

Resist Temptation

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 4:1-10

Bible Truth: I can say "no" to temptation.

Bible Story: Matthew 4:1-10

Bible Verse: Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" (Matthew 4:10, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "That's Tempting"

Preparation

Write the word "temptation" on a sheet of paper large enough for the children to see it clearly. Gather a food item that the children in your class would like to eat (cake, candy bar, cookies, etc.) Talk to a child before class and ask him to help you with an illustration by eating the food item when you turn your back in class.

Materials
large sheet of paper
marker
food item popular with
children in your area

Presentation

Show children the food item you brought. Make a big deal about how great it would taste or how great it smells. Ask the volunteer you talked to before class to hold the food for you. Turn your back for a moment to allow the child to take a bite of the item. When you turn around, notice that the child has "given in" to temptation.

Show the children the word "temptation." Say: **Do any of you know what this word means?** Pause to allow children to answer. **Temptation is when you have the opportunity to choose to do something that is wrong. You can either choose to say "yes" to temptation, or you can choose to say "no" to temptation. Today, (insert volunteer's name) gave us an example of saying "yes" to temptation. Instead of saying "yes" to temptation, Jesus wants us to say "no" to temptation and make the choice to do the right thing. However, sometimes it is really hard to make the right choice when faced with temptation. Today, we are going to learn from Jesus' example how we can say "no" to temptation.** Be sure to thank your volunteer and explain to the class that he didn't really eat the food without permission.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Matthew 4:10

Preparation

Write Matthew 4:10 on a poster board.

Write each word of Matthew 4:10 on a separate piece of paper. Remember to include the reference. Hide the papers around the room.

Materials
poster board
marker
paper
tape, clothespins, or paper clips

Explanation

Read Matthew 4:10 with the children. Say: **Today you are going to hear a story about a time when Jesus was tempted by Satan to worship him instead of God. Instead of saying "yes" to this temptation, Jesus said "no" by quoting a Bible verse to Satan.** Ask a child to underline the part of the verse that Jesus quoted to Satan.

Say: **In this verse, Jesus taught us a great way to say "no" to temptation. When you are faced with the temptation to disobey God's commandments and do something you know will not please Him, think about what the Bible tells you to do. Remembering a Bible verse can help you make the right choice.**

Memorization Activity

Explain to the children that you have hidden the words to Matthew 4:10 around the room on separate pieces of paper. They should find one word and then attach it to the front of their clothing using tape (or whatever you provide). Once each child is wearing a word, the children should try to arrange themselves in correct verse order.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Jesus Is Tempted," Matthew 4:1-11

Preparation

Read and study Matthew 4:1-11.

Write each group of questions on a separate index card:

Group 1

How many days was Jesus in the desert?

Why do you think He went to the desert?

During those forty days, Jesus didn't eat. Why did He choose not to eat?

Materials
Bible
index cards or paper
pencils
pictures of the Bible story (You can find them online, in a picture Bible, or draw them yourself.)

Group 2

After the forty days, who went to Jesus in the desert?

Mention the first way Satan tried to make Jesus sin.

Why was that a difficult temptation for Jesus?

How did Jesus overcome the temptation?

Group 3

Why did Satan ask Jesus to jump off the temple?

The second time Satan tempted Jesus, Satan also quoted a Bible verse. How was Satan's use of scripture different from Jesus' use of scripture?

Group 4

How did Satan tempt Jesus a third time?

What happened after Jesus said: "Away from me Satan"?

What weapon did Jesus use each time Satan tempted Him? Why?

Why do you think God allowed His Son Jesus to be tempted?

Presentation

Divide the children into four teams of listeners. Give each team a prepared card with questions and let them read over the questions together for a few moments. Instruct each team to listen for the answers to their questions during the story. If the members in a team hear the answer to one of their questions, they shouldn't say it out loud. The questions can only be answered during discussion time after the Bible story. If one of the teams can't answer all their questions, the opportunity will be given to the other teams to answer those questions.

Tell the children the following story using the picture visuals you have prepared.

Say: **Jesus had been living in the desert for forty days. He hadn't eaten anything and was weak and very hungry when Satan approached Him. "Jesus, if you are truly the Son of God, tell these stones to turn into bread."**

Although Jesus was very hungry and had the power to turn the stones into bread, He didn't obey Satan's command. He responded to the enemy with the Word of God. He said, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

When this temptation failed, Satan tried a different one. He took Jesus to the temple. "If you want people to believe that you are truly the Son of God, you should show them a great sign. Throw yourself from the temple. God said in His Word that His angels will protect you from all harm."

Jesus did want people to believe that He was the Son of God, but obeying Satan was definitely not the way to show that He was God's Son. "Satan," He answered, "It is also written that you will not test the Lord your God." Once again, Satan failed at tempting Jesus.

Satan tried one last time. From a high mountain he showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world. "All these kingdoms are mine. I can give them away to any person I choose. I will give them to you if you worship me."

Jesus spoke with power, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

Satan failed. Jesus chose to serve God, His Father. And immediately angels came to take care of Jesus.

Once the story is finished, give each group a moment to discuss the answers to their questions. When they are finished with discussion, have them share their answers. If they don't know an answer, allow the other teams to help.

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Bible Study, "Help! I'm Being Tempted"

Preparation

Make five copies of the matching activity "Help! I'm Being Tempted" located at the end of this lesson. If you do not have access to a copy machine, copy the situations and Bible verses on poster board for the children to see.

Materials
pencils
copies of "Help! I'm Being Tempted" activity

Presentation

Say: **In Unit One, we learned that it can sometimes be hard to obey God. We discussed different situations in which children faced the temptation to disobey God's instructions. We are going to look at those situations again and find Bible verses that could help each child say "no" to temptation.**

Divide the children into five groups. Give each group a copy of the "Help! I'm Being Tempted" activity. Ask each group to match the temptation with the Bible verse that could help in that situation. When each group is finished, have them share their verses.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
Bible

Presentation

Ask children to hold a Bible in their hands. If you do not have a Bible for each child, they can stand in a circle around one Bible. Explain that to be able to use God's Word to say "no" to temptation, we need to read it. Pray with the children that they will spend time during the next week reading their Bibles. You might consider sending home a simple Bible reading schedule to help them. If Bibles are not available for each child in your area, give children a new scripture each week written on a piece of paper that they can commit to memory.

OPTIONAL REVIEW ACTIVITY

Learning Activity: Art, "Chronological Line of Jesus' Temptation"

Preparation

Write each of the following titles and accompanying scripture references on 5 index cards or pieces of paper:

Materials
paper
pencils
crayons or markers

"Jesus went to the desert" Matthew 4:1, 2

"Turn the stones into bread" Matthew 4:3, 4

"Throw yourself from the temple" Matthew 4:5-7

"You can rule these kingdoms" Matthew 4:8-10

"The angels took care of Jesus" Matthew 4:11

Presentation

Allow the children to work with a partner or in small groups to draw one of the scenes depicted on the index cards. (Be sure every scene is drawn.) Instruct them to read the Scripture verses and to work together in drawing the scene. When the children finish, ask them to hang the story scenes on the wall in the correct order.

Help! I'm Being Tempted!

Each of the situations below lists a temptation you may face one day. Match the temptation with the Bible verse you could remember to help resist the temptation.

1. Your mom asks you to turn off the television and go clean your room.
 2. Your dad has given you 10 minutes to read before bed. You know you should read your Bible, but you really want to finish reading a story in another book.
 3. Your little brother just wrote all over your math homework with a black marker, and now you have to re-do it. Your parents remind you that God wants you to forgive him.
 4. You are spending the night at a friend's house. Your friend wants you to watch a movie you know your parents have said you are not allowed to watch.
 5. You received money as a birthday present. You know the Bible teaches you to give ten percent of the money back to God as a tithe.
- A. Psalm 101:3a, "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes..."
 - B. Colossians 3:13, "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you."
 - C. Ephesians 6:1, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."
 - D. Luke 6:38, "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."
 - E. Psalm 119:11, "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."

Choose to Serve God

Lesson Scripture: Joshua 24:1-26

Bible Truth: I will choose to serve God.

Bible Story: Joshua 24:1-26

Bible Verse: “Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve.” “And the people said to Joshua, ‘We will serve the Lord our God and obey him.’” (Joshua 24:15b and 24, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: “It’s Your Decision”

Preparation

If you teach younger children, write “My Decisions” at the top of a piece of paper for each child.

Presentation

Give each child a sheet of paper and a pencil. Ask older children to write “My Decisions” at the top of the page.

Materials

paper
pencils
shirt
watch or clock
food item

Say: **Every day you make decisions, many more than you probably realize. From the moment you get out of bed until you go back to sleep at night, you are making decisions. Every day you have to choose what to wear.** (Show the shirt.) **You have to choose what to eat.** (Show the food.) **You have to choose how to spend your time.** (Show the watch or clock.)

Give the children three minutes to write or draw some of the decisions they make each day. When time is up, ask the children to circle three things they consider to be the most important.

Say: **What three options did you choose?** Allow children to answer. **Why do you think these options are the most important ones?** Allow children to answer. **In today’s Bible lesson, a whole nation made a very important decision. We will discover what that decision was.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Joshua 24:15b and 24

Preparation

Write Joshua 24:15b and 24 on a poster board or whiteboard.

“Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve.” [said Joshua].

“And the people said to Joshua, ‘We will serve the Lord our God and obey him.’”

Materials
poster board
marker

Explanation

Read the scriptures written on the poster board to the children.

Say: **What was the decision Joshua asked the Israelites to make? Whom did they choose to serve?**

Memorization Activity

Divide the children into two groups. Allow one group to play the role of Joshua. They will say: “Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve.” The other group should play the role of the Israelites. They will respond: “We will serve the Lord our God and obey Him.” Ask each group to say their part loudly, softly, in a whisper, while jumping, etc. until they have repeated the verses several times.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: “The People Choose,” Joshua 24:1-26

Preparation

Read and study Joshua 24:1-26.

The week before teaching this lesson, give the dialogue to two adults or teenagers. Ask them to learn the parts for Joshua and the narrator and be prepared to present it during this week’s session. Joshua will need to wear a Bible costume.

Materials
Bible
Bible costume for Joshua
poster board
marker

Copy from the script the two lines the children need to say during the story onto a piece of poster board, one line on the front and one line on the back.

Presentation

Say: **You get to be part of today's Bible story. You will be the people of Israel. During the story, the people of Israel say two different lines. When it is your turn to say your line, I will hold up the poster board for you to read. Let's practice.** Help them to practice those lines before the story is presented. As the teacher, help the children say their lines at the appropriate time. Say: **And now we present, "The People Choose."**

NARRATOR: The people of Israel had lived in Canaan for many years. They had built houses and cities. They had farmed the land and planted the crops. Joshua was a hundred and ten years old.

JOSHUA: Call the people to a meeting. I want to talk to them one last time before I die.

NARRATOR: When the people had gathered, Joshua talked to them.

JOSHUA: I want all of you to be a courageous people. I want you to obey the laws God has given you. There are still enemies in the land. You must drive them away. Don't have anything to do with them. Don't serve their gods. Don't marry their sons and daughters. If you obey God, He will bless you in everything you do. But if you disobey Him, you will have problems.

NARRATOR: Joshua reminded the people that God had been with them since Abraham arrived in Canaan. He had been with them while they were enslaved in the land of Egypt. He was with them and led them through the desert. As Joshua was speaking to the people, he reminded them of the things God had done for them.

PEOPLE: He has done great things for us. He has given us this land. He has helped us to fight our enemies.

JOSHUA: You must choose today if you will serve the Lord God or if you will worship other gods.

PEOPLE: We will serve the Lord our God. We will obey His commandments.

Once the skit is over, discuss the following questions with the children:

- What did Joshua ask the people to do?**
- What would happen if they obeyed God?**
- What would happen if they disobeyed?**
- Why did the people choose to serve God?**
- Why have you decided to serve God?**

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Art, "My Decision"

Preparation

Gather materials

Presentation

Say: **The most important decision you can ever make is to choose to serve God. Many of you made that decision when you asked Jesus to be your Savior from sin. Each day you also make other decisions that show you serve God. Can anyone tell me a decision you make each day that shows you serve God?**

Write children's responses on a piece of poster board, chalkboard, or whiteboard. There responses should include some of the following: obeying my parents, reading my Bible, forgiving others, praying, etc.

Do you want to know what Joshua did to help the people of Israel to remember the decision they had made? Let's read Joshua 24:26 so you can see it. Read the verse to the children. **Joshua wrote the decision the people made in a book of God's laws. After this, he laid a large stone under a tree as a memorial to help them remember the decision they had made.**

Today I want you to do what Joshua did. I want you to make a drawing that will help you remember the decisions you have made to serve God.

Ask the children to draw a picture of themselves when they asked Jesus to forgive them of their sins and chose to serve Him. Then they can also draw pictures of themselves choosing to serve God in the other ways discussed (obeying parents, reading the Bible, etc.)

This would also be a good time to pray with children who have not received Jesus as their Savior from sin.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Presentation

When children have finished their drawings, invite them to attach their pictures to the wall and say aloud, "I choose Jesus." Pray a prayer over each child asking God to help him live out his decision each day.

Materials

Bible
poster board
paper
pencils

Materials

tape
pictures from
application activity

God's Way, Not My Way

Lesson Scripture: 2 Samuel 6:1-15

Bible Truth: I will serve the Lord the way He wants, not my way.

Bible Story: 2 Samuel 6:1-15

Bible Verse: "Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long." (Psalm 25:4-5, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Follow the Recipe"

Preparation

Find a simple recipe children can make and gather the necessary supplies to make it in class.

Presentation

Say: **Have you ever prepared something to eat that wasn't good? Have you ever built something that didn't work? Why do these things happen?** Allow children to answer questions as you ask them. **Usually this happens because we don't follow instructions. Today you are going to make a special treat. Be sure to follow the instructions correctly.**

Allow the children to prepare something to eat by following a simple recipe. Then allow them to enjoy what they prepared.

As they eat, say: **Why was it important to follow the recipe?** Allow children to answer. **The Word of God is like a recipe. We can find God's words in the Bible. If we want our lives to be full of blessings, we need to obey His Word. We need to serve Him the way He wants. In today's Bible story, we'll discover what happened when David didn't follow God's instructions when bringing the ark of the Lord back to Jerusalem.**

Materials

a simple food recipe children can make in class
food items needed for recipe
kitchen supplies to make recipe

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Psalm 25:4-5

Preparation

Write Psalm 25:4-5 on a poster board or white board.

Write the following phrases on 10 sheets of paper. Be sure to leave the back side of each paper blank.

page 1: Show me your ways, Lord
page 2: teach me your paths.
page 3: Guide me in your truth
page 4: and teach me,
page 5: for you are
page 6: God my Savior,
page 7: and my hope
page 8: is in you
page 9: all day long.
page 10: Psalm 25:4-5

Materials
poster board
marker
10 pieces of construction paper

Create a path with these papers. Be sure to put the path in correct order.

Explanation

Show children the Bible verse and read it together. Say: **This Bible verse contains a prayer to God. Can anyone tell me something this verse asks God to do for us?** Allow children to respond. **Yes, the verse asks God to show, teach, and guide us.** Have three volunteers underline those words. **This verse asks God to show us His ways and teach us His paths.** Underline the words ways and paths. **God has a certain way He wants us to live our lives and certain places He wants us to go.**

Have you ever followed a path? Maybe you went on a hike with your family or friends and you had to follow a map to get to your destination. The Bible is God's map to tell us the path we should follow in life. If we do what God's Word tells us to do, then we will go the places God wants us to go and do the things God wants us to do.

Memorization Activity

Show the children the Bible verse path you created. Ask them to follow the path and say the words on each sheet of paper. Repeat this several times, turning over one or two papers to the blank side each time they start over.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "David Moves the Ark," 2 Samuel 6:1-15

Preparation

Read and study 2 Samuel 6:1-5.

Find pictures of this story online, in a picture Bible, or draw pictures to show to the children as you tell the story.

Materials
Bible
pictures of the Bible
story

Presentation

Using pictures, tell the Bible story to the children.

Say: **The ark of the Lord was special for the people of Israel. It contained the laws of Moses. Many years before, the Philistine army had taken the ark of the Lord from Israel. Because David had been recognized as king of all Israel, he wanted to bring the ark of the Lord back to Jerusalem. He knew God's plans were to keep the ark inside the tabernacle, and for that reason he built a new tabernacle to place it in. Then, he sent word to the people to tell them that the ark was being taken back to Jerusalem.**

An army of 30,000 men went to move the ark. God had given specific instructions that the ark was only to be moved by priests who were to carry it on their shoulders. NO ONE but the priests were allowed to touch the ark. However, instead of moving the ark God's way, David had it placed on a cart pulled by oxen. David and a group of musicians walked in front of the ark. They played instruments and sang praises to God. They were all joyful because the ark of the Lord was being brought back to Jerusalem.

Suddenly, the music stopped. When the cart pulled by the oxen approached a bump in the road, the ark moved as if it would fall. One of the men walking next to the ark reached out his hand to steady the ark and keep it from falling. When his hand touched the ark, he fell dead. God had said that no one, with the exception of the priests, was to touch the ark. The people had forgotten His command.

"What does this mean?" the people were asking themselves. David was also astonished. He was afraid to take the ark to Jerusalem, so he left it at the home of Obed-edom, who lived nearby. Then David and the people returned to their homes.

For three months, the ark of the Lord was in the house of Obed-edom. During the time the ark was there, the Lord blessed Obed-edom and his household.

When King David heard of this, he wanted to return the ark to Jerusalem. On this occasion, he followed God's commands about how to move to the ark. He ordered the priests to carry the ark on their shoulders as the Lord had commanded in the law book. As the priests

walked towards Jerusalem, David danced before the Lord. The Israelites cheered and played their trumpets. Finally, the ark entered the city of Jerusalem. It was placed in the tabernacle that David had prepared for it. After this, David blessed the people and praised the Lord for everything He had done for Israel.

Say: David learned that we always need to do things God's way. It is always best to follow God's commands and do things His way!

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Drama, "God's Way vs. My Way"

Preparation

Write the following situations on a poster board or white board:

Your little brother keeps using your toys without asking permission.

Your best friend forgot to do her homework, and she wants to copy your answers.

A bully is picking on your friend.

You find out that someone at school has been gossiping about you to other kids.

You think your teacher is picking on you because she doesn't like you.

Materials
poster board
marker

Presentation

Say: **We face many situations in life. There are two ways to handle things: God's way and our own way.** Divide children into groups and assign them one of situations listed above. They will develop two skits. One skit will solve the problem "God's way" and one will solve the problem "My way." Once the groups are ready, each group should act out their skits without telling the class which solution is "God's Way" and which one is "My Way." The class will try to guess which of the two skits represents "God's Way."

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
2 small piece of paper for each
child
pencils
trash can

Presentation

Give each child two small pieces of paper. Ask them to write "My Way" on one sheet of paper and "God's Way" on the other. Invite children to pray, asking God to help them respond to situations the way God wants. As a symbol that they want to follow God's way, ask children to crumple the "My way" paper and put it in the trash can. Have them take home the "God's Way" paper as a reminder to follow God this week.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

Learning Activity: Bible Study, "Tell Me About the Ark"

Preparation

Write the following questions and Scripture references on index cards:

- Who built the ark? Exodus 37:1
- What materials were used to build it? Exodus 37:1-2
- How big was the ark? Exodus 37:1
- How it was supposed to be carried? Exodus 37:2-5
- What was in the ark? Deuteronomy 10:2; Exodus 16:33; Numbers 17:10

Materials
index cards
pencils, markers, crayons
paper
measuring stick (ruler)
artist drawing of the Ark
of the Lord

Prepare a sheet of paper large enough to draw the ark according to its true measurements (3 $\frac{3}{4}$ feet long, 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ feet wide, 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ feet tall). You can use tape and attach several sheets of paper together.

Presentation

Say: **The Ark of the Lord was a trunk, similar to a suitcase you might use when you take a trip. The ark was very important to the people of Israel. You can learn more information about the ark by reading some Bible verses.**

Allow each child to work with a partner. Give a prepared index card to each team. Ask them to read the Scripture verse and to write their answers to the questions. Allow a few minutes for each team to complete the task, and then ask each team to share their answers.

Show the drawing of the ark to the children if you have it available. Allow them to draw the ark on the large paper using the exact measurements.

Watch Your Attitude

Lesson Scripture: Nehemiah 2:11-18

Bible Truth: I will serve the Lord with a good attitude.

Bible Story: Nehemiah 2:11-18

Bible Verse: “And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men.” (Colossians 3:23, NKJV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: “How Will You Serve the Lord?”

Preparation

On a piece of paper, write a task for each child to complete. Several children can receive the same task. Some suggested tasks include:

Write a get-well note to someone who is sick.

Write Colossians 3:23 on a piece of paper three times.

Draw a picture of one way you can serve the Lord.

Take out the trash and clean the room.

Materials
paper
pencil
supplies children will need to
complete each task you
assign

Gather the supplies children will need to complete their tasks. (paper, pencils, crayons, trash bags, etc.)

Presentation

As the children come into the classroom, hand each one of them a task. Listen to comments and notice the attitude of each child as she completes her task. When most of the children are finished, discuss the following questions:

How did you feel about the task I gave you? Why?

Did anyone have a task you liked more than yours? Which one was it? Why did you like it more than yours?

Did any task seem more important than others? Which one? Why?

Do you think you completed the task with a good attitude or not?

Would you say that you did your best with your task, or did you just rush through to get done?

Say: Today, we will learn about a man named Nehemiah, to whom God assigned a very difficult task to accomplish. During the Bible story, listen to see if Nehemiah obeyed the memorization verse that we have for today: " And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men." (Colossians 3:23, NKJV)

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Colossians 3:23

Preparation

Write Colossians 3:23 on a poster board.

Explanation

Read Colossians 3:23 with the children. Say: **What does it mean to do something "heartily"?** Allow children to answer. **It means to do something "with your whole heart" and in a "cheerful" manner. When you do something "with your whole heart," you do your best with the task and don't just rush through to get it done. Sometimes it can be hard to do things we don't like with our whole heart and cheerfully. Do you obey this verse when you are doing chores or homework? Allow children to answer. Can you mention some other attitudes we might have when we do chores assigned to us? Allow children to answer. Yes, at times we complain.** Write "complaining" on a sheet of paper. Place it over the word "heartily" and ask the children to read the verse. Repeat this exercise by following other suggestions offered by the children, such as "sloppy," "in anger," and "quickly"

Is God pleased with these attitudes? No. How does He want us to do our work? Allow children to say "heartily or cheerfully."

Memorization Activity

Divide the children into two teams. Place five blocks opposite each team (ten total) on the other side of the classroom. When the signal is given, the first person on each team needs to run over to the blocks, place them one on top of the other, say the memorization verse, knock down the blocks, and return to his/her team. Each person in line will do the same thing when it is his turn. If the blocks fall down before the five of them have been placed satisfactorily, the child will have to place them again. The first team to finish the relay wins.

Materials
poster board
marker
paper
10 blocks

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Rebuilding the Walls," Nehemiah 2:11-18

Preparation

Read and study Nehemiah 2:11-18.

Chose one child to pretend to be Nehemiah. Divide the rest of the children into two groups, the Israelites and the enemies of the Israelites.

Materials
Bible

Presentation

Say: **Today we are going to act out our Bible story. Listen carefully as I read the story. You can go ahead and act out anything you hear, or you can wait for me to give you instructions.**

The city of Jerusalem was very important to God. He wanted His people to be able to live there safely. In Bible times, in order for a city to be safe, it needed to have strong walls built around it. God asked Nehemiah to be in charge of rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem because it was a mess. Let's travel with Nehemiah around Jerusalem. Encourage the Israelite children to imagine being on horses, rapidly galloping. **As he traveled around the city, Nehemiah examined the broken walls and the burned gates. "Something must be done," Nehemiah told himself.** Ask the child playing Nehemiah to examine the pretend walls.

The following day, Nehemiah gathered the people. Everyone wanted to help in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. Both men and women helped. Every family repaired the walls facing their houses. Have the Israelite children "build" the walls as you continue the story. **Some of the family members would take out huge stone parts. Strong men would gather the stones to shape the walls.**

The enemies living around Jerusalem couldn't believe what was happening. They didn't want the walls to be rebuilt because they wouldn't be able to enter the city and give its people a hard time, so they started to make fun of the walls. Have the enemies of the Israelites start making fun of those building the walls. **"The walls are so weak that they will fall down when a little fox climbs up on them."**

Nehemiah and the people in Jerusalem didn't pay attention to these insults. They were determined to rebuild the walls.

Then the enemies made plans to attack Jerusalem. Have the enemies huddle around like they are making a plan. **When Nehemiah heard about their plans, he positioned his men with swords. He also put guards to watch the walls during the day and at nighttime.**

Ask some of the Israelite children to stop working and to act as guards. **But the enemy continued with threats of attack. Nehemiah told his people to work with one hand and hold their weapon with the other.** Ask the Israelite children to pretend they are holding a weapon while they continue to build the wall.

The walls were completed after only fifty-two days. When the enemies heard that the walls had been completely rebuilt, they were afraid because they knew that God had helped Nehemiah and the people finish the work. Have the enemies shake with fear.

After the children finish building the pretend walls, ask them to sit inside the city while discussing the following questions:

Did Nehemiah obey today's memorization verse when he rebuilt the walls?

Did the people work with all their heart in rebuilding the walls?

How did God bless the people for their willingness to rebuild the walls?

How does God bless you when you do something with all your heart?

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Art, "Building the Walls"

Preparation

Using construction paper, cut out three paper stones for each child in your class.

On a sheet of paper, write the following phrase: "We will serve the Lord with all of our hearts!" Attach the paper to a wall in the classroom.

Materials
construction paper
markers
scissors
pencils, pens, or crayons

Presentation

Say: **Let's read our Bible verse again.** Read Colossians 3:23. **Did Nehemiah and the people in Jerusalem obey this command when they were working on the walls?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, they worked heartily! Remember that heartily means with all of their heart and with a good attitude. They knew God wanted them to rebuilt the walls, so they worked very hard even when others tried to stop them. They never gave up or complained.**

There are many things God wants us to do for Him. Can you think of some? Allow children to answer. Help them list things such as be kind to others, obey my parents, give an offering in church, do my homework, etc. **Let's write some of these things on the stones I am going to give you.**

Give each of the children three small stones cut out of paper. Ask them to write one thing on each stone that they know God wants them to do, even if it is hard. When children have finished, attach the stones to the classroom wall in the shape of a "wall."

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Presentation

Gather children around the stones they have placed on the wall.

Say: **Just like the people in Jerusalem had enemies, we also**

have an enemy. Our enemy is Satan. He would like to keep you from doing the things God wants you to do. He wants you to be lazy and have a bad attitude, the opposite of working "heartily." Let's pray together and ask God to give us the strength and courage we need to do these things for Him with a good attitude. Say a pray with the children and encourage them to ask God to help them do everything He asks with a cheerful attitude.

Materials

the paper "wall" made during
the learning activity