


LESSON 6: GOD MAKES BITTER WATER GOOD

Leader Guide for Grades 1 & 2

Classroom: Greenhouse Kids

 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 dirty water clear.

Supplies

- clear cups (1 per child)
- pitcher of water
- potting soil (avoid all potting soil with fertilizer)
- coffee filters (1 for every 5 kids)
- clear or light-colored bowls (1 for every 5 kids)



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Kids make gifts for the leader, get exercise as they travel, and try a drink.

Supplies

- Bible
- paper
- markers
- salty snack, such as crackers or pretzels (several per child)
- bottles of seltzer water (about 3 ounces per child)
- 3-ounce disposable cups (1 per child)
- Crystal Light On-the-Go packets (1 for every 10 kids) (fruit punch is a great flavor for kids)



CRAFT

Kids make hot chocolate mix.

Supplies

- snack-size resealable plastic bags (2 per child)
- confectioners' sugar (1¼ cup for every 5 kids)
- powdered milk (1 cup for every 5 kids)
- unsweetened cocoa powder (½ 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 (about 20 per child)
- "Grace-Filled Cocoa" handouts (1 for every 5 kids) (download [here](#))
- light-colored crayons
- scissors
- permanent marker (optional)
- tape

Easy Prep

- Cut apart the handouts.
- Make a sample craft to show kids.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Kids play a guessing game.



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Kids play Tag and show grace to their friends.

Supplies

- plastic or paper cups



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Kids take sips of a sweet drink as they pray.

Supplies

- sweet drink (enough for each child to have a few sips)
- 3-ounce cups (1 per child)

**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.



OPENING

Welcome

[5 min]

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'll find out that God shows grace. That means he gives us something good that we don't deserve. In the Bible, we'll hear how God's friends were whining and complaining. They didn't deserve anything good, but God gave them something good. He made some water taste better so his friends could drink it. That reminds me of sauces and dressings that can sometimes make our food tastier. Things like ranch dressing, ketchup, and jelly change the taste of potatoes, bread, and other foods we eat.**

Share

- Say: **If I were to choose which I like best out of ranch dressing, ketchup, and jelly, I would choose...** Share which of the three condiments you prefer, and explain why. Maybe you like ranch best because you can use it on a variety of things like salad or french fries. Or maybe you like ketchup because it goes along with your favorite meat.
- In small groups, have kids share which of the three condiments (ranch, ketchup, or jelly) they'd pick first to eat. Have them share what they'd eat the condiment with. They can also share other condiments they like instead.
- After small groups have discussed, have a few kids share with the whole group what they talked about in their small groups.

Summarize

Open a Bible, and say: **We add sauces, jellies, and dressings to our foods to make them taste better. Today we'll read in the Bible about how God made some gross water taste better. God did it to show grace to his friends. The Bible tells all about how God shows grace to us, too. And it shows us how we can share his grace. Let's learn more about that as we hear from the Bible today.**

Pray, thanking God for showing grace.



OBJECT LESSON

[10 min]

All Clear!

Supplies

- clear cups (1 per child)
- pitcher of water
- potting soil (avoid all potting soil with fertilizer)
- coffee filters (1 for every 5 kids)
- clear or light-colored bowls (1 for every 5 kids)

Make Dirty Water

Say: **In our Bible story, God gave his friends something good even though they didn't deserve it. Hold up the pitcher of water. Right now this water looks good and clear and ready to drink. But just like grumbling can ruin a happy day, dirt will ruin our clear water.**

- Give each child a clear cup with some water in it.
- Place potting soil where kids can reach.
- Have kids use their fingers to get pinches of potting soil to drop in their cups. As they add the soil, lead them in grumbling out loud. Like during the Bible Discovery, you might mention that you're tired, hungry, bored, and so on. Have kids grumble and add a pinch of soil four times.
- Have kids swirl or stir their water to mix in the soil.

Pour Water Through a Filter

Ask: • **Look at our water. How has it changed?**

Say: **The water used to be clear and good to drink. But now I don't want to drink it. We need help to make this water good again.**

- Form groups of five, and assign an adult or teen helper to each group.
- Have the adult or teen helper hold a coffee filter above a bowl while each child takes a turn carefully pouring the dirty water through the filter. The filter will catch the dirt, causing clear water to drip through to the bowl.
- After kids pour their water, encourage each child to say something he or she thanks God for.
- Once everyone has had a turn, observe the bowl of clean water together.

Talk About It

Say: **The filter helped us turn bad into good. It caught all the dirt and let only clear water drip through. Like the filter turned our water good, God shows grace. He turns bad into good and changes our hearts so we grumble less and thank him more!**

**Supplies**

- Bible
- paper
- markers
- salty snack, such as crackers or pretzels (several per child)
- bottles of seltzer water (about 3 ounces per child)
- 3-ounce disposable cups (1 per child)
- Crystal Light On-the-Go packets (1 for every 10 kids) (fruit punch is a great flavor for kids)

Make Gifts for the Leader

Begin by acting like you're not having a great day. Really ham it up by making it sound as if it's a terrible day. Share three to five things about your fictional bad day. You might say that you couldn't sleep last night, your shower was cold, someone ate all your favorite cereal, you had a flat tire, and you stepped in mud on the way into the church.

Say: **To cheer me up, would you mind making a picture or something for me?** Pause. **Does anyone know origami?** Give kids markers and paper, and allow them to work for a few minutes to make something for you.

When kids begin to hand you their creations, thank them, but remain focused on your bad day. For example, you might say in a sad tone, "Thanks for making this picture. It's nice, but I'm still having a terrible day."

After all the children have given you their creations and you've continued to complain about your day, gather the children and make sure you have their full attention.

Change your composure and voice to a positive tone, and say: **Friends, thank you for all the wonderful pictures you made for me! I was pretending just now—I'm not really having a terrible day. I was showing you how some people in the Bible acted.**

Act and Exercise

Say: **In our Bible story, it says God's friends, the Israelites, were complaining a lot. God had just freed them from living in a terrible place. God brought them to a new place where they could have a better life. And they thanked God at first, but then they started complaining again. And they complained, and they complained, and they complained—kind of like I just did with all my complaining.**

The Israelites were on a tough journey through the desert. Have the kids stand, and lead them in running in place for 60 seconds. Encourage them to move as fast as possible.

Say: **You're running hard. You might need some energy because we're going to travel even more.** Give each child a few pretzels or crackers to eat. Then lead kids in pretending to travel, continuing to make it vigorous. Have them hop over "logs," "climb a mountain" using both their arms and legs, and run from "big animals."

When children begin to get tired, have them sit. Say: **The Israelites traveled for three long days! And there was no water in the desert, so they were getting really thirsty. They complained a lot about that. We sometimes complain, too, don't we?**

Share some things you have complained about. For example, maybe you complained about a vegetable your parents made you eat, about not getting to watch your favorite TV show, or about having to do your chores.

Ask: **• What does your mom or dad do when you complain a lot?** Children might say that Mom and Dad become mad or sad when kids complain a lot. They might also say that they have to go home or go to their rooms or a toy is taken away.

Taste a Drink

Say: **The Israelites were complaining so much! And when they did find a beautiful place with water, they tasted it, but it was bitter. I bet you all are thirsty right now from all that traveling and exercise you did.**

Pour a small sip of seltzer water into a cup for each child. Wait for the children's reactions. Say: **Oh! Our water is kind of like the water the Israelites tried. I guess we can't drink that. But the Bible says the Israelites asked God for help with the water. And God showed grace to his friends. They had been complaining so much, but instead of being annoyed or angry with them, God helped them! He gave them something good when they didn't deserve it. That's what I mean when I say God showed grace.**

Here's how God helped them: God asked his friend Moses to pick up a stick. Hold up a Crystal Light On-the-Go packet. God said, "Throw the stick in the water to make it good to drink." Empty a Crystal Light packet into the bottle of seltzer water (one packet for every 20 ounces), put the lid on, and gently mix.

Say: **After Moses tossed the stick into the bitter water, God changed it. Then the water was good to drink! Let's see if our sticks made our water tasty.** Give each child about 2 ounces of seltzer mixed with flavoring. Invite kids to talk about how the water tastes now.

Talk About It

Say: **The water was bitter, but when we added the stick, it made our water pretty good. In the Bible, the water was bitter, too, but when Moses added the stick, God made the water good. God showed grace when he helped his friends. His friends complained and complained, but God still gave them something good.**

God shows grace to us, too. Sometimes we're grumpy, but God still gives us good things.

Share about a time you were grumpy. Then invite children to share about a time they were grumpy if they want to.

Say: **Sometimes we make choices we know are wrong, but God still forgives us and takes care of us. That's another way God shows grace.**

Share about a time you made a choice you knew was wrong when you were a child. Maybe you sneaked a piece of candy without asking your parents, or maybe you did something unkind to a friend, brother, or sister.

Say: **Think of a time you did something you knew was wrong.** Pause and allow about 20 seconds of silence.

Say: **God forgives you for what you did that was wrong. God shows grace to us all the time, and we can show grace to others, too. We can be kind and helpful to others, even when they don't deserve it. Let's think of some ways we can show grace.**

Share the following scenarios, and encourage children to think of ways they could show grace. At first you may have to prompt ideas, but after a couple of examples, children will likely begin to think of ideas.

- A friend grabs a toy from your hands. (To show grace, you might let the friend play with it and not try to grab it back.)
- Your brother says something mean to you. (To show grace, you might say something nice back to him.)
- A friend won't share a snack with you. (To show grace, you might share your snack with her.)
- Your mom or dad is grumpy. (To show grace, you say nice things or help with the chores.)

Say: **We can show grace because God shows grace to us. God always gives us good things. He always gives us what's best for us, even when we don't deserve it.**



CRAFT

Grace-Filled Cocoa

[20 min]

Supplies

- snack-size resealable plastic bags (2 per child)
- confectioners' sugar (1¼ cup for every 5 kids)
- powdered milk (1 cup for every 5 kids)
- unsweetened cocoa powder (½ 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 (about 20 per child)
- "Grace-Filled Cocoa" handouts (1 for every 5 kids) (download [here](#))
- light-colored crayons
- scissors
- permanent marker (optional)
- tape

Easy Prep

- Cut apart the handouts.
- 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 a 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.

Make Hot Chocolate Packets

Show kids the sample craft you made. Divide kids into groups of five, and have them wash their hands. Set out the supplies for each group to share, and have helpers lead kids through these instructions to make two hot chocolate packets each.

- Lead each group of five children in mixing 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).
- Give each child two resealable plastic bags.

- Help kids open their bags and scoop about ¼ cup of the mix to pour in each of their bags.
- Let kids add up to 10 mini marshmallows to each bag.
- Help kids seal the bags.
- Give each child two labels from the “Grace-Filled Cocoa” handout, and tell kids what it says. Then let them decorate the labels with light-colored crayons.
- Help kids tape the labels to their 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. For his friends, the Israelites, God showed grace by making their water taste good. Adding hot chocolate mix is a way to make hot water taste really good! When you leave today, share God’s goodness and grace by giving your hot chocolate mixes to two people. Choose someone who looks sad or is complaining a lot. Maybe even choose someone who’s mean to you. When you do, remember that God gives us good things when we don’t deserve them, and we can give a good gift like that, too. Give something good by sharing your hot chocolate!**

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



LOW-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

Guessing Game

Play a Game Like I Spy

Say: **Let's play a guessing game! I'll look around and then give you a clue about something in our room. Then you'll take turns guessing what it is. I'm going to try to choose something that will be really hard for you to guess.**

- Choose an object and give a clue. Your clue could be a color, a texture, or what you do with the object. For example, "I see something soft" could be a clue for a stuffed animal, or "I see something red" could be a clue for a poster on your wall. Be careful not to look directly at the object and give it away.
- Have kids try to guess the object. When a child guesses correctly, he or she gets to choose the next object and give a clue. Challenge kids to choose things that will be difficult to guess.
- Continue playing, making sure to give each child an opportunity to choose an object and give a clue.

Talk About It

Say: **We didn't always guess the right objects right away. But our friends showed grace and let us keep guessing, even when we were wrong. Just like our friends showed grace in our game, God shows grace to us every day. We all make mistakes sometimes. But our friends and family members show us grace and keep on loving us.**

Tell about someone in *your* life who gives you grace when you mess up.

Ask: • **Who's someone who gives *you* grace when you mess up?** Kids might mention a parent or a teacher.

Say: **When people show grace, they show us what God is like. God shows grace. God's grace gives us more chances to make good choices.**



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

Good Water Tag

Supplies

- plastic or paper cups

Play a Game of Tag

Say: **In our Bible story, God helped his friends who were thirsty. He gave them a good gift when they needed it—water! Let's play a game where we'll pretend to give friends water when they need help.**

- Choose one "Tagger" for every five kids in your group. The Taggers will run around and try to tag other kids.
- Choose "Water Friends," and give an empty plastic cup to each of those kids. You'll need one Water Friend for every Tagger. These kids will help people who get tagged.
- When kids are tagged, they'll sit on the floor until they can get some "good water." Water Friends will give their cups to the kids sitting on the floor. Then those kids become new Water Friends. Both the child who had the cup and the child who received a cup are now free, but now the child who *received* the cup gets a turn to free others.
- If a Water Friend is tagged, he or she also sits and waits for another Water Friend to trade cups with.
- Play for about eight minutes, switching kids' roles occasionally so everyone has a turn as a Water Friend.

Talk About It

Say: **When we give grace, we help people even if they don't do anything to earn our help. The Water Friends helped people who were tagged. The people who were tagged didn't do anything to deserve help, but the Water Friends still helped them. God helps us when we don't deserve it, too. That's what I mean when I say God shows grace.**

And in our game, we passed on grace. When someone helped us, we got a cup and could help others, too.

Tell about a time in your life you gave grace to someone. Perhaps you did a family member's chores after he or she was mean to you, or you sent a birthday card to someone who had forgotten *your* birthday.

Say: **God loves it when we share grace with others like he does. God shows grace, and we can, too. He helps us give grace to others.**



Supplies

- sweet drink (enough for each child to have a few sips)
- 3-ounce cups (1 per child)

Drink a Sweet Drink

Say: **God did something amazing in the Bible story we read today. God showed grace when he helped his friends. They were very grumpy and didn't really deserve help, but God gave them what they needed anyway. He made some water safe to drink.**

Give each child a small cup with only a sip of the sweet drink, and tell kids not to drink it yet.

Share about something sweet God does for you. For example, you might share how God brings you peace when you read the Bible. You might also share how God makes you feel joy when you sing to him.

Ask: • **What's something sweet God does for you?** Help children think of ideas, if needed. They might share how they feel safe when they remember that God's with them at night or that God gave them family whom they love.

Say: **God gives us so much, and every time God gives us something, he's showing us grace. God loves us and wants to take care of us, even when we don't deserve it. God showed grace to his friends in the Bible when he gave them something to drink, and he shows grace to us. Let's thank God for taking care of us and giving us grace.**

Lead children to say "Thank you, God" and then drink a sip from their cups.

Continue Sipping and Praying

Say: **God's grace never runs out.** Have adult and teen helpers add more of the sweet drink to each child's cup. **We can make bad choices, but God will love us and forgive us. Let's thank God for forgiving us.**

Lead children to say "Thank you, God" and then drink a sip from their cups.

Say: **Because of God's unending grace and love, we can show grace and love to others, too.**

Let's ask God to help us share God's grace with others by being kind to all those around us.

Lead children to say "Help me show grace, God" and then drink a sip from their cups.

Say: **This week, remember that God has such a big love for you, and he can help you show grace and love to others, too.** Invite kids to come back to church next week.