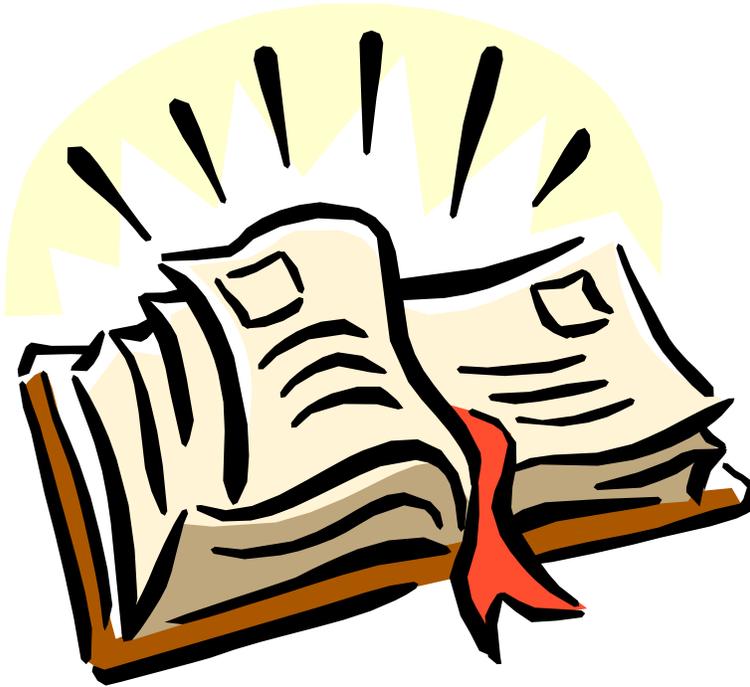


Bible Time for Kids!



CHILDREN'S DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF:



LESSON TITLE: To the Unknown God

THEME: Believers of the truth should share it with those who are deceived.

SCRIPTURE: Acts 17:16-34

Dear Parents...

Welcome to Bible Time for Kids! This is a series of daily devotions for children and their families. Our purpose is to supplement our Sunday morning curriculum and give you an opportunity to encourage your children to develop a daily devotional life. We hope you and your family will be blessed as you study God's Word together.

This week we learned about The Unknown God. The theme was "Believers of the truth should share it with those who are deceived." The apostle Paul came to the city of Athens and saw all kinds of idols. His heart was broken for the people to come to Jesus and he wanted to share with them about the true and living God. So he saw one of the altars that said to the "unknown God" just in case they missed one in their worship. Paul used this as an opportunity to teach about Jesus.

We need to be ready to share about our faith in Jesus. We are going to be learning more about that this week. There are a lot of people and things in this world that say they speak for God - a lot of confusion. How do we know the truth and help others to know the truth? We'll find out more this week!

The section of scripture that we studied was **Acts 17:16-34**. The following five devotions are based on either the scripture and/or the theme for Sunday's lesson. As a starting point it would be good for you to review these verses with your children.

These devotions are designed to help you reinforce Sunday's lesson throughout the week with your children, provide some more ideas for the application of God's Word in your children's lives and provide a tool to help in family devotions.

Obviously children at various age levels will respond to the devotional in different ways. You may want to add your own ideas to these to make them more age appropriate.

May the Lord bless you as you study His Word together!

Itchy Ears

Text: 2 Timothy 4:3 - "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers."

Also read Acts 17:20-21

Have you ever done something at school called "Show and Tell"? It is when each person in class brings something exciting and shows it to everyone and then tells about it. It can be very fun and silly. But sometimes children will make something up because they want everyone to think their story is the best. They might stretch the truth to make the thing they are talking about really exciting so the rest of the class will think they are cool. But still, any way you look at it, if it is not the truth then it is a lie. And even when it is a lie the other kids may want to listen because it sounds fun and exciting, but it is still a lie.

In our Bible reading today we see that this is what is happening with Paul. In the city he came to he was on a mission to tell people about the truth of Jesus. They liked to hear all about different gods and stories about different ways to believe in God. They did not care if it was true or not, as long as it sounded exciting. We read in our verse today that Paul warned young Timothy to watch out for people with "itching ears." People with itchy ears would be those who only want to listen to those things that please them. They do not really want to learn what the Bible says, just what makes them happy.

We have to be careful not to have itchy ears. Just because something sounds fun and exciting does not mean that it is true. There are so many different ways that people believe about God in the world, but there is only one truth. God wants us to understand His truth and not be fooled by people that would want to lead us away from the truth. How can we know the truth and not have itchy ears? First we need to have a desire in our heart to know the truth. Do we really want to know what God has to say about our lives? Then we need to go to the source of all truth, God's Word. God has given us the Bible to help us to understand what is true and what is not. So if something we are told is different than what is in the Bible, then it is not true. So let us be careful and only let God's Word scratch our itchy ears.

- What does God want you to do when you hear something wrong about God?
- Where can we find the truth about God?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Itchy ears: people with ears that only want to hear or listen to what makes them happy, even if it is not the truth.

Day Two

God, Where do you Live?

Text: Acts 17:24 - "God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not **dwell** in the temples made with hands."

Also read Deuteronomy 10:14

Do you know where God lives? Some people believe that He lives in a church or a temple or that He is sitting in heaven not concerned with what is going on down here on earth. The Bible tells us that God does live in heaven but He also dwells inside the hearts of His people. In fact, the Bible even calls our hearts the temple of the Holy Spirit. When we believe in Jesus, He comes to live inside of us. God is not concerned with big expensive churches or temples made with gold and silver. He is concerned about where our hearts are. He wants us to have pure hearts that love and worship only Him.

So how do we know what is in our heart? Well the Bible tells us in Jeremiah 17:9, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked..." That means no matter how nice we think we are or how good we try to be, our hearts are filled with bad things. Do you ever think, "But I've never done anything really bad, my heart is not like that"? The Bible tells us that everyone in the whole world has sinned and done things wrong. We need Jesus to change our hearts and live inside of us to change us.

God knows our hearts and only He can make them pure. To make our hearts right we have to believe that we are sinners and that our hearts need to be made clean. We need to ask God to forgive us of our sins and invite Jesus to come live in our hearts. Once we do that He begins to take the yucky things like jealousy, hatred, selfishness and pride out of our hearts; and He makes it His new home, bringing with Him the new things of His Holy Spirit--love, patience, longsuffering, kindness (see Galatians 5:22-23). God does live in heaven but He also wants to live in our hearts when we invite Him in. Where do think God lives? Is He making your heart His home?

- Does Jesus live inside the hearts of His people"?
- Can we clean our own hearts?
- What does God bring with Him when He lives inside of our hearts?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Dwell: To live or abide in.

Day Three

More Precious than Silver

Text: Isaiah 42:8 - "I am the Lord, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to carved images."

Also read Acts 17:29

Have you ever traveled to another country? A while ago I got to go to Russia. There, like a lot of places around the world (including our country), there were great churches with pictures and gold statues inside. For hundreds of years people in Russia have been going to these places to pray and worship God. What they do not understand is that God does not want us to pray to pictures or light candles on altars to seek His forgiveness or worship Him. This is like the people in the city of Athens where Paul was preaching in our Bible story. The people of Athens in Paul's time were making temples and carved images to whatever they thought God was in their own imaginations. As the Lord spoke in Isaiah and throughout the Bible, He alone is to be praised, not the gold or silver that people were using to worship Him.

All over the world today, as in the time of Paul, people may go to a church building, but still not understand that God wants to have a relationship with them. They believe that in worshipping in beautiful churches or bowing down to all different types of statues, they are pleasing and serving God. It is sad because they are living in darkness and do not realize that they do not have to do these things. They can simply call out to Jesus to save them and they will have eternal life. The good news is that Jesus Christ is the only true way to the Father, our God. We need to spread the message of this truth to all nations (Matthew 28:19-20) just as the apostle Paul was doing.

God is more precious than the finest gold or silver and there is nothing we can make that could ever replace Him. We must believe in Jesus and love Him with our whole heart to show we truly believe in Him. God wants people who worship Him alone. Who do you worship?

- Do you know of some ways that people try to worship God, but are deceived?
- Did all of the people worshiping idols make Paul sad?
- Is there someone you can share the love and truth of Jesus Christ with?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Idols: Anything created by man to take the place of God and receive the worship of man.

Day Four

God Won't be Mocked

Text: Acts 13:51 - "But they shook off the dust from their feet against them, and came to Iconium."

Also read Acts 19:32-33

So far this week we have seen that the apostle Paul has been telling people the truth about God and His Son, Jesus. When he spoke the truth of who God is, what did the people do? Some of them wanted to hear more but there were those who mocked him. It was not Paul himself they were speaking badly of; it was really Jesus. Sometimes we can be mocked when we spread the gospel of Jesus. When Jesus was living on this earth He suffered the pain of being mocked and talked bad about. Has anyone ever made fun of you and hurt your feelings? Well, Jesus knows what that is like. People laughed at Him when He said He was the Son of God. They even wanted to throw stones at Him to hurt Him and even kill Him when He spoke the truth to them. Jesus came to earth to die for our sins so we could be free and live forever in heaven with Him. Imagine the pain He must have felt when people who should have loved Him nailed him to the cross.

But the Bible also tells us what we should do when people do not want to listen to the truth or make fun of us because we believe in God and the Bible. We are to not worry about the mockers. We should just go on and shake off the dust of our feet. What God is telling us is we must not stay and argue or fight when people do not believe. We are to turn and walk away. It is not us who are being rejected. It is Jesus Himself and we must continue to pray for people who refuse to accept the truth about God.

Paul had courage and boldness to speak with the people of Athens. They had been worshipping their own idols for centuries and now he was telling them they were wrong and they needed to turn to Jesus. That took guts, but Paul was not the brave one. It was his faith in Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit that led him to share the truth with people. Paul knew that in the end God was not going to be mocked.

- Have you ever been laughed at because you believe in Jesus?
- Have you prayed to have boldness to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ?
- What should you do if someone makes fun of you because you believe in Jesus?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Mock: To ridicule, reject, laugh at or tease.

Day Five

The Good Seed

Text: Acts 17:34 - "However, some men joined him and believed, among them Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them."

Also read Luke 8:4-15

Why was it that many of the people who heard Paul share about Jesus didn't want to believe in and accept Jesus? Why is it like that today when the good news about Jesus is shared with others? Do you remember in Day One of our devotions this week we learned about the true condition of our hearts? Without Jesus we would just want what we want and do things our own way. But if all of us have wicked hearts, why do some of us believe and some of us don't? Let us look at the story that Jesus taught to find out more. We are told that the seed (God's Word) fell onto different soils. These are different hearts. Some seed begins to grow and gets killed by the cares of this world. The enemy, the devil, steals other seed. Still other seed do not take very good root and die after a while. But we also see that some seed falls into good soil.

All of these types of soils and growth show us how our hearts are. Some people accept God's Word, but then turn away later. Sometimes the devil may snatch the Word so that someone does not receive it. Still others are more worried about the things of this world than knowing Jesus so it kills any growth. But there is still the good soil where the seed is planted and good fruit begins to grow. That is the person's heart that is open to receive God's Word and it begins to grow strong. They continue in their relationship with Jesus and get stronger and stronger each day.

Whenever we share the love of Jesus with others, we are planting seed. For Dionysius and Damairs from our Bible reading, the seed was planted and began to grow into something beautiful. It would be interesting to know how many more people that these two people may have told about Jesus and how many accepted Him into their lives. If we all were to tell others about Jesus, like the apostle Paul did, what would the world be like? Will you share the love of Jesus and tell a friend about Jesus? Will you plant seed into people's hearts for the kingdom of God? You never know how God will use you, as you trust in Him to lead you!

- Has the Good Seed of Jesus Christ been planted in your heart?

Kid's Prayer Time



This week when you pray ask that God will show you if you are trusting in Him or idols. Also pray that God will help you to share the gospel of Jesus with others.

Memory Verse...

First and Second Grade

**"God, who made the world,
since He is Lord, does not
dwell in temples made with
hands."**

Third Grade and Above

**"God, who made the world
and everything in it, since
He is Lord of heaven and
earth, does not dwell in
temples made with hands."**

Acts 17:24