



WEIRD
SCIENCE

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The Parables of Jesus Elementary Series

Series Overview

Brace yourselves for the ultimate in Weird Science! In this series, we're taking Jesus' mind-blowing parables and turning them into the craziest, coolest experiments ever! Come along with us as we show kids how faith can be fun as we explore the teachings of Jesus.

Each session is a wild ride full of laughter, surprises, and 'Whoa, that's awesome!' moments. So, grab your curiosity and join us for a super cool journey where the Bible comes alive in the most unexpected, totally epic ways.

Lesson Overview

Lesson One kicks off our Weird Science series by introducing the parables of Jesus. First, we explore The Parable of the Lost Sheep in Matthew 18:10-14. Within this first lesson, we see an invisible ink experiment with an incredible chemical reaction! Then, there's an interactive magnetism experiment for the younger elementary group and an awesome water tension experiment for the preteen group — each to teach us that we are never too lost for Jesus to save!

Through these interactive experiments, we'll gain the knowledge that Jesus searches for us even when we sin because he loves us.

Lesson 1



Lesson 1:
Jesus Came for Everyone



Bible Verses:
Matthew 18:10-14, John 6:35



Memory Verse: “Jesus replied, ‘I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.’” John 6:35



Bottom Line
We are never too lost for Jesus.

Teacher Note:

*: Indicates directions for the teacher

Prep: Indicates what needs to be prepared prior to the teaching

SUPPLIES

Lesson Supplies:

- Method of writing or displaying memory verse

Large Group Experiment: The Lost Message

- Paper
- Water
- Baking soda
- Hair dryer or other heat source
- Paintbrush or cotton swab

***PREP BEFORE LESSON:** Pour equal parts water and baking soda into a bowl. Then, grab a paintbrush or cotton swab and a sheet of paper. Next, dip the paintbrush or cotton swab in the mixed water and baking soda. Begin to write a message (You can relate it to the teaching — for example, “Jesus saves what is lost” or “We are never too lost for Jesus”). Let the paper dry for a few minutes and set it aside.

Younger Elementary Group Experiment: Jesus’ Magnetism to Us

- Magnet or magnetic wand
- Large bag of rice
- Paper clips
- Large tray or platter

Preteen Group Experiment: Jesus Finds Us With One Drop of Love

- Water
- A few different colors of fine glitter
- Dish soap
- Shallow paper plates (foam works best)
- Markers

OPENING GAME

Sheep Who! (Similar to “Heads Up Seven Up”)

Slide 1 - Game Time- Sheep Who!

How to Play:

***Prep:** Have all the children place their heads in their laps and extend one thumb up. Then, secretly choose one person to be our “lost sheep.” This person goes around tapping the thumbs of six other people. If a person’s thumb is tapped, he or she becomes a shepherd and goes to the front of the room. When this has been accomplished, instruct children to lift their heads. Everyone raises his or her head and tries to guess which of the seven people is the “lost sheep.”

SAY: Today, I have a game for us to play! This game is like “Heads Up Seven Up,” except our game has one lost sheep and six shepherds. Everyone will put his or her head down while I choose our “lost sheep.” There will also be six shepherds chosen. To win the game, your goal is to find this lost sheep among the six shepherds. This sheep will go around and tap six thumbs. If your finger is tapped, you can put your thumb down and wait for your instructions. The rest of us will guess who, out of these seven friends, is our “lost sheep.” Ready?

Everyone, put your heads down and thumbs up in the air.

***Tap one student on the shoulder and tell him or her, “You’re the lost sheep.” Instruct him or her to tap six friends’ thumbs. When this is complete, move forward in the game.**

SAY: Now, if your thumb was tapped, come up to the front.

***Have all seven children stand in a line visible to the other children.**

SAY: Okay. Now, you can all open your eyes. Who is our lost sheep?

***Have children guess who the lost sheep is by examining their friends’ poker faces. When children guess correctly, repeat steps to the game for another round or two.**

SAY: You know, it was so important to find our lost sheep. Just as this one sheep was important to find, Jesus tells a story in the book of Luke about one lost sheep. Today, we’re going to take a look at this story. Jesus searches for his lost sheep, just like we searched for our lost sheep today.

WORSHIP & GIVING

*Verses are included for reference.

Slide 2 - Worship & Giving

SAY: Let's talk about worship and giving. Both are actions of thankfulness, honor, and love to God. Jesus taught that we are to serve God in worship ([John 4:23-24](#)). This can include how we live but also by singing and praising God. When we worship, it isn't for us but solely a gift for God. This is similar to giving. It's kind of like saying, "God, what I have is yours." It's an action of giving to God from our heart to His. The Bible tells us that God rejoices over our cheerful giving ([2 Corinthians 9:6-8](#)) and draws near to our praises or worship ([Psalm 22:3](#)). He loves when we do both with a heart focused on Him.

LARGE GROUP TEACHING

*Now it's time to begin the large group teaching time. This means you'll have all elementary ages together for the following lesson and experiment. Before the lesson, you wrote the invisible message on a piece of paper. You will need that paper for this lesson.

Slide 3 - Weird Science

SAY: Welcome to the first lesson of our Weird Science Series! In this series, we're going to be making connections between the parables that Jesus told and the coolest, craziest science experiments. If you love Jesus and you love science, you're going to LOVE this lesson!

Remember our game today? We played a game all about shepherds and lost sheep. Well, there's a parable all about lost sheep in the Bible. When the parable talks about sheep being "lost," it's actually talking about how we (the sheep) can sin sometimes (get lost) and stray away from Jesus. But there's good news. Jesus searches for us and brings us back where we belong, which is with him. Before we talk more about that parable, I want to show you guys something.

*Display paper (the one with the hidden message). Children should not be able to read the message.

SAY: Does this paper look special to you guys?

Probably not because it's just a blank piece of paper. Well, what if I told you it was a special piece of paper? If I told you there was a lost message on here, on this blank paper, would you believe me?

There IS a lost message on here, and if we want to find it, we're going to have to really search for it. But before we do that, let's look at what Jesus says about what is lost in this story in the book of Matthew.

Slide 4 - Matthew 18:10

*Read Matthew 18:10:

"See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven."

SAY: Here, Jesus starts by talking about how important his followers, believers like you and me, are to God. When he says, "See that you do not despise one of these little ones," he's saying, "Don't look down upon any of my followers." He follows that up by explaining that we are so important to God that we have angels assigned to protect us. Wow! God must really care about us!

And just as we look for what's lost on this paper, Jesus looks for us when we get lost in our sin. Why? Because of his love for us! Let's keep reading.

Slide 5 - Matthew 18:12

***Read Matthew 18:12:**

"What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray?"

Like we talked about earlier, when Jesus talks about sheep, he's talking about his followers. Jesus says "sheep" because he is our Shepherd. A shepherd takes care of sheep — he feeds them, protects them, and even loves them. Jesus does all these things for us. He loves and takes care of us. So here, Jesus is saying that every single sheep, each of his followers, is special to him.

Now, let's look back at this paper we have here. I do have other papers in this room, so should I just let this paper go? No, I'm not going to do that because this one right here is special. I'm going to look for the message. This is similar to what Jesus says about his sheep in the Bible. He won't give up on one sheep just because he has a huge flock of sheep that is already safe with him. He says that he wants the one that is lost. This teaches us that we are never too lost for Jesus.

Slide 6 - Bottom Line: We are never too lost for Jesus.

Since finding the message on this paper is important to me, I will carefully look for it. I have to be patient to find this message. I have to work really hard to find it. I have to protect this paper so it doesn't get ruined either. I may even have to use some tools or get some help to find this lost message. Jesus does the same when he goes searching for those lost in sin. He is patient with them, he is caring, he is protective, and he doesn't give up.

Maybe if I had more light, I could find this hidden message. Let's look.

***Hold up the paper to the light. Attempt to read the message.**

SAY: We still can't see it, but we still won't give up. Hmmmmm... I have an idea of how I could find this hidden message. Let's give it a try.

***Use your source of heat (hair dryer or other source) to reveal the message. The heat should cause the water and baking soda mixture to turn brown. Attempt to read the message.**

How cool! We didn't give up on finding the message, and there it was! Just as we didn't give up on finding the message, we shouldn't give up on helping others who are lost — who have strayed from Jesus. We can point them to Jesus to help them find the message of the Gospel — the message that Jesus has come to save sinners.

Now let's find out what Jesus does when He finds His lost sheep.

Slide 7 - Matthew 18:13-14

***Read Matthew 18:13-14:**

“And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.”

SAY: Jesus says there is joy and celebration when he finds those who had wandered away from him. You know, this story is for us. Sometimes, we make poor choices — like saying unkind words to our brothers or sisters, disobeying our parents when they tell us to clean our rooms, or telling lies.

Jesus loves each of us so much that He wants to find us when we sin and wander away from him. He wants to bring us back to himself. There is nothing you could ever do that would stop Jesus from looking for you. He wants you to do things like pray to him, read your Bible, go to church, and love him, too. **You are never too lost for Jesus.**

Slide 8 - You are never too lost for Jesus.

Science Break Down:

***Share the science behind our experiment.**

SAY: The lost message on this paper was a science experiment. The hidden message was written with water and baking soda, and it was invisible until we applied heat to it. The heat caused a chemical reaction which made the hidden message go from clear to brown!

Just like the chemical change we saw here, when we go from being lost in sin to being found in Jesus, we experience change, too. We go from being a lone lost sheep to being cared for and loved by Jesus.

Slide 9 - Weird Science

SMALL GROUP TIME: YOUNGER ELEMENTARY

Memory Verse

“Jesus replied, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.” John 6:35

*First, write down the verse somewhere children can see it. Then, recite the memory verse a few words at a time and have the children repeat them back to you until you complete the verse.

SAY: Our memory verse this month is John 6:35. It is all about how Jesus is the bread of life... another way to say that is He gives us everything we need. So I am going to say a few words with motions, and then you will repeat after me. Are you ready?

Leader Says: Jesus Replied

Kids Say: Jesus Replied

Leader Says: I am the bread of life

Kids Say: I am the bread of life

Leader Says: Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again.

Kids Say: Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again.

Leader Says: Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty

Kids Say: Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty

Leader Says: John 6:35

Kids Say: John 6:35

Great Job! We will work on memorizing that verse all month when we are together.

Making Connections

SAY: Jesus loves us so much that, even when we sin, he will come looking for us to bring us back to him. He is patient, careful, and joyous as he loves us. We can never be too lost for Jesus. He was sent to save what was lost, no matter how far we stray away from him when we sin. Let's talk about this.

Discussion Questions:

1. Who is the Shepherd in the Parable we read about today?
2. List everything you know about shepherds. In what ways is Jesus similar to a shepherd?
3. In the Parable of the Lost Sheep, Jesus isn't really talking about sheep at all. Who are the sheep that Jesus talks about? What does it really mean when they wander?
4. How does Jesus react when one of his followers wanders away from him? What does this reaction teach us about God?

Group Experiment - Younger Elementary: Jesus' Magnetism to Us

***Prep:** Pour out the rice on a large tray or platter and spread out paper clips throughout. Set a timer for 15-20 seconds. Then, have the children take turns finding paper clips using the magnet or magnetic wand. Challenge the children to compete to see who can find the most paper clips in the allotted time (adjust time according to children's ability).

***Explain** that as the magnet searches for the lost paperclips stuck in rice, Jesus too searches for us when we are lost in our own sin.

Science Breakdown:

***Share the science** behind our experiment.

SAY: A magnet is a piece of metal that pulls certain types of metal to itself. It is a force of nature called magnetism. A magnet doesn't even have to touch an object to draw near to it. It can even draw something to itself over quite some distance! This is called a magnetic field.

In this experiment, we searched for paper clips with our magnet. Well, Jesus draws us to him when he searches for us, too! Like a magnet, Jesus pulls us towards him with love, no matter how far we may wander away from him.

Discussion Questions:

1. How is the science experiment that we did just now similar to The Parable of the Lost Sheep?
2. How is Jesus like a magnet? What about Jesus makes people want to spend time with him and get to know him?

***When your small group discussion has come to an end, close in prayer.**

SMALL GROUP TIME: PRETEENS

Memory Verse

“Jesus replied, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.” John 6:35

*First, write down the verse somewhere preteens can see it. Then, recite the memory verse a few words at a time and have preteens repeat them back to you until you complete the verse.

SAY: Our memory verse this month is John 6:35. It is all about how Jesus is the bread of life... another way to say that is He gives us everything we need. So I am going to say a few words with motions, and then you will repeat after me. Are you ready?

Leader Says: Jesus Replied

Preteens Say: Jesus Replied

Leader Says: I am the bread of life

Preteens Say: I am the bread of life

Leader Says: Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again.

Preteens Say: Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again.

Leader Says: Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty

Preteens Say: Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty

Leader Says: John 6:35

Preteens Say: John 6:35

Great Job! Now, let's try a new challenge with this verse.

Preteen Verse Challenge:

Disappearing Bible Verse

*After the preteens repeat the verse back to you one time, remove/erase/scratch out a word from the verse. Each time a word is removed (choose to remove 3-4 this first time), read the full verse again with the preteens. When the verse disappears, have the preteens attempt to say the full verse together.

SAY: Here's our memory verse. Now, I'm going to erase a word or two at a time, and we'll practice reciting the verse without the missing words. Then, I'll remove even more, and we'll try again. By the end, our verse will have disappeared, and we'll see if we can remember the whole thing!

Making Connections

SAY: It's time to dig a little deeper into what we learned in large group. We learned that we are never too lost for Jesus. Let's think about sheep for a second. When a lost sheep wanders off alone, it is vulnerable to predators. This means another larger animal could come to attack it. This poor sheep is not safe. It also doesn't have someone feeding it. This isn't how sheep were made to live. A shepherd would bring this lone sheep back to the herd — back under his protection where he can fight off predators and where he can feed the sheep. Likewise, Jesus searches for us when our sin causes us to wander away from him. He brings us back to pray to him, read his Word, or to just spend time with him. He loves us this much. Let's talk about it.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does The Parable of the Lost Sheep reveal about God's heart for the rebel, the outcast, the evildoer? How do you tend to feel about these types of people?
2. What does this parable reveal about God's heart for you?
3. Since Jesus longs to rescue sinners, do you think that this parable teaches you that it's okay to keep sinning again and again? Why or why not?
4. Jesus always seems ready to pursue the lost sheep, but sometimes, it can be frustrating for us to see someone we think is "too lost" be forgiven and brought back into Jesus' sheepfold. Why do you think that is? Have you ever felt like someone didn't deserve to be pursued by Jesus?
5. In what ways can we be more like Jesus when it comes to love, forgiveness, and grace?

Group Experiment - Preteens: Jesus Finds Us With One Drop of Love

*Modeling this experiment first may be helpful.

*Prep: If possible, give each preteen his or her own plate. First, have the preteens draw a picture of themselves on their paper plates using markers. Then, fill each plate with an inch or two of water. Next, have the preteens sprinkle glitter onto the water. Lastly, put a drop of dish soap onto each of the preteen's fingertips and invite them to dip their fingers into the glitter water.

*Ask the preteens what they observe. Explain that, just as the glitter hides the pictures they drew of themselves, we also "lose ourselves" when sin creeps into our lives. As they drop soap onto their plates, share the idea that just like the drop of soap, one drop of love from Jesus finds us, too. After all, as followers of Jesus, our real identity is in him.

Science Breakdown:

***Share the science behind our experiment.**

SAY: Water is made up of molecules that stick together and create an energy called surface tension. Glitter does not mix with water, so it sits on top of the water, not breaking the surface tension. Then, when that drop of soap is added, the soap is heavy enough to break the surface tension.

Discussion Questions:

1. Think about how, at first, the glitter clouded your view of the picture you drew of yourself. How does sin, like that glitter, cover up who we really are in Christ?
2. What do people learn from us when we are following Jesus versus when we are making bad choices? Does that matter?
3. How is Jesus like that drop of soap in the science experiment? Remember, the drop of soap broke the surface tension, allowing the glitter to be cleared away so that we could see the picture of ourselves underneath. Does this sound like the Gospel to you? How so?

***When your small group discussion has come to an end, close in prayer.**

TEACHING RESOURCES

Opening Game:

<https://www.rockbrookcamp.com/activities/just-for-campers/play-heads-up/>

Surface Tension Experiment (Preteen Group):

<https://www.fantasticfunandlearning.com/make-germs-scatter-science-demonstration.html>