



Kids Club

Leader Guide

June

Week 4

June 23, 2024

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

Coloring Page

Empty two liter bottle (or any container that can be knocked down with a bean bag), bean bag/soft ball

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE:

5 minutes - Pick up kids/kids arrive - bathroom, wash hands, water break

20 minutes - Snack, Games, Prayer/Devotion, Quality Time, Clean-up

30-40 minutes - RBKids Lesson & Prayer

10-15 minutes - Free time, Clean-up and Dismissal

TODAY'S FOCUS:

Only God is worthy of our praise!

WEEKLY VERSE:

"He will fill your mouth with laughter. Shouts of joy will come from your lips."

Job 8:21 (NIRV)

KEY PASSAGE:

1 Samuel 5:1-10

ROCK BRIDGE MISSION:

We believe the Bible, so we worship the one true God! We love God and will put no other idols before Him.

PRAYER:

Dear God, we praise you because you are the one true God! Help us to always put you first in our hearts! In Jesus' name, Amen.

INTRODUCTION:

ASK THIS AS KIDS ARRIVE: Are there any funny Bible stories we didn't cover that you know? Go around the group and see who can make the funniest face! Offer a [coloring page](#).

SAY THIS:

We've had a few laughs over the last couple of weeks reading the Bible. Yes, for any of you who have been absent, I said what I said. We have had some laughs reading the Bible. We've had some potty humor and even a talking donkey. Each of these humorous stories has come with a serious point about the sovereignty of God. We've learned that God wants us to obey, that He wants us to serve Him and treat Him with respect, and that He wants us to do things His way. We've also learned that our all-powerful God, who can send fire from Heaven and make donkeys talk, can be a very funny individual.

Today we have one more story that will make us laugh. This is one of the funniest tales in all of the scriptures, and like all of our previous stories, it has a very serious message.

This story takes place right after Israel lost a major battle to their long-time enemies, the Philistines. The two sons of Israel's high priest had died in battle, and when word of their death reached their father, he died as well. What's worse, the Ark of the Covenant, a golden chest, had been stolen. The Philistines had taken it back to the city of Ekron and placed it in the temple of Dagon.

Dagon was a false god worshipped the Philistines, and the Philistines had erected a large statue of Dagon inside the temple. They set the Ark in front of Dagon to symbolize Dagon's victory over the God of Israel, and they went out to party. But the next morning, they found something hilarious inside. Let's open our Bibles and see what they found!

READ: 1 SAMUEL 5:1-10

TALK ABOUT THIS: Finding the statue bowing before the Ark once could have been an accident. The Philistines thought nothing of it, and they put Dagon back on his pedestal. They probably had a chuckle over it themselves. "Hey, maybe Dagon is worshipping the Hebrew God!" But the next day, Dagon was on his face again, bowing as if in worship before the Ark!

Things went from bad to worse for the Philistines. When they gave up on Dagon, God sent a plague of sores on the Philistines. Does anyone want to take a wild guess what happened to the people at Ekron? If you were here two weeks ago when we talked about how repetition is funny, you know what's coming. The whole town gets hit with the same plague as the first town.

It's funny to look back at what happened to the Philistines, but there's a serious lesson here that they learned the hard way. There's only one true God who deserves our praise. His name is not Dagon, and as the Philistines soon realized, God wanted His ark back.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

DO THIS: Ask kids to retell the Bible story. If they need help, use these questions to remember key parts.

1. What did the Philistines take from the Israelites?
2. Why did the Philistines put the ark in the temple of Dagon?
3. What happened to the statue of their god Dagon?
4. What did the bowing statue tell the Philistines?
5. Why did they find Dagon bowing to the Ark?
6. Why is God the only God who deserves praise?
7. Are there "false gods" that people today put ahead of God?
8. How can we always remember to put God first?

Lead a discussion about the contrast between the power of God and the powerlessness of false idols like Dagon. Ask children to share examples of things people sometimes put their trust in instead of God.

DRIVE IT HOME - SAY THIS: This is a story that just gets funnier as it goes along. After two towns had suffered plagues of sores and rats, the Philistines finally had enough. They knew God was angry, and they knew the only way to end these plagues was to return the ark. They built a cart and put the Ark on the cart. They hooked two goats up to the cart. They made an offering of gold to send back with the Ark: five golden rats, and five golden sores. I'm not making this up, kids. It's all right there in 1 Samuel!

The Philistines got off easy. God was known to send floods, fires, poisonous snakes, and other plagues on people who denied His power. The Philistines didn't learn their lesson, as they continued to hassle the Israelites, but God would use men like Samson and even a shepherd boy named David to continue to humble the proud and cocky Philistines.

Gospel Connection: These stories were written down so that thousands of years later, we could avoid the hard lessons in our own lives and learn from their mistakes. The Bible teaches us that God is our Creator. He is powerful enough to flood the whole world, to send fire from the sky, and even plague an entire town with sores. But God is not just a powerful being sitting on high. He loves us like a Father. He sent His son Jesus to die for our sins. If we believe in Jesus, we can receive the gift of eternal life. If we bow to Jesus in this life, we can know Him as Savior and Father. That is why He alone deserves our praise and worship!

The Bible teaches us that one day, every knee will bow and every tongue confesses that Jesus is Lord. Many will bow in fear, knowing they did not bow to Jesus while they were alive. I hope none of us here will be part of that group. God wants you to bow today. He wants to be your Heavenly Father. He wants to be your Savior. If you're ready to bow to Jesus today and begin a new life in Christ, let me know if that's a decision you'd like to make. It's the best choice you'll ever make.

ACTIVITY:

DO THIS: To reinforce the idea that in our lives, we get to choose what is better. What will we prefer? To be led by God or led by lesser gods?

Ask the kids who likes Item A and who likes Item B. Let the kids do a blind taste of both options A and B and choose their favorite.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

Just as we all have preferences, we all bow to someone or something. God wants us to bow to Him alone!

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY 2:

Explain that an idol is anything that takes the place of God in our lives or anything we value more than God. Ask kids to think about how they spend their time, because that will give them a good idea of what they put before God.

Acknowledge that there are things in our lives that we HAVE to do - like going to school, chores, homework, etc. But we don't have to leave God out of those things!

- Emphasize that idols can be material things, relationships, achievements, or even personal qualities that we prioritize over our relationship with God.
- Create a list of idols and think of ways we can deprioritize them!

Material Idols:

- Encourage kids to identify any possessions they value more than their relationship with God.
- Discuss how material possessions can distract us from focusing on God's love and teachings.

Relationship Idols:

- Discuss the importance of healthy relationships but caution against making people or friendships into idols.
- Ask kids to consider if they prioritize pleasing their friends or family over living according to God's principles.
- Highlight the need for balance in relationships, with God always being the top priority.

Achievement Idols:

- Talk about the value of goals and ambitions but warn against making success or achievements into idols.
- Encourage kids to reflect on whether they prioritize their achievements (like good grades or sports) over spending time with God.
- Emphasize that true fulfillment comes from our relationship with God, not from worldly success.

Personal Idols:

- Discuss how qualities like popularity, beauty, or intelligence can become idols if we value them above our relationship with God.
- Encourage kids to reflect on whether they prioritize their personal qualities over living according to God's will.
- Emphasize that our true worth comes from being children of God, not from our appearance or abilities.

Reflection and Prayer:

- Provide time for kids to reflect on what idols they might have in their lives.
- Encourage them to confess any idols to God and ask for His help in prioritizing their relationship with Him.
- Lead a prayer for guidance in recognizing and removing idols from their lives.

Follow-Up Activities:

- Offer suggestions for practical steps kids can take to keep God as their top priority, such as setting aside daily time for prayer and Bible reading, volunteering to help others, or sharing their faith with friends.
- Encourage kids to hold each other accountable and support one another in putting God first in their lives.
- Remind kids that identifying and removing idols is an ongoing process, and it's okay to ask for help and guidance along the way.
- Encourage them to continue growing in their relationship with God and trusting Him to lead them on the right path.

Consider having kids write their idols, place them in a bottle, and use a bean bag/soft ball to knock their "gods" down!

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY 3:

DO THIS: Pair the kids off and have them recite the verse to each other.