Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Younger Children
Proper 23 (B)
Old Testament: Job 23: 1-9, 16-17

BACKGROUND
We are now well into the fall season. Many areas of the country are beginning to experience cooler weather. If the weather permits, you may decide to begin your class outside under a tree whose leaves have started changing color. Have a conversation with the children about our seasonal changes and some of the beauty that we see during the fall season. God's creation is amazing, and it is important to know that while it is for all of us to enjoy we all need to appreciate what will come next. Ask the children to provide some ideas as to how the fall season helps us to prepare for what is next. While we still have several weeks left of the Pentecost season in the church year and as Halloween approaches many children may already be thinking about Christmas.

Today's reading is the second of four from the Book of Job. Job is a very faithful servant of God's and he is tested by Satan in this series. This series highlights themes of justice and suffering. The Book of Job takes place during 5th or 4th century BCE. In this part of the series, Job is experiencing deep sorrow and suffering. Job begins this reading as a confident follower of God. He asks to speak with God as he begins to be worn down by his need to continually defend his faith in God to his friends. Job begins to feel hopeless and he experiences despair when he cannot find God.

A NOTATION FOR THIS WEEK'S READING
Job is in physical pain and his friends have told him to repent for his sins. They believe that Job must have sinned greatly because he is experiencing so much pain. This to them is the idea of God's cause and effect - you do something bad so God makes you suffer, or you do something good and God blesses you. Job dialogues with his three friends and this part of the reading is his dialogue with Eliphaz. Job decides that he needs to speak with God face to face. He wants to present his case to God because he feels that he has been so faithful to God that he deserves a fair hearing before God. Job feels that God is absent because God does not immediately respond. Job feels alone and terrified and he would rather die. He has grown tired of defending his faith to his family and his friends.

THEME
We are All Tested

BEFORE CLASS
Prepare your supplies for the craft you choose.

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God-Finder
Large construction paper or stock paper for the board (one per child), Small stock paper for spinner-for a paper arrow (two per child), Metal (or brass) fasteners (two per child)

You may decide to create the God-finders before the children gather or you may have them put them together themselves. If you decide to have the children put them together themselves you should draw a line down the middle of the construction or stock paper (creating two even squares) and place a metal fastener in the middle of each square with an arrow in the middle of it. This will be the spinner.

God-Magnifier
Card stock for handle and round edge of magnifying glass, Red construction paper for heart in the middle of the magnifying glass, Tracing paper or see-through paper like clear contact paper.

You will need to make these ahead of time for this age group and then give them time to decorate the magnifier.

To see a picture of this type of magnifying glass you may search the following term online: God searches our hearts or go to: https://craftingthewordofgod.com/2013/08/02/god-searches-our hearts/.

BEGINNING
Invite the children to gather and ask: Where do you find God? When do you look for God?

OPENING PRAYER
Thank you, Lord for Job and his friends. Help us to find you in our every day even when we are being tested. Help us to remember to always answer your call. In your name we pray, Amen.

THE STORY: JOB 23: 1-9, 16-17
Job is one of God's most faithful servants, but he is now at his wit's end in this reading. Job has defended God and his faith to his friends and his family. Job now needs to speak with God because he has many questions for God. Job believes that he has endured good and bad in a faith filled manner but now he can no longer continue in this miserable way of life. Help your students read the following verses or read each one to the students.

Young Child Friendly Verses: Job looks for God because he wants to speak with God. Job wants to know first hand what God has to say to him. Job begins to show signs of impatience and agitation. Job believes God would be willing to speak with him if he could just find God.

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Once you have finished reading the verses with the children ask them how they would feel if they were Job.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

At the end of the sharing ask the students the following questions:

- Do you remember a time when you felt God?
- Was this a happy time or a sad time?

ACTIVITIES

God-Finder

Encourage each child to create a God-Finder device. Give each child a board (construction paper or stock paper) that has been divided in two and has a spinner with an arrow in the middle of each square. Have each child divide each square in four (with a pencil). The left side of the paper should list in each square one situation where it is common to look for God (i.e. sick, alone, church, afraid). The right side should list in each square one place where we find God (i.e. church, home, school, family). Have the children take turns playing with their devices by using the spinner to play out different scenarios. For example, if their spinner lands on sick and family have them tell of a time when they were sick, and they looked for God and when they were with family and they felt God.

God-Magnifier

Encourage each child to decorate a God-Magnifier. When they are done, encourage them to wander around the room, using their God-Magnifier to find God in people and in the things around them.

Invite them to take them home and place this craft in a visible place at home so as to remind them of God's love for them.

GETTING CLOSURE

Gather the students together and ask: Why is God special to you? How do you feel when you trust God?

CLOSING PRAYER

Thank you, Lord, for your many servants. They help us to see many examples of your great love and their awesome faith. Your amazing works bring us closer together and we are grateful for all you do. In your name we pray, Amen.

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