


## LESSON 6: GOD MAKES BITTER WATER GOOD

Leader Guide for Grades 5 & 6

Classroom: Deeply Rooted

 Exodus 15:22-27

09/29/2019

### Teachers Dig In

#### Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Exodus 15:22-27
- In This Passage: After the Israelites escape Egypt, they travel in the desert for three days without finding water. When they finally find some, it tastes bitter. They complain and doubt God's plan, but God shows Moses a piece of wood to throw in the water. The wood makes the water good to drink! Even though they don't deserve God's goodness, God shows grace.
- Bible Point: God shows grace...
- Application: ...so we show grace.
- Summary Verse: "The Lord is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love" (Psalm 103:8).

#### Dig Deeper

- You'll Be Teaching: *God shows grace.* Grace is a lot easier to accept than to extend. Most kids have no problem believing that God loves and forgives them, even when they don't deserve it. But when other people are acting hard to love and forgive, passing on God's grace can be challenging! Help kids truly immerse themselves in how amazing God's grace for them is, so that they can't help but let it overflow to others.
- Think About: How has God shown you grace? What good things has he given you that you don't deserve?

#### Dig In to Prayer

- Pray that God would help kids understand the depth of his grace.

#### Quick Tip

- Sometimes misbehavior can be a result of a traumatic experience. The trauma response can inhibit kids' ability to regulate their emotions, behavior, and attention. This can show up as withdrawal, aggression, or disruptiveness. If you have a child who's acting out, don't assume they're doing it intentionally. Show grace. Seek to learn more about their situation. Your compassion and listening ear can make a big difference.

## This Lesson at a Glance



### OPENING

Kids share about a topic related to the lesson.

#### Supplies

- Bible



### OBJECT LESSON

Kids make water filters.

#### Supplies

- 16.9-ounce bottles of water (1 per child)
- scissors
- small plastic cups (2 per child)
- coffee filters (1 per child)
- cotton balls (at least 4 per child)
- sand
- gravel
- pitchers or a sink
- potting soil without fertilizer in it
- blue food coloring



### CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Kids try to cheer you up when you whine and then eat a salty snack with a bitter drink.

#### Supplies

- Bibles
- paper
- crayons or markers
- salty snack, such as popcorn or pretzels
- 8- or 9-ounce cups (1 per child)
- plain seltzer water
- Crystal Light On-the-Go packets (1 for every 4 kids) (fruit punch is a great flavor for kids)
- drinking straws (1 per child)

#### Easy Prep

- If you have a lot of kids, it might help to pour the cups of seltzer water ahead of time. Fill them only halfway.



### HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Kids race to carry sugar cubes to a bucket of water.

#### Supplies

- large bucket of water
- jumbo craft sticks (1 per child)
- sugar cubes (8 per child)
- 5 bowls
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

#### Easy Prep

- Place the bucket of water in the center of the play area.
- Place bowls on the floor around the bucket of water, 10 to 15 feet away.
- Distribute the sugar cubes as evenly as possible among the bowls.



### LOW-ENERGY GAME

Kids toss sticks into buckets of water.

#### Supplies

#### Easy Prep

- medium-size buckets of water (1 for every 5 kids)
- craft sticks (5 per child)
- masking tape
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

- Place the buckets of water around the room, and then tape lines on the floor 5 to 7 feet away from the buckets—these will be the throwing lines for kids to stand behind for their stick tosses.



## LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

**Kids pass on water as they pray for God's grace.**

### Supplies

- pitcher of water
- cups (1 per child)



## CRAFT

**Kids make cocoa packets to give away.**

### Supplies

- snack-size resealable plastic bags (2 per child, plus a few extra)
- confectioners' sugar (1¼ cup for every 5 kids)
- unsweetened cocoa powder (½ cup for every 5 kids)
- powdered milk (1 cup for every 5 kids)
- large bowls (1 for every 5 kids)
- mixing spoons (1 for every 5 kids)
- ¼-cup measuring cups (1 for every 5 kids)
- mini marshmallows
- "Grace-Filled Cocoa" handouts (1 for every 5 kids) (download [here](#))
- scissors
- markers
- tape

### Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.

*\*Marked supplies are also used in Core Bible Discovery*

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



### Supplies

- Bible

### Welcome

- Thank kids for coming.
- Just for fun, have kids give a foot-five (a high-five with a foot) to two friends.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having kids give the birthday child a fist bump with fireworks. (Don't know what this means? Ask your kids!)
- Collect the offering.

### Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we're going to learn that God shows grace. *Grace* is when God gives us good things we don't deserve. He showed the Israelites grace by making their water taste good. When I want to make something taste better, I use toppings or seasonings!**

### Share

- Tell kids *your* favorite condiment or seasoning.
- Have kids form pairs. Ask kids to share *their* favorite condiment or seasoning.
- After partners have discussed, ask two or three kids to share with the whole group what they talked about with their partners.

### Summarize

Open a Bible to Exodus 15, and say: **Condiments—the things we add to make food taste good—can remind us of grace because they're good! God shows grace whenever he gives us good things we don't deserve. Let's see how God showed grace to the Israelites in the Bible. The Bible is special because it's full of true stories about what God has done. God can talk to us as we read and experience his grace. Let's listen to God as we hear from the Bible today and as we pray to him.**

Pray, praising God for showing grace.



## OBJECT LESSON

### Clear Water

[10 min]

### Supplies

- 16.9-ounce bottles of water (1 per child)
- scissors
- small plastic cups (2 per child)
- coffee filters (1 per child)
- cotton balls (at least 4 per child)
- sand
- gravel
- pitchers or a sink
- potting soil without fertilizer in it
- blue food coloring

### Tips

- Use water bottles made with thin plastic so it's easy and safe for kids to cut them in half.
- If kids aren't thirsty or can't drink that much water, they can pour the extra water into the pitcher for Life Application Wrap-Up.

### Make Dirty Water

Say: **I don't know about you, but I'm a little thirsty. It's a good thing we have these bottles of delicious water. Let's take a drink!** Encourage kids to each drink about half a bottle of water. **In our Bible story, the Israelites were thirsty, too. So God showed grace and turned gross, bitter water into clean water for them to drink. Let's make our own water filters that turn dirty water into clear water.**

- Give each child two small plastic cups. Have kids add a bit of potting soil to one cup, and have an adult or teen helper add a drop or two of blue food coloring to the second cup.
- Have kids pour water from their bottles into each cup so each cup is half full. Kids should drink or pour out the rest of the water in their bottles so the bottles are empty. Kids don't need the lids.

Ask: • **Describe the water in your two cups. What do you see?**

### Create Filter Layers

Say: **Now let's build a filter to help us make the water clear again.**

- Have kids use scissors to cut their empty water bottles in half. Then they'll turn over the top half and place it upside down in the bottom half of the plastic bottle. This will be the filter base.



- Have each child place a coffee filter in the filter base. If the filter is not triangular, kids can fold the filter in half two times to make a triangle that will fit snugly into the bottle. Show kids how to trim the top of the filter if needed.



- Have kids use cotton balls, sand, and gravel to make filter layers. Encourage them to think through and plan what order they'd like their layers to be in. (We first added cotton balls, then sand, and then gravel.)
- Encourage kids to carefully pour the sand so it stays inside the filter and doesn't escape into the bottom of the bottle.

### **Pour Water Through the Filter**

Say: **Now that our filters are ready, let's pour water through them and see if it comes out clear!**

- Show kids how to carefully pour the water with the potting soil into the top of the filter and watch it drip through to the bottom. It'll be clear!
- Then have kids pour the water with food coloring into the filter. Note that the water that comes through is much clearer than it was.



### Observe Layers

- Have kids carefully disassemble their filters, removing the gravel, sand, and cotton balls. As they take apart the filters, they'll see which layers stopped the dirt and the food coloring.
- Have kids put the gravel in one of their cups, throw away the filters with the cotton balls and sand, and collect water bottles for recycling. You can save the gravel for a future supply or place it outside after class.

### Talk About It

Ask: • **What surprised you about this experiment?**

Say: **Our water filters helped make the water clear again—or at least clearer than it was. We might not have expected clear water to come through the filter, but it did! In our Bible story, the people of Israel may have been surprised that God made bitter water good to drink, and *he* didn't need a water filter! God shows grace to us when he clears away sin in our lives and gives us a refreshing new start.**

Ask: • **What makes it easy or hard to believe God filters away your sin?**

Say: **God shows grace. He sent Jesus to be like the filter, catching all the things we do wrong so we have a clean start.**



## Supplies

- Bibles
- paper
- crayons or markers
- salty snack, such as popcorn or pretzels
- 8- or 9-ounce cups (1 per child)
- plain seltzer water
- Crystal Light On-the-Go packets (1 for every 4 kids) (fruit punch is a great flavor for kids)
- drinking straws (1 per child)

## Easy Prep

- If you have a lot of kids, it might help to pour the cups of seltzer water ahead of time. Fill them only halfway.

## Whine and Complain

Put on your best whiny voice. Say: **I've had a horrible start to my day. My alarm clock went off two minutes early—I must've set it wrong. When I went to pour my breakfast cereal, only two pieces were left. I went to take a shower, and the water was a little bit on the cold side. The shirt I wanted to wear was dirty, so I had to wear this one. Driving here, I got stuck at every red light. It's like *everything* is going wrong today!**

**So I thought maybe you could cheer me up. Will you color pictures for me to cheer me up?**

Distribute paper and crayons, and have kids color pictures for you. As you collect them, find things to whine about. Ham up your performance and be extra whiny. Try to choose nonpersonal things so you don't make kids feel bad. Here are some suggestions:

- What I *really* wanted was a picture of a hippopotamus, and I didn't get one.
- I wanted all the pictures colored with only green because that's my favorite color.
- Even though I have these pictures, I still don't have my breakfast cereal.
- And I still don't have the shirt I wanted to wear!
- I wanted you to color on the *other* side of the paper!
- I like these pictures, but they'll probably get lost or stolen. Nothing goes right for me.

**Ask: • What were you thinking when you heard me whine and complain about your pictures?**

**• If I asked you to draw another picture for me, would you want to? Explain.**

**Say: The good news is, I made up all the things I complained about. My day's not really going so bad. And I *love* the pictures you made! When all people do is whine and complain—even when you just did something nice for them—it's hard to keep treating them kindly.**

**In the Bible, God had just freed his people, the Israelites, from being slaves in Egypt. They saw his power as he sent a lot of plagues on the Egyptians. Then he made a dry path through an entire sea to help the Israelites get across when the Egyptians chased them! Those were awesome, huge, amazing miracles!**

**Ask: • If you'd just experienced all these things, what would you want to say to God?**

**Say: At first, the Israelites thanked God and sang to him. But pretty soon they started complaining. Even though they didn't have to be slaves anymore, they found more and more and *more* things to complain about, just like I did earlier. But God shows grace, and he helped them over and over. *Grace* is when we get something good that we don't deserve. Let's experience what they did and see how God showed his grace.**

## Get Thirsty

Have kids run around the room for a minute and then do 20 jumping jacks. When kids sit down, distribute salty snacks and let them eat.

**Ask: • What's one word that describes how your mouth feels right now?**



**Say: I bet you'd love to have some water to drink! Let me get you some.**

Pour cups half full of seltzer water, and give a cup to each child. Most kids won't like the flavor or will at least be unpleasantly surprised by it.

**Say: This reminds me of something that happened to the Israelites.**

Read Exodus 15:22-24.

**Ask: • Knowing that God could send mighty plagues and part a sea so people could walk through it, what could he do about getting the Israelites water?**

**Say: You'd think after seeing all God's power, they'd trust him to provide water. But in that moment, they just wanted a drink! So they complained about the bitter water. We do the same thing sometimes.**

**Ask: • In your whiniest voice, call out some things kids whine or complain about today.**

**Say: That's a lot of whining! But God shows grace, and he showed the Israelites grace by fixing the water even when they complained. Let's see how he did it.**

Read Exodus 15:25.

Distribute Crystal Light packets, and have kids pour a little bit of the powder into their seltzer water and then stir it with straws. Advise kids to add only about one-fourth of the packet to each cup. The water will turn sweet, and kids can enjoy it.

As kids drink their water, lead them in this discussion.

**Ask: • Why do you think God showed grace, even when his people complained?**

**Say: Instead of complaining earlier, I could've celebrated all the good ways God had shown me his love! I could've thanked God for an alarm that woke me up so I could be here, that I got to have pancakes instead of cereal, and that God gave me clean water for a shower and plenty of clothes to wear.**

**Ask: • Tell about something you complain about a lot. How can you flip that to celebrate God's grace—providing something you don't deserve instead? For example, think about the things I complained about at the beginning and how I just flipped them. Have kids share in pairs, and then ask a few kids to report to the whole group.**

**Say: The good news is, God shows grace. Even when the Israelites had a bad attitude, God helped them. And when God's grace is added to our lives, it makes everything sweet! We just need to drink it up and enjoy the sweetness of God's grace. Then we can pass it on and show God's grace to others! God shows grace, so we show grace.**



## HIGH-ENERGY GAME

### Sweet Grace Race

[10 min]

### Supplies

- large bucket of water
- jumbo craft sticks (1 per child)
- sugar cubes (8 per child)
- 5 bowls
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

### Easy Prep

- Place the bucket of water in the center of the play area.
- Place bowls on the floor around the bucket of water, 10 to 15 feet away.
- Distribute the sugar cubes as evenly as possible among the bowls.

### Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the album [here](#).

### Run Sugar Cubes to the Water

**Say: Today's Bible story was about one of the many miraculous ways God took care of Moses and his people. God used a piece of wood to turn bitter water into sweet, drinkable water. In our game we'll use sticks to sweeten some water, too, but in our own way!**

- Give each child a craft stick.
- Point out where you've placed the bowls of sugar cubes.
- Kids will use their craft sticks to carry one sugar cube at a time by balancing it at the end of the stick and then drop it into the bucket of water to sweeten the water. Kids may use only one hand to hold their craft sticks.
- Challenge everyone to move as quickly as possible to get all the sugar cubes into the bucket.
- If a sugar cube is dropped, it must go back to the bowl it came from and a new person can carry it.
- For an added challenge, about halfway through tell kids to carry the craft sticks by holding one end in their mouths and balancing the sugar cubes on the other end.
- If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids play.

### Talk About It

**Ask:** • **What was it like to carry the sugar cubes on the sticks?**

• **What would've been different about how you played if there had been a million-dollar prize for never dropping a sugar cube?**

**Say:** I gave you grace in the game—when you dropped sugar cubes, you got new chances to get them to the water. *Grace* means getting new chances even if we haven't done anything to earn new chances.

**Ask:** • **Tell about a time you were happy to get a second chance.** Share an example of your own, such as a police officer giving you a warning instead of a ticket after pulling you over.

**Say:** **Grace is a sweet relief! God's grace made the water sweet for Moses and his people, and God's grace has done so many other amazing things in many people's lives. God shows grace by not giving up on us even though we mess up, and we can do the same for others.**



## LOW-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

### Stick It

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#### Supplies

- medium-size buckets of water (1 for every 5 kids)
- craft sticks (5 per child)
- masking tape
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

#### Easy Prep

- Place the buckets of water around the room, and then tape lines on the floor 5 to 7 feet away from the buckets—these will be the throwing lines for kids to stand behind for their stick tosses.

#### Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the album [here](#).

#### Toss Sticks Into the Water

Say: **In our Bible story today, we heard about how God miraculously made bitter water turn to sweet, drinkable water for the Israelites when Moses threw a special stick into the water. Moses' stick toss turned into a great idea for our game!**

- Form groups of five.
- Give each child five craft sticks.
- Have groups each form a line at a bucket, standing behind the throwing line you taped to the ground.
- Kids will take turns aiming and tossing one stick at a time into the bucket of water.
- If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids play.
- After everyone has tossed all of his or her sticks, have kids count how many went in the water and how many missed the bucket.
- Have kids each pick up five craft sticks from in and around the buckets to play another round or two. Challenge kids to improve how many sticks they get into the bucket.

#### Talk About It

Ask: • **What made it hard or easy for you to toss *all* your sticks in the bucket perfectly each time?**

Say: **It's hard to do anything completely perfectly. The Israelites in our Bible story didn't trust God perfectly, and none of us is perfect either. But God was still good to the Israelites and took care of them in miraculous ways, even when they messed up. God does the same for us.**

Ask: • **Tell about a time you messed up or did wrong but a friend or family member still showed you love and care.** Share an example of your own, such as a friend showing you grace after you forgot his or her birthday.

Say: **Those are times in your life and mine that someone has shown us grace. God shows grace to all of us and loves us no matter how many times we mess up. We can show God's grace to others by forgiving people when they mess up and giving them chances to try again.**



### Supplies

- pitcher of water
- cups (1 per child)

### Pass Water

Say: **In our Bible story, God showed grace by providing good water. Let's use water to thank God for giving us grace and to ask for his help passing on his grace.**

- Have kids sit in a semicircle.
- Set the pitcher of water at one end of the semicircle.
- Sit at the other end of the semicircle so the last child gets a chance to pass the water on to you.
- Give each child a cup.
- The child next to the pitcher of water will fill his or her cup while thanking God for his grace. Then that child will ask for God's help showing grace to others while emptying his or her cup into the next child's.
- Kids can pray aloud or silently.
- When someone's cup is being filled, he or she will thank God for his grace. When someone is pouring water into someone else's cup, he or she will ask for God's help showing grace to others.
- As the water is passed around the semicircle, the first child will continue to fill his or her cup and pass it around so everyone ends with a cup of water.

### Wrap Up

Say: **God shows grace, so we show grace. We can treat others kindly even when they don't seem to deserve it. We can show love and forgiveness to everyone. And we'll never run out of grace because God shows grace so much that he'll keep refilling our cups as we pass on his grace.**

Pray: **Thank you, God, that you show grace. Help us show your grace so everyone can see your gracious heart. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Thank kids for coming, and encourage them to come back next week.



## CRAFT

### Grace-Filled Cocoa

[20 min]

#### Supplies

- snack-size resealable plastic bags (2 per child, plus a few extra)
- confectioners' sugar (1¼ cup for every 5 kids)
- unsweetened cocoa powder (½ cup for every 5 kids)
- powdered milk (1 cup for every 5 kids)
- large bowls (1 for every 5 kids)
- mixing spoons (1 for every 5 kids)
- ¼-cup measuring cups (1 for every 5 kids)
- mini marshmallows
- "Grace-Filled Cocoa" handouts (1 for every 5 kids) (download [here](#))
- scissors
- markers
- tape

#### Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.



#### Tip

- Can't find enough measuring cups? Use 1 to pour some sugar into a clear plastic cup. Then use permanent marker to mark where the sugar line is. Give each group of 5 kids a marked cup, and tell them to fill to the line to measure ¼ cup.

#### Make Hot Chocolate Packets

Show kids the sample craft you made. Have kids form groups of five. Set out the supplies to share, and have kids follow these instructions to make two hot chocolate packets each.

- Each group will mix together 1¼ cup of confectioners' sugar (that's five ¼ cups), ½ cup of unsweetened cocoa powder (that's two ¼ cups), and 1 cup of powdered milk (that's four ¼ cups).
- Each child will get two bags. In each bag, put ¼ cup of your hot chocolate mix. Each group should have an extra ¼ cup, so you can make extra bags to distribute to another class or to adults in the lobby after church.
- Add a few marshmallows.
- Seal the bags.
- Cut out two labels from the "Grace-Filled Cocoa" handout.

- Decorate the labels, and tape one on each of your bags.

### **Talk About It**

Ask: • **When do you like to drink hot chocolate?**

• **Who else do you know who likes hot chocolate?**

Say: God shows grace. In the Israelites' case, he showed grace by making their water taste good.

**Adding hot chocolate mix is a way to make hot water taste really good! This week, pass on God's grace by giving your hot chocolate mixes to two people who seem to need grace. They might be feeling sad, complaining a lot, or going through a hard time. Maybe it's even someone who's mean to you! Reflect God's grace by sharing your hot chocolate!**

Have kids take their hot chocolate packets home and share them to show God's grace.

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