

UNIT 10 | SESSION 3

SAUL DISOBEYED GOD

1 SAMUEL 14–15



CHRIST CONNECTION: Like Saul, our sin keeps us from God. Only Jesus has no sin. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin so we can be with Him forever.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who is our King? Jesus is our King.

KEY PASSAGE: The LORD rules over everything. Psalm 103:19

STORY POINT: Saul disobeyed God's commands.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

Rather than follow the instructions of the Lord, King Saul relied on his own strength, wisdom, and timeline to achieve success. God had promised to extend favor to Saul on the condition that he remain obedient to His commands. The devastating impact of King Saul's disobedience, however, and its effect on his legacy is seen in 1 Samuel 14–15. Through the disobedience of Saul, we see our need for the sinless, sacrificial Savior—Jesus.

How did Saul's disobedience impact God's people? How did Jesus show His desire to always obey His Father?

Saul's hasty decisions in leadership led the Israelites to pursue uncleanness and irreverence toward the Lord. Saul placed his troops under a strict oath not to eat until the battle was over. The rashness of his oath led to the attempted execution of his son Jonathan and the sin of consuming impure food. Later, Saul led his men to disobey God's commands by not completely destroying the Amalekites and everything they had. Saul led his people down a path of destruction, not seeming to care how his disobedience impacted the nation he led.

While Saul, led by pride and impulsiveness, was willing to execute his son to make an example of him, we see a stark contrast between his actions and God's love for us. Jesus, God in flesh, laid down His own life to make redemption possible for those who trust in Him.

Consider Saul's disobedience, which was motivated by foolishness and selfish ambition. Now, reflect on the redemption we receive through Christ's pure and perfect obedience. While Saul's poor leadership and disobedience led to God rejecting him as king, the perfect King Jesus leads us toward redemption and forgiveness of sin. Lead boys and girls to see the reward of obedience to God—yet to see with even greater clarity, the gift of grace we don't deserve through Christ's sacrificial love.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet preschoolers and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers the story of the gospel



LOVE

Lead preschoolers to love the God of the gospel

30–40 MINUTES



LIVE

Lead preschoolers to live the mission of the gospel



BONUS

60–65 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers for an additional hour



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a supply of the following items available during all teaching sessions: Allergy Alert, Bibles, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tipped scissors, construction paper, copy paper, glue sticks, glue, tape, baby dolls, blocks, play dough, and a beanbag.



WELCOME

Follow the path

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ painter's tape



LEARN

Explore a pomegranate

- ☐ opened pomegranate

Tell the Bible story

- ☐ "Saul Disobeyed God" video (optional)

Learn and practice the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker



LOVE

Make a snack

- ☐ honey
- ☐ crackers
- ☐ plastic knives
- ☐ napkins

Build a forest

- ☐ cardboard tubes
- ☐ green construction paper
- ☐ toy people figures



LIVE

Paint with glitter paint

- ☐ art smocks
- ☐ hair gel
- ☐ glitter
- ☐ food coloring
- ☐ paintbrushes

Missions activity

- ☐ "Medical Missions" missions video

Snack and transition

- ☐ hand sanitizer (optional)
- ☐ "Choose Your Favorite Foods" activity page, 1 per child
- ☐ Big Picture Cards for Families



BONUS

Sneak away

- ☐ wool fluff
- ☐ fruit item

Say the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker

Serve a feast

- ☐ toy food items
- ☐ paper plates
- ☐ cups
- ☐ utensils
- ☐ napkins
- ☐ tablecloth

Discover the key passage phrase

- ☐ box with lid
- ☐ pom-poms
- ☐ plastic tweezers



WELCOME Preschoolers

Provide as many learning activities as possible from the Love and Live sections to give preschoolers choices to learn. Incorporate the Bible story, the Christ Connection, and key passage phrase in your conversations as the preschoolers engage in learning activities throughout the session.

Use the following activity to greet children as they enter the classroom. Talk about the big picture question and answer. After each child completes the welcome activity, encourage him to participate in the activities provided from the Love and Live sections of the leader guide.

FOLLOW THE PATH

Use painter's tape to outline a path from the doorway into the classroom. Create a different path from the ones used in previous sessions. Weave a shorter path around furniture in the classroom ending at a Bible. Place a copy of the Bible Story Picture Poster in the Bible. Post the Big Picture Question Poster near the entrance to the classroom. Greet preschoolers as they enter the classroom and point out the Big Picture Question Poster. Invite preschoolers to take baby steps along the path to the Bible to discover if Saul made good choices as king. Meet the preschooler at the end of the path and encourage her to open the Bible to reveal the Bible Story Picture Poster and the answer to the question.

SAY “ I am so glad that you are at church today. Our big picture question asks, **Who is our King?** **Jesus is our King.** The path ends at the Bible, where we learn that **SAUL DISOBEYED GOD.** ”





LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 EXPLORE A POMEGRANATE



Before the session, post an Allergy Alert and cut open a pomegranate. Pass the pomegranate to preschoolers as they come to the group time area. Invite children to touch, hold, and smell the fruit before they pass it to another preschooler.

SAY “King Saul and his son Jonathan led the Israelite army. One day, King Saul and a big army rested around a pomegranate tree.”

2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to 1 Samuel 14–15. Tell the Bible story using the following summary. You may choose to review the Bible story by showing the video.

SAUL DISOBEYED GOD

SAY “King Saul led the Israelite army, and his son Jonathan helped the soldiers fight against their enemies.

One day, King Saul and a big army rested around a pomegranate tree. Saul’s son Jonathan sneaked away with his helper to go to the camp of their enemies, the Philistines. Jonathan and his helper won a fight against some of the Philistines. The Philistines were afraid!

King Saul brought the rest of his army to fight the Philistines. Saul told his soldiers not to eat anything until they won, so the soldiers were tired and hungry.

Now Jonathan did not know about his dad’s rule. The army went into the woods. Jonathan found some yummy honey on the ground, and he ate some. When Saul found out, he wanted to punish Jonathan. But the other soldiers said not to, so Saul didn’t punish his son.

Sometime later, the Israelites won a battle against the Amalekites. God told Saul to destroy everything, but Saul did not listen. He kept some of the best animals. Because Saul didn’t obey, God said Saul couldn’t be king anymore.”

Christ Connection: Like Saul, our sin keeps us from God. Only Jesus has no sin. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin so we can be with Him forever.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

3 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

Ask preschoolers how they think the people in the story felt at different points. Invite preschoolers to make each expression with their faces as they answer. Highlight different parts of the story such as Jonathan and his helper winning a fight, the Philistines after Jonathan won the fight, the soldiers when they could not eat or drink, and Saul when God said he could not be king anymore.

SAY “ You showed how the people may have felt in the story today. **SAUL DISOBEYED GOD.** Like Saul, our sin keeps us from God. Only Jesus has no sin. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin so we can be with Him forever. ”

4 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of “Mary Had a Little Lamb”:

The LORD rules over everything, everything, everything.

The LORD rules over everything.

Psalm 103:19

5 LEARN AND PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at Psalm 103:19. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Encourage preschoolers to clap out the syllables of the key passage phrase as you say it several times.

SAY “ Because Saul did not obey, God said Saul could not be king anymore. He would not be the Israelites’ ruler. Our key passage phrase reminds us that ‘The LORD rules over everything.’ **Jesus is our King.** ”

6 PRAY

Pray, thanking God that even though Saul sinned, Jesus has no sin and we can be with Him forever.

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

1 PASS THE CROWN



Cut a small crown shape from paper and tape it to a beanbag. Invite preschoolers to sit in a circle. Pass the beanbag while you say the key passage phrase. When the key passage phrase ends, the child holding the beanbag places it on his head and walks around the outside of the circle, attempting to keep the beanbag on his head until he is back at his place. Play several rounds so that each child has a turn to walk around the circle.

SAY “A crown lets people know who the king or queen is. We passed the crown around the circle several times, changing the king and queen. Saul had been king of Israel, but he did not listen to God. Because **SAUL DISOBEYED GOD**, God said Saul could not be the king anymore. Like Saul, our sin keeps us from God. Only Jesus has no sin. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin so we can be with Him forever.”

2 MAKE A SNACK



Before the session, post an Allergy Alert. Place honey, crackers, plastic knives, and napkins on a table. Lead children to wash their hands with soap and water. Invite preschoolers to make a snack. Demonstrate how to spread the honey on the crackers with the plastic knives. Ask children how the honey tastes. Encourage children to spread honey on another cracker for a friend.

SAY “What does the honey taste like? Do you like the crackers with honey? Crackers and honey make a nice snack when you are hungry. Saul told his soldiers not to eat anything until they won the battle. The soldiers were tired and hungry. Jonathan did not know about his dad’s rule. Jonathan found some yummy honey on the ground and ate some. When Saul found out, he wanted to punish Jonathan, but the other soldiers said not to, so Saul did not punish his son.”

3 BUILD A FOREST

Place cardboard tubes, green construction paper, scissors, tape, and people figures in the block area. Invite preschoolers to create trees and build a forest with the cardboard tubes and green paper. Demonstrate how to cut or tear the paper into smaller shapes and tape the shapes to the tubes to make a tree. Encourage preschoolers to arrange the people figures in the forest.

SAY “I like the forest you created. One day, King Saul and his army rested around a pomegranate tree. Saul’s son Jonathan sneaked away with his helper. Jonathan and his helper won a fight against the Philistines. That same day, Saul’s army went into the woods. Jonathan found some honey in the woods and ate it. He did not know that his father made a rule that no one should eat anything until they won the battle. Saul did not punish his son for not following the rule.”

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

1 PAINT WITH GLITTER PAINT

Before the session, mix the glitter with the hair gel to create glitter paint. To give the paint a little color, add a drop or two of food coloring to the mixture. Place construction paper, glitter paint, paintbrushes, and smocks on a table. Assist preschoolers with placing a smock over their clothing. Invite children to paint with the glitter paint. Encourage preschoolers to place a key passage phrase label on their completed artwork.

SAY “Glitter reminds me of a sparkling crown a king might wear. Our key passage phrase reminds us, ‘The LORD rules over everything.’ Saul had been the ruler, but **SAUL DISOBEYED GOD**. God said Saul could not be the king anymore. We know that **Jesus is our King**. ”

2 MISSIONS ACTIVITY

Remind preschoolers that the good news about Jesus is too good to keep to ourselves! God wants us to tell others about Jesus. A follower of Jesus who is sent to tell others about Jesus is called a missionary. Tell preschoolers that doctors, nurses, and volunteers from the United States often go to Thailand to help Dr. Derbyshire as he sees patients in mobile clinics, or doctor's offices. Show the “Medical Missions” missions video. Pray for the medical teams and their clinics in Thailand. Pray that more people in Thailand who visit the clinics will want to know about Jesus.

SAY “Dr. Blockberger, Dr. Derbyshire, and the medical team helped people in the clinic feel better, and they also told them about Jesus. Three people believed in Jesus the first day they opened one of the clinics, and other people said they wanted to learn more about Jesus. ”

3 SNACK AND TRANSITION

Post an Allergy Alert. Serve the snack. As children eat, review and talk about the Bible story. When children finish their snack, lead them to complete the activity page. As they work, continue talking about the Bible story and emphasize the Christ Connection.

SAY “Like Saul, our sin keeps us from God. Only Jesus has no sin. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin so we can be with Him forever. ”

Remember to communicate helpful information to the bonus teaching hour leaders. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something their child did well during the session. Distribute Big Picture Cards for Families. Encourage parents to engage with the family discussion starters and family activities during the week.



BONUS Teaching Hour Group Time

1 SNEAK AWAY

Invite preschoolers to pretend like they are sneaking away to come to group time. Demonstrate how to place a finger over your mouth to keep quiet and tip toe to the group time area. Tell preschoolers that Jonathan and his helper sneaked away to fight the Philistine army.

2 TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to 1 Samuel 14–15. Use the summarized points below to talk about the Bible story:

SAUL DISOBEYED GOD

- King Saul and his son Jonathan led the Israelite army. Jonathan led the soldiers to fight the Philistine army. They won!
- Then King Saul told the soldiers not to eat anything. Jonathan did not know about his rule, so Jonathan ate some honey. King Saul was upset, but he did not punish Jonathan.
- When the soldiers fought the Amalekites, God said to destroy everything. King Saul did not obey God, so God said Saul couldn't be king anymore.

3 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of “Mary Had a Little Lamb”:

The LORD rules over everything, everything, everything.
The LORD rules over everything.
Psalm 103:19

4 SAY THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at Psalm 103:19. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Encourage preschoolers to march out the syllables of the key passage phrase as you repeat it several times.

5 PRAY

Pray, thanking God for sending Jesus to be our King and for ruling faithfully over everything.



BONUS Teaching Hour Activities

6 MAKE A PLACE MAT

Place construction paper, markers, and glue sticks on a table. Invite preschoolers to make a place mat they can use at home. Demonstrate how to tear the construction paper into small pieces and glue them on another, larger piece of construction paper. Children may want to write or draw with the markers as well.

SAY “Your place mats are lovely. We use place mats when we sit down at the table to eat. Saul told his soldiers not to eat anything until they won the battle against the Philistines. The soldiers were tired and hungry. Saul’s son Jonathan was there as well, but he did not hear about his father’s rule. He found some yummy honey on the ground and ate it. When Saul found out, he wanted to punish Jonathan, but the other soldiers said not to.”

7 SERVE A FEAST

Place the play food, paper plates, cups, utensils, napkins, and tablecloth out for preschoolers to explore. Invite preschoolers to set the table and arrange everything for a feast. Sit at the table with the children and encourage them to serve you a meal.

SAY “You created quite a feast! Thank you for all the wonderful food you served. King Saul told his soldiers not to eat anything until they won the battle. His soldiers were tired and very hungry. Jonathan, King Saul’s son, did not know about his father’s rule. When Jonathan went into the woods, he found some yummy honey on the ground, and he ate some. When Saul found out, he wanted to punish Jonathan, but the other soldiers told him not to.”

8 DISCOVER THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Cut a piece of paper to fit the inside of a shallow box or box lid. Write the key passage phrase on the paper. Place the paper in the box and cover it with the pom-poms. Invite preschoolers to use the tweezers or tongs to remove the pom-poms from the box. Older preschoolers may enjoy the challenge of using their non-dominant hand or challenging themselves to see how fast they can remove the pom-poms. Once preschoolers remove the pom-poms from the box, read the key passage phrase.

SAY “Our key passage phrase says, ‘The LORD rules over everything. Psalm 103:19.’ Saul had been the king, but **SAUL DISOBEYED GOD**. Because Saul didn’t obey, God said he could not be the king anymore. Like Saul, our sin keeps us from God. Only Jesus has no sin. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin so we can be with Him forever. **Jesus is our King**. He rules over everything.”

Release preschoolers to parents according to your church’s security procedure. Tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session.