



LESSON SNAPSHOT

BOTTOM LINE:

God wants us to trust in Jesus.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that God can do great things in our lives if we put our faith and trust in Jesus.

KEY PASSAGE:

John 9:1-15, 35-39, Jesus Heals a Blind Man

MEMORY VERSE:

"His signs are great. His wonders are mighty. His kingdom will last forever. His rule will never end." Daniel 4:3 (NirV)

SUMMARY:

Every circus needs a ringleader, a great showman who everything centers around. The entirety of the Bible – Old and New Testament – centers around Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He is the Greatest Showman, showing us the love, power and strength of God the Father.

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for giving us Jesus.

*In Jesus' name,
Amen*



MEMORY VERSE

“How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is an eternal kingdom; his dominion endures from generation to generation.” Daniel 4:3 (NIV)

“His signs are great. His wonders are mighty. His kingdom will last forever. His rule will never end.” Daniel 4:3 (NIRV)

LARGE GROUP:

Pick out some kids at random from the crowd and see who can recite the memory verse. Then repeat it all together.

SMALL GROUP:

Without putting the verse on display or looking it up, see how many kids can recite the memory verse.



SKIT

MEET THE GREATEST SHOWMAN

ITEMS NEEDED:

A ringmaster's costume for Adam
A Biblical costume for Thomas

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN:

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CHARACTERS:

Adam - A circus ringmaster
Thomas - A blind man who was healed

Adam enters and takes center stage.

ADAM: Ladies and gentlemen, children of all ages, gather 'round, and step right up! The Bible Circus is back to astound you with feats and sights, strange and rare! Step right up and be the first to see what God has done for these amazing people. How amazing? *(takes off his hat)* Dear friends, although it has been my privilege to act as ringmaster these last eight weeks, I am not the leader of this circus. No! There is a greater showman, the greatest showman, who runs this particular circus! He holds the power of the entire universe in His hands, and yet, He loves every one of us individually. To show you how great this man is, I have invited another man to share his story. Please welcome... Thomas.

Thomas enters.

ADAM: Thomas, you are not a circus man.

THOMAS: No, sir.

ADAM: You are no strongman, no trapeze artist, no escape artist.

THOMAS: Not me, no.

ADAM: No bearded lady.

SKIT

THOMAS: I am definitely not that.

ADAM: But until recently, you were blind, is that correct?

THOMAS: I was born blind, sir. All my life, I was dependent on the kindness of others because I could not see.

ADAM: And how about now?

THOMAS: I see everything. The red of your coat. The smile on those kids. Everything from the hay in the animal cages to the mighty elephants.

ADAM: How is that possible?

THOMAS: It was the ringmaster. It was God's only Son, Jesus. He spat on the ground, made some mud in the dirt, rubbed it on my eyes, and told me to wash in the Pool of Siloam. When I washed the mud away, I could see!

ADAM: That's amazing! Did you ever think in a million years, you would gain the gift of sight?

THOMAS: Never.

ADAM: What did your friends say when this miracle happened?

THOMAS: They couldn't believe it. And when I told them the story of how it happened, they still didn't believe it.

ADAM: How did you answer them?

THOMAS: Simple. I told them, "I was blind, but now I can see." Jesus gave me my sight, and I am so grateful to know him.

ADAM: Ladies and gentlemen, children of all ages, there is only one greatest showman, and His name is Jesus Christ. He wants to be your leader, the Lord of your life. When you believe in Jesus, great things will happen!

THOMAS: I'm living proof of that!

ADAM: Thank you for being part of the Bible Circus. We hope that you'll carry this message with you as you go. Jesus loves you, and He wants to change your life!



OBJECT LESSON OR KIDS SERMON

ITEMS NEEDED:

The Take Home crafts from every week of this series

How many of you guys still have all the crafts we've made during this series at home? Who has the poster you made last week? Who has the finger puppets from week one? Who ate their strongman dumbbells?

When people used to go to the circus, they would take home souvenirs. T-shirts, balloons, buttons, posters, toys, little mementos that they hang onto for a while to remember the experience. Most of these are eventually lost or thrown out. We know most of you won't hang on to your circus crafts for very long either, but there is one thing we want you to take away from this series, and that's Jesus.

Jesus is no souvenir. He's the Son of God. He died for you, and if you believe in Him, He will give you eternal life. Jesus wants to be your Savior and your best friend. That's a far better thing to have than a T-shirt with a circus elephant on it.

You may not remember this lesson five years from now or even five months from now, but we hope you will never forget this. Jesus loves you, and if you believe in Jesus, He will change your life!



LARGE GROUP GAME

LIP SYNC CHALLENGE

ITEMS NEEDED:

A recording of This Is the Greatest Show
Two microphones, not turned on

INSTRUCTIONS:

Choose two people from the audience who have seen The Greatest Showman, and give each one a dead microphone. Play the song, and let the two take turns lip syncing part of the song. Let the audience decide, by applause, who gives the best performance.

VARIATION:

If your students don't know the movie, pick a song most or all of the kids will know, a pop tune or a Disney tune. Make it something dramatic!

WHAT'S THE POINT?

Jesus is the Greatest Showman because He can change your life!



LARGE GROUP LESSON

BOTTOM LINE:

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OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that God can do great things in our lives if we put our faith and trust in Jesus.

KEY PASSAGE:

John 9:1-15, 35-39, Jesus Heals a Blind Man

INTRO:

Over the last several weeks we've talked about a lot of the acts that used to populate the circus. We've talked about the brave men and women who train lions, who work the flying trapeze, and the daredevils who risk life and limb. We've talked about the clowns who make us laugh and the oddities like the bearded lady. The one person we haven't mentioned is the one in the center of the action. He's the man who directs your attention to the high wire, to the cage of death, and to the clown car now entering the arena. He is your host. He is the ringmaster.

The ringmaster usually dresses in a bright red coat and top hat. His booming voice echoes through the big top as he takes you seamlessly from one act to the next. He tells you that the people now performing for your pleasure are the fifth and sixth generation to carry on these circus traditions.

He is sometimes presented as the man who traveled the world, recruiting all these acts so that he could present them to you all under one tent, and in the early days of the circus, that was sometimes true. Whether it was the ringmaster or an unseen producer, there was in the circus a showman who knew what people wanted to see. Men like the Ringling Brothers, James Bailey, Adam Forepaugh, and the great P.T. Barnum knew a good act when they saw it. They competed with one another to find the biggest, the fastest, the strongest, the strangest, the greatest acts they could find. Each one of them wanted to be known as the best. They wanted to be the greatest showman.

As we wind down our Bible Circus series, it's only fitting we focus on the only man who could possibly be called the greatest in the Bible. The entire Bible, the Old and New Testament, revolves around the story of the man who was born of a virgin, who died on the cross, and who rose from the grave so that He could give us new life.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

All the other people we discussed in this series are merely role players next to Him. Jesus is the Son of God, the Greatest Showman, the man who can truly change your world!

READ JOHN 9:1-15, 35-39

MAIN POINT:

The story of the blind man is one of many transformations that takes place in the gospels. Every time Jesus encounters someone, he changes them forever. Jesus changes fishermen into disciples. He restores perfect health to the disabled and the diseased. He convinces the greedy and selfish Zacchaeus to give back everything he has ever stolen, and He gives new hope to Mary Magdalene when He casts seven demons out of her.

Many people didn't want to believe the blind man's story. To borrow a word from Barnum, they thought it was all "humbug." The blind man could only say with amazement, "I was blind, but now I see." Jesus changed his life. Jesus can change your life. He will do amazing things in you and through you if you only trust Him with your heart!

DRIVE IT HOME:

If you've seen the movie *The Greatest Showman*, you saw a fictionalized version of the life story of P.T. Barnum. In the movie, Barnum is a man who sees things in other people that no one else does. Where people see oddballs and freaks, Barnum saw stars. He saw something special in the little person who became Tom Thumb. He saw true beauty in the bearded lady. Barnum gave these people who had been outcasts all their lives a place where they were welcome. He made them believe in themselves. He changed their world.

The Barnum we see in *The Greatest Showman* is a reflection of Jesus. Jesus didn't see us as outcasts, as sinners who deserve to be punished. He sees each and every one of us as someone special. He wants to change our lives, like He did the blind man. He wants to give us hope. He is preparing a place for all of us in Heaven, a place where every man, woman, and child can feel at home.

We've witnessed a lot of amazing stories over the last few weeks. We've seen how God helped Daniel in the lion's den; how He saved Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego from the fiery furnace; how He used Deborah and Samson to save His people; how He rescued Peter from certain doom. All of these stories, and all the other stories in the Bible, were written down to teach us the amazing things God will do through those who love Him. Now is your time to respond to that message, and ask Jesus to become your Savior.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

If you've never given your heart to Jesus, we want to invite you to do so. When you ask Jesus to be your Savior, He will send His Holy Spirit to live in your heart. Jesus will begin to show you all the amazing things that He sees in you, and He will begin doing amazing things in your life!

The story of Jesus has been called the Greatest Story Ever Told. Jesus is inviting you to be part of that story. Ask Jesus to be your Savior. Ask Him to show you how much He loves you. God will do great things in your life when you place your trust in Jesus!

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for giving us Jesus.

*In Jesus' name,
Amen*



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (K-2ND)

ICEBREAKER:

If you could do any circus act, what would you want to do?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Daniel 4:3

Without putting the verse on display or looking it up, see how many kids can recite the memory verse.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Have the kids create and act out a skit telling today's Bible story.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read John 9:1-15, 35-39

Who did Jesus see as He walked along the road?

What did Jesus do when He saw the blind man?

What happened when the blind man washed in the pool?

Why did the blind man believe Jesus was the Son of Man?

How can we place our trust in Jesus?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Help us to trust you all our life.

In Jesus' name,

Amen



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (3-5TH)

ICEBREAKER:

If you could do any circus act, what would you want to do?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Daniel 4:3

Without putting the verse on display or looking it up, see how many kids can recite the memory verse.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Have the kids create and act out a skit telling today's Bible story.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read John 9:1-15, 35-39

What did Jesus do for the blind man?

Why did the blind man believe in Jesus?

What did Jesus do so that He could be our Savior?

Do you believe Jesus can do great things in your life?

How can we make Jesus our Savior?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Help us to trust you all our life.

In Jesus' name,

Amen



POWERPOINT REVIEW GAME

CIRCUS BIBLE JEOPARDY

God used this not-so-bearded lady to save Israel from King Sisera.
WHO WAS DEBORAH?

These men were protected by God when they were cast into a fiery furnace for refusing to worship an idol.
WHO WERE SHADRACH, MESHACH, AND ABEDNEGO?

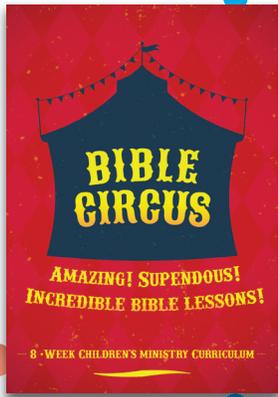
God tamed the lion to protect this faithful believer.
WHO WAS DANIEL?

An angel of the Lord helped this believer make a daring escape.
WHO WAS PETER?

God took this man to Heaven in a flaming chariot.
WHO WAS ELIJAH?

He gave eyesight to a man who was born blind.
WHO WAS JESUS?

God gave this man a second chance, and he sacrificed himself to defeat Israel's enemies.
WHO WAS SAMSON?



MAKE IT STICK

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

Bible Circus Lesson 8

THIS WEEK'S LESSON: JESUS



IN THE CAR:

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

Every circus needs a ringleader, a great showman who everything centers around. The entirety of the Bible – Old and New Testament – centers around Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He is the Greatest Showman, showing us the love, power and strength of God the Father. John 9:1-15, 35-39, Jesus Heals a Blind Man



HANGING OUT:

Make this week's lesson real:

Share with your kids some of the greatest acts you've ever seen in person, whether it was circus, music, theater, or something else. Then re-read this week's Bible story, and ask your children how they think the crowd must have reacted to this scene.



AT DINNER:

Here are some great discussion starters:

- What did Jesus do for the blind man?
- Why did the blind man believe in Jesus as his Savior?
- How can we place our trust in Jesus?



AT BEDTIME:

Quiz your child on this week's memory verse:

"His signs are great. His wonders are mighty. His kingdom will last forever. His rule will never end." Daniel 4:3 (NIRV)



PARENT TIME:

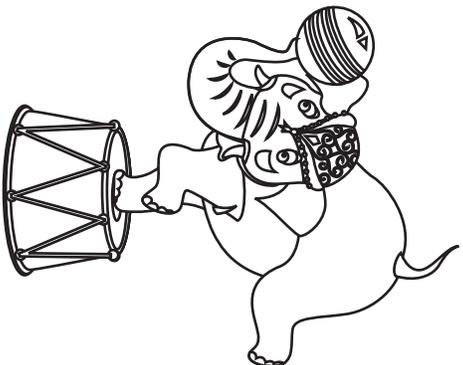
What you need to know:

Asking Jesus to be our Savior is the greatest choice any of us can make. Talk to your kids about that decision, whether it's one they've made already or one they have yet to make. Ask God to put it on their hearts to trust Jesus.

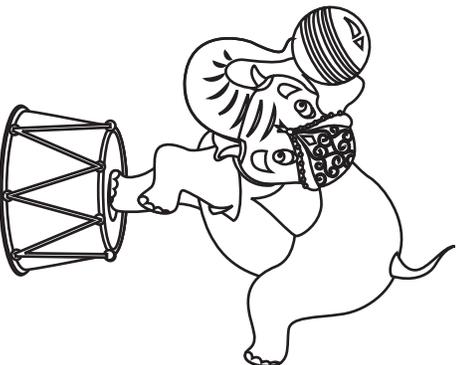


CRAFT ACTIVITY

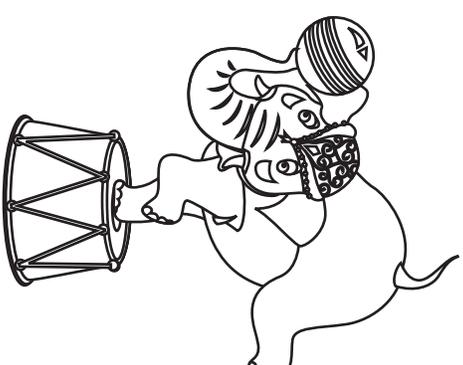
Have the kids make a pair of “binoculars” with toilet paper rolls or construction paper, something they might use to see better at the circus. Let it be a reminder of how Jesus allowed the man born blind to see!



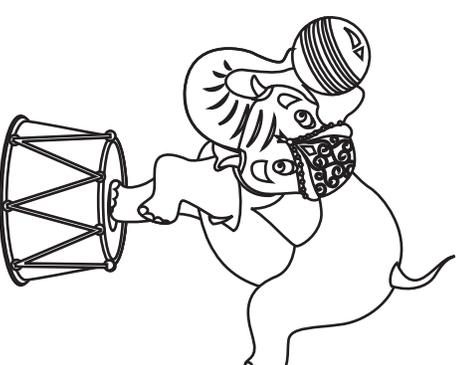
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