

LESSON 74

God's Word Is Living

HEBREWS 4:12-13



BIBLE TRUTH

THE WORD OF GOD IS ACTIVE

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING REVIEW **5 MIN**

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

2. BIBLE STORY **10 MIN**

Read Hebrews 4:1–16 from the Scriptures or read story 152, “God’s Word Is Living,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

3. OBJECT LESSON 1 **10 MIN**

Nothing Is Hidden from His Sight

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ three transparent, plastic containers with one large enough to fit over the stone
- ✓ a baseball-sized stone

4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION **10 MIN**

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

5. OBJECT LESSON 2 **10 MIN**

Rotten to the Core

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ three apples—two mildly bruised and one with no bruises
- ✓ dried figs
- ✓ large knife
- ✓ cutting board
- ✓ paper towels
- ✓ plastic bag for the trash/scrap (so they aren’t sitting in the classroom)

6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY **5 MIN**

7. ACTIVITY TIME **10 MIN**

Color a Picture

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 74—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

LESSON SNAPSHOT

8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 15 MIN

They Failed to Hide Their Sin

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ simple costumes made up of flat sheets and towels
- ✓ a bag full of spare change and a bandanna to use as a moneybag

TOTAL 80 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

The Word of God is living—God’s Word is living and active (Hebrews 4:12). When we read God’s Word, the Holy Spirit uses it to judge our actions and our thoughts. But in order for us to benefit from God’s Word we must come to it with faith and believe it. Israel failed to enter into the Promised Land and God’s rest because they did not believe God’s word (Hebrews 3:19—4:3). It is important that when we read God’s Word and it judges our hearts, we do not turn away but believe and repent of our sin and trust the Lord.

Nothing is hidden from God’s sight—We will all have to give an account for everything we have done while we are here on this earth (Hebrews 4:13). God sees and knows everything. Jesus said, “nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known” (Matthew 10:26). God knows every sparrow that falls, and every hair on our head is numbered. Therefore, we should not fool ourselves into thinking that we can ignore God’s Word and live life any way we want, without judgment. God knows everything we do and his Word exposes our every sin. If a person has secretly stolen something, he might think he has gotten away with his crime. But every time he reads the words “Thou shall not steal,” he becomes freshly aware that God knows he is a thief. One day we will all need to give an account before God for all we have done.

Our confidence and rest is in Jesus—Once you realize that God sees all and that he is going to judge everyone, it is easy to be afraid. But the writer of Hebrews tells us that in trusting Jesus we have a place of rest from striving to live by our works. Jesus has already lived a perfect life and died for our sins. He offers us rest from our striving if we believe and place our trust in him.

We can run to the throne of grace in our time of need because we have a faithful high priest (Hebrews 4:14–16). Jesus was tempted like us in every way, so he can sympathize with our struggles. Unlike us, he did not sin. His sinlessness made him the perfect sacrifice for our sin. Now, in heaven before God, the sacrificial Lamb stands as our high priest. His sacrifice pleads for us before the throne of God night and day forever. Later in Hebrews we read the following:

The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. (Hebrews 7:23–27)

Where Is the Gospel?

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Immediately following the description of the probing work of God's Word, the writer of Hebrews turns our attention to Jesus, our great High Priest. This is not an accidental transition. God's Word exposes our sin, making us aware of our need for forgiveness. Therefore we should run to the throne of grace, where we can find mercy from God.

There is only one way for God to show us mercy. God can't simply overlook our sin. As a just and righteous judge, he must punish sin. But instead of punishing us, God poured out the punishment for our sin upon his Son. Now everyone who places their faith in Christ's work on the cross can rest from their labors.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Hebrews 4:1–16 from the Scriptures or read story 152, "God's Word Is Living," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Nothing Is Hidden from His Sight

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ three transparent, plastic containers with one large enough to fit over the stone
- ✓ a baseball-sized stone

Show the stone to the class and explain that it represents a sinful, stony heart that is rebelling against God and filled with sin.

Ask the class if they would want God to know about it if they had a heart like this. (They will answer no). Ask them why not. (The answer, of course, is that God is going to judge sin.)

Read Hebrews 4:7 and explain to the class that we harden our heart when we disobey God's Word and do our own thing. Then ask the class for a few examples.

Finally, ask for a volunteer and explain that you want them to try and hide the rock from the class, but they must keep the rock on the table and they can only use the clear plastic containers to hide it.

They will say it is impossible, but encourage them to give it a try anyway. Then ask the class if they can see the rock. Use this as an illustration to help the class see that we can try to hide our sin but God knows everything that we have done.

TEACHING/DISCUSSION **10 MIN**

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESSON 2 **10 MIN**

Rotten to the Core

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ three apples—two mildly bruised and one with no bruises
- ✓ dried figs
- ✓ large knife
- ✓ cutting board
- ✓ paper towels
- ✓ plastic bag for the trash/scrap (so they aren't sitting in the classroom)

Prior to class, core an apple from the bottom, but do not pierce the top. Hollow out the cavity as large as you can without making the opening in the bottom larger. Then stuff the cavity with figs. The apple should look normal from the outside when it stands upright.

Use this exercise to illustrate the sin in our hearts that the Word of God is able to expose.

Read Hebrews 4:12–13 to the class. Ask the children to put the passage in their own words. Correct them as necessary and move on to the illustration.

Tell them that you can't always tell if an apple is good to eat until you cut into it. The knife can reveal what is hidden inside. Ask them if they have ever cut into a rotten apple.

Cut open the first good apple and let them see inside. If there are any imperfections they will show up. Then cut open the second good apple and let them see inside again. Finally cut open the cored apple and watch their expressions go wild!

Ask them the following questions:

- **How many of you expected to see such a bad apple?**
(Draw them out.)
- **How did the apple look on the outside?**
(It looked pretty good.)
- **How is this like a person?**
(A person can look good on the outside but be filled with sin on the inside.)
- **How does the Word of God reveal our hearts?**
(The Word convicts us and makes us feel guilty for our sin so that we realize we must repent.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY **5 MIN**

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME **10 MIN**

Color a Picture

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 74—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- **What do you see in this picture?**
(a sword, a heart, and a Bible)

- **What did our Bible passage today tell us about these three objects?**
(The sword is another name for the Bible and it is used to divide or cut open our heart to reveal the sin inside.)

- **How does the Bible show us our sin?**
(In the Bible we learn what sin is and how we can obey God. God doesn't hide the truth from us. He has given us the Bible so that we can know how to please him and live for him.)

CLOSING PRAYER **5 MIN**

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's Scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON **15 MIN**

They Failed to Hide Their Sin

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ simple costumes made up of flat sheets and towels
- ✓ a bag full of spare change and a bandanna to use as a moneybag

Read Hebrews 4:13 and explain that no one can hide their sins from God. Then ask the class if they can remember a person from the Bible who tried to hide his or her sins from God. See if they can remember the following three examples. After each one, choose a few children to act out the scene in front of the class.

1. Adam and Eve tried to hide the fact that they had eaten the forbidden fruit by hiding from God (Genesis 3:7–10). To act this out have two children pretend to eat the fruit and then hide somewhere in the classroom from you.

2. Achan stole some of the devoted things and tried to hide them from God, but God knew and chose him out of all the Israelites (Joshua 7:18–22). Have a child play Achan. Give him the bandanna full of coins and have him pretend to dig a hole and bury it. Then line up several children along with Achan and pretend to be God—point out Achan in the group and say that he was the one who did it.

3. Ananias and Sapphira tried to keep back some of the money they pretended to give after selling a piece of land. But God told Peter exactly what they had done (Acts 5:1–11). Choose two students to play the roles of Ananias and Sapphira. Use the narrative in Acts 5:1–11 as a script and narrate the story.

Ask the children what they think about trying to hide their sin from God now that you have reminded them of these three stories.

Finally, share the gospel and explain that we are all sinners, yet if we trust in what Jesus did on the cross we do not have to worry or try to hide our sin. Instead, we can run to Jesus and find rest in him when we put our trust in his work on the cross.

