

LESSON SNAPSHOT

BOTTOM LINE:

Jesus is the Wonderful Counselor.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn they can go to Jesus with any challenge because he is their Wonderful Counselor.

KEY PASSAGE:

Isaiah 9:6-7, A Child Is Born & Matthew 1:18-23, Immanuel

MEMORY VERSE:

“And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6b (NIV)

SUMMARY:

A counselor is someone who you can turn to for advice, for a shoulder to lean on, for help with your problems. A counselor is there for you. Jesus is our wonderful counselor; he is there for us. Jesus is God with us.

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for your wisdom and presence.

*In Jesus' name,
Amen*

MEMORY VERSE

“And he will be called Wonderful Adviser and Mighty God. He will also be called Father Who Lives Forever and Prince Who Brings Peace.” Isaiah 9:6b (NirV)

“And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6b (NIV)

“And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6b (NLT)

“And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6b (KJV)

LARGE GROUP:

Have the kids read the verse together. Read it normally, then in a whisper, then really, really loud!

SMALL GROUP:

Ask if anyone already has this verse memorized from previous memory verse studies. Have those kids recite the verse by themselves, then review it with the other kids.

SKIT

GOOD MAN NEEDS COUNSELING

ITEMS NEEDED:

- A super hero costume for Good Man
- A villain costume for Villain Man
- A large cutaway box for the set (see stage directions)

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN:

3M

CHARACTERS:

- The Announcer
- Good Man - A super hero toy
- Villain Man - Good Man's archenemy

ANNOUNCER: And now, it's another episode in the story of GOOD MAN, a hero so good, so awesome, so amazing, there's only one way to describe him. He's GOOD MAN! As our story begins today, Good Man has been purchased by a sweet little grandma who wrapped him in a box for her grandson Jimmy. Unbeknownst to him, but knownst to us, Good Man is not alone inside the package! Yes, evil lurks in the corner of the Amazon box that brought grandma her boxed set of Golden Girls DVDs!

Lights up. A giant cutaway of a box is on stage. Villain Man is sitting in the back of the box, up-stage from the audience, while Good Man stands down center at the front part of the box.

GOOD MAN: And so the countdown begins! T-minus 23 days until Christmas. I can't wait to see the look on the little boy's face who gets me. Who doesn't love Good Man? I'll tell you who! No-body! I'm the hottest toy since Tickle Me Elmo. No! Since the White Tiger Zord! No! Since the Cabbage Patch Dolls. Yes, it's going to be a Merry Christmas indeed for the little boy who un-wraps me.

VILLAIN MAN: Merry Christmas. Haha, Merry Christmas! That doesn't sound right. What's the phrase I'm looking for? Ah yes. Bah humbug!

GOOD MAN: Villain Man! You rotten, stinking, no good, double-crossing, kidnapping, thieving—

SKIT

VILLAIN MAN: Please, please! All these compliments will make me blush, Good Man!

GOOD MAN: What are you doing in here?

VILLAIN MAN: Same as you, do-gooder. I'm waiting for Christmas!

GOOD MAN: Oh no! I'm not going to let you steal this little boy's Christmas! Put 'em up! Let's fight! Right here, right now!

VILLAIN MAN: Steal Christmas? My dear boy, don't you know that little Jimmy asked for both of us?

GOOD MAN: You liar!

VILLAIN MAN: It's true! I saw the list little granny had in her hand. He wants you and me.

GOOD MAN: I don't believe you! I won't believe you! What kind of little boy asks for the good guys and the bad guys?

VILLAIN MAN: A normal one?

GOOD MAN: I can't believe this. 23 days inside a box with my archenemy.

VILLAIN MAN: And you know he's going to stash us side by side in his toy box, right?

GOOD MAN: By the time this is over, I'm going to need some serious counseling.

VILLAIN MAN: Yes. Too bad you don't have access to... the Wonderful Counselor.

GOOD MAN: Who is the Wonderful Counselor? One of your independent consultants in evil?

VILLAIN MAN: On the contrary! The Wonderful Counselor is the one whose birthday people celebrate on Christmas day. He is Jesus, the Son of God, the Savior of the world!

GOOD MAN: He's a counselor?

VILLAIN MAN: He is indeed! Jesus is their Creator and their God. They can go to Him with any challenge, and He will give them wisdom.

GOOD MAN: I need to talk to this guy. Where do I find Him?

SKIT

VILLAIN MAN: Sorry, Good Man, the Wonderful Counselor can't save you from me!

GOOD MAN: Why not?

VILLAIN MAN: Well, as Academy Award winner Tom Hanks once said, "YOU! ARE! A! TOY!"

GOOD MAN: Oh yeah.

VILLAIN MAN: But isn't it good to know that Jesus will be there for little Jimmy?

GOOD MAN: Yeah, it really is. I just hope he convinces little Jimmy to get rid of you!

OBJECT LESSON OR KIDS SERMON

ITEMS NEEDED:

A Talking Magic 8 Ball

How many of you have ever played with a Talking Magic 8 Ball? It's fun to ask the 8 Ball questions, especially with your friends. You can ask it silly things like, "Will I ever travel through space?" Or "Is Bigfoot real?" Or even "Will I ever get married?" But if you use a Talking Magic 8 Ball for real advice, you're not going to get it. It's just a toy, and if you ask the same question five times in a row, odds are the answer's going to be different every time. How is that a wise source of knowledge?

Jesus is called the Wonderful Counselor because there is no greater source of wisdom in all the world. He is our Creator and our God. He knows us better than we know ourselves. We can seek His advice any time and anywhere, and if we listen to Him, He will never steer us in the wrong di-rection.

Jesus still matters because He is the Wonderful Counselor. He is the source of all wisdom and so-meone we can trust with any challenge.

LARGE GROUP GAME

TINSEL TANGLE

ITEMS NEEDED:

Six long strands of tinsel garland

INSTRUCTIONS:

Choose six players for this game and give each one a garland. On your signal, the kids will race to see who can completely wrap the garland around them the fastest.

VARIATION:

Make this a team game, with teams of three where two people must wrap the third with garland.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

There are many ways to try and win this game, many choices to make. When we have a decision to make, Jesus wants to be our counselor.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

BOTTOM LINE:

Jesus is the Wonderful Counselor.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn they can go to Jesus with any challenge because he is their Wonderful Counselor.

KEY PASSAGE:

Isaiah 9:6-7, A Child Is Born & Matthew 1:18-23, Immanuel

INTRO:

If you could go back to the 1980s and get your hands on an old toy catalog, do you know what you would see? Depending on the year, you'd see a whole page dedicated to each of the hot toy lines that year. Star Wars. GI Joe. Transformers. He-Man and the Masters of the Universe. Ghostbusters. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. My Little Pony. If you're saying to yourself, "Gee, that sounds familiar," it's because over the past several years, all of these same toy lines have come back in one form or another. In fact some of them never actually went away!

The funny thing is many of the toys I mentioned above being sold now aren't being made for you. Sure, you can take them out of the package and play with them, but the target market for these toys are the adults who played with these toys as kids! That's why they all come in special edition collector boxes. You would think that being grown up means wanting grown up gifts like jewelry and weed eaters, and some adults do. But some people never outgrew their love for their favorite toys.

We can debate whether or not collectible toys are a good gift for a grown up, but one thing we can't argue is the importance of the gift of Jesus. Many people today consider the true story of Christmas to be a fantasy best suited for kids, but the baby in the manger and the man He became are very real. He is the reason we gather here every week. He is a timeless gift we can rely on every day of our lives. Listen to how the prophet Isaiah described Him:

READ ISAIAH 9:6-7

The amazing thing about these words is that Isaiah wrote them approximately 700 years before Jesus was born! Before God's amazing gift was ever opened,

LARGE GROUP LESSON

God told Isaiah exactly what was insi-de. Over the next four weeks, we're going to unwrap these words to discover why Jesus still mat-ters today.

The Christmas story begins with an angel visiting Mary, telling her she is going to be the mother of God's Son. Mary then tells her fiancé Joseph, who is not sure he believes her. Joseph is very con-fused by Mary's story, but God is ready for Him. He sends an angel to assure Joseph that Mary is telling the truth.

READ MATTHEW 1:18-23

MAIN POINT:

When Joseph needed counsel, God was there for him. He let Joseph know that he, too, has been chosen to raise God's only son. Even though he is nervous and afraid, Joseph accepts the angel's advice. He marries Mary, and he becomes the earthly father to our own Wonderful Counselor.

The angel tells Joseph the baby will be called Immanuel, which means "God with us." Put that together with Wonderful Counselor and what do you get? A wonderful counselor who is always there when we need Him! Jesus lives in the hearts of all believers through the Holy Spirit. Any time, day or night, we need advice, we can pray. The Wonderful Counselor will hear us and guide us to make the right choice.

DRIVE IT HOME:

Counselors are wonderful people themselves who provide great services to millions of people. There are counselors who help students decide where to go to college to pursue their dreams. There are counselors who help people talk through difficult times in their lives. There are counselors who help grown-ups make better choices with their money. You know, like telling them to invest in a retirement account instead of the new Masters of the WWE Universe crossover action figures.

Counselors are only human, though. They keep office hours, they have families, and they're not available any time we want them. They also don't have all the answers we need. Not like Jesus. God is not only all-powerful, but all knowing. He knows us better than we know ourselves because He is also our Creator. Only Jesus can help us find our untapped talents and potential. On-ly Jesus is available 24/7 for our problems and questions. Only Jesus can save us from sins and assure us that we are forgiven for all the mistakes we've ever made.

People who think Jesus is just a story for kids are missing out on so much. Jesus is alive. He is the Wonderful Counselor, and any person who calls on His name will have their voice heard.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

As Christmas approaches this year, I want to encourage all of you to take advantage of our Wonderful Counselor. Got a question? Ask Him. Need advice? Ask Him. It doesn't matter if you're lying in bed or sitting in class or on the way to grandma's house. Jesus is always there, just a prayer away. He is the Wonderful Counselor, and we can take any challenge we ever face to Him.

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for your wisdom and presence.

*In Jesus' name,
Amen*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (K-2ND)

ICEBREAKER:

What is your all time LEAST favorite Christmas song?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Isaiah 9:6b

Ask if anyone already has this verse memorized from previous memory verse studies. Have those kids recite the verse by themselves, then review it with the other kids.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Play some Christmas charades.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Isaiah 9:6-7 & Matthew 1:18-23

What four names does Isaiah give to Jesus?

What does the name Immanuel mean?

Who was Joseph?

What good counsel did the angel give Joseph?

What makes Jesus a Wonderful Counselor?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Be our counselor when we need you so we can make the right choices!

In Jesus' name,

Amen

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (3-5TH)

ICEBREAKER:

What is your all time LEAST favorite Christmas song?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Isaiah 9:6b

Ask if anyone already has this verse memorized from previous memory verse studies. Have those kids recite the verse by themselves, then review it with the other kids.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Play some Christmas charades.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Isaiah 9:6-7 & Matthew 1:18-23

What do the four names Isaiah gives to Jesus mean?

Why is Jesus also called Immanuel?

What good counsel did the angel give Joseph?

What makes Jesus a Wonderful Counselor?

Why should we take our concerns to Jesus?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Be our counselor when we need you so we can make the right choices!

In Jesus' name,

Amen

POWERPOINT REVIEW GAME

FILL IN THE BLANK

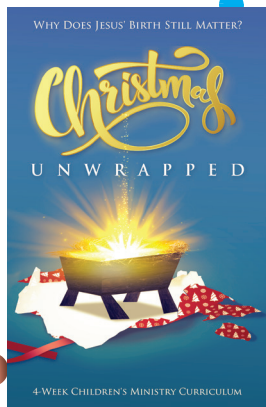
_____ means “God with us.”
IMMANUEL

_____ was engaged to a woman named Mary.
JOSEPH

An _____ visited Joseph and told him that Mary’s child would be the Messiah.
ANGEL

Isaiah described Jesus as a Wonderful _____.
COUNSELOR

When we have a problem and need to talk, _____ will always be there for us.
JESUS



MAKE IT STICK

5 Simple Ways You Can Make This Lesson Stick With your Kids

Christmas Unwrapped Lesson 1

THIS WEEK'S LESSON: WONDERFUL COUNSELOR



IN THE CAR:

Ask your child what they learned about this week on the drive home:

A counselor is someone who you can turn to for advice, for a shoulder to lean on, for help with your problems. A counselor is there for you. Jesus is our wonderful counselor; he is there for us. Jesus is God with us. Isaiah 9:6-7, A Child Is Born & Matthew 1:18-23, Immanuel



HANGING OUT:

Make this week's lesson real:

Tell your kids about some special people who have given you good counsel and advice. Then ask them what things make Jesus the Wonderful Counselor?



AT DINNER:

Here are some great discussion starters:

- What names did Isaiah give to Jesus?
- What does Immanuel mean, and why is this also a name for Jesus?
- What good advice did the angel give Joseph?



AT BEDTIME:

Quiz your child on this week's memory verse:

"And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6b (NIV)



PARENT TIME:

What you need to know:

Jesus is God with us. He is always there for us, and He truly is a Wonderful Counselor. When your kids have questions or problems, pray with them. Ask the Wonderful Counselor to share His wisdom.



"And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of
Peace." - Isaiah 9:6b (NIV)



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CRAFT ACTIVITY

Each week the kids will make ornaments with the week's featured name for Jesus (from Isaiah 9) written on it. These can be ball ornaments they decorate with markers or ornaments they make with craft material and string - whatever you like! At the end of the series they will have four different ornaments that say Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.