

1st Sunday after Pentecost

May 20, 2024 -
May 26, 2024

SCRIPTURE: Romans 8:12-17

THEME: Only A Triune God Can Deliver What Only A Triune God Can Offer

SONG: CW21 483/ CW93 192 - Holy, Holy, Holy

VISUAL: Plinko game or slide

OBJECT LESSON

In this devotional series, I want to use what we know to help understand our relationship with God: Games! We are going to hear about having a "Top Down Faith." Show a picture of a slide and/or Plinko game. Where do you start on either of these toys? From the top! You slide down from the top. You put a chip down from the top in Plinko to win a prize.

BIBLE TRUTH

God is at the top of our "slide" or Plinko game.. There is a very famous passage that tells us of God sending down blessings, I believe you may know, John 3:16. Can you say it with me? "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." God so loved the world that he GAVE his one and only son. Here on earth, we have nothing to give and no way to get anything up to God. God first loved us and then GAVE to us.

Isaiah 6:8 says God atoned for our sins. Atonement means through God's son, Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, he GIVES us forgiveness for all our sins. God the Father's love, God the Son's sacrifice for our sins, is all from the TOP DOWN. We receive all these blessings from God without any help from us.

Now let's read in Romans 8: 12-17. Did you hear what also comes down to us? Who do we receive? (God the Holy Spirit) God sends his Spirit to live in us. The Holy Spirit GIVES us power to believe in God's blessings of love and forgiveness. The Message Bible translation shows us the Holy Spirit GIVES us power to live for God. "God's Spirit beckons. There are things to do and places to go!"

Now that we have God's gifts from TOP DOWN, he moves us to share with those below the slide. Go and tell others God's love for them! Show by your actions God's forgiveness, patience and care to your friends and family. Thank God we have a TOP DOWN faith! Only a Triune God can give us all we need!

DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

What are some things we heard today that God has "sent down" to us? Jesus to die for us, Forgiveness of sins, His Spirit to live in our hearts. How can we show our thanks to God for all of these blessings? Care for others, treat them with patience and forgiveness

PRAYER

Dear Father in heaven, thank you for sending your son, Jesus, to live a perfect life and dying on the cross for us so that we can go to heaven. Thank you for sending the Holy Spirit to live in our hearts. Move us to show our thankfulness for your goodness by being helpful, patience and forgiving of others. Amen.



HEART IMPRINTS

2nd Sunday after Pentecost

May 27, 2024 -
June 2, 2024

SCRIPTURE: Colossians 2:17

THEME: Rest is a Gift Not Something to Be Earned. Rest Only Christ Provides

SONG: CW21 927/ CW93 329 - Lord, Dismiss Us With Your Blessings

VISUAL: Pillow and eye mask

OBJECT LESSON

Playing games is a nice break from doing work or chores. Mom says to put your toys away before you watch TV. Do your work before you get recess. Some teachers may even use 5-10 extra minutes of recess as a reward for doing well in class or a test. Yea! You earned a break! When God was creating the world, he made day and night. Night is made for rest. The darkness helps our body relax and stop working. When it is daylight, it is hard to sleep. Ever try to take a nap? Unless you are feeling sick, I bet it was hard to rest! Some people like to use an eye mask to darken the room so they can sleep, because they know their body needs to rest.

BIBLE TRUTH

I'm going to tell you that God has given you a rest. God knows that we need it. God commanded the Israelites in Deuteronomy to rest. Sometimes the 10 commandments sound like 10 laws or rules to follow but God gave us the 3rd commandment to rest, "Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy". Sabbath means rest. Keep a day free from thought of work to dedicate to God and hear his Word. He gives us an eye mask to shield us from distractions, from running around doing work and then to sit, listen, and pray.

This law was teaching the people that God gives rest not because we did so much but because He wills it. It teaches us the rest from sin we have in Christ. Christ's perfect life, death, and resurrection gives us rest with him in heaven. Colossians 2:17 tells us "These (the old testament laws) are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ." In heaven we will not be tired, sad, hungry, stressed, or frustrated.

Jesus Christ proved he has the power to give us rest from our sinful life because he showed he has power through miracles. The Gospels are full of examples of Jesus' miraculous power: healing the blind, lame, leperous. In the Gospel of Mark chapters 2 and 3, Pharisees confront Jesus about the Sabbath. They wrongly believed that Sabbath was an earthy show of not working, but Jesus said, "The Son of Man (himself) is Lord even of the Sabbath" and revealed his power by healing a man's shriveled hand in front of them. If his words heal our bodies, his words of forgiveness and rest must be true too!

DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

Which commandment tells us to stop, rest, and give God our time? (3rd Commandment : Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.)

What did Jesus give us rest from? (Sin, sinful world.)

What can we be sure that Jesus has given us? (Forgiveness, eternal rest in heaven.)

PRAYER

Dear Father in heaven, thank you for sending your son, Jesus, to live a perfect life and dying on the cross for us so that we can have eternal rest in heaven. Help us take time each day to rest from playing, homework, or chores to listen to your words of rest in the Bible. Amen.



HEART IMPRINTS

3rd Sunday after Pentecost

June 3, 2024 -
June 9, 2024

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 3:8-15

THEME: The Devil Does His Worst, Yet Jesus Always Wins

SONG: CW21 863/ CW93 200 - A Mighty Fortress v. 3

VISUAL: Dodgeball

OBJECT LESSON

Show the dodge ball. Do you know what this is? Who has ever played dodgeball? Half the kids go on one side of the gym and half go on the other side. There is a middle line you can't cross. Balls are in the center of the middle line and both teams rush to grab a ball to throw at the opposite team. If you get hit, you are out. Sometimes it may feel like you are always hit, always out.

BIBLE TRUTH

Today's lesson is from Genesis 3:8-15. Read the selection or have a student read it. It seems like the devil (serpent) hit us pretty hard! God's perfect world was ruined. Adam and Eve are out! Out of the garden. But listen to what God tells the devil in verse 15 again. "And I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." The devil doesn't win. Jesus crushes his head!

In Revelation we hear God put the devil on a leash so he can't cross that middle line. Jesus is the sole player on our dodgeball team. He came to be perfect for us, conquer sin, satan, and death. He is the player on our team, throwing the dodgeball and never missing. With Jesus with us, we stand behind him and avoid the devils taunts and temptations. There is also a version of dodgeball that has a medic. This medic is able to tag anyone that is hit and brings them back to life. Jesus is our medic. He won against sin, satan, and death. He raises us up and brings us new life with Him in heaven.

DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

Because Adam and Eve disobeyed God, we are sinful and cannot "win" heaven. Who wins it for us? (Jesus.)

The devil still tempts us. Where can we go for help? (Jesus.)

How does he help and strengthen us? (Through his Word when we hear, learn it, memorize it.)

PRAYER

Dear Father in heaven, thank you for sending your son, Jesus, to live a perfect life, dying on the cross, and rising for us so that we know that we will be raised to life with you in heaven. Help us to guard our faith in you. Be with us each day, Amen.



HEART IMPRINTS

4th Sunday after Pentecost

June 10, 2024 -
June 16, 2024

SCRIPTURE: Mark 4:30-32

THEME: From the Tiniest Seed Grows the Largest Kingdom

SONG: CW21 925/ CW93 322 - On What Has Now Been Sown

VISUAL: Blob Tag

OBJECT LESSON

Let's talk about another game: Blob tag. Once tagged, a person holds hands with the tagger as you continue to tag other players and have them join. Soon a "blob" of kids are holding hands and grabbing more to join their group. If time and space allows, play a quick game of tag with the whole group or just a select few.

BIBLE TRUTH

This is like the kingdom of God. Jesus said in Mark 4:30-32 "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable should we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed. Which is the smallest of all seeds on earth, yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants." Through Jesus' perfect life, death, and resurrection, God has grabbed a hold of us and given us faith. Hearing the Gospel, it grows and bears fruit throughout the whole world. When we tell others about Jesus or invite them to VBS or church, we are planting a seed of faith and love. Soon God's kingdom grows full much like our "Blob Tag" game. Jesus grabs hold of us and brings us to his kingdom.

DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

What things can you invite friends or family to where they will hear God's word? (Church, Sunday school, VBS.)

What would you say to a friend when they ask you about your faith? (I believe that God loves me and sent his son to save me from all my sins and bring me to heaven.)

PRAYER

Dear Father in heaven, thank you for sending your son, Jesus, to live a perfect life and dying on the cross for us so that you grab a hold of us and bring us to heaven. Help us to guard our faith in you and plant seeds of faith through your word so more friends will also share in heaven with us. Amen.



HEART IMPRINTS

5th Sunday after Pentecost

June 17, 2024 -
June 23, 2024

SCRIPTURE: Acts 27:14-15, 18-25

THEME: Our Gracious God is With Us Through All the Storms of Life

SONG: CW21 805/ CW93 322 - Eternal Father Strong to Save v. 1,2

VISUAL: a blow up raft

OBJECT LESSON

You may have played "Don't Rock the Boat" in a pool or lake. Here you can have 2-3 kids sit on the raft. Pretend to rock the boat back and forth to see who falls off in the "water". It's scary rocking if you don't know how to swim or can't see the bottom of the deep water in the lake.

BIBLE TRUTH

Listen to what happened to Paul in Acts 27:14-15, 18-20. Read the selection or have a student read. The men gave up all hope of being saved. But Paul gives the men hope. Read vs. 23-25. We will have difficult things to go through in life. Maybe a pet ran away, a friend is mad at you, or a family member is sick or passed away. These things feel like someone is "rocking" our boat or are big waves of trouble for us. But we have a TOP DOWN faith. A similar event in Mark 4:35-41 shows us Jesus is with us during those times and has power to GIVE us peace. Read selection. Jesus is in the storm, our troubles. He urges us to have faith. Trust in Him to protect you.

DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

How did God protect Paul during the storm? (He kept the men safe, God told Paul everyone would be safe.)

What did the disciples say Jesus had the power over? (Wind and waves.)

Because we know how God has saved in the past, what can we trust God to do for us? (Be with us in our troubles, give us strength, ultimately save us from death in hell.)

PRAYER

Dear Father in heaven, thank you for giving us your word to show us your almighty power over all things. Thank you for sending Jesus, your son, to save us from all troubles when he brings us to heaven. Holy Spirit, lead us to seek you when we are sad, or in trouble and trust in your peace and deliverance. Amen.



HEART IMPRINTS

6th Sunday after Pentecost

June 24, 2024 -
June 30, 2024

SCRIPTURE: Mark 5:36-42

THEME: The Living Lord Completely Changes Our view of Death

SONG: CW21 444/ CW93 145 - Jesus Lives! The Vicotry's Won v. 1-3

VISUAL: Printed picture of "Game Over" screen from a video game

OBJECT LESSON

For the last five weeks we have been looking at how some games help us understand how God delivers a TOP DOWN faith. Today, we will look at all games from Tag, dodgeball, even Super Mario Bros and Among Us. After the "Game Over" show the picture we can start again!

BIBLE TRUTH

When a young girl died, her father went to Jesus. Read Mark 5:36-42. Jesus proved he is the son of God and our Savior by his power over sicknesses and death.

2 Corinthians 4:14 "Because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus". Through our faith in Jesus' resurrection our "Game Over" is not the end. We have a new life in heaven with our living Lord. While we may not like to lose games, Christ already won the best for us! We do nothing. And the best part about "losing" or death is in Lamentations 3:31-32 "For no one is cast-off by the Lord forever. Though he brings grief, he will show compassion, so great is his unfailing love."

DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

How does knowing we have a new life in heaven change our attitudes about a family member's death? (We can find comfort that we will see fellow believers in heaven some day.)

Our death? (We don't need to fear death, because we know where we will go to a perfect life in heaven.)

PRAYER

Dear Father in heaven, thank you for showing us your unfailing love and sending your son, Jesus, to live a perfect life, dying, and rising again so that we can be sure we will rise some day to heaven. Help us to live in peace, in the knowledge that our "game over" is not permanent, but only a gateway to our perfect life in heaven. Move us to spread the news of your salvation to others so they too may share in Jesus' resurrection. Amen.



HEART IMPRINTS