

WEEK 2

OUR FELLOWSHIP IS RESTORED SALVATION RESTORES FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE

THE FOUR KEYS . . .

KEY VERSE

God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. 1 Corinthians 1:9

KEY IDEAS

1. God created us to be in perfect fellowship with Him.
2. Sin broke our fellowship with God.
3. God provided reconciliation in Jesus.

KEY PASSAGE

The Story of Nehemiah

KEY PRINCIPLES



EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW . . .

that God created us in perfect fellowship with Him but our sin broke it.



EVERY CHILD SHOULD FEEL . . .

a need to be rescued from sin and reconciled to God.



EVERY CHILD SHOULD BE ABLE TO . . .

remember that God provided a rescue from sin through Jesus.



EVERY CHILD SHOULD WANT . . .

to repent of sin and be reconciled to God.

INTRODUCTION

The book of Nehemiah tells the story of how God's people were living in exile far away from the land God had promised to them because of their sin and unfaithfulness. God promised them He would return them to their land and that they would not be punished forever. God used prophets Ezra and Nehemiah to help the people return home. Nehemiah helped the Israelites rebuild the wall around their city that had been destroyed by the Babylonians so they could return. He faced hardships left and right but continued to have faith in God to restore them. Just like Israel, we are exiled from God because of sin, but God made a way through Jesus for us to be restored to fellowship with Him and to become sons and daughters!

OPENING ILLUSTRATION

Bring in before and after pictures of a piece of furniture, car, or house that has been restored. Be sure to have three pictures: the original perfect condition, the condition after it's been damaged, and the condition after repair/ restoration. Show the original picture and discuss how it is in perfect condition, works like it should, nothing is wrong with it. Show the second photo and discuss how it has been worn, damaged, and doesn't work like it was intended to. Then show the final picture and discuss how after it was restored, the item is in perfect condition again and works like it should. It might look a little different from the original, but it has a purpose again. Explain how this is just like our relationship with God. God created us perfectly to be in relationship with Him. Our sin broke our relationship with God and it needed to be rescued and repaired. So, God sent Jesus to rescue and restore us. Just like the furniture, car, house, etc. doesn't look exactly the same after it's been repaired, neither do we. We cannot go back to exactly how the world was before the Fall, but our relationship with God can be even greater because now we have chosen to follow Him and leave behind our sin.

KEY IDEAS

Read the story of Nehemiah (see Storybook Bible for summarized version). Then use these points for guided discussion.

- God created us to be in perfect fellowship with Him. (Gen. 1:26)
 - What does it mean to have fellowship or be in relationship (not romantic) with someone?
 - What does perfect fellowship with God look like? Perfect fellowship means that we have agreement with God in all things, unity. Our hearts are not against the things of God when we have restored fellowship. While we are still on earth in our fleshly physical bodies, we will still be naturally inclined to sin against Him, even as Christians. It won't be until God returns and restores the earth that we will be in perfect fellowship again; however, as Christians, even now, we can choose the things of God instead of our sin because the Holy Spirit lives in us and helps us desire those things more than our sin. The closer we walk with God daily, the more fellowship we have with Him now.
- Sin broke our fellowship with God. (Rom. 5:10, Col. 1:21)
 - How does sin break our fellowship with God? Sin is rebellion. When we rebel, we tell God that the things we want are better than what He wants. Because fellowship means unity, if we go against the things of God for what we want instead, we are breaking fellowship. Since God is the very definition and standard of all that is good, to break fellowship with God means to break away from what is good, choosing what is bad for us.
- God provided reconciliation in Jesus. (Rom. 5:10, 2 Cor. 5:18-19)
 - What does it mean to be reconciled? When you have a fight with a friend, the relationship is strained maybe even to a breaking point. You might stop speaking altogether. When your relationship is reconciled, you have resolved your differences and offered forgiveness to one another, and your friendship is repaired.
 - Why do we need to be reconciled to God? Our sin alienates us from God, separating us, because it breaks our fellowship with Him. If God had not provided a way to be restored in Jesus, we would be separated from God forever, never enjoying His goodness, and this is the reality of Hell for those who choose to reject Him and His offer of salvation.

Activity

Ask the children to define the word reconciliation in their own words. Have them open their Bibles and search the concordance for the word "reconciled" or "restored" and "fellowship". What does the Bible say about these things and our relationship with God? Write some points on the board about the importance of reconciliation with God and with others.

Prayer

Thank God for reconciling us to Himself through His son Jesus. Ask God to help you recognize how your sin has broken fellowship with Him and your need to be reconciled and forgiven.

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

ACTIVITY

Memorize the key verse 1 Corinthians 1:9.

Spend time with your child discussing the meaning of reconciliation. Ask your child if they can remember a time when they disobeyed the rules and were punished. Use this as an example of broken fellowship and unity and work through the discussion questions below. You can also use an example of a time when they had a fight with a friend or peer as a second example.

DISCUSSION (Matt. 5:9 & 23-24, Rom. 12:18, Romans 5:8-10, 2 Cor. 5:18-20)

- How was the fellowship broken in the situation above? What happened?
- How did you respond in the moment and how did the other person respond?
- Did that response honor God? How could you have honored God more with your response?
- Was the relationship eventually restored? How?
- If not, how can you take steps now to reconcile the relationship?

PRAYER

Thank God that He does not leave us without a chance to be reconciled to Him and that He gave us Jesus as the way to be restored to fellowship with Him. Thank Him that He loves us enough to pursue reconciliation even when we don't deserve it. Ask God to help you pursue reconciliation with others even when they don't deserve it.