



Dear Parents:

This page lets you know what your child learned today at church. Included are suggested discussion questions and possible activities that you may use to reinforce the Bible story at home. Please ask your child to share today's story with you. You may be surprised at how much he or she remembers!

TODAY'S STORY: THE CENTURION

God's true people – those who believe in Jesus – are those who recognise the authority of Jesus.

Today your child learned about what it means to have faith in Jesus. Jesus was teaching people about God's Kingdom, and a foreigner – an army officer who wasn't part of God's people – recognised Jesus' power and came to ask Him to heal his servant. The officer displayed a trust in Jesus that even God's own people didn't show. Jesus said that it is only a person's belief that brings him or her into God's Kingdom. Then Jesus told the foreign officer to go home. Because he believed in Jesus, the officer's servant was healed at that very moment.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:

MATTHEW 8:5-13

FOCUS FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN:

"Jesus wants me to believe in Him."

NEXT WEEK'S STORY: THE PARALYSED MAN

(Luke 5:17-26; Matthew 9:1-8)

PRAYER:

Thank you, God, for the good things You do for me each and every day. Help me remember the story of the soldier who believed in Jesus and asked for help for his servant and friend. Help me be like that soldier and faith in You at all times.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

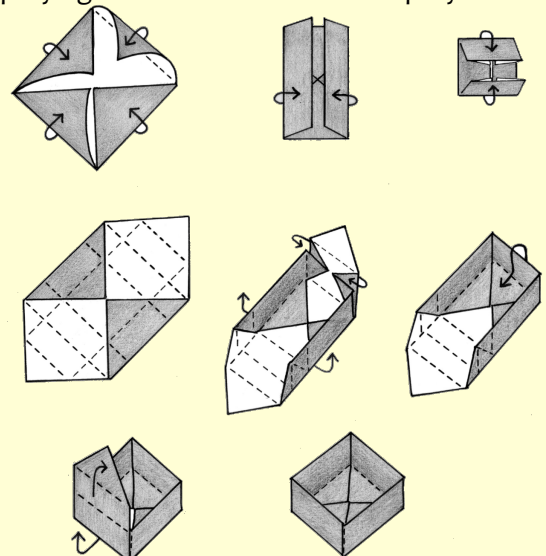
- Who asked Jesus for help?
- Do you think the soldier was afraid to ask for Jesus' help? What did the soldier believe about Jesus?
- What happens when someone in control gives a command?
- What did Jesus say about the soldier's faith?
- Because of the soldier's faith, what did Jesus choose to do?
- When has Jesus answered your prayer in an unexpected way or at an unexpected time?
- What are some things that may keep us from having faith?

SUGGESTED PARENT/CHILD ACTIVITIES

The soldier in today's story believed in Jesus and asked for help for his servant and friend. Discuss ways that you and your children can have faith in Jesus at all times.

Help your child make a "Possibility Box" as you discuss things that seem impossible. Remind your children that all things are possible with God. (Matthew 19:26; Mark 9:23, 10:27)

Decorate the box. On slips of paper, write three things that you would like to see God do: one for yourself, one for the community and one for the world. Place the papers in the box. Commit to praying for God to answer these prayers.



FAITH

"Faith means being sure of the things we hope for and knowing that something is real even if we do not see it." ~ Hebrews 11:1 (NCV)

Use the below activities to discuss the definition of faith and what it means to have faith in Jesus.

Balloon Surfing

~ Several balloons

~ Duct tape

~ Flat-bottomed object (such as a piece of plywood, table top or something else that won't bend)



1. Blow up your balloons and tape them to your sturdy object.
2. Once the balloons are attached, flip the object over so that the balloons are on the floor (preferably carpet) and the board is on top.
3. Sit on a chair and position the balloon object below your feet. Step carefully on the board and let go of the chair.
4. If you have a larger object (such as a table), add people to those standing on the balloons. You will be surprised at how much weight – and how many people – the balloons can hold at once!

Faith in Action

~ One large Ziploc bag

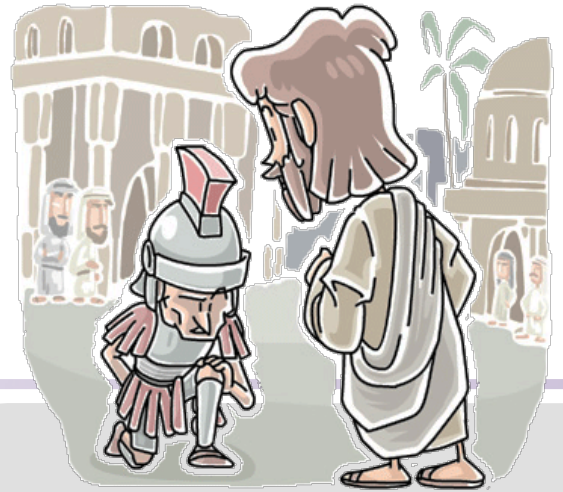
~ Container of water

~ 6 or 7 sharpened pencils

1. Pour water to fill the Ziploc bag halfway, and then zip it closed.
2. Hold the bag over your child's head, and then pull out the sharpened pencils.
3. Very slowly – one at a time – push the pencils through the plastic bag – in one side and poking through the other side. If done correctly, no water should leak out of the bag. The water pressure will seal the bag against the pencils.



NOTE: Sometimes God asks us to do things we don't understand, but we can have faith and trust in God that He will always do what is right. The more we live our lives for God, the easier it becomes to trust. Look at the example in this activity. It's easier to trust that you won't get wet after the 5th or 6th pencil is pushed through the bag. Put your faith in action!



SONGS

My God is So Big

My God is so big

So strong and so mighty

There's nothing my God cannot do for you

Christians Who Will Do Anything

(Sing to the VeggieTales tune "Pirates Who Don't Do Anything")

Chorus:

I am a Christian who will do anything

I believe in God and all He says

And when He asks me to do anything,

I'll just tell Him, "I will do anything!"

Verse 1:

Because I'll choose my words wisely,

And I'll be kind to my classmates

And I'll listen to my dad when he says,

"Clean your room!"

And I'll help my mom when she asks,

And I'll do it without fussin'

And I'll gladly go to church on Sunday morn.

(Repeat chorus)

Verse 2:

Because I'll always share the Good News,

And I'll always help my friends out,

And I'll always find the new kid, and I'll ask him to play ball.

And I'll always read my Bible,

And I'll always say my prayers,

And I'll gladly go to church on Sunday morn.

(Repeat chorus)