

1

See What's Wrong

PSALM 119:105; GENESIS 3:1-24



GOAL

By hearing a story about the first humans' choice, children practice recognizing when they have made a mistake or done something wrong.

- A** Art
- AM** Active/Movement
- C** Conversation
- D** Drama
- F** Food
- G** Game
- M** Music
- NS** Nature/Science
- QC** Quiet/Contemplative
- S** Service
- T** Technology
- X** Extra Prep

Note: bit.ly addresses are case-sensitive.



PRAYER

Dear God, help me to admit when I have done wrong so that I can draw closer to you. Amen.

THIS SESSION

When we choose actions that do not love God or others, relationships are harmed or broken. By acknowledging our wrongdoing and confessing, we are on the path to repairing and restoring those relationships. Young children learn that identifying and admitting things that we do wrong is the first step of confession.

THE BIBLE STORY

In the creation story, God set an expectation, or rule, for humanity's behavior. Then and now, we make mistakes and wrong choices. In Genesis 3:1-24, the first humans see (after some denial) that their choice went against God's intentions.

CONNECTIONS WITH CHILDREN

When young children make a mistake or a choice to do something wrong, sometimes they don't realize it, and they need help identifying the wrongdoing. Other times, however, they know what they have done, and they try to hide it. In this session, children practice ways that they can acknowledge when they have done something wrong, speaking words aloud to another person or to God to begin to repair the relationship that has been broken.

SESSION PREPARATION

- "Learning the Motions" (p. 8): Learn the motions from Resource Page 1, "Thy Word."
- "Walking God's Path" (p. 8): Practice the motions for the opening ritual, which will be used in each session of this unit. Set up a path in your room that you can walk along with the children. This could be walking between a row of chairs; on a sheet, a blanket, or papers on the floor; or along a piece of tape on the floor. Keep the path, if possible, to use in sessions 2, 3, and 4.
- "What's Wrong?" (p. 8): Obtain *Bruno's Hat* by Canizales (Flyaway Books, 2019) or use the YouTube video "Bruno's Hat" (bit.ly/FMBrunosHat, 4:45).



GETTING STARTED

- Internet-connected device (optional)
- Resource Page 1 (optional)

LEARNING THE MOTIONS



As children arrive, greet them by name. Invite them to learn motions for words to the refrain of the song “Thy Word Is a Lamp unto My Feet.” Similar words and these motions will be used in the opening ritual, “Walking God’s Path,” in each session of this unit. Either show the YouTube video “Thy Word—Motions Tutorial—Sheepfold #12” (bit.ly/FMThyWordMotions, 3:14), stopping at 1:00, or use the directions on Resource Page 1.

- Bible
- Prepared path
- Resource Page 1

WALKING GOD’S PATH



Gather by the path you have set up in your space. Read Psalm 119:105. Tell the children that loving God and loving others is like walking on God’s path. Invite the children to follow you as you walk slowly along the path. Explain that, when we do something we know we shouldn’t do, that is like stumbling along the path, getting stuck in the mud, or turning off God’s path. (*Stop and move off the path.*) Tell the children that to find our way back to God’s path is to admit what we’ve done wrong. (*Brush yourself off and move back onto the path.*)

Using Resource Page 1, invite the children to repeat after you and follow your motions.



Keep the path, if possible, and Resource Page 1 for sessions 2, 3, and 4.



INTRODUCING THE PRACTICE

- Bruno’s Hat* by Canizales (Flyaway Books, 2019) or internet-connected device

WHAT’S WRONG?



For confession to happen, something wrong needs to be identified. Children can practice identifying when a mistake has been made or when something unkind was done or said by hearing a story and finding the examples of wrongdoing or hurtful actions.

Read the book *Bruno’s Hat* by Canizales or show the YouTube video “Bruno’s Hat” (bit.ly/FMBrunosHat, 4:45). After each two-page spread—from the time Sergio teases Bruno about his hat to when Peter says “quiet” (0:55–2:25 on the video)—pause and wonder together:

- ➔ Which character said or did something wrong or unkind?
- ➔ Why do you think they might have behaved that way?
- ➔ Which character was hurt by the other’s words or actions?
- ➔ What could the character who said or did something wrong do to make things right?



FINDING THE PRACTICE IN THE BIBLE

GOD'S RULES

C

Resource Page 2

Wonder together what rules the children may have at home, church, or school. Ask them if it is hard to keep all the rules or if they sometimes make mistakes or choose to break them. Tell the children that today's story is about a rule God gave the first humans.

Read the Bible story based on Genesis 3:1–24 from Resource Page 2, pausing to ask the questions provided in the story. After the story, explain that a *consequence* is something that happens because of our actions. Sometimes consequences are good, and sometimes they may hurt or change our relationship with God or others. Ask the children what the consequence was for the first humans' action of breaking God's rule. Tell the children that, even though the humans had to leave the garden, God still loved them. Assure the children that God loves us always too, even when we do something wrong.

Return to the conversation about the rules the children named. Ask the children why they think those rules are there. Suggest that rules are often in place to keep us safe and to help us live together in community. Tell the children that, many years after the first humans, God gave people a set of rules to help them called the Ten Commandments. Later, Jesus said that all the rules were about two things—loving God and loving others. Tell the children that, when we know we've done something wrong, we can say we are sorry. This is the beginning of what it means to confess.



FINDING THE PRACTICE ALL AROUND US

Choose one or both options.

WE TELL GOD WHAT WE DID

C QC

Newsprint, marker

Tell the children that, in the worship service, there is often a prayer of confession that everyone says together. Explain that the prayer names things we are sorry for and asks God for forgiveness. Comment that the prayer names things that each of us may not have done but that we all do at times, such as being unkind to a friend or not being truthful. Tell the children that there is often a time for silence when people can tell God in their hearts and minds anything that they want to confess that they have done wrong.

Invite the children to create and say a prayer of confession together. On newsprint, write: "Dear God, we are sorry when we . . ."

Wonder together what they could tell God they are sorry about. Write down their suggestions, encouraging them to name actions that we all do sometimes.

Read each suggestion and invite the children to respond after each one:

O God, hear our prayer. (*raise their hands in the air, put their hands together in prayer*)

After the last response, say, “Hear our silent prayers, God,” and maintain silence for a few moments. Then say, “Amen.” Tell the children that, after the prayer in the worship service, the pastor will say words that assure people of God’s love and forgiveness. After your prayer of confession, say, “God loves you and forgives you. Amen.”

- Resource Page 3
- Squares of paper and crayons or natural (or unbleached) cotton muslin fabric and fabric markers
- String
- Hole punch

CONFESSION FLAGS

A

Show the children Resource Page 3 and tell them that, in some parts of the world, people use prayer flags with words and pictures to send their prayers to God. Using squares of fabric or paper, have each child draw a picture or write a prayer about something they would like to tell God they are sorry about. Punch two holes in the top corners of the flags and thread string through them. Before hanging the prayer flags in your space, have each child place a hand on their flag and repeat after you:

God, we are sorry /
for the things we have done /
that hurt you or others. /
Thank you for forgiving us. /
We give our prayers to you, /
Amen. /



PRACTICING THE PRACTICE

Choose one or both options.

FOUR STEPS

AM



This activity will be repeated in each session of this unit because it builds on the steps involved in confession, just the way the sessions do. Repetition is an important way that young children learn.

Tell the children that there are four steps to take when they have made a mistake or done something wrong. Use the following directions, inviting the children to repeat your words and motions:

The first step is SEE, (*hold up the pointer finger*) /
seeing I did something wrong. (*point finger toward eye*) /
The second step is SAY, (*hold up 2 fingers*) /
saying, “I’m sorry” to another person or to God. (*move fingers from mouth outward*) /
The third step is FEEL, (*hold up 3 fingers*) /
feeling sorry and trying my best to do better. (*place 3 fingers over heart*) /
The fourth step is FIX, (*hold up 4 fingers*) /
doing what I can to fix what is hurt or broken. (*lace fingers on both hands together*) /

Encourage the children to use the four steps when they need to confess a mistake or something they have done wrong. Suggest that they share the four steps with family members.

SEEING THE WRONG

A C

Provide the children with crayons or colored pencils and copies of Resource Page 4. Read the panels and wonder what the children might do in a similar situation. As the children color, use the time to reflect further on how each child can practice admitting a mistake or admit doing something wrong at home or with friends. Encourage the children to share their picture with their family.

- Copies of Resource Page 4
- Crayons or colored pencils



FOLLOWING JESUS

Gather the children in a circle. Pray the following prayer, inviting the children to repeat after you:

Dear God, /
we want to love you and love others, /
but sometimes we make mistakes /
or do something wrong. /
Help us to see when we have done so, /
when we have strayed from your path for us. /
Thank you for loving us always! /
Amen. /

“Thy Word” Motions

Thy (point up for God)

Word (place hands together as an open book for Bible)

is a lamp (rest right elbow on back of left hand, make a fist with right hand and open fingers like a light bulb turning on)

unto my feet (point to foot with both hands)

and a light (move hand, palms open and fingers spread wide, in an outward motion in front of face)

unto my path. (move both hands in a parallel motion, about the width of your body, back and forth, creating a path)



Walking God's Path

God's way has been set before us, (point upward, then point to the path) /

a way of justice, peace, and love. (make motions for: **justice**—move palms up and down like balancing a scale; **peace**—make a peace sign with 2 fingers in “V” formation; **love**—cross hands over heart) /

God's Word is a lamp to my feet (point upward; move hands to form an open book; rest right elbow on back of left hand, make a fist with right hand and open fingers like light bulb turning on; then point to feet) /

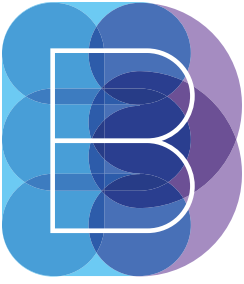
and a light to my path. (move hands, palms open and fingers spread wide, in an outward motion in front of face; then move both hands in a parallel motion, about the width of your body, back and forth, creating a path) /

We stumble and stray away from the path. (turn to the left and then to the right) /

We get stuck in the mud. (lift up each foot as if stuck in mud) /

Create in me a clean heart, O God, (pretend to wash hands, then cross hands over heart) /

and renew a right spirit within me. Amen. (bring hands together in prayer and bow head) /



BIBLE STORY

BASED ON GENESIS 3:1–24

The first humans lived in a garden that God created for them. When God created the humans, God gave them instructions, telling them that they could eat anything in the garden but the fruit from one tree.

Why do you think God gave the first humans this one rule?

One day, a sneaky animal began talking to the humans. The sneaky animal asked, “Did God say, ‘You cannot eat from any tree in the garden?’” The humans said, “We can eat all the fruit in the garden, but we can’t eat from one tree.” The sneaky animal said, “No, don’t listen to God. That fruit won’t hurt you. Go ahead!”

What do you think the humans did?

They ate it. After they ate it, they knew they had done something wrong. Just then, God came looking for the humans, but God couldn’t find them. God called to the humans and said, “Where are you?” The humans answered, “We hid from you.”

Why do you think the humans hid from God?

The humans continued, “We hid because we know we did something wrong.” God said, “What did you do?” Then they told God what they had done. Then God said, “You did something wrong by eating the fruit. You can’t live in the garden because you did not follow my instructions.” After that, humans weren’t allowed back into the garden.

How did the humans know they had done something wrong?

Why do you think it is hard to admit when we’ve broken a rule, made a mistake, or done something wrong?



