done for us. God's Word is very different from our words. His Word is perfectly true. It tells us everything we need to know to live the way God wants us to live. And, it doesn't just tell us what we need to know, it can change us, too. The Holy Spirit works in God's people when they read the Bible. He gives them wisdom and helps them to know, love and obey God. He uses it to help their faith keep growing strong.

### **Understanding the Bible Truth**

1. Why is the Bible unlike any other book? *Because it is God's Word.*
2. What does the Bible tell us? *About God, about who we are and why God made us. How God wants us to live.*
3. How are God's Words different from our words? *They don't just tell us things, they have the power to change us.*
4. Who works in God's people when they read the Bible? How? *The Holy Spirit. He gives them wisdom and helps them to love and obey God.*
5. How often should we try to read God's Word? What else should we do? *We should try to read (or have it read to us) every day. We should also try to memorize it.*
6. What happens when God's people do these two things? *They will grow stronger and stronger in their faith.*

### **Story Connection Questions**

1. What happened when the Israelites didn't read God's Word? *They disobeyed God and turned to worship other idols. Many sad things happened to them because of their disobedience. Finally God had to punish them severely by taking them away from their land.*
2. What happened when the Israelites turned back to hear God's Word? *They wept over their sinfulness, confessed their sins and God forgave them. He restored them to their land once more.*

### **Bible Verse Connection Question**

1. What does our Bible Truth have to do with our **Bible Verse: Psalm 119:11,15-16**: "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you...I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word."?

*This verse reminds us that God's people delight in God's Word, the Bible. They think about it and even memorize it so that they might not sin against God. They know that God's Word is not just true. It is powerful to change them to be more like Jesus. They don't want to neglect it, because they want to know God and please Him most of all.*

### **ACTS Questions**

1. What is something we can praise God for because of this Bible Truth?  
*Praise God for being the Giver of His Word, the Bible.*
2. What are sins we can confess to God because of this Bible Truth?  
*Confess that many times we do not want to read His Word. We would rather do other things*
3. What is something we can thank God for because of this Bible Truth?  
*Thank God for His Word that tells us what He is like and how He wants us to live.*
4. What is something we can ask God for because of this Bible Truth?  
*We can ask God to work in our hearts that we would want to confess our sins, turn away from disobeying Him and trust in this wonderful Jesus as our own Savior. We can ask God to help us read the Bible more. And, that He would use it to help us grow in our faith in Him and grow in our knowledge, love and obedience to Him.*

**Life Application Questions**

1. If reading the Bible is so good for us, why do we have such a hard time wanting to read it sometimes? *We are all sinful people who love to do things our own way, most of all. It is not surprising that we find it hard to do what God wants us to do. We need to turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. We need to ask God to send His Holy Spirit to give us more hunger and discipline to hear His Word.*

2. What difference will it make if God's people read and memorize God's Word? *He will use it to help them love and know Him better. They can know the many blessings of doing things God's way rather than the bad consequences of sinning against Him. They can ask the Holy Spirit to use the words they hear to bear more obedience and delight in God in their hearts and lives.*

**Gospel Question**

1. We are all born sinners. None of us love God as He created us to. What hope is there for sinners like us? *God is the good Creator and King of the world. He made people to worship Him and live by His good laws. But we are all sinners who have rebelled against Him. We all deserve death--God's just, eternal punishment for our sins. How terrible! But God has good news for us. In His great mercy, God sent His Son Jesus to earth to save sinners. Yes, Jesus, the perfect Son of God, left His home in heaven and became a man. He lived the perfect life that pleases God. (He's the only one who has ever done that!) He offered it up to God His Father as the perfect sacrifice for sins when He suffered and died on the cross. Then, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead in victory. He had fully paid for the sins of God's people, so they wouldn't have to! Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life with God. They will be His very own special people who will know Him and enjoy Him forever. We can be God's people, too, if we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.*

## Game: Rush to Safety

### Materials

Construction Paper  
CD and CD player  
Masking Tape  
Small bowl or bag  
Bible Truth Questions

### Preparing the Game

1. Choose 20+ questions for your game from the Bible Truth Discussion Questions, or make up your own.
2. Write the Bible Truth questions on small thin strips of paper (or make a photocopy of the Bible Truth Discussion Questions and simply cut them into strips) and put them in the bag/bowl.
3. Cut circles about 9" in diameter, enough for every child but one.
4. Tape the circles on the floor around the room.

### Playing the Game

Point out the safety spot circles on the floor. Tell the children that you will tell the children to move however you command them to move, such as march, walk, skip, crab crawl, etc. (BUT NOT RUN!!!) when you play the music. But when the music stops, they are to get to a safety spot. Show them that there is one spot too few for them all so that someone will be caught out. and they. As it gets slower, they march slower, etc. Suddenly stop the music and the children scramble for the beanbags. The child who has no safety spot picks a question for the class to answer. If the class answers it correctly, then the child is added back into the group. If not, then the child stays out and another safety spot is removed.

Game continues as number of questions, time, and attention span allow.

NOTE: Have the children who are "out" help make up actions for the other children to do, put them in charge of the music, etc. along with you. This will keep them happily occupied as they continue.

### Non-competitive Option

Have the child without a safety spot choose a question for the class, but then join the game, even if the class gets it wrong. Add the question back into the bag for further review. Don't reduce the number of safety spots.

### Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Quiz Questions

Have the children choose a few of the questions from the game to ask the parents/other children during TAKING IT TO OTHERS time. Help pre-readers by whispering the question in their ear and letting them ask it aloud to the parents/other children. Make sure you read the Bible verse aloud before you ask your questions.

Directions:

1. Write words to song in large print before class.
2. Play the song for the children, helping them follow along on the song sheet.
3. Discuss the song, using a few questions from the discussion sheet. *Don't use them all!*
4. Introduce sign language for key words of your choice from sign language sheet for your song. Use as few or as many as you think the children can learn.
5. Sing and sign the song. Sign language as well as large format lyrics and sheet music are found in the PFI Unit Songbook or online.
6. If desired, play the Song Game.

**Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Presenting and Singing the Song**

1. Sing and sign the song, encouraging the watching children/parents to join in.
2. Ask the class some of the questions listed below. The Bible Truth Connection Question is particularly good to help them understand how the song ties in with the Bible Truth.

### Trust and Obey

#### Verse 1

When we walk with the Lord  
In the light of His Word  
What a glory He sheds on our way!  
Let us do His good will;  
He abides with us still,  
And with all who will trust and obey.

#### Refrain

Trust and obey,  
for there's no other way  
To be happy in Jesus,  
but to trust and obey.

Words: John H. Sammis Music: Daniel B. Towner Public Domain

Listen to it on PFI NIV Songs 12, Track 24

### Understanding the Song

1. What does it mean to walk with the Lord? *It doesn't mean to take a stroll or hike with Him. It means to live our lives in obedience to His Word.*
2. What does it mean to walk with the Lord in the light of His Word? *To do read the Bible and find out how God has told us in His Word He wants us to live, rather than just guessing how He wants us to live.*
3. What will He do if we walk with Him in the light of His Word? *He will shed His glory on our way.*
4. What does it mean that He will shed glory on our way? *He will keep us from doing sinful things that displease Him. He will help us to live a life that pleases Him When we do, He will bless us with peace and joy in our hearts and our lives will reflect the good way that He is to others. These things will be a display of His glory both to ourselves and to others.*
5. How can we know what God's good will is? *God's good will is following all of His commands He has given us in the Bible.*
6. What does it mean for God to abide with us? *It means for Him to be with us in our hearts, by His Spirit.*
7. Who does God abide with? *He abides with His people, those who have come to Him in faith and who live their lives in trust and obedience to Him.*
8. What does it mean to trust and obey? *To rest joyfully in who God is and have faith that He is perfect in what He has allowed to happen and has good purposes for what He has allowed. To obey means to keep doing the things that God wants His people to do: pray, rejoice in Him, love others, keep His laws, take comfort in His Word, etc.*

### Bible Truth Connection Question

1. How does this song relate to our Bible Truth: **God's People Read His Word, the Bible?**

*God's people read the Bible so that they can "walk in the light of His Word", living lives in loving obedience to Him. They know that they glorify Him when they live this way.*

### Story Connection

1. How does this song relate to today's story? *The Israelites were all too quick to NOT walk in the light of God's Word. They chose to worship idols and disobey His good laws. Only after being severely disciplined did they finally turn to Him and cry out to know His Word once more that they might live lives that glorify Him by their obedience.*

**Bible Verse Connection Question**

1. What does this hymn have to do with our Bible Verse: **Psalm 119:11,15-16**: "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you...I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word."?

*We are all sinners. We are unworthy of God's forgiveness. But God is faithful and just...and oh, so, merciful. He sent Jesus to save all who confess their sins to Him, turn away from their sins, and trust in Jesus as their Savior. God's people know that God has forgiven them and not through any easy way, but through the suffering and death of Jesus on the cross. When they think about how Jesus, the very Son of God, died to save them, they wonder at His glorious love and their own unworthiness.*

**Life Application Questions**

1. How can we be affected by the message of this song? *We can praise God for giving us His Word to know how to live to love and please Him. We can ask Him to give us faith to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior, as His Word tells us to. We can ask Him to give us a hunger to read His Word more and live what we learn, so that His glory might be reflected out from our lives.*

**ACTS Questions**

1. What is something we can praise God for from this hymn?

*Praise God for the Giver of His Word that we can know how to obey it.*

2. What are sins we can confess to God from this hymn?

*That many times we do not trust or obey God and His Word. We choose to do things our own way. We are sinners who need a Savior!*

3. What is something we can thank God for from this hymn?

*We can thank God giving His people wisdom about how He wants them to live through His Word (sheds light on their way).*

4. What is something we can ask God for from this Bible verse?

*That God would work in our hearts that we confess our sins, might turn from our sins and trust Jesus as our Savior. We can ask Him to give us faith to trust in Him and grace to obey His Word. We can ask Him to do His good will in us and through us.*

**Gospel Question**

1. Each of us needs to trust and obey God, but we are sinners. What hope is there for us? What is this amazing good news of God's love? What is the gospel?

*God is the good Creator and King of the world. He made people to worship Him and live by His good laws. But we are all sinners who've rebelled against Him. We all deserve death--God's just, eternal punishment for our sins. How terrible! But God has good news for us. In His great mercy, God sent His Son, Jesus to earth as a man to save sinners. He lived the perfect life that pleases God. (He's the only one who's ever done that!) He offered it up to God His Father as the perfect sacrifice for sins when He suffered and died on the cross. Then, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead in victory. He had fully paid for the sins of God's people, so they wouldn't have to! Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life with God. They will be His very own special people who will know Him and enjoy Him forever. We can be God's people, too, if we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.*

## **Song Game: Big Voice, Little Voice**

### **Materials**

Song

Sign language signs used in the song printed out onto little cards

Blindfold

### **Preparing the Game**

None.

### **Playing the Game**

1. Practice the song and signs until the children know them well. Then tell them: "Children, we are going to hide a sign language sign and see if one of you can find it... with a little help from the rest of us!"
2. Choose someone to be "It" and blindfold them. Choose another child to hide one of the sign language cards. When it's hidden, "It" can remove the blindfold and begin to look.
3. The rest of the children will sing the song in a louder voice when "It" gets closer to the hidden sign and quieter when "It" gets further from the sign.
4. When "It" finds the hidden clue, another "It" is chosen and play begins again.

Game continues as number of questions, time, and attention span allow.

choose a FEW questions for discussion, then choose the game and/or music activity

**Meditation Version: Psalm 119:11,15-16**

"I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you...I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word."

**Alternate Memory Version: Psalm 119:11**

"I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."

**Understanding the Bible Verse**

1. Whose word is this verse talking about? *God's Word.*
2. What does it mean to hide God's Word in our hearts? *It means to memorize it so that we know it without someone having to read it or tell it to us.*
3. What good is it to memorize God's Word? *It will help us know what God wants us to do, so that we might not sin against Him.*
4. What does it mean to meditate on something? *It means to slowly think about what something means and how to apply it to our lives.*
5. What is a precept? *A commandment or a teaching about how we should live.*
6. What are God's precepts and where can we find them? *Anything God tells us He wants us to do. We find His precepts in the Bible.*
7. What does it mean to meditate on God's precepts? *To know what they are and then think about how you should live your life by them.*
8. What does it mean to "consider God's ways"? *To think about the way God is and to praise Him for His amazing wisdom, power, love and mercy He shows in them. To think about how we should live, in light on what He is like.*
9. What are God's decrees and how do we delight in them? *God's decrees are all that He has chosen to do in this world, and all He had told us that He wants us to do. We delight in them by trying to understand them, by praising Him for them and by trying to obey them in our lives.*
10. What does it mean to neglect God's Word? *Not reading or listening to it regularly, not trying to understand what you hear or read, and ignoring it when you are deciding how to live.*

**Bible Truth Connection Question**

1. What does this verse have to do with the **Bible Truth: God's People Read His Word, the Bible?**

*This verse reminds us that God's people delight in God's Word, the Bible. They think about it and even memorize it so that they might not sin against God. They know that God's Word is not just true. It is powerful to change them to be more like Jesus. They don't want to neglect it, because they want to know God and please Him most of all.*

**Story Connection Questions**

1. What does the verse have to do with our story? *The LORD called the Israelites to meditate on His Word and hide it in their hearts that they might not sin against Him. He called them to hear it regularly and not neglect it so that they might live as He wanted them to live and receive His blessings.*
2. Why was it so easy for the Israelites to forget God's Word? *Because they were sinful and love to do things their own way, rather than God's.*

**Life Application Questions**

1. Why should we be so careful to meditate, delight and not neglect the Bible? *Because it is not just anyone's words. It is God's Word. He made us and knows exactly how He wants us to live for His glory and our good. The Bible is not just words, but is powerful. The Holy Spirit will use the words of the Bible to work great changes in our hearts.*
2. What is the first step that God calls each of us to do to delight and obey His Word? *To turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior that God would forgive us and make us His special people.*

**ACTS Questions**

1. What is something we can praise God for from this Bible verse? *Praise God for being the Giver of His Word to us.*

2. What are sins we can confess to God from this Bible verse?

*That many times we choose not to delight in God's Word. We choose not to meditate on it or memorize it. We choose not to obey it. We deserve God's punishment! We need a Savior!*

3. What is something we can thank God for from this Bible verse?

*We can thank God using His Word to help His people not to sin against Him.*

4. What is something we can ask God for from this Bible verse?

*We can ask God to work in our hearts that we would want to confess our sins, turn away from disobeying Him and trust in this wonderful Jesus as our own Savior. We can ask Him to give us delight in His Word and help us to meditate on it and memorize it. We can ask Him to work powerfully in our lives through His Word.*

**The Gospel**

1. This verse encourages us to hide God's Word in our hearts that we might not sin against Him. This is good, however, the Bible makes it clear that hiding God's Word in our hearts will never be enough to keep us from sinning completely... and it certainly cannot bring us forgiveness for our sins. But God's Word also tells us the wonderful story of what God has done to save sinners like us. Can you tell me this good news, the gospel?

*God is the good Creator and King of the world. He made people to worship Him and live by His good laws. But we are all sinners who have rebelled against Him. We all deserve death--God's just, eternal punishment for our sins. How terrible! But God has good news for us. In His great mercy, God sent His Son Jesus to earth to save sinners. Yes, Jesus, the perfect Son of God, left His home in heaven and became a man. He lived the perfect life that pleases God. (He's the only one who has ever done that!) He offered it up to God His Father as the perfect sacrifice for sins when He suffered and died on the cross. Then, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead in victory. He had fully paid for the sins of God's people, so they wouldn't have to! Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life with God. They will be His very own special people who will know Him and enjoy Him forever. We can be God's people, too, if we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.*

## Game: Memory Verse Limbo

### Materials

Bible Verse written up in large print so that all can see

A soft-surfaced, medium sized ball, such as a foam ball

Masking tape

Paper and markers

Helpful, but optional: colored team "pennies" (jerseys) to identify members of each team. H

### Preparing the Game

1. Choose Meditation or Alternate version of the verse to use.
2. Clearly print out the words to the verse on paper and cut it into 10+ sections. Number each section in sequence. Place each section in Easter eggs of the same color. Print out another copy of the verse, also numbered sequentially on another piece of paper. Repeat for each team.
3. Partition the floor into even sections as shown in the diagram above.

### Learning the Verse

Some or all of your children may be non- or early readers. Teach the verse in sections, having them say it after you. Repeat a few times. Add clapping or other movement as they say it.

### Directions

1. If desired, discuss of a **FEW** of the most important questions before beginning game.
2. Explain the game to them as follows:

Have the children line up. Have everyone say the verse together. Start with the pole at head height and have each child say the verse before "limbo-ing" (bend backwards without touching the pole) under the pole. Feel free to help the children say the verse. After everyone has gone through at the first height, lower a few inches and repeat the process. (Say verse and have children go through). A child is "out" when he/she can no longer limbo without falling down or touching the pole.

Give children who have a failed limbo attempt the option of being restored to the limbo line again by saying the verse a second time (on their own, with a partner or with you); or, allow them sit quietly in a line in front of the limbo line so that they can help others still "limbo-ing" saying the verse (if needed) or simply watch.

Game continue as time or attention span allow.

### Non-competitive Option

Let the children continue to limbo at each height, even if they have a failed attempt at a particular height.

### Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Quiz Questions

Have the children choose a few of the questions from the game to ask the parents/other children during TAKING IT TO OTHERS time. Help pre-readers by whispering the question in their ear and letting them ask it aloud to the parents/other children. Make sure you read the Bible verse aloud before you ask your questions.

***If you do this closing activity, make sure you read the verse to the class before asking the questions.***

## Directions:

1. Write words to song in large print before class.
2. Play the song for the children, helping them follow along on the song sheet.
3. Discuss the song, using a few questions from the discussion sheet. *Don't use them all!*
4. Introduce sign language for key words of your choice from sign language sheet for your song. Use as few or as many as you think the children can learn.
5. Sing and sign the song. Sign language as well as large format lyrics and sheet music are found in the PFI Unit Songbook or online.
6. If desired, play the Song Game.

**Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Presenting and Singing the Song**

1. Sing and sign the song, encouraging the watching children/parents to join in.
2. Ask the class some of the questions listed below. The Bible Truth Connection Question is particularly good to help them understand how the verse ties in with the Bible Truth.

**I Have Hidden Your Word: Psalm 119:11,15-16**

## Refrain:

I have hidden your word in my heart,  
That I might not sin against you,  
I have hidden your word in my heart,  
That I might not sin against you.

I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways.  
I delight in your decrees,  
I will not neglect your word, *Refrain*

Psalm One-nineteen, eleven through sixteen.

**Listen to it on PFI NIV Songs 12, Track 25**

**Song Game: Sign It, Say It, What Does It Mean?****Materials**

Sign Language signs used in song, particularly choose words with important meanings you want the children to learn, such as "grace", "redeem", etc.

Bag or bowl

**Preparing the Game**

1. Cut out signs and put in bowl.

**Playing the Game**

1. Practice the song and signs until the children know them well. Then put all the signs we've learned in this bag/ bowl and mix them up.
2. Ask one of the children to choose a sign, but not show it to anyone...but you, if they need some help.
3. Ask the child to do the sign for the rest of the children and see if the other children can guess which one it is. Do the sign with the child, if desired.
4. When the children guess the sign, ask them the meaning of the word. If no one guesses the sign, put it back in the bowl to be picked again.
5. Choose another child to pick a new sign from the bag and continue.

NOTE: You might want to sing the song after you do each word or couple of words.

Game continues as number of questions, time, and attention span allow.

Directions: Read and discuss Bible Truth, using a FEW of the questions. Play game. Feel free to modify the game to fit your children.

### General Story Questions

1. What did the Lord tell the people they would need to remember for things to go well for them in the beautiful land He was giving them? *To know and obey His Word.*
2. Who were they supposed to make sure to teach? Why? *Their children. If they did not teach their children the Words of God, then they would not know how to obey Him. They would see what all the other peoples were doing and would follow their gods instead.*
3. What were the Israelites supposed to do every seven years? Why do you think they were supposed to stay in tabernacles? *Hear all of the Words of God read. All of them were supposed to gather in one place, but there was no city big enough for all the people. It would take many days to read all the Word of God, they would need places to stay. Perhaps staying outside like the Israelites had done in the Wilderness was a helpful reminder of all the Lord had done for them in the past.*
4. How did God bless the Israelites when they obeyed Him? *He gave them lots of good crops, children, protection from enemies, good Kings, Jerusalem, the Temple.*
5. Why did the Lord allow the Babylonians to destroy Jerusalem? *Because the people kept forgetting God's Word and disobeyed God.*
6. What did the Israelites do that was especially terrible? *They worshiped other gods, even offering sacrifices to them in the Lord's Temple. They put the Word of God away and did not read it. For awhile it was completely lost and forgotten.*
7. How was the Lord's punishment for the Israelites kind? *He did it to soften their hearts so they would turn back to Him. They deserved to be forever cut off from His because of breaking their covenant with Him, but He punished them for only 70 years.*
8. What did the Israelites realize when they were in Babylon? *How they had turned away from the Lord and His good Words. How they deserved His punishment.*
9. What did the Israelites re-build when they went home? *Their houses, the Temple, and the walls of Jerusalem.*
10. What did the Israelites realize they needed more than their houses, the Temple and the walls of Jerusalem? *The Word of God.*
11. Who did they ask to read them God's Word and what did they do to prepare for him to read it? *Ezra the scribe. Built a huge platform for him to stand on and read.*
12. How long did Ezra read the Word of God? About how many hours do you think that was? *From dawn until noon—about six hours.*
13. Why did the people cry when they heard God's Word? *They realized their sins against Him.*
14. Why did Ezra tell them to celebrate instead of cry? *Because the Lord had shown them their sins through His Word and they wanted to obey Him. That made the day holy to the Lord.*
15. What did the people do to show their sorrow for their sins when the entire law was read? *Sackcloth, ashes, confession and worship.*

### Bible Truth Connection Questions

1. What does this story have to do with our Bible Truth: God's People Read His Word, the Bible? *After many years of forgetting God's Word and disobeying the Lord, the Israelites gladly received His Words, confessed their sins and turned to obey Him.*

### Life Application Questions

1. Why should we read the Word of God? *To know more about Him so we can love Him and obey Him more.*
2. How is it easier for us to know God's Word than it was for the Israelites? *We have our own Bibles at home.*
3. What does God's Word call all sinners to do as the best and necessary first step in knowing and obeying God? *To turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.*

**Bible Verse Connection Question**

1. What does the story have to do with our **Bible Verse: Psalm 119:11,15-16**: "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you...I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word."?

*The LORD called the Israelites to meditate on His Word and hide it in their hearts that they might not sin against Him. He called them to hear it regularly and not neglect it so that they might live as He wanted them to live and receive His blessings.*

**ACTS Questions**

1. What is something we can praise God for being that we learned in our story? *Praise God for being so merciful to sinful people.*

2. What is something we can confess as sin that we learned in our story? *Confess that like the Israelites, we are all sinners who deserve God's punishment. We do not love God or His Word as we should. We all need a Savior!*

3. What is something we can thank God for that we learned in our story? *We can thank God for giving us His Word that we can know Him, obey Him and know the way to be saved.*

4. What is something we can ask God for that we learned in our story? *We can ask God to work in our hearts, helping us to confess our sins, turn away from them and trust Jesus as our own Savior. We can ask Him to give us a love for His Word and help us to remember it and obey it.*

**The Gospel**

1. When Ezra read God's Word to the Israelites they heard about who God is, how all people have rebelled against Him and of His promises to send a Savior to save them. Who is the Savior that was to come? Why did He need to come? What did He do? What is the gospel?

*God is the good Creator and King of the world. He made people to worship Him and live by His good laws. But we are all sinners who have rebelled against Him. We all deserve death--God's just, eternal punishment for our sins. How terrible! But God has good news for us. In His great mercy, God sent His Son Jesus to earth to save sinners. Yes, Jesus, the perfect Son of God, left His home in heaven and became a man. He lived the perfect life that pleases God. (He's the only one who has ever done that!) He offered it up to God His Father as the perfect sacrifice for sins when He suffered and died on the cross. Then, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead in victory. He had fully paid for the sins of God's people, so they wouldn't have to! Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life with God. They will be His very own special people who will know Him and enjoy Him forever. We can be God's people, too, if we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.*

## Game: Spoon and Ball Relay

### Materials

Spoons, one per each team

Ping-pong Balls, one per each team

Masking Tape

Baskets: one small one per team; plus, one large one to be shared by all teams.

Story Review Questions, one per child

Paper and marker/pencil for writing questions and keeping score

### Preparing the Game

1. Choose 20+ questions for your game from the Story Review Discussion Questions, or make up your own. Write point values to each question, such as 5, 10 and 25 points, depending upon how difficult they are.

**5 point questions: What does it say?** Simple fact questions, such as “How did Satan tempt Jesus to disobey God, His Father?”

**10 point questions: What does it mean?** Meaning questions, such as “Why was it important that Jesus obeyed God perfectly?”

**25 point questions: What does it mean to me?** Life application questions, such as “What is something God wants you to do that you find especially difficult to obey?”

### Preparing the Game

1. Choose 20+ questions for your game from the Story Review Discussion Questions, or make up your own.

2. On the sticky pads write various point values, from 1 to 4...with perhaps two 10's thrown in for fun. Make perhaps 50 of these point values. Stick these all over the room, high, low, unusual places. Place the two 10 point sticky pad sheets in the most unusual spots.

### Playing the Game

**Part 1: Getting the Questions:** Split the children into two teams. Have them line up behind the taped lines on the floor. Give the first person in each line a spoon and a ping pong ball. Tell the children that at your signal the first person will walk with the ball balanced in the spoon down to where the basket is. They are to drop the ball into the basket, pick up the ball again as well as a question from the basket and run back with the spoon, ball, and question to their team. They hand the spoon and ping pong ball to the next person in line and deposit their question in their smaller team basket located next to the start line. The relay continues until all children have had a turn.

### Part 2: Asking the Questions

After the relay is finished, the children sit down in their groups. The leader will take a question from a team's basket, tell them how many points it is worth and ask them the question. If the team gets it right, then they get the points. If not, then any other team has a chance to win the points. The teacher then proceeds to the next team's basket and continues the process. At the end, add up the points and see who wins.

### Non-competitive Option

Split the children into two groups and retrieve the questions as above until all the questions have been retrieved. Have the children of the two groups take turns pulling a question out of their basket for all the children to answer. Tally how many questions the children were able to get right. If desired, can play the game again, using only the questions they did not correctly answer. Ask them these again and see how many they get right the second time. Repeat as long as attention span allows or until all the questions have been correctly answered.

### Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Quiz Questions

Have the children choose a few of the questions from the game to ask the parents/other children during TAKING IT TO OTHERS time. Help pre-readers by whispering the question in their ear and letting them ask it aloud to the parents/other children.

**CASE REPLAY ACTIVITIES**

Use this guide to review the Case Story and act it out for others to enjoy!

**CASE REPLAY, JR: YOUNGEST CHILDREN**

**Description:** The children will act out the story together, everyone doing the same action/sound effect at the same time. This activity is most suitable for kindergarteners.

**Materials**

The Case RePlay, Jr. script for younger children

**Preparation**

1. Read through the script and write in the blanks along the side possible actions/sound effects the children could do to act it out.

**Instructions**

1. Tell the children that they will be re-enacting the story together as you tell it.
2. As you read the script, lead the children in actions/sound effects to do with you.
3. If desired, you can read the script and stop at certain sentences and ask them what a good action/sound effect would be to act out what you just read.
4. Repeat the re-enactment one or two times more.

**CASE REPLAY, SR: OLDER CHILDREN**

**Description:** The children act out the story as a three-scene play. You will narrate it using the Case RePlay, Sr. script and they will act it out (no spoken words, for the most part), with each child assuming a different character's role. This activity is most suitable for first grade and up. You will review the story, then practice it a few times before performing it for others.

**Materials**

The Case RePlay, Sr. script  
White board or other large format paper  
Costumes and props

**Preparation**

1. Prepare for the play by choosing costumes and props for each character in the story. Decorate the area with any scenery props.
2. Write the words "Beginning," "Middle," "End" on a large piece of paper/whiteboard with plenty of space under each heading. You will use this paper to help the children think about the story as a three-scene play, as it is presented in the script.

**Instructions**

1. Tell the children that they will get to act out the story as a three-scene play, with a beginning, middle and end section. Tell them that before they can act it out, they need to think it out. as you narrate it with your script.
2. Take the children's answers as they recount the story, helping them put key incidents in the right order.
3. If desired, when they have filled in their Beginning, Middle, End, read through your whole (real) script, so they hear exactly what you will have them act out.
4. Then tell the children that it's time to practice acting out the story.
5. Assign parts to each child. If you are using costumes, do NOT give them out at this point. They will be a distraction.
6. Have all the children sit on the floor or in chairs on one side of the "stage," then call the characters up in place as their part in the story comes.
7. As you read the script, guide the children in where you want them to move or do to act it out.
8. After going through the whole script once, give out any costumes and props and act out the script once or twice more.

**Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Re-enacting the Story**

Read the script as the children act out together (younger) or assuming different roles (older) as the other children or the parents watch.

**CASE REPLAY, JR--YOUNGER KIDS (KINDERGARTEN) P.2**

Welcome to our play! The name of our story is called: The Case of the Missing Words.

Our story starts out in Jerusalem, in Israel, and in the country of Babylon. It takes over many years in Old Testament times, long before Jesus came to live on earth.

And now we present: "The Case of the Missing Words."

**Scene 1:**

Moses gathered all the Israelites together to speak the Lord's words to them one more time before they entered the Promised Land and he died. He urged them to never forget the Lord's words and to teach them to their children, too. Every seven years they were to camp in tabernacles and listen to all of God's Word read to them. This would help them remember to obey Him. How He would bless them and care for them always if they would keep obeying Him! But, if they forgot His Words and disobeyed Him, He would discipline them by destroying Jerusalem, their land, and sending them to be captives for 70 years. Sometimes the Israelites remembered His words and the Lord blessed them. He gave them good crops, lots of children, protection for enemies, great kings, and Jerusalem with the beautiful Temple. Usually, they forgot His words. They worshiped other gods, even in the Temple. They put away His words and didn't read them.

**Actions:**

**Scene 2:**

The Lord gave the Israelites many warnings to turn back and obey His word, but they didn't listen. Finally, He disciplined them as He had promised He would. The Babylonian soldiers came and took all the treasures out of the Temple. Then they destroyed it and the rest of Jerusalem. Even its walls came tumbling down. They took the people back to Babylon to be their slaves. In Babylon, the Israelites began to be sorry for their disobedience. They cried out to the Lord and hoped He would deliver them, though they didn't deserve it. He promised He would, at the end of seventy years.

**Scene 3**

Sure enough, the Israelites were freed at the end of the seventy years. They went back and re-built their houses, the Temple and the walls of Jerusalem. But it wasn't enough to have Jerusalem and the Temple re-built, they realized they needed God's Word, too. They built a huge platform and asked Ezra the scribe to gather all the people and read them the words of God. Ezra and the people praised the Lord and then he read to them from dawn to noon, starting at the beginning with Genesis 1:1. The people wept when they heard God's Word because they now knew they had sinned against the Lord. Ezra and the other readers comforted the people. They told them to stop crying but to celebrate that they had heard God's Word. Everyone went home and celebrated. Ezra and the leaders read more of the Word to find out what next they should do. They read God's command to have the people build tabernacles and read all of His Word to them and decided that's what they should do. The people went out and got wood and leaves to build tabernacles. They stayed in them and listened to the whole Word of God. They repented of their sins by wearing sackcloth and ashes and by confessing their sins to the Lord and worshiping Him. And the Lord forgave the people their sins.

**Bible Truth Tie-In:**

The Bible Truth we are learning is: **God's People Do Good Works God Prepared for Them.** After many years of forgetting God's Word and disobeying the Lord, the Israelites gladly received His Words, confessed their sins and turned to obey Him.

## **CASE REPLAY, SR--OLDER KIDS (1ST GRADE AND UP) P.3**

"Welcome to our play! The name of our story is called: The Case of the Missing Words.

Our story starts out in Jerusalem, in Israel, and in the country of Babylon. It takes over many years in Old Testament times, many years before Jesus came to live on earth.

The characters in our story today are: Moses; the men, women and children of Israel; Joshua; soldiers and other people of Babylon; Ezra and the other readers of God's Word.

And now we present: "The Case of the Missing Words."

### **Scene 1: (Beginning)**

Moses gathered all the Israelites together to speak the Lord's words to them one more time before they entered the Promised Land and he died. He urged them to never forget the Lord's words and to teach them to their children, too. Every seven years they were to camp in tabernacles and listen to all of God's Word read to them. This would help them remember to obey Him. How He would bless them and care for them always if they would keep obeying Him! But, if they forgot His Words and disobeyed Him, He would discipline them by destroying Jerusalem, their land, and sending them to be captives for 70 years. Sometimes the Israelites remembered His words and the Lord blessed them. He gave them good crops, lots of children, protection for enemies, great kings, and Jerusalem with the beautiful Temple. Usually, they forgot His words. They worshiped other gods, even in the Temple. They put away His words and didn't read them.

### **Scene 2: (Middle)**

The Lord gave the Israelites many warnings to turn back and obey His word, but they didn't listen. Finally, He disciplined them as He had promised He would. The Babylonian soldiers came and took all the treasures out of the Temple. Then they destroyed it and the rest of Jerusalem. Even its walls came tumbling down. They took the people back to Babylon to be their slaves. In Babylon, the Israelites began to be sorry for their disobedience. They cried out to the Lord and hoped He would deliver them, though they didn't deserve it. He promised He would, at the end of seventy years.

### **Scene 3: (End)**

Sure enough, the Israelites were freed at the end of the seventy years. They went back and re-built their houses, the Temple and the walls of Jerusalem. But it wasn't enough to have Jerusalem and the Temple re-built, they realized they needed God's Word, too. They built a huge platform and asked Ezra the scribe to gather all the people and read them the words of God. Ezra and the people praised the Lord and then he read to them from dawn to noon, starting at the beginning with Genesis 1:1. The people wept when they heard God's Word because they now knew they had sinned against the Lord. Ezra and the other readers comforted the people. They told them to stop crying but to celebrate that they had heard God's Word. Everyone went home and celebrated. Ezra and the leaders read more of the Word to find out what next they should do. They read God's command to have the people build tabernacles and read all of His Word to them and decided that's what they should do. The people went out and got wood and leaves to build tabernacles. They stayed in them and listened to the whole Word of God. They repented of their sins by wearing sackcloth and ashes and by confessing their sins to the Lord and worshiping Him. And the Lord forgave the people their sins.

### **Bible Truth Tie-In:**

The Bible Truth we are learning is: **God's People Do Good Works God Prepared for Them.** After many years of forgetting God's Word and disobeying the Lord, the Israelites gladly received His Words, confessed their sins and turned to obey Him.

## Tabernacles Made of Wood and Tree Branches

### Description

The children will make a little tabernacle out of salt dough, popsicle sticks, and small twigs with leaves.

### Materials

Salt

Flour

Water

Cereal box tops or poster board

28 popsicle sticks per craft

Small Twigs with leaves

If desired, 4 Teddy Graham bears (or similar figure) to be used for people

### Preparing the Craft

1. Mix up salt, flour, oil and water using salt dough recipe below. You will need about 1/2 to 3/4 cup of salt dough per child.
2. Cut cereal box/poster board into 4" x 3" pieces, one needed per craft. This will be the base for the tabernacle.
3. Make a sample for the children to see.

### Recipe for the Salt Dough

2 cups flour

1 cup salt

1 cup water

Mix ingredients together and knead until it reaches an even consistency. Store in an airtight container until ready to use.

### Making the Craft

1. Show children your sample.
2. Have the children flatten their salt dough onto the top of the cereal box base until it covers it completely.
3. Have the children stick the popsicle sticks in the salt dough around the edges so that they stand up. This makes the walls of the tabernacle.
4. Have the children place the teddy grahams in the middle of the salt dough, either standing up or laying down. (The Israelites were supposed to look up through the roof of their tabernacles and see the stars.)
5. Have the children lay twig pieces on top of the popsicle sticks, leaving gaps (in which to look up through the branches and see the stars. This was very important!)

### Making a Bible Truth Connection

Once the children have settled into their craft, use the Bible Truth- Craft Connection Sheet to lead discussion about the craft. Note that most of these questions echo the questions on the case board, providing a review of what the children learned earlier.

### Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Craft Presentation

If you are presenting the craft to other children or parents the children can hold up their crafts (or your model craft) and read their Bible Truth Connection answers to explain the importance of the craft.

**CASE CRAFT****Discussion Guide****Instructions:**

As the children are settled into making their craft, ask them these questions to help them understand the craft's significance. Use the answers provided to guide the children's answers.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Where did the Israelites listen to the Word of God read to them?

*Just outside the Promised Land and in Jerusalem.*

2. Who read the Word of God to the Israelites?

*Ezra and some other readers.*

3. Why did the Israelites camp out in tabernacles when they had houses to live in?

*Because God's Word told them to do this.*

4. What is Bible Truth 8 that we are learning?

*Bible Truth 8 is: God's People Read His Word, the Bible.*

5. What do the tabernacles made of wood and branches have to do with the Bible Truth 8?

*Long ago, at the time of this story, people didn't have their own Bibles to read. God commanded the people to gather together every seven years to hear His Word read to them and explained to them. This was one way He provided for them to know all His Word that they might know and obey Him.*

6. What can God help us remember through this craft of Tabernacles Made of Wood and Tree Branches?

*God wants us all to regularly listen to His Word to help us know and obey Him better.*

**TAKING IT TO OTHERS****Craft Presentation****Instructions:**

Have children hold up your model craft/their crafts. Choose five children (or you say) the five sections below to explain the craft's importance.

**Presentation:**

1. Our craft is Tabernacles Made of Wood and Tree Branches.

2. In Jerusalem, the Israelites camped out in Tabernacles Made of Wood and Tree Branches So they could listen to the whole Word of God read to them and explained.

3. Bible Truth 8 is: God's People Read His Word, the Bible.

4. Long ago, at the time of this story, people didn't have their own Bibles to read. God commanded the people to gather together every seven years to camp out in tabernacles and to hear His Word read to them and explained to them. This was one way He provided for them to know all His Word that they might know and obey Him.

5. Our craft can help us remember that God wants us all to regularly listen to His Word to help us know and obey Him better.

Note: Even non-readers can participate in presenting the craft, if you will whisper what they are to say in their ear and let them say it aloud for the others to hear.

**BEFORE CLASS:****1. PICK YOUR PERSON**

VIPPs can be anyone in your church! Typically, they fall into 6 categories: Church staff, Elders, Deacons/deaconesses, Special Volunteers (people who aren't paid, but spend a lot of time helping out in particular ways), Supported Workers (aka missionaries), and Church Members.

**2. GATHER YOUR FACTS**

Use the VIPP Information Sheet to write down the facts about your VIPP. The information on this worksheet is used in the VIPP activities, listed in the "Choose an Activity" section below.

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:****1. INTRODUCE YOUR VIPP**

Introduce your VIPP to the children, using the VIPP Information Sheet. Fill in a set of VIPP Clue Cards with the information for your VIPP. If desired, you can even have the actual person come into class for the children to meet.

Need help describing what someone does for the church in a kid-friendly way? Check out the list of common VIPPs on the Praise Factory website in the PFI resources. There are lots of kid-friendly descriptions for common VIPP's, such as pastors, elders, deacons and a lot more.

**2. PRAY!**

Lead the children in praying for the VIPP. Ask the children if they would like to pray for one of the VIPPs prayer requests. Even non-readers can pray for the VIPP if you whisper the prayer request in their ear, then let them say it aloud. Never force a child to pray!

**3. CHOOSE AN ACTIVITY**

There are two activities you can use to help the children learn about the VIPP:

**VIPP Clue Cards:** These are nine coloring sheets in which children fill in the nine things they learn about the VIPP from the VIPP Information Sheet. Photocopy a set of each child. Use as few or as many of these Clue Cards as you desire. They are found in the back of this book.

**VIPP Game:** This is a game that uses a set of Clue Cards for one or two VIPPs.

Choose a VIPP and fill in his/her information on the VIPP Information Sheet. Fill in a set of VIPP Clue Cards with the information for your VIPP. Tell the children about the VIPP, having them fill in the VIPP Clue Cards with the key facts as they learn them. Write any words the children need to write on a white-board or other piece of paper so they can see how to spell them. Help younger children write these words on their clue cards. Ideas for how to tell the children about many common VIPPs are listed at [praisefactory.org](http://praisefactory.org) with the resources for this Bible Truth.

**Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Introduce and Pray for the VIPP**

If you are presenting the VIPP to other children or parents you can assign children to hold up the 10 clue cards and say what each card tells about the VIPP. (Or, you can have the children hold them up as you tell what each one means.) Then lead the children in praying for the VIPP.

## Game: Hit the Wall

### Materials

Information Sheet for one VIPP

2 Set of Clue Cards

8 8.5" x 11" Manilla Envelopes

Nerf Ball or other soft ball for indoor use

### Preparing the Game

1. Fill in one set of clue sheets for the VIPP you are using.
2. Tape the other (blank) set of Clue Cards to the outside of the manilla envelopes.
3. Put the filled-in clue cards in the corresponding envelope.
4. Tape the envelopes to the wall.

### Playing the Game

**Reveal:** Tell the children about the VIPP, showing them your filled-in clue cards as you tell about them.

**Review:** Have the children take turns trying to hit an envelope with the ball. The teacher (or the child) tells the Clue Card category. The other children try to remember what the VIPP's answer was. Open it up and see if they got it right. If they did, the Clue Card is retired. If not, it can be added back into the Clue Cards to be aimed at.

**VIPP INFORMATION SHEET**

**VIPP NAME:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT VIPP LOOKS LIKE**

Man or Woman? \_\_\_\_\_

Hair color? \_\_\_\_\_

Eye color? \_\_\_\_\_

**FAVORITE ANIMAL**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**FAVORITE FOOD**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**FAVORITE FREE TIME ACTIVITY**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT VIPP DOES DURING WEEK**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**VIPP GROUP OF SERVICE:**

Church Member

Deacon

Elder

Church Staff

Special Volunteer

Supported Worker  
(Missionary)

**3 WAYS VIPP SERVES CHURCH**

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**3 WAYS TO PRAY FOR THE VIPP**

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