

1-4 GRADES

FUN + FRIENDS + FAITH



MAY 15

SECOND SERVICE

LEADER Bible Study

Ruth had been married to a Hebrew man who later died. She returned to Israel from Moab with her mother-in-law. Ruth was an outsider, a woman without a husband in a land that was not her own. Ruth was vulnerable, but what we see so beautifully in her story is that God protected her and provided for her.

The story of Ruth is a beautiful picture of kindness. One possible definition of kindness is “love in action.” We see kindness from multiple angles that all point us to God’s kindness. Consider the following points:

Ruth showed kindness to Naomi. Ruth was not an Israelite, but after her husband died, she committed herself not only to her Israelite mother-in-law, but to the God of Israel as well. Ruth worked hard to ensure that she and Naomi would not starve. She followed behind Boaz’s workers to gather grain that fell during the harvest—backbreaking labor with often pitiful yields.

Boaz showed kindness to Ruth. First, Boaz instructed his workers to be a bit more haphazard with their harvest to ensure Ruth had more grain to gather. Then he went out of his way to become her redeemer. Ruth had nothing to give to Boaz, but he still desired to take her in and provide for her and Naomi.

God shows kindness to sinners. We see this in His choice to bring Ruth, a non-Israelite, into His chosen people and the lineage of His Son. But even more than this, we see God’s kindness in His choice to send a Rescuer at all!

As you teach this story, help the kids to focus on the kindness of God. Guide them to consider the ways they can show kindness to others.

KINDNESS: A gentle nature and a desire to help others; desire and enjoyment of doing good things and bringing happiness to others

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE: Prayer

Prayer is the act of talking with God and allowing Him to change and transform you.

GOD PROVIDED FOR RUTH

Ruth 1-4

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

What are the consequences for sin?

The consequence for sin is separation from God.

CHRIST CONNECTION

Boaz was a family redeemer. He helped his close relatives who were in trouble. Boaz cared for Ruth and Naomi because their husbands had died. In a similar way, Jesus is our Redeemer. We need help because we sin. Jesus bought our salvation for us by taking our punishment when He died on the cross.

KEY PASSAGE: Roman 6.23

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.



Busy Hands

INTRODUCTION / Song videos: “Onward Christian Soldiers” and “Refuge”, Big Picture Question Poster

WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC: Choose a few high-energy worship songs—such as “Onward, Christian Soldiers” or “Refuge”—to sing with your group of kids. Lead motions enthusiastically and encourage kids to join you. Between songs, help the kids think through what it means to worship God and why we often use music to help us do so.

INTRODUCTION AND BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Say: **Hey there, everyone! If you are excited to be here, can you shout ‘I’m excited!’?** [Pause for kids to respond.] **I’m glad you are all here. Raise your hand if you can tell me a bit about why we gather each week and what we do together.** [Allow responses.] **Yes, that’s right; we gather each week to worship God by singing praises to Him and studying the Bible. And we have a lot of fun!**

As we study the Bible, we learn big picture questions to focus on specific doctrines the Bible teaches. A doctrine is a true idea that we believe because it’s taught in the Bible. Can any of you remember the big picture question and answer we have been using for the last few weeks? [Allow responses.] **Yep! What are the consequences for sin? The consequence for sin is separation from God. Because God is perfectly holy, He will judge sin. We are all sinners, and our sin earns us death—physical and spiritual death. Through death we are separated from God. God judges us for the sin in our hearts. *Thankfully, God is also merciful and kind, and He provided a way for us to escape sin and live with Him forever through Jesus.***

In the Bible stories we have studied, we have seen God’s people going around and around in a cycle of sin. Two weeks ago, we learned that even though the people repeatedly cried out to God for salvation, the judges God sent could only help with the consequences of sin, not the cause of sin. Last week we learned that Samson brought about his own downfall by choosing sin instead of God, but God still used Samson’s death to save Israel from the Philistines. Our story this week is about a woman who lived during the time of the judges. Her story isn’t about repeated sin, but about God’s love and His merciful kindness for people who turn from sin to follow Him. Let’s hear it!

THE BIBLE STORY: RUTH // Bibles, Bible story video: “God Provided for Ruth”

Open your Bible to Ruth. Distribute Bibles to the children who do not have their own. Children may work in pairs. Discuss the location of Ruth in the Bible and ask the children to try to find it themselves. Help the kids when needed.

Play the Bible story video “God Provided for Ruth.” A few of the kids may have seen the video first service, but ask them and the entire class to watch the video thinking about the word “kindness.” Who is being kind in this story? Continued on the next page.



Active Minds

After the video, discuss the word kindness. You may want to use the definition on the cover page of the lesson. Allow the children to share ways they are kind to others or others show kindness to them. You may want to write some information and ideas on the whiteboard.

Use the three points below to discuss kindness in the story about Ruth.

Ruth showed kindness to Naomi: Ruth stayed with Naomi to help take care of her, even though it meant leaving her homeland and everything she knew.

Boaz showed kindness to Ruth: Boaz first showed kindness by having his workers leave grain for them. Later, he saved Ruth and Naomi from poverty by being a kinsman redeemer to Ruth.

God shows kindness to sinners: Ruth chose to be kind to Naomi, Boaz chose to be kind to Ruth, and God chooses to be kind to us, sending His Son for us even when we were His enemies.

Make the CHRIST CONNECTION: Say: **Boaz was a family redeemer. He helped his close relatives who were in trouble. Boaz cared for Ruth and Naomi because their husbands had died. Jesus is our Redeemer. We need help because we sin. Jesus bought our salvation for us by taking our punishment when He died on the cross.**

GROUP DEMONSTRATION // Medium glass jar, cornstarch, water, measuring cup, metal fork

Make a mixture of approximately two parts cornstarch to one part water in the glass jar. Add cornstarch or water as needed to get a consistency almost like a milkshake or warm peanut butter, but with the following strange property: something placed gently into the mixture will sink slowly, but anything shoved forcefully into it gets stuck, as though the mixture were solid. Invite a few kids to play with the mixture and describe what it's like. Challenge a child to try jabbing into the mixture with a metal fork. Then invite another child to rest the fork on the surface of the mix.

Say: **Mixing cornstarch and water in the correct proportions creates something called a 'non-Newtonian fluid.' This fluid is called non-Newtonian because it seems to go against the laws of motion first described by a scientist named Sir Isaac Newton. Usually, the harder you push, the faster something should go through a fluid. For example, if you lay on the surface of water and let out your breath, you will slowly sink to the bottom, but if you dive in like a pencil you will reach the bottom much faster. This fluid is the opposite!**

This can help us think about kindness in our lives. Imagine that trying to stab the mixture was like a harsh or rude response to another. There's resistance there. When we treat others harshly, they will put up defenses to try and keep us out. However, often times when we speak and behave with kindness, gentleness, and love, people respond more softly and allow us to be in their lives.

Continued on the next page.



Active Minds

Think about our Bible story. Ruth was from Moab, a nation that did not love God or worship Him. When she decided to love God and to stay with Naomi, God welcomed Ruth into her family with kindness and love. God often shows kindness to sinners; He wants us to see His goodness and love and cling to Him. When we do, He makes us new and helps us respond to others with kindness so they can see God's love in us.

PRAYER: God, You provided for Ruth and Naomi and You provide for us. Thank You for always knowing what we need. Help us to see where You are providing for us this week. Amen.

KEY PASSAGE // Key Passage Poster, Key Passage Song: "Eternal Life (Romans 6:23)

Say: **Did you notice that our key passage uses some interesting words? The first one is wages. The word wages means 'payment.' A wage is something that a person earns for his work. We have earned death because of our sin.**

But the second part of the verse says that God has given us a gift. A gift is something that is not earned. We have been given the gift of eternal life; that means we haven't earned eternal life, but God offers it to us for free.

Read Romans 6:23 and encourage the kids to read along. Display the key passage poster for kids to read. You may also sing the key passage song, "Eternal Life (Romans 6:23)."

REVIEW SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES // Dry erase board and marker, sticky notes, pencils

What is a spiritual discipline? [Allow responses.] Say: **A spiritual discipline is a practice, or repeated action, that helps us grow in love for God and godliness. We are currently learning about prayer.**

Say: **Last week you were encouraged to pray for someone and reach out to them. You could also use the acronym P -R -A -Y to help you pray during your personal prayer time. Did you pray for others, reach out to them or pray including Praise, Repent, Ask or Yield?** [Allow responses.]

GROUP ACTIVITY: NEEDS AND WANTS: Make three columns on a dry erase board. Label one NEEDS, one WANTS, and the last column FOR OTHERS. Give kids sticky notes and lead them to write suggestions on the notes and place them in the correct column. After a few minutes, read the suggestions and ask kids to decide if the item is something God wants us to ask Him for. If they decide yes, keep the note on the board. If they decide no, place the note to the side of the board. Place all the notes back on the board as you debrief.

Continued on the next page.



Active Minds

Remember that asking God for things is one way we can pray (petitions). God wants us to ask Him for the things we need and for the things we want or desire. The Bible teaches that we can ask God for both. God also wants us to intercede and ask Him for the things other people need or want, too. God loves us greatly. He provides for our needs, and He gives us so many wonderful gifts.

REVIEW THE DISCIPLINE OF PRAYER: How can prayer help you grow in love for God and godliness? [Allow responses.]

Say: Prayer as a spiritual discipline is all about talking with God, growing closer to Him, and allowing Him to change or transform you.

What do you remember from last week? What are some of the different types of prayer? [Allow responses.]

Say: There are many different ways to talk with God. Last week we learned the acronym P-R-A-Y (praise, repent, ask, yield). [Refer to the different letters around the room.] This week we will look more closely at the letter A and how we can ask God for what we need and to intercede on behalf of others for what they need.

READ THE BIBLE // Bibles

Distribute Bibles. Open a Bible to Matthew 6 and encourage kids to find the passage in their Bibles. Read Matthew 6:25-34 and 7:7-11. **In Matthew 6, Jesus told the crowd to think about two things for which God cares and provides. What were they? Look at verses 26 and 28.** [Choose a volunteer to read aloud Matthew 6:26,28.]

Say: Jesus mentioned birds and flowers. Which do you think God loves more, birds and flowers, or people? [Allow responses.] God loves people much more than birds, flowers, or any other created thing. If He cares and provides for the birds and flowers, we can trust Him to care and provide for us. We should ask God to meet our needs, and trust Him to provide.

In Matthew 7, Jesus spoke about kids and their fathers, and He compared them to God the Father. Who do you think loves you more—your parents (or whoever takes care of you) or God? Why?

Say: God absolutely loves you more than anyone else loves you! Think about an amazing gift you received from your parents, grandparents, or someone who takes care of you. What did you receive? [Allow responses.] Jesus said that if these people love you and know how to give good gifts, you can definitely trust God to give you even greater things, if you ask for them (v. 11). We can ask God to give us the things we want and desire.

Continued on the next page.



Open Hearts

Both Matthew chapters 6 and 7 mention seeking. What does Jesus tell us to seek more than anything else? Look at chapter 6 verse 33. [Choose a volunteer to read aloud Matt. 6:33.]

Say: **Jesus said to seek God’s kingdom and His righteousness first. This means that God and His kingdom should be the most important things in our lives. We should want what He wants, both in our lives and all around us. If we truly put Jesus first and honor Him as King above all, everything else will fall into place as it should. We can trust Him completely. We should ask God for the things we need and for the things others need. We should ask God for the things we want. We should ask God to change our wants to match what He wants—to help us desire heavenly things, and especially to desire Jesus. We can ask God for all these things.**

PRAY: God, thank You for loving us. Thank You that You never get tired of listening to us when we pray. Please give us everything we need, and help us to trust You. Thank You for blessing us through Jesus. Please give us the things we desire, and change our hearts so that we want whatever is for Your glory and our good. Help us to always put You first. Amen.

WEEKLY CHALLENGE: Challenge kids to pray daily and ask God for things they need and want and to intercede for others. Ask them to keep track of the ways God provides during the week.

GROUP GAME: CAPTAIN, MAY I? // None

Direct kids to stand shoulder-to-shoulder on one end of the room. Choose one kid to be the Captain and stand opposite the others. The Captain chooses one player at a time and gives instructions such as, “Adele, take four baby steps forward.” Before a player takes any action, she must ask, “Captain, may I?” The Captain then either grants or denies permission. If a player forgets to ask permission or moves out of turn, she must return to the starting line. Once a player reaches the Captain, she becomes the new Captain.

Say: **This game is a good reminder for us to ask God for the things we need and want, ‘God, may I?’ It is also a good reminder that sometimes God’s answer is, ‘Yes,’ but other times it is, ‘No.’**

SPOT THE NEED // Blank index cards (10 per child), pencils or pens

Provide blank index cards (10 per kid) and writing utensils. Direct kids to write down five wants and five needs (one per card). Ask kids to mix up their cards and find a partner. Kids should keep cards facedown. Partners will take turns placing cards in a pile on the table or floor between them.

Continued on the next page.



Extra Ideas

If the card played is a want, no action is needed, and the next player takes his turn. If the card is a need, players must race to slap the pile of cards.

The first player to slap the pile may pick up all the cards and place them on the bottom of his hand. Play continues until one player is out of cards. Conclude the activity by inviting partners to pray together to ask God to provide some of the things they wrote on their cards.

NAOMI SAYS // None

Play “Simon Says,” but with Naomi as the leader. Include some actions that pertain to the story, such as “gather grain” or “take off a shoe.”

Say: **You’ve probably played ‘Simon Says’ before, right? How do you win? Well, you listen really closely and then follow the leader. In our story today, Ruth followed Naomi as closely as she possibly could. She had to listen to the words that Naomi said and she had to watch Naomi’s actions. That’s how Ruth knew what to do next. We want to follow Jesus that closely. We want to listen to His words through prayer, reading the Bible, and learning more about Him. Through following Him closely, we can know the next step we need to take.**

SHARE HIGHS AND LOWS // None

Sit in a circle. Tell something that was a high point and something that was a low point of your week. Model honesty and vulnerability in an age-appropriate way. Then go around the circle, inviting each kid to share his high and low.



Extra Ideas

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word gospel. Clarify that the word gospel means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Note: Feel free to use this clear and concise list to help children understand God's plan for them today or any time children have questions about salvation.