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The Two Sons



Lesson Text

Matthew 21:28-32

Lesson Objectives

- The students will define obedience to God as shown in "The Parable of the Two Sons."
- The students will explain that God expects us to obey all those he has set in authority over us.
- The students will practice obedience in a particular area during the week.

Materials Needed

For each student:

- pen or pencil

For the teacher:

- 1 copy of "Good News from the Kingdom"
- globe or map of the world
- extra Bibles
- 2 pieces of bubble gum
- 2 saltine crackers
- 1 basketball
- 1 large writing surface
- chalk or marker
- paper
- Parable Poster (included with the unit)
- special teacher insert for Unit 16 Lesson 3—key for identifying "The Parable of the Two Sons" on the Parable Poster
- green highlighter

Reproducible Pages:

- Page A, 1 copy for each student (copied back to back with Reproducible Page B)
- Page B, 1 copy for each student
- Page C, 1 copy for each student (copied back to back with Reproducible Page D)
- Page D, 1 copy for each student
- Page E, 1 copy for the teacher
- Page F, 1 copy for each student

Lesson Plan

Getting Ready

- Faithful Instruction
 - Teacher Focus
 - Teacher Tips
- Preclass Activity: "I Meant to..." (Part 1)
- Starting Up
 - Welcome and Singing
 - Opening Prayer
 - Victories
 - Good News from the Kingdom

Getting into God's Word

- Story 1: Discussion: "I Meant to..." (Part 1)
- Scripture Study
- Story 2: "I Meant to..." (Part 2)
- Activity: Just Do It!

Getting It to Others

- Scripture Memory: 1 John 5:3
- Weekly Challenge and Snack Time
- Conclusion

Scripture Memory

This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome...

1 John 5:3





Faithful Instruction

Teacher Focus

Pray before preparing this lesson. Read Part 1 of "I Meant to..." (Reproducible Page A) and do the worksheet (Reproducible Page B) yourself. Then read and meditate on Matthew 21:28-32. Now read Part 2 of the "I Meant to..." story (Reproducible Pages C and D). Think about your own initial response to the story. Spend time meditating on how you need to improve in your own obedience to those in authority in your life and especially to God. Also check out how you are doing with following through with responsibilities to others with whom you are in relationship. Share what you have learned with your students.

Teacher Tips

It will be very helpful for the students to see that they are not the only ones who must repent of the "I meant to do it" mentality. Your sharing of your own repentance in this area is key. If they see people they respect, i.e. teachers and parents, striving to be obedient to God and others in authority over them, the students will follow that example of obedience.

Using the teacher insert, identify the location of "The Parable of the Two Sons" on the Parable Poster. During the Scripture Study portion of the class, the first group of students who use the poster will highlight the location of the parable being studied. A different color of highlighter will be used for each parable. The already highlighted poster will be saved and reused in subsequent years.

For next week's lesson you will need a number of magazines that depict a variety of types of people. You will want to start gathering these now.

Preclass Activity

"I Meant to..." (Part 1)

The students will read a story and answer questions that will introduce them to the concepts in "The Parable of the Two Sons."

Materials Used

For each student:

- pen or pencil

Reproducible Pages:

- Page A, 1 copy for each student (copied back to back with Reproducible Page B)
- Page B, 1 copy for each student

Instructions

1. Distribute the copies of Reproducible Pages A and B (copied back to back) and a pen or pencil to each student.
2. Have the students read Part 1 of the story and answer the questions completely. This should be done individually, not as teams.
3. Have the students keep their sheets when they are finished. They will be using them as a reference for the lesson.





Starting Up

Welcome and Singing

Call the students together in a circle. Welcome everyone by name, being sure to recognize anyone who is visiting. Let them know how glad you are to see them and how much you looked forward to being with them. Sing a few great songs.

Opening Prayer

Who would like to say a prayer to start today's time together? Let a few students lead the prayer. Encourage the students to mention missing students, special church activities, illnesses and to be especially thankful for the chance to be together.

Victories

Take the time to have the students share about the challenges they were given at the end of last week's class. Did everyone complete their challenge? How did it go? What fears did you face as you met the challenge to put the lesson into practice? How did everyone do with having consistent quiet times? Who would like to share something they learned this week?

Praise and encourage all the students' efforts, especially noting any area of significant growth. Offer help and suggestions so they can have even more victories in the coming week.

Good News from the Kingdom

Materials Used

For the teacher:

- 1 copy of "Good News from the Kingdom"
- globe or map of the world

Instructions

Now let's take a few minutes to share "Good News from the Kingdom." Be excited as you read about what is happening around the world. Have a globe or map ready, pointing out the location as you share. Remind your students that the kingdom of God is worldwide and that the victories of our brothers and sisters in other countries can inspire us and spur us on.





Story

"I Meant to..." (Part 1)

Materials Used

Reproducible Pages:

- Page A (already handed out)
- Page B (already handed out)

Preparation

Be sure to do the activity in the Teacher Focus and take note of the Teacher Tips. This will enable you to relate to the students and to understand what assumptions they will make in reading the story.

Instructions

1. Have the students refer to their copies of Reproducible Pages A and B ("I Meant to...").
2. Tell the students to listen as you read Part 1 (only) aloud to the class.
3. Create an open discussion with the students, using their answers from Reproducible Page B and the questions below:
 - What do you think about the story?
 - Can you relate to it?
4. Share your personal answers with the class. Explain why you tend to be more like one brother or the other.
5. Ask: Which brother do you think that you are most like?

Scripture Study

Materials Used

For the teacher:

- extra Bibles
- Parable Poster (included with unit)
- special teacher insert for Unit 16 Lesson 3—key for identifying "The Parable of the Two Sons" on Parable Poster
- green highlighter

Reproducible Pages:

- Page C, 1 copy for each student
- Page D, 1 copy for each student

Instructions

Now let's open our Bibles. Have the students turn to Matthew 21:28-32. Have one student read verses 28-31a and have another student read verses 31b-32.

Look in verse 23 of this chapter.

- To whom was Jesus telling this parable? (the chief priests and elders of the people or teachers of the law)
- Who does the father represent in the parable? (God)
- Who do each of the brothers represent? If they need a clue, point them to verse 32. (The first son represents the tax collectors and prostitutes. The second son represents the chief priests and the elders or teachers of the law.)
- What did Jesus tell the religious people with this parable? (It didn't matter if they intended or planned to do what was right, God is more concerned about whether they did it or not. God is not concerned with who looks the best on the outside. Rather he is concerned with what is happening in our hearts.)
- How did Jesus feel about the prostitutes and tax collectors, even when it seemed they initially rebelled? (He commended them for their honest obedience. They realized that they needed God and took his offer of forgiveness seriously.)
- What does this say about God? (He's more interested in our honest obedience than in our paying "lip service" to him. See Isaiah 29:13a.)

Story

Read aloud Part 2 of "I Meant to..." (Reproducible Pages C and D). (If you have some strong readers, you can allow them to share the reading.) Continue with the discussion.

- Think back over the first part of the story. How does reading this parable change your view of the brothers? Which one would you rather be now?
- What was Ryan's reason for not obeying his father? (He thought what he wanted to do was more important. He wanted to choose how to serve his father rather than simply doing what his father asked him to do.)
- Was his reason valid? Why? (No, it was not what his father asked him to do.)
- What are a few things God asks us to do each day? (pray / read the Bible / obey parents / help out around the house / not complain / do homework)
- Do you always obey or do you do what you want to do?



- How do you think this makes God feel?
- What does God want us to do? (simply obey him)
- Though God is not physically with us, he has placed in each of our lives people who have authority over us. Name a few of these authorities. (parents / teachers / older brothers and sisters / leaders in the church)
- Does God expect us to obey these people as well?
- How well do we need to obey them? (just as we would obey God—as long as they are not asking us to do something that is against God's will!)
- How well do you obey your parents when they ask you to clean your room?
- How well do you obey your teachers when they give you an assignment for homework?
- How well do you obey your teachers or leaders in the kingdom when they ask you to participate in class or an activity?



Parable Poster

Have the students try to locate the place on the Parable Poster where the action of "The Parable of the Two Sons" is taking place. The first class to study this unit should highlight this parable's action with a green highlighter. Subsequent classes will simply refer to the green highlighted area to see where the parable takes place.

Activity

Just Do It!

This game will remind the students of several Biblical figures who were called to be obedient to God.

Materials Used

For the teacher:

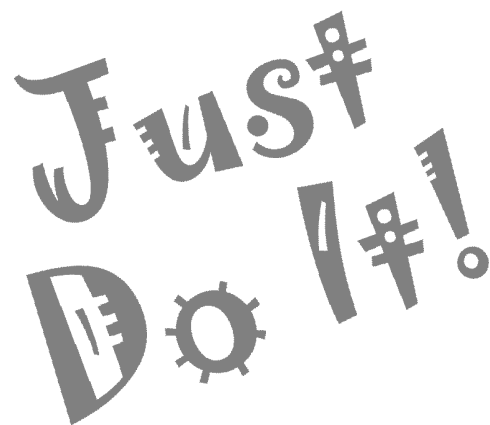
- 2 pieces of bubble gum
- 2 saltine crackers
- 1 basketball
- 1 large writing surface
- chalk or marker

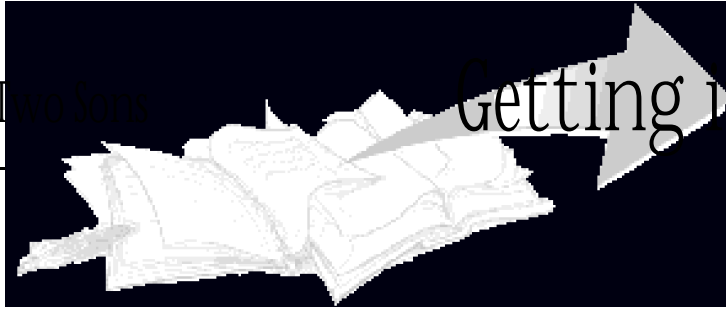
Reproducible Pages:

- Page E, 1 copy for the teacher

Instructions

1. Divide the students into two teams. Have the class sit in their teams, with one team on each side of the room. If you have an assistant, have that person keep score. If not, choose a student to do it.
2. Explain to the students that there will be eight Bible trivia questions given: four to each team. NOTE: Bibles may not be used to answer the questions.
3. Explain that they may decide as a team who is going to answer the questions. If their team is unable to answer the question correctly, they must perform a specific action that you will name (as indicated on Reproducible Page E). Ten points are awarded for each correct answer or up to ten points can be awarded for an approved "performance." The winning team is the one with the most points.
4. Flip a coin to see who goes first. Have each contestant stand in front of the class to answer the question or perform the action.
5. Each participant will be asked a question. The student has ten seconds to answer. If they are unable to answer correctly, you will explain the action they must perform. Have the student say, "Aw, do I have to?" Have the class respond in unison, "Just Do It!" The student must then perform the action.
6. If the student chooses not to perform the action, his team receives no points. Assign the following number of points for the performance:
 - 4 points for attempting the action
 - 10 points for completing the action as assigned





Scripture Memory

This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome...

1 John 5:3

Materials Used

For each student:

- pen or pencil

Reproducible Pages:

- Page F, 1 copy for each student

Instructions

1. Distribute a copy of Reproducible Page F (Scripture Memory) to each student.
2. Read through the verse aloud together several times.
3. Encourage the students to take the sheets home and to share the memory verse with their parents.

Weekly Challenge

Practice godly obedience this week. Choose someone to whom you need to be more obedient, and put what you have learned into practice.

Weekly Challenge and Snack Time

Materials Used

For each student:

- pen or pencil

For the teacher:

- paper

Have the students sit in their banquet planning committees. If your students bring a snack, allow them to eat while you explain to them the challenge for the week.

Briefly summarize the lesson. Remind the students how God is not as concerned with good intentions as he is with whether we obey him or not. He knows that if we are trying to please him with our obedience, we will also be obedient to those he has put in authority in our lives.

I would like for you to think of a particular authority figure whom you will really pursue obeying this week (i.e. do the chores your parents ask you to do without complaining or making excuses, complete homework assignments given by teachers, keep promises to siblings, etc.). Allow one minute for the students to think, then ask for responses. Be sure all students have a chance to respond. Write down their responses so that you can pray over the list and follow up next week. Encourage the other students to be writing down what a few of their friends share (on Reproducible Page F—Scripture Memory Sheet) so they can pray for them and ask them about it throughout the week. Encourage them to come back with victory stories to share.

Be sure to encourage the students who did an outstanding job in class and praise any students who had a more successful time than in previous class periods.

Discuss how well everyone is doing on their banquet plans. Ask who was given an assignment for the banquet. What was their assignment? What are they planning? How much have they done to make it happen? Are they being obedient or just having good intentions? Reinforce the lesson and encourage the students to be obedient by completing what they have promised to do.

Conclusion

End the class with a prayer.

The Two Sons



Lesson Text

Matthew 21:28-32

Lesson Objectives

- The students will explain that God expects us to respond specifically and completely to his commands.
- The students will give two practical examples of complete obedience.
- The students will practice obedience in a particular area this week.

Materials Needed

For each student:

- pen or pencil

For each group of 3 or

4 students:

- 1 tall clear glass jar
- ¼ cup clear corn syrup
- ¼ cup glycerol
- ¼ cup water (colored with red food coloring)
- ¼ cup olive oil or any light cooking oil
- ¼ cup rubbing alcohol (colored with blue food coloring)
- 5 or 6 paper cups
- 1 roll paper towels

For the teacher:

- marker
- extra Bibles
- bunch of grapes
- a basket
- 16 sheets of blank white paper
- 1 black marker

Reproducible Pages:

- Page G, 1 copy for each student

Lesson Plan

Getting Ready

- Faithful Instruction
 - Teacher Focus
 - Teacher Tips
- Preclass Activity: Floating Liquids
- Starting Up
 - Welcome and Singing
 - Opening Prayer and Review
 - Great News Sharing

Getting into God's Word

- Scripture Study
- Activity: Act It Out!

Getting It to Others

- Scripture Memory: 1 John 5:3
- Weekly Challenge and Snack Time
- Conclusion

Scripture Memory

This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome...

1 John 5:3





Faithful Instruction

Teacher Focus

Pray before preparing this lesson. Read and pray over Matthew 21:28-32. The Supplement Lesson takes the concept of obedience from "The Parable of the Two Sons" to a deeper level than the previous lesson. Your goal in this lesson is to help the students to see that it is not just enough to legalistically obey, but that we must do it with all our hearts. Consider your own obedience to those in authority in your life. Can it be said that you obey completely and joyfully at all times? Your example in this area will be an example to your students for their lives.

Teacher Tips

Do the "Floating Liquids" experiment at home before you do it with the students. This will help to eliminate any surprises. Also, realize that though this is a preclass activity, because of the complexity it will extend into the class time more than a usual preclass activity. For that reason, no other activity will be given.

As you read through the questions in the Scripture Study, it is important that you are animated. This makes the answers more obvious to the students and helps them to see how silly we can sometimes sound when we give excuses for not being obedient from our hearts.

Preclass Activity

Floating Liquids

The students will perform a science experiment that will help them to understand the importance of obeying directions exactly as they are given.

Materials Used

For each group of 3 or 4 students:

- 1 tall clear glass jar
- ¼ cup clear corn syrup
- ¼ cup glycerol
- ¼ cup water (colored with red food coloring)
- ¼ cup olive oil or any light cooking oil
- ¼ cup rubbing alcohol (colored with blue food coloring)
- 5 or 6 paper cups
- 1 roll paper towels

For the teacher:

- marker

Reproducible Pages:

- Page G, 1 copy for each student





Preparation

Premix the water and rubbing alcohol with the food colorings ahead of time. (Glycerol can be found at your local drugstore. If you are unable to locate any one of the items, you may delete it from your list of ingredients. The experiment will still work fine without it.)

Instructions

1. Divide your students into groups of three or four with each group sitting at a single table if possible. Tables need to have a smooth, level surface.
2. Put a set of liquids at each table in paper cups (clearly marked), so that no one has to carry the liquids across the room. Make sure that you have enough liquid for every group.
3. Give each student a copy of Reproducible Page G (Floating Liquids). Don't stress the need for them to follow these directions carefully. It will be a good learning experience for the students and good insight for you to see who will follow the instructions exactly without having to be told. Simply remind the students to work carefully in order to avoid spilling any ingredients.
4. As the experiment progresses, walk around the room and observe how well the students are following the directions. Limit the number of questions you answer. Everything they need to know to perform the experiment correctly is on their handout.
5. The purpose of this experiment is to help the students see how well they follow directions. If they do it exactly as directed, the striped effect they will create will be really interesting. If they don't follow the directions carefully, their liquids will mix and they will not achieve the desired effect.
6. After they are all finished, ask them what they learned. How important was it to follow the instructions exactly?

NOTE: If you find that all students did follow directions and all the experiments gave the appropriate result, you may want to do it again showing the difference it would make if you did not follow the instructions.

Starting Up

Welcome and Singing

Call the students together in a circle. Welcome everyone by name, being sure to recognize anyone who is visiting. Let them know how glad you are to see them and how much you looked forward to being with them. Sing a few great songs.

Opening Prayer and Review

- Open with one of the students praying for each student to be completely obedient to God and to those in authority over them.
- Have one student recite the memory verse for this lesson: 1 John 5:3.
- Have a student briefly review the previous lesson (Core Lesson).

Great News Sharing

Allow several minutes for the students to share great news about their lives. This could be about a family member who became a disciple, someone healed from an illness, someone studying the Bible, great grades, etc. Remind the students to be brief so as many as possible can share.



Scripture Study

Materials Used

For the teacher:

- extra Bibles
- bunch of grapes
- a basket

This lesson is meant to not only reinforce the Core Lesson, but to identify what true obedience is. You can do this by letting the students share with you what they have learned.

- What did you talk about during the previous class? Encourage a number of students to respond; don't let just one student say everything. This gives you a feel for how much individual students learned and who you might need to work with a little more during and after the class.
- Let's look back at our parable. Can anybody tell me where it is? Have one student read verses 28-31a of Matthew 21, and have another student read verses 31b-32.
- What do you think the father wanted his sons to do in the vineyard? (work)
- What kind of work do you think you would do in a vineyard? (pick grapes / sort them / clean them / package them for customers / trim the branches back, etc.)
- What if the first son in the parable went all the way to the vineyard, got out his basket (pull out your grapes and a basket), picked one grape from the vine (pick one grape and put it in the empty basket) and then went home (turn like you are leaving)? Would that be obedience? (no)
- Well, then what IS obedience? (Allow the students to share their ideas.)
- So if our parents ask us to wash the dishes and we wash the dishes, but we don't wash the pots and pans, is that obedience? (no) But you technically did what they said.
- If your teacher asks you to read three articles and write a report, and you read two articles and write the report, is that obedience? (no) But you wrote the report.

- If an adult asks you to help clean up the auditorium after church and you pick up all the trash, leaving it in the back of the room, is that obedience? (no) But you picked up the trash.
- So how would we define real obedience? (doing things with all our heart, even if it is inconvenient or difficult / doing things exactly as told)
- Did the chief priests and teachers of the law know the right things to do? (yes) Did they do them? (Yes, they went to church, read the Scriptures, gave their tithes each week, fasted and prayed.)
- Why wasn't Jesus pleased with their obedience? (didn't do everything he asked them to do / only did the things that were easy or that made them look good / didn't do things from the heart)
- But the prostitutes and tax collectors had to change a lot more than these religious men. Wouldn't it have been harder for them? (Their obedience was from the heart. / Obedience to God comes more easily if we love God.)





Activity

Act It Out!

Instructions

1. Divide the class into four groups.
2. Assign the groups to come up with a skit to act out one of the following scenarios:
 - The son in Matthew 21 who at first said he would not work
 - The son in Matthew 21 who said he would, but didn't work
 - The son in the story who at first reacted to his father's request
 - The son who at first had a great attitude in response to his father's request
3. Give each group at least five minutes to come up with their skit.
4. Have each group present its skit and then share what they learned about obedience from the skit they performed. (Each person can share or they can choose one person to share for the group.)
5. NOTE: If the groups are large, students can be props. Example: (1.) several students lining up to be the vineyard, positioning hands and fingers to be clusters of grapes. Tell them to use their imaginations. (2.) They can also add extra workers who simply observe what is happening. (3.) In the modern story students can be articles of furniture, etc.



Repentance and Obedience Bring Joy



Scripture Memory

This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome...

1 John 5:3

Materials Used

For the teacher:

- 16 sheets of blank white paper
- 1 black marker

Preparation

1. On each sheet of paper, write one word from the memory scripture. One sheet will also have the scripture reference (1 John 5:3). Be sure to include all punctuation with the word (i.e. there will be one "commands." with a period and another "commands" without a period).
2. Fold all the sheets in half.

Instructions

1. Standing before the class, take the folded sheets of paper and put them in your hand like a fan.
2. Have volunteers come up one at a time and select one sheet of paper. Each student is to then open his sheet up, show the class and then line up in the front of the class in the correct order that the words should go.
3. After all the sheets have been selected and the scripture is in order, have the students read the scripture together.

Weekly Challenge and Snack Time

If your students bring a snack, allow them to eat while you remind them of the challenge for the week. (You can allow the students to eat the grapes that you brought to class. Be sure to ask about allergies.)

How is everyone doing with the challenge this week? (The students chose an authority figure that they would pursue obeying wholeheartedly.) Did you find it difficult or easy to obey? Why was it so? How did you feel after you obeyed or did not obey?

Discuss any obstacles the students have encountered in carrying out the challenge. Give ideas on how to overcome their pride, being sure to remind them to pray daily about being obedient.

Encourage the students with experiences from your own life and remind them that you are praying for their success. Remind them also to be consistent with their daily quiet times.

Inform the students that there will be a guest speaker on Sunday. Encourage them to bring their own thank-you cards to present to the speaker afterward.

Ask how they are doing with inviting friends to the Great Banquet.

Conclusion

End the class with a prayer.

Weekly Challenge

Practice godly obedience this week. Choose someone to whom you need to be more obedient, and put what you have learned into practice.

“I Meant to...” (Part 1)

Robert and Ryan Cooke woke up Saturday to the smell of bacon and waffles floating upstairs from the kitchen. It was Dad’s day to cook breakfast and he always made a feast on Saturday. Still half asleep and looking forward to a nice leisurely day at home while Mom was away visiting her parents, they followed their noses downstairs and into the dining room. The table was set and covered with steaming plates of bacon and waffles, fresh-squeezed orange juice and ripe succulent fruit.

“Wow, Dad, this looks great!” said Robert, as the brothers quickly sat in their places, diving across the table and each other to fill their plates.

They devoured the breakfast and sat back contentedly. Ryan sighed, “A stellar job, Dad, as usual.”

“Thank you, Ryan,” Dad said, sipping his coffee. “Now that you both have gotten a good night’s sleep and had a good breakfast, I need your help cleaning up the house today.”

Both of the brothers groaned simultaneously.

“Aw, Dad. Not today,” Robert complained. “We thought we’d get a break with Mom being at Grandma and Gramp’s house. Mom usually has us do a million chores on Saturday.”

Dad shook his head. “Well, just because Mom isn’t here doesn’t mean you can sit around like a couple of bums all day. In fact, I thought we could really make Mom feel special by giving the house an extra bit of cleaning and even cooking dinner. Remember, we’re going to have the Johnsons over for dinner tonight.”

“But Dad,” Robert protested, “I already planned to get with Jeff to try out his new fishing boat today.”

“Well,” Dad said, “I guess that means you’re going to have to call him and put it off at least until you finish your chores.”

Robert was starting to get upset, “I can’t just cancel. You’re the one who’s always telling me I need to learn to keep my word.”

“Robert Edward,” said Dad, and his voice made it clear there would be no more objections. “I want you to wash, fold and put away the laundry. It’s already sorted and waiting for you in the laundry room. Then I need you to clean the upstairs bathroom. Is that clear?”

Robert glared at his father and without a word stormed out of the room and up the stairs. Ryan and his father both heard Robert’s bedroom door slam.

Mr. Cooke sighed, “Well Ryan, did you already plan your day out, too?”

“No, sir.”

“Well then, could you clean up the dishes in the kitchen, dust the living room and then run the vacuum cleaner downstairs?” He spoke almost to himself for a moment, “I’d love to straighten out the garage. But it’ll have to wait.” He looked back up at Ryan, “I’ve got to run a few errands and when I get back, I’ll start planning dinner for tonight.”

“Yes, sir.”

Mr. Cooke got up, picked up his keys and his wallet, and headed toward the door. “I’ll be back in a couple of hours.”

Ryan stopped his Dad at the open door, “Do you want me to talk to Robert?”

Ryan’s Dad glanced up toward the ceiling and then looked outside. “No, I think he’ll come around on his own.” He looked back at Ryan and smiled, “See ya later.” And he was gone.



Answer the following questions:

1. What do you think about Robert and his reaction to his father's request? About Ryan and his response?

2. From their initial responses, which son seems most likely to obey his father?

3. Which son do you tend to be more like? Why?



“I Meant to...” (Part 2)

Robert stepped out of the upstairs bathroom. “Done,” he said, dropping the sponge into the bucket and heading downstairs.

He’d spent about fifteen minutes in his room after Dad left. He felt really bad about how he’d reacted to Dad’s simple request to do a few chores. Saturday chores were something everyone helped to do. Why should he think that he didn’t have to work today because he’d made other plans? He couldn’t wait for Dad to get home so he could apologize.

In between the loads of laundry, he’d also cleaned the downstairs bathroom. After he’d come down from his temper tantrum, he remembered his parents had said something about the Johnsons coming for dinner that night. He wanted to do more than he’d been asked just to show his father how really sorry he was.

He’d assumed Ryan had gone with his father to run the errands he’d mentioned over breakfast because he hadn’t seen him downstairs since he’d started the laundry. He went to the garage to get more detergent.

On his way he passed the kitchen and noticed the breakfast dishes were still sitting on the table. He decided to do those when he finished the upstairs bathroom.

He was whistling when he pushed open the garage door and knocked his brother over.

“In a hurry?” Ryan asked, picking himself up from the garage floor.

“Hey,” Robert said, “I didn’t even realize you were here. I thought you went with Dad.”

“No,” he said, turning back to neatly stacking the cans of paint on the shelf. “I heard Dad say something about wanting to get the garage clean so I figured I’d do it for him.”

“So he asked you to clean the garage?”

“Uh,” Ryan stopped, “no—actually, he asked me to clean the dishes and clean up downstairs, but I thought that he would really appreciate it if I did this for him.”

Robert stopped, “Wait a minute. He asked you to wash the dishes and clean the downstairs and you chose to do this instead?”

“Yeah,” Ryan diligently continued his work, “but Dad’s been wanting to get this garage cleaned for months. I think this is what he’d rather have me do.”

Robert left his brother in the garage. Dad was not going to be happy.

Robert was up to his elbows in soap and dishes when his father came in.



"Hey," his Dad said from the door, "Where's your brother? I thought I asked him to do the dishes."

"He's in the garage."

Mr. Cooke headed for the garage.

"Dad," Robert stopped him. "I'm sorry for how I acted this morning. It was very ungrateful and disrespectful of you."

"I forgive you, son. I knew you'd change your mind. I'll be right back in. I need to talk to your brother."

Robert was rinsing the last pan when his Dad and brother came into the kitchen.

"I thought it would make you happy if I cleaned the garage for you," Ryan was saying.

"What did I ask you to do, son?"

"But"

"What did I ask you to do?" his father repeated.

Ryan sighed, "To clean the dishes, and dust and vacuum the downstairs."

"Did you do that?"

"No, but..." Ryan protested.

"Did you obey what I asked for you to do?"

"No."

There was a moment of silence.

"Now," their father continued, "I appreciate you cleaning the garage, but that was not what I specifically asked you to do."

"But I wanted to please you," Ryan said, unable to look in his dad's eyes.

Mr. Cooke walked over to his son and gently lifted his face to look him in the eye, "You please me when you obey me and do what I ask. Okay?"

Ryan sighed, "Okay."

Mr. Cooke hugged his son gently. When he pulled back, he looked over at Robert. "Well, your brother has done a great job, but there's still work to do." He glanced at his watch. "If we really work together, we can get everything done and have dinner almost ready by the time Mom gets home. What do you say?"

Both boys smiled at their dad and the three went to work.

Just Do It!

Questions, Answers and Actions

For teacher reference only—do not hand out to the students.

1. QUESTION: According to 2 Kings 5, how many times did Naaman need to dip in the Jordan to be cleansed from leprosy?
ANSWER: Seven times
ACTION: Sing at the top of your lungs, "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" (or some other equally familiar tune) and act it out.
2. QUESTION: According to Genesis 22, what was the name of the son Abraham was asked by God to sacrifice?
ANSWER: Isaac
ACTION: Act like a baby throwing a temper tantrum when he doesn't get his way (performance must last at least twenty-five seconds).
3. QUESTION: According to Joshua 6, how many times total did God have the Israelites march around Jericho to make the walls of the city fall?
ANSWER: Thirteen times
ACTION: Stand on your head, balance a basketball on your finger or balance on one leg and sing the "ABC" song.
4. QUESTION: According to Exodus 17, what did God tell Moses to do to find water for the Israelites in the desert?
ANSWER: Strike the rock with his staff
ACTION: Lead your team in one minute of calisthenics, like a drill sergeant.
5. QUESTION: According to Genesis 9, what sign did God give Noah to show him he would never flood the earth again?
ANSWER: A rainbow
ACTION: Eat two saltine crackers and whistle "Yankee Doodle."
6. QUESTION: According to Judges 7, which men went with Gideon to fight the Midianites, the men who kneeled down to drink or the men who lapped water like a dog (from their hands)?
ANSWER: The men who lapped water like a dog
ACTION: Blow the biggest bubble you can with two pieces of bubble gum while dribbling a basketball around the room once.
7. QUESTION: According to Matthew 14, who had John the Baptist beheaded?
ANSWER: King Herod
ACTION: Hold your nose closed and say the alphabet backward.
8. QUESTION: According to Acts 9, where was Paul going when he was struck blind by Jesus?
ANSWER: Damascus
ACTION: Bark like a dog to the tune of "Jingle Bells" (or some other familiar holiday song).

Scripture Memory

This is love for God:
to obey his commands.
And his commands are not burdensome...

1 John 5:3

Weekly Challenge

Practice godly obedience this week. Choose someone to whom you need to be more obedient, and put what you have learned into practice.

Floating Liquids

Materials Needed

- 1 tall clear glass jar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup clear corn syrup
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup glycerol
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water (colored with red food coloring)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive oil or any light cooking oil
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup rubbing alcohol (colored with blue food coloring)
- 1 roll paper towels

Instructions

1. Read all the instructions before beginning the activity.
2. Place your glass jar, mouth end up, on the paper towels on a smooth, level surface.
3. Starting with the heaviest liquid, the syrup, pour it into the bottom of the glass.
4. Then add the next heaviest, glycerol, dribbling it slowly down the inside of the glass so that the syrup is not disturbed.
5. When this layer has settled, carefully add the water and then the olive oil, again dribbling each slowly down the inside of the glass.
6. Finally, trickle in the lightest liquid, the rubbing alcohol. What happened?

