

TURKEY TALES



LARGE GROUP LESSON

BOTTOM LINE:

Grumblers focus on the obstacle. Thank-ers see the opportunity.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that every obstacle is an opportunity for God to do amazing things.

KEY PASSAGE:

Exodus 14:10-29. The Israelites Cross the Red Sea.

INTRO

Today we are going to be talking about two kinds of people: Grumblers and Thank-ers. Okay, thank-er isn't really a word, but we're going to pretend for a little while.

Grumblers are complainers and arguers. No matter how great life is going, grumblers seem to be able to find something to complain about. Thank-ers, on the other hand, are people who are full of gratitude and thankfulness. They know that no matter how hard things might be, there's always something good to thank God for.

Our Bible story today is about a group of people called the Israelites. They should have been Thank-ers; they had a lot to thank God for. God had delivered them from years and years of slavery.

You see, another group of people, the Egyptians, had made the Israelites their slaves. The Israelites were forced to work for the Egyptians without any pay. They had no money, no rights, nothing they could call their own. But in an amazing act of love, God sent Moses to deliver his people out of slavery.

Today's story takes place right after the Israelites left the land of Egypt. They were just on the beginning of their journey to a new homeland that God had promised for them. He was even leading them to their new home with a giant pillar of cloud, that burned like fire at night to light their way. God was doing some amazing things for his people.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

The Israelites were feeling pretty great about all of this; that is until they reached their first obstacle. The Red Sea. It was big and deep. There was no way to get around it. And the Egyptians were on their trail, ready to take them back into slavery. That's a pretty big obstacle. But every obstacle is an opportunity for God to do something amaz-ing.

READ Exodus 14:10-29

MAIN POINT

As soon as the Israelites saw the Red Sea, they turned into Grumblers. They forgot about the amazing way God had delivered them from Egypt. They forgot about the great new homeland he had promised to take them to. All they saw were the Red Sea on one side and the Egyptians approaching on the other. Grumblers only focus on the obstacles.

Luckily for these grumblers, God loved them and wanted good things for them. He saved his people. First, he sent his pillar of cloud to block the way between the Egyp-tians and the Israelites. Then he gave Moses the instructions to raise his staff and stretch his hands over the water. When Moses did this, the waters of the Red Sea part-ed, allowing the Israelites to cross over.

After God did these amazing things, the Bible tells us that the Israelites praised God. That is until the next obstacle came their way. We'll look at that next week. But just imagine how much happier the Israelites would have been if they could have learned to be thankful for all that God was doing even when they faced problems.

DRIVE IT HOME:

Just like the Israelites, each of us face problems in life. I'm guessing your problem isn't the need to cross the sea to escape your enemies, but it's still important. It might be a problem at school. Maybe there's a bully that picks on you, or maybe you have trouble keeping up with your school work. The problem you face might be at home. Maybe par-ents who argue, or maybe you don't get along with your brothers and sisters.

Whatever the problems you face, though, I want to encourage you to be a thank-er instead of a grumbler. You might be thinking, "How can you be thankful when you have problems?" Here's how: today's story shows us that every obstacle is an opportunity for God to show up and do amazing things.

Sometimes we face problems that are easy to solve; other times it's too much for us to handle alone. But whatever we face, God wants us to focus on him, not on our prob-lems. Grumblers focus on the obstacles, and they're miserable. Thank-ers focus on the opportunity. Their eyes are on God. And you'll learn that when your eyes are on God, it's easy to be joyful – even in the hardest times.

So remember: Grumblers focus on the obstacle, Thank-ers focus on the opportunity. Which one will you be?

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thumbs up/down REVIEW GAME

Multiple Choice

1. The Israelites had once been slaves in _____.
Egypt* (thumbs up)
Florida (thumbs down)
2. Who did God send to deliver the Israelites out of Egypt?
Moses* (thumbs up)
Noah (thumbs down)
3. The Red Sea parted when Moses raised his _____ over the waters.
staff* (thumbs up)
sponge (thumbs down)
4. The Israelites entered the Red Sea and walked on _____.
dry land* (thumbs up)
unhappy fish (thumbs down)
5. _____ focus on the obstacle, instead of focusing on God.
Grumblers* (Thumbs up)
Thanks-ers (thumbs down)

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MEMORY VERSE

“Do everything without grumbling or arguing” - Philippians 2:14 (NIV)

“Do everything without finding fault or arguing” - Philippians 2:14 (NIV)

LARGE GROUP:

Put the verse on the big screen and read it aloud with the kids.

SMALL GROUP:

Work as a group to create motions to accompany the verse. Say the verse several times while acting out the motions. (K-2nd)

Give all the kids a Bible. After you read the verse, give them the reference and see who can find it first in their Bible. (3rd-5th)

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER

Dear God,

We want to be thankful people and not grumblers. Help us to see every obstacle as an opportunity for you to do amazing things in our lives.

*In Jesus' name,
Amen*

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SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (PreK, K-1st)

ICEBREAKER

What is something you are thankful for?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY

Philippians 2:14

Work as a group to create motions to accompany the verse. Say the verse several times while acting out the motions.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY

Get a cane or a branch to serve as your staff. Play a game of "Moses Says." Quickly bark out a series of orders, but the kids only have to obey the ones that you say when you hold your staff over your head.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Read Exodus 14:10-29.

Why did the Israelites leave Egypt?

What was the obstacle the Israelites faced?

What did God do to help them?

What's an obstacle you have right now?

Is it better to be a grumbler or a thank-er?

SIMPLE PRAYER

Dear God,

We thank you for who you are and all you do for us. May we always remember that you are bigger than any problem we'll ever face.

In Jesus' name,

Amen