

BIBLE TRUTH 4, 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 ESV Songs 8, Track 1*

Rules to Help Us Worship God and Love One Another: WoGoLOA Classroom Rules Song
PFI ESV Songs 8, Track 2

Big Question Under Investigation: Big Question 8 Songs *PFI ESV Songs 8, Tracks 3,4*

Big Question Bible Verse: 1 Chronicles 16:34 Song: *PFI ESV Songs 8, Track 5*

Extra Bible Verse: Lamentations 3:22, 23 Song: The Steadfast Love of the LORD *PFI ESV Songs 8 Track 6*

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

Bible Truth 4: God Loves His People By Caring For Their Needs

Bible Truth Hymn: The King of Love, vs.1,4 *PFI ESV Songs 8, Tracks 14,15*

Bible Verse: Psalm 23:1-6

Bible Verse Song: The LORD Is My Shepherd *PFI ESV Songs 8, Track 16*

Extra Bible Verse Song: *If God Be for Us Romans 8:31-32,35,38-39, ESV, Songs 8, Track 17*

Extra Bible Verse Song: *Who Shall Separate Us? Romans 8:31-32,35,38-39, ESV, Songs 8, Track 18*

Lesson 3 New Testament: The Case of the Two Needy Men *2 Peter*

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

Snack and Discussion Planner: The Houses of Rome in Flames

ACTS Prayer: Prayer Sheet

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

Bible Truth Hymn: The King of Love, vs.1,4 *PFI ESV Songs 8, Tracks 14,15*

Song, Sign Language and Song Game: Big Voice, Little Voice **PFI ESV Songs 8 BOOK or ONLINE**

Bible Verse Review: Psalm 23:1-6 Discussion Sheet and Game: Mr. Freezie Ball

Bible Verse Song: The LORD Is My Shepherd Psalm 23:1-6 *PFI ESV Songs 8, Track 16*

Song, Sign Language and Song Game: Sign It, Say It, What Does It Mean? **PFI ESV Songs 8 BOOK or ONLINE**

Story Review: Discussion Questions and Game: Obstacle Course Quiz

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: Walls of Gold and Jewels

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 4, Lesson 3 **PFI ESV Prontos 8 BOOK or ONLINE**

The Case of the Two Needy Men *2 Peter* by Connie Dever

Our story is: The Case of the Two Needy Men.
As you listen to the story, see if you can figure out:

1. Who were the two needy men? Who did they rely upon to get what they needed?
2. Which one only truly had all his needs met? Why?

This story takes place in New Testament times, in Rome, when Nero was Caesar. This was about thirty years after Jesus died on the cross, rose from the dead and went back to heaven.

Apparently Caesar Nero wasn't that much to look at. He had a head of blond curls, but weak, blue eyes and a lot of acne. He had a big belly and bad body odor, too! No, Caesar Nero certainly wasn't much to look at—or even smell—but when he entered the room, people bowed. And when he wanted something, he got it. Caesar Nero was a man who took care of his own needs—no matter what.

Nero had his mother Agrippina to thank for much of the good things he enjoyed. She was the one who had Caesar Claudius adopt Nero and choose him to be the next Caesar over his own son, Britannicus. Agrippina also had the great teacher Seneca brought from exile to teach Nero philosophy, science, Latin and how to run a government. And it was she who had her husband Caesar Claudius killed with poisoned mushrooms so Nero would be crowned emperor over the Roman Empire at just age sixteen.

As Caesar, Nero became proud. He didn't need his mother or Seneca anymore. He was the most powerful man in the world. He could get whatever he wanted—and he wanted a lot! He wanted a magnificent, new palace, surrounded by woods, parks, zoos, waterfalls and fountains. He wanted a lake big enough to sail ships on it; and a market, an outdoor theatre, a big workout center (called a gymnasium) and a luxurious bathhouse with steamy salt and spring water for Nero and his guests to enjoy.

He would name the palace Domus Aurea: the Golden Palace. It would have walls decorated in gold, silver, jewels and fine paintings. One dining room would have sprinklers in the ceiling that sprayed perfume down upon the guests. Another would have a ceiling painted

with the sun, moon, stars, and planets that would rotate in keeping with the time of day or night.

Most incredible of all would be the 120-foot-high (about as tall as a ten-story building) bronze statue of himself that he would place at the palace's entrance. After all, shouldn't he be honored as Nero the Great: king over the Roman Empire? Provider for its millions' of people?

But there was a problem with Nero's palace plans. There was no place in Rome to put it! It would take up hundreds of acres, and the city was already dangerously crowded. Hundreds of thousands of people squeezed into shabby houses built along dark, narrow passageways that were more like tunnels than streets.

But remember. Nero was a man used to meeting his own needs. He would find a way to get what he wanted. What if something was to happen to get rid of all those dark streets swarming with life...too much life, some might say? Think what beautiful, wide streets and new buildings could be built there instead! It certainly would be much healthier for the people and whose to say there wouldn't be space left over for Nero's dream palace?

Just a thought of Nero's...or perhaps a plan? No one knows for sure. But somehow, on July 19th 64 A.D., a fire broke out in some shops at one end of the Circus Maximus—the huge sports arena—in Rome. The fire lasted nine days, destroying two-thirds of the city. About half a million people lost everything.

What a caring emperor Nero seemed in those days after the fire. He put shelters in his own gardens to house them and he brought in low-cost corn so all could afford to eat. He offered sacrifices to the Roman gods asking them to help the people hurt by the fire.

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 even as Nero did these good things, the people began to say that Nero had set the fire on purpose. And when he began to build Domus Aurea where the fire had been, the people were sure they were right. Many hated him. Some wanted to kill him.

But don't forget: Nero was the man who took care of his own needs. He knew what to do about these rumors. He would blame the fire on someone else. Someone most Romans hated already: the Christians.

"Those Christians! They're the ones who started that fire!" Nero lied. "They refuse to worship the emperor and the Roman gods. They say their God will judge Rome for its sinful ways. They hate Romans. That's why they started this fire!" he told the people.

The people believed Nero's lies. They didn't like the Christians and their strange beliefs. They rejoiced as Nero sent bands of soldiers to gather up the Christians and send them to their death. Some were dipped in wax; some were thrown to the lions; some were burned alive; still others were crucified. Nero, the man who could meet all his needs, had done it again. He sat in his palace in satisfaction. He had turned people's angry from him to the Christians.

The apostle Peter was in Rome when Nero's great persecution of the Christians began. He had come there to encourage the Roman believers in their faith when the great fire broke out. He had not been arrested during those first, terrible days when so many Christians lost their lives; but, he was not to be spared forever. Nero sent out soldiers to arrest more Christians and captured Peter. At last! One of the Christians' greatest leaders would soon be dead! The Romans must have thought.

Great leader! Ha! Peter couldn't be more unlike Nero, the great Roman leader. Peter was poor. He had no armies. He was helpless to take care of his own needs, let alone others. And what about this Jesus who Peter worshiped? He was supposed to be the Son of God who paid for God's people's sins while He died on the cross, then rose from the grave, in victory over death. But if Jesus really was the Son of God, where was He now when Peter and the rest of the Christians were in such great need? Dead and gone...the Romans believed.

But Peter knew the truth. So did the other believers.

It looked like Jesus had left them all alone; but He had not. He DID reign in heaven. He DID have power to take care of God's people's needs. He was taking care of them right then. His Holy Spirit was working in their hearts, giving them courage and reminding them of Jesus' promises to them. Promises like: "I am the Resurrection and the Life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lived and believes in Me will never die." And, "Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

No. Peter didn't fear. Perhaps he had no way to take care of his needs, but he knew God did. God would be with him, helping him to the very end.

But Peter didn't just think of himself in these last days of his life. He thought of the other Christians spread throughout Asia Minor. They struggled, too. They had teachers who taught them lies about God. They had enemies who made fun of them and even hurt them for believing in Jesus. Peter wanted to encourage them to keep to keep on believing in God and trusting that He would take care of all their needs, too.

So Peter turned to his friend Silvanus who was with him. "Silvanus, write down one last letter for me."

Getting out a scroll, Silvanus wrote as Peter spoke: "From Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To you who through our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received faith in God. May God fill you with His peace and grace through Jesus!" Peter urged them. "Don't be afraid or discouraged. Keep living for Jesus. Remember that His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness. He has given us His very great and precious promises. Keep growing in goodness, and in knowing God and His Word. If you do, you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus has made it clear that soon I will die and go to be with Him. I'm sending you this letter so you will always remember these things when I am gone," Peter said.

Peter spoke these words and many others. When he finished, he said to Silvanus, "Give this to the Christians in Asia Minor." Silvanus promised he would.

Peter died soon after. Soldiers tied up his hands and took him to a cross to die. Some say Peter asked to be crucified upside, feeling unworthy to die the same way

as His Savior Jesus had. No one knows for sure. But we do know that God was with Peter, either upside down or right side up, as he died on that cross. And, we know that by His divine power, the God who gave Peter everything he needed for life and for godliness, gave him everything he needed to die for Him, too. And best of all, we know that when Peter's suffering was over, his spirit went to be with Jesus in heaven. There at last, he knew the fullest delight any person can ever know: life in God's presence: rich and full and indescribably wonderful forever. Yes. God had taken care of all his needs--this man who seemed to have nothing.

Cracking the Case:

It's time to answer our Case Questions.

1. Who were the two needy men? Who did they rely upon to get what they needed? Nero and Peter. Nero relied upon himself. Peter relied upon Jesus.

2. Who looked like he had all his needs met? Who truly had all his needs met? Why? Nero seemed to get everything he wanted. But only Peter truly had all his needs met. Jesus gave him everything he needed to live the life God wanted him to live. And, Jesus also gave Peter forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Sadly, Nero never did.

Something For You and Me

Our Bible Truth is:

God Loves His People By Caring For Their Needs

Our Bible Verse is: Psalm 23:1-6

"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever."

Do you wonder what happened to Nero, the man who thought he could take care of his own needs? In the years after Peter died, Nero's plans fell apart. Nero thought persecuting and killing Christians would put an end to belief in Jesus; but instead, it led to many Romans hearing the good news of Jesus and believing. They saw God's divine power at work in them, giving them courage to keep confessing Jesus as their Savior

even as they suffered terribly and died. "Surely someone could die like this only if what they say about Jesus is true," they thought.

But this was the least of Nero's problems. The Roman people completely turned against him. They made plans to kill him. In the end, Nero killed himself before someone else did. Domus Aurea was abandoned. The beautiful grounds were divided up and his magnificent palace was allowed to crumble. His head was removed from the 120 feet bronze statue.

Worst of all, when Nero died, he died in his sins, having never repented and trusted in Jesus as his Savior. The man who though he could take care of his own needs, didn't take care of any of his real needs at all. How very sad!

What about you and me? Who are we like? Are we like Nero? Have we tried to take care of our self and have nothing to do with God? Or, like Peter, have we trusted Jesus to save us from our sins and to take care of all our needs? If we are like Nero, the wonderful news is it is not too late! Even today we can turn from our sins and trust Jesus as our own Savior. He promises to forgive us and make us God's very own, dearly loved people. And if we do, we can know that no matter what we go through God has given us His divine power to give us everything we need for life and godliness.

Let's praise God for His wonderful promises to always take care of all His people's needs. Let's ask Him to fill us with His divine power that we might have everything we need for life and godliness to the praise of His glory! *Close in prayer.*

Closing ACTS Prayer

A God, we praise You for being the Provider for Your people's every need, even when facing death.

C God, we confess that many times, like Nero, we are selfish and greedy. We think about what we want and forget You and Your good ways. We need a Savior!

T God, we thank You for promising to always give Your people the power they need to endure even the hardest things, such as persecution and death.

S God, work in our hearts! Help us to turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Change our hearts so that we are not greedy and selfish like Nero, but are people who love You and live for You.

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 perfectly good, wise and powerful to always take care of all Your people's needs in the way that is best.

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

Add your own Adorations:

CONFESSION:

God, we confess that we have worried that You cannot or will not take care of our needs. Confess that we have grumbled about ways that You has taken care of our needs that may be best for us, but that we don't like. We need a Savior!

God, we have sinned against You....

Add your own Confessions:

THANKSGIVING:

Thank You, God for all of our needs that You have taken care of already. Thank You for sending Jesus to take care of the greatest need of we have: forgiveness of sins through Jesus.

God, we thank You for...

Add your own Thanksgivings:

SUPPLICATION:

God, take care of our needs, according to what will bring You the most glory and will be wisest and best for us. Work in our hearts. Help us to turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to love You and know You.

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 Houses of Rome in Flames

Candy corn or red fruit roll up “fire” flaming up out of graham cracker/wheat thin “houses of Rome”

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

Case Tie-in: Nero was willing to lie and hurt others terribly, just to take care of his own needs. He set fire to a large part of Rome in order to make room to build a huge palace for himself. He was willing to falsely blame this on the Christians in order to get himself out of trouble.

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 Loves His People by Caring for Their Needs

God is the most wonderful Father anyone could ever imagine. He is always good; always wise. He loves His children with the deepest of loves. He always takes care of their needs. When we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as Savior, God becomes our heavenly Father and we become His adopted children.

God's people know that God has already taken care of their greatest need of all: He sent Jesus to die for their sins. When they remember that their loving Father was willing to give up even His own dear Son to save them, they know they can trust Him to take care all the rest of their needs, too.

God delights to hear His people ask Him for what they need; and, He delights to provide them with what they need. He always gives them what He knows is the very best for them.

Understanding the Bible Truth

1. What kind of Father is God? *He is the most wonderful Father anyone could ever imagine: always good; always wise; loves His children with the deepest of loves; always takes care of all their needs.*
2. What is the greatest need we have? How did God take care of it for His people? *To be forgiven their sins so they do not have to face God's eternal wrath and punishment, but can know and enjoy God forever. He took care of this need by sending Jesus to suffer and die as the full payment for their sins.*
3. How do we become God's adopted children and He our Heavenly Father? *By turning from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our own Savior.*
4. Why does thinking about God giving His own Son to save them comfort God's people about His meeting the rest of their needs? *If He was willing to give up His dear Son, who He loves most of all, to take care of their biggest need, surely He will completely take care of all their other lesser needs.*
5. How does God feel about hearing about and providing for His people's needs? What does that mean? *He delights to hear about them and provide for them. That means it brings Him pleasure.*

Bible Truth Story Connection Questions

1. How did God meet the Christians' needs as they suffered and died? How did He use this to bring others to believe in Him? *He gave them strength to not fear and to keep confessing their faith in Him, even as they suffered and died. Some Romans saw this and trusted in Jesus as their Savior, feeling that it must be true if they were willing to suffer and die for Jesus like this.*
2. What did Peter remind the Christians in Asia Minor that God had given them so that they would always have what they needed for life and godliness? *His precious promises. What are some of the precious promises God has given His people that God might have used to strengthen them as they suffered? Various. Review story for some possibilities.*

Bible Verse Connection Question

1. What does our Bible Truth have to do with our **Bible Verse: Psalm 23:1-6**: "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever."?
The LORD is like a shepherd to His people. He is always with them, caring for their needs and guiding them. There will never be a day when He is not caring for them. Even when they face death, itself, He will be with them. They never need to fear. They can rejoice that even on that day He will take care of them and He will bring them to live with Him forever in heaven.

Life Application Questions

1. What are needs that people have? How does God meet these needs?
2. Has God ever cared for your needs in ways other than what you prayed for/expected? Who do you think He cared for them as He did? *He is all wise and know better than us what will ultimately be best for us.*
3. God loves His people by caring for their needs. How can we become God's people? *By turning away 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 Truth? *Praise God for being the one true God who is able to take care all of our needs.*

2. What are sins we can confess to God because of this Bible Truth?

We have worried that God won't take care of our needs or can't take care of our needs, even though He has shown us in His Word, the Bible, that He will always take care of the needs of those who turn to Him and trust in Jesus as their Savior. We deserve His punishment! We need a Savior!

Thank God for ways He has taken care of our needs already. *We can thank Him for sending Jesus to take care of the greatest need of His sinful people: forgiveness of sins through Jesus. We can thank Him for sending Jesus to take care of the greatest need of His sinful people: forgiveness of sins through Jesus.*

4. What is something we can ask God for because of this Bible Truth?

We can ask God to take care of our greatest need: the forgiveness of our sins. We can ask Him 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 take care of other specific needs we/others have in a way that glorifies Him and is good for us.

The Gospel

1. What is every person's greatest need? What has God done to meet that need? What does He call us to 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: Silly Grand March

Materials

CD and CD player
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.

Playing the Game

Have the children form partners, then form a big double circle. 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!!!) when you play the music. But when the music stops, they and their partner are to grab hands and sit down as quickly as possibly. The last pair to sit down become the Question Choosers for the class. If the class answers it correctly, then the pair is added back into the group immediately. If not, then the pair stays out until another round when a correct answer is given to a question. (Feel free to add back incorrectly answered questions into the bag).

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

Don't exclude the Question Choosers from the game, even if class gets the wrong answer.

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.

The King of Love

Verse 1

The King of love my shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never.
I nothing lack if I am His
and He is mine forever.

Verse 4

In death's dark vale I fear no ill,
With Thee dear Lord beside me.
Thy rod and staff, my comfort still,
Thy cross before to guide me.

Listen to it on PFI ESV Songs 8, Tracks 14,15

Understanding the Song

1. Who is the "King of Love"? Why is this a good name for Him? *The LORD. He alone rules with pure love in all that He does for His people.*
2. How is the LORD like a shepherd? *He cares and protects His people, as a shepherd cares and protects his sheep.*
3. What is the LORD's goodness like? *It never fails.*
4. What does "I am His and He is mine" mean? *I am one of God's people. He is my Savior.*
5. What will I lack if I am His and He is mine? *Nothing.*
6. How can we become His? *By turning from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our own Savior.*
7. What does "death's dark vale" mean? *A vale is a valley. Sometimes people talk about scary, lonely, hard times being like valleys and good, happy times being like mountain tops. Death can be the scariest, loneliest, hardest time of all.*
8. What does "ill" mean and why don't God's people need to fear it in death's dark vale? *Ill means something evil or bad (not sick). They need fear nothing evil or bad even when they are dying because they know that the LORD is with them, caring for them, helping them and guiding them.*
9. What does a shepherd use a rod and staff for? *Rod: ward off enemies; the staff to rescue a sheep from a pit.*
10. What are God's rod and staff? *Why are they a comfort in death's dark vale? God's protection of His people from evil that will harm them; God's rescuing power. There is no greater enemy than sin and death. God's people know that God has defeated sin and death when Jesus died on the cross for them. He rescued them so they will enjoy wonderful life with Him forever. They do not need to fear death.*
11. How is the cross a guide in death's dark vale? *A guide is something we can look up to know which way to go. God's people think about how Jesus died on the cross and remember that He has saved them from their sins. It guides them to keep trusting God to save them when they die, instead of fearing.*

Bible Truth Connection Question

1. How does this song relate to our **Bible Truth: God Loves His People By Caring For Their Needs**? *God's people praise God for loving them. and, like a good shepherd, for caring for His people's needs totally. They lack nothing; His goodness never fails them; even when facing death, they still fear nothing "ill" because He is with them. He knows God will care for him after death by taking him to heaven to be with Him forever.*

Story Connection Question

1. How does this song relate to our story? *Peter and the Christians persecuted by Nero were truly living in death's dark vale, but they did not fear "ill." They knew they belonged to the Lord and He was with them. They did not lack the faith they needed to suffer and die for Him. He gave it to them. The cross was their guide. They knew that Jesus had died to save them and they would be going to His house to sing His praises forever.*

Bible Connection Question

1. What does this hymn have to do with our Bible Verse: **Psalm 23:1-6**: "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever."?

God's people praise God for being the King of love. He is their king who they obey. It is delightful having Him as their king because all that He does comes from His heart of love for them and for the glory of His name. He takes care of them like a good shepherd does his sheep. Sheep are very stupid and need someone to take care all of their needs or else they will die. God does this for His people. They lack nothing; His goodness never fails them; even when facing death, they still fear nothing "ill" because He is with them. God's people know God will care for them after death by taking them to heaven to be with Him forever. We can become God's people when we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

ACTS Questions

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

Praise God for being the King of Love who loves and cares for His people perfectly.

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

That we have rebellious hearts who many times do not want to follow the LORD, even though He is the good and loving King of the world. We deserve His punishment! We need a Savior!

3. What is something we can thank God for from this hymn? *We can thank God sending Jesus to save His people from their sins. We can thank Him for ways we have seen Him care for our needs, even this past week.*

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

That God would work in our hearts that we might turn from our sins and trust Jesus as our Savior. We can ask Him to be our shepherd and help us to follow Him all the days of our lives.

Life Application Question

1. How can our lives be affected by the message of this song? *We can praise God for being the Good Shepherd of His people. We can ask Him to make us His people, giving us faith to turn from our sins and trust in Him. We can ask Him to help us to trust Him as the Good Shepherd that He is.*

Gospel Question

1. How can we know God as our King of Love who cares for all our needs? 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 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 23:1-6

"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever."

Shortened Memory/Games Version: Psalm 23:1,6

"The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want...goodness and love will follow me all the day of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever."

Understanding the Bible Verse

1. What does a shepherd do for his sheep? *He takes care of their needs and protects them from enemies.*
2. How is the LORD like a shepherd? *He takes care of and protects His people.*
3. What does it mean to be "in want?" *To not have something you need.*
4. Why won't God's people be in want because He is their shepherd? *He is all powerful, all good, all wise. He doesn't just know what they need, but He can always give it to them.*
5. What needs would "green pastures and quiet waters meet for a sheep? *Good food and water for their body. A safe place to rest. The basic needs of life.*
6. What needs of God's people are like green pastures and quiet waters? *What they need to grow and live: food, drink, rest, a home, clothes, love, and other basic needs of life.*
7. What does it mean that God restores His people's souls? *To restore something means to take something weak and tired and make it strong and full of life again, the way it's supposed to be. When our souls are weak in faith, tired in trusting and obeying God, God can make them strong to keep believing and living for Him.*
8. How does God restore our souls? *By His Holy Spirit working in our hearts;; by reading/hearing His Word, the Bible; and by encouraging us through others.*
9. What are paths of righteousness and why does God guide His people in them? *Not a real road we walk on. This is the way to say He guides them in ways to live that please and honor Him. He does this for "His name's sake;" that is, He does it so that when others see us living in ways that please God, it helps them see what God is like and gives them reason to honor Him.*
10. Why is helping God's people walk in the paths of righteousness a way that God cares for them? *God's people want to honor and glorify God in how they live. They know that His ways of righteousness are always the best way to live. By guiding them in them, He is showing them the way to live that will make them happiest (in the long run, if not the short run.)*
11. What is the valley of the shadow of death? How does God help His people there? *Not a real valley we walk through, but a picture of going through something really hard, and that might even lead to death. He is with them; He helps them fear no evil.*
12. What is a rod and staff? What are God's rod and staff? Why are they comforting to God's people? *A rod is a weapon the shepherd uses against the sheep's enemies. A staff is a long stick with a hook on one end that the shepherd uses to rescue the sheep when they fall in a hole, etc.*
13. What does it mean that God prepares a table for His people in the presence of their enemies? *A table is where food is placed for us to eat and be filled up with the food we need to keep on living. An enemy wants to harm us. He wouldn't want us to have the good things we need. This verse is telling us that God promises to always give us what we need, even in the hardest times. Nothing or no one can keep Him from taking care of His people.*
14. What does having our head anointed with oil and our cup overflowing mean? *In Bible times, having your head anointed with oil meant having a bit of oil poured upon it. It was a way of showing someone favor. Having an overflowing cup what a way of saying you will have everything you need. These expressions are ways of saying that God always blesses His people with everything they need and more.*
15. What does it mean for goodness and mercy to follow you all the days of your life? *Not that they are really walking behind you but that God is always with His people showing them mercy and goodness in how He cares for their needs every day.*

16. What is the house of the LORD and Why will God's people dwell there forever? *God's house is heaven, where God's presence is and where God's people can have close fellowship with Him. Through faith in Jesus, God's people receive eternal life, which is dwelling with God forever.*

Bible Truth Connection Question

1. What does this verse have to do with the **Bible Truth: God Loves His People By Caring For Their Needs?** *God loves His people and cares for needs completely, just like a good shepherd takes care of his sheep.*

Story Connection Questions

1. How does this verse relate to our story? *Peter and the other Christians in Rome endured terrible suffering and death from Nero. They did it without fearing evil and knowing that God would bring them to dwell in His house, enjoying His close fellowship and presence forever.*

Life Application Questions

1. If God's goodness and mercy is with His people all the days of their life, how well do you think God will be meeting their needs? *Perfectly well!*
2. How can we become God's people? *By turning away from our sins and trusting Jesus as our Savior.*

ACTS Questions

1. What is something we can praise God for from this Bible Verse?
Praise God for being the Shepherd of His People, all the days of their lives.
2. What are sins we can confess to God from this Bible Verse?
We have all turned away from God. We act like we do not want Him to be our shepherd. We want to live life our own way. 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 different ways we have seen Him meet our needs. We can thank Him for sending Jesus to meet the greatest need of His people: the forgiveness of sins for all who turn away from disobeying God and trust in Jesus as their own 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 be our Shepherd: guide us and care for us, according to His perfect love and wisdom, all the days of our lives.

The Gospel

1. How can we dwell with God forever in heaven? 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: Mr. Freezie Ball

Materials

Bible verse written up in large print so that all can see
Medium size foam or other soft surfaced ball, or tennis ball

Preparing the Game

None.

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:
Have the children spread out around the leader, who will be the first Mr. Freezie. Everyone says the Bible verse together. Then, Mr. Freezie throws the ball up in the air as he calls out the name of one child. That child runs to get the ball, while everyone else spreads out. When the child gets the ball, he yells "freeze" to the other children. He then rolls the ball to gently hit another child. That child tries to say the memory verse, getting the assistance of one other person if desired. If he says it correctly, he becomes the new Mr. Freezie and will be the next toss the ball. If not, then the child who rolled the ball remains Mr. Freezie for another turn. The person who rolled the ball would then become the new Mr. Freezie and be next toss the ball. Class says verse together each time before Mr. Freezie says the next child's name.

Game continues as time and attention span allow.

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.

The LORD Is My Shepherd

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.
 He makes me lie down in green pastures,
 He leads me beside quiet waters, He restores my soul,
 He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake.
 Even though I walk through the valley of death, I will fear no evil,

Why? For You are with me. Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me, in the presence of my enemies,
 You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
 Surely goodness and mercy will follow me, All of the days of my life,
 And I will dwell in the house of the LORD, forever and ever and ever.
 Psalm Twenty-three.

Listen to it on PFI ESV Songs 8, Track 16

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.

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. What did Nero look like? *Curly blond hair, thick neck, big belly, spots and smelly skin, wore a dressing gown, scarf and no shoes usually.*
2. Why did people bow before Nero? *He was Caesar. Very powerful, very rich.*
3. Who helped Nero come to power? *His mother Agrippina.*
4. Why did Nero stop wanting Agrippina and Seneca's help? *He thought about his own greatness and thought he could take care of his own needs by himself.*
5. What did Nero decide he needed? *A great, big, new palace.*
6. What was Nero's new palace like? *Acres of lands with zoos, woods, parks, waterfalls and fountains. Huge man-made lake big enough for ships; gymnasium, bathhouse, theatre; 120' bronze statue of himself; walls of main building out of gold, silver, jewels; dining rooms that sprayed down perfume/rotated like sky.*
7. What problem was there with building Domus Aurea? *No place to put it in over-crowded Rome.*
8. What did the fire burn up and why would people think Nero did it? *Two thirds of Rome. He could build a new city and name it after himself. He took a lot of the land to build his new palace.*
9. What did Nero do to help the people hurt by the fire? *Gave them shelters in his gardens; brought in low-priced corn for them to buy; prayed to the Roman gods.*
10. Who did Nero blame for setting the fire? Why? *The Christians. Because they were hated already for not worshipping the Roman gods and the emperor; and, for saying God would judge Rome for its sins one day.*
11. What did Nero do to the Christians? *Had them suffer terrible deaths: thrown to lions, dipped in wax; crucified; burned alive.*
12. What did Peter want to do before he was killed? *Write a letter of encouragement to the Christians in Asia Minor.*
13. What did Peter tell the Christians God would give them to help them through the hard times they faced? *By His divine power He would give them everything they needed for life and for godliness.*
14. How did Peter know that those Christians in Asia Minor could trust God to take care of their needs? *He had known God's divine power had given him everything he needed for life and godliness. He remembered Jesus' precious promises and had seen them come true.*
15. How did seem like God wasn't taking care of Peter and the other Christians needs? *He was allowing them to suffer terribly ... and for something they didn't even do.*
16. How did God really take care of their needs? *By His Holy Spirit He gave them the strength to suffer and die in a way that honored Him. He used them to show the Romans the truth of the good news of Jesus and turn many to trust in Him. He brought them home to heaven to be with Him forever, where there would never be anymore suffering or pain for them.*
17. What need did Nero really have that he never could meet? *He needed to be forgiven of his sins and trust Jesus as his Savior.*

Bible Truth Connection Questions

1. How does this story fit in with our Bible Truth: God Loves His People by Caring for Their Needs? *Peter and the Christians seemed to have nothing, not even God's help to rescue them. But God did care for their needs. He gave them strength to live and die for Him.*

Bible Verse Connection Question

1. What does the story have to do with our **Bible Verse: Psalm 23:1-6**: "The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me... Surely goodness and love will follow me all the day of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever."?
Peter may have seemed helpless to Nero, but Peter trusted God to meet his needs. Peter had known the LORD to be his shepherd, guiding him and taking care of him each day of his life. Even as he faced death, Peter feared no evil. He knew the LORD was with him and would take him to dwell in heaven. Peter encouraged the other Christians to keep trusting in God, too. God would give them everything they needed every day of their lives, even when it included persecution.

Life Application Questions

1. How are we like Nero? *Many times we think about our own greatness when we are good at something. Many times we want to meet our own needs, rather than trusting in God.*
2. What are some precious promises that God gives His people and tell them how He promises to meet their needs?
3. We might be sinners like Nero, but we can know God's forgiveness for our sins. How? *By turning away from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our own Savior.*

ACTS Questions

1. What is something we can praise God for being that we learned in our story?
Praise God for being the Provider for His people's every need, even when facing death.
2. What is something we can confess as sin that we learned in our story?
Confess that many times, like Nero, we are selfish and greedy. We think about what we want and forget God and His good ways. We deserve God's punishment. We need a Savior!
3. What is something we can thank God for that we learned in our story?
We can thank God for promising to always give His people the power they need to endure even the hardest things, such as persecution and death.
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 turn away from our sins and trust Jesus as our own Savior. We can ask Him to change our hearts so that we are not greedy and selfish like Nero, but people who love God and live for Him.

The Gospel

1. What is the good news of Jesus that the Christians believed? 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: Obstacle Course Quiz

Materials

Various materials, such as jump ropes, balls, inner tubes, carpet squares, boxes, tunnels made from chairs and bedspreads, etc. to make a simple obstacle course for each team.

Masking Tape

20+ Story Review Questions and other story review questions, 1+ per child

Paper/post-it notes & marker/pencil

Preparing the Game

1. Choose 20+ questions for your game from the Story Review Discussion Questions, or make up your own.
2. Set up two identical obstacle courses, one for each team, that both end up at the same wall of your room.
3. Write a question on the back of a post-it note. On the front, write a point amount, such as 5, 10, 25 points, depending upon the difficulty of the question. Place these questions on the wall at the end of the obstacle courses.
4. Use the masking tape to make starting lines.

Playing the Game

Divide the children into two teams and have them sit down in a line. Demonstrate how they are to go through the obstacle course. At the leader's command, the first person in each line goes through the obstacle course. Whoever reaches the question wall first wins 1 point for their team and gets to take down one question to give to the teacher. The teacher will ask the question to both teams, calling on the team who raises their hand first. If that team is correct in their answer, they get 2 points. If not, then the question goes to the other team. Process is repeated with next 2 children in line, etc.

Game continues until all have had a chance to run the course, or as question cards, time and attention span allow.

Non-competitive Option

Send the children through two at a time, each child choosing a question from the wall. Have the children ask their question to the whole group and work together on the answer. Have the two children come back through the obstacle course and go to the back of their own lines. Repeat with next two children.

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: The Case of the Two Needy Men.

Our story takes place in New Testament times, in Rome, about thirty years about Jesus rose from the dead.

And now we present: "The Case of the Two Needy Men."

Scene 1:

With his thick neck, big stomach, and spotty, smelly skin, Nero didn't look like much, but people bowed before him and obeyed his wishes because he was Caesar. His mother did a lot to make him the powerful Caesar he was. She had Caesar Claudius adopt him and choose him to be the next Caesar. She had Seneca brought from exile to teach him. And she even had Claudius killed so Nero would become Caesar at 16. Nero soon started to think about his own greatness, wealth and power. He stopped depending on his mother and Seneca. He would get what he needed by himself. He decided he needed a huge, new palace with lots of land, right near Rome. Called Domus Aurea, the Golden palace, it would have zoos, woods, parks, a man-made lake big enough for ships, a market, theatre, gymnasium and bathhouse. The main house had walls of gold, silver, and jewels. The dining rooms sprayed down perfume and had a rotating ceiling. Outside the palace would be a 120' high bronze statue of honoring himself. Nero wanted to put this palace in Rome, but it was overcrowded, Something would have to happen to those streets of houses if Nero was to build his palace.

Actions:

Scene 2:

Soon, a great fire broke out near the Circus Maximus. It burned for nine days and burned up two thirds of the city. Half a million people lost everything. Nero helped the people by making them shelters in his gardens; bringing in low-cost corn; and praying to the Roman gods for them. But people started saying that Nero started the fire to build a new city to name after himself, especially after he took a lot of the land for his new palace. They were angry and wanted to kill him. Nero knew how to take care of himself. He blamed the fire on the Christians, saying they hated Romans, the emperor and the Roman gods. People believed Nero. Soldiers arrested the Christians. The Christians were hurt and killed in terrible ways.

Scene 3

Peter was in Rome when all this happened. Eventually the Romans arrested him. How happy they were to capture this great Christian leader! Peter may have been a leader, but he was completely different from Nero, the Romans could see. He had no education or riches or powerful army. And maybe he had lived with Jesus, who was supposed to be the mighty Son of God, who did miracles, died for God's people's sins and was raised from the dead, but it certainly didn't look like God was taking care of Peter or the other Christians. But Peter and the others knew this was wrong. God's Holy Spirit worked in their hearts, reminding them of Jesus' precious promises and giving them courage to suffer and die for Him. Peter asked Silvanus to write down a final letter to the Christians in Asia Minor before he died. They were facing false teachers and suffering for believing in Jesus. He encouraged them that God, through His divine power, had given them everything they needed for life and godliness. He would take care of all their needs. They should persevere and keep living for God. Silvanus promised Peter he would take this letter to the churches. Soldiers tied Peter's hands and took him away to be crucified. Peter asked to be crucified upside down so he wouldn't die as Jesus did. God gave him strength to suffer and die for Him.

Bible Truth Tie-In: The Bible Truth we are learning is: **God Loves His People By Caring For Their Needs** . Peter and the Christians seemed to have nothing, not even God's help to rescue them. But God did care for their needs. He gave them strength to live and die for Him.

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

Welcome to our play! The name of our story is: The Case of the Two Needy Men.

Our story takes place in New Testament times, in Rome, about thirty years about Jesus rose from the dead.

The characters in our story are: Nero; Caesar Claudius; Agrippina; Seneca; Romans; Romans; Peter and other Christians in Rome; Soldiers; Silvanus; and Christians in Asia Minor.

And now we present: "The Case of the Two Needy Men."

Scene 1: (Beginning)

With his thick neck, big stomach, and spotty, smelly skin, Nero didn't look like much, but people bowed before him and obeyed his wishes because he was Caesar. His mother did a lot to make him the powerful Caesar he was. She had Caesar Claudius adopt him and choose him to be the next Caesar. She had Seneca brought from exile to teach him. And she even had Claudius killed so Nero would become Caesar at 16. Nero soon started to think about his own greatness, wealth and power. He stopped depending on his mother and Seneca. He would get what he needed by himself. He decided he needed a huge, new palace with lots of land, right near Rome. Called Domus Aurea, the Golden palace, it would have zoos, woods, parks, a man-made lake big enough for ships, a market, theatre, gymnasium and bathhouse. The main house had walls of gold, silver, and jewels. The dining rooms sprayed down perfume and had a rotating ceiling. Outside the palace would be a 120' high bronze statue of honoring himself. Nero wanted to put this palace in Rome, but it was overcrowded, Something would have to happen to those streets of houses if Nero was to build his palace.

Scene 2: (Middle)

Soon, a great fire broke out near the Circus Maximus. It burned for nine days and burned up two thirds of the city. Half a million people lost everything. Nero helped the people by making them shelters in his gardens; bringing in low-cost corn; and praying to the Roman gods for them. But people started saying that Nero started the fire to build a new city to name after himself, especially after he took a lot of the land for his new palace. They were angry and wanted to kill him. Nero knew how to take care of himself. He blamed the fire on the Christians, saying they hated Romans, the emperor and the Roman gods. People believed Nero. Soldiers arrested the Christians. The Christians were hurt and killed in terrible ways.

Scene 3: (End)

Peter was in Rome when all this happened. Eventually the Romans arrested him. How happy they were to capture this great Christian leader! Peter may have been a leader, but he was completely different from Nero, the Romans could see. He had no education or riches or powerful army. And maybe he had lived with Jesus, who was supposed to be the mighty Son of God, who did miracles, died for God's people's sins and was raised from the dead, but it certainly didn't look like God was taking care of Peter or the other Christians. But Peter and the others knew this was wrong. God's Holy Spirit worked in their hearts, reminding them of Jesus' precious promises and giving them courage to suffer and die for Him. Peter asked Silvanus to write down a final letter to the Christians in Asia Minor before he died. They were facing false teachers and suffering for believing in Jesus. He encouraged them that God, through His divine power, had given them everything they needed for life and godliness. He would take care of all their needs. They should persevere and keep living for God. Silvanus promised Peter he would take this letter to the churches. Soldiers tied Peter's hands and took him away to be crucified. Peter asked to be crucified upside down so he wouldn't die as Jesus did. God gave him strength to suffer and die for Him.

Bible Truth Tie-In: The Bible Truth we are learning is: **God Loves His People By Caring For Their Needs** . Peter and the Christians seemed to have nothing, not even God's help to rescue them. But God did care for their needs. He gave them strength to live and die for Him.

Walls of Gold and Jewels

Description

Children will glue string pieces in designs on cardstock, cover it with foil, and add jewels to make Nero's wall.

Materials

Cardstock, poster board, or other stiff paper, approx 6' x 8" per child

String

Gold Foil OR Aluminum Foil, Gold paint and sponge pieces

Small Craft Jewels

Craft Glue

Preparing the Craft

1. Cut out cardstock/poster board into approx.. 6"x8" rectangles
2. If using gold foil: Cut sheets of gold foil about 7"x9" rectangles
If using aluminum foil and gold paint: cut foil into 7"x9" rectangles; set out gold paint and sponge pieces that the children will use to dab the paint onto the foil.
3. Cut string into about 6" lengths, about 4 per child.
4. Set out craft jewels and glue.

Making the Craft

1. Show the children a copy of the craft.
2. Have the children glue the surface of the cardstock.
3. Place the strings on the cardstock making swirls and other designs.
4. Lay foil over top of cardstock with string. Press down so that the foil touches as much of surface as possible and string designs stand up.
5. If using aluminum foil and gold paint, have the children lightly brush gold paint over the surface.
6. Glue jewels as desired on the foil.

NOTE: Gold paint is not usually a washable paint. Use with care! Encourage children to try swirls and patterns, not just to color a whole section the same color, for a more dramatic look.

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 Nero live? *In Rome.*
2. What did Nero build after the great fire in Rome? What were some of the walls made of? did the people think about this? *A huge palace for himself. Some of the walls were made of gold and jewels.*
3. What did the people think about Nero after building the palace? What did Nero do about that? What did he think about his clever plan? *They were angry, saying Nero caused the fire, himself, in order to make room to build this palace. They wanted to kill him. Nero blamed it on the Christians and the people believed him. He gloated over turning away their anger with this lie.*
4. What is Bible Truth that we are learning? *God Loves His People By Caring For Their Needs .*
5. What does our craft have to do with our Bible Truth: God Loves His People By Caring For Their Needs?
Suffering may be part of God's good plan for His people, but they know that He will help them through it and richly reward them in heaven.
6. What can our craft help us remember?
How very, very much God loves His people!

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: Walls of Gold and Jewels.
2. In Rome, Nero gloated in his room with walls of gold and jewels because he had turned the Romans anger away from himself and to the Christians.
3. Our Bible Truth is: God Loves His People By Caring For Their Needs .
4. The Christians suffered and died as part of Nero's evil plan, but God cared for their needs to the very end. He gave them strength to endure and to keep praising His name. He brought them to heaven to be with Him forever, never to have pain or suffering again.
5. Our craft can help us remember that suffering may be part of God's good plan for His people, but they know that He will help them through it and richly reward them in heaven.

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.

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: Crabbin' Around

Materials

Information Sheet for two VIPPs

2 Sets of Clue Cards

Tape

A Bag

Preparing the Game

1. Fill in one set of clue sheets for the VIPP you are using.
2. Put all the Clue Cards in a bag, except for the ones with the names and pictures of the VIPPs.
3. Tape the picture and name of each VIPP to the wall, about 3 feet from the ground.

Playing the Game

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

Review: Put the Clue Cards for both VIPPS put in one bag. Mix up. Have children sit down, with their legs in front of them and their hands propped behind them. Show them how to get in crab position and try moving around. (Moving on hands and feet, with front side facing up). Tell them that you will pull out a clue, tell them what it is and they are to crab-crawl their way to the picture of the person who it belongs to. Give them the answer after everyone has run to their guessed person. Continue until all clues have been used up.

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
