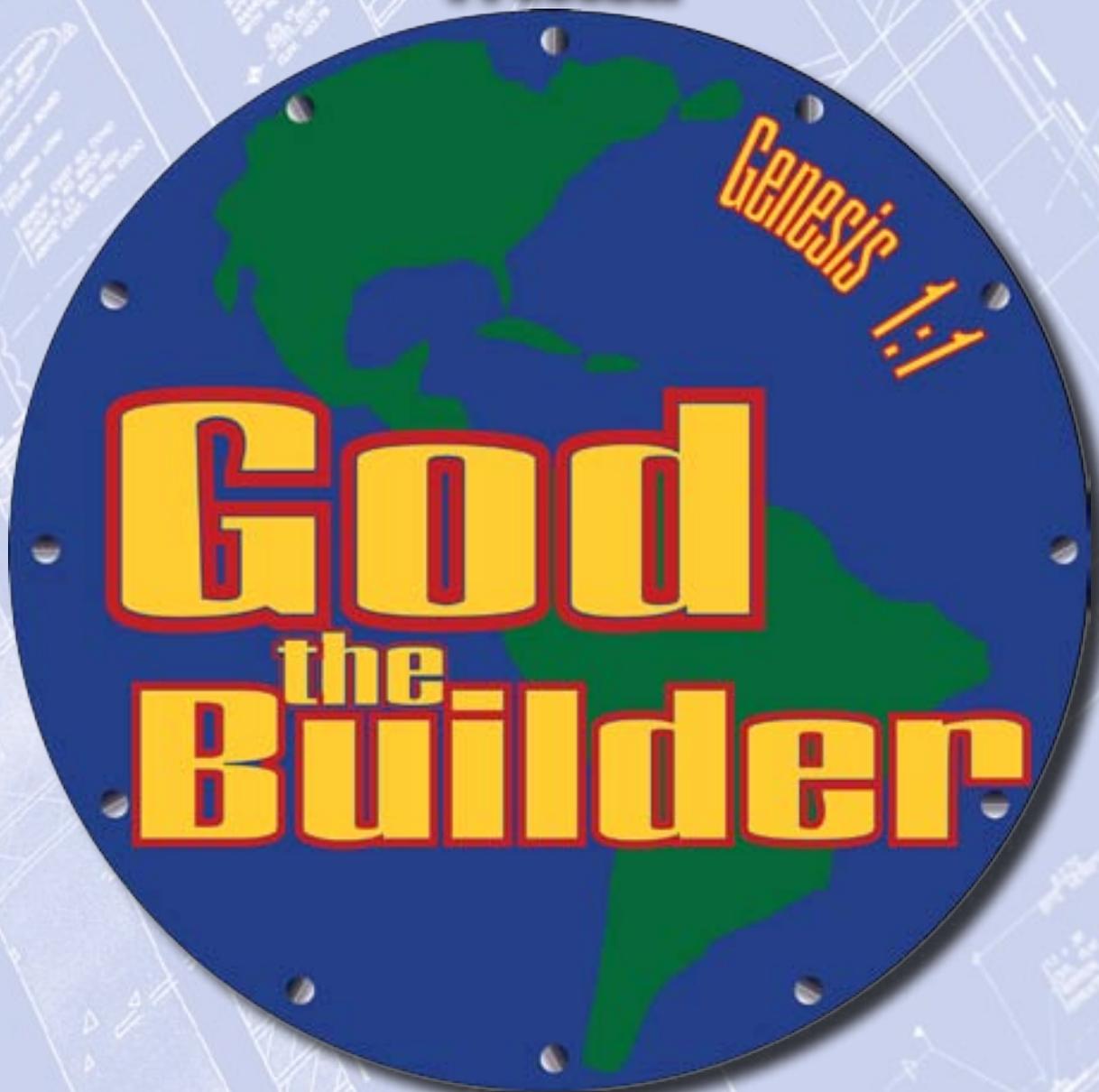


**Whitewater Valley Presbytery
Presbiterio Norte de Quintana Roo
Present:**



**Vacation Bible School
Class: Grades 4-6**

For more information, see http://www.whitewatervalley.org/hm_vbs2011.htm

God the Builder

God the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth

Day One 4th to 6th Grade

THEME:	God created everything, and continues to create.
BIBLE PASSAGE:	Genesis 1:1-2:4
MEMORY VERSE:	"In the beginning God creating the heavens and the earth." Genesis 1:1

Objective

- That the student may recognize that God is the creator of heaven, earth and all that is in it.

Preparation

- Pray that God may give you the wisdom to use the proper words so that the student can understand the word of God.
- Use the appropriate time to be able to read and become familiar with the Bible story and its content.
- Prepare and organize the materials needed for your class.
- Memorize the memory verse in order to set the example to your students.
- Above all, act with love and dedication by showing an attitude of service, understanding, and interest towards the students.

Material

- Read Genesis 1:1-2:4 and Psalm 8
- Attendance list
- Lesson theme pins to mark attendance
- Bulletin / Cork / flannel board
- Creation illustrations
- Blank sheets of paper
- Newsprint
- Crayons and/or markers
- Pictures of pristine landscapes and of polluted areas

Introduction

Greet students as they arrive. Let them know you are glad to see them. Hand out name tags.

Encourage them to continue coming to VBS. Let them know they can invite friends.

Introduce the overall theme of VBS, today's theme and the passage for the day.

Studying the Bible Passage

Ask students to close their eyes (or use a blindfold to cover them) and have them describe what they see. Most of them will agree that they cannot see anything; that everything is dark. Let

them know that this is how it was at the beginning of time, before creation. The only one that existed was God; he has no beginning or end.

God designed and created everything that exists with his great power. He simply ordered things to be done, and they were made out of nothing. God was the only one that could do such a wonder, and now we can enjoy all of God's creation.

Ask the students to take turns reading a Bible verse from today's passage.

God is the great creator, because he created everything around us without anyone asking him to do so. He formed matter, designed time, and everything else according to his will and wisdom. When God created time, he made the day and the night of the first day. He created the sky on the second day (*If you have creation pictures/illustrations you may use them to narrate the story*).

On the third day God created the seas, the land and the trees (*Stick on the board each work of creation as you mention them*).

On the fourth day, God created the sun, moon and stars (*Again, stick on board each work of creation as you mention them*).

On the fifth day, God created the animals that live in the water and all the birds (*If you prefer, ask a student to help you stick the pictures of some animals on the board*).

On the sixth day, God created all the animals of the land. He created those that we have as domestic animals today and wild animals. Do you know the difference between a domestic and wild animal? (*Allow students to answer and give an example of each.*) On this day, God also created the first human beings, which were Adam and Eve. He first created man, and later used a rib from the man to create the woman.

When God completed his creation, he saw all that he created and said that it was very good. Then, on the seventh day, God rested because he was done creating everything that we can see and enjoy today: all the beautiful scenery of the earth, and all the planets that exist.

Not only did God give creation to human beings to live in and enjoy it, but also for us to take care of and preserve.

How do you feel when you think about us being a small part of all that God has created? (*Let students answer*). I feel like God makes human being so special, because we are able to take care of creation. *Ask the students to take turns reading Psalm 8.*

Reflecting on the Bible Passage

When God created the heavens, the earth, and everything that is in them, none of it was polluted. Do you think that is still the case? I don't think so (*Show pictures of polluted rivers and other bodies of water*). How do you see God's creation now? *Allow students to express what they see and what they may know about the topic.*

Humans have not always taken care of God's creation in a responsible way. We need to learn how to take better care of and preserve the environment because it is the house that God has built for us. We should be grateful to God and praise him for his marvelous creation. We should also be responsible by taking care of it, and teaching others to do so by setting an example.

I want us to always remember this: No one told God to make this magnificent creation. God made up God's own mind to construct the entire universe and put human beings to live, be nourished by and take care of the earth.

Do you think that we are fulfilling our job of taking care of God's creation?

How do you think we can take care of the earth? Pay close attention to the student responses. When we act responsibly in creation we are showing that we are grateful to God and that we are fulfilling our role as stewards of creation.

Applying the Bible Passage to Our Live

Do you think that we can help take care of God's creation even though we may be young? Encourage students to express their ideas.

Write them up on a chalk board or piece of newsprint so that the student may feel her/his opinion matters.

If your students do not share, you can suggest ideas such as:

- *Discard trash in appropriate places.*
- *Get into the habit of recycling*
- *Make compost from food that will be discarded.*
- *Avoid contaminating bodies of water (e.g. rivers, lakes, creeks, etc.)*
- *Plant new trees.*
- *Do not burn trash.*
- *Use biodegradable bags.*
- *Recycle and/or reuse shopping bags when visiting the supermarket.*

Every time we throw trash away in the appropriate places and when we recycle what we can, we are contributing to taking care of our environment. Depending on their age, students may not know what recycling means. *Giving them examples of recycling (e.g. newspaper, soda cans, etc.) would be helpful.*

We act responsibly when we go to the beach or to the park, and pick up and throw away our own trash. This way, we keep our parks, rivers, and lakes from getting polluted. When we protect the animals and trees that are on planet earth we help maintain the balance of life. This is really important now, especially with things such as global warming affecting us. We should also avoid allowing trees to be cut in a way that is out of control.

God likes when humans act responsibly and take care of the planet. However, this is not always the case today. That is why we should set the example to take care of our surroundings. *Once again, point to the pictures that you may have of polluted waters or land to emphasize the impact our negligence can cause on the earth. Encourage students to share their thoughts and opinions.*

Optional Activity: *Ask students to make posters to share the Bible lesson with the church. The posters should encourage the congregation to take care of the environment and to praise God for creation.*

Conclusion

Why do humans have to take care of God's creation? Because God is the great builder. God created a wonderful world for us to live in, and gave us the task to take care of everything that is in it.

Emphasize the importance of caring for: bodies of water, animals, and everything that is on planet earth. Explain that if we do not take care of things ourselves, we may suffer the consequences (e.g. polluted water).

Ask the students if any of them can live without water or food. Then ask them to commit themselves to care for the environment so that the generations that come may have a better quality of life. Finish the class by repeating the theme for the day, as well as the memory verse.

Close in prayer.

God the Builder Dios el Constructor

The Potter Shapes the Clay Day Two 4th-6th Grade

THEME:	God shapes our lives according to God's purpose.
BIBLE PASSAGE:	Jeremiah 18:1-6
MEMORY VERSE:	"The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me." Psalm 138:8

Objective

- Students will learn that God shapes our lives according to God's purpose
- Students will understand that they are "wet clay" in God's hands and that God is shaping their lives.
- Students will listen to the story of Jeremiah's visit to the potter and understand how God works in their lives, shaping them to be the best they can be
- Students will recognize that God's work in their lives has a purpose
- Students will identify situations and experiences God has used to mold them

Preparation

- Study both stories in Jeremiah 18:1-6 - Jeremiah's call to visit the potter and the actual visit
- Consider the work of a potter: materials used, process for creating a pot
- Consider ways this analogy can help the students understand how God works in their lives
- Think about the memory verse: In what ways is God "fulfilling his purpose" in your life?
- Pray that the Lord will give you wisdom to share the lesson and help students to understand how God works in their lives

Material

- A couple of pieces of pottery
- If possible, some play dough that has been shaped into some object

Introduction

*Welcome the children. Let them know how glad you are that they have joined you today to continue our journey on **God the Builder**. Be sure everyone has their nametag, and especially welcome to the class any new children.*

Open with a brief prayer (or invite one of the students to open in prayer).

Introduce today's memory verse:

Psalm 138:8 - The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me."

If possible have the verse written on a chalkboard, or dry erase board, so students can read it together several times, and then gradually erase the words to help them memorize it.

Studying the Bible passage

Ask:

- ♦ Has anyone ever made something out of clay or play dough? (*Acknowledge those who raise their hands.*)
- ♦ What kinds of things did you make? (*Take a few volunteers' responses.*)
- ♦ How is creating something from clay or play dough easy? How is it difficult? (*In the discussion at some point you are looking for the idea that when what you are creating is not turning out like you want, then you roll the clay back up and start over*)
- ♦ Let's talk about the difference between clay and play dough: (*Help students to generate a list of the difference between the two mediums.*)

Clay	Play Dough
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Generally brown in color2. Requires the potter to continually keep moist while creating the object3. Generally is <i>thrown</i> (placed) on a continually moving wheel to evenly form the shape the potter wants4. The potter will shape the clay with wet hands, slowly molding the clay into the desired object5. If the potter is not pleased with how the object is turning out, the entire piece is pulled off the wheel and the whole process must begin again.6. The final product is <i>glazed</i> (a special kind of paint used on pottery) to add color and allow it to hold moisture7. Must be place in a <i>kiln</i> (a type of very hot oven) and <i>fired</i> (heated to a certain temperature to permanently hold the shape)8. Pottery can be used for many things: dishes, cups, bowls, vases, and decorations	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Comes in many colors2. Can be used over and over again, so when it is put away, it must be kept in a sealed container so it will not dry out3. The "potter" simply shapes the dough with her hands4. If unhappy with how it looks, just roll it into another shape5. It is never painted6. To harden, just leave out in the air, but it is not really designed for permanent objects7. Hardened objects are only used for decorations and definitely not for any liquid or to eat from

- ♦ Today's lesson, God tells the prophet Jeremiah to go visit the home of a potter, a man who works with clay. After watching the potter work, Jeremiah realizes how God is like the potter and people are like the clay.
- ♦ Now, let's read what the Lord taught Jeremiah at the potter's house. *Read the story aloud twice:*

The first time: Students just hear the story.

Before the second reading say: Listen to the story one more time and think about what lessons did the Lord want Jeremiah to learn from the potter?

Reflecting on the Bible passage

- ♦ Why did the Lord send Jeremiah to the potter's house? (*To learn a lesson about how God's work in our lives is like the work of the potter so he could then share it with the children of Israel*)
- ♦ What did Jeremiah notice the potter doing? (*The potter was working on the wheel, he was shaping the clay with his hands, the clay was marred so the potter reshaped it, the potter was determine to create the best shape for the piece of clay*)
- ♦ Jeremiah makes an analogy (a comparison) between the Lord and the potter, the clay and the children of Israel. How is the Lord like the potter? (*God molds and shapes us; the Lord works in our lives and wants us to be the best we can be; we may not see or understand why things happen in our life until later - when the pot is completed.*)
- ♦ How were the children of Israel or us like the clay? (*We understand that God works in our lives to help us be the best we can be. Sometimes we may not understand why things happen, but we can trust that God is working through that situation to help us grow.*)

Applying the Bible passage to our life

- ♦ Let's think about the list of things that a potter does and see if we can think of what it could look like in our lives for each step of the process:

The Potter's Work	What that could look like in our lives
1. The clay is brown and ugly	1 We have lots of faults (sin) in our lives. No one is perfect.(Ex: <i>cheating, lying, being mean</i>)
2. The potter picks up a clump of clay and makes sure it is very moist to create an object	2. Because of Jesus, God sees what can be good in our lives, so God begins to work in us. (Ex: <i>We confess our sin & ask for God's help</i>)
3. The potter <i>thrown</i> (placed) the clay on the moving wheel and begins to evenly form the shape	3. Difficult situations come (<i>sickness, injury, mean people</i>) and God begins to work in us to help us in the situation (<i>doctor's medicine, discipline from parents</i>)
4. The potter shapes the clay with his wet hands, slowly molding the clay into the desired object	4. Sometimes we have to change - <i>break a bad habit, learn something new, ask for forgiveness</i>

<p>5. If the potter is not pleased with how the object is turning out, so he stops the wheel and pulls off the clay, restarts the wheel and throws the clay again.</p>	<p>5. Sometimes we try to do things ourselves and end up in an even bigger mess (<i>tell a lie or act mean towards someone or don't do as we are told - but we get "caught" & have to fix it</i>)</p>
<p>6. The potter is pleased with his object and decides on the <i>glazed</i> (a special kind of paint used on pottery) to add color and allow it to hold moisture</p>	<p>6. We ask for forgiveness or correct the problem and rebuild relationships. We do what is right and make things better. (<i>tell the truth, fix something we've broken, apologize</i>)</p>
<p>7. The object is placed in a <i>kiln</i> (a type of very hot oven) and <i>fired</i> (heated to a certain temperature to permanently hold the shape)</p>	<p>7. Sometimes, things get even harder, even though we have tried our best; sometimes things get worse before they get better; sometimes it takes more time to get things right. (<i>lose a friendship, family moves, we get sicker</i>)</p>
<p>8. Once it is baked, it is removed from the oven and cooled and this is ready to use.</p>	<p>8. Sometimes suddenly, you just realize that everything is good. You take what you have learned in a situation and apply it in your life.</p>

Conclusion

How does today's Bible verse from *Psalm 138:8 - The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me.* connect to the lesson from Jeremiah? (*The verse expresses the desire of the individual for God to work in his/her life; it's like the words the clay would say to the potter; the person accepts God's work in his/her life, even though things may be difficult. It recognizes that God is working in our lives for a purpose that will bring glory to God.*)

There are three important lessons in today's story:

First, Jeremiah listened to hear what God wanted him to do. What was it that God wanted Jeremiah to do? (Student response: *Go and visit the potter.*) We must always listen for God in our lives and be willing to obey, even when we may not understand.

Secondly, Jeremiah obeyed. He didn't know what God wanted, he just knew that he was to go visit the potter and that God would then give him a message. Sometimes God wants us to do something or something happens and we won't always know why, but it is important for us to follow God's leading.

And thirdly, like the potter, God is molding and shaping our lives - through good and sometimes bad things - to help us become God's servants. We must trust that God knows what will help us become the best we can be.

Let's close in prayer: *(You can either pray yourself or ask for a volunteer. If you focus on this lesson, you may want to pray for ears that listen for God's voice, courage to follow God's lead, and acceptance of what God plans for our lives.)*

God the Builder

The Spirit of God Breathed Life into the Dry Bones of the People of Israel

Day Three

4th to 6th Grade

THEME:	God creates hope and new life in the midst of desperation and death.
BIBLE PASSAGE:	Ezekiel 37:1-14
MEMORY VERSE:	"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

Objective

- That the students recognize that God gives life to what is dead, and that we find hope and new opportunities only in him.

Preparation

- Pray that God may give you the wisdom to use the proper words so that the student can understand the word of God.
- Use the appropriate time to be able to read and become familiar with the Bible story and its content.
- Prepare and organize the materials needed for your class.
- Memorize the memory verse in order to set the example to your students.
- Above all, act with love and dedication by showing an attitude of service, understanding, and interest towards the students.

Material

- Attendance list
- Lesson theme pins to mark attendance
- Bulletin or Cork or flannel board
- Pictures or illustrations of human skeleton, muscular system and of the human body.
- A tunic made out of fabric or crepe paper.
- Posters
- Magazines (to cut pictures out for the posters)
- Glue
- Crayons and/or markers

Introduction

Greet students as they arrive. Let them know you are glad to see them.

Encourage them to continue coming to VBS and that their attendance is very important. Let them know they can invite friends.

Introduce the overall theme of VBS, today's theme and the passage for the day.

Studying the Biblical passage

It is recommended that the students sit in a semi-circle. Ask students to take turns reading verses of the passage.

The Bible tells us that many years ago a prophet called Ezekiel had a very strange experience. God gives him vision that is a bit unusual. You all know that our bodies are made up of many different parts. (Show them the picture of the human skeleton) Some of the parts of the body are called bones. Do you know what they do? They give structure and support to our body. Another part of our body is our muscular system. (Show them a picture) Our muscles help our body move.

In this picture we can see the circulatory system, which provides nutrition to all the parts of our body and allows them to have the energy to work normally.

These are some of the parts of the human body. When a part of the body is not working right it can cause problems. Just imagine if you broke a bone or strained a muscle. It would hurt a lot and you would not be able to do things as easily as you are used to.

If you opted to act out the story, you can invite a student to play the character of the prophet and ask her/him to wear the tunic. You can guide the student to act out the parts as you narrate the story. Another option would be for you to play the role of the prophet. If you choose to do this, where the garments from the beginning of the class and introduce the character of the prophet in this way. The rest of the class can represent the multitude that God lifted up from the dry bones.

During the time of this story, many people dressed in tunics like this. One day God took the prophet Ezekiel to a valley. A valley is an open and very wide place. Let us make pretend that this is that valley. *You can spread the bone pictures on the floor or use/create toy bones.* The valley was full of dry bones. The prophet was walking through this valley noticing that it was full of dry bones. God asked him, "Son of Man, can these bones live?" The prophet responded "O Sovereign Lord, you alone know." God ordered him: "Speak to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! God says that he will give you life, will cover you with flesh and skin and you will live again. Then you will know that God is Lord.'" When the prophet began to say these words, the bones obeyed and began coming together *(With someone's help, pick up the "bones" on the floor and show the pictures of the entire skeleton, muscular system, and human body)* until they formed skeletons just like this one and then muscles were formed like we see in this picture. This continued until the human body was formed like this one. But it wasn't just one body that was formed, but enough to have an army. God explained this vision to the prophet. God told him that the bones represented the people of Israel, who felt like they had no hope, and were very sad. However, God was determined to give them a new life and new hope. He demonstrated this by giving the prophet the vision of the dry bones and adding a message of hope for his people.

You may feel sad and without hope just like the people of Israel. God wants to give you a new hope so that you may no longer be sad. God is more interested in you than you imagine. What you say, think, and feel is really important for God. God wants you to know that, and that you acknowledge him as the only God and trust in him fully. He is God the builder, and the one who restores lives.

Reflecting on the Biblical Passage

It must have been weird, or even scary, to be in a place like the one Ezekiel was in, and see so many dry bones, right?

Perhaps it may be scary for some of us to have an experience like this and be in a place full of bones. It truly must have been a gloomy experience.

However, Ezekiel was very obedient to God. The Bible does not say that the prophet was afraid or that he no longer wanted to see the vision. He spoke to the bones just as God ordered him to, and he was able to see how the bones began coming together, coming to life, and forming many human beings. This must have been an impressive experience for the prophet. He was witnessing the building of life from bones that were completely dry. Even though it was a vision, it was something that no one had ever experienced.

God gave a message to his people through that vision. It was a message of life and hope, because the people felt lost and without hope. God gave them a reason to feel animated to continue marching forward. God tells Israel that he is willing to give them a new life.

If you have felt sad because of something that has happened to you, only in God can you find a new happiness. He is willing to give to you a new life.

God is not only the builder, but he also rebuilds our feelings and our very life. He does not want us to be sad. God is willing to breathe new life into us.

Just like the prophet, we can be witnessed of the marvelous work of God in our own lives. All God wants is for us to trust him, and then he will do his perfect will in our life.

Applying the Bible Passage to Our Lives

God is very interested in knowing how his people feel, what they think and what they say. That is why he had to show the prophet a vision of dry bones. Although the message may be a bit strange for us, it brought a message of hope, new life and new joys to the people.

The people should only trust in God, the builder of life.

If you have felt very sad just like the people of Israel, you should put your trust in God and he will give you joy. It does not matter what may have caused you to feel sad, God is capable of rebuilding those things that may be dry or have no life.

The most beautiful thing about this message is that God is willing to give new life, regardless of whether we ask for it or not. He wants to do a marvelous reconstruction in our life to show us that he is God.

Optional Activity: Ask students to make posters to share today's story with the church. The posters can demonstrate the ways in which God give hope in a world that can be as devastated as a valley full of dry bones.

Conclusion

If you have experienced sad moments remember that the God truly exists. God is the builder of the heavens and the earth and can give new life.

Who is capable of giving life? Only God. Let us put all of our trust in him. When you feel sad, afraid, or when you feel there is no hope, know that only God can help you. God can give you new hope and new joy.

God wants you to trust in him always. Just like he cares for the people of Israel, he also cares for you. Whatever you think, feel, and say is very important to God. God is always willing to rebuild our lives.

Do you want to be happy? God wants to help you. It doesn't matter what may have happened in your past or what people may have done to you that affected your life. God is the only one capable of changing your circumstances and fill you with life and hope.

Only God is capable of bringing life where there was none before.

Finish with prayer.

God the Builder Dios el Constructor

The wise build on the Rock Day Four 4th - 6th Grade

THEME:	God creates faithful followers.
BIBLE PASSAGE:	Matthew 7:24-29
MEMORY VERSE:	"The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone." Psalm 118:22

Objective

- Students will learn how parables teach us lessons about following God.
- Students will understand that they build their faith on Christ, our cornerstone
- Students will understand and learn the memory verse of Psalm 118:22
- Students will learn the parable of the wise and foolish builders and understand how it applies to their lives

Preparation

- Read today's memory verse (Psalm 118:22) and reflect on how Jesus fulfilled this prophesy.

Material

- Read the parable of the wise and foolish builders (Mathew 7:24-29) and consider ways people can be wise and foolish in their lives
- Pictures of some elaborate sand castles. You may see <http://www.popularmechanics.com/technology/engineering/gonzo/4279810>
- Prepare two comparison charts: one for the wise and foolish builders; the second with "If we are wise / If we are foolish" with the rows labeled the same.
- Prepare the memory verse into four sentence strips
 - Strip 1 = The stone
 - Strip 2 = that the builders rejected
 - Strip 3 = has become
 - Strip 4 = the chief cornerstone
 - Strip 5 = Psalm 118:22

Introduction

Welcome the children. Let them know how glad you are that they have joined you today to continue our journey on God the Builder. Be sure everyone has their nametag, and especially welcome to the class any new children.

Open with a brief prayer (or invite one of the students to open in prayer).

Ask the children:

Have any of you gone to the beach and built a sandcastle? *(Acknowledge who raise their hands, perhaps allowing a few to share their stories).*

What is the most difficult thing about building sandcastles? *(Possible responses: getting the sand to the right consistency - moist but not too wet; building not too close to the water so the waves won't knock it down; keeping others from wrecking it)*

If you build a fabulous castle on the beach, in all likelihood, when you return tomorrow to the beach, what will you find? *(It will be gone or at least partially destroyed) Why? (The tide will have come in and destroyed it; someone could have knocked it down; the wind and water erode it.)*

[If you have pictures to show of sand castles, say, Look at these elaborate sand castles. I bet it took a lot of time and talent to build them, but it's kind of sad, because they aren't going to be standing for very long. How come? (They aren't going to last forever. Soon they will collapse.

Would you ever consider building a house on sand? Why? *(No. It's not solid enough. It isn't going to stay in place because of the tide; it will not be strong enough against the wind and waves.)*

Studying the Bible passage

Today's lesson is a parable. Does anyone know what a parable is? *(Students respond. Fill in any missing information to be sure students understand that a parable is a short story that teaches a special lesson or truth. Jesus often told parables to help people better understand how to live their lives according to God's truths.)*

In the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 7 verses 24 to 27, Jesus tells the parable of the wise and foolish builders. Let's listen to what Jesus tells us, *(Have the students read the parable aloud.)*

Does anyone know what the purpose of a foundation is when you build a house? *(Student response or you tell...the foundation is the base of a house. If it is weak or crooked or poorly made, the house will collapse. If the foundation is not strong, it will not keep the building up, especially in difficult weather.)*

Let's make a chart and compare the two men who were building houses. *(Using chart paper or having it drawn on a dry erase board, turn to the chart and get students' responses for each category.)*

	The Wise Man	The Foolish Man
Built house on...	<i>Rock</i>	<i>Sand</i>
Bad weather	<i>Rain came down Streams rose Wind blew Everything beat on the house</i>	<i>Rain came down Streams rose Wind blew Everything beat on the house</i>
What happened to the house?	<i>House did not fall</i>	<i>House fell</i>
Why did that happen?	<i>It was built on a foundation of rock</i>	<i>Its foundation was sand, so it fell with a great crash</i>

Reflecting on the Bible passage

Remember our definition of a parable (a short story that teaches a special lesson or truth. Jesus often told parables to help people better understand how to live their lives according to God's truths.) I wonder what Jesus is trying to teach us with this parable. *(Pause for students to ponder this thought.)*

I've got an idea, let's make a new chart. This time, let's think about what the parable could be saying to us about how we live our lives and what is most important to us.

	If we are "wise"	If we are "foolish"
Built house on... <i>(What would be our life's foundation - the part of the house that holds <u>us</u> up - what in our lives keeps us focused and centered?)</i>	<i>The Bible; Jesus' words; faith; trust in God who will guide us</i>	<i>What everyone else is doing; what society says is right; what is popular; what feels good; what makes me better than someone else; focus on possessions and things</i>
Bad weather <i>(What are things that make life difficult - "storms" in life?)</i>	<i>Illness, death of someone we love, meanness of others, people being unfair or unkind, accidents happen, difficult situations come our way</i>	<i>Illness, death of someone we love, meanness of others, people being unfair or unkind, accidents happen, difficult situations come our way</i>
What happened to the house? <i>(When those "storms" happen, how does it affect our lives?)</i>	<i>Faith gives us courage; the Holy Spirit gives us strength, we get through the tough time and are stronger; we trust God will help us to grow and to learn no matter what happens</i>	<i>We feel alone. People leave or betray us. Others take advantage of us. People get hurt. What is popular changes.</i>
Why did that happen?	<i>Like with the potter in the recent lesson, we learn and grow regardless of the situation; we know that God is with us and leading us; we are able to trust that God will help us in any situation and use it for God's glory</i>	<i>Without a firm foundation in our lives, there is nothing to hold onto. Popularity is like sand; it is always shifting. If we live to please others or ourselves, we will eventually be disappointed.</i>

This takes us to today's Bible memory verse which comes from Psalm 118:22 and reads, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone."

This verse was a prophecy. (A statement in the Old Testament that foretells a future event, in this case, it tells about something that Jesus will do.) In the New Testament in the book of Ephesians, chapter 2, verses 19-20, the apostle Paul wrote that this prophecy was fulfilled in the death and resurrection of Christ. Paul said believers are "...fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone."

Do you know anything about the importance of a cornerstone on a building? (*Student responses, but lead them to these thoughts: it is set at the foundation of the building; all other bricks are built off of it, so if it is crooked or broken or misaligned, the building will collapse; sometimes, people put time capsules in them - containing important artifacts from the time the building was built; often, the cornerstone has the date or some other inscription on it. It is the most important part of a building.*)

So let's look more specifically at our memory verse and see how it relates to Jesus:

(Put up Strip 1) **The stone (was Jesus)**

(Put up Strip 2) **which the builders rejected** (*refers to the Pilate and the Pharisees and those who crucified Jesus*)

(Put up Strip 3) **has become** (*by Jesus' resurrection*)

(Put up Strip 4) **the chief cornerstone."** (*the basis of all we believe, live, and do.*)

(Put up Strip 5) **Psalm 118:22**

Let's practice our memory verse together. (*Say it once with all strips showing, then repeat, taking down the first strip, then the second, etc, until the entire verse is memorized.*)

Applying the Bible passage to our life

How can Jesus be our cornerstone? (*He gives us wisdom through the Bible; we can follow his teachings; we can pray and ask Jesus to help us each day in the things we do and say.*)

So, what can we do to show that Jesus is the cornerstone in our lives? (*We can read and study the Bible; we can memorize scripture and try to use it in our daily lives; we can come to church and Sunday School; we can treat others as Jesus commands - love them, serve them, help them. We can be kind to others, even if they are not kind to us. We can be helpful in our families, with our friends, at school, and wherever we are.*)

Conclusion

What is our memory verse for today? (*"The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone."*)

How does this verse related to the parable of the wise and foolish builders? (*The parable reminds us that we must build our lives on ... Jesus, the Bible, our faith, scripture, etc. That if we trust in ourselves, we will always be standing on shaky ground and other things can easily knock us down. When we trust Jesus, our life has a firm foundation that will help us in whatever we do or whatever situation we find ourselves in.*)

Close with prayer.

Dios el Constructor God the Builder

We are the Body of Christ Day Five Grades 4-6

THEME:	God builds the Body of Christ, the Church
BIBLE PASSAGE:	I Corinthians 12: 12-27
MEMORY VERSE:	"So in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others." Romans 12:5

Objective	That the students may:
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn the importance of fellowship, unity and harmony with their classmates.• Identify attitudes that cause division among people.• Understand that there can be unity within diversity.• Pray that God may give you the wisdom to use the proper words so that the student can understand the word of God.• Use the appropriate time to be able to read and become familiar with the Bible story and its content.• Prepare and organize the materials needed for your class.• Memorize the memory verse in order to set the example to your students.• Above all, act with love and dedication by showing an attitude of service, understanding, and interest towards the students.
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance List• Class theme pins to mark attendance• Tortoise and hare masks• Copies of the script below

Introduction

Greet students as they arrive. Let them know you are glad to see them.

Introduce the overall theme of VBS, today's theme and the passage for the day.

Studying the Biblical Passage

If you choose to act the story out, make two masks: one of a tortoise, and another of a hare. Make copies of the script and hand them out to the students that will help you out in the skit.

(See script at the end of the lesson)

We can see in this story how important it is to work as a team without allowing rivalries or being jealous. We can apply this to our own lives. Things will be better for us if we seek unity and teamwork in everything that we do.

Ask the students to take turns reading a verse from today's Bible passage.

Reflecting on the Biblical Passage

Do you know what it means to work as a team? Allow students to respond and make write down their responses.

I would like for you all to remember the story of the tortoise and the hare. At first they acted in a selfish way. Then they realized that sometimes there are moments that we cannot overcome some things by ourselves and that there may be some consequences for not working as a team. After thinking about it, they raced again as a team and were able to have better results. They were able to work harder toward their goals. They saw how important it was not to be selfish and to have a spirit of cooperation with each other.

If we focus on the human body like the Bible passage does, we can see how there is perfect unity between its members. Division and selfishness among the members of the body does not exist. They all work together for the well-being of the entire body.

This lesson teaches us that we should not be selfish. We should pay attention to the needs of others as well. That way we can have healthy and happy lives.

God compares the church to the human body and calls it the Body of Christ.

Do you believe we are doing a good job of taking care of the unity of the church?

Applying the Bible Passage to Our Lives

It is important for us to know that in the church we are all different. We have different roles and jobs. However, we should always work towards the unity and well-being of all people.

Ask the students to mention certain attitudes that cause division or arguments among people in general or in families.

If the students do not respond, encourage them, and give some examples.

- *Lies*
- *Selfishness*
- *Jealousy*
- *Arguments*

Ask them to mention attitudes that promote unity. For example:

- *Speak with truth*
- *Generosity*
- *Show interest and love for others*
- *Practice patience*

Do you think we can work for unity in the church even if we are young?

We shouldn't only work for unity at church, but also in our homes and schools. Wherever we may be, we should always promote unity. We should always seek to serve others and work as a team.

Optional Activity: *Break students up in small groups (you can have only one group if it is a small class). Ask them to do a skit on the topic of unity. The skit can take place in a school, church, household, etc. The purpose of the skit should be to emphasize today's lesson from the Bible passage and the story of the tortoise and the hare. The group(s) should present the skit for the rest of the class. If there is only one group, the class may present the skit in front of other classes in the church (with permission from the teacher of the other class).*

Conclusion

God is the great builder, and created a beautiful world for us to live in. We have the responsibility of taking care of creation and everything that is in it. God also wants more commitment for his children to learn how to live in harmony with each other.

Why is it important for the church to seek unity and harmony among its members? Because, it makes God happy. God sees the church as the body of Christ and always wants it to be in unity.

God wants to see his people living in peace, love and taking care of each other. By doing this, we can show the rest of the world that we are God's children.

We should think about how we act and see how we act. Let's choose to always act in unity and harmony with those that are around us no matter where we are: Church, school, home, etc.

We should defeat the selfishness, and arrogance that causes so much damage to the church and everywhere else. We should learn how to work in unity and harmony as we seek to do what's best for the group, before thinking of ourselves.

It's not easy to do, but it's the best way to go. This way we can construct healthy relationships wherever we are.

Express to the students your appreciation for them to come this week. Invite and encourage them to continue participating in the ministries of the church.

Finish with prayer.

THE TORTOISE AND THE HARE

Narrator: Today I will tell you a story of something that happened in a forest. In this forest there was a tortoise and a hare that were always arguing about who was the fastest.

Hare: Tortoise, I am faster than you are.

Tortoise: That's not true, I'm faster than you.

Hare: Ok, well there are some friends here with us (pointing to the rest of the class). Let them tell us who is faster.

Tortoise: Yes, tell the hare that I'm faster. You know what? Let's race to see who is fastest!

Hare: Ok, tortoise. We'll race, but I already know that I'm going to win.

NARRATOR: They agreed on the route they were going to take for the race. As soon as the race began, the hare shot out quickly. After a while, the hare noticed that she was far ahead and decided to stop and rest. The problem is that the hare fell asleep. Even though the tortoise was walking slowly, it caught up to the hare and past her, and ended up winning the race. This teaches us that those who are steady win the race.

Tortoise: I WON! I WON!

Hare: Hey, what happened? NOOOOO!! I can't be! I fell asleep and the tortoise won the race! It's not fair!

Tortoise: You see, hare? I told you I was faster.

Hare: No, I really lost the race because I was too confident and never believing that you could win.

Tortoise: You thought that you were going to beat me.

Hare: Yes, give me another chance. Let's race again.

Tortoise: Ok, hare.

Hare & Tortoise: On your marks, get set, go!

NARRATOR: The hare ran from the very beginning and didn't stop. The hare won by a landslide. This teaches us that those that are quick and aggressive beat those that are slow and stable. But the story doesn't end here. After the race ended, the tortoise stopped to think about what just happened. The tortoise came to the conclusion that there was no way of beating the hare in speed. The way the race was set up, the hare was always going to win. So, the tortoise decided to race the hare once again.

Tortoise: Hey, hare! Give me another chance and I'll show you that I am fast.

Hare: Ummmm, let me think about it. Well, ok. I'll give you another chance.

Tortoise: But now we will follow a different route. We will go through the river in this new route.

Hare: Ok, no problem. Ready, set, go!

NARRATOR: The hare ran as fast as she could until she reached the river. The river was very wide. Standing by the river, the hare asked:

Hare: Now what do I do?! I can't swim!

NARRATOR: Meanwhile, the tortoise got to the river, swam across and continued her own pace. The tortoise ended up winning the race. This teaches us how we can identify the advantages that we may have in a race. In this case, the tortoise knew how to swim, which is why she chose to include the river in the new route. The tortoise took advantage of this and ended up beating the hare in the race.

The story doesn't end here. As time passed the tortoise and the hare became very good friends. They both realized that they were good competitors. They decided to race again. But this time, they would race as a team. In the first part of the race, the hare carried the tortoise until they got to the river. Then, the tortoise carried the hare on its shell across the river. Once they got across the river, the hare once again carried the tortoise until they got to the finish line. They were able to get to the finish line in a record time. They were happier than they had been when they won the races individually.

Hare: This teaches us that it is good to be very talented and have great individual skills. But, unless we are able to work with others and use the skills of each other...

Tortoise: We will not be as good as we can. There will always be situations for which we will not be prepared, but that others can handle better.

NARRATOR: It's important to see that neither the tortoise nor the hare abandoned the race.

Hare: I saw what I did, recognized my mistakes and decided to work harder after I had failed.

Tortoise: Once I saw that speed was my weakness, I decided to change my strategy and take advantage of my strength as a swimmer.

Tortoise and Hare: These races helped us see that if we work together we will have better results!

NARRATOR: When we go through challenges in our life, there are going to be times that it's better to take it easy and trust ourselves. There are going to be other times when we have to make a stronger effort. There will be other moments that it may be better to change our strategy and try something different. However, the best answer to challenges may be to join forces with someone

else. The lesson of the story is that we should stop competing against each other, and instead join forces with someone to overcome a problem, so that we get better results.

Tortoise and Hare: We all have races to win ahead of us!

Tortoise: There are many hares!

Hare: There are many tortoises!

Tortoise and Hare: AND MANY GOALS TO REACH!!