



LESSON SNAPSHOT

BOTTOM LINE:

We can trust God to keep his promises!

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that we can trust God, because God always keeps His promises.

KEY PASSAGE:

Genesis 18:1-14, Sarah Laughs

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:

The clowns at the circus make everyone laugh. When Sarah heard God promise to allow her to have a baby when she was old enough to be a grandma, she laughed. She laughed because she didn't believe God could do something that seemed as impossible as that. But Sarah learned that God always keeps His promises.

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for always keeping your promises.

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:

Choose three kids from the audience. Have each one “sing” the memory verse in a different musical style - country, hip-hop, oldies, opera, etc.

SMALL GROUP:

Have the kids each recite or read the verse in the voice of their favorite cartoon character.



SKIT

MEET THE LAUGHING LADY

ITEMS NEEDED:

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

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN:

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CHARACTERS:

Adam - A circus ringmaster
Sarah - Abraham's wife

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. But now, ladies and gentlemen, it's time for the clowns!

Sarah enters, laughing.

SARAH: Oh I just love the clowns!

ADAM: We've got some of the funniest clowns in the world, like Hugo, the clown who slips on a banana peel.

SARAH: I love that guy!

ADAM: We also have Clarabell, the clown who squirts water out of a flower.

SARAH: Oh Clarabell, so funny!

ADAM: And then we have the clown car, a tiny little car packed with over 50 clowns!

SARAH: That's my favorite!

SKIT

ADAM: Well I guess we don't need clowns to get a laugh, do we? Say, aren't you Sarah?

SARAH: Yes I am.

ADAM: Well no wonder you're laughing! You're the lady who laughed when God said you were going to have a baby!

SARAH: Of course I laughed! I was an old woman! How was I going to have a baby? *(laughs)*

ADAM: But you had a baby, didn't you?

SARAH: *(stops laughing)* Yes. Yes I did.

ADAM: You didn't think God could do it, but he proved you wrong.

SARAH: He sure did.

ADAM: I guess it wasn't so funny after all.

SARAH: I don't know. I think God had a good laugh over it.

ADAM: And why is that?

SARAH: Because God made a promise, and he always keeps His promises. I'm pretty sure he had a good laugh at my lack of faith.

ADAM: Something tells me you didn't laugh at God's promises after that.

SARAH: Nope, not at God's promises. But I do love the clowns! Where are they?

ADAM: They're not here. Hugo slipped so hard on a banana peel last night, he broke his leg. Clarabell shot herself in the eye with the squirting flower and is having emergency Lasic surgery. And the clown car broke down, stranding 57 clowns at the 7-11 off Highway 35.

SARAH: Are you serious??

ADAM: I'm so sorry the clowns won't be making anyone laugh today.

SARAH: Yes they will! That's the funniest thing ever!

SKIT

Sarah exits laughing.

ADAM: Well, just remember, kids, it's ok to laugh at clowns, but never laugh at God's promises. See you next week!



OBJECT LESSON OR KIDS SERMON

ITEMS NEEDED:

A red clown nose

Can I ask you guys a serious question? Does this red nose make my face look funny? What is it about a red clown nose that makes people laugh and smile?

Laughter is a gift from God. Laughter helps us to cope with the bad times and enjoy the good times. We all laugh when we hear a good story, hear a good joke, watch a funny cartoon, or see someone who looks silly, like a person with a red clown nose.

Sarah thought it was a joke when she heard she was having a baby, but God had the last laugh in this story. Sarah was an old woman, far too old to be having children, but when God makes a promise, He keeps it. Sarah never forgot that lesson. In fact she named her son Isaac – which means laughter – to remind herself never to doubt God.

We can trust God to keep His promises. If Sarah were here, she'd tell you, that is no joke!



LARGE GROUP GAME

CLOWN CAR

ITEMS NEEDED:

A large cardboard box or other prop that kids could crawl through made to look like a clown car

INSTRUCTIONS:

Choose eight players for this game. This is a modified version of musical chairs/ hot potato, except instead of trying to get a seat or not get stuck holding a ball, when the music stops, the person or persons inside the clown car are out. Players will walk in a circle that goes through the car so that someone is always crawling through the box. The last kid standing wins.

VARIATION:

A simple game of hot potato can be played with a clown nose if the car prop is not feasible.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

God's promises are no laughing matter. He keeps His promises.



LARGE GROUP LESSON

BOTTOM LINE:

We can trust God to keep his promises!

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that we can trust God, because God always keeps His promises.

KEY PASSAGE:

Genesis 18:1-14, Sarah Laughs

INTRO:

How many of you guys enjoy clowns? How many of you are absolutely terrified of clowns? Adults, let's see those hands. Who is afraid of clowns?

My apologies to all of you who have let the scary clowns of the world get the best of you, but you can't talk about the circus without talking about clowns. Clowns have been a circus staple from the very beginning. Clowns appeared on the posters, in the parades, and of course, in the big top. Clowns are so important to the circus, that the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus actually once operated a clown college! From 1968 to 1997, students from around the world attended this one of a kind school to learn the fine art of American-style clowning. Tuition was absolutely free, if you could get in, and when you graduated, you were issued your own special clown suit and clown personality, ready for the circus!

Clowns are known for many things. Some are happy, some are sad. Some are known for juggling or acrobatics. Some clowns perform with dogs, who dress like clowns and do amazing tricks. And then there's the ever-popular clown car, the tiny vehicle that drives out to the center ring loaded with dozens and dozens of clowns! Whatever their act, the main purpose of the clown was always the same: make people laugh!

Today's Bible story is not about a clown, but about a woman known for her laughter. There were no circuses around in the days of Genesis, and the woman's laughter was not due to anything truly funny. She heard someone make a promise that she believed was impossible. It was so ridiculous, it made her laugh. She would soon find out this promise was no joke. God made the promise, and when God makes promises, He keeps them, no matter how impossible they may seem!

READ GENESIS 18:1-14

LARGE GROUP LESSON

MAIN POINT:

Sarah was an old, old woman. She was far past the age when it was possible to have children. When she heard these strangers in her house promise that she would have a baby, she laughed! It was a joke. It had to be a joke. How could an old woman possibly have a baby? But look what happens in Genesis chapter 21:

GENESIS 21:1-7

The man who said Sarah would have a baby was no clown. He was a messenger, delivering a promise straight from God. God never jokes around when He makes a promise. He is always faithful, and we can count on Him to keep His word.

Promises are no laughing matter to God. When He makes a promise, you better believe He will keep it.

DRIVE IT HOME:

I know Genesis tells us that Sarah was laughing about the baby, but deep down inside, this was no laughing matter to her. She wanted to have a baby, and it must have been painful to think someone was teasing her about it. Sarah believed she was far past the age to have a child. How could anyone be so cruel as to promise her a baby?

Empty promises hurt. So do broken ones. I have no doubt all of you here have been the victim of broken promises. Maybe it was a friend. Maybe it was a loved one. Maybe it was your own parents. When someone close, someone you trust and love breaks a promise, it can be devastating. You may laugh when someone who has hurt you before makes another promise, but the last thing you feel in that moment is happy and joyful.

For those of you feeling the sting of broken promises today, I have good news. God will never leave you hanging. God will never make a promise He can't keep, and He will never break any promise He has made. We believe the Bible to be the true Word of God because God has kept every promise made in this book. He promised Sarah a child, and He delivered. He promised us a Savior, and He sent Jesus. We know that if we place our faith in Jesus, we will be saved from our sins because God promised He would do just that.

Sarah laughed because she didn't believe. In the end she laughed with joy as she held her newborn son Isaac. The name Isaac even means laughter. God taught Sarah that He is a God who always keeps his promises. That's a promise we can claim as our own, and when God proves His faithfulness, He will leave you laughing with joy!

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for always keeping your promises. In Jesus' name, Amen



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (K-2ND)

ICEBREAKER:

Have you ever seen a clown at a birthday party?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Daniel 4:3

Have the kids each recite or read the verse in the voice of their favorite cartoon character.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Have each kid stand up and tell one of their funniest (clean) jokes.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Genesis 18:1-14

Who was Sarah?

What made Sarah laugh?

Why was it so funny to hear she would have a baby?

What happened a year later?

How do we know God keeps His promises?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Show us how You keep Your promises so we will never doubt your Word!

In Jesus' name,

Amen



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (3-5TH)

ICEBREAKER:

Have you ever seen a clown at a birthday party?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Daniel 4:3

Have the kids each recite or read the verse in the voice of their favorite cartoon character.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Have each kid stand up and tell one of their funniest (clean) jokes.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Genesis 18:1-14

Why did Sarah laugh when she heard she would have a baby?

What happened a year later?

How does it feel when someone breaks a promise to you?

How do we know God keeps His promises?

What can we do to build our faith in God and His promises?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Show us how You keep Your promises so we will never doubt your Word!

In Jesus' name,

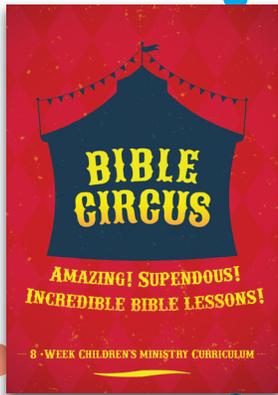
Amen



POWERPOINT REVIEW GAME

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. Sarah was _____.
A. Abraham's wife*
B. Lot's wife
C. Isaac's wife
2. Sarah laughed because she heard _____.
A. a funny joke
B. Abraham slipping on a banana peel
C. that she would have a baby*
3. A year later Sarah _____.
A. was dead
B. had a baby*
C. was still without a child
4. Sarah named her son Isaac, which means _____.
A. I'm sorry
B. Laughter*
C. Promise
5. God _____ keeps His promises.
A. never
B. sometimes
C. always*



MAKE IT STICK

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

Bible Circus Lesson 4

THIS WEEK'S LESSON: SARAH THE LAUGHING CLOWN



IN THE CAR:

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

The clowns at the circus make everyone laugh. When Sarah heard God promise to allow her to have a baby when she was old enough to be a grandma, she laughed. She laughed because she didn't believe God could do something that seemed as impossible as that. But Sarah learned that God always keeps His promises. Genesis 18:1-14, Sarah Laughs



HANGING OUT:

Make this week's lesson real:

Ask your kids how it feels when people break promises to them. Ask how they think Sarah felt when she heard she would have a baby, and ask them what they think Sarah felt when she held that newborn baby in her arms.



AT DINNER:

Here are some great discussion starters:

- What made Sarah laugh, and why?
- How does this story teach us that God keeps His promises?
- Do you believe God really keeps every promise He makes?



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:

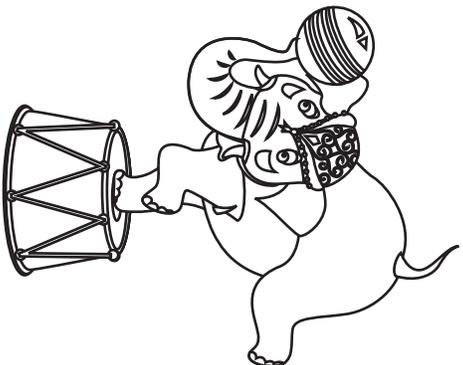
What you need to know:

People make and break promises all the time. No wonder we're so cynical toward God's Word. Yet the Bible tells us we can trust God to always keep His Word. Ask God to give you and your family the faith to believe in God's promises.

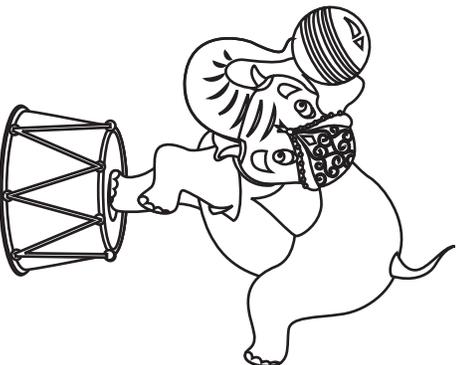


CRAFT ACTIVITY

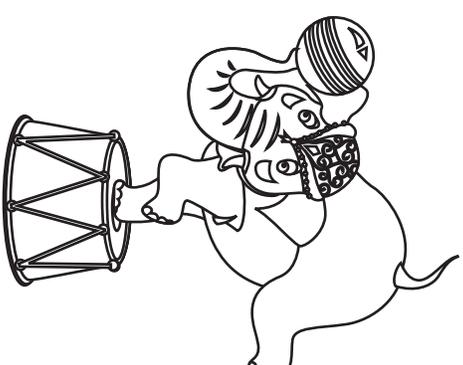
Have the kids draw and color their own clown masks. Then cut them out and attach them to large popsicle sticks.



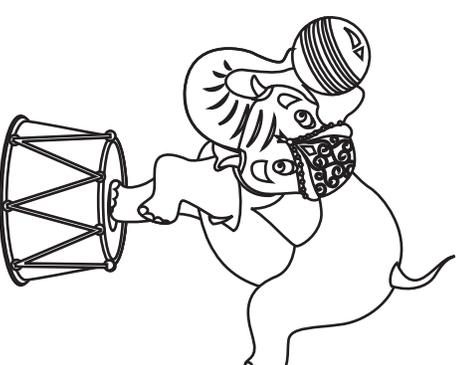
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His kingdom will last forever. His rule will
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