John 7:37-39
Jesus: Thirst Quencher

Scripture: John 7:37-39

Memory Verse: John 7:38 *"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."*

Lesson Focus: While we will only cover three verses from the gospel of John, these three verses have plenty to teach the kids. Using water, Jesus will teach us how spiritually parched we are and that only He can quench our thirsty souls. But He doesn't only quench this thirst but also empowers believers with His Spirit to reach out and quench the thirst in others. We will challenge the kids to come, believe, and then go!

Activities and Crafts: Coloring Picture of Living Water, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring It Home Discussion for 3rd – 5th.
Craft for 1st & 2nd: Living Water Curly-Q

Starter Activity: Thirst Quenchers

All of the kids have experienced being thirsty. To get the lesson started ask the kids what their "go-to" drinks are to quench their thirst. Share these more unusual options first before finishing the discussion talking about water:

Teachers: Consider bringing in some of these objects to enhance the discussion. *

1) Gatorade -> Comes in many flavors….what's your favorite?
2) Coconut Milk -> Rich in acids that help heal wounds
3) Pickle Juice -> Helps ease muscle cramping

Q: While all of these have their place, what do you think all of the medical experts agree is the best thirst quencher?
A: Just plain old water!

Water is essential for life! You can survive about three weeks without food, but only about three days without water!

One thing that is so great about Jesus is He uses everyday things like bread (John 6) and water (today's lesson) to teach us important truths about Himself. Let's open our Bibles and see how He uses water to teach us in our study today.

Bible Study:

John 7:37: You might remember from last week that Jesus was at a special Jewish feast and made amazing claims about Himself (read **John 7:29-30** again). People were in uproar, because Jesus is saying things about Himself (that He is God) that no one was allowed to be saying (unless it is actually true!).

On this last day of the feast, the Jewish priests would take water from a spring and pour it out on the altar as a memorial for when God provided the people with water in the desert.

Read Psalm 78:12-16: These verses recount some of the amazing things that God did for the children of Israel and v. 15-16 emphasize that the Lord miraculously gave them water to drink as He led them through the desert. * These works of God were to be remembered!

So imagine yourself, a good Jewish boy or girl, watching the Jewish leaders proceed through this water ritual on the last day of the feast, remembering how God miraculously provided water to your great-great-great-grandparents….and then Jesus interrupts the entire procession and cries out, "*Come to Me! This water pointed to Me!*"

Or to put this in a more modern context, imagine you are watching the Super Bowl, something many of us do every year (just like the Jewish folks would attend the feast every year), and at the halftime show the featured artist comes up on stage and cries out something like, "I am God! Come to Me!"

Q: How would you react? You would probably be a little startled and suspicious! And so were the people back then! You see, Jesus is making claims that no one had ever made before. But the difference between Jesus and some freak at the Super Bowl is that Jesus backed up His claims with supernatural signs!

Q: Who does Jesus invite to come to Him in this verse?
A: Anyone and everyone! * But also, anyone and everyone who "thirsts".

Q: What kind of "thirsty" is Jesus talking about?
A: Spiritual thirst of your heart and soul. God designed us with a thirst or yearning for Himself, a "God-shaped hole in our hearts" (see **Eccl. 3:11**). We may try to fill this hole with things of this world, but only He can fill it! *

When we come to Jesus thirsty and make Him the treasure of our hearts by faith, He fills that hole and quenches that thirst! *

John 7:38: Not only are we to come to Jesus, but we are to believe and trust in Him. This isn't the first time Jesus said this. (**Read John 6:35**)
Q: What are His instructions in both of these verses? Come to Me! Believe in Me!

In chapter 6, Jesus showed how the manna given in the wilderness to the Jewish people pointed to Him. He is the Bread of Life which comes from heaven that will satisfy our spiritual hunger! (**John 6:33**)

Now in chapter 7, Jesus shows how the water God gave in the wilderness to the same Jewish people also pointed to Him, the only One Who quenches our spiritual thirst!

Read Isaiah 55:1. Jesus's invitation echoes this one from the prophet Isaiah, except that Jesus Himself is that living water!

As you read the Old Testament (**Teachers:** Consider holding up your Bible with the OT pages in your hand), it is amazing how over and over again what is written in these pages pointed to God's promised Savior, Jesus Christ!

Reread John 7:38. Not only does Jesus quench our spiritual thirst when we come and believe, but something changes inside of us.
Q: What does this verse say happens?
A: Our hearts are changed so that we can then be used by God to quench the spiritual thirst of others!

Q: How many of you have played outside on a hot summer day and gone to your garden hose for a drink? (**Teachers:** Consider bringing in a hose to enhance the discussion) *

Guess what! In one sense, all of us are like hoses! One end of the hose is the output (things we say or do), but the other end of the hose is the input (our hearts). * But the input must be connected to a source. If it is connected to Jesus, then He will be the source and the flow will be His refreshing living water! But if it is connected to ANYTHING ELSE, bad, dirty, phony water will flow! *

When Jesus is the treasure of your heart, not only will this living water flow, but v. 38 says RIVERS or TORRENTS of it will flow!

Q: How many of you have ever been white-water rafting in the mountains? That is amazing, powerful water that flows in those rivers! That is a perfect illustration of the power that Jesus gives to those who are His by faith and trust. By His power, believers will do awesome and amazing things for Him!

John 7:39: This living water believers receive is God the Holy Spirit!

The Bible teaches that when we come and believe in Jesus Christ, not only are our sins forgiven, but God the Holy Spirit comes and INVADES us, dwelling within us and changing us from the inside out.

Q: Who has their home address memorized? What does this address indicate?
A: It refers to the place you dwell, or your home. Well, once we believe in Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes to make His home inside of us! It's like believers become His house and we are His "address"!

Q: But when the Holy Spirit moves in and calls us His home, do you think He is going to just let us stay the way we are? *
A: No! Seeing how filthy we are, He is going to be doing some house-cleaning!

Galatians 5:22 talks about the fruit of the Spirit being love, ***agape*** love. Not fluffy Disney princess love, but joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle, self-controlling love!

This is what will be flowing out of our lives if we are believers in Jesus Christ! It is Jesus's great desire that our lives will be like great, powerful mountain rivers, splashing His refreshment everywhere we go and soaking all those around us with His love.

Key Point: Jesus invites you to come to Him to quench your thirst. First, you must realize you are thirsty. It is not until you come, admitting you are spiritually parched and thirsty, that you will drink and be satisfied. * Then, the Holy Spirit will dwell inside you and empower you to overflow with *agape* love for others.

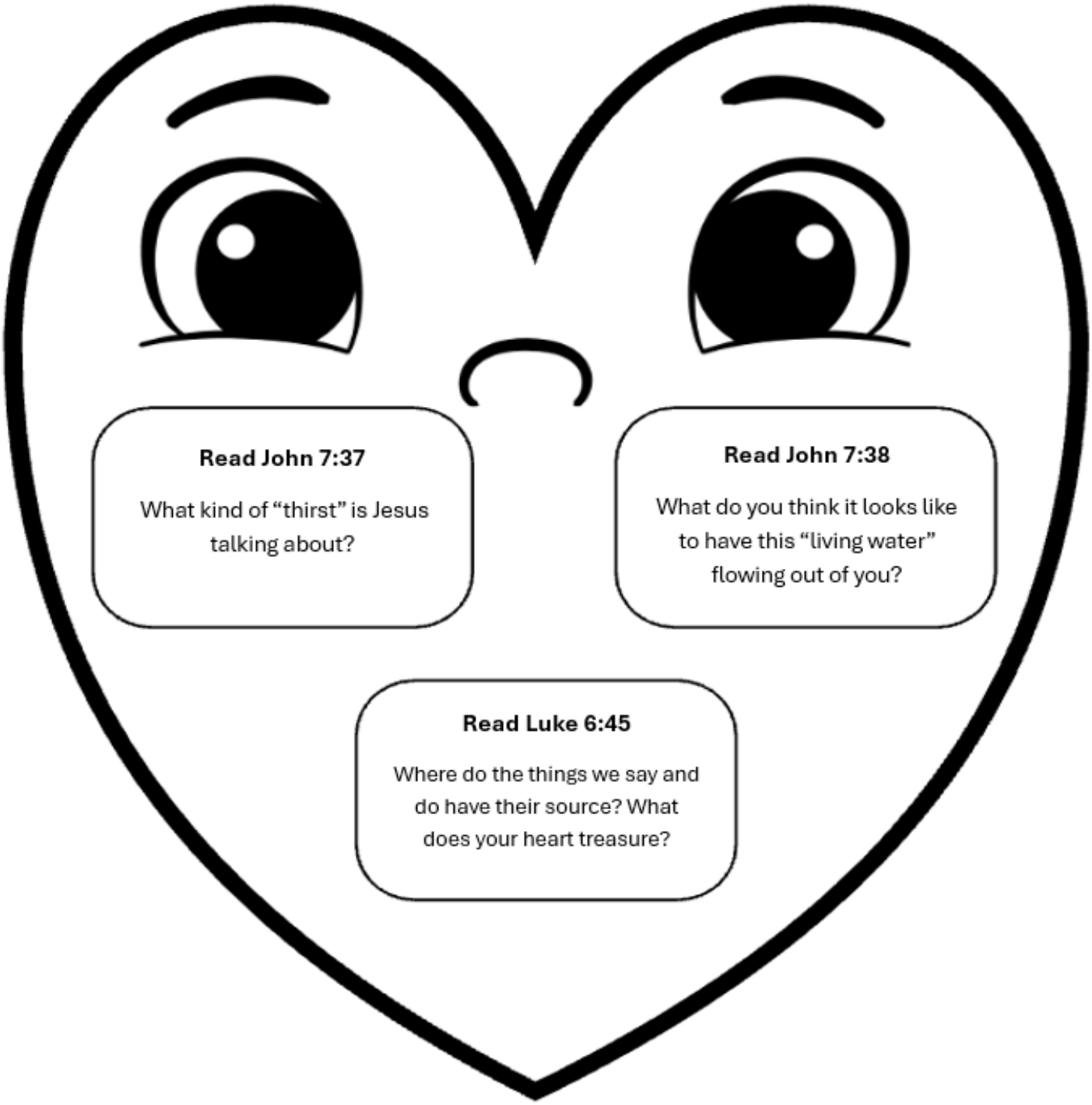
Teachers: We will provide you with a bowl of water and two dry sponges. Describe * how these dry sponges are like us when we are seeking to have our spiritual thirst quenched by things other than Jesus (video games, phones, money, popularity, etc.). Immerse one of the sponges in the water and describe how this is what it is like when we come to Jesus and believe like it says in v. 37.

Q: Which sponge better represents you? If you were thirsty, which one would you go to?

If you have never believed in Jesus, come today and quench your thirst. If you have believed, but you feel that your heart is dry and thirsty, come receive prayer and be filled so that you will leave overflowing with the love of God!

BRING IT HOME

BEHOLD what manner of **LOVE** the Father has bestowed on us,



Read John 7:37

What kind of "thirst" is Jesus talking about?

Read John 7:38

What do you think it looks like to have this "living water" flowing out of you?

Read Luke 6:45

Where do the things we say and do have their source? What does your heart treasure?

that we should be called children of God!

1 JOHN 3:1