



Uh Oh Topher

Elijah and the Fireball from Heaven

BIG IDEA: God can do miracles.

BIBLE BASIS: 1 Kings 18

KEY VERSE: “With people, this is impossible. But with God, all things are possible.” Matthew 19:26 (NirV)

SCHEDULE

PLAY TIME ACTIVITIES

10:30-11:00

LARGE GROUP LESSON

11:00-11:30

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

11:30-12:00

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LEADER DEVOTIONAL

During my late teens and early twenties, I had one of the most challenging, albeit best, jobs on earth — I was a camp counselor. The pay was miniscule. (One year we calculated that the counselors earned less than a dollar an hour.) Moreover, the hours were long. And by “long,” I mean that we only got two nights off a week, for four hours each night. So when our nights off rolled around, you can imagine all of the things we needed and wanted to accomplish — laundry, shopping, relaxation, recreation. But most of all, we just wanted to spend every possible moment hanging out and building friendships with the other counselors who had the night off.

One summer, though, I felt convicted to approach my nights off differently. Although they were precious few, I was compelled to give the first of my two nights off every week to God alone. For those four hours, I would spend time praying, meditating, and reading in solitude. As I wrestled with the thought, I couldn’t imagine how I was going to accomplish everything I needed in the four remaining hours a week. Moreover, I was afraid of missing out on all of the fun that the other counselors would be having together. Nevertheless, I gave it a shot.

Predictably, my time each week with God was life-giving. I saw more spiritual growth during that summer than I ever had before. And simply put, I fell more deeply in love with God than I could have imagined. What I didn’t anticipate, though, is that by giving God the first portion of my time, the remainder of my time seemed multiplied. Not only did I have enough time to do everything I wanted and needed, I had an abundance of time. And best of all, there was a divine sweetness that permeated it all. Although I had essentially cut my time of fellowship in half, my connection with the other counselors was twice as deep. Not only was my time with God having a profound impact on me, it was also profoundly impacting those around me.

If you’re like me, you might think you’re too busy to give that much time to God. But in fact, the opposite is true. We’re too busy *not* to give that much time to God. God created us first and foremost to have fellowship with Him, and when that’s missing, everything else suffers. So try something wonderfully dangerous this week — give God the first portion of your day. And not just your spare time. Instead, be radically generous with the time you give Him. You’ll be amazed at how faithful God is when you put Him first.

David Rausch

Go Tell It Founder and Creator



SMALL GROUP SKILL BUILDING

Using Kid-friendly Language

It may be true that we've been washed in the blood of Jesus for the atonement of our sins and the redemption of our souls, but you might want to pause before telling that to a kid. The Christian faith is rich with imagery and vocabulary! To a kid, though, some of it might be confusing, overwhelming, and even frightening at times. If you don't want your kids to look at you like you're speaking Klingon, consider the following advice:

Be mindful of your language. The biggest part of solving a problem is recognizing that it exists. For some of us, we don't even realize that the words we're using with kids are a little advanced.

Develop a kid-thesaurus. No — that's not a dinosaur! Begin developing kid-friendly language to replace some of the bigger words you might use. For example, instead of saying "redeemed," you might say "set free." Instead of saying "washed in the blood," you might say "forgiven of our sins."

Be intentional with new words. Not only is it okay to introduce new words to kids, it's instrumental. Part of developing kids into functioning members of the church is helping them understand the language, but be purposeful with your new words instead of just using them haphazardly.

Don't introduce too many new words too quickly. It can take kids a little bit of time to understand and absorb new words and concepts. If you throw too many new words at them too quickly, they may not remember any of them.

Use the word, define the word, use the word. When you introduce kids to a new word, first use it in its right context. Next, define the word using simple and clear language. Finally, use the word multiple times so kids can really digest it. You may even want to have the kids repeat the word after you so they can really familiarize themselves with it.



☆ PLAY TIME ACTIVITY

THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE

Supplies: None

Directions: Have the children try to perform each of the challenges below. After attempting each one, lead the kids in shouting, "That's impossible!"

Actions:

- Jump and touch the moon
- Clap loud enough for China to hear
- Stomp and cause an earthquake
- Flap your arms and fly
- Spin around faster than a tornado
- Push the wall down with your hands

Say: For people, those things are all impossible. But for God, nothing is impossible. He can do anything. Today we're going to hear a story about something incredible God did. We're going to learn that **God can do miracles**.

Question: What do you think a miracle is?

BIBLE BALANCE (Bible Memorization Activity)

Supplies: Tape (1 roll)

Today's Bible verse:

*"With people (point to self with thumbs),
this is impossible (make big "X" with arms).
But with God (point up),
all things are possible (two thumbs up)."
Matthew 19:26 (extend hands like you're holding a book).*

Preparation: Using painters or masking tape, create a tape line on the floor approximately 10 feet long to make a "balance beam."

Directions: Practice the verse together several times. When ready, challenge the children to cross the tape-line balance beam while saying the verse and without stepping off. For each additional round have the children cross the balance beam using a different method from the list below.

Methods of Movement:

- Giant steps
- Tiny steps
- Backwards
- Hop on two feet
- Sideways
- Bear crawl
- Tippy-toes
- Hop on one foot
- Crab walk

Large Group: Room 207 at 11:00 AM



★ SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

After the large group story time is over, help the children transition into the small group activity time. There are multiple activity options designed to help kids remember the Bible story and Big Idea, discover personal application, and to respond to God through art, prayer, and Bible reading. Offer as many activities as your time and space allows.

MIRACLE OR NOT (Application Activity)

Supplies: None

Say: In today's true Bible story, God made fire come down from the sky. It was a miracle — something amazing only God can do. Let's play a game that helps us think about whether something is a miracle from God or not.

Directions: One at a time, read each item on the list below to the children. If it's a miracle, the children should jump to their feet and shout, "**God can do miracles!**" If it's not a miracle, they should stay seated and remain quiet as a mouse.

- Turning a walking stick into a snake. (Miracle — Ex. 7:8–10)
- Turning a river of water into blood. (Miracle — Ex. 7:20–25)
- Coloring a picture without EVER coloring outside the lines (Not a miracle)
- Making a donkey talk. (Miracle — Numbers 22:21–35)
- Lifting a BIG watermelon over your head. (Not a miracle)
- Making it dark for three days. (Miracle — Ex. 10:21–23)
- Drinking a full cup of juice without spilling any. (Not a miracle)
- Flying in a rocket ship to the moon. (Not a miracle)
- Dividing the Red Sea into two. (Miracle — Ex. 14:21–23)
- Making Jesus come back to life. (Miracle — Matt. 28:5–6)

Question: God can do anything. What do you think He can do for you?

3.2 Small Group Lesson | Preschool



MIXED-UP MIRACLES (Application Activity)

Supplies: “Mixed-Up Miracle” cards (1 set per group)

Directions: There are two sets of cards: verb cards and noun cards. Spread the verb cards in one pile and the noun cards in another pile. Allow the children to take turns drawing one card from each pile. Read aloud the verb and then the noun. The combination will (most likely) create a mixed-up miracle. (Example: Healed bread from the sky) Ask the children if that sounds like something God really did. Continue until all of the cards are gone.

Say: **God can do miracles**, but those miracles seemed like they were mixed up. Let’s try to match them so they tell us about real miracles that God did.

Directions: Hold up and read one verb card at a time, then allow the children to decide which noun card goes with it. (See below for the answer key.) After each card is successfully matched, count to three and have the group say, “**God can do miracles.**”

Verb

Healed (made better)
Divided (split)
Stopped
Raised (made alive)
Rained down

Noun

a sick person
the Red Sea
a roaring lion
Jesus from the dead
bread from the sky

UH OH TOPHER! (Bible Story Review Activity)

Supplies: “Uh Oh Topher” story review page (1 per group), Topher the Gopher character cards (1 per child)

Say: I’m going to read you today’s Bible story again, but there’s a little problem. Topher the Gopher got into the story and chewed up some of the words, then he replaced them with the wrong words. Listen carefully to see if you can hear the wrong words. If you hear something that is wrong, hold up your “Topher the Gopher” card, then say, “Uh Oh, Topher. That’s not right!” Then you can tell me what really happened in the story.

Directions: Use the “Uh Oh Topher” story review page to read today’s story to the children. The page will indicate in bold which words are wrong, followed by the right words. If necessary, help the children remember what really happened in the story.

3.2 Small Group Lesson | Preschool



I'M AMAZED (Response to God Activity)

Supplies: GO! Home Guide (printed on back of coloring sheet, 1 per child), crayons

Directions: Give each child a GO! Home Guide and some crayons or markers. The sheet will have a space for children to draw. Say to the children, "What do you look like when you are amazed? Draw a picture of it." When finished, ask the children to show their pictures and share why they think God is amazing.

Say: When the people saw how God sent fire from Heaven, they were amazed. They probably looked a lot like our pictures. We're going to say a prayer right now and praise God by telling Him why we think He is so amazing.

Prayer: Begin by asking if any of the children would like to pray. Allow any children who want to pray the opportunity to do so. When they're finished, close the prayer by thanking God for doing amazing things for you and the children.

Question: How would you have reacted if you were with Elijah and saw fire come down from the sky?

Question: God made fire come down from the sky. What else do you think God could do?