

WEEK 2

GOD IS REDEEMER

GOD CHANGES OUR HEARTS

PRIMARY LESSON GUIDE

THE FOUR KEYS

KEY VERSE

I will give them a heart to know that I am the Lord, and they shall be My people and I will be their God. Jeremiah 24:7a

KEY IDEAS

1. Sin makes our hearts hard as stone
2. Only God can change our hearts
3. God's forgiveness makes our hearts soft

KEY PASSAGE

Genesis 3:1-19, Ezekiel 36:26-27

KEY PRINCIPLES

EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW ...

sin makes our hearts hard and we do not want to obey God on our own.

EVERY CHILD SHOULD BE ABLE TO ...

trust in Jesus for forgiveness.

EVERY CHILD SHOULD FEEL ...

amazed that God can change our hearts.

EVERY CHILD SHOULD WANT ...

their heart to be made soft so they will love what God loves.

INTRODUCTION

God is not only our Savior but also our Redeemer. The word redemption means to “buy back” something that has been lost. In our case, we have lost our freedom and fellowship with God because of sin. We are slaves to sin, and Jesus bought us back through His blood that was shed for us on the cross. When we repent and trust in Him, we are transformed into new creations with new hearts and given the promise of eternal life. God’s plan is to redeem all people who will repent and trust in Him. Together, we are His church. The church is both local (Christians who meet together weekly to pray and worship) and global (all Christians on earth). Jesus describes the church in Matthew 5 like a “city on a hill” that gives light to the darkness that surrounds it. God has given Christians a special job to shine His light to the world so all people have a chance to know Him and be saved.

OPENING ILLUSTRATION

Begin class by briefly reviewing last week’s lesson. Remind kids that Jesus makes us a new creation when we trust in Him. Explain that today we’re going to talk more about how when Jesus makes us new, our hearts are changed. Gather the following supplies to illustrate the lesson: small bowl of water, small sponge, large red and white construction paper hearts, large envelope with “JESUS” written on the front.

STORY

Ask, “Does anyone remember when we talked about how God created the whole world and He made the first people? Who were they? When God created the world, what was it like?” God created the world perfectly and without sin. He gave Adam and Eve clean, pure hearts. (Hold up the red heart to demonstrate.) Say, “Let’s read about what happened after God created them.” (Read Genesis 3:1-19)

Hold up the red heart again and explain that when God created Adam & Eve, they had clean hearts like this one. But they were deceived (lied to) by Satan and disobeyed God by eating from the one tree He told them not to. By doing this, they committed the very first sin. They believed Satan’s lie instead of believing that God had made this rule for their protection. The Bible says that Satan wants to do 3 things to us (John 10:10):

1. Steal (with the red heart in your hands, motion as if to snatch it away)
2. Kill (rip the heart in two)
3. Destroy (crumble the heart up into a ball)

When Adam & Eve chose to listen to Satan, their hearts changed. Sin makes our hearts dirty and hard as stone. So, all of Adam & Eve’s children had the same sad hearts like this one because they could only give their children what they had. God’s word says we’re all born with this kind of heart (Romans 3:23, Jeremiah 17:9). Before they sinned, Adam & Eve had a good relationship with God. But sin separated them from Him. God cares so much about our hearts and He loves us so much He sent Jesus (hold up the envelope) to make a way for our hearts to be repaired. So when we take our broken hearts and we give them to Jesus....(place the broken heart inside the envelope and pull out the clean, white one)....He gives us a new heart!

This doesn’t mean that we won’t ever sin again, because we still live on this earth that is full of temptations. But it does mean that we can have a relationship with God because we have been forgiven for all our sins! And as we walk with Jesus day by day, our desires start to look more like His. Instead of wanting to only please ourselves by sinning, a new heart desires to please God more! As we spend time in God’s Word, our hearts look more and more like His. (Read Ezekiel 36:26-27)

ACTIVITY

Using the sponge and bowl of water, explain that sin hardens our hearts like stone. We do not desire God when our hearts are hard. Hold up the sponge and explain that a sinful heart is just like a dry sponge that is hard and not useful. But when we repent of our sins and allow Jesus to soften our hearts, they become like a wet sponge that is soft and useful to God.

PRAYER

Thank God that He changes our hearts and uses us for a special purpose when we trust in Him. Ask God to help you see that sin hardens our hearts but He makes them soft and kind.

SONG

Who is the Redeemer by The New City Catechism

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

Matthew 13:15, Romans 2:5, Psalm 81:12, Psalm 86:5, Psalm 51:10

ACTIVITY

Use playdough and help your child mold hearts while you discuss the questions below. (Alt. option: you can also use cookie dough to form hearts and then bake them to share as a snack.) Talk about how God changes our hearts of stone and gives us hearts of flesh.

DISCUSSION

- What does sin do to our hearts?
Sin hardens our hearts against the things of God and causes death and destruction. Instead of living to please ourselves and satisfy our sinful desires, we should repent and turn to God who loves us and knows what is best for us.
- Why should we want a changed heart?
We can become so hard in our sin that we keep refusing to repent, and eventually God leaves us alone in our stubbornness and sin. This is because He is a good God who does not force anyone to love Him back. Instead of living to please ourselves, we should repent of sin and turn to Him for forgiveness so that we can be set free.
- How does God change our stony hearts to soft hearts?
When we repent of sin and follow Jesus, He changes our desires so that the more we walk with Him, the more we desire the things He desires. God is the most kind and caring being that exists, and all He does is good.

PRAYER

Thank God for making a way for our hearts to be softened like His. Ask God to help you love what He loves.