

BIBLE TRUTH 3, LESSON 3: 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 7, Track 1*

Rules to Help Us Worship God and Love One Another: WoGoLOA Classroom Rules Song
PFI NIV Songs 7, Track 2

Big Question Under Investigation: Big Question 7 Songs *PFI NIV Songs 7, Tracks 3,4*

Big Question Bible Verse: Ephesians 5:1-2 Song *PFI NIV Songs 7, Track 5*

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

Bible Truth 3: God Gave Us His Laws to Convict Us of Our Sin, That We Might Be Saved

Bible Truth Hymn: Breathe on Me, Breath of God, v.1 *PFI NIV Songs 7, Track 12*

Bible Verse: Isaiah 55:6-7

Bible Verse Song: Seek the LORD *PFI NIV Songs 7, Track 13*

Lesson 3 New Testament: The Case of the Convicting Convict *Matthew 3,4,5,14; Mark 6:14-29; Luke 3,2*

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

Snack and Discussion Planner: The King and the Prisoner of Machaerus

ACTS Prayer: Prayer Sheet

Bible Truth Review: Discussion Questions and Game: Beanbag Grand March

Bible Truth Hymn: Breathe on Me, Breath of God, v.1 *PFI NIV Songs 7, Track 12*
Song, Sign Language and Song Game: Word Take Away **PFI NIV Songs 7 BOOK or ONLINE**

Bible Verse Review: Isaiah 55:6-7 Discussion Sheet and Game: Balloon Find

Bible Verse Song: Seek the LORD Isaiah 55:6-7 *PFI NIV Songs 7, Track 13*
Song, Sign Language and Song Game: Big Voice, Little Voice **PFI NIV Songs 7 BOOK or ONLINE**

Story Review: Discussion Questions and Game: The Answer's in the Tent

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: John Brought Up from the Dungeon to Preach

VIPP (Very Important Prayer Person) Prayer Time: Coloring Sheets (back of book), Game: Hot and Cold Hide

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

PFI Pronto: Bible Truth 3, Lesson 3 **PFI NIV PRONTOS 7 BOOK or ONLINE**

The Case of the Convicting Convict *Matthew 3,4,5,14; Mark 6:14-29; Luke 3,2* by Connie Dever

Our story is: The Case of the Convicting Convict. As you listen to the story, see if you can figure out:

1. A convict is someone who has been arrested and put in jail. Who was the convict? Why was he in jail?
2. Who did he hope to convict of his sins that he might repent? Did this person repent?

This story takes place in New Testament times, while Jesus lived on earth.

Away from village and city. Away from family, friends and their everyday lives, people were going. Out into the hot, dry wilderness of Judea. Why? To listen to the words of a wild-looking man named John, living out there near the Jordan River. John looked like Prophet Elijah, with his long, uncut hair and his camel-hair sackcloth clothes. He sounded like Prophet Elijah, too, as he gave his urgent message: "Repent for the kingdom of God is near!"

The people listened and wondered: "Could the Messiah be coming at last? Was John the 'voice crying in the wilderness' to prepare the way for the LORD, the Messiah?" Many believed he was. So crowds of people from Judea, Jordan and Jerusalem journeyed out into the wilderness to see and to listen.

But John's message wasn't a message of see and listen. It was a message of change. People needed to repent—to turn away in their hearts from their love of sin, and to turn away in their lives from the sinful ways they lived. This is what John was urging all to do.

But who **would** repent and believe? Many people did. They confessed their sins and were baptized by John there in the Jordan River. Their baptism was a sign of their repentance and their looking forward in faith to the forgiveness of sins God would give through the coming Messiah. Even people known as especially bad sinners came to be baptized, too. People like the Jewish tax collectors who had taken too much money from people. People like the Jewish soldiers who did cruel things to help the tax collectors came, too. They all repented, believed and were baptized.

But the Pharisees and Sadducees—the Jewish religious leaders—were a different matter. They refused to repent and believe: "Why should we, of all people, repent? We fast twice a week; we keep all of God's laws and

even all the little rules that the Jewish teachers have made up. We make our sacrifices; we give a tenth of everything we have—even our spices. We are ready for the Messiah already," they thought. "Besides, God will save all the Jews, just because they are the sons and daughters of Abraham. Only really sinful people, like those tax collectors and soldiers, need to repent. Not us!" they said. "John is wrong. He certainly is NOT the prophet preparing the way for the Messiah!" they insisted.

But John knew the truth. All people are sinners who need God's forgiveness. It didn't matter who you were. How sad it was that the Pharisees and Sadducees believed if all Israel repented for a day, then Messiah would come. Yet they were the ones unwilling to repent themselves!

"You think you are right with God already, but your lives don't show it," John said to them. "No one is saved just because they come from Abraham's family. I baptize people with water for repentance, to prepare them for the Messiah. After me He will come. He is more powerful than I—whose sandals I'm not even fit to carry! And He will baptize people with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He will bring eternal life to those who repent and believe, but God's judgment on those who will not. This will be what happens to you, if you don't repent of your sins," John warned them. Offended and furious, the Pharisees and Sadducees went to report what John was saying to the other leaders.

Then one day, John announced the Messiah had come! "Here He is, Jesus, the one God will use to take away the sins of the world!" Now there was more reason to get rid of John. Who was he to announce Jesus as the Messiah! They would must do something now!

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.

But the Pharisees and Sadducees didn't have to. King Herod, sitting in his luxurious palace, not far to the east of the Jordan River. Would take care of John instead. His spies reported to him about John: "You should see the crowds of people coming to hear him and be baptized!," his spies told him. "The Pharisees and Sadducees hate John, but the common people, tax collectors and soldiers are repenting and being baptized. They love him," they told Herod.

"You better watch John," the spies warned. "He may become a powerful enemy. He says the Messiah is coming. He talks against you. He says your marriage to Herodias, your brother's wife, is wrong. The people are listening. Be careful or he will turn them against you."

Queen Herodias was furious when she heard this! It was true. She had left her husband to be wife to the powerful King Herod. And as a daughter of the High Priest, Herodias knew God's laws and that she had broken them. But she would not repent. She wanted John dead. "Silence that man!" she ordered.

Herod agreed, but he had to be careful. The people loved John. He must silence John without killing him to keep them happy. Herod posted guards and waited until John crossed the Jordan River into his territory. When he did, they seized him and put him in Herod's dungeon there at Machaerus.

Even with John out of the way, Herod couldn't stop thinking about him. "What is John like? I have to see him and hear him, myself," Herod thought. So John be brought before him and Herod allowed him to speak: "I am the voice crying out in the wilderness," John told him. 'Prepare yourselves for the way of the LORD. The Kingdom of God is near. The Messiah is coming. Repent! You must not have Herodias, your brother's wife!"

Herod was fascinated by John, but his words disturbed him. Him, repent?! He was half-Jew. He knew God's laws and how he had broken them. Now God was graciously using John to offer Herod salvation.

Would Herod repent and believe in the coming Messiah? No, he would not! Herodias certainly wouldn't either! She looked for a chance get rid of John for good.

At last it came. Herod threw a big party to celebrate the day he was crowned tetrarch of Galilee and Perea. High officials, military commanders and other

important men came. As they climbed the steep cliff and entered the castle grounds, his guests could not help but be impressed with Machaerus. It looked out onto the rugged Judean wilderness and the lovely hills of Hebron from its 3800-foot perch above the Dead Sea. Herod had huge storehouses for grain and food; cisterns full of gallons of water; and an arsenal filled with every weapon imaginable. It was all so amazing!

In the banquet hall, dinner went on for hours as dish after dish of fine food was served. Then came the entertainment. Salome, Herodias' daughter, pleased them with her splendid dancing. Round and round, faster and faster, she leapt and twirled to the beat of the music, delighting everyone with her beauty and grace.

No one was more pleased with Salome's dancing than Herod, himself. In front of all his guests he stood up and said to her: "Ask me for anything you want, and I'll give it to you., up to half my kingdom," he promised.

"What shall I ask for?" Salome asked her mother.

At last the moment Herodias had waited for: "Ask for the head of John the Baptist," she coldly answered.

Salome went to the king and said: "Give me the head of John the Baptist...on a platter."

The king was so upset. What was he to do? He had made a promise to her before these important men! To refuse her might cause these men to distrust him. Herod wanted them to know he was a man of his promises. Oh, how Herodias had trapped her husband! Would he have John put to death, and anger the people who loved John? Or, would he save John's life and lose the respect of these men? And what about himself? Would Herod really add killing John to the long list of wicked things he had done already? Or, would he at last repent and prepare his heart for the Messiah whom John said was coming?

Herod gave into the pressure, brushing aside any stirring in his heart he answered, "You heard the girl. Send the executioner to the dungeon. Bring her John's head." The executioner did as he was told. John's head was brought in and given to Salome...then she gave it to her mother.

John the Baptist died that night in Machaerus, but that did not stop the plans of God. All that John had promised came true. The Messiah, Jesus, had come

and He was bringing the Kingdom of God. Reports began to stream in to Herod from all over Galilee about Jesus. What amazing things he said and did! The the people who had repented of their sins and by faith prepared their hearts for salvation through Jesus, joyfully received Jesus and were saved.

But the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and Herod who had rejected John, rejected Jesus, too. The Pharisees and Sadducees had Jesus' arrested. Then on the very morning of Jesus' death, they had Him brought before Herod for questioning. Herod had been as curious about Jesus as he had been about John. Here was the Messiah standing right before him, would he seek the salvation John had promised Jesus would bring? No, he would not. He would not be convicted of his sins or repent of them. He would not believe in Jesus. He and his soldiers dressed Jesus in a purple robe and mocked Him; then sent Him back to be condemned to die. Once more God had shown Herod mercy, but once more he chose to keep his wicked ways with his wicked wife. What a sad end for King Herod!

Cracking the Case:

It's time to answer our Case Questions.

1. A convict is someone who has been arrested and put in jail. Who was the convict? Why was he in jail? John (the Baptist). Herod and his wife didn't like that he said that they were sinners for getting married. (She had been Herod's brother's wife first.)

2. Who did he hope to convict of his sins that he might repent? Did this person repent?

Herod. No, he did not.

Something For You and Me

Our Bible Truth is: God Gave Us His Laws to Convict Us of Sin That We Might Be Saved

Our Bible Verse is: Isaiah 55:6-7

"Seek the LORD while He may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will freely pardon."

How merciful God had been to Herod! How many times He urged Herod to repent and prepare his heart for the salvation that was to come through the Messiah. Yet every single time, Herod refused to repent. To the

day he died--as far as we know--Herod never repented of his sins and believed in Jesus.

What about you and me? Are we shocked that Herod never repented of his sins? We shouldn't be. All of us, like Herod are lawbreakers with rebellious hearts. Too many times, we would rather keep our sinful, selfish ways rather than be convicted of our sins and turn to God. Let's praise God for His mercy shown to all of us, sinners. Let's praise Him for using His laws to convict us of our sins. Let's ask Him to send the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts and the hearts of others that we all might repent, believe in Jesus, and be saved.

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

A God, we praise You for being holy and yet so merciful! You call us all to repent of our sins that we might be saved through Jesus!

C God, we confess that we are sinners, like the people who heard John the Baptist's message. We also need to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

T God, we thank You for not leaving sinful people like us in our sins, but providing a way of salvation as Your free gift through Jesus.

S God, work in our hearts! Help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior. Help us to live faithful lives, like John the Baptist--faithful to You, all the way to the day we die!

Special Words

Pharisees and Sadducees: Jewish leaders.

Machaerus: Fortress-palace built by Herod.

Tetrarch: One of four rulers who rule over a country.

Messiah: The promised king and deliverer from God.

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:

God, we praise You for being so merciful. You are the God who convicts sinners of sins to save them, not just condemn them.

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

Add your own Adorations:

CONFESSION:

God, we confess that we have broken Your good laws in many ways. We deserve Your punishment! We need a Savior!

God, we have sinned against You....

Add your own Confessions:

THANKSGIVING:

Thank You, God for giving us Your laws that show us what sin is. Thank You for using Your laws to not just show us we are sinners, but to point us to our need of Jesus as our Savior.

God, we thank You for...

Add your own Thanksgivings:

SUPPLICATION:

God, work in our hearts! Help us turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

God, we need Your help...

Add your own Supplication:

SNEAKY SNACK

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

Snack: The King and the Prisoner of Machaerus

Ice cream cone (the two-sized cylinder kind, not the cone-shaped kind) "Machaerus" with teddy graham John the Baptist stowed in the bottom section "dungeon". Stand Herod and Herodias Teddy grahams on top of a rounded cookie, spread with a little icing and place on top of cone. If desired, can have lemon/orange/raspberry sherbet to put in cones after the children guess the meaning of the Teddy grahams. This could stand for the torches that lit the castle at the banquet. NOTE: Might want to use sugar-free ice cream to avoid too much sugar

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

Case Tie-in: King Herod gave in to his wife, Herodias, and had John arrested and locked in the dungeon of Machaerus. She wanted John silenced for saying that it was wrong for her to be married to Herod. Neither she nor Herod wanted to turn away from their sins and prepare for the coming Messiah, as John urged.

SOUL FOOD

Food for thought during snack time

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.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

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 Gave Us His Laws to Convict Us of Our Sin, That We Might Be Saved

God made each of us with a heart that tells us what is right and wrong. When we hear God's laws, we know that they are right. When we disobey God's laws, we know that we are doing wrong. We know we are not the perfect law-keepers God created us to be and calls us to be.

God's laws remind us that we deserve God's punishment for our sins, but that's not all God has planned for His laws to do. He has also planned for His laws to show us our sin, that we would turn away from our sins and be saved.

God loves to save sinners! Jesus promised that whoever comes to Him, repenting of their sins and trusting in Him as their Savior, He will never turn away. No matter how bad of a lawbreaker they have been, He will forgive their sins and save them. He will forgive us all of our sins, if we repent of our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Understanding the Bible Truth

1. What has God given us to tell us what is right and wrong? *A heart.*
2. What do we know when we hear God's laws? *That they are right.*
3. How do we know we are not the perfect law-keepers God calls us to be? *We disobey God's laws.*
4. What do God's laws remind us? *That we are sinners deserving God's punishment.*
5. What wonderful, merciful thing did God plan for His laws to do? *To show us our sin that we would turn away from our sins, trust in Jesus and be saved.*
6. What did Jesus promise all people, no matter how badly they have sinned? *Whoever comes to Him, having truly repented of their sins and trusted in Him as Savior, He will never turn away.*
7. How can Jesus make this promise? *Because He paid for all the sins of all who would ever turn from their sins and trust in Him.*

Bible Verse Connection Question

1. What does our Bible Truth have to do with our **Bible Verse: Isaiah 55:6-7**: "Seek the LORD while He may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will freely pardon."?
We seek the LORD by praying to Him and by reading His Word. His Word shows us that we are sinners deserving God's punishment. But it also promises that all who forsake their wicked ways (their rebellion against God) and their evil thoughts and turn to the LORD, He will have mercy on them. He will freely pardon.

Bible Truth Story Connection Questions

1. What did John tell the people to do? *Confess their sins and repent that their hearts might be prepared for the coming of the Messiah and the Kingdom of God.*
2. How did the people know what to confess/repent of? *Their consciences told them what was wrong; and, they had God's laws in the Bible. Also, John told people like the soldiers, tax collectors, Pharisees, Sadducees and even Herod and Herodias what they should do.*
3. Why didn't the Pharisees and Sadducees confess their sins and repent? *They didn't think they needed to repent. They thought it was enough that they kept the little rules that the Jewish leaders had made up about God's laws. They thought it was enough that Abraham was their great, great, great, etc. grandfather. God accepted Abraham, so God accepted them.*
4. How did God show great mercy to Herod, even though he rejected it each time? *He had John preach to Herod many times; He even allowed him to see and talk with Jesus, right before He died.*

Life Application Questions

1. How do we know what is wrong? *We know through the heart that God gave us, especially as we hear the Word of God.*
2. How does the LORD remind us of His laws to convict us of sin that we might be saved? *As we read His Word, we know His laws. His Holy Spirit uses it to show us our sin that we might confess them to God and turn to trust Jesus as our Savior.*

Life Application Questions

1. Have you ever found it hard to persevere in faithful love to someone else? When?
2. What is something good for God's people to remember when they have to forgive someone and they don't want to? *Remember God's forgiveness of their sins; remember that it is His command to forgive others.*
3. How can we become God's people? *By turning away from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our Savior.*

ACTS Questions

1. What is something we can praise God for because of this Bible Truth? *Praise God for His great love for His people shown through sending His Son to save His people.*
2. What are sins we can confess to God because of this Bible Truth?
Confess that we have not loved others as God calls us to.
3. What is something we can thank God for because of this Bible Truth?
Thank God for giving us people who love us. Thank God for His Holy Spirit who helps His people love others as God wants them to.
4. What is something we can ask God for because of this Bible Truth?
Ask God to work in our hearts and make us His people. Ask God to help us to turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Ask God to fill us with His Holy Spirit and help us to love others in the same way that He has loved His people.

The Gospel

1. God wants His people to love others as He has loved them? How has God shown His great love to His sinful people? 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: Beanbag Grand March

Materials

Small bowl or bag
1 Bean Bag per child
CD and CD player
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.

Playing the Game

Have the children form partners, then form a big double circle. Give each child a bean bag. Have them balance them on their heads. Tell the children that you will start the music and tell the children to move however you command them to move, such as march, walk, skip, tip toes, big knee bends, pat head, fly like a bird, etc. (BUT NOT RUN!!!) and try not to let their bean bag fall off their heads. When/if the bean bag falls off, a team is to sit down. When the music stops, all of the seated children are asked a question. If they get the right answer, then everyone is released to the march again. If not, then they must wait until the next time a question is asked and answered correctly.

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

Let all the children whose beanbag fell join back into the march, even if the class misses the question. Add the missed question back into the bag for further review.

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.

Breathe on Me, Breath of God

Verse 1

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love,
And do what Thou wouldst do.

Listen to it on PFI NIV Songs 7, Track 12

Understanding the Song

1. Who is the "Breath of God"? Why? *The Holy Spirit is nicknamed the "Breath of God." Our breath fills our body the air that it needs to live. The Holy Spirit fills our spirit with Himself so that we can know and love God and have eternal life.*
2. What does it mean to ask the Holy Spirit to breathe on us? *To fill our hearts with Himself.*
3. What does it mean for the Holy Spirit to fill us with life anew? *"Life anew" means "new life." The Holy Spirit is the One who comes into our sinful, rebellious hearts, cleanses them of sin and fills them with love for God. This is called "new life" because it is such a big change from living however our sinful hearts want to live. It is being dead in our spirit (not knowing or loving God) and then being made alive in our spirit (knowing and loving God).*
4. How does the singer of the song want the Holy Spirit to help him love? *What God loves.*
5. What does God love? How do we know this? *God loves Himself—Father, Son and Holy Spirit and the glory of His name. He loves all of His good and holy ways. He loves all of His creation, especially people who He made in His image. We know this from the Bible.*
6. What does the singer of the song want the Holy Spirit to help him do? *To do what God would do.*
7. What does God do that the singer wants to do? How do we know this? *God does many things that humans cannot do; but there are some things that God does that humans can at least act like. We can love Him and we can love others. We can bring glory to God's name. We can live by His holy laws. We can hate evil. We know what God wants us to do by reading His Word, especially His laws.*

Bible Truth Connection Question

1. How does this song relate to our Bible Truth: **God Gave Us His Laws to Convict Us of Our Sin, That We Might Be Saved?**

It is the Holy Spirit who convicts us of our sin when we hear God's laws. He is the one that works in our hearts to want to stop rebelling against God and start repenting. He works in us to love what God loves and to want to do what God would have us do. It is by His work that we turn in faith to trust Jesus as our Savior.

Story Connection Question

1. How does this song relate to today's story? *John the Baptist urged everyone to repent of their sins that their hearts might be prepared for the coming of the Messiah. Many of the common people & outcasts heard John's message were convicted of their sins, repented & were baptized. Their hearts were ready when Jesus came. They heard His message & believed in Him and were saved. They desired for the Holy Spirit to breathe new life into their hearts. They desired to love and to do as God would have them do. But the Pharisees, Sadducees, Herod & Herodias rejected John's message. Their hearts were not prepared for Jesus' message. They rejected it & were not saved. The Holy Spirit did not come to make their hearts new. They did not love or do as God would have them do because they did not have the Holy Spirit in their hearts.*

Bible Connection Question

1. What does this hymn have to do with our Bible Verse: **Isaiah 55:6-7**: "Seek the LORD while He may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will freely pardon."

The Breath of God is a nickname for the Holy Spirit. He works in the hearts of people, showing them their sin and helping them to forsake their evil ways. Without the Holy Spirit, no one will turn away from their sins and turn to God for forgiveness. This hymn is a prayer asking the Holy Spirit to work inside our hearts, giving us new life and filling us with love for God. These are gifts that God gives us when, in His mercy, we turn to Him and He freely pardons us.

Life Application Questions

1. How can our lives be affected by the message of this song? *We can praise God sending the Holy Spirit to work in rebellious hearts, bringing them to conviction of sin and faith in Jesus. We can ask God to send His Holy Spirit to use God's laws to bring conviction of sin in our own hearts and the hearts of others. We can ask Him to help us to love and to do what the LORD loves and would have us do.*

ACTS Questions

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

Praise God for being the Giver of His Holy Spirit who can change us.

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

That many times we do not love God as we should. We love ourselves and our own ways better. We deserve His punishment! We need a Savior!

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

We can thank God being able to change even our hard hearts, filling them with His new life and with love for Him.

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

That God would work in our hearts and give us new life. We can ask Him to help us to love and do whatever He would have us do.

Gospel Question

1. How can we receive new life from God? How can we be saved from our sins? 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: Word Take Away

Materials

Sign Language Signs and Song

White board and marker

Eraser

Preparing the Game

1. Write the words to the song on a white board.

Playing the Game

1. After children have learned the song and signs well, then tell the children that you are going to leave out words from the song (that you've learned signs for) and just do the sign in its place.
2. Have the children help you choose a word to take out. Erase the word from the board. Review the sign the for erased word.
3. Sing the song, trying to remember to NOT sing the word and do only the sign.
4. Continue to take out words until all of the words (with signs) have been taken out.

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

BIBLE VERSE REVIEW

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

Meditation Version: Isaiah 55:6-7

“Seek the LORD while He may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will freely pardon.”

Alternate Memory/Games Version: Isaiah 55:6,7

“Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him.”

Understanding the Bible Verse

1. Who should we seek? *The LORD.*
2. Why is the word “LORD” in all capitals, instead of little letters like most names? *“LORD” is a substitute word for the real name of God: Yahweh. The Israelites felt the name Yahweh too holy and special for people to say or even write. They wrote the word LORD instead.*
3. What does it mean to seek the LORD while He may be found and while He is near? *Does it mean that sometimes He hides from people or goes far away from them? God gives us a very special gift when we understand that we are sinners and we need to ask Him for forgiveness to be saved. It is a decision we must make before we die; and the sooner we make it, the better. Our hearts might become harder or more rebellious; our lives might even end. We should seek the LORD’s forgiveness today, because we do not know what will happen next.*
4. What is a wicked person, an evil man like? *Anyone who does not love God, but rebels against His good ways over and over and over.*
5. What should the wicked, the evil man do? *Forsake (turn away from) their (sinful, rebellious) ways and thoughts.*
6. Since Christians do sinful things, are they wicked or evil? *Christians are wicked, evil people who have confessed their sins to God. They have forsaken their sinful ways and thoughts and have turned to trust in Jesus as their Savior. They still fight sinful temptations and may many times give into them in sinful ways, but Jesus has forgiven them and by His Holy Spirit living in their hearts, gives them strength to keep fighting against sin.*
7. What happens to the wicked, evil person who forsakes his sinful ways/thoughts and turns to the LORD? *He promises to show him mercy and pardon.*
8. Why can the LORD pardon wicked people? *Because Jesus took the punishment for the sins of all who will ever turn from their sinful ways and trust in Him.*

Bible Truth Connection Question

1. What does this verse have to do with the **Bible Truth: God Gave Us His Laws to Convict Us of Our Sin, That We Might Be Saved?**

God’s laws make it clear to people what wickedness. He uses it to convict them of their wickedness that they might forsake their ways and turn to Him for pardon through Jesus and be saved.

Story Connection Questions

1. How does this verse relate to our story? *John the Baptist urged everyone to turn from their wickedness to the LORD so their hearts would be prepared for the coming of the Messiah. Many of the common people and outcasts heard and repented. The Pharisees, Sadducees and Herod did not. Most refused to forsake their wicked ways and thoughts. Most did not turn to the LORD while He was “near”. Most did not seek His mercy or pardon... and were not saved.*

Life Application Questions

1. What wickedness do we struggle with in our own hearts?
2. What wonderful gift does God offer us, even though we are sinners? How can we receive it? *Forgiveness of sins and eternal life! By turning from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our own Savior.*

ACTS Questions

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

Praise God for being Someone We Can Find When We Seek Him.

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

That many times we don't want to seek the LORD. We don't want to forsake our rebellious ways. 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 for offering full pardon for sins, even to the worst of sinners, when they turn from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior.

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 turn away from disobeying Him and trust in this wonderful Jesus as our own Savior. We can ask Him to help us seek Him.

The Gospel

1. What did Jesus do so that sinners can be forgiven their sins instead of facing God's eternal punishment? 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: Balloon Find

Materials

Bible verse written up in large print so that all can see
 2 large pieces of paper or poster board
 Paper, pencil, permanent marker
 Balloons, at least one per child and up to one per word of verse per team.
 2 Baskets or garbage bags
 Masking Tape

Preparing the Game

1. Make copy of the verse per team and cut it apart into as many parts as there are balloons per team. Number these verse pieces in order. Make a sign per team of the verse. If you have a lot of non- or early readers, write the verse in easy to read print, numbering each word/section that correspond to the sections on the cut-up version of the verse. If your children are all proficient readers, do not write the verse on the poster board, but simply draw lines and number them 1-10, corresponding to the 10 verse pieces. Write down and cut out the numbers used on the verse pieces and put in a little bag or jar. Designate particular colors /shapes of balloons for each team. You can choose to have only one color per team (i.e., Team 1 has only blue balloons); Team 2 has only red ones) or multiple colors/shapes per team (i.e., Team 1 has orange and blue balloons, Team 2 has red and blue balloons). Roll up the pieces of paper and insert each one into each of the balloons. Write the corresponding number on the outside of the balloon with the permanent marker. Make sure to have a complete set of the verse for each team. Store each set of balloons in baskets or garbage bags until game time. Make a circle of masking tape: one larger one in the middle, where all the balloons will be released. Make two starting lines, one for each team.

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, lead the children in a discussion of a **FEW** of the most important questions before beginning game.
 2. Explain the game to them as follows:
 Split the children into two teams and have them stand/sit in line. Tell them that all the words to the Bible verse are inside of the balloons. Let them know what color balloons their team will be looking for. Release all the balloons into the middle circle. Say the verse together as a group. Draw a number out of the bag and tell it the group. Then, at your word, let the first child in each team go find the correctly numbered balloon from the pile of balloons. They will each bring back their balloon and sit on it to pop it (or let you or someone else pop it. Remove the piece of verse and put them in a pile. Everyone one then says the verse again, the teacher pulls another number out and the next two children go to find the new number. Continue until all the numbers are found. Have each team stick their verse pieces up on their poster board, then say the verse together. If working with less confident readers, point out to them that they can use the sign you made and the numbers in the verse pieces as hints to help them line it up properly. The team then says the verse together. The first team to do so, wins. The first team who does, wins.

Non-competitive Option: Have the teams add each piece of verse to their poster board as it is retrieved from the balloon. At the end, have everyone say the verse together again.

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.

Seek the LORD

Seek the LORD while He may be found,
 Call on Him while He is near,
 Seek the LORD while He may be found,
 Call on Him while He is near,
 Let the wicked forsake his way,
 And the evil man his thought,
 Let him turn, turn to the LORD,
 And He will have mercy on him,
 He will have mercy on him.
 Isaiah Fifty-five, six and seven.
 First Corinthians Thirteen, four through eight.

Listen to it on PFI NIV Songs 7, Track 13

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.

STORY REVIEW

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. Why were people going out to the wilderness by the Jordan River? *To hear John preach.*
2. What did John say to the people? *That the Messiah was coming and bringing God's Kingdom. They should prepare their hearts for Him by confessing their sins, repenting and being baptized.*
3. Who received John's message? *The common people and the outcasts.*
4. Who refused to receive John's message? *The Pharisees and Sadducees.*
5. Why did the Pharisees and Sadducees think they did not need to repent of sins? *They believed it was enough that they kept all the Jewish leaders' little rules about God's laws; and that they were the great, great, great, etc. grandchildren of Abraham. God accepted him, so that means He accepts them, too.*
6. What did John say about Herod and Herodias? *That it was wrong for them to be married because she was really Herod's brother's wife.*
7. What worried Herod about John? *That he would lead the people to revolt against him.*
8. Why did Herodias want John dead? *To silence what he said about Herod and her marriage.*
9. What did Herod do to John to get him away from the people? *He had him arrested and put in the dungeon of Machaerus.*
10. Why did Herod keep calling for John? *He knew he was a godly man. He was curious about what he was like and what he said.*
11. What was Herodias looking for an opportunity to do? *To have John killed, since her husband wouldn't do it.*
12. Why did Herod hold a big feast at Machaerus? Who came? *To celebrate his anniversary as tetrarch of Galilee. He invited officials, military commanders, and important men of Galilee.*
13. What would have impressed them about Machaerus? *All the weapons, the water cisterns and food storage; also, the incredible view.*
14. What did Salome do after the men had eaten dinner? *She danced for them.*
15. What did Herod offer Salome as a reward for her dancing? *Anything, up to half his kingdom.*
16. What did Herodias tell Salome to ask for? *John the Baptist's head.*
17. Why did Herod hesitate to give Salome what she wanted? *He knew John was a godly man. He was scared of what the people would do.*
18. What did Herod go ahead and have John executed? *He cared more about what people thought than what God thought.*
19. What happened with Jesus after John died? *Jesus began to preach the good news of the Kingdom of God, just as John said he would.*
20. Who received Jesus' message? *The common people and the outcasts who had prepared their hearts as John told them to.*
21. Who did not receive Jesus' message? *The Pharisees, Sadducees and Herod who all rejected John.*
22. How is it easy to be like the Pharisees? *We might think that because we go to church and do good things that we do not need to be convicted of our sins. We need to ask God to give us hearts that are easily convicted of its sin so we will turn to Him in repentance and faith.*
23. How is it easy to be like Herod? *We may have heard the need to confess our sins, repent and be saved, yet we may harden our hearts. We might be tempted to keep doing things to please people or just to suit ourselves rather than repenting and turning to Jesus.*

Bible Truth Connection Questions

1. What does this story have to do with our Bible Truth: **God Gave Us His Laws to Convict Us of Our Sin, That We Might Be Saved?** *In His great mercy, the LORD gave Herod many times to be convicted of his sins, repent and be saved. But he would not; nor did (most of) the Pharisees and Sadducees. Many of the common people and the outcasts, however, were convicted of their sins as they heard John preach. They did repent and turn in faith to prepare for the Messiah. They heard Jesus' message, believed and were saved.*

Bible Verse Connection Question

1. What does the story have to do with our **Bible Verse: Isaiah 55:6-7**: "Seek the LORD while He may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will freely pardon."?

John the Baptist urged everyone to turn from their wickedness to the LORD so their hearts would be prepared for the coming of the Messiah. Many of the common people and outcasts heard and repented. The Pharisees, Sadducees and Herod did not. Most refused to forsake their wicked ways and thoughts. Most did not turn to the LORD while He was "near". Most did not seek His mercy or pardon...and were not saved.

Life Application Questions

1. How is it easy to be like the Pharisees? *We might think that because we go to church and do good things that we do not need to be convicted of our sins. We need to ask God to give us hearts that are easily convicted of its sin so we will turn to Him in repentance and faith.*

2. How is it easy to be like Herod? *We may have heard the need to confess our sins, repent and be saved, yet we may harden our hearts. We might be tempted to keep doing things to please people or just to suit ourselves rather than repenting and turning to Jesus.*

ACTS Questions

1. What's something we can praise God for from this story? *Praise God for being holy and yet so merciful! He calls us to repent of our sins that we might be saved through Jesus!*

2. What's something we can confess from this story? *Confess that we are sinners, like the people who heard John the Baptist's message. We also need to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.*

3. What's something we can thank God for from this story? *We can thank God for not leaving sinful people like us in our sins, but providing a way of salvation as His free gift through Jesus.*

4. What is something we can ask God for, from this story? *We can ask God to work in our hearts, helping us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior. We can ask Him to help us to live faithful lives like John the Baptist--faithful to God even to death!*

The Gospel

1. Who was John the Baptist preparing the people for? What was Jesus coming to do? What is the gospel? *John was preparing them for the coming of Jesus, who was coming to save God's people. The gospel is: 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: The Answer's in the Tent

Materials

Various props, objects, costumes, or even pictures from the story, enough for one idea per child at least.
 A small pup tent or blanket and chairs made into a tent
 Paper and pencil/pen to write down questions
 Jar or bag

Preparing the Game

1. Make a list of main characters, objects, elements from the story. For example in the story of Jesus being tempted in the wilderness you could have rocks, bread, blocks (like from the Temple), a globe, a red robe/shirt, etc. (for Satan), white robe for angels who came to comfort Jesus at the end, a Bible (the word of God that Jesus used to refute Satan), a picture of a desert or the sun, the number 40 (for 40 days and nights without food). The Plan-a-Play story sheet is a good source of ideas. If desired, you can write different point values--such as 5, 10, 25 points-- on questions, depending upon how hard they are. Place these objects in the tent.
2. Make up questions that have these props as their answers, such as: What did Satan tempt Jesus to turn the rocks into when He was so hungry? (bread)
3. Place the questions in a jar or bag.

Playing the Game

Have the children sit down in lines of equal teams. Tell them that in the tent are answers to the questions that you have folded up in the bag. They will take turns listening to a question and having the first person in line go into the tent and find the prop/costume piece/etc. that answers the question. If a team doesn't get the right prop, then the first person from the other team gets to go up and see if they can find it for a point.

Continue until all have had a chance to play or all questions have been answered. Tally points. Repeat game as time and attention spans allow.

Non-competitive Option

Don't put points on the questions. Don't split into teams, but instead sit in a circle around the tent. Have the children take turns going into the tent to retrieve the prop that fits the answer to the question.

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 Case Story Re-Action! The name of our story is: The Case of the Convicting Convict.

Our story takes place in New Testament times, while Jesus lived on earth.

And now we present: "The Case of the Convicting Convict."

Scene 1:

People from all over Israel went out to the wilderness by the Jordan River to hear John preach. John urged them to prepare their hearts for the coming Messiah and the Kingdom of God He would bring by confessing and repenting of their sins, and be baptized. Many people repented, believed and were baptized. Even outcasts, like the tax collectors and soldiers, heard John's message, and responded. They wanted to be ready for the Messiah. But the Pharisees and Sadducees--the Jewish leaders-- heard John's message and rejected it. They didn't think they needed to repent. They thought it was enough to keep all the Jewish leaders little rules about God's laws and that Abraham was their great, great, great, grandfather. John told them they needed to repent, too, but they wouldn't listen. They angrily went back and told the others what John said about them. John also rebuked Herod for taking his brother's wife, Herodias, for himself.

Actions:

Scene 2:

News of what John was saying and doing reached Herod and Herodias. Herod was afraid John might lead the people to revolt against him. Herodias wanted him killed for what he said about Herod and her. Herod had John arrested and chained up in the dungeon of Machaerus to keep him out of trouble. Herod was fascinated with John and many times called for him to be brought before him to preach. John rebuked him and told him to repent of his sins; but, Herod would not. Herodias got angrier and angrier every time Herod had John preach to him. She waited for the right moment to have him killed. At Herod's anniversary of being tetrarch, she got her chance. Herod invited all the important officials, the military commanders, and men of Galilee to a rich feast in his honor at Machaerus. After dinner, Herodias' daughter Salome danced for them. Herod was so pleased with her dancing that in front of all his guests he promised her up to half his kingdom. She asked her mother what to ask for and Herodias told her to ask for John the Baptist's head. Salome asked for his head to be brought to her on a platter. Herod didn't want to do it, but decided it was more important to keep his promise in front of his guests than to do what was right and spare John. John was put to death and his head brought on a platter to Salome.

Scene 3:

John died, but everything he had preached happened. The Messiah Jesus came and preached the good news of salvation. Many people heard Jesus' message and received it. By repentance and faith, they turned to Him and were saved. But not the Pharisees, Sadducees and Herod who had refused to be convicted of their sins, repent and be prepared for the Messiah. They rejected Jesus' message. They had Him arrested and made plans to kill Him. On the day Jesus was to die on the cross, he was brought before Herod to be judged. Even then, with Jesus right in front of him, Herod would not soften his heart. He and his soldiers mocked Him in unbelief. As far as we know, Herod never repenting of his sins. May we not be like him! May we all turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior!

Bible Truth Tie-In:

The Bible Truth we are learning is: **God Gave Us His Laws to Convict Us of Our Sin, That We Might Be Saved.** Herod refused to be convicted of his sins, repent and prepare his heart for Messiah Jesus. Instead, he chose to harden his heart and please himself, his wife and others. As far as we know, he received the full consequences of his choice: he died in his sins. Oh, may we not respond to God like Herod! May we hear and repent, and know salvation through Jesus!

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

Welcome to our Case Story Re-Action! The name of our story is: The Case of the Convicting Convict.

Our story takes place in New Testament times, while Jesus lived on earth.

The characters in our story are: John; Common people; Outcasts (Tax collectors and soldiers); Pharisees and Sadducees; Herod and Herodias; Officials, Military commanders, and important men of Galilee; and, Jesus.

And now we present: "The Case of the Convicting Convict."

Scene 1: (Beginning)

People from all over Israel went out to the wilderness by the Jordan River to hear John preach. John urged them to prepare their hearts for the coming Messiah and the Kingdom of God He would bring by confessing and repenting of their sins, and be baptized. Many people repented, believed and were baptized. Even outcasts, like the tax collectors and soldiers, heard John's message, and responded. They wanted to be ready for the Messiah. But the Pharisees and Sadducees--the Jewish leaders-- heard John's message and rejected it. They didn't think they needed to repent. They thought it was enough to keep all the Jewish leaders little rules about God's laws and that Abraham was their great, great, great, grandfather. John told them they needed to repent, too, but they wouldn't listen. They angrily went back and told the others what John said about them. John also rebuked Herod for taking his brother's wife, Herodias, for himself.

Scene 2: (Middle)

News of what John was saying and doing reached Herod and Herodias. Herod was afraid John might lead the people to revolt against him. Herodias wanted him killed for what he said about Herod and her. Herod had John arrested and chained up in the dungeon of Machaerus to keep him out of trouble. Herod was fascinated with John and many times called for him to be brought before him to preach. John rebuked him and told him to repent of his sins; but, Herod would not. Herodias got angrier and angrier every time Herod had John preach to him. She waited for the right moment to have him killed. At Herod's anniversary of being tetrarch, she got her chance. Herod invited all the important officials, the military commanders, and men of Galilee to a rich feast in his honor at Machaerus. After dinner, Herodias' daughter Salome danced for them. Herod was so pleased with her dancing that in front of all his guests he promised her up to half his kingdom. She asked her mother what to ask for and Herodias told her to ask for John the Baptist's head. Salome asked for his head to be brought to her on a platter. Herod didn't want to do it, but decided it was more important to keep his promise in front of his guests than to do what was right and spare John. John was put to death and his head brought on a platter to Salome.

Scene 3: (End)

John died, but everything he had preached happened. The Messiah Jesus came and preached the good news of salvation. Many people heard Jesus' message and received it. By repentance and faith, they turned to Him and were saved. But not the Pharisees, Sadducees and Herod who had refused to be convicted of their sins, repent and be prepared for the Messiah. They rejected Jesus' message. They had Him arrested and made plans to kill Him. On the day Jesus was to die on the cross, he was brought before Herod to be judged. Even then, with Jesus right in front of him, Herod would not soften his heart. He and his soldiers mocked Him in unbelief. As far as we know, Herod never repenting of his sins. May we not be like him! May we all turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior!

Bible Truth Tie-In:

The Bible Truth we are learning is: **God Gave Us His Laws to Convict Us of Our Sin, That We Might Be Saved.** Herod refused to be convicted of his sins, repent and prepare his heart for Messiah Jesus. Instead, he chose to harden his heart and please himself, his wife and others. As far as we know, he received the full consequences of his choice: he died in his sins. Oh, may we not respond to God like Herod! May we hear and repent, and know salvation through Jesus!

John Brought Up from the Dungeon to Preach

Description

Children will make a pop-up John who comes up from his dungeon to preach before Herod and Herodias.

Materials

White cardstock

16 oz. paper cups, 1 per child

1 long wooden kebab stick per child

White cardstock

Brown/gray craft sand

Markers

Tape

Strong glue and sponge pieces as applicators

Brown/gray felt to make one 5" diameter circle per child (Could also use cardstock, but not preferable) OR a lid that fits on the cup

Glue gun and glue sticks

Preparing the Craft

1. Poke hole just big enough for the kebab stick in bottom of each cup.
2. Cut slits for prison bars in front half of cup, leaving uncut space at top and bottom.
3. Using your cup as a guide, cut out 1 brown felt circle per child, about ½" larger than rim. Cut slits in each as shown in Figure #1.
4. Use glue gun to glue edges of felt circle to rim allowing edges to hang over. OR, if you have lids for your cups, just cut inner slits in lid.
5. Copy onto cardstock 1 of Patterns #1-4 per child. Cut out.
6. Set out craft sand in 13" x 9" baking trays or equivalent. Set out glue and sponge pieces..

Making the Craft

1. Show the children a copy of the craft.
2. Have the children color in Herod, Herodias, and John.
3. Decorate the inside wall of the castle above the line. Glue Herod and Herodias in place above the line.
4. Spread glue all around the cup and all over the back side of castle wall.
5. Attach castle wall to back side of cup (area without prison bars).
6. Roll cup in craft sand so that it leaves a fine coat all around the prison bars and up the back side of the castle wall.
7. Securely tape John onto the sharp end of wooden kebab stick. Insert other end of stick through hole and lower John down into the dungeon by pulling down on the stick. Now John can be brought up and taken back down to the dungeon.

NOTE: If you do not want to use craft sand, you can purchase brown/gray cups and decorate the cardstock back of castle and dungeon with markers.

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****Discussion Questions**

1. Where did King Herod put John when he was arrested? *In his dungeon at Castle Machaerus.*
2. What did King Herod order be done with John many times? *To be brought up to preach to him.*
3. Why did he want to listen to John? What did John hope King Herod would do? What did King Herod do? *He knew John was a godly man and was both scared and curious about what John had to say. He never took John's words to heart. He did not repent of his sins.*
4. What is Bible Truth that we are learning? *God Gave Us His Laws to Convict Us of Our Sin, That We Might Be Saved.*
5. What does our craft have to do with our Bible Truth: God Gave Us His Laws to Convict Us of Our Sin, That We Might Be Saved?
Through John's preaching, the LORD gave Herod many opportunities to be convicted of his sin, repent and be prepared for the Messiah. But Herod always hardened his heart and refused to change. He cared more about what others thought and doing whatever he wanted to do.
6. What can our craft help us remember? *We, too, have heard God's laws, perhaps even many times. What will we do? Will we refuse to change like Herod, or will we confess our sins, repent and be saved?*

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

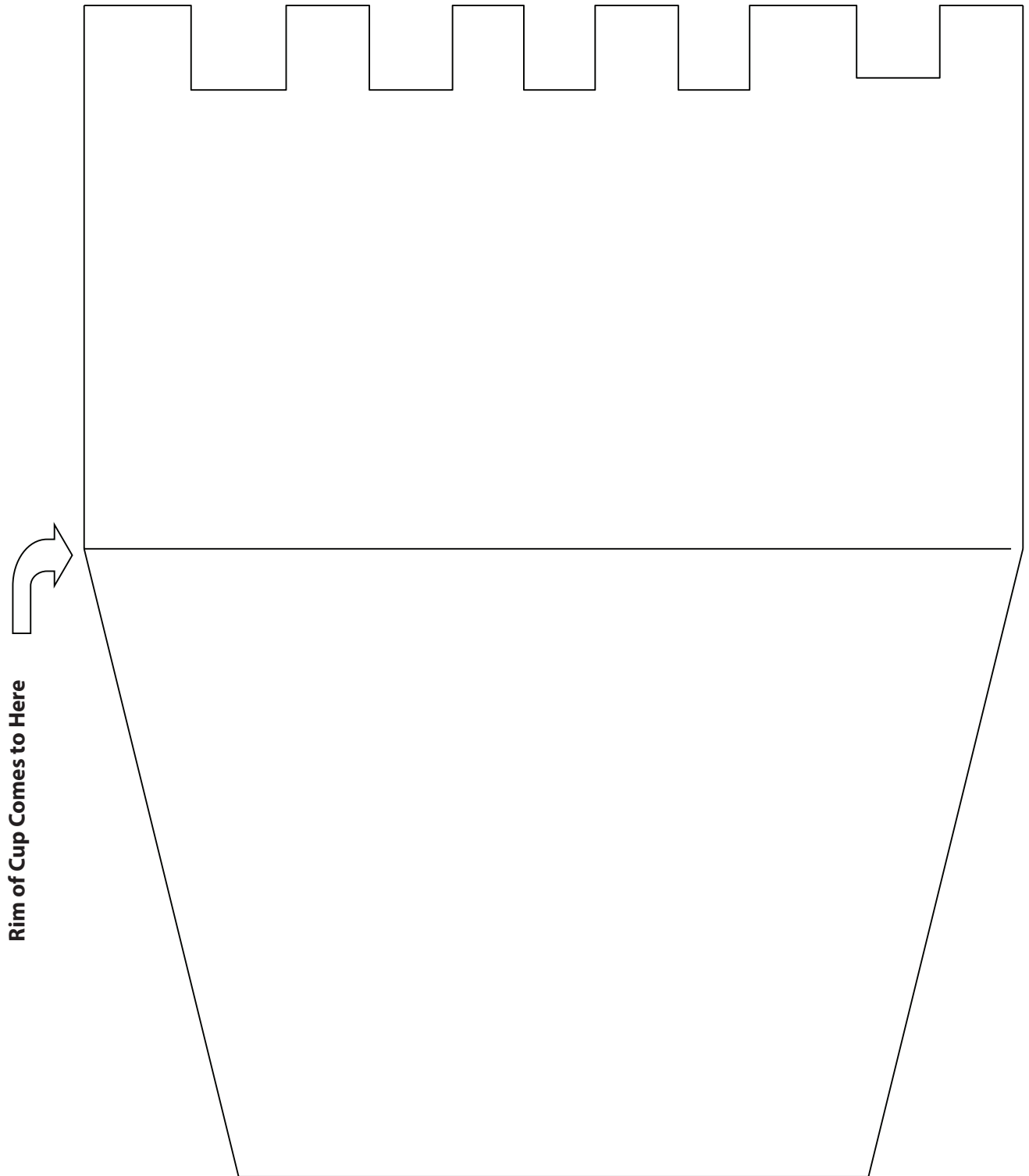
Have children hold up your model craft/their crafts. Choose five children (or you say) the five sections below to explain the craft's importance.

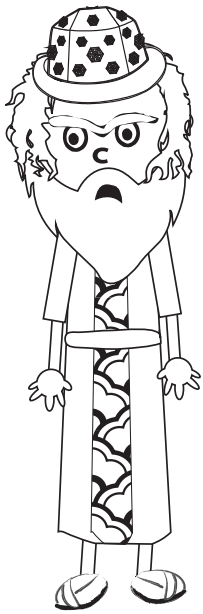
Presentation:

1. Our craft is: John Brought Up from the Dungeon to Preach.
2. At Castle Machaerus, King Herod the Tetrarch many times ordered for John to be brought up from the dungeon to preach to him. He knew he was a godly man and was both scared and curious about what John had to say... yet he took John's words to heart. He did not repent of his sins.
3. Our Bible Truth is: God Gave Us His Laws to Convict Us of Our Sin, That We Might Be Saved.
4. Through John's preaching, the LORD gave Herod many opportunities to be convicted of his sin, repent and be prepared for the Messiah. But Herod always hardened his heart and refused to change. He cared more about what others thought and doing whatever he wanted to do.
5. Our craft can help us remember that we, too, have heard God's laws, perhaps even many times. What will we do? Will we refuse to change like Herod, or will we confess our sins, repent and be saved?

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.

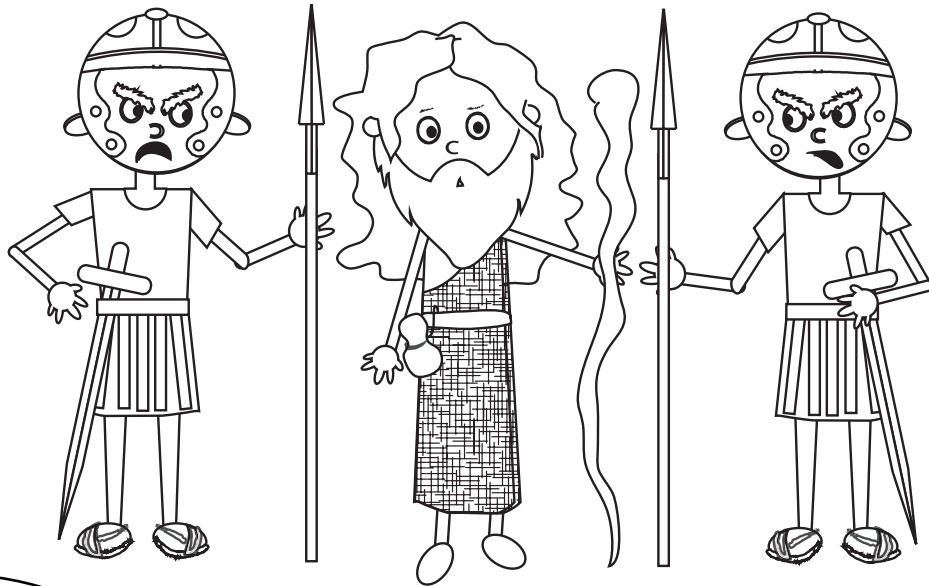
Craft Pattern #1
Back Side of Castle





Pattern 3 Queen Herodias

Pattern 2 King Herod



Pattern 4 John the Baptist with Guards

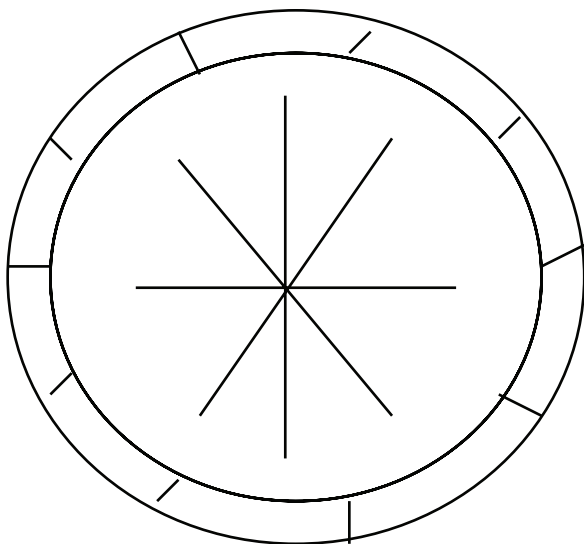


Figure #1

Diagram of Slits

Fold over rim of cup along dashed circle. Dashed lines to make slits to help fold felt/paper over rim. You will glue these down to rim of cup. Solid lines make slits for John to come up out of dungeon.

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.

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 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: Hot and Cold Hide

Materials

Information Sheet for one VIPP
2 Set of Clue Cards
8 8.5" x 11" Manilla Envelopes
Blindfold

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.

Playing the Game

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

Review: Choose one child to be "The Finder" and cover his eyes with the blindfold. Choose one of the Clue Card envelopes. Choose another child to be "The Hider". This child will hide the envelope somewhere in the room. When the clue is hidden, the Finder takes off his blindfold and begins to look for the envelope. The other children say "hot, cold, etc" as the child gets closer or further from the envelope to help the child find it. When the folder is found, 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 hidden.

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

3 WAYS TO PRAY FOR THE VIPP

