



Copy That, Copycat

Solomon Asks for Wisdom

BIG IDEA: God helps me make good choices.

BIBLE BASIS: 1 Kings 2:1–12, 3:1–15

KEY VERSE: “If you love me, obey my commands.” John 14:15 (NIRV)

SCHEDULE

PLAY TIME ACTIVITIES

15–20 minutes

LARGE GROUP LESSON

20–25 minutes

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

25–35 minutes

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LEADER DEVOTIONAL

In 1 Kings 3, God gives King Solomon the chance to have anything he chooses. Anything! But rather than choosing riches, power, or a long life, Solomon chooses wisdom to lead God's people. God, being incredibly pleased by Solomon's request, gives him wisdom along with all of the other stuff. It's like Solomon got to circle the "all of the above" option. That alone reveals God's generous nature. But if you read the few verses leading up to this story, you see that God's generosity goes even deeper than it might first appear. "How so?" you might ask.

In the first few verses of 1 Kings 3, Solomon does nothing but sin against God! He forms an alliance with the enemies of God and marries the daughter of the Egyptian Pharaoh. Then, against God's wishes, Solomon offers sacrifices at the worst of the worst high places! But then, in a seemingly confounding turn of heart, the very next verse says, "Solomon loved the Lord." What? How can this be?

In Larry Osborne's must-get-your-hands-on book, *Spirituality for the Rest of Us*, he explains something that might give us insight into this seemingly spiritual contradiction. He says, "It's not that God doesn't have high standards. His standards are incredibly high. But he understands and makes allowances for something most of us leave out of the spiritual equation — spiritual blind spots."

God, in addition to being generous, is also gracious. For Solomon, his failings were the result of "blind spots." God knows us in a way we can't and sees what we do not see. He also chooses to give ridiculous amounts of grace and forgiveness in the areas that we unknowingly sin. And this is where wisdom comes into play. Wisdom is the ability to discern right from wrong — it reveals our "blind spots."

If you feel like praying for something gutsy this week, request from God the wisdom to see your blind spots. Ask Him to bring light to areas of darkness you might not even be aware of. As scary as it is, I think you'll find it to also be one of the most liberating and soul-healing requests ever.

John Garrison
GO! Contributor



LARGE GROUP SKILL BUILDING

Gestures: Get Your Hands in the Game

For some people, using their hands while talking comes quite naturally. In fact, we probably all know someone who talks so much with their hands you might wonder if they've made up their own version of sign language. For others, not so much. Their hands hang like dead weights as if they were anchors keeping them from floating into space. Regardless of where you fall on the spectrum, harnessing the communication power of your hands is very important. If you use them well, they'll grab the interest of your audience and reinforce your message. On the other hand (pun intended), if you don't have command of your hands, they can betray your message. Here are a few tips to help put your hands to work:

Recognize the communication power of your hands: Wrap your brain around this: your hands are *a/ways* communicating. It is impossible not to say something with your hands (or any of your body, for that matter). The sooner you grasp this, the sooner you can begin making them say what you want.

Avoid distracting gestures: There are certain gestures that can distract the audience and betray your message. Hands hanging low, hands in pockets, hands on hips, and arms crossed can communicate disinterest or nervousness.

Make your hands match your mouth: If you're telling kids how exciting God's Word is, but you have your hands in your pockets, your hands are betraying your message. Your mouth is saying "exciting," but your hands are saying "boring." Choose gestures that match and strengthen your message.

Be spontaneous: For a lot of people, their hands naturally reflect their inner thoughts and emotions. The more comfortable you are with your audience, the more your hands will "speak." So, relax and let them go to work!

Be intentional: Spontaneity is great, but sometimes you need to be intentional about the gestures you make. Look through your next lesson. Choose one or two places to use an intentional gesture. During an intense moment of battle, you might clench your fists. When you're telling the kids about God's enormous love for them, you might spread your hands far apart. Decide what you want to do and practice ahead of time.

2.4 Large Group Lesson | Preschool



UNIT DESCRIPTION

When it comes to telling Bible stories, the copycat is where it's at! During "Copy That, Copycat," preschool kids will be introduced to Otis the cat. Otis is a hand puppet that copies what the children do. As the children act out the Bible story, so does Otis! As the stories unfold, Otis and the preschoolers will learn that God helps them be brave and make good choices.

SET-UP INSTRUCTIONS

- Place the "Otis the cat" hand puppet in the storytelling area. This puppet will be used for all 4 weeks of the unit. Inexpensive cat hand puppets can be found on Amazon as well as other online and local stores.
- Place a smartphone in the storytelling area.
- Print the "Good Choice Pictures" on 8½ x 11 cardstock and place them in the storytelling area.
- Create a "Super Duper Bible Box" and place your storytelling Bible inside. This box will be used every week. See the Resource Folder for details on how to make the "Super Duper Bible Box."
- If using the non-video options for the Topher segments of the lesson, print the Topher's Storytime Rules signs and Topher's Big Idea signs on 8½ x 11 cardstock paper and place in the story time area. See "Getting Started" in the Resource Folder for the printable signs and for more instructions on how to perform the non-video options.
- Note: Any media repeated throughout the unit, such as the Topher videos and the title slide, is located in the Lesson 1 Resource Folder only.

2.4 Large Group Lesson | Preschool



★ LARGE GROUP LESSON

WELCOME AND MUSIC

As children enter the story time area, give them a high-energy welcome — smile, wave, give high fives, and tell them you're glad to see them. For added energy during the transition, play a fun song that the children are familiar with. When the children have all arrived, play one or two upbeat worship songs of your choosing and lead the kids in singing.

Music: Play one or two upbeat worship songs

BIG IDEA AND BIBLE VERSE

Large Group Leader: Hello boys and girls! Today is such a happy day! Do you know why? *(Children respond.)* Today is a happy day because we're at church together! God loves when we come to church and learn about His Bible. In just a little bit, we're going to learn about the Bible with the help of Otis the cat.

Say: Today's true Bible story is going to teach us that **God helps me make good choices.** That's our Big Idea for the day. Let's say it together. *(Repeat Big Idea with children.)* **God helps me make good choices.** It's true! **God helps me make good choices.** In fact, that's what today's memory verse is all about. Let me teach it to you.

*"Be strong (flex muscles)
and brave (power pose with fists on hips).
Do not be afraid (shake head and wag finger "no")...
I will be with you (hug yourself)
everywhere you go (march in place).
Joshua 1:9 (extend hands like you're holding a book)."*

Say: Let's do that together. *(Repeat Memory Verse with children 2 or 3 times.)*

STORY TIME RULES

Say: Wow — nice job! I think you kids are ready for the Bible story. Before we get started, though, I think we should go over our three story time rules.

Video: Play "Topher the Gopher Story Time Rules" video

(Note: Play the "Topher the Gopher Story Time Rules" video or use the Story Time Rules script found in the Resource Folder.)

2.4 Large Group Lesson | Preschool



COPY THAT, COPYCAT INTRO

Say: I think we're ready for Otis to join us. Otis is a little bit shy, though. Maybe if we call to him in a friendly voice, he'll come out. Let's say, "Meow-meow, Otis, meow-meow." (*Say with children. Secretly slip your hand into the cat puppet and make Otis peek out from behind your other arm.*) It's working! Otis is peeking out. Let's say it again and maybe he'll come all the way out. (*Say with children again. When Otis comes all the way out, he has your smartphone in his mouth.*) Oh no, Otis has my phone. (*To Otis.*) Otis, that's not a cat toy. Please give it back to me. (*When you try to take your smartphone from Otis, he will not let go.*)

Say: Otis won't let go of my phone. Maybe he needs to hear our Big Idea for the day. On the count of 3, let's tell Otis, **"God helps me make good choices."** (*Count to 3 and repeat with children. Otis lets go of the phone.*) It worked — God helped Otis make a good choice!

Say: You know — that reminds me of today's Bible story. In our true story, God helps a man named Solomon make good choices. If you're ready to hear that true Bible story, meow like a kitty cat. (*Children meow.*) Great! First, let's get our Bible out of the Super Duper Bible Box. (*Move to the Super Duper Bible Box.*) I need your help getting the Bible out, though. We need to say our special Bible words together. Repeat these special words after me: It's true, it's true, the Bible is true!

Slide: Show the "Solomon Asks for Wisdom" slide

2.4 Large Group Lesson | Preschool



BIG BIBLE STORY — SOLOMON ASKS FOR WISDOM

Say: In the Bible, in the Book of 1 Kings, there was a man named King David. David was a wonderful king who loved God very much. When King David was very old, he said to his son, Solomon, “I’m going to die soon. When I do, obey God’s commands. Make good choices and live the way God wants you to.” Then something very sad happened — King David died. **Let’s make a sad face and bow our heads low.** (*Pretend with children.*) Now let’s see if Otis will copy us. Let’s say, “Copy that, copycat!” (*Say with children, then make Otis copy what the children did.*)

Say: Now that King David had died, his son, Solomon, was the new king. King Solomon also loved God very much. One night, King Solomon was feeling very sleepy. **Let’s pretend to yawn, then go to sleep.** (*Pretend with children.*) Now let’s see if Otis will copy us. Let’s say, “Copy that, copycat!” (*Say with children, then make Otis copy what the children did.*)

Say: While King Solomon was asleep, God spoke to him in a dream. God said, “Ask me for anything you want and I’ll give it to you.” Wow — can you imagine all the things King Solomon could ask for? He could ask for money, or for long life, or victory in battle. **Let’s pretend to swing a sword like we’re in a battle.** (*Pretend with children.*) Now let’s see if Otis will copy us. Let’s say, “Copy that, copycat!” (*Say with children, then make Otis copy what the children did.*)

Say: But King Solomon didn’t ask for any of those things. King Solomon said to God, “Help me know what is right and what is wrong, so I can make good choices and lead your people well.” God was VERY happy with King Solomon’s answer. **Let’s clap 3 times for King Solomon.** (*Clap with children.*) Now let’s say, “Copy that, copycat!” (*Say with children, then make Otis copy.*)

Say: God said to King Solomon, “You could have asked for money, or long life, or victory in battle, but instead, you have asked to know what is right and fair. Because of your wise request, I will give you ALL of these things. No other king will be as great as you.” Then King Solomon woke up from his dream. **Let’s pretend to wake up and stretch.** (*Pretend with children.*) Now let’s say, “Copy that, copycat!” (*Say with children, then make Otis copy the children.*)

Say: Wow — you and Otis did such a great job telling the Bible story! Otis has to leave now. Let’s wave to him and say, “Goodbye!” (*As children wave goodbye, make Otis wave back, then discreetly slip him off of your hand and put him away.*)

2.4 Large Group Lesson | Preschool



MUSIC AND CLOSING

(Encourage the children to stand up. Lead them in a worship song of your choice. Following the song, use the rhyme from earlier to help the children sit down again.)

Music: Play one worship song

Say: In today's true Bible story, King Solomon could have asked for *anything* he wanted. He could have asked for money, or candy, or LOTS and LOTS of toys! But is that what he asked for? *(Children respond.)* No! Instead, King Solomon asked God to help him make good choices. God helped King Solomon make good choices and He helps us make good choices too.

Say: I have an idea — let's practice making good choices for God. I'll give you a situation, then you tell me what you think the good choice is. Let's give it a try. *(Hold up one "Good Choice" picture at a time. Read the corresponding situation below, then ask the children, "What's the good choice you could make?" Lead the children in cheering for each good answer.)*

- When you see a toy you want, but it's not yours.
- When you break your mom's phone, then she asks if you did it.
- When your dad tells you to clean your room, but you want to go outside and play.

Say: When we make bad choices, Jesus still loves us and forgives us. But He doesn't want us to make bad choices. Fortunately, God helps us. When we have a hard time obeying God's commands, we can pray to Him and ask for help. **God helps us make good choices.**

2.4 Large Group Lesson | Preschool



TOPHER'S BIG IDEA

Say: Hey — that's our Big Idea for today! I think we should tell it to our parents when we see them. Maybe we should practice first. *(Appear to be thinking.)* Hmm...who could we practice telling? I know! We could tell our friend, Topher the Gopher. Let's see if we can find him.

Video: Play "Topher's Big Idea Video"

(Whisper.) Uh-oh. It looks like Topher is asleep. I think we should wake him up. When he wakes up, we can all tell him that **God helps me make good choices**. On the count of 3, let's all yell, "Topher the Gopher, wake up, wake up!" *(Count to 3 and yell with kids. Then play "Topher's Big Idea Video 2" or hold up card #2.)*

Topher: Hey, what's the Big Idea?

Children and Large Group Leader: **God helps me make good choices.** *(Repeat the Big Idea several times. When finished, play "Topher's Big Idea Video 3" or hold up card #3.)*

Topher: Wow! That is a Big Idea! Thanks for telling me! Goodbye kids. *(Encourage kids to wave goodbye to Topher as he disappears back into his hole.)*

Large Group Leader: Let's say a prayer together and ask God to help us make good choices. *(Encourage kids to repeat the following prayer after you.)*

Dear God,
I want to love and follow you.
Please forgive me...
When I make bad choices.
Help me do what is right.
Amen.