

Agua Viva / Living Water

Noah built an Ark

Day one

Adults

THEME:	God uses water to teach us about obedience
BIBLE PASSAGE:	Genesis 6:11-22 (optional: Genesis 7:11-12, 8:6-13, 9:8-16)
MEMORY VERSE:	"Noah did everything just as God commanded him." <i>Genesis 6:22 (NIV)</i>

Objective Preparation

The adults will know about the love and mercy of God.

- Pray asking the Lord to give you wisdom, understanding and the right words to teach the lesson. Pray for the Holy Spirit to work in the hearts of those who will be listening.
- Read Genesis 6:9-22, 7:1-24, 8:1:22 and 9:8-16, so you may have a better perspective of what happen before and after the flood. Also so you have a better perspective of God's mercy and how much He dislikes sin.
- Read and study your lesson in Genesis 6:9-22, 7:1, 4, 5, 10, 17, 18 and 23.
- Read the cultural and Biblical background.
- Don't forget to have your Bible with you.
- Practice the lesson so you can measure the length of the class.
- A photocopy for each student of the worksheet.
- White sheets of paper, pencils, and pens.

Material

Biblical and cultural background.

First, consider the fact that we are talking about the first book of the Bible: Genesis. Genesis means "origin" or "beginning". It's the book that narrates the beginning of everything. Genesis proclaims the only and eternal God, creator of all that exists. This book establishes from the beginning the relationship God had with human beings. Human beings had been created by Him and had been trusted to rule the earth. God wanted goodness and happiness for people, but also wanted obedience and loyalty. Genesis also talks about the origin of sin and about suffering when one prefers to do his/her will instead of God's will. Genesis also tells us how God acts in history with the purpose of redeeming human beings.

You will discover in Genesis chapters 6:9-11, 7 and 8, that the earth was no longer the perfect paradise that God had created. Soon humanity had forgotten God and there was only evil in their hearts and the intention of doing wrong. But there was a man named Noah, whose name in Hebrew means "rest", who worshiped God with his family. The Bible says that Noah was a righteous man, blameless, perfect in his generations that lived according to God's will. When the Bible says that Noah was perfect in his generations, not only is it referring to his descendents (Shem, Ham and Japheth), we must consider Noah's ancestry: Noah's father -Lamech, Noah's grandfather

Methuselah, and his great grandfather Enoch who walked with God and was taken away by God (Genesis 5:24). Noah is a descendant of Seth, son of Adam. When Enoch was born to Seth, "People began to call on the name of the Lord" (Genesis 4:26).

God is faithful and keeps His promises. But He also punishes sin because He is just and Noah's story is a clear example of it.

Introduction

- *Greet the group. Encourage them to greet one another.*
- *Meanwhile hand out nametags to the students and write their names on a list.*
- *Invite one of the students to give thanks to God for the opportunity of being together and also ask God to give them understanding and open up their hearts and minds so they may understand God's teaching for the day.*
- *Practice the memory verse. "Noah did everything just as God commanded him." Genesis 6:22. Encourage students to look for the memory verse in the Bible. Invite students to look up the bible passage in their Bibles.*

Studying the Bible passage

- *Divide the group into teams.*
- *Ask the students to look up in their Bibles the following passages: Genesis 6:9-22, 7:1, 4, 5, 10, 17, 18 y 23. Each team reads a verse out loud until all verses are read.*
- *Ask the students about Noah's story: Do they know it? What's the teaching of the story?*
- *Give each team a white sheet of paper and pencils. Ask each team to read the Bible verses and write the teaching of the verses and their application for today.*
- *After a few minutes, ask all teams to share with the rest of the class what they discussed and learned.*

The Bible tells the story of a man called Noah. Noah lived in a place and time when no one knew anything about boats, ships, arks or any of the sorts. The place where he lived was in fact a dry place, but God asked Noah to build an ark. Did Noah build an ark? How long do you think it took Noah and his family to build the ark?

The word of God says that Noah was a good man; he was righteous and perfect in his generations, he walked with God and always obeyed Him. Among the people of his time, only he and his family lived according to God's will. Noah's family was his wife, his three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth, and their wives.

In those days the people had become corrupt and the earth was full of violence due to the wickedness of people. God was sad and told Noah: "I've decided to wipe out people for the earth is full evil and violence. I will destroy the earth with all the people in it. Build an ark with cypress wood; there will be rooms in the ark and you will caulk the ark (cover all the crevices between the wood boards) with pitch from the inside and from the outside (pitch is a black, sticky liquid that is obtained from petroleum). The ark is to be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. Make a roof for the ark and finish the ark to within 18 inches of the top. Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks.

God told Noah the exact measurements for the ark, the material he was to use and **Noah did everything as the Lord commanded him.** God, through His word teaches us His will. Noah listened

to God and was attentive to His instructions. For us to know God's will we need a relationship with Him. Noah's task wasn't simple or easy to do. Sometimes we feel unprepared or not qualified for a task but we should remember that Noah wasn't an engineer or an expert on ship construction. In fact, Noah didn't even know what an ark was. God chooses us because He knows us; He knows our strengths; we are God's instruments. The ark Noah built, along with seven other people resisted the flood. The Titanic was built by many people; several of them were experts on the matter. Advanced technology was also used to build the Titanic but it was unable to survive. Noah was a little over five hundred years when he started building the Ark, and when the flood started he was seven hundred (Genesis 7:6 and 11) Sometimes we use the excuse "I'm not very young anymore", "I don't think I can do a lot or be of help". We feel unqualified or old. But, remember, Noah was older than you and I together and still **he did just as God commanded him**. Noah acted out God's will.

God told Noah he would send strong and constant rain that would flood the earth and destroy all living things under heaven. All that existed on earth would die. God was sad because people had chosen to do evil instead of God's will.

Sometimes we are like those people because we choose "the easy way" instead of acting according to God's will. Sometimes as parents, we prefer to avoid angry children and we allow them to do things that aren't the best for them. We don't want to be "the bad guy" so we allow them to go places that will probably bring bad consequences to their lives in the long run.

In this story we see how God decided to end evil, He decided to destroy everything but Noah and his family who lived according to God's will.

God made a pact with Noah. A pact is an agreement between two parties. God told Noah: "Go inside the ark with your wife, your sons and daughters-in-law, take in with you a male and female of each animal type of the world so they may live as well as you". In Genesis chapter seven, verses two and three you may read all the instructions about the animals God gave Noah. Ask one of the students to read this scripture passage. God also told Noah to gather food for them and for the animals, and **Noah did everything just as God commanded him**.

You might be thinking, "How did Noah gather the animals plus build an ark?"

Noah acted out God's will and so did the rest of creation. God took care of all the small details, while Noah did his part.

When we have a task to carry out in our own lives, we worry about things over which we have no control. While we worry about those things, we neglect those things over which we do have control: attitudes, responsibilities, relations, and our communion with God. We must do what God calls us to do and trust Him. Trust that God is there, doing His part, working on those things which He alone can control.

Many years went by before Noah and his family were able to finish the ark, and during that time people made fun of Noah. People didn't believe the possibility of a flood as Noah was telling them because their hearts were full of evil and were not repentant of their sins. Ask a student to read I Peter 3:20. Noah's case was the opposite because unlike the people of his time, he did obey by faith like it's stated in Hebrews 11:7. (Ask a student to read this Bible verse).

When Noah finished the ark, he did what God had told him to do and he got in the ark with his family and the animals. God told him that in seven days rain would fall for forty days and forty nights. **Noah did just as God commanded him** and later rain started. The earth was flooded and all people died along with the animals and the birds that weren't inside the ark because they did not obey God. The people had only the desire in their hearts to do evil things that weren't pleasing to God. The only survivors from the flood were Noah and all with him in the ark because they chose to obey God and trust Him.

Genesis chapter 9 talks about the pact between God and Noah (ask students to read this chapter at home). This pact is also between God and us. God promised that he would never again destroy the earth by a flood like He did in Noah's time (Gen.9: 1-17). God sent His son to die in our place not to wash sins away with water again, but to wash our sins with Jesus' precious blood.

God gives us the opportunity to repent of our sins, accept Christ as our personal Lord and Savior, our ark of salvation. Ask God to forgive you for the sins you have committed and start all over again. If you haven't given your life to Jesus for him to be the captain of the ark of your life, now would be the perfect moment.

Ask the students that haven't asked Jesus to come into their hearts to repeat out loud after you. (Pray a prayer of repentance and accepting Christ into their hearts and lives). While you pray, ask those who have accepted Christ to pray silently and ask Christ to forgive their sins so that they may go on serving Him.

Reflecting on the Bible passage

- *Give each student a photocopy of the worksheet. Divide the group into teams and divide the questions to be answered into those teams. Give each group some time to analyze and answer their questions. After a few minutes give each team some time to share with the rest of the class their point of view about the theme they discussed and about how, in a practical way, this may be applied to their lives.*

Applying the Bible passage to our life

Noah was a man that loved God and lived according to His will. Noah did everything JUST AS God commanded him to do. Noah followed all of God's instructions without changing a thing. Noah learned to be patient because he trusted God would always be with him to help him. Noah didn't care about how long it would take him to do what God told him because he trusted God.

Perhaps today, some of us are going through struggles and it may feel that it's too large to handle or overcome. But that struggle can't be compared with all the pain and suffering that people go through if they don't have Christ as their Savior.

Noah's story should encourage us. Noah was a man with a great responsibility, he had to build an enormous ark, care for his family and gather animals and food. This gigantic task would have been easier with the help of many persons. But people didn't listen, didn't understand and didn't obey. Noah might have felt alone with the task, but he wasn't discouraged. Although he had to do a lot of work and others didn't understand and even made fun of him, he still obeyed God's will.

Today, we are in a similar situation. We have the responsibility to care for our families so that when a "storm" comes, we may stand and not fall. Your home, your family is the main ark you have to build and fortify; not with pitch but with the love and Word of God.

Some of the materials you need to build your Ark are:

- Prayer. You must pray for your family and the difficult situations in your home.
- Reading the Bible. Having a private time with God as individuals.
- Good family relations. Investing time in communicating with all family members. Learning to share our needs and doubts with each other. Listening to one another. Looking for solutions together. Encouraging one another. Forgiving one another to strengthen our love.

- Gathering with others in a church. Getting together with other people that also love God and getting involved in that community to serve others. Remember God is with us and can help us in any task.

Conclusion

Just like in Noah's time, it seems that obeying God is a difficult thing to do because the World is full of wickedness. Everywhere we look there is evil and things that offend God.

The Bible says in Matthew 7: 13, 14 "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life and only a few find it."

For many, it is easier to do bad things and disobey. It seems that it's more fun to disobey than obey but it isn't so. If you feel bad because you obey and your friends make fun of you, you might feel alone at first especially if you try to do God's will. But in the end you will be receive a reward that is only for the children of God, for those who do His will.

Just like Noah did, regardless of the difficulty of the task at hand, when you obey God, you can be certain that God is there to help you. If it seems too hard, ask God in prayer to help you and give you patience, constancy and trust in Him and Noah did.

Close in prayer.

Work sheet

The 13 things I learned about life from Noah' ark...

- 1.- It's important to be punctual and not be late to an appointed time.
- 2.- Remember that all of us are different, but we're all in the same boat.
- 3.- Plan for your future. It wasn't raining when Noah began building the ark.
- 4.- Never feel old even if some tell you that your time has gone by, or that at your age you can't do a significant great thing only because you're 600 years old.
- 5.- Don't pay attention to those who criticize you, go on with the job God has given you.
- 6.- All you do and build, do it well, even if your not a professional or it's not something you know how to do.
- 7.- When looking for company for life's journey, look for someone that is similar to you. Opposites may attract but won't achieve much. Plus you have to look for someone in the same path towards God so you may encourage each other to continue traveling towards the ark.
- 8.- If you feel that your spiritual growth is slow, don't worry. More than speed, God wants perseverance. Remember there were turtles in the ark along with the horses, wild cats and other "fast" animals.
- 9.- Although at first you may feel alone and others may make fun of you, in the long run there is a reward for trying to live according to the Word of God.
- 10.- Don't minimize the efforts of simple people. Remember the ark was built by amateurs and the Titanic was built by professionals.
- 11.- Regardless of how strong the storm is, if you stay close to God, there will always be a rainbow waiting for you.

"SUCESS IS NOT FOR THOSE WHO THINK THAT IT CAN BE DONE,
IT IS FOR THOSE WHO DO IT "

Living Water / Agua Viva

Moses Strikes the Rock

Day Two

Adults

THEME:	God uses water to teach us about trusting in God's care.
BIBLE PASSAGE:	Exodus 17:1-7
MEMORY VERSE:	<i>God made streams come out of the rock and caused waters to flow down like rivers.</i> Psalm 78:16 (NRSV)

Objective	To learn from this passage how God used water to teach the Israelites and us about trusting in his care.
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare for this lesson by first asking God to open the eyes of your understanding of His Word (Ps. 119:18) and to prepare you to teach His message.• To put this lesson in context, read Exodus 15:22-27 and 16, which teach God's provision for his people, as well as Exodus 17.• Also see 1 Cor. 10:1-12 where Paul refers to this incident, saying that the rock is Christ.• Other Old Testament scriptures that apply: Psalm 36:8-9, 42:1-2; Jeremiah 2:13, 17:13; Isaiah 43:20-21.
Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bible, paper and pencil for each student• Blackboard or marking board to write on.• A map that shows the area through which the Israelites journeyed on their way between Egypt and Mt. Sinai would be helpful. (A good one that shows Rephidim in relation to Mount Sinai is in the NIV Life Application Bible on page 133.)

Introduction

- *Greet the group.*
- *Briefly go over the lesson learned yesterday regarding how God used water to teach obedience.*
- *Help the class memorize the passage for the day.*

Studying the Bible passage

Today's scripture passage takes place shortly after Moses had led God's people, Israel, out of slavery in Egypt. The Israelites had seen God's miraculous power against Pharaoh, in the parting of the Red Sea, and most recently in providing food, manna, in the wilderness (Exodus 16). Now after camping at Rephidim, they face another problem - no water.

Begin with prayer asking God to open our eyes that we may see wonderful things in his Word. Before you read Exodus 17:1-7, ask the students to listen carefully to the passage and write

down any key words that are significant in understanding the situation. Words they list will probably include water, quarrel, test, thirst, and grumbled.

1 From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink.

2 The people quarreled with Moses, and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?"

3 But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?"

4 So Moses cried out to the Lord, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me."

5 The Lord said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go.

6 I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel.

7 He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

NRSV

After you finish reading the passage, ask the students to share the words they listed as you write them on the board. Briefly discuss why these words are important to the meaning of the passage.

Reflecting on the Bible passage

Discuss the following questions:

According to verse 1, where were the Israelites and why were they there? They were coming from the wilderness and camping at Rephidim because this is where the Lord had led them. *Use the map to show where the Israelites were and remind the students that the Lord was leading the congregation with a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.*

Why do you think the Lord led them into a place where "there was no water for the people to drink"? God was teaching the Israelites to trust Him to provide for all their needs. He had provided water for them once before at Marah, making bitter water sweet (Exodus 15:22-27). He was providing food for them daily with manna from heaven (Exodus 16) and now wanted them to trust Him to provide water for them. Because God had led them there, He was responsible to take care of them.

How did the people react to their situation? They "quarreled" and "complained against" Moses for bringing them out of Egypt just to die of thirst. They challenged Moses to supply water for them and began to question whether God was with them or not (vs. 7).

What did Moses mean by the question, "Why do you test the Lord?" in verse 2. Although the people were quarreling and grumbling against Moses for their predicament, in reality they were blaming God and doubting rather than trusting that He would take care of them, even after they

had received such proofs of his power and goodness. They were tempting the Lord by their attitude, trying His patience by their grumbling and complaining, and thus sinning against God.

How did Moses respond to the complaints and threat of being stoned by the Israelites?

He prayed and asked God for wisdom and guidance in dealing with the people and solving the problem.

How did God answer his prayer? Why did the Lord tell Moses to walk before the people with his staff in his hand and to take some of the elders with him? The staff in Moses' hand represented God's power and authority and holding it was a sign of dependence and trust in God. The elders needed to personally witness what God was going to do in providing water from the rock for the Israelites. *Show the map again and point out that we know from scripture God led them from Rephidim to Mount Sinai where He would give them the Law through Moses. The people needed to respect and obey Moses as God's representative.*

Tell the students that Moses named the place Massah, which means testing because the people tested or doubted God, and Meribah, which means quarrel or strife. This was to remind them of their sin of doubting God as well as his mercy in providing for them despite their sin.

- *Teach the class the memory verse and practice it together.*

Applying the Bible passage to our life

How does Moses model what a trusting Christian should do during times of trial? He turned to the Lord in prayer, asked for guidance, and was obedient to do what the Lord told him to do. *(Cross reference: James 1:5-6a - "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, . . ." (NIV).*

Since scripture interprets scripture, have the students turn to 1 Cor. 10:1-12 and read it together. What warnings do we see in both Exodus 17 and 1 Cor. 10 that we can apply to our own lives? The people criticized Moses as their leader and murmured against God, sins about which we are warned in 1 Cor. 10:1-12. In spite of God's miraculous provision that He had already shown for them, the Israelites took their eyes off God and looked back toward Egypt, doubting that God would take care of them. Wanting to go back to the old life, they failed to pass the test because of their ingratitude and unbelief. On the map of our lives, how many places ought to be named "Testing and Quarreling" because of the way we've complained about our circumstances and failed to trust God?

Discuss how in this scripture God teaches us through Paul the spiritual meaning of the water coming from the rock. Paul tells us that the rock was Christ. Continuing the analogy, striking the rock speaks of Christ's death on the cross and water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit given by Christ to the believer.

If there is time, you might want to look at Numbers 20:1-13, a second experience with the rock. The Israelites complained about a lack of water at the end of their 40-year journey as well

as at the beginning. Here, instead of speaking to the rock to provide water as God commanded, Moses struck the rock as he had done the first time. Because of his disobedience, Moses was not permitted to enter the promised land of Canaan. If striking the rock speaks of Christ's death on the cross, Christ can die only once.¹ (See Rom. 6:9-10 and Heb. 9:26-28)

Conclusion

In our daily lives as well as our "wilderness experiences," we can trust God to open fountains to supply our need where we least expect them, *waters in the wilderness* (Isaiah 43:20-21), that we might praise Him. We can live in complete dependence upon God's providence and Christ's grace - the grace and comforts of the Holy Spirit, which are compared to *rivers of living water* (John 4:14, 7:38-39).

Every difficulty God permits us to encounter will become either a test that can make us better or a temptation that can make us worse, and it's our own attitude that determines which it will be. If in unbelief we start complaining and blaming God, then temptation will trap us and rob us of an opportunity to grow spiritually. But if we trust God and let Him have His way, the trial will work for us and not against us (Rom. 8:28; James 1:12-15) and help us grow in grace. . . .

On the map of our lives, how many places ought to be named "Testing and Quarreling" because of the way we've complained about our circumstances and failed to trust God? It's one thing to sit comfortably in church and sing "All the way my Savior leads me, what have I to ask beside?" and quite something else to be confronted with distress and disappointment and meekly say, "Not my will but Thine be done."²

¹ Wiersbe, Warren W.: *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1993.

² Wiersbe, Warren W.: *Be Delivered*. Colorado Springs, CO: Chariot Victor Pub., 1998

Agua Viva / Living Water

Jonah is swallowed by a fish

Day Three

Adults

THEME:	God uses water to teach us about repentance
BIBLE PASSAGE:	Jonah 1:1-17 and 2:10 (optional: Jonah 2:1-10)
MEMORY VERSE:	"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" Mark 1:15 (NIV)

Objective	The student, through the Bible story, will learn the true meaning of repentance so that he may receive God's forgiveness and be able to live with peace in his heart.
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare your heart in prayer asking for Jesus Christ's guidance. Pray for the new souls that will listen to the Word of God, so that they may be reached today.• Several students in this class have children in the different EBV classes, so it's important for them to know that what they will learn today, their children will also learn in their classes. As families they should help each other.• Read the lesson several times to be confident in front of the students about what you are going to say.• In all your classes, emphasize the fact that all that is being taught was and is true and it comes from the word of God, that is "the Bible" (always have it at hand).
Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bible• Photocopies of the questionnaire at the end of this lesson to do at the end of the class.• Pencils

Introduction

- Welcome students and encourage them to share with the rest of the class how they've felt *the past two days in the VBS. Also encourage them to share about what God is doing in their lives.*
- *Pray asking for the Holy Spirit's guidance for today' class. Ask the group if there's a volunteer to participate praying.*
- *Start the class by asking the students: Have you ever done anything that you wished you hadn't done and repented for it? (Give two or three students the opportunity to share).*

Give a brief explanation about the meaning of the word "repentance" and also about what the concept implies.

Studying the Bible passage

Jonah was a prophet that heard the voice of God telling him: "Go to Nineveh, the great city, and talk to the people about me, for there's great wickedness in them". "I won't do that", thought Jonah, "I don't want to do it". So Jonah ran away from the presence of God as fast as he could, so God wouldn't see him. He arrived at Joppa where he saw a ship sailing towards another city that wasn't Nineveh, so he got on board the ship and fled. But who can hide from God if He's everywhere? God knows exactly everything we do, everything we think and every thing we say, so Jonah couldn't hide from the presence of God. A little time later, a violent storm began, the wind blew very hard, and waves rose up the size of mountains that hit the ship making it creak. All the sailors and people on board were scared, but Jonah was peacefully sleeping below deck. The captain woke him up. Then the sailors said to each other, "let us cast lots to see who has to leave the ship." Guess who the lot fell on? (Wait for answers). Jonah was thrown overboard into the sea.

This happened because God had a plan for Jonah. When Jonah was at sea, a big sea monster came from the depths and swallowed Jonah. The Bible says that for three days and three nights Jonah was in the big fish's belly, and while he was there the Holy Spirit touched his heart. Jonah repented for not doing what God had told him to do. Jonah felt great sadness in his heart and prayed full of humility and repentance. Jonah told God that he would never again disobey any of His commands and that he would do it whole-heartedly. After God heard Jonah's prayer (God listens to all those who truly repent and forgives them), the big fish spewed Jonah on the beach and when he saw the sky and the sun again, he gratefully knelt down and worshiped God. Jonah was truly forgiven and his response to that was obedience. He got up, sailed on a boat to Nineveh and once he was there, he started to preach to the people about God and all the wonders He does in a person's life.

Through this Bible story, God teaches us today that we must obey His commands written in His word (*show the Bible*), not because a big fish will come and swallow us but because we love Him.

Reflecting on the Bible passage

- The added questionnaire will encourage students to meditate on their lives.
- Emphasize the fact that true repentance is felt in one's heart.

When one feels true repentance, one should pray to God asking for His forgiveness and start doing God's will.

Applying the Bible passage to our life

- How should you feel when you do something you know is wrong?

Every time you do something that isn't right, come to God in prayer. Ask God to forgive you for what you did and DON'T DO IT AGAIN.

Optional Activity:

Give each student a photocopy of the questionnaire. Encourage students to be honest when answering the questionnaire. Tell them no one will look at their answers but themselves. The purpose of answering the questions is for them to meditate on their answers.

When all students finish, invite some volunteers to share their ideas with the rest of the class. Ask students to share their thoughts on repentance after listening to the Bible story.

Conclusion

- *Review the memory verse learned today.*
- *Encourage students to invite friends to come to VBS so they can also listen to what God teaches in the Bible.*

Close with prayer. Invite students to take this opportunity to examine their hearts and ask God to forgive them for the wrong things they've done.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Read the questions and answer honestly.

1. What is your reaction when you do something wrong before others and above all in the eyes of *God*?
2. Have you truly obeyed all that *God* asks you to do? If not, what are some things that you have not done?
3. If you feel in your heart you've done wrong, in what way could you undo the wrong you've done?
4. Would you be willing to pray to *God* asking Him to forgive the wrong you've done?
5. Do you think *God* will forgive you? Why?
6. Would you do the same things again that you know are wrong?

Living Water / Agua Viva

Jesus Meets the Samaritan Woman at the Well

Day Four Adult

THEME:	God uses water to teach us about receiving new life.
BIBLE PASSAGE:	John 4:5-30 and 39-42(optional: John 4:31-38)
MEMORY VERSE:	<i>But those who drink of the water that I will give will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.</i> John 4:14 (NRSV)

Objective	To learn from this passage how God used water to teach us about receiving new life.
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare for this lesson by first asking God to open the eyes of your understanding of His Word (Ps. 119:18) and to prepare you to teach His message.• Read all of John 4 to put the story of the Samaritan woman in context.• Also look at related scriptures: John 7:37-39; Rev. 21:6, 22:17; Isaiah 12:3, 49:10, 55:1; Ezek. 36:25-27.
Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bible, paper and pencil for each student, and a blackboard or marking board to write on.• You might want to have some kind of object lesson from nature that shows how water brings life - perhaps a plant that has not been watered and is dying and a plant that is thriving because it has been watered.• A map could be used to show how Jesus traveled through Samaria to get from Jerusalem to Galilee.

Biblical Explanation and Background:

Jesus chose to go through Samaria, and the route took them past the historic place called "Jacob's Well". (This well still exists today, and is reputed to be 75 to 100 feet deep and to still give good water.) This is notable, because most Jews would have bypassed Samaria to avoid contact with the Samaritans.

While the disciples were gone to get food, Jesus engages in the longest dialog ever recorded between Jesus and another person. Jesus spoke to this Samaritan woman who had come to the well to get water, and he asked her to give him a drink. To us this seems inconsequential, but in Jesus' time, it was unheard of for a Jewish man, let alone a Rabbi, to speak to a Samaritan woman. This woman seems to have come alone to the well at a time when other women were home resting in the cool shade. Jesus knew she had great emotional and spiritual needs; he loves all people

at all times, and he was not considering his own reputation. He was reaching out to her by asking her for a drink.

The woman immediately questioned Jesus about his asking her for a drink; she knew the social prohibitions; she knew the Jews hated the Samaritans, and she no doubt knew Jesus was a stranger, not from the local town. Jesus replied with a revelation about himself, (verse 10) "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." (The term "living water" can mean "fresh, flowing water" as opposed to stagnant water.) We know from our memory verse, John 7:37, that Jesus meant that if she believed that he was the "anointed one" or the Messiah that God had promised to take away the sins of the world, that she would have "living water". "Living water" refers to Jesus' spirit, the Holy Spirit, who lives in the believer. John 7:38 quotes Jesus saying, "Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." John 7:39 explains that this refers to the Holy Spirit in the believer.

The woman was intrigued by Jesus' words; she asked him two more questions. First, she wanted to know where and how Jesus would get "living water", and second, she was awed by Jesus' authority; she asked him to tell her who he is. Notice that Jesus had deliberately invited her into this conversation, and she was willing to learn more about Jesus. She was not proud; she was not rejecting him because of her own religious beliefs or prejudices. She had the attitude of a child, willing to know Jesus. Remember, Jesus said when he blessed the little children, "I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." (Luke 18:17)

Jesus answered the woman with the promise, "...whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst...the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." (John 4:14) The woman asked Jesus for the living water "that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water." (John 4:15) She wasn't sure what Jesus was offering her, but she wanted it. Children also sometimes are not sure what Jesus is offering, but they know they "love Jesus". Still, Jesus sees to the core of human nature, and he saw sin in the core of the woman. Isaiah 59:2 says that our sin has separated us from God, but John 3:16 gives us God's solution for sin, eternal life through his Son.

Faith in Jesus, the Son of God, is the "spring of water welling up to eternal life". To expose the woman to her own need, Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband and come back." (John 4:16) She admitted honestly (again, like a child) to Jesus that she had no husband, and Jesus told her that he knew she'd had five husbands and was now living with a man to whom she was not married. Inwardly, this shocked the woman, for we know that later she told the people in the town to "Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" (John 4:29) Outwardly, in verse 20, she betrayed her spiritual hunger to Jesus by saying, "Sir, I perceive you are a prophet.." and asking about where God should be worshipped. Jesus again answered her eager question; he explained that "God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24)

The woman's reply to Jesus indicated that he had reached her heart. She said, "I know that Messiah (called Christ) is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." (John 4:25) And

then Jesus openly told her, since she was ready to receive him, "I who speak to you am he." (John 4:26) What love Jesus showed for her in revealing himself to her as the Son of God! She joyfully believed him, and she ran off to tell the town's people that she'd found the Messiah. Children also can joyfully believe Jesus when they learn that their sins separate them from God, and that Jesus, God's Son, has paid the penalty for sin.

Jesus' disciples were puzzled when they returned and found him talking with a Samaritan woman. They urged him to eat, and his answer, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about" reminds us of his mission: "The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10) The joy Jesus felt in the woman's faith filled him; it was enough.

Introduction

- Greet the group. Offer an opening prayer asking God to open our eyes that we may see wonderful things in his Word.
- Briefly go over the lesson learned yesterday regarding how God used water to teach us about repenting.
- Ask the students: Has there ever been a time in your life when you have experienced being really thirsty? Just as these plants require water to live physically, so do we. Throughout scripture in both the Old and New Testament, God uses the need for physical water to sustain life as an object lesson for our need for God, the "fountain of living waters" (Jeremiah 2:13) to live spiritually. Today's lesson is an example of how God uses water to teach us about new life brought to us by Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

Studying the Bible passage

John 4:1-4 tells us that Jesus traveled from Jerusalem back to Galilee because of opposition to his ministry from the Pharisees. Verse 4 tells us that he had to go through Samaria. The Samaritans were a mixed group with ties to Jews and foreigners who were brought in to settle Israel after the northern kingdom was captured by the Assyrians and many of the Jews were deported to Assyria. Jews hated the Samaritans and would avoid going through Samaria even though the route between Judah and Galilee was shorter. Jesus, however, "had to go through Samaria" - there was someone he needed to talk to.

Read John 4:5-30 & 39-42.

Reflecting on the Bible passage

Discuss the following questions with the students:

- Why would it have been considered unusual for Jesus to be talking with this woman?
- She was a Samaritan, a group hated by the Jews.
- She was a woman and culturally it would have been improper for a Jewish man to be talking alone with her.
- She was obviously living in sin. (She came to the well to draw water at noon, the hottest time of the day, instead of early morning with the other women who knew her reputation.)

Who does Jesus say He is?

Jesus reveals to the Samaritan woman that He is the long-awaited Messiah (verses 25-26), a revelation that He has not made to anyone else at this point in his ministry. You may want to discuss with the class reasons why Jesus would choose a Samaritan woman as the first person He tells.

What did Jesus mean by "living water"?

Look up the following Old Testament scripture passages about water, (either in small groups or individually depending on class size) and discuss how they apply to the meaning of today's passage: Psalm 36:9, 42; Isaiah 12:2-3, 49:10, 55:1; Jeremiah 17:13, and Zechariah 13:1.

Together read Ezekiel 36:25-27 and John 7:37-39.

How do the verses in John 7 relate to the verses in Ezekiel?

The prophet Ezekiel is prophesying the coming of the Holy Spirit, as is Jesus in John 7.

Scripture interprets scripture. How do these verses help us understand Jesus' words to the Samaritan woman regarding water?

In John 7:37 Jesus says "come to me and drink" and promises to give the Holy Spirit to all who believe in Him (verse 38). He is claiming to be the Messiah as He told the Samaritan woman. In John 4:10 He used the term "living water" to mean eternal life. Whoever believes in Jesus receives the Holy Spirit who brings eternal life to the believer.

Applying the Bible passage to our life

Who is Jesus to you? Have you accepted him as your Savior and Lord and received the gift of the Holy Spirit? Only the Messiah, Jesus, can give this gift of "living water" that satisfies the thirst of the soul and brings eternal life.

If you know Jesus as your Savior and Lord, do you ask daily for the filling of the Holy Spirit so that you might share the Good News of Jesus with those who are thirsty for the "living water" only He can give? Are you willing to share with anyone to whom God leads you, even those who may not seem open to hear the Gospel?

Conclusion

The Samaritan woman did not understand that Jesus was talking about spiritual "water" rather than physical water. She thought that the water He offered would make her life easier - she wouldn't have to come to the well for water every day. Accepting Jesus does not necessarily make our lives easier, but Jesus changes us on the inside and gives us the power through the Holy Spirit to deal with life's problems and challenges. The "living water" He gives us brings new life, now and for eternity.

Agua Viva / Living Water

Let's go Fishing.

Day Five

Adults

THEME:	God uses the miraculous catch of fish so we may learn to trust in Him.
BIBLE PASSAGE:	John 21: 1-1
MEMORY VERSE:	"Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them" Matthew 6:26 (NIV)

Objective	That the adult may learn to have confidence in God's providing for him/her and his/her family.
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare and study the class material well. Use your own words to make the story more interesting to the adults. The knowledge of the lesson and of your students will make the lesson more accessible to the class.• Ask for God's guidance that you may be able to fulfill the class objective and that the lesson might be a blessing to the adults your class.• The students are adults and, generally in their lives, they focus on their role as providers of everything their families need.• You may have some single parents and they might have problems providing what their families need.• Ask for the Spirit's guidance to be able to fulfill the class objective; you can be a blessing to many today.
Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your Bible• Sheets of white paper. And pencils

Introduction

- *Welcome all, if possible by name. This is the last day of VBS, so they know each other, ask them to greet each other.*
- *They should know that whatever they learned during the five days of studies, it should help them in their family life.*
- *Ask someone to pray, giving thanks to God for this day and asking Him to make them faithful in their church attendance.*
- *If someone does not attend church, invite him/she to consider the benefit that this would be for him/her and the family.*
- *Read and practice the memory verse.*
- *Ask if anyone goes fishing. What type of fishing?*
- *What fish is the hardest to catch?*
- *The cooks might tell you which fish is harder to prepare and cook.*
- *How would you feel if you went fishing all day long and didn't catch anything?*

Background of the Bible story.

In John chapter 21 we find 7 disciples, by the Sea of Tiberias, wondering what to do. For three years they had walked with Jesus. From the moment that Jesus called them, they left their daily tasks and followed the Master to live with Him and learn from Him. During the time of their discipleship they depended on Him. They went with Him everywhere, rested where lodging was offered. They ate meals bought with the offerings given by those who already believed in Jesus as the Messiah. In other words, the whole time they walked with Jesus, they depended on Him. Jesus had everything they needed. Now, Jesus had been crucified, had risen, but He was neither with them, nor they with Him. The question was: How are we going to eat now?

Studying the Bible Passage

These fishermen were very special friends of Jesus; we call them his disciples. We go back by the Sea of Tiberias and we find them again, seven disciples, Simon Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, John, Jacob and two other whose names we don't know.

Because Jesus was not with them anymore, they could not depend on Him for their daily needs, so they were thinking: what should we do? How would they find a way to meet the needs of their families and their personal needs? Peter and others were fishermen. As always, Peter took the initiative and said: "I do not know about you all, but I am going fishing." So, they decided to do the same and went fishing once again. They had to get some food for their families, their families depended on them.

The Bible tells us that the disciples went far out to sea, where they knew there were fish, and they were fishing all night. They threw their nets once they were at sea, waited and pulled them back in and there were no fish. Over and over again, doing the same thing and nothing; the disciples caught nothing, no fish. They were so tired, frustrated and hungry that they pulled their nets and began sail back to shore.

John tells us that when they were near the beach, where they knew there were no fish, they saw a person on the beach. The person was Jesus, but they did not recognize Him because of the distance and because it was dawn. He called out to them "Friends, haven't you any fish?" In other words, do you have anything to eat for you and your families? The disciples had to answer: No! Then Jesus told them "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some"

They obeyed and threw their nets on the right side and "were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish, 153!" When they arrived at the beach, what did they find? The Bible tells us that a "fire of burning coals was there with fish on it, and some bread." And "Jesus said to them "Come and have breakfast" In other words Jesus was telling them, You must learn to trust and depend on me. You have no fish, I will give them to you, you have nothing to eat, and I will feed you whatever you need. Learn to depend on me, as you did when you walked with me.

This lesson was not only for the disciples, but it is for you and me, for all of us. Jesus is with us today. We might not see Him as the disciples did, but He can see us. Jesus sees you and knows what you need.

The disciples learned that everything comes from God and He is the one who gives whatever the person needs. You and I must learn also that all things come from the Lord and He is the one who gives whatever we might need today.

Let's learn to depend on God, to trust in God, who will supply all our needs for us and for our families.

Reflecting on the Bible passage.

- What was the key for the disciples to be able to get enough fish for them and their families?
- Wasn't it because they were willing to obey what Jesus told them, even though it seemed illogical?
- Remember that they were fishermen and they went fishing where they knew the fish would be, which would not be by the shore.
- What do we do when we cannot have what we want?
- If you were John or Peter out in the sea, what would you be thinking? How would you feel?

Activity

- *Ask the students to answer the questions in the questionnaire. Invite them to discuss their answers, as they are willing.*

Conclusion

Tell the group: It has been a pleasure to have you in class all week. We have learned so much about the love God has for us as we read those stories in which water played such an important role. What are some of the lessons that really stuck with you from this week?

(If you need to refresh their memory, you can tell them that first Noah and the flood showed us how to obey God, Moses reminded us that God gives us water and everything we need to live, from inside the big fish Jonah invites us to confess our sins so we may follow God's plans for us, the Samaritan woman learned by the well that in Jesus we have new life, and finally today Jesus showed his disciples as they fished that they should turn to Jesus to provide for their needs.)

I hope that you have learned a lot and that you had a lot of fun. I hope that you continue coming to church, because the Bible has many more stories that talk to us about how much God loves us. No, let us say a prayer and I'll ask God to continue to bless you and your families:

Conclude with prayer.

Questionnaire

1) What are the things that God provides everyday?

Material things

Spiritual things

2) What keeps me from completely trusting that God will provide?

Reasons.

3) Do we get what God provides only if we trust in Him?

4) Do you believe that God can help you to supply your needs and those of your family?
(material or spiritual needs).