

### STORY (Acts 6-8:2)

#### SERIES INTRO

Over the next few weeks, we're going to be looking at some "MAD" people in the Bible.

M-A-D: Making a Difference

These are people who made a difference because of God's Spirit working in them and through them.

And today, because of what Jesus has done on the Cross and His Holy Spirit in us, we too can be "MAD" people and Make a Difference.

Yes, even the smallest one of you!

One of these "MAD" people is a man named Stephen.

#### MAD CREW INTRO: STEPHEN

When we first read about Stephen in the Bible, he was chosen to be a "waiter".

After Jesus rose from the dead and went to heaven, the Holy Spirit came down and empowered the disciples to preach the good news about Jesus to everyone, and the early church was born. Many people, far and wide, came to know Jesus. After a while, it became challenging for the disciples to take care of so many different people, e.g. to ensure that the widows got their share of food every day etc. So they chose seven men to help do the job. The main criteria for the seven men were that they had to be known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom.

Stephen was one of the seven men. He didn't think it was too small a job to serve the widows etc. He was a man full of God's grace and power. The Holy Spirit gave him the ability to perform great wonders and signs. The Holy Spirit also gave him wisdom to tell people about Jesus.

The church in Jerusalem grew very fast at that time. But not everyone was happy with Stephen ...

#### STORY

Tell the story of the stoning of Stephen from Acts 6:8-8:2.

(idea: roll up some newspapers as "stones" to illustrate stoning with a doll/soft toy)

Resources: [choose an appropriate video]

Acts 7: The Stoning of Stephen Lesson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2B9CJZCVguM>

Stephen Stoned for His Faith Bible Animation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FPcMr-RomAM>

God's Story: Stephen: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9eN72iFjo> [for older kids]

The Stoning of Stephen the Martyr: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n5nGHmH6PeA>

### LESSON

#### **AN ORDINARY GUY WITH AN EXTRAORDINARY GOD**

Stephen was just an ordinary guy who knew Jesus and loved Jesus. The Bible records that he was “a man full of God’s grace and power” and “full of the Holy Spirit”.

Because Stephen knew who he was and whose he was, he was confident even in the face of death. He was recorded as the first Christian martyr in the Bible — a person who is killed because of their religious or other beliefs. He kept his eyes on Jesus right until the end — when he saw heaven open and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

#### **A PICTURE OF JESUS**

Like Jesus, Stephen was willing to serve even the lowest members of the church, e.g. the widows/poor.

Like Jesus, Stephen was dragged before the Teachers of the Law falsely accused of speaking against the Jewish temples and laws.

Like Jesus, Stephen released his spirit and asked God to forgive those who were killing him. *“Lord, do not hold this sin against them”* (7:60).

#### **STEPHEN MADE A DIFFERENCE**

At that point in time, Stephen’s death may have been seen as the greatest setback for the church. It was the first time one of them was killed for talking about Jesus. There was great mourning for the death of Stephen.

The Bible also tells us that on that day, a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and many who believed in Jesus were dragged off and thrown into prison. The rest ran away and were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria.

It was a dark, disappointing and difficult time. But God used this sad episode to spread the good news about Jesus to all over the world.

Who remembers Acts 1:8? Before Jesus ascended to heaven, He told the disciples that they will receive the Holy Spirit and be His witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Up to this point, the disciples had been comfortably growing in Jerusalem. But it was through Stephen’s death that they were able to be His witnesses in all Judea and Samaria too.

Through his life and death, Stephen was able to make a difference. With Jesus, you can make a difference too! Let’s learn to speak boldly about Jesus to our friends and those who do not know Him!

### ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

#### STEPHEN-RELATED CRAFT

Insert Acts 1:8 verse: *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*

#### SHARE & PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Get kids to pray for those who do not know Jesus and for boldness to share about Jesus to them.

Remind kids that: **We can make a difference when we keep our eyes on Jesus!**

### STORY

#### SERIES REVIEW

Over the next few weeks, we're going to be looking at some "MAD" people in the Bible.

M-A-D: Making a Difference

These are people who made a difference because of God's Spirit working in them and through them.

And today, because of what Jesus has done on the Cross and His Holy Spirit in us, we too can be "MAD" people and Make a Difference. Yes, even the smallest one of you!

Last week, we looked at a "MAD" man named Stephen. Anyone remembers who Stephen is?

Today, we're meeting another "MAD" man named Daniel!

#### MAD CREW INTRO: DANIEL

Daniel was a young man from a noble family in Jerusalem. He was handsome, strong, intelligent and quick to learn. Daniel was also a prisoner of war.

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had attacked and conquered Jerusalem, and he raided the temple of God and sentenced the Israelites to exile. The King wanted the best of Judah's fine young men to serve in his palace, to learn the language and literature of Babylon. These men were to undergo training for three years before entering the king's service.

Daniel was one of these men, along with some of his friends. He was given the Babylonian name Belteshazzar. He was a wise man, a dream interpreter, a prophet. While under exile, Daniel served under several kings and empires. But most importantly, he never stopped serving the Greatest King of all.

#### STORY

Tell the story of Daniel (can focus on Daniel 6 for younger kids).

Resources: [choose an appropriate video]

The Story Of Daniel | Kids on the Move: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qvj1NsZeXtQ>

Daniel in the Lions' Den (Daniel 6) - Gospel Project <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbSTFopL0gk>

God's Story: Daniel: <https://youtu.be/GY0pARvYcyw> [for older kids]

Overview: Daniel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9cSC9uobtPM>

### LESSON

#### SET APART FOR GOD

Daniel and his friends worshipped God. Even though they had to be immersed in Babylonian culture, they refused to follow the religious practices of the Babylonians.

From the start, they set themselves apart by declining to eat/drink the food and wine provided by the king as those had been offered to idols (Daniel 1:8-16). They only ate vegetables and drank water. Despite not eating the royal food, Daniel and his friends looked healthier and better nourished than the others.

Through the years, there were many other challenges. E.g. Daniel's 3 friends refused to bow down to a golden statue of the king and were thrown into a fiery furnace. Daniel himself refused to pray to King Darius and was thrown into a lion's den. But through it all, they continued to set themselves apart for God and trust Him.

#### A PICTURE OF JESUS

Like Jesus, who showed great understanding in his discussions with the teachers of the Law as a young boy and could answer all who wanted to trap him, Daniel was wise in every way. *"In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom."*

Like Jesus, who was blameless but falsely accused, Daniel was set up by jealous men. *"... the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent. Finally these men said, 'We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God.'" (Daniel 6:4-5)*

#### DANIEL MADE A DIFFERENCE

Daniel went from a life of nobility to become a prisoner of war. He could have sulked and complain, but instead, he excelled in everything he did. He served through multiple foreign kings, from Nebuchadnezzar to Cyrus, and empires. On several occasions, some of the kings recognised God through Daniel's wisdom and superiority. King Darius even declared: *"I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel."*

With Christ in us, we too can have the wisdom of God, an excellent spirit and make a difference!



TNCC  
CHILDREN'S  
CHURCH

DANIEL

## ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

### DANIEL-RELATED CRAFT/ACTIVITY

### SHARE & PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Get kids to share issues they may be facing and pray for the spirit of excellence on all of them.

Remind kids that: **We can make a difference when we keep our eyes on Jesus!**

### STORY

#### HOOK

Play different sounds and have the kids try to guess what the sound is.

Say: You did a good job listening today! Remember that you can always listen to God!

#### SERIES REVIEW

Over the next few weeks, we're going to be looking at some "MAD" people in the Bible.

M-A-D: Making a Difference

These are people who made a difference because of God's Spirit working in them and through them.

And today, because of what Jesus has done on the Cross and His Holy Spirit in us, we too can be "MAD" people and Make a Difference. Yes, even the smallest one of you!

Over the past two weeks, we learned about two "MAD" people. Anyone remembers who? *Stephen, Daniel*

Today, we're meeting another "MAD" person named Samuel!

#### MAD CREW INTRO: SAMUEL

Samuel's story started even before he was born. (1 Sam 1)

His father was Elkanah, and his mother was Hannah. Hannah could not have children. This made her very sad. So, every year when they went to worship at the tabernacle, Hannah would cry and not eat.

One year, Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the tabernacle. He saw Hannah crying as she prayed for God to give her a baby boy. She told God that she would give the baby to God and wouldn't shave his head. Hannah's lips were moving but no sound came out. So Eli thought she was drunk. But he later told her to go in peace, that the Lord would give Hannah her request.

Soon after, Hannah had a baby boy. And she named him Samuel because "Because I have asked for him from the Lord." When Samuel had finished nursing (at about three years old), he went with his parents to the tabernacle to offer sacrifice to God. They took three bulls, flour & wine with them.

Elkanah and Hannah left Samuel at the temple to minister with Eli the priest. Hannah would make Samuel a new robe when they visited every year. (God blessed Hannah with three more sons and two daughters.)

Samuel grew up into an impactful man of God.

### STORY

Tell the story of Samuel from 1 Samuel 3:1-21.

Every time that you say 'And Samuel answered' have the kids respond with 'Here I am.'

*Samuel served with Eli in the Lord's house. Eli grew old and couldn't see very well already.*

*One night Samuel was sleeping when he heard someone call his name. He got up and ran to Eli. **And Samuel said: "Here I am!"** he said to Eli.*

*"I didn't call you," Eli answered, "go back to bed." So Samuel went back to bed.*

*Again the LORD called, "Samuel!" Samuel jumped out of bed and went to Eli. **And Samuel said: "Here I am!"***

*"I didn't call you, go back to bed," Eli answered a second time.*

*A third time God called Samuel and Samuel got up and went to Eli. **And Samuel said: "Here I am!"***

*Finally, Eli realized that it was God who was calling Samuel. He told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you again, say, 'Speak LORD, for your servant is listening.'"*

*Samuel went back to bed and sure enough, again he heard the voice of God calling, "Samuel! Samuel!" This time Samuel answered as Eli had told him, "Speak, for your servant is listening."*

*God spoke to Samuel and told him many things that would happen soon. God told Samuel that Eli's sons (who were evil) would not be the new priests of Israel. Samuel would be.*

*God spoke to Samuel and was able to use him even though he was young. Samuel served God for as long as he lived, as a prophet, priest, and a judge (the last in Israel).*

Resources: [choose an appropriate video]

God speaks to Samuel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P13ulsFW70A>

Samuel hears God's Voice: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nnt\\_PMEQk0A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nnt_PMEQk0A)



## LESSON

### LISTEN TO GOD

At the time when Samuel was growing up, *“every person did what was right in his own eyes”* (Judges 17:6), and *“the word of the Lord was rare; there were not many visions”* (1 Samuel 3:1). It seemed like God was very quiet in those days. But that is probably because people did not want to listen.

Up until that night, Samuel did not know God’s voice. Hence, he did not recognise it when God called his name (3 times!) until Eli told him. God spoke many things to Samuel that night. And God continued to speak to him through his life. And Samuel listened and became God’s mouthpiece to the people of Israel.

We can all be like Samuel and listen to God’s voice. How does God speak to us? Some of the ways are through:

- **His Word:** As we spend more and more time reading God’s Word (the Bible), we learn more about who He is and what Jesus has done for us on the Cross. As we do that, we learn to recognise His voice as He guides us and encourages us through His Word.
- **His Holy Spirit:** After Jesus went back to heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit to live in all of us. This Holy Spirit is our guide and our teacher. He directs our thoughts, He gives us ideas, He prompts us to do the right thing.  
E.g. When someone’s name is on our mind, maybe God is encouraging us to pray for the person. When you have a strong feeling about something. It might be that God is directing us in the way we should (or shouldn’t) go.
- **Other people:** When God speaks something to you and you are unsure, you can share it with the shepherds God placed over us, like our parents, our teachers, and our pastors. They will also be able to help guide you and confirm or clarify what you have been hearing from God.

[Share an experience when God spoke to you personally]

### A PICTURE OF JESUS

Like Jesus (Luke 2:52), the boy Samuel continued to grow in stature and in favour with the Lord and with people (1 Samuel 2:26).

Samuel became a prophet, a priest and a judge. Jesus came as a prophet to tell us about who God really is. Jesus is our High Priest, who intercedes for us. He will return to judge the world.



TNCC  
CHILDREN'S  
CHURCH

SAMUEL

### **SAMUEL MADE A DIFFERENCE**

Samuel's ministry was a long productive one. He was a circuit judge travelling from Bethel to Gilgal to Mizpah to Ramah to judge. He anointed two kings (Saul and David) though he did not live to see David crowned. All his life was devoted to doing the Lord's work. Samuel served at a transitional time for Israel. He was the last Judge in the time of the Judges. He was High Priest. And he was a Prophet in the time of the Kings. He was the only man to ever be all three (Judge, High Priest, and Prophet).

With Christ in us, we too can hear from God and make a difference in our nation.

### ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

#### **SAMUEL-RELATED CRAFT/ACTIVITY**

e.g.

Give each child two Styrofoam or paper cups. Poke a hole in the bottom of each cup and connect them with a string or ribbon about 3 ft. long. Secure the string inside the cup with tape. Decorate the cups with crayons or stickers.

Show the class how to talk through one end to a friend.

Say, When God called Samuel He didn't use a cell phone! He spoke directly to Samuel. We need to always be listening for signs that God is speaking to you.

#### **SHARE & PRAY FOR EACH OTHER**

Get kids to share issues they may be facing and pray for the spirit of excellence on all of them.

Remind kids that: **We can make a difference when we learn to listen to God!**

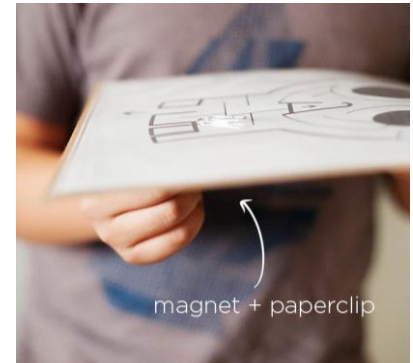
### STORY

#### HOOK

Materials: Magnet, some paper clips, sheet of paper (optional: maze)

Put some paper clips on top of the sheet of paper and the magnet underneath. Move the paper clips around using the magnet. As you are moving the paper clips, explain that even though we do not “see” the magnetic force, it is still there moving the paper clips.

In the same way, even though we may not actually “see” God, but we know that He has always promised to be with us because He has promised to never leave nor forsake us in His word.



#### SERIES REVIEW

Over the next few weeks, we’re going to be looking at some “MAD” people in the Bible.

M-A-D: Making a Difference

These are people who made a difference because of God’s Spirit working in them and through them. And today, because of what Jesus has done on the Cross and His Holy Spirit in us, we too can be “MAD” people and Make a Difference. Yes, even the smallest one of you!

Over the past few weeks, we learned about some “MAD” people. Anyone remembers who? *Stephen, Daniel, Samuel*

Today, we’re meeting another “MAD” person named Joshua!

#### MAD CREW INTRO: Joshua

Joshua was also one of the 12 spies that Moses had sent to the Promised Land. He and Caleb were the only ones who believed that God could and would bring them in safely, even though the other 10 spies were too afraid to face the giants of the land.

Joshua was an impactful man of God. Before Moses passed away, after wandering in the desert for 40 years, he presented his assistant Joshua before the people as the new leader who would replace him and bring them into the Promised Land.

### STORY

Tell the story of Joshua from Joshua 1.

When Moses died, Joshua was suddenly left with the huge task of leading an entire nation of people. The Israelites were many, many, many, many people. If you include the women and children, there would have been about 2 million people! That's a VERY BIG JOB!

It was a scary challenge, but God reassured Joshua:

*"Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.*

*"Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."*

Resources: [choose an appropriate video]

Joshua Leads (Joshua 1): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vqhPOd0JxBs>

God's Story: Joshua Becomes Leader: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wUKWt46vubo>

### LESSON

God told Joshua three important things:

**“Get ready to lead the people into the land I am about to give to them!”**

God told Joshua that all of the land was theirs—just as he had promised. God had already provided all that was needed for this BIG job. He had already prepared the land for the Israelites. Joshua just had to go and get it.

Imagine your dad telling you, “I bought you your favourite ice cream. It’s in the freezer. Go and get it!” Would you say, “No, it’s too difficult. I don’t have the money. I can’t get the ice cream”? Of course not. Because it’s already been provided for you!

God was with Joshua. And the same God is with me!

**“I will never leave you nor forsake you.”**

Joshua had large shoes to fill. But God promised Joshua that just as He was with Moses, He will be with Joshua also. He will never leave him nor forsake him.

In the same way, God promises you and me that He will be with us always.

God was with Joshua. God is with me!

**Be careful to obey all the law ... then you will be prosperous and successful.**

God gave the people of Israel His perfect law, and if they follow it completely, they will be blessed. As we know, it’s impossible to keep God’s law perfectly in our own strength. That’s why God had to send Jesus—the only One who can keep God’s law perfectly.

The law is a shadow of things to come; the reality is found in Jesus. (Col 2:17) As we meditate on God’s word, we realise more and more about Jesus and His complete work on the Cross. And with a fuller understanding, we will enjoy God’s blessings and be prosperous and successful in every part of our life.

God was with Joshua. God is with me!

Even as tNCC celebrates our 11<sup>th</sup> Anniversary today, this is the first time we cannot gather together and have to celebrate online. Even though there are viruses and confusion out there, some political instability, a lot of uncertainties, like Joshua, we can hold on to God’s promises: He has already given us the victory; He will never leave us nor forsake us; And the more we know about Jesus and His finished work on the Cross, the more we will experience His prosperity and success in our lives!

### ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

#### MEMORY VERSE SONG: Joshua 1:9

Hillsong: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyp7WNusPDg>

Saddleback: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=asjSnNgDTrw>

Seeds: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IU45XTawnSY>

#### JOSHUA-RELATED CRAFT/ACTIVITY

Keep it simple and easy for parents to prepare.

#### SHARE & PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Get kids to share issues they may be facing and pray for the spirit of courage on all of them.

Remind kids that: **We can make a difference because Jesus is with us!**

#### COMMUNION

### STORY

#### HOOK

Begin the class by playing hangman. Use words like “beautiful, kingdom, queen, Jews, and honour”. Let this lead you into the story. Tell the children that all of these words and the gallows will be in the story.

#### SERIES REVIEW

Over the next few weeks, we’re going to be looking at some “MAD” people in the Bible.

M-A-D: Making a Difference

These are people who made a difference because of God’s Spirit working in them and through them. And today, because of what Jesus has done on the Cross and His Holy Spirit in us, we too can be “MAD” people and Make a Difference. Yes, even the smallest one of you!

Over the past few weeks, we learned about some “MAD” people. Anyone remembers who? *Stephen, Daniel, Samuel, Joshua.*

Even though we’ve learned mostly about “MAD” men ... today, we will meet a “MAD” woman too, a very special person named Esther.

#### MAD CREW INTRO: Esther

The book of Esther is an unusual book because God’s name is not mentioned once in the entire book. Even so, the book clearly outlines the power of God over the plans of men.

It tells the story of a beautiful young Jewish girl, an orphan girl who become the queen of Persia.



### STORY

Tell the story of Esther.

Years have passed since Daniel was thrown into a lion's den. King Darius' son, Xerxes (sometimes called Ahasuerus), was now the ruler of Persia. That meant that he was king over the biggest kingdom in the world at that time.

Even though King Xerxes was rich and powerful, his wife, Queen Vashti, dishonoured him in front of all his friends. That made King Xerxes very angry and he banished her from his presence.

The king became sad because he did not have a queen. His helpers searched the whole kingdom to find the most beautiful girls so the king could choose a new queen. The girls were brought to the palace. The girls were given the best makeup and perfumes. They spent a whole year learning how to be a queen.

One of the girls was a beautiful young Jewish girl called Hadassah, also known as Esther. Esther's family/ancestors were taken from Jerusalem as slaves/prisoners of war into exile. That's why she ended up in Persia. Esther's father and mother had died a long time ago. Her cousin, Mordecai had raised her and treated her like a daughter. Mordecai taught Esther how to love God.

When it came time to choose the new queen, the king chose Esther. Esther was a good queen. The king did not believe in God, but Esther did. She never forgot her cousin Mordecai and she never forgot that she was one of God's children. Sometimes it was hard for Esther because the other Jews were treated badly. They did not have the riches that Esther had. Esther tried to use the good things that God had given her to help other people.

One time Mordecai helped the king. Mordecai heard that someone was trying to kill the king. He told Esther about it and she told the king. The plan was stopped. Mordecai saved the king's life! This was very special so it was written about in the king's record book.

Another man became famous in the kingdom. His name was Haman. The king thought Haman was a good man so he ordered everyone in the kingdom to bow down to Haman. But Haman was a bad man and he hated the Jews. Mordecai would not bow down to Haman. Haman was so angry that he planned a way to kill Mordecai and all of the Jews.

Haman told the king that the Jews were bad. Finally, the king believed him and made a law. The law said that people could kill the Jews and not get in trouble. Haman was glad. He had a huge gallows built and he planned to have Mordecai hanged.

When Mordecai heard about the plan he told Esther. "Please, Esther, you have to save our people! Maybe God knew this would happen and that is why he let you be Queen."

Esther was very frightened. She had never told the king that she was a Jew. Would he be mad at her like he was mad at the first queen? No one was allowed to go to the king unless he asked them first.

Even the queen could not go to the king without an invitation. If anyone went to the king without an invitation they could be put to death. The only thing that could change this was if the king pointed his sceptre at the person who came to him.

Then Mordecai told her: *“Do not think that because you are in the king’s house you alone of all the Jews will escape. For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?”*

Finally, Esther decided to go to the king. When she came to him she was very frightened. Would she be put to death? Then the king pointed his sceptre at her and told her to come to him. The king liked Esther. He told her she could have anything she wanted.

Esther had a plan. She told the king that she wanted to have a special feast just for the two of them and for Haman. Esther and the king planned the feast for the very next day.

The king went to bed that night but he could not sleep. Sometimes reading a book helps you sleep. So the king asked one of his helpers to bring one of the old record books. The helper brought the book and began to read to the king about things that had happened long ago. He read about the time Mordecai had saved the king’s life! The king got very excited. He wanted to do something special for Mordecai. The king called for Haman to come into his chamber. Haman was happy because he thought the king was going to do something nice for him. The king asked Haman what should be done for someone who deserved honour. Haman thought the king was about to honour him so he said: “That person should be given a royal robe and one of the king’s horses. They should be led through the streets so everyone knows that the king likes them.”

“That is a great idea,” said the king. “Go and do those things for Mordecai!”

Haman was shocked! He could not believe that the king liked Mordecai. Now, Haman knew he was in big trouble. The king liked Mordecai but Haman was trying to kill Mordecai. What would the king do when he found out?

The next day Haman went to the special feast with Esther and the King. The worst thing that Haman imagined happened. Esther told the king that someone was trying to kill the good man, Mordecai, who had saved the king’s life. The king was very angry. He said that the man should be put to death. Haman was hung on the very gallows that he had built for Mordecai.

Then Esther told the king that she was a Jew. He was very sorry that he had made the law that Jews could kill the Jews. Even the king could not change the law. Then Esther asked the king to make another law – a law that said the Jews could fight back if someone tried to kill them. The king knew that this was a good idea so he made the law. From then on, if someone tried to hurt the Jews then the Jews fought back. Soon, no one wanted to hurt the Jews anymore.

Mordecai and all of the Jews were saved because of Esther.

Resources: [choose an appropriate video]

Little Big Heroes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INRq93fnMJY>

IShare: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qV\\_av5ZXFu4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qV_av5ZXFu4)

Kids on the Move: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SaS\\_ePAjCvk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SaS_ePAjCvk)

Crossroads: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZXp41Npw\\_Uw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZXp41Npw_Uw)

Saddleback Kids: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Ea9cNApeZU>

### LESSON

. Interestingly, God's name is never mentioned in Esther. Not. One. Time. Yet God's fingerprints are on every page.

#### **GOD IS ALWAYS WORKING BEHIND THE SCENES**

God had a plan for Esther, to save a whole nation. To the Jews in exile, it might have felt like God was absent. But God was with Esther when she lost her parents and she was raised by her wise uncle. It wasn't by mistake that Esther had "a lovely figure and was beautiful" (2:7). It was no coincidence that God raised Esther — an orphan, a prisoner of war, a foreigner — up to be queen at a time when the people of God were at threat of being killed. God was arranging every single detail for His glory.

What is God's plan for you? Why don't you ask Him?

You may not know what it is now, but God is always working in the background in all our lives, even when it doesn't seem like it.

#### **GOD PLACED US WHERE WE ARE FOR A REASON**

When Mordecai asked Esther to approach the King and beg for mercy and plead for the Jewish people, Esther knew it could mean certain death. But Mordecai reminded her that God placed her in the palace for a reason — to make a difference. *"And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?"*

God has placed us exactly where we are today. We can make an impact from exactly where we are today. For us, we should not look at our own strength, abilities and influence. It is God's plan which He will carry out with His power. We just partner God in what He is doing, in our lives, our families, our country and beyond.

#### **A PICTURE OF JESUS**

Esther's situation looked bleak, as did the future of her people. Yet throughout the Old Testament, God promised that the Messiah/Saviour would come from Jewish lineage. Was God wrong? No. Regardless of man's plans, God has the final say because He is sovereign. Jesus was born into this world, to take the punishment of sin and to give new eternal life to all who would believe in Him.

Esther was raised to make a difference for such a time as this.

We can make a difference for such a time as this too!



TNCC  
CHILDREN'S  
CHURCH

ESTHER

## ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

### ESTHER-RELATED CRAFT/ACTIVITY

Keep it simple and easy for parents to prepare. Suggested text: For such a time as this!

### SHARE & PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Get kids to share issues they may be facing and pray for the spirit of courage on all of them.

Remind kids that: **We can make a difference because Jesus is with us!**

### COMMUNION

### STORY

#### **SERIES REVIEW**

We've been learning about some "MAD" people in the Bible.

M-A-D: Making a Difference

These are people who made a difference because of God's Spirit working in them and through them. And today, because of what Jesus has done on the Cross and His Holy Spirit in us, we too can be "MAD" people and Make a Difference. Yes, even the smallest one of you!

Which "MAD" person do you remember? *Stephen, Daniel, Samuel, Joshua, Esther*

Today, we learn about a "MAD" man called Elisha.

#### **MAD CREW INTRO: Elisha**

Elisha was an assistant and disciple of the prophet Elijah, whom he followed for many years. Elijah was very old, and God had told him that Elisha would be the next prophet of Israel.

### STORY/LESSON

(2 Kings 2) One day, Elisha and Elijah were walking — Elisha knew that God was going to take Elijah away that day, so even though Elijah told him repeatedly to stay, Elisha never left his side and followed him all the way from Gilgal to Bethel, to Jericho, to Jordan. Finally, Elisha asked him, “What can I do for you before I am taken from you?” “Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit,” Elisha said. Elijah said that if Elisha saw God taking Elijah away, then he would receive the double portion.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Faf-K4qe-W0>

Elijah was an impactful prophet. But Elisha desired and asked for double portion of his blessing, and he received it. In fact, based on what the Bible recorded, Elisha was doubly impactful as he performed twice as many miracles as Elijah did (28 vs. 14, ref: <http://www.bcbsr.com/survey/eli.html>).

For example: [explain only very briefly]

As we saw, right after Elijah was taken into heaven, Elisha was able to part the Jordan River.

When the people in the city complained to Elisha that the water is bitter, which made the land unproductive, Elisha made the bitter water pure (2 Kings 2:19-22).

That reminds us of Jesus who changed water into wine.

Elisha also helped a poor widow to pay her debts by supernaturally supplying oil to all the empty jars she brought (2 Kings 4 :1-7).

That reminds us how Jesus multiplied bread and fishes so the multitude can eat.

Elisha also raised the son of the woman of Shunem from the dead (2 Kings 4:8-37).

That reminds us of Jesus who raised Lazarus from dead.

### ELISHA'S LIFE & MIRACLES WERE A SHADOW/PICTURE OF JESUS

Elisha saw Elijah being brought up to heaven in a chariot of fire. But later on, he saw a whole heavenly army of horses and chariots of fire (2 Kings 6:8-22).

LifeKids Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D8LN1py7XxQ>

Elisha was surrounded by a vast army, but he told his servant, "Don't be afraid! For there are more on our side than on theirs!"

Similarly, in such a time as the Covid-19 outbreak, when there is confusion and fear and uncertainties all around, we are reminded NOT TO BE AFRAID. Jesus has not left nor forsaken us, He is always with us and in us, He will deliver us. We can proclaim His VICTORY in our situations and circumstances in life.

### OPEN OUR EYES AND SEE JESUS



TNCC  
CHILDREN'S  
CHURCH

ELISHA

Elisha desired double portion of Elijah's anointing/gifts so he can be a blessing. God used Elisha to do many more miracles and he was IMPACTFUL.

We can also have Elisha's heart and desire great things from our Abba Father so we can also impact lives for His Kingdom!

The good news today is that we do not need a double portion of Elijah's spirit ... because we have Jesus' own spirit, His Holy Spirit residing in us. WOW! How much more impactful can we be with Christ spirit inside of us?

**WE HAVE THE HOLY SPIRIT LIVING IN US**

We can make an even bigger difference than Elisha!



### ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

#### ELISHA-RELATED CRAFT/ACTIVITY

Keep it simple and easy for parents to prepare.

#### ELISHA QUIZ

Ask questions from today's lesson and get kids to put their answer in the chat or write out the answer on a piece of paper and show. Try to give each kid a chance to answer.

Alternative: design a live quiz on quizizz, e.g.

<https://quizizz.com/admin/quiz/5e71be4dad7e3001b427ccc/bible-elisha-and-gods-army>

#### SHARE & PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Get kids to share issues they may be facing and pray for all of them.

Remind kids that: **We can make a difference because Jesus' Spirit is in us!**

#### COMMUNION

### STORY

#### SERIES REVIEW

We've been learning about some "MAD" people in the Bible.

M-A-D: Making a Difference

These are people who made a difference because of God's Spirit working in them and through them. And today, because of what Jesus has done on the Cross and His Holy Spirit in us, we too can be "MAD" people and Make a Difference. Yes, even the smallest one of you!

Which "MAD" person do you remember? *Stephen, Daniel, Samuel, Joshua, Esther, Elisha*

We've had "MAD" men and women. And even "MAD" kids (who grew into very old men), e.g. Samuel.

Today, we're learning about another kid who made a difference in his nation.

#### MAD CREW INTRO: Josiah

Anyone knows who the first king of Israel was? *Saul*.

But because Saul did not follow God, God chose a shepherd boy to become king. Who's that? *David*.

When David died, his son took over. What's his name? *Solomon*. That's right!

Although Solomon started well with God and became the wisest and richest man in the world, he later followed many false gods. Because of that, Israel was split into two kingdoms – Israel and Judah. Both Israel and Judah had many kings. Some of the kings were good kings, but many of them were bad kings.

One of the baddest kings of Judah was Manasseh (2 Kings 21). He became king at 12 and reigned for 55 years, longer than any other king of Judah. It was Manasseh who introduced many forms of idolatry to Israel and broke Israel's covenant with the Lord. Eventually, it was Manasseh's sins that destroyed the nation and led it into captivity.

His son Amon was also as bad as his father. He was king for only two years before his own servants assassinated him!

His son Josiah became king. He was just 8 years old! That's about the same age as many of you!

### STORY

Having such a father and grandfather and taking over such a kingdom at a young age would have been bewildering to anyone, but Josiah made a difference as king of Judah.

Let's find out what happened during his reign:

Crossroads: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6C4MEXXbBmM>

Saddleback: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zbOLxBHvkA>

For his work Josiah is remembered as one of the greatest kings of Judah.

*"Neither before nor after Josiah was there a king like him who turned to the Lord as he did—with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength, in accordance with all the Law of Moses."*

(2 Kings 23:25).

### LESSON

How did a young boy like Josiah make such a big difference in the nation of Judah? How can we make a difference like Josiah?

Let's learn it in 3 words: **TURN, STEP & FOLLOW.**

#### **TURN**

Even though Josiah's father and grandfather were bad kings, Josiah chose to turn from their wicked ways. He turned the whole nation of Israel back to God. We also do not have to simply follow the ways of our previous generation, or even our friends. We can make a personal choice to be different and to follow whatever God has put in our hearts.

#### **STEP**

God led Josiah step by step — Josiah became king at 8. At 16, he "began to seek the God of his father David" (2 Chronicles. 34:3). At age 20, Josiah instructed that idols were to be destroyed in Judah, Jerusalem, and throughout the land. At 26, he raised money to repair the temple (during which time the Book of the Law was found). Josiah went on to be a good and wise king of Israel for 31 years.

Often, God does not tell us everything that is to come in detail, but He will reveal and unveil the next step to us when we get to it. Even when we don't see the end results or the ultimate goal but we can TRUST our Abba Father. As we do the little things in front of us, God will reveal and lead us to His perfect will.

#### **FOLLOW**

When Josiah found the book of the Law, he realised how far off they were from God's standards of holiness and righteousness and was devastated and repented. He followed the Law of God and tore down and removed all the traces of idols in the land so that the people of Judah worshipped the one true God.

Today, we are not only blessed with the word of God (the Bible) that we can and should read every day, but we have the Word of God (Jesus) in us. We can follow in His ways and leading as we hear Him speak to us.

Under the Old Covenant, everyone had to follow the Law to be blessed; if they don't, they would be cursed and punished. But under the New Covenant, we follow the Word of God (Jesus) because Jesus has already blessed us and made us holy and righteous by His finished work on the cross.



TNCC  
CHILDREN'S  
CHURCH

JOSIAH

### **A PICTURE OF JESUS**

Josiah came into a culture of darkness, idolatry and murder. Jesus came to the lost world, a world that is dead to sin, and gave us His life.

Josiah started at a young age and made a decision to follow King David and teach righteousness to his people. A greater son of David, Jesus came to fulfill the law, to reign eternally and to be righteousness to us.

Josiah came to restore the Word of God, leading the people to celebrate the Passover as written in the Law. Jesus is the Word of God, our Passover Lamb who gave His life to make us holy and pure.

Thank you Jesus!

### ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

#### JOSIAH-RELATED CRAFT/ACTIVITY

Keep it simple and easy for parents to prepare.

Worksheet (can be printed and rolled up as a scroll or get kids to fill in on screen):

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3uNEVAAKowpRFc4T3FCYVB5dG8/edit> (younger kids)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3uNEVAAKowpbzU1aDJNNEJrSiQ/edit> (older kids)

#### SHARE & PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Get kids to share issues they may be facing and pray for all of them.

Remind kids that: **We can make a difference when we turn, step and follow the Word of God, Jesus!**

#### COMMUNION

### STORY

#### KIDZ CELEBRATION SONG

Let's all stand, sing and dance together!

#### SERIES REVIEW

We've been learning about some "MAD" people in the Bible.

M-A-D: Making a Difference

These are people who made a difference because of God's Spirit working in them and through them. And today, because of what Jesus has done on the Cross and His Holy Spirit in us, we too can be "MAD" people and Make a Difference.

Which "MAD" person do you remember? *Stephen, Daniel, Samuel, Joshua, Esther, Elisha, Josiah*

Today, we're learning about a very, very fishy story about another MAD person called ... Jonah!

#### MAD CREW INTRO: Jonah

The prophet Jonah's story is recorded in the Book of Jonah. Can you find the Book of Jonah in your Bible?

It reads like a fairytale. But it is a true Biblical record that gives us a picture of God's heart.

### STORY

"I don't want to!"

Would you ever say that to God?

Jonah did.

God said to Jonah, "Go to Ninevah!"

And Jonah said, "I don't want to!"

Well, he didn't exactly SAY that to God — but that's what he was thinking.

Back in Jonah's day — this was a LONG time ago, about 800 years before Jesus was born — the greatest city in the world was Ninevah. Everyone had heard of Ninevah. And everyone knew it was an evil place.

So, God had a job for Jonah.

"Jonah," God called, "Get up! Go to Ninevah!"

"Tell the people there that I know all about the terrible things they are doing. They think no one can see the evil things they do. But I see!"

But Ninevah was a big, scary place, and Jonah didn't want to go!

Besides, the Assyrians lived in Ninevah, and the Assyrians were big bullies. They were always beating up on everybody, especially Jonah's people. They deserved to get in trouble from God.

If Jonah warned the people of Ninevah, they might change their evil ways — and then God might forgive them (God is always forgiving people!) — and then they might get away with all the terrible things they have done.

That wouldn't be fair!

So, do you know what Jonah did?

He ran away!

Jonah went down to Joppa and jumped on a ship that was sailing for Tarshish. Tarshish was a city in Spain, or maybe it was what we call the whole country of Spain now, I am not entirely sure, but whatever, it was about as far away as a person could go. Jonah thought, "God will never find me there."

But God knows where every gnat, ant, and bug on the face of the earth is. He knows when a mosquito lands on your nose. He knows where it came from, and where it goes. Of course God would know where Jonah went!

Let's see what happened next ...

Crossroads: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jO2QsF\\_nnIU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jO2QsF_nnIU)

Saddleback: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WOSadLyqshg>

LifeKids: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BAaR6eKfzXY>



## LESSON

Jonah did a very “unprophet-like” thing when he ran away. But despite his weaknesses, he was able to get an entire city to repent, with the shortest sermon ever recorded! Talk about making a difference! *“Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown.”*

More importantly, Jonah gave us an important insight about God’s heart and grace to a very undeserving city (and a very undeserving prophet)!

### PICTURES OF JESUS

**Jonah didn’t want to go to a wicked city; Jesus came willingly to save wicked people.**

Jonah didn’t want to go to the big, wicked city of Nineveh. The people there were bad and mean, and they were all gentiles (non-Jews). He didn’t want to tell them about how good God was. So he ran in the opposite direction.

Like Jonah, Jesus was sent to save a sinful people (all of us!). But while Jonah was reluctant and didn’t want to go, Jesus came willingly — He left heaven for earth and gave His own life to save us out of love for you and me.

**Romans 5:8** *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

**Jonah offered his life to pay for his disobedience and save the lives of all the other sailors; Jesus gave His life to pay for our disobedience and save our lives.**

“What can we do to save ourselves?” the sailors asked. But no matter how hard the sailors tried, they could not save themselves. Jonah knew he was the cause of the storm; he knew he had to be thrown overboard so that all the others could live.

The truth is, no matter how hard we all try, we cannot save ourselves and earn eternal life. Jesus had to take OUR punishment by giving His life so that all of us could live with Him forever.

**Jonah was in the fish’s belly for 3 days. Jesus died and rose from the dead after 3 days.**

Jesus said in **Matthew 12:40**, *“For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth”.*

When Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead, he saved us from the death. Jesus said, *“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies and whoever who believes in me will never die”.* (**John 11:25-26**)

### **JONAH WANTED JUSTICE. GOD GAVE GRACE.**

The whole story began because Jonah did not think the Ninevites deserved to be saved. He wanted them to face the full wrath of God and to be destroyed. So even after 3 days in the fish and the whole city repenting, Jonah was actually angry! He was angry that the wicked Ninevites didn't get the punishment they deserved. Jonah forgot that God also gave him grace — he was disobedient to God.

*I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity. (Jonah 4:2)*

ALL of us have sinned; all of us deserved punishment. But God, in His grace, did not give us what we deserved. Instead, through Jesus, He made us right and made us family. We have a gracious God!

### **WE ARE FORGIVEN BECAUSE OF JESUS' FINISHED WORK ON THE CROSS.**

The King of Nineveh begged God for forgiveness, in hopes that "maybe" God will have mercy and forgive them.

A key difference for us under the New Covenant today is that because of Jesus' finished work on the cross, we can now enjoy God's unconditional love and complete forgiveness.

### ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

#### JONAH-RELATED CRAFT/ACTIVITY

Keep it simple and easy for parents to prepare.

Verse: *I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love.*

**(Jonah 4:2)**

#### WORKSHEET

(Below)

#### JONAH SONG

Saddleback: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RlvuWMqAPTQ>





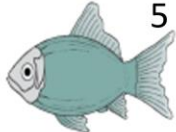







#### SHARE & PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Get kids to share issues they may be facing and pray for all of them.

Remind kids that: **We have a God who is gracious and compassionate!**

#### COMMUNION

FILL IN THE BLANKS (You can cut this up and staple the pages together as a mini booklet too)

<p>1</p> <p>God told _____ to _____ to _____</p> 	<p>2</p>  <p>Jonah said _____, went on a boat headed to _____ to run away from _____.</p>
<p>3</p>  <p>God sent a great _____. and everyone was very afraid.</p>	<p>4</p>  <p>Jonah knew it was his fault and told the sailors to _____ him into the sea!</p>
<p>5</p> <p>But Jonah didn't die. Instead, God sent a _____ to swallow Jonah.</p> 	<p>6</p> <p>Jonah was in the belly of the fish for _____ days &amp; nights.</p> 
<p>7</p> <p>Jonah _____ to God while he was in the belly of the fish. God spoke to the fish and it _____ Jonah out onto dry land.</p> 	<p>8</p> <p>God told Jonah to go to Nineveh again, and this time he went and _____ to the people there.</p> 
<p>9</p> <p>The Ninevites begged God for _____ and promised not to be wicked, and God didn't destroy the city.</p> 	<p>10</p> <p>Jonah was angry that God forgave the Ninevites. God used a _____ to remind Jonah that He cares for them too.</p> 
<p>11</p> <p>Jonah didn't want to go to Nineveh because it was a _____ city. Jesus _____ came to give His life for wicked sinners (you and me)!</p> 	<p>12</p> <p>"I knew that you are a _____ and _____ God, slow to anger and abounding in _____, a God who relents from sending calamity." (Jonah 4:2)</p> 

### STORY

#### **SERIES REVIEW**

We've been learning about some "MAD" people in the Bible.

M-A-D: Making a Difference

These are people who made a difference because of God's Spirit working in them and through them. And today, because of what Jesus has done on the Cross and His Holy Spirit in us, we too can be "MAD" people and Make a Difference.

Which "MAD" person do you remember? *Stephen, Daniel, Samuel, Joshua, Esther, Elisha, Josiah, Jonah ...*

Today, we're learning about a man named ... Gideon.

#### **MAD CREW INTRO: Gideon**

Gideon was an Israelite, from the smallest tribe, the weakest clan and the youngest in his family.  
[prop #1: nesting dolls or stacking cups: open/lift to show the smallest of small]

How could someone like him make a difference? Gideon certainly didn't think he could.

But God had other ideas.

### STORY

Gideon was living at a time when the Midianites were always attacking Israel (God allowed it because the Israelites kept disobeying God and worshipping idols).

In fact, the Midianites had been destroying the Israelites' crops for seven years!

This made the Israelites very hungry and fearful, and drove them to hide in the mountains and caves. And that's where Gideon was first introduced ... threshing wheat secretly so the Midianites will not find him.

But God found him. He sent an angel to him with a message ... God told Gideon that he will save Israel out of the hands of the Midianites.

"Impossible!" Gideon said.

But God told him, "'I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites, leaving none alive."

That's quite a big difference. That's quite an impact.

Let's see what happened next ...

Crossroads – God's story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U68cIMZSgvQ>

Saddleback: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3CDZjpDKU>

Crossroads Kids – God's people: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CjgIS78eYAg>

PursueGod Kids: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWF19SMMQII>

### LESSON

#### **GOD'S SIGNS**

Gideon needed some convincing and gave God two tests — and God passed them both.

[prop #2: wool and a water spray can to illustrate]

Firstly, Gideon put some wool fleece on the floor. If the next morning, the wool was wet, but the ground was dry, then he would believe. And the wool was very wet.

Second, Gideon put the wool again and asked that the wool would be dry, but the ground wet. And that was exactly what happened.

These signs also hold spiritual truths for us.

Wet wool + Dry ground = In the midst of dryness (and surrounded by a pandemic), we can enjoy the fullness of blessings (e.g. joy, peace, health, provision etc) that comes from Jesus.

Dry wool + Wet ground = On the cross, Jesus emptied Himself of everything He had so that all of us may be filled with Him.

#### **GOD'S STRENGTH**

Gideon was just a normal guy. There wasn't anything special about him. He wasn't a great warrior. Despite being the smallest of small, God still chose Gideon to defeat the enemy. Why?

Gideon started with an army of 32,000 men to go against the Midianites.

But God slowly whittled down the army to 10,000. And then he reduced it even further.

God gave Gideon's men a little drinking test — those who bent down to drink on their knees (like a dog) were sent back; only those who scooped up the water in their hands to drink were kept.

[prop #3: bowl of water to illustrate drinking styles]

Finally how many men were left? 300

300?! Who fights a powerful enemy with only 300? God does!

Why? So that His power may be revealed and no one can claim the victory from their own strength.

So though we may be few, small or inadequate, remember, we have Jesus living in us, and His strength is more than enough! No matter what your challenge, know that Jesus always gives us His strength to carry us through.

#### **GOD'S VICTORY**

[prop #4: trumpet/torch/jar: can use picture cut-outs]

In fact, in the end, Gideon didn't have to draw a sword. He and his 300 men just blew their trumpets, broke their jars and held up their torches with a battle cry. Nobody moved or ran into the Midianites'



TNCC  
CHILDREN'S  
CHURCH

## GIDEON

camps to attack. They just stood there. But the enemy got confused and ran away crying in fear and fighting each other. Gideon and his men got to watch God defeat the Midianites.

When we were facing Satan, the enemy who may have seemed big and powerful, Jesus came as a small, helpless baby, growing up as a little boy. Through His life, he showed us His real strength and power ... living holy and blameless as a man and going to the cross to take the sins of the world on Himself!

Like Gideon and his men, we can stand and watch His victory for us. We can declare His praise and let His light shine in our lives to all around us!

God enabled Gideon to make a difference by showing Him His strength and victory!



### ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

#### **GIDEON-RELATED CRAFT/ACTIVITY**

Keep it simple and easy for parents to prepare.

#### **SHARE & PRAY FOR EACH OTHER**

Get kids to share issues they may be facing and pray for all of them.

Remind kids that: **We have a God who is gracious and compassionate!**

### STORY

#### ICEBREAKER: Walk, Open, Stretch (5 mins)

Be enthusiastic and use big, definitive movements.

Introduce these 3 actions to kids:

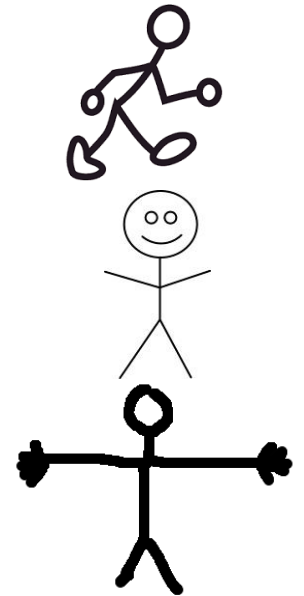
**Walk:** Walk on the spot with hands and legs moving

**Open:** Clap hands together (with fingers pointing upwards) and open them apart (like two swing doors opening)

**Stretch:** Stretch hands and legs outwards on each side as far as possible

Repeat these words and actions in order slowly, before picking up speed and mixing them up.

End on a high note and an Awesome Clap.



#### SERIES REVIEW

We've been learning about some "MAD" people in the Bible.

M-A-D: Making a Difference

These are people who made a difference and were impactful because of God's Spirit working in them and through them.

And today, because of what Jesus has done on the Cross and His Holy Spirit in us, we too can be "MAD" people and Make a Difference.

Which "MAD" person do you remember? *Stephen, Daniel, Samuel, Joshua, Esther, Elisha, Josiah, Jonah, Gideon ...*

Today, we're learning about a man named ... Philip.

#### MAD CREW INTRO: Philip

We first learn about Philip in Acts 6, when he was chosen as one of the seven men, together with Stephen, to serve the Greek widows.

Like Stephen (the first martyr of Christ), Philip was known to be "*full of the Spirit and wisdom*".

### STORY

How did Stephen (the first of our MAD Crew that we learnt) die? *He was stoned to death by Jewish leaders.*

After Stephen's death, *a great persecution broke out against the church in **Jerusalem**, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.* (Acts 8:1, 4)

Philip went down to a city in **Samaria** and proclaimed the Messiah there. *When the crowds heard Philip and saw the signs he performed, they all paid close attention to what he said. For with shrieks, impure spirits came out of many, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. So there was great joy in that city.* (Acts 8:6-8)

Later on, an angel of the Lord told Philip to go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza. On that road, Philip met a very important person all the way from Ethiopia. Do you know where Ethiopia is?

Let's see what happened next ...

Animation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BWNFa4GCikk>

KidsWise: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fQIQIEiRjvA>

[For younger kids]

Every time the words "WALK", "OPEN" and "STRETCH" are mentioned, get the children to do the accompanying actions.

God asked Philip to go to a certain road in the desert. He didn't say why, or what, or who. He just said go. Philip didn't argue or give excuses. He didn't know what was going to happen. God said go, so He just **WALKED**.

Along came an Ethiopian eunuch, a very important man who served the queen of Ethiopia. He was sitting in a carriage and reading Scripture.

God's Holy Spirit told Philip to "Go near and overtake the chariot." Once again, Philip **WALKED**. Or rather ... he ran!



The very important man was reading the prophet Isaiah. He looked a bit confused. So Philip **OPENED** his mouth and asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

The very important man said, "Of course not. Can you help me?"

The prophet Isaiah was talking about a lamb being slaughtered. Who was this lamb? The lamb was Jesus.

So Philip **OPENED** his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him.



As they went down the road, and they saw some water. The very important man said he believed that Jesus is the Son of God and wanted to be baptised. So Philip **STRETCHED** OUT his hand and baptised him. And the very important man was so happy to believe in Jesus. And when he back to his country, he brought the good news about Jesus to all his countrymen there.



### LESSON

Before Jesus went back to heaven, He gave His last instructions, the Great Commission, to his disciples. If you recall, we learnt about **Acts 1:8** before. Let's read it together:

*"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

Just as how Stephen was a picture of Jesus — serving the lowly, falsely accused by the Teachers of the Law, forgiving those who killed him — Philip is a picture of the church rising up answer Jesus' Great Commission in Acts 1:8 — by Walking, Opening and Stretching, from Jerusalem to Samaria and to the Ends of the Earth.

#### **JERUSALEM in JUDEA**

Like Stephen, he served the widows and the lowly in the early church.

#### **SAMARIA**

When he went to Samaria, he preached about Jesus and a great revival and great joy broke out.

#### **ENDS OF THE EARTH**

Philip obeyed the word of God, and was able to share the truths about Jesus to the Ethiopian eunuch who would then bring the gospel to his end of the earth.

#### **AND THEN THE END WILL COME**

Jesus tells us that He will come again when the gospel has reached the ends of the earth because He wants everyone to have a chance to hear about His love and salvation.

*And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. (Matthew 24:14)*

And in the same way that the Lord suddenly took Philip away after he baptised the Ethiopian, we too will be caught up together in the clouds to meet Jesus when He comes again (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

#### **CONCLUSION**

Philip was an ordinary person, just like you and me. He did not have super powers. He may not have been super wise. He may not have super ability.

But he had feet to WALK. He had a mouth to OPEN and speak. He had hands to STRETCH out. And He had God's Holy Spirit — who has all the power, wisdom, ability and everything needed.

When we have God's Holy Spirit, He can use our feet, our mouth and our hands to tell everyone about Jesus. All we need to do is to listen to God, and to WALK, OPEN and STRETCH — and He will use us to Make a Difference!

### ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

#### **PHILIP-RELATED CRAFT/ACTIVITY**

Keep it simple and easy for parents to prepare.

Memory Verse:

*And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. (Matthew 24:14)*

#### **SHARE & PRAY FOR EACH OTHER**

Get kids to share and pray for those who do not know Jesus and for God to use them to share His love and gospel with them.

### STORY

#### **SERIES REVIEW**

We've been learning about some "MAD" people in the Bible.

M-A-D: Making a Difference

These are people who made a difference and were impactful because of God's Spirit working in them and through them.

And today, because of what Jesus has done on the Cross and His Holy Spirit in us, we too can be "MAD" people and Make a Difference.

Which "MAD" person do you remember? *Stephen, Daniel, Samuel, Joshua, Esther, Elisha, Josiah, Jonah, Gideon, Philip ...*

Today, we're learning about a boy who learnt about God from a young age — Timothy.

#### **MAD CREW INTRO: Timothy**

Timothy's father was a Greek, but his mother (Eunice) and grandmother (Lois) were Jewish Christians, and they taught Timothy about God since he was a kid. When he grew older, he became a missionary with Paul and, later on, an impactful leader of the church.

1 and 2 Timothy in the Bible are actually letters from Paul to Timothy, written when Paul was in prison, to teach him how to be a good minister to the church.

### STORY

When Timothy grew to be a young man, he met the missionary, Paul.

(Yes, this was the same Paul who used to be called Saul and who was responsible for the stoning of Stephen and the persecution of the early church.)

Timothy met Paul in Lystra and travelled with him on his second missionary journey.

Timothy became a very good helper to Paul, and Paul loved Timothy just like how a father loves a son. Timothy was with Paul even when Paul went to prison. Timothy helped Paul write letters to churches so that they could learn about God too.

Later on, Timothy decided to live in the city of Ephesus and help the church there by teaching and preaching. Sometimes it was hard for Timothy. He was a young man still and sometimes older people did not listen to him because of his age. But Timothy loved God and he did not give up teaching the people in Ephesus.

Timothy's old friend Paul wrote him letters to encourage Timothy and help him be a better minister. Paul reminded Timothy of what he had gone through for the sake of Christ and encouraged Timothy to remain true to God's Word and to preach it boldly. He gave Timothy advice and told him that he should always study God's word and be ready to give answers to people who ask questions.

Let's learn a bit more about Timothy's life ...

Timothy meeting Paul in Lego: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N5G5kpvU57I>

Crossroads God's Story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w4GSFluzBSA>



### LESSON

#### I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE ... WHEN I AM YOUNG

Timothy's mother and grandmother taught Timothy about God from infancy and he came to believe in Jesus. Timothy went on to be a young missionary and church leader. It wasn't always easy because of his age. Older people may have thought that they'd know better than him.

But Paul encouraged Timothy that he can Make a Difference even as a young person:

*Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. (1 Timothy 4:12)*

Not only did Timothy not have to be self-conscious about being young, but he could set an example for other believers, whether young or old, to follow.

So children, you may think church and Christianity is for your parents and you just follow along because they tell you to. But you can know God as your Father and believe in Jesus for yourself, study His word and make an impact around you ... even as a kid!

#### I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE ... WITH GOD'S WORD

Timothy is a good example of a child who learned God's Word and grew up to be strong and faithful.

In **2 Timothy 3:16**, Paul reminds Timothy: *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.* He goes on to tell Timothy to preach the Word "in season and out of season" (**2 Timothy 4:2**).

To preach God's Word, Timothy had to know it. Likewise, if we are to be ready to use God's Word in our lives or the share it with others, we need to study it.

As our church is listening through the Book of John this month, why don't you listen to a chapter a day together with your parents? This is a great way to learn the Word of God to be able to share it with others, for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.

#### I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE ... UNTIL THE END

Paul and Timothy went through many challenges and persecutions together. Towards the end of his life, Paul wrote to Timothy from prison to declare: *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. (2 Timothy 4:7)*

He had also charged Timothy to do the same in **1 Timothy 6:12**. *Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.* Timothy started well as a young boy, and he should end well, too.



TNCC  
CHILDREN'S  
CHURCH

## TIMOTHY

In life, many things may happen that may cause us to feel like giving up and even stop following God. But like Timothy and Paul, we can keep our eyes focused on Jesus and keep running, keep fighting and keep taking hold of what He has given to us. Because God is always with us. And He gives us all we need to keep going. *For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. (2 Timothy 1:7)*

What is one way you can be like Timothy? Answer God's call even at a young age? Study and share His word? Persevere until the end? [get kids to share one thing they learnt]



TNCC  
CHILDREN'S  
CHURCH

TIMOTHY

## ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

### TIMOTHY-RELATED CRAFT/ACTIVITY

Keep it simple and easy for parents to prepare.

### MEMORY VERSE

*Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. (1 Timothy 4:12)*

### SHARE & PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Get kids to share and pray for those who do not know Jesus and for God to use them to share His love and gospel with them.

### STORY

#### **SERIES REVIEW**

We've been learning about some "MAD" people in the Bible.

M-A-D: Making a Difference

These are people who made a difference and were impactful because of God's Spirit working in them and through them.

And today, because of what Jesus has done on the Cross and His Holy Spirit in us, we too can be "MAD" people and Make a Difference.

Which "MAD" person do you remember? *Stephen, Daniel, Samuel, Joshua, Esther, Elisha, Josiah, Jonah, Gideon, Philip, Timothy ...*

Today, we're learning about a guy who loved to help others — Barnabas.

#### **MAD CREW INTRO: Barnabas**

Barnabas was originally called Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus. The apostles called him Barnabas – which means Son of Encouragement

It was an appropriate name because he was an encouragement to all who knew him.

### LESSON

Barnabas is one of those people in the Bible that isn't talked about a whole lot. But one thing we know ... he was someone who made a huge impact because he encouraged others.

#### **BARNABAS ENCOURAGED THE CHURCH**

In Acts 4, we read that all those who believed in Jesus "were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had."

Barnabas was one of those who sold a field he owned and brought the money to the apostles.

He was a Levite. According to the distribution of land when the Israelites entered Canaan, the Levites were given cities and pastureland around the cities for their cattle. The pastures extended 3,000 feet (over half a mile) in all four directions from each Levite city. Barnabas sold a field he owned and brought the proceeds to the apostles.

Video: RCFellowship <https://youtu.be/AYJTgeUw3ow?t=19>

#### **BARNABAS ENCOURAGED PAUL**

Remember Saul? When Saul had his encounter with Jesus, he changed his name to Paul. Paul went to Jerusalem and tried to contact the believers there, but they were afraid of him. What if he was just pretending to be a believer in Christ? What if he was really just trying to find them and arrest them?

Barnabas saw what was happening. He himself had the trust and respect of the believers, and he thought Paul was sincere. If he introduced Paul to the apostles in Jerusalem, the others would accept him. That's what he did. Barnabas told them how Paul had been converted and how he was now preaching about Jesus. So the church accepted him, and Paul was able to stay in Jerusalem.

Later, when some evil men were trying to kill Paul, he went away to Tarsus. Barnabas went to Tarsus looking for Paul again. He found him and brought him to the city of Antioch and the two of them preached in the city for a whole year.

Video: Saddleback Kids <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BK8MM42pi1A>

#### **BARNABAS ENCOURAGED JOHN MARK**

Barnabas had a cousin, John Mark, who travelled with him and Paul to some of the cities. But at one of the cities, John Mark deserted them (probably he was homesick) and failed to continue the journey with them. For their second missionary journey, Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with them again, but Paul refused. There was sharp disagreement over the matter. Paul was reluctant to trust John Mark again, but Barnabas wanted to give him a second chance.

They settled it by parting ways. Barnabas took John Mark with him to the island of Cyprus, and Paul took another preacher, Silas, with him through Syria. There is an indication that Paul and Barnabas worked together again, and in his letter to the Colossians which was written from prison, Paul mentions the fact that John Mark is with him, and he tells them that if John Mark comes to the church, they are to welcome him.

### **LET'S MAKE A DIFFERENCE AS AN ENCOURAGER**

Barnabas was truly the Son of Encouragement who always looked for the best in people, and his faith in them was rewarded.

Let's all be encouragers of others.

Suppose a new person comes to your school. You can be a friend to that person. Talk to him (or her). At lunch time go and sit with that person, or invite her to join you and your friends at your table.

At recess time include the new person in your activities. Welcome him on your team even though he may not become the best player on the team.

Be helpful and show him where things are at the school, and tell him what is expected of students. Help him to learn his way around.

Be a "Barnabas".

Memory Verse: *Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.* (Ephesians 4:29)

### ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

#### **BE AN ENCOURAGER**

Get kids to share about someone they can encourage — parent, teacher, friend, neighbor, cousin etc.

Write a simple note or card to encourage them. Pray for them.

#### **SHARE & PRAY FOR EACH OTHER**

Get kids to share and pray for those who need encouragement.