

## Leader Devotional

### Equip

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More than any other term, Jesus referred to Himself as the Son of Man. In Jesus' day, this term could have been perceived two ways—the first being simply a man, and the second being the Messiah.

Ezekiel referred to himself more than 90 times as the son of man. In Hebrew, "son of man" was a figure of speech indicating membership to a particular class. In the context of Ezekiel, the term "son of man" brings to light the contrast between humanity and Almighty God. Daniel used the term "son of man" to describe the One who will come on clouds from heaven, in glory and everlasting dominion (Daniel 7). All people will serve the Son of Man, and His kingdom will not be destroyed. Clearly this refers to a divine being, not just a mere man.

We can infer that when Jesus referred to Himself as the Son of Man, He was making a statement. He was declaring both His humanity and His divinity. Those who denied the deity of Jesus, such as the Pharisees and the religious leaders, saw His claim as blasphemous. However, for one to recognize Jesus as the divine Son of Man described in Daniel 7, one would have to have the conviction that Jesus was the fulfillment of messianic prophecy. Jesus was seemingly always trying to bring the question "Who do you think I am?" to the forefront, challenging those around Him to make a decision about His authority.

### Support

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The story is told of the Great Blondin, a famous tightrope walker who lived near the end of the 19th century. One of his most famous endeavors was the crossing of the Niagara Gorge, where legend has it that upon crossing the gorge back and forth pushing a wheelbarrow, with the crowds going wild, he asked the onlookers, "Who believes I can cross again with this wheelbarrow?" Everyone

enthusiastically applauded with agreement. Then he asked, "Who, then, will get in the wheelbarrow?"

That is the definition of faith. It is staking all you have on the faithfulness of the One you are trusting. When we seek forgiveness and healing from God, it is the ultimate act of stepping into faith. Faith is not something comfortable. It stretches us in unforeseen ways. The faith of the paralyzed man and of his friends, to dig down through the roof of a house, probably upsetting the homeowner, demonstrated an heroic faith, a true faith. God calls us to step outside of what is easy and what is comfortable into a life that honors His faithfulness.

If you dare, ask God this week to deepen your faith. But be careful: The way faith grows is through opportunities to demonstrate that faith and dependence upon God. Pray that God would also deepen the faith of the children whom you lead, that He would take them out of their comfort zones and change them as only He can.

## Kinder - 3rd Grade Lesson

**Date:** May 30th

**Series:** God Is

**Topic:** God Forgives

**Intro:** 15 Minutes

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*Welcome kids as they arrive. They are allowed to play with toys, color, or play group games.*

- **1st Service:** Begin at 9:30am
- **2nd Service:** Begin at 11:15am

**Worship Focus:** 10 minutes

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*Lead children in a Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds. Have them put their hands on their heart. Encourage them to picture a throne on their heart. Ask them who is sitting on it? Remind the students that when we worship, we are removing ourselves from the throne of our heart and putting God in His rightful place - King of our Heart. Encourage them to express their worship with their voices and give them permission to raise their hands as they feel led.*

*When you feel they are ready, play the two worship songs:*

- This is Amazing Grace - Phil Wickham
- Reckless Love - Cory Asbury

**Bible Focus - Main Lesson:** 15 minutes

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**Intro:**

**Has there ever been a time in your life where you helped someone, whether they asked for help or not? What did you do to help that person?** (Pause for

response). Today, we are going to learn about how four friends fit into the Big God Story. Before we talk more about it, let's learn some of the backstory!

Just before Jesus began His ministry, He was baptized and then tempted in the wilderness for 40 days. After His time in the wilderness, Jesus began traveling from town to town, preaching and ministering to people. The Bible tells us that in one town, the people **"gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door" (Mark 2:2)**. What a crowd! But there were four friends determined to get to Jesus. Let's watch this video to find out more!

### **Bible Story:**

**Play Video** - *Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man (Luke 5:17-26)*

### **Recap:**

In today's story four men had a friend who was paralyzed. **What does paralyzed mean?** Being paralyzed means that the man couldn't walk on his own, so his friends carried him on a mat. **When they arrived at the house where Jesus was, what happened?** It was too crowded to get in the door! But they didn't give up; they thought of a plan.

Back then, houses had flat roofs made of a straw-and-mud mixture (**cue house image**). So the men climbed up to the roof, brought up their friend, and started digging a hole in the roof! Everyone in the crowd must have wondered what they were doing! But the four men kept on digging. When the hole was big enough, they picked up their friend and lowered him down into the house.

**Invite the children to open their Bibles to Mark 2:5. (At this time, model/ show the children how to get to the New Testament, find the Book of Mark, Chapter 2, then verse 5.)** Ask for one volunteer to read the verse loud and proud. When Jesus saw their faith, He turned to the paralyzed man and said, **"Son, your sins are forgiven" (Mark 2:5)**. Wait! What? "Your sins are forgiven"? Why would Jesus say that? That man had come for healing, but instead Jesus forgave his sins.

Pharisees, or Jewish teachers, were also in the room. They claimed to follow the commandments of the Old Testament very closely and believed that following the laws would cause God to send His Messiah and conquer their enemies. They were so strict about their beliefs that they wouldn't even go near sinners, the sick, or outcasts because they didn't want the sin to rub off on them. **Did the Pharisees like Jesus?** No! **Why not?** Most Pharisees didn't like Jesus very much because He spent a lot of time with all kinds of people.

The Pharisees also believed that only God has the authority to forgive sin. So when they heard Jesus forgive the paralyzed man of his sins, the Pharisees were furious. Because Jesus is God, He knew what they were thinking and said, **"Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.'** So he said to the man, **'I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home'" (Mark 2:9-11)** . And the man got up and walked. Everyone was amazed!

Ask for 1-2 volunteers to come up and put the heavy chains on their bodies to represent the weight of sin. Ask them how they feel with the weights on them. Then, remove the chains and ask the children how they feel without the weight. ***Sometimes we try to hide our sin or pretend it doesn't exist, but we still feel the huge weight of sin's guilt and shame. But through Jesus, we don't have to carry the weight of our sin anymore!***

That's why Jesus came. The Bible says, **"The punishment that brought us peace was on [Jesus], and by his wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5)** . When Jesus died on the cross, He took the punishment for our sins, and when we trust and obey Him, He forgives us! ***Share an age-appropriate story of a time you experienced true forgiveness from God, and share how free you felt.***

*End in Prayer.*

**At this time, split the children into two smaller groups: Kinder & 1st, 2nd & 3rd. Bring one group upstairs to the empty classroom closest to the main exit of the hallway (what used to be the old nursery). The other group will remain in the K-3rd classroom. Focus on Activity #1 first. After 10 minutes, switch locations and focus on Activity #2.**

## **Activity #1: 10 Minutes | Riding Through an Obstacle Course**

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**What You Need:** gym scooter with handles, 6' rope, masking/painters tape (for start and finish line), obstacles (chairs, table, stuffed animals, etc.) Optional: could make zig-zags with tape.

**Relate:** In today's part of The Big God Story, we heard about a man who was paralyzed, which means he couldn't walk. His friends wanted to get him to Jesus, but they couldn't get past the crowds surrounding the house where Jesus was. They had to try some pretty tricky maneuvers to get their paralyzed friend to Jesus. Today, let's ride on a gym scooter as we try to navigate some obstacles.

### **What To Do:**

1. Ask for a volunteer and have that child sit on a gym scooter at the "Start" line, holding one end of the rope.
2. Then, ask 2-5 kids to grab the other end of the rope.
3. On your signal, have the kids pull the child on the scooter through the obstacle course. Make sure they go slowly enough that the child doesn't fall off the scooter!
4. Repeat this activity with the rest of the children. Be sure to give each one a chance to ride.

## Activity #2: 10 Minutes | Confession & Forgiveness Stations

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### What You Need:

- Confession Station: individual whiteboards, whiteboard markers & erasers
- Forgiveness Station: large cross (wood or paper cross taped to the wall), index cards, pens/markers, glue dots

**Relate:** Sometimes it can be hard to think about and even talk about our sins. But God is good, and He will always love us, always listen, and always forgive us when we choose to turn away from our sin and ask for His forgiveness.

### What To Do:

1. While worship music is playing (Play Prayer Spotify Playlist), ask the kids to spend some time talking to God silently about any places in their lives where they need God's forgiveness. When the children are ready, encourage them to visit the response stations.
2. Have the leaders position themselves around the room, especially near the response stations.
3. At the Confession Station, encourage each child to write a word or draw a picture of something she wants to confess to God. The child can place both hands on that word or picture and confess that sin to God, asking Him for forgiveness. Then the child can remove her hands, take an eraser, and erase the word or picture while thanking God for sending Jesus to pay for her sins.
4. At the Forgiveness Station, encourage children to write brief letters/draw a picture to Jesus and thank Him for what He did on the cross and for giving them grace and love. Then the kids can take glue dots and stick their letters to the cross. As children respond, encourage leaders to move around the room, be available to kids, and pray with them for forgiveness if they want.

## Ending:

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Return to the K-3rd classroom and let kids play until parents arrive. K-3rd is **not** allowed on the playground at this time.

As parents pick their children up, tell them the main points we talked about today and the activities we did. Please make sure kids take home all the things that they came with (ex. Jackets or toys) and any crafts they made in class.

After children are gone, please wipe down the chairs and tables and put supplies back so they can be ready for the next service.