

### Think about:

**Describe the setting of this story.**

**Why do you think John didn't want to baptize Jesus? What convinced him?**

**If you heard the voice from heaven, what would you have thought?**

**Where is God in this story?**

Go and watch:

### Sacrament of Belonging

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

This is the true story of Alfredo, a poor Mexican boy whose family was killed by fire.



**What was Alfredo looking for?**

**What do you think Alfredo was doing when he was in front of the cross?**

**At the end a boy says to Alfredo, "You are my brother."**

**Why is this important?**

**Do you think Alfredo found what he was looking for?**

**How are Alfredo's story and baptism connected?**

### Symbol

*noun • sym·bol • \sim-bəl*

A symbol is a simple image that stands for or represents a more complicated concept. It is like a starting line—it starts at one point, but takes you to a different place.



**Command:** Jesus said: "Go...and make disciples...baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."

**Symbol:** In baptism, the symbol is water.

**Promise:** Baptized people belong to God, are loved and forgiven by God, and are part of Christ's church.

**We don't know exactly how God is with us in baptism, but we know it is true. Even when we don't understand God, God is with us. That is good news!**



## Jesus is Baptized

*This is my Son, the Beloved,  
with whom I am well pleased.  
—Matthew 3:17*

People came to John at the Jordan River and he baptized them. Jesus came, asking to be baptized. John said, "I need to be baptized by you! You are coming to me?" Jesus answered, "Do it. This is the right way to do God's work." John agreed, and just as Jesus came up from the water, the heavens opened and the Spirit of God came down like a dove. A voice from heaven said, "This is my Son. I love him."

**Read the whole story:  
Matthew 3:1-17**

### What is a Sacrament?

There are three important things about sacraments. Each sacrament:

- Has a command. Jesus told us to do them.
- Has a symbol.
- Has a promise.





## The most important things pastors do are:

- Preach
- Teach
- Administer the sacraments

**Interview your pastor.** All good interviewers plan their questions ahead. What will you ask?

### Preach

1. Why do you preach?
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

### Teach

1. What is the most important thing you teach?
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

### Administer the Sacraments

1. What don't you understand about baptism?
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

### Two more questions:

Why and how did you become a pastor?

What do you do when you have questions about God?

## Administer

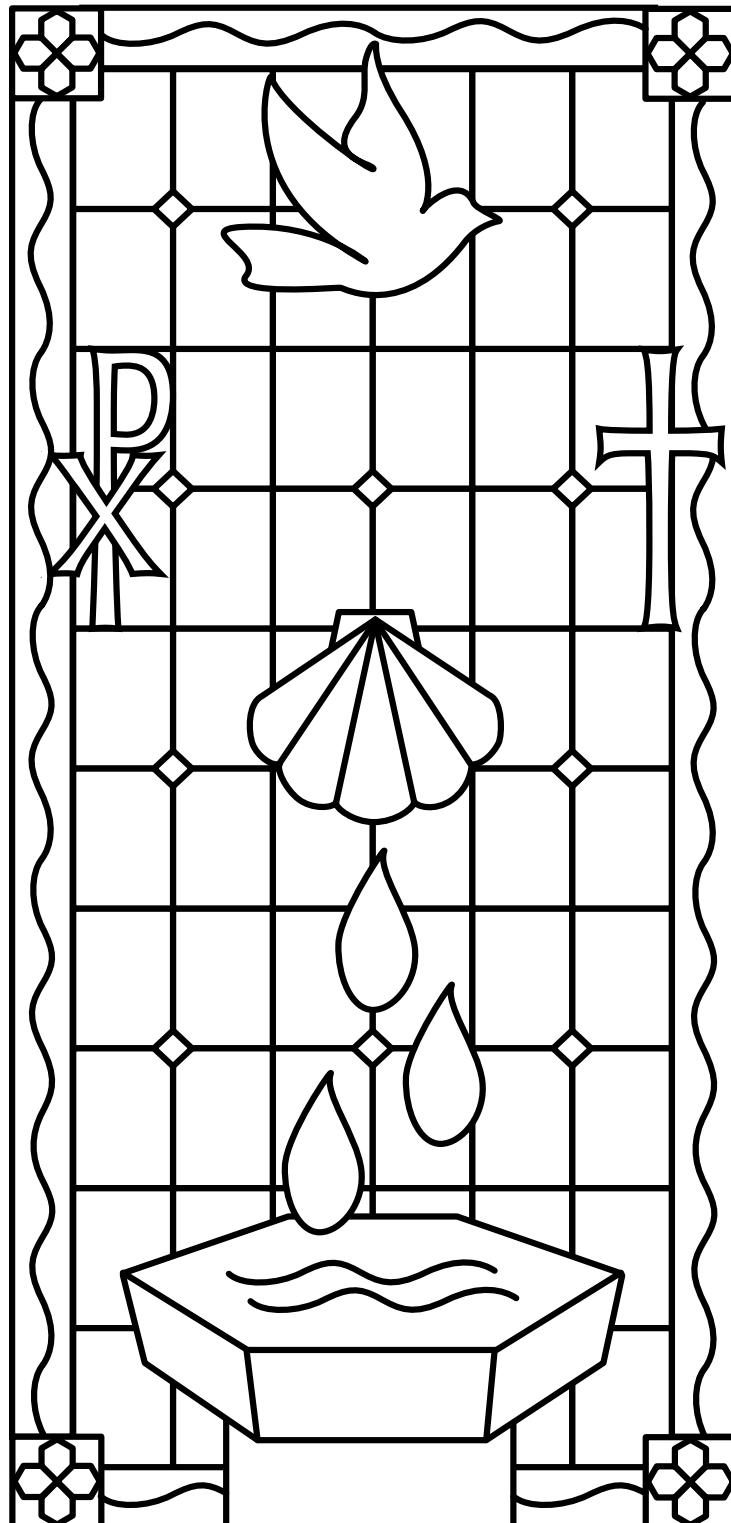
*verb • ad-min-is-ter • \ad-'mi-nə-stər\*

This word is really two words put together. "Ad" means "to" in Latin. "Minister" means "serve." So, if you "administer" something, you serve something to someone. Pastors serve sacraments to people. Did you know that a pastor's stole is a symbol of being a servant? True!

## Get up and go:

Find and color the symbols. Research symbols you don't know. How do they connect to baptism?

Font Cross Dove Shell Water Chi Ro

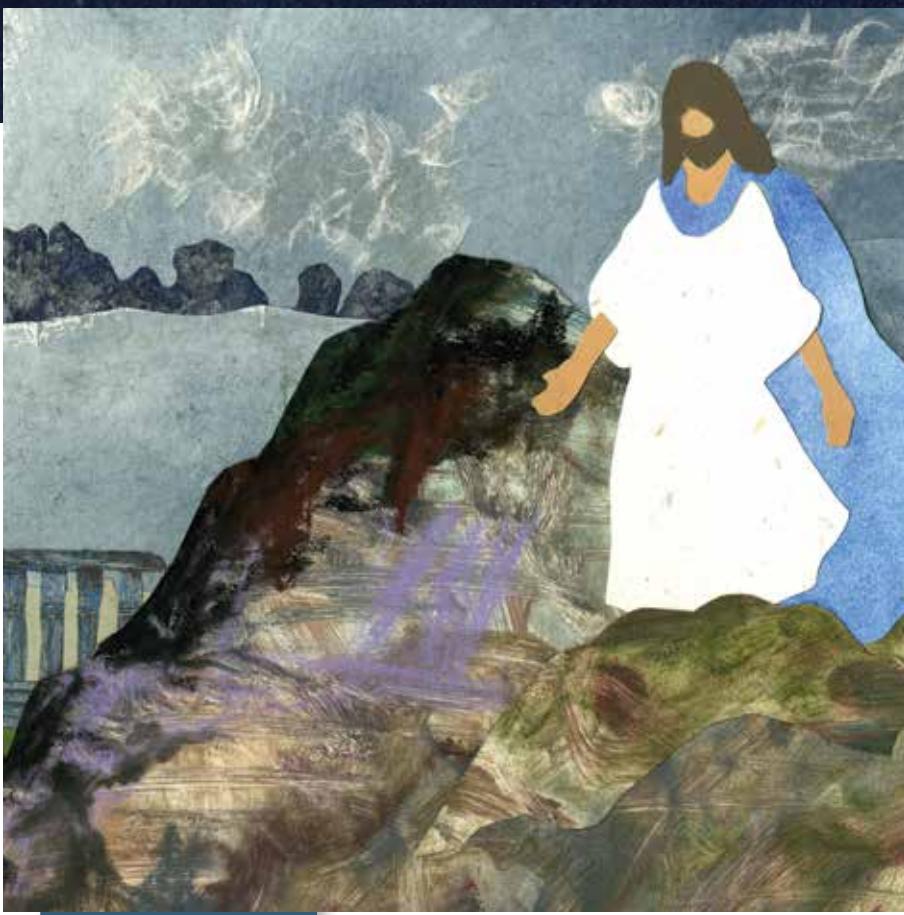


**This story amazes me because**

\_\_\_\_\_.

**Where do you see repeating themes?**





### Think about:

**Jesus was tempted for 40 days.**  
Find other important “40” stories on the timeline.

**What were Jesus’ temptations?**  
How did Jesus’ temptations go against God?

If Jesus said “Yes” to temptation, who would he have helped?

Go and watch:

### Marshmallow challenge!

Imagine little kids in a room, alone, with a luscious, gigantic marshmallow.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G7LN96jEXHc>

**What are your temptations?**  
**How do you resist temptation?**  
**What happens if you don’t resist temptation?**  
**What next?**

### Adversary

*noun • adversary • \ad-və(r)-se-rēl*

An adversary is someone or something that is against you or someone else. The devil is God’s adversary. Think of it this way: when you play basketball, who is your adversary? The team against you! “Devil” and “Satan” are the Bible’s words for anything and anyone against God and God’s way.

## Jesus is Tempted

*It is written, “Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.”*

—Luke 4:8

After Jesus was baptized, God led him into the wilderness. He was alone and had no food for 40 days. The devil came to Jesus and said, “Turn these stones to bread.” Jesus said, “No!” The devil took Jesus to a high point so he could see all the kingdoms of the world. The devil said, “You can have power over all the lands if you serve me.” Jesus said, “No!” The devil took Jesus to the top of the temple and said, “Jump, so God can save you.” Jesus said, “No!”

Then the devil left.

**Read the whole story:**  
**Luke 4:1-13**



Photos, top to bottom: iStock/lntrub, Volanl, Antonio Guillen, Valeriya.





**Jesus was a great leader.** He understood that his job was to serve God and other people, not himself.



**Temptation 1:** "If you are God's Son, turn these stones to bread."

Jesus was hungry.

**If Jesus turned the stones to bread, who would benefit?**



**Temptation 2:** "I will give all this to you, if you will serve me."

Jesus could see all the kingdoms of the world.

**If Jesus served the devil, how would Jesus use his power?**



**Temptation 3:** "If you are God's Son, jump!"

Jesus was on the highest part of the temple.

**If Jesus had jumped, how would jumping be against God?**

**Be a:**

## Shoe Maker

Have you ever heard someone say, "Take a walk in their shoes"? It means you try to figure out what life is like for that person from their perspective, not from your own perspective.

Some kids sleep in cars because they don't have a home.

**Take a walk in their shoes. What do you notice?**

Some kids eat in soup kitchens because they don't have enough food at home.

**Take a walk in their shoes. What do you notice?**

Some kids can't go to the doctor when they are sick because it is too expensive.

**Take a walk in their shoes. What do you notice?**

Some kids have to fetch water far from home rather than go to school.

**Take a walk in their shoes. What do you notice?**

Some kids don't have friends because they don't know how to be a friend, or are too afraid to be a friend.

**Take a walk in their shoes. What do you notice?**

## Get up and go:

### Take a walk in their shoes

Being Jesus' disciple doesn't mean you neglect yourself, but it does mean you need to consider other people's feelings, thoughts, and ideas as carefully as you do your own. It can be tempting to think and act only for yourself.

**Consider the situations in the boxes.**

**How do you imagine the other person felt?**

**What makes it tempting to put yourself first?**

**How could you be a disciple in these situations?**



There is a new student in your class who is very quiet. You figure out why—she is new to the country and is just learning English. Most of the other kids, including your friends, ignore her.

**What should you do?**

You and almost all your friends were invited to a party. It was going to be a great party! But your best friend was not invited—on purpose. **What should you do?**

The kids you eat lunch with are bullying someone at school. You used to be friends with the person who is getting bullied. You want to stand up to your lunch buddies, but you are afraid they will not let you be at their table anymore. **What should you do?**

You promised to spend the day with your grandma, but now your best friend invited you to spend the whole day at an amusement park. It would be so much fun and you really want to go, but you promised your grandma.

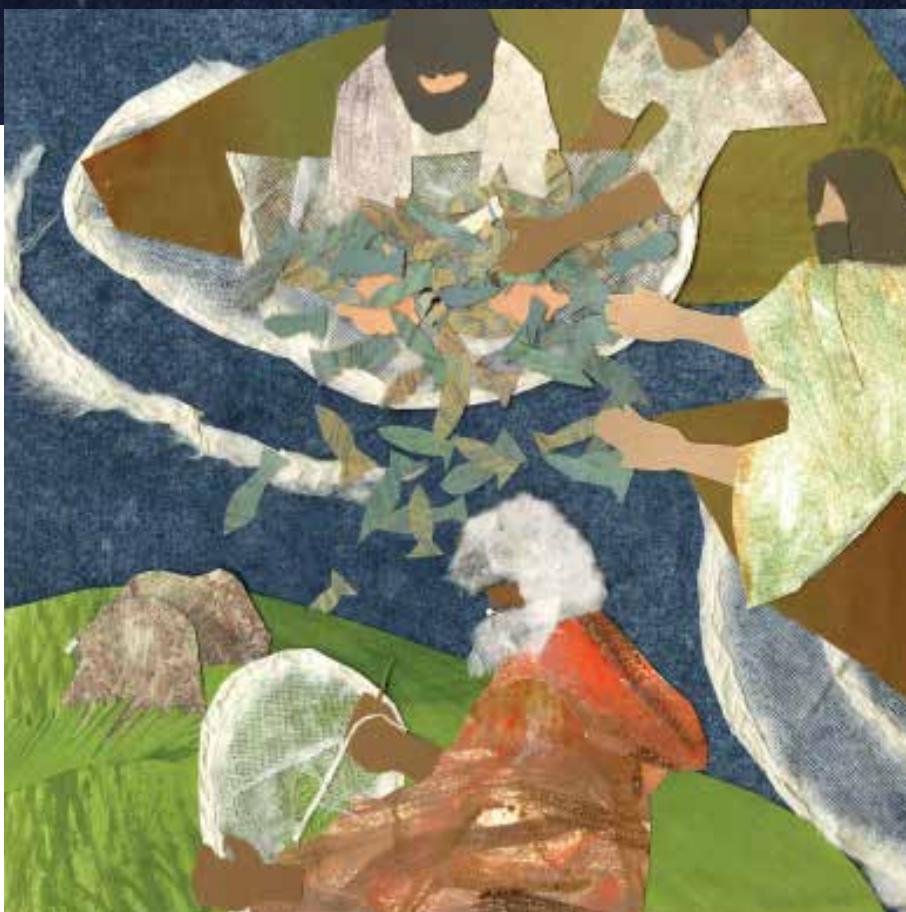
**What should you do?**

**This story reminds me how tempting it is to \_\_\_\_\_.**



**Where do you see repeating themes?**





### Think about:

To follow Jesus, the disciples had to leave everything behind. Why might that be?

Why is it hard to leave ideas behind?

What might it mean to “fish for people”?

If you were one of the people fishing, what would you ask Jesus?

**Go and listen:**

Pastor Byran Sirchio wants kids to learn the names of the 12 disciples, so he sings them! How can a song help you remember? How can a story help you remember?

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=abFZlZRWqPE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=abFZlZRWqPE)

### Find the names of all 12 disciples:

MATTHEW	J	O	T	H	A	D	D	A	E	U	S
THOMAS	D	A	J	E	N	A	S	J	P	E	T
JOHN	S	I	M	O	N	T	H	O	M	A	S
JAMES	O	N	S	D	H	D	O	M	S	R	U
JAMES	S	I	R	D	E	N	H	A	M	A	S
PHILIP	R	E	A	D	D	E	H	T	O	J	A
PETER	W	E	M	O	L	O	H	T	R	A	B
ANDREW	E	L	A	A	J	N	O	H	E	M	A
BARTHOLOMEW	S	A	D	U	J	O	P	E	T	E	R
SIMON	P	H	I	L	I	P	E	W	I	S	A
JUDAS											
THADDAEUS											



*“They say that nobody is perfect.  
Then they tell you  
practice makes perfect.  
I wish they’d make up their minds.”*

—Winston Churchill

Have you ever felt like Churchill? How so?

What is the difference between being faithful and being perfect?

Why is it impossible to be perfect?

The disciples were not perfect. In fact, often they didn’t understand Jesus. They even let Jesus down. So, why do you think Jesus called them?

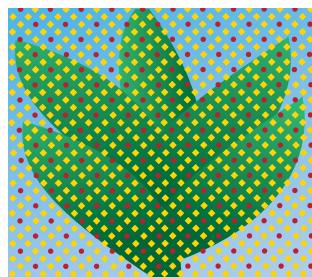
Give examples of being faithful to Jesus.



## Carbon dating

**What is carbon dating?** Carbon dating is used to estimate the age of artifacts that used to be alive: trees, plants, animal bones, pottery, wood, and leather that is 50,000 years old or younger.

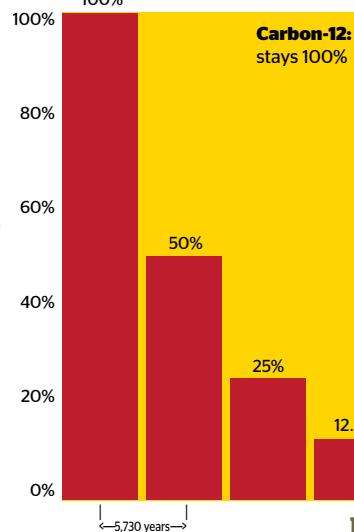
**How does it work?** Plants take in carbon, including carbon-12 and carbon-14, or c-12 and c-14. When animals and people eat the plants they also take in carbon. All living things have the same percentage of c-12 and c-14 as the percentage of c-12 and c-14 in the atmosphere.



When the living thing dies, no more carbon is taken in, and in fact, the c-14 starts to slowly decay, turning into nitrogen-14, or n-14. The c-12 stays the same.

Yellow Diamond = Carbon-12  
Red Circle = Carbon-14

**Carbon-14**  
100%



← 5,730 years →

**What is "half-life"?** How fast the c-14 decays is called

"half-life." The half-life of c-14 is 5,730 years. This means that in 5,730 years, half of the c-14 will decay. In the next 5,730 years, half of the remaining c-14 will decay. Scientists then compare how much c-14 is left with how much c-12 there is. And voila! We have a pretty good estimate of how old the specimen is.

**Would the c-14 ever be completely gone?**

### Remember:

- The older the once-living thing, the bigger the difference between the c-12 and c-14.
- Scientists can estimate age because the percentages of c-12 and c-14 in the atmosphere have stayed about the same over time.

**A chemist tests a dead tree for c-12 and c-14.**

**After 5,730 years, what will happen to the c-12?**

**After 5,730 years, what will happen to the c-14?**

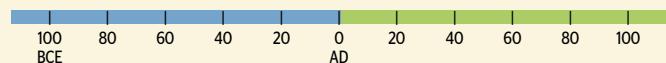
**After a second 5,730 years, what will happen to the c-14?**

## How old is this Sea of Galilee boat?



*In 1986 this boat was found in the Sea of Galilee in Israel. This is the kind of boat that Jesus' disciples used.*

**Time —>**

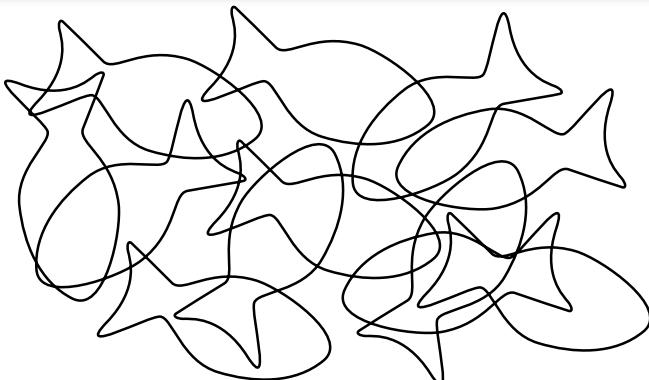


The carbon dating estimates that most of the wood dates to 40 BCE. Some of the wood dates to 50 CE. A lamp and pottery found in the boat date to 50 CE.

**Now we need a hypothesis.**

**Try this out:** The main part of the boat was built around 40 BCE. It was repaired decades later, in 50 CE. The last things people left in the boat date to 50 CE. How long would you estimate the boat was in use?

**How can science help us understand what the world was like when Jesus was your age?**



### Get up and go:

Color the tangled fish with different colors or patterns. How many fish are there? Try making a big version.



**This story makes me wish I could ask Jesus about \_\_\_\_\_.**

**Where do you see repeating themes?**





### Think about:

**This story happened on the “third day.” What else happened on the third day? Why might this be?**

**If you were one of the disciples, would you think you made the right or wrong decision following Jesus?**

**This story reminds us that Jesus can do things others cannot. What can you do that Jesus can also do?**

Think about a Bible story you remember and then ask where you see that story in your world. Like this:



**The Wedding at Cana says that the disciples believed in Jesus when they saw him change water into wine. When have you seen Jesus’ power?**

**Cain and Abel tell us about jealousy. When have you been jealous?**



**This story describes Jesus’ temptations in the wilderness after his baptism. When have you been tempted to help yourself rather than someone else?**

The amazing thing is that the Bible, a book about God, Jesus, and the Spirit, is also about us!

**The Bible is about you!**

## Wedding at Cana

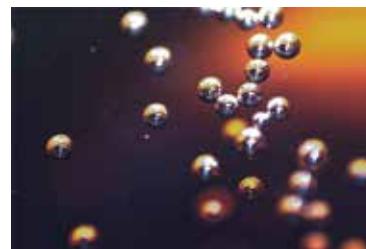
***Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.***

**—John 2:11**

**O**ne day Jesus, his mother, Mary, and his disciples were at a wedding in a town called Cana. Soon there wasn’t enough wine to drink. Jesus told the waiters to fill six big jars with water. Jesus changed the water into wine. It was even better wine than they had at the beginning of the feast. It was amazing! The disciples saw that Jesus could do things other people could not. The disciples believed in Jesus.

**Read the whole story:  
John 2:1-11**

*If you look too close, it’s possible to miss the whole thing.*



**If you only see the bubbles up close, you might think this is outer space or a murky pond. But what is it?**



If you focus on how Jesus changed water into wine, you might miss the full meaning of the story. This story tells us that with Jesus, good things never run out and the best is saved for last.

**Sometimes people think being first is better. What does this story say?**

**Sometimes people think they have to keep all the good things for themselves rather than share. What does this story say?**





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**At the Wedding at Cana ordinary time and God's time met. What happened?**

Clocks keep track of ordinary time, like the time you get up and go to bed. Human time is ordinary time—it begins and it ends.



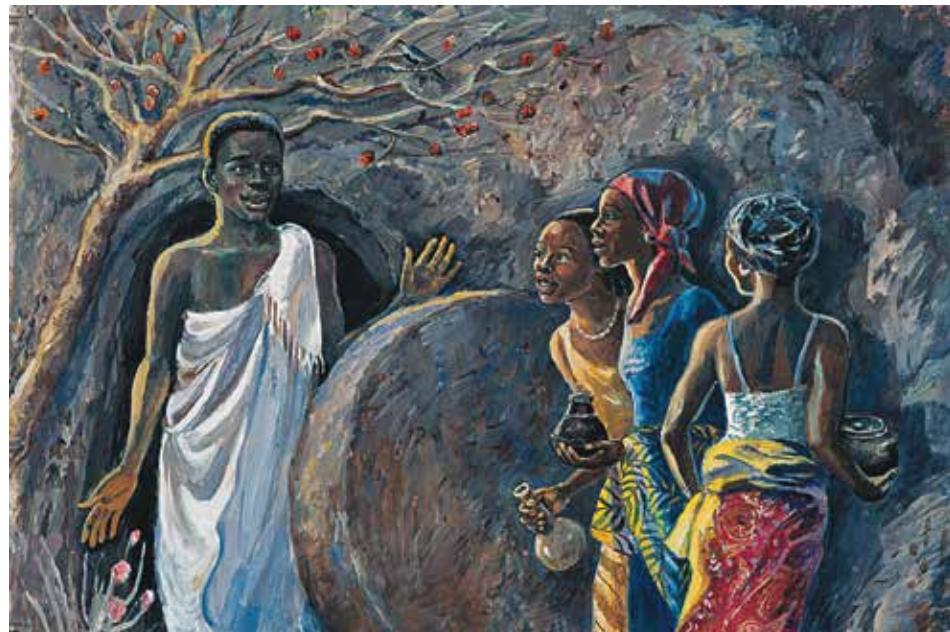
© iStock/Tatomm

God's time is different from ordinary time. God's time is eternal—it had no beginning and it has no end. Jesus brings together ordinary time and God's time.

Wonderful, amazing things can happen in God's time because of God's power.

### What else can happen when ordinary time and God's time meet?

In Jesus' tomb, ordinary time and God's time met. What happened?



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### Get up and go:

Have you ever wished you could point a wand and magically clean up your room? It would be fun, but magic is pretend.

Magicians fool people—making it look like they are doing something they really aren't. Jesus did not do magic. We don't know how

Jesus changed the water into wine, but it wasn't magic. No matter how it happened, this miracle shows us Jesus' great power.



### Try this magic trick with a deck of cards:

**Prepare:** Count out 25 cards in secret. Place them on top of the rest of the deck, but hold the cards so you can tell where your pile of 25 is.

**Announce: I will read your mind!**

*In front of your audience, follow these directions:*

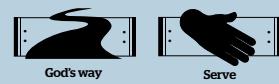
1. Divide the deck at the point of your split.
2. Place the 25 cards in a pile face down on the table. Hold the rest of the cards in your hands.

3. Ask someone to choose one card from your hand without showing you, but showing the rest of the people.
4. Make a pile (face down) of the rest of the cards in your hands. Have the person place their card on top of the pile, face down.
5. Place your stack of 25 cards on top of the pile, face down.
6. Count out 26 cards. The 26th card is the one! Amaze your friends.

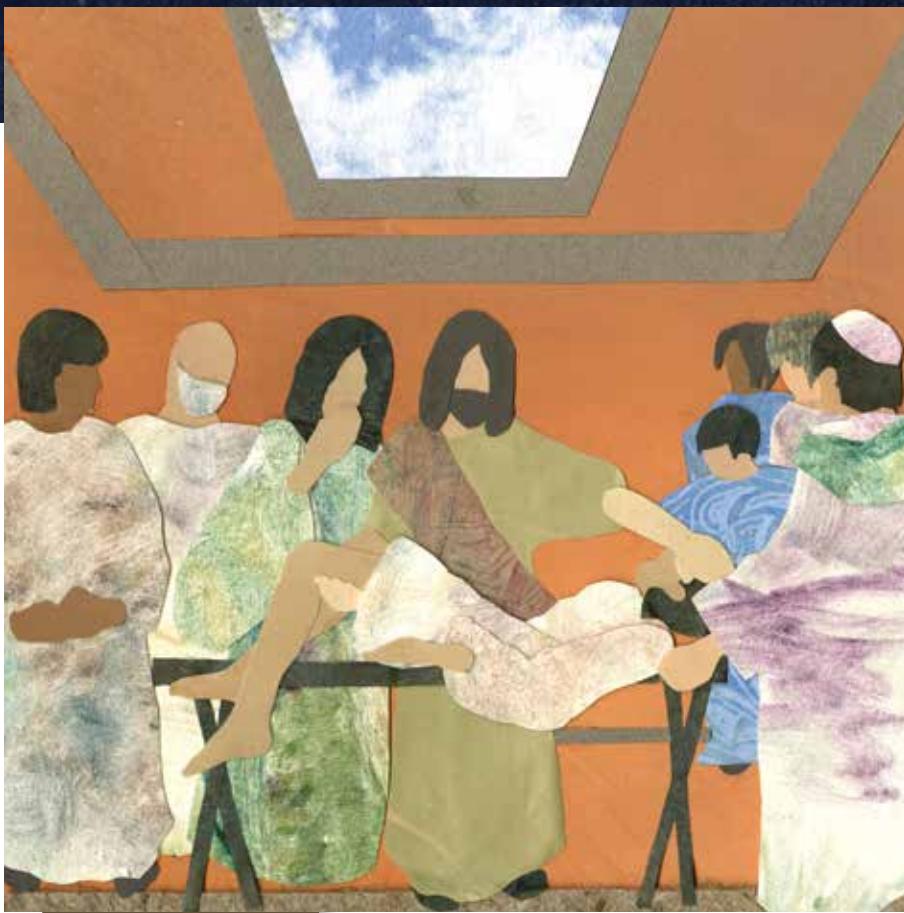


**This story is surprising because**

Where do you see repeating themes?



God's way



### Think about:

**Where do you see God's power in this story? How are God's power and Jesus' power connected?**

**What does this story tell you about Jesus?**

**Why were some people concerned?**

### Miracle

*noun • miracle • \mîr-i-käl\*

A miracle is an event or time or experience that leads people to know God is part of their lives. Miracles are often unexpected and impossible to explain, and yet for the one experiencing the miracle, it is as true as anything can possibly be.

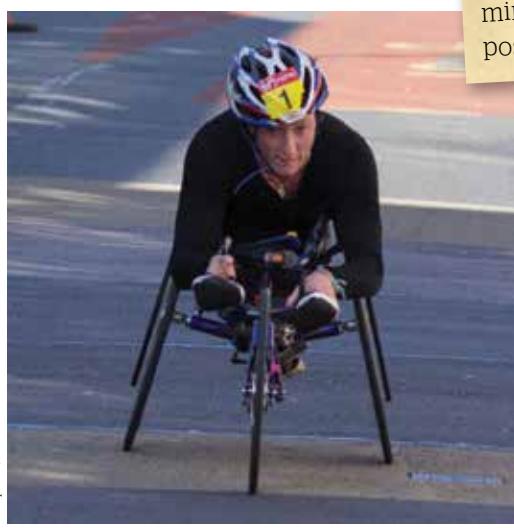
**J**esus could do amazing things because God gave him great power. He was in a crowded house. Some men came carrying a friend who could not walk. The men knew Jesus could help, and lowered their friend through the roof to Jesus. He could see the men's great faith. Jesus said, "Your sins are forgiven." The man got up and walked! Some scribes were angry. They thought only God could forgive sins.

**Read the whole story:  
Mark 2:1-12**



In Luke 17:11-19, Jesus healed ten lepers. One leper thanked Jesus.

### Go and find out:



Wikipedia/Kate Chan

Among Tatyana's gold medals is this win in the 2014 London Marathon.

### Learning to Race

<http://tatyanamfadden.com/about-tatyana>

Tatyana McFadden was born with spina bifida and is paralyzed from the waist down. Tatyana lived in an orphanage and did not have a wheelchair, so she learned to walk on her hands. When Tatyana was 6 years old, she was adopted, joined a family, and got a wheelchair. Tatyana became an athlete. She went to her first Paralympic games when she was 15, the youngest member of Team USA. Since then Tatyana has earned 16 Paralympic medals.

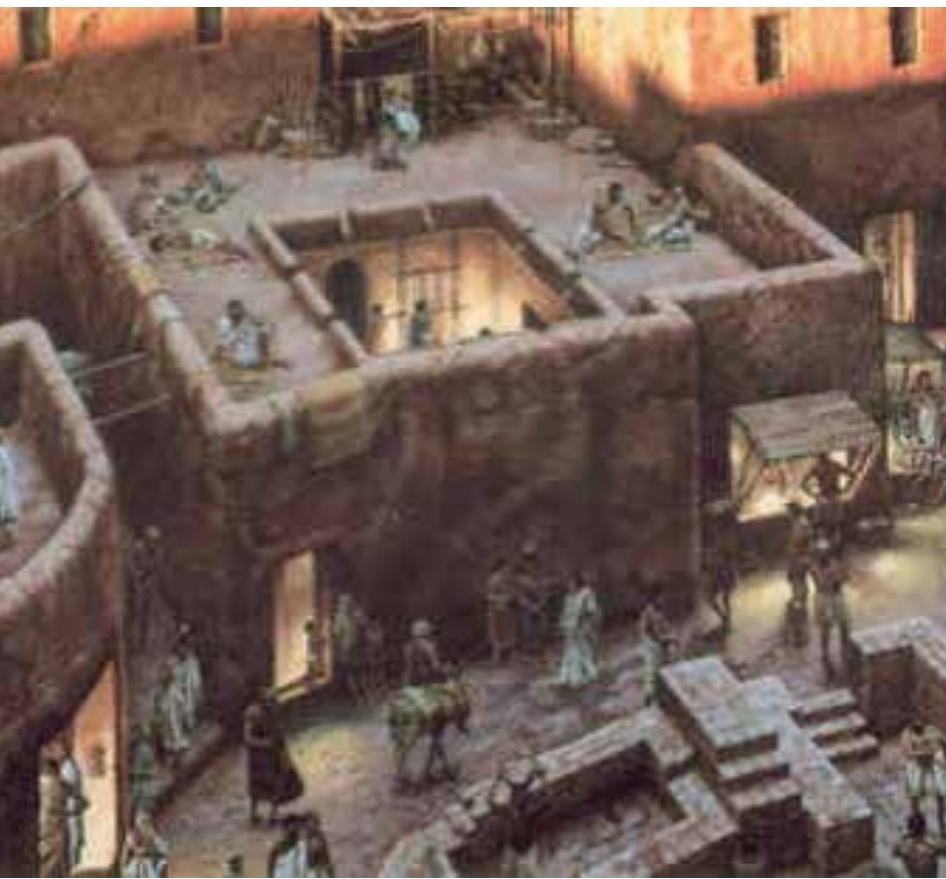
**Where do you see healing in Luke 17:11-19? In Tatyana's story?**

**Jesus told the lepers to go to the priest to show they were healed so they could go home to their families. How do you imagine being home was healing for the lepers? Tatyana?**

**What is the difference between being healed and being cured?**



## Be an: Archaeologist



This is a reproduction of a house that was common when Jesus was your age.

**It has only one room and a courtyard.**

**Animals lived very close to people.**

**Windows were few and small.**

**There are steps outside leading to the roof.**

**If you had a one room house, what might you do on your roof?**

**How does this picture connect to today's story?**

**How does archaeology help us understand and interpret the Bible?**

In Jerusalem archaeologists have excavated houses from the first century. These things were left behind. What do they tell you about the people who lived here?



Left to right: Figures and spoon: Oriental Institute, Chicago; Roman bowl, ca. 100CE, Museo Bellini, Asola, Italy; Flavian coin, 69CE, Classical Numismatic Group, Inc.; Roman glass bowl with gold leaf, ca. 50 CE, Walters Art Museum, Baltimore; clay dog, Tel Tsaf; vessel, Oriental Institute, Chicago.

## Get up and go:

### Make a time capsule.

**What would make a good container?**

**Think of some interesting things you could put in your time capsule.**

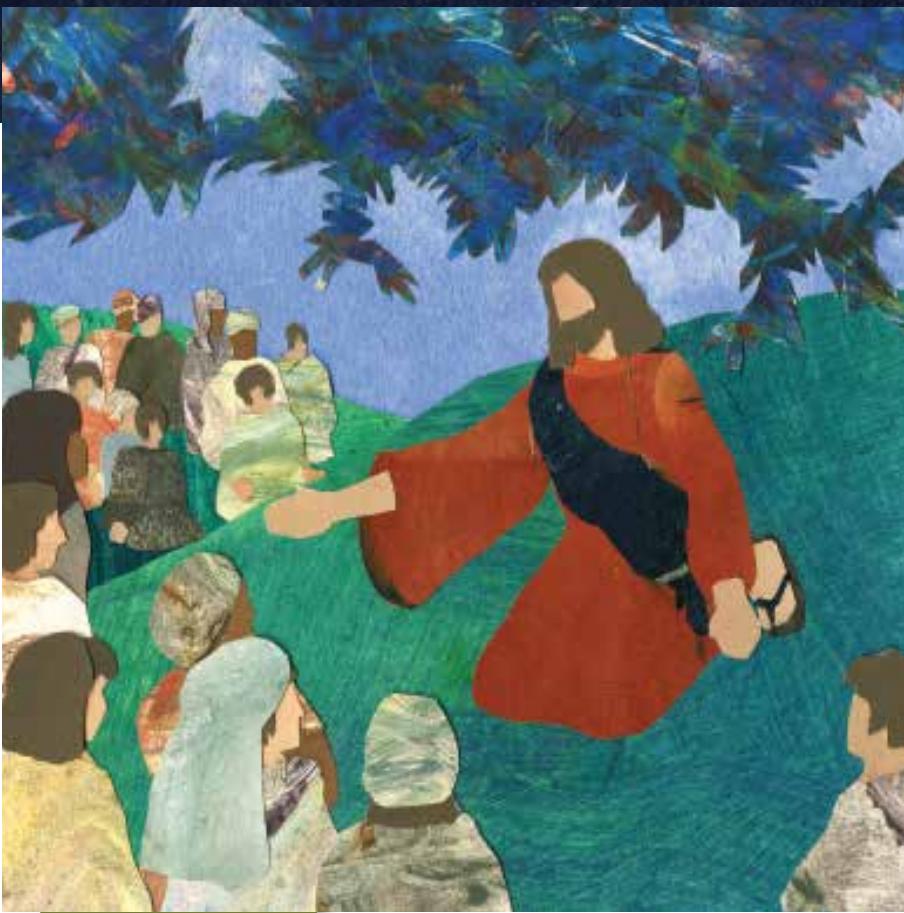
Imagine archaeologists excavate your house in 2,000 years. What might they find? How does what we leave behind tell stories about us?

What story would you like to tell about your family? Put it in a time capsule.



**This story makes me wonder about \_\_\_\_\_.**

**Where do you see repeating themes?**



### Think about:

**Why do you think people followed Jesus?**

**Jesus' sermon imagines a world different from what it is now. Describe the world Jesus' imagines.**

**What does it mean to be blessed?**

**How are you blessed?**

**Stop and think:**



**What do you hunger for?**

**What do you thirst for?**

**Can people be hungry and thirsty for things that are not food or drink? How so?**

## The Sermon on the Mount

***Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.***

**Matthew 5:8**

**W**herever Jesus went, people followed him. They wanted to listen to Jesus. He said such interesting things! One day Jesus went up on a mountain. Lots of people came with him. Jesus preached. He said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

**Read the whole story:  
Matthew 5:1-12**

***When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:***

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**What is it like to be poor in spirit?**

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

**What do people mourn?**

"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

**What is the opposite of being meek?**

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

**Think about history. Who has longed for righteousness or justice?**

"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

**How does being merciful return as mercy?**

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

**What can pollute your heart?**

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

**Why is it hard to be a peacemaker?**



## Be a: Mathematician

There seems to be a built-in order to God's creation. For centuries people have known that some special numbers appear over and over again in nature. These special numbers are part of a pattern, called a Fibonacci (fib-uh-NOTCH-ee) sequence.

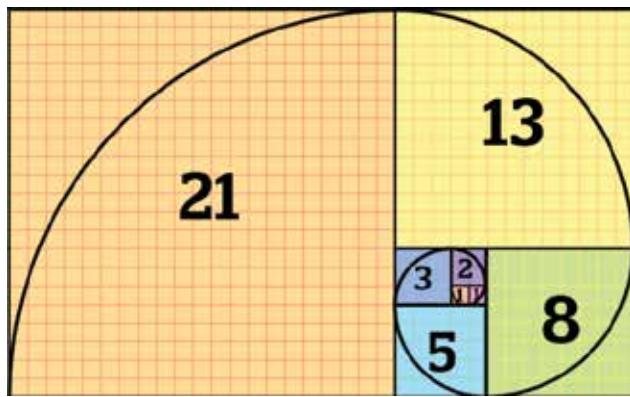
### Can you spot the pattern?

Start with two ones. The next Fibonacci number is found by adding up the two numbers before it. We often find these numbers in nature.

<b>How many seeds?</b>	<b>How many points?</b>
<b>How many petals?</b>	<b>How many arms?</b>

### Make a Fibonacci curve

On graph paper, make a square that is 1 unit by 1 unit. Make another 1 unit by 1 unit square. The next Fibonacci number is 2. Make a 2 by 2 unit square. Keep making squares to match the Fibonacci sequence. Draw curves from corner to corner in the squares to make a spiral. This is a Fibonacci spiral. This spiral is found in nature.



**In his sermon, Jesus was trying to reset the world so it follows God's way,** God's order for the world. When things are as God wants them to be, people who are poor are cared for; people who speak for justice are heard; people who care for the earth are valued; people who are peacemakers are leaders.

### Get up and go:

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 10,946 \\
 + 17,711 \\
 \hline
 28,657
 \end{array}$$
  

$$\begin{array}{r}
 10,946 \\
 + 28,657 \\
 \hline
 46,368
 \end{array}$$
  

$$\begin{array}{r}
 75,025
 \end{array}$$

### Look at the graph and its spiral.

**Find the same spiral in the shell and the other images at the right.**

**Find a mirror.** Your ear also follows the same spiral!

Can you discover other things in nature that follow God's pattern?

Left to right from top: National Fruit Collection, Brogdale; Paul Shaffner/Creative Commons. Kabir/Creative Commons; George Chernilevsky/Creative Commons. blue maize.net; Cohee/Creative Commons. Hubble image/NASA; Kathryn Brewer; GOES satellite; Anna Banczur/Creative Commons.

$$\begin{array}{r}
 1 \\
 1 \\
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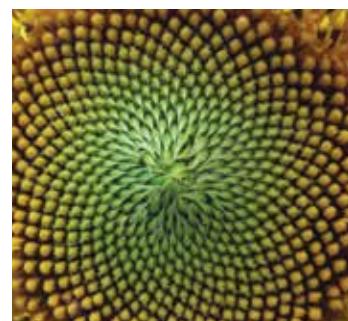
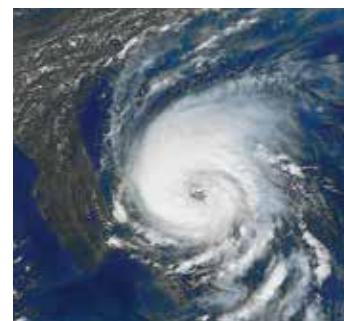
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 46,368
 \end{array}$$
  

$$\begin{array}{r}
 75,025
 \end{array}$$

Look for Fibonacci numbers in nature:



Look at the many ways nature recreates this spiral:

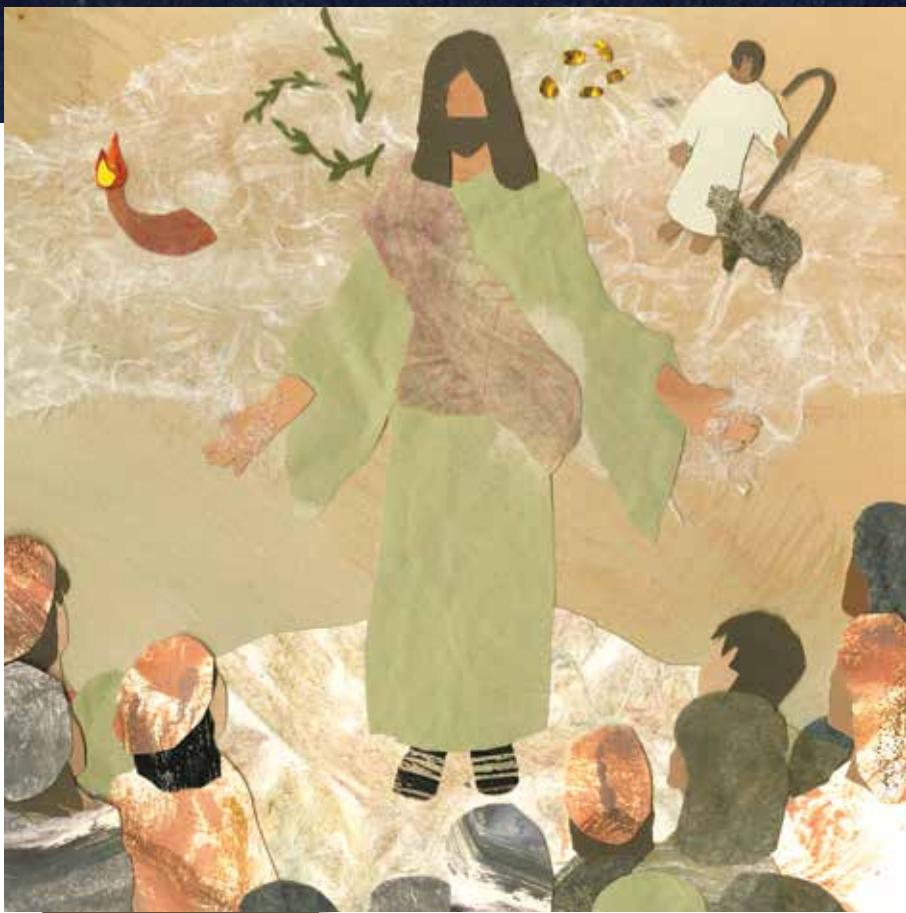


This story makes me curious about \_\_\_\_\_.



Where do you see repeating themes?





### Think about:

**Jesus did not have a classroom.**

**How did Jesus teach?**

**What's a parable? How do they teach?**

**Why do you think people listened to Jesus? What makes it hard to learn from Jesus?**

### Parable *noun • parable • \pə-rə-bəl\*

A parable is a short story that makes a big point. Jesus told parables to help people think in new ways. Parables are full of surprises. A parable about a missing sheep is also about lost people, just as a parable about a helpful Samaritan is about how we judge people. Parables stick in your mind so you can think about them over and over.

People came from everywhere to listen to Jesus. Jesus told them stories called “parables.” Parables are short stories to help people learn important things. The stories were about sheep and coins and parents and children. Jesus told stories about lamps and vines and seeds. The stories taught people about God and God’s love. Jesus also taught

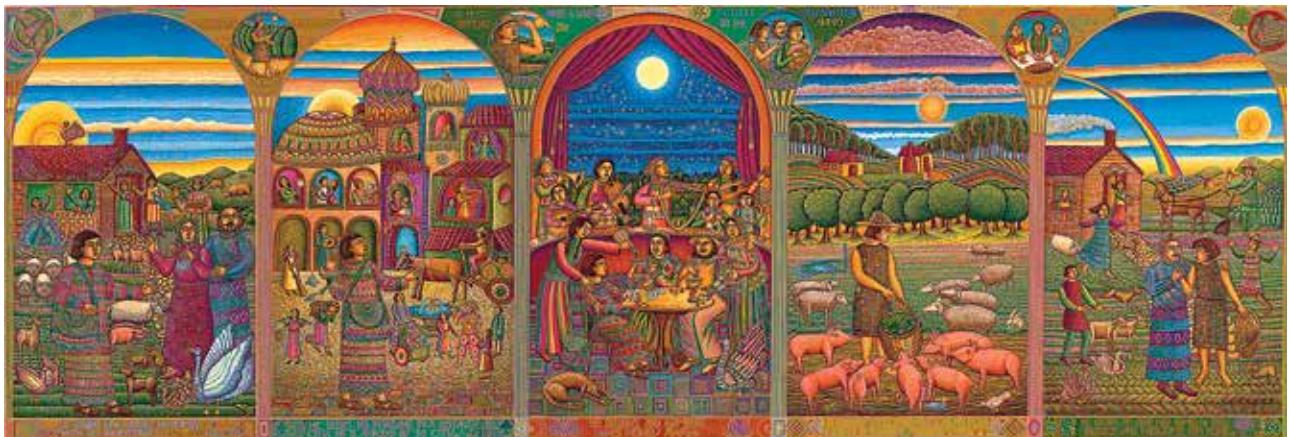
people how to pray and what it means to love and forgive each other.

**Read a whole parable:  
Luke 15:1-32**

### Parable of the Prodigal Son

Jesus told the story of the Prodigal Son. John August Swanson created this serigraph called *The Story of the Prodigal Son*. Listen to Swanson describe his art: <http://bit.ly/2pMVMOx>

**Look at each section of this artwork. Retell the parable based on the images.**



Copyright 2004 by John August Swanson. Serigraph 13½" by 40". www.JohnAugustSwanson.com



## Be a Storyteller

Read the parable.

Think what it meant to Jesus' first listeners.

Look for one main point.

Ask what the parable says to you.

Read the parable again and keep thinking!

**Read the Parables of the Lost Coin and the Lost Sheep (Luke 15:1-10). Notice a pattern in the parables.**

**Follow the pattern. Write your own story.**

<b>Someone has something</b>	A woman has 10 coins	A shepherd has 100 sheep
One part is lost	One coin is lost	One sheep is lost
The person searches	Woman searches	Shepherd searches
Missing thing is found	Coin is found	Sheep is found
Rejoice!	Rejoice!	Rejoice!

**What does it mean to be "lost" to God? What does it mean to be "found" by God?**

**Where do you see love and commitment in these parables?**

**If God is like the woman and the shepherd, what does that mean about God?**

### Get up and go:



### A nine-patch quilt of parables

**Match the images to these parables:**

Hidden treasure and Pearl  
(Matthew 13:44-46)

Laborers in the Vineyard  
(Matthew 20:1-16)

Leaven (Matthew 13:33)

Lost Coin (Luke 15:8-10)

Lost Sheep (Luke 15:1-7)

Ten Bridesmaids (Matthew 25:1-13)

Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)

Wedding Banquet (Luke 14:16-24)

Mustard Seed (Mark 4:30-32)

**Parables are opposite of the way things usually are.**

- Eating cereal for dinner and a burger for breakfast is against the way we usually eat.
- Rosa Parks refusing to give up her seat was against the culture.

**Find examples of Jesus' parables going against the way things usually are.**

Photos L-R, T-B: iStock/Jasper57, iStock/Ridofranz, iStock/Dianazh, Kathryn Brewer, Kathryn Brewer, iStock/Phive2015, Kathryn Brewer, iStock/simplytheyu, iStock/Skystorm.

**This story makes me wonder about \_\_\_\_\_.**



**Where do you see repeating themes?**





### Think about:

**Jesus and the disciples didn't agree. What was the issue?**

**Do you think adults are too busy for kids today? Talk about it.**

**Mark included stories in his gospel he thought were important.  
What makes this story important?**

## Jesus and the Children

*Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.*

—Mark 10:14

One day some parents brought their children to see Jesus. The disciples said Jesus was too busy to see the children. But Jesus said, "Let the children come to me!" Then Jesus picked up the children, held them in his arms, and blessed them. Later Jesus told the disciples, "Unless you become like these little children, you will not be part of God's kingdom."

**Read the whole story:  
Mark 10:13-16**

## The Kingdom of God

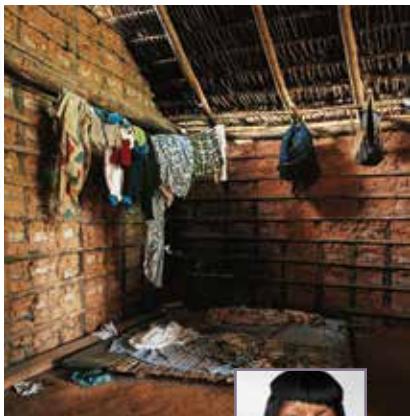
*noun • the kingdom of God • \tha 'kīj-dam əv 'Gōd\*

The kingdom of God is not filled with kings or princesses. It is not a place, but a description. The kingdom of God describes what things are like when they are as God wants them to be. What does God want things to be like?

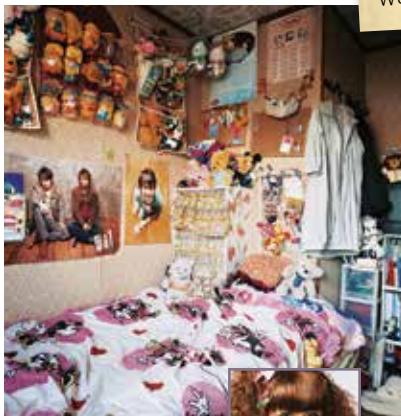
Go and watch:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lJx4SkDhh7I>

**What do these bedrooms tell you about God's children?**



**Ahkokhet, 8,**  
Amazonia, Brazil



**Kana, 16,**  
Tokyo, Japan



istock/monkeybusinessimages

The relationship children have with parents is based on trust.

**How is trust in God part of living in the kingdom of God?**



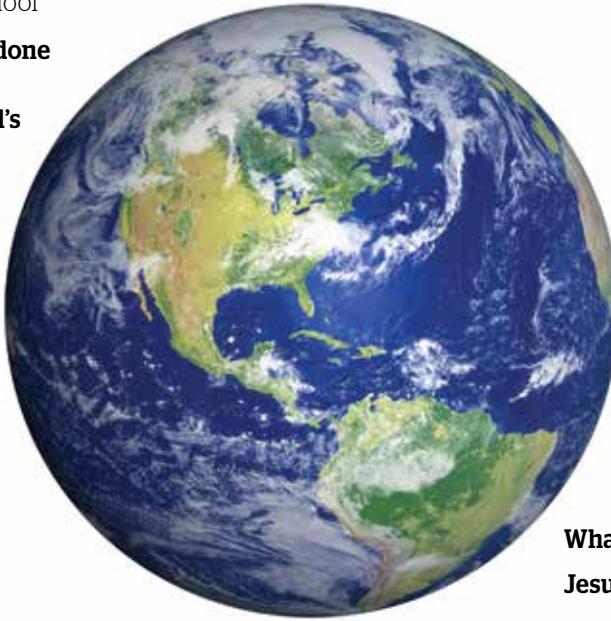
## Be a: Demographer

Demographers collect and analyze data about groups of people.

Researchers from UNICEF study what life is like for children now in order to hypothesize what life will be like for children in the future. UNICEF says unless things change, by 2030:

- 167 million children will live in extreme poverty
- 69 million children under age 5 will die by 2030
- 60 million elementary-age children will be out of school

What can be done so that life is better for God's children?



## Get up and go:

### Human Family

by Maya Angelou

*I note the obvious differences between each sort and type, but we are more alike, my friends, than we are unalike.*

*We are more alike, my friends, than we are unalike.*

*We are more alike, my friends, than we are unalike.*

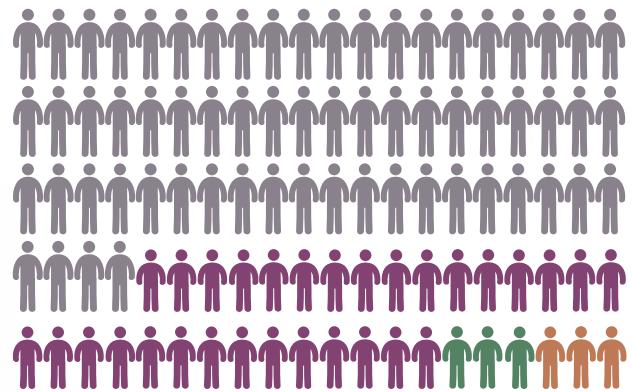


Make a list of things all people have in common. It's a long list, isn't it!

Maya Angelou

### The world has more than 7 billion people.

That's a lot! David Smith imagined the world as a village of 100 people. He did lots of math to match the real world population to the 100-person village.



#### If the world had 100 people:

36 would be school age (ages 5 - 24). Of those:

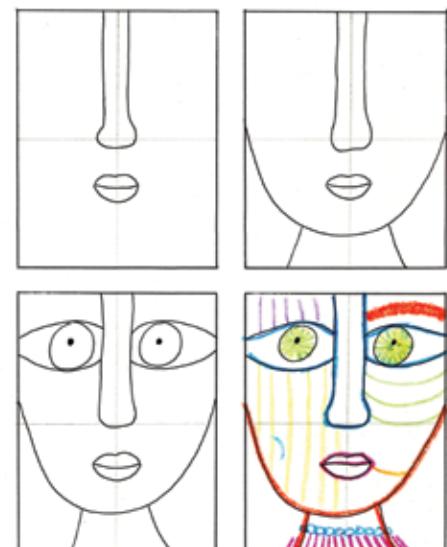
- 30 would be in school.
- 3 would work around the house (helping with work, getting water)
- 3 would be laborers (working in fields, factories, as soldiers)

What does this tell you about the world?

Jesus said the kingdom of God belongs to children. What can adults learn from children?

*Jesus loves the little children.  
All the children of the world.*

Make an abstract self portrait of yourself. Follow the steps shown on the right.

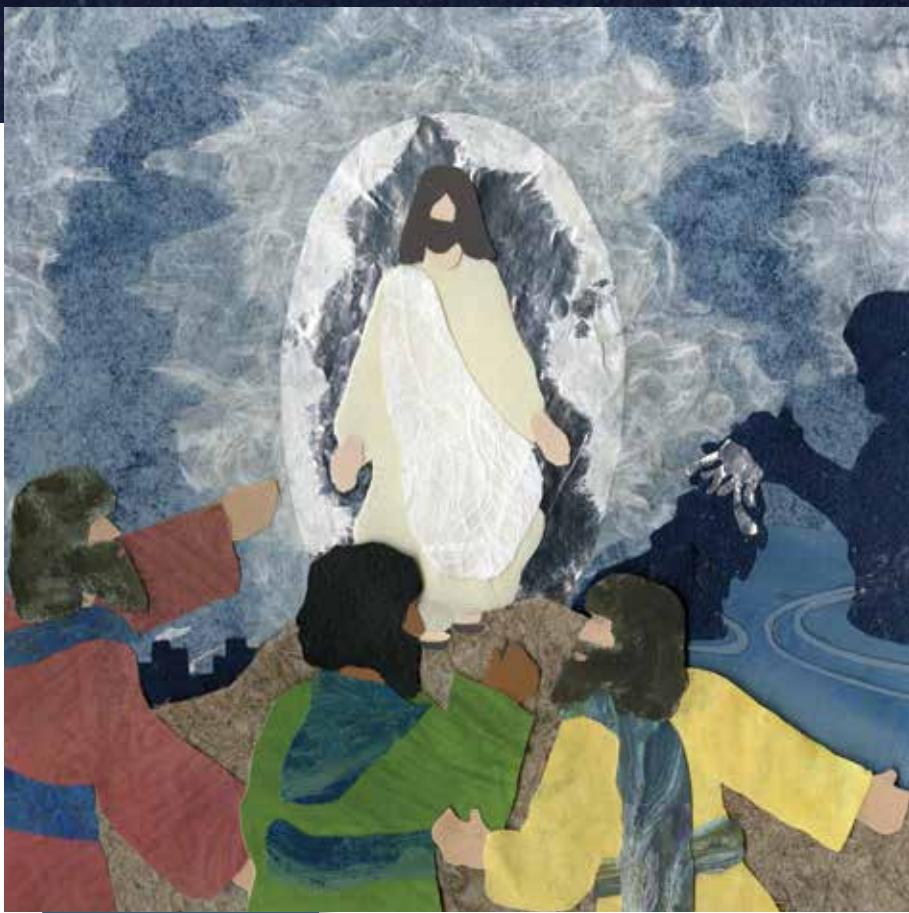


This story makes me wonder about \_\_\_\_\_.



Where do you see repeating themes?





### Think about:

**What do you think it means for Jesus' face to look like the sun?**

**Why do you imagine Peter wanted to stay?**

**If you heard God say these words, what would you think?  
What might you say?**



Anna is a new girl at school. Her clothes look ragged.



Kids often whispered about Devin, making fun of his worn shoes and the lunches he brought.



Ayaan wears a scarf over her head at school. Kids think it is strange.

## Jesus' Transfiguration

**This is my Son, the Beloved;  
Listen to him!**

**-Matthew 17:5**

**J**esus went to a high mountain with Peter, James, and John. Right in front of them Jesus was changed suddenly—his face was like the sun and his clothes were dazzling white. Moses and Elijah, ancient prophets, appeared. Peter said, “It’s good to be here. Let’s make three tents so we can stay.” While Peter was talking, a cloud settled over them and the disciples heard

God say, “This is my son. I love him. Listen to him!”

**Read the whole story:  
Matthew 17:1-8**

**We do not know exactly what Jesus looked like on the mountain,** if he looked different or if the disciples saw him differently, maybe both? We DO hear God with a message: Jesus is God’s son and we should *listen* to him. Today we see Jesus in people who need help.



Jesus’ transfiguration echoes his baptism. When Jesus was baptized a voice from heaven said, “This is my son, the Beloved. He pleases me.” Now God says, “This is my son. I love him. Listen to him!” Find a connection to Jesus’ baptism in today’s image.

**When the kids saw these students, what did they look at?  
What did the kids fail to see about their classmates?**

**When Jesus was transfigured the disciples saw him in a new way. How can you see others in a new way?**



## Bean: Quilter

Quilters pick fabric and colors carefully, so each individual piece looks right with all the other pieces.

Colors have **value**. Color value measures how light or how dark a color is. When colors are all mixed up, it is hard to figure out which ones are light, medium, or dark. Quilters use special red-lens glasses to help them. When looking through red-lens glasses, everything is the same AND everything is different, at the same time! You see all the same things—stripes, polka dots, flowers—but they are all shades and tints of red, and you can see which colors are light, medium, or dark.

**Look at this quilt. Can you see the star show through on the red side? It is the same quilt but you see it differently!**



iStock/MaxCab

## Get up and see:

### Another way to see

Can you see stars in this drawing?

Use your colors to help others see the stars clearly.

Do you notice that depending on how you look at it, it is possible to see a variety of things in one quilt?

Give examples of seeing people differently.

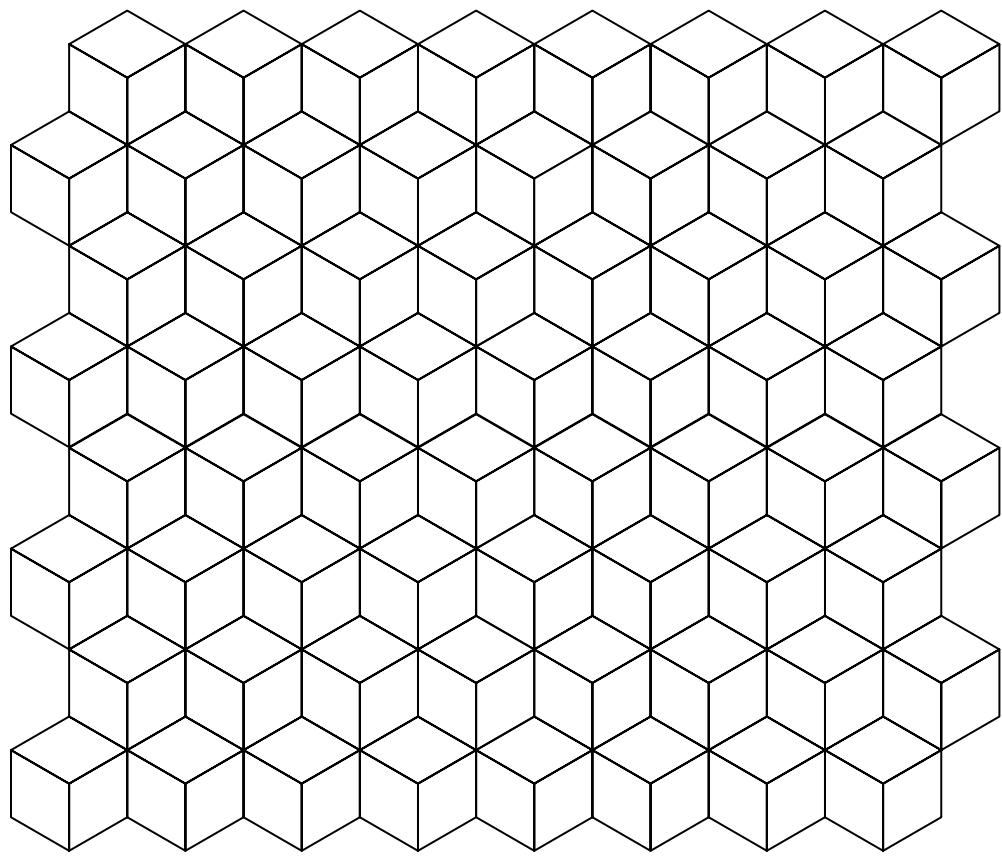
*"It's not what you look at that matters.  
It's what you see."*



—Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862), American writer, poet, philosopher, naturalist, historian, and abolitionist

Connect this quote to Jesus' transfiguration.

Connect this quote to people you know.



This story makes me want to understand \_\_\_\_\_.

Where do you see a repeating theme?





### Think about:

**Jesus is not a regular king. What kind of leader is Jesus?**

**Long ago people connected donkeys with hard work and humbleness, and horses with strength and war. Why do you think Jesus rode a donkey?**

**Read Psalm 118:26. What do you notice?**

### Zechariah 9:9

*Rejoice greatly,  
O daughter Zion!  
Shout aloud,  
O daughter Jerusalem!  
Lo, your king comes to you;  
triumphant and  
victorious is he,  
humble and riding  
on a donkey,  
on a colt, the foal  
of a donkey.*

es on the ground. They shouted, “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.”

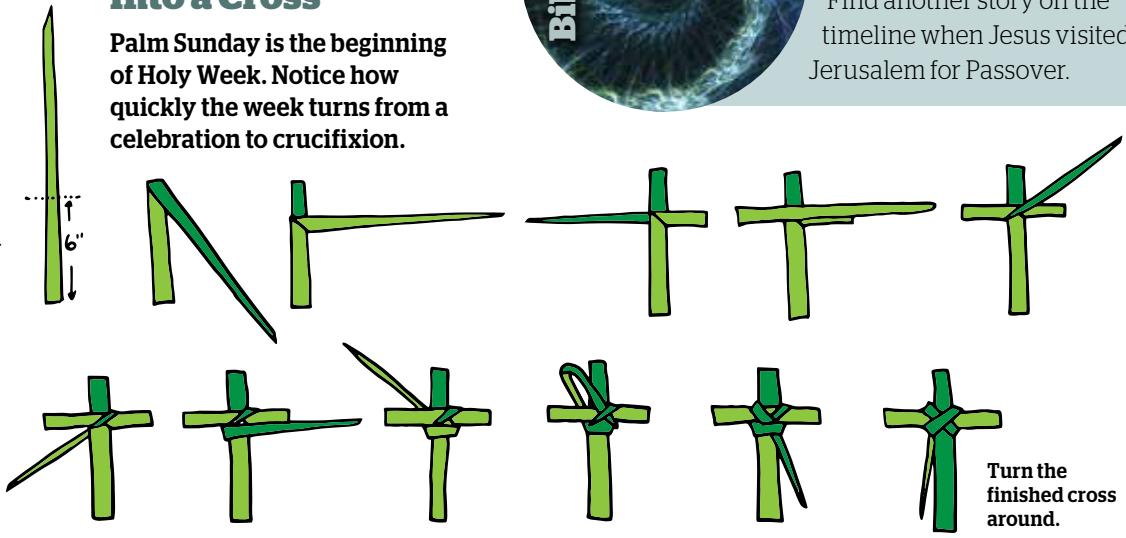
**J**esus and his disciples went to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. When they got close to the city, one of the disciples brought Jesus a donkey. Jesus rode the rest of the way on the donkey. Many people thought Jesus was the promised king. They gave him a royal welcome, laying their cloaks and palm branch-

**Read the whole story:  
Mark 11:1-11;  
John 12:12-14**

When Jesus was your age, many Jews wanted to be in Jerusalem for Passover so they could go to the temple. Find another story on the timeline when Jesus visited Jerusalem for Passover.

### Make a Palm Branch into a Cross

**Palm Sunday is the beginning of Holy Week. Notice how quickly the week turns from a celebration to crucifixion.**



**What do you notice?**



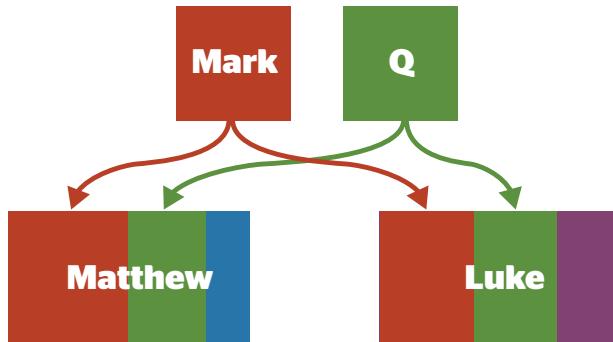
## Be a: Detective

Some people wonder why the synoptic gospels are so similar but are also different.

### Bible detectives have a hypothesis:

Most people think that Mark is the first and oldest gospel. Matthew and Luke then borrowed from Mark and from another source that is a mystery to us. We call the mystery source "Q" (short for *quelle* which means *source* in German). Matthew and Luke also add a few of their own unique ideas.

### Two-source Hypothesis



### Get up and go:

### Two Kingdoms

Jesus was not the only visitor in Jerusalem for Passover. Pontius Pilate came too. Pilate wanted to be in Jerusalem in case there was trouble. After all, Passover celebrated freedom from slavery. What if the people caused a disturbance because the Romans were oppressing them now?

**There were two very different processions in Jerusalem. Sketch the two processions.**

#### Include:

- Jesus on a donkey
- Clothes and branches on Jesus' path
- A crowd of peasants
- People shouting "Hosanna!"

*Jesus: Kingdom of God*

*Pilate: Kingdom of Caesar*

#### Include:

- Pilate on a chariot pulled by a horse
- Soldiers with armor, helmets, spears
- Banners

- Which procession is for the real king? How so?  
How does Pilate use and show his power? How does Jesus use and show his power?  
What happens when these two leaders clash?  
How are the kingdoms of God and of Caesar different?

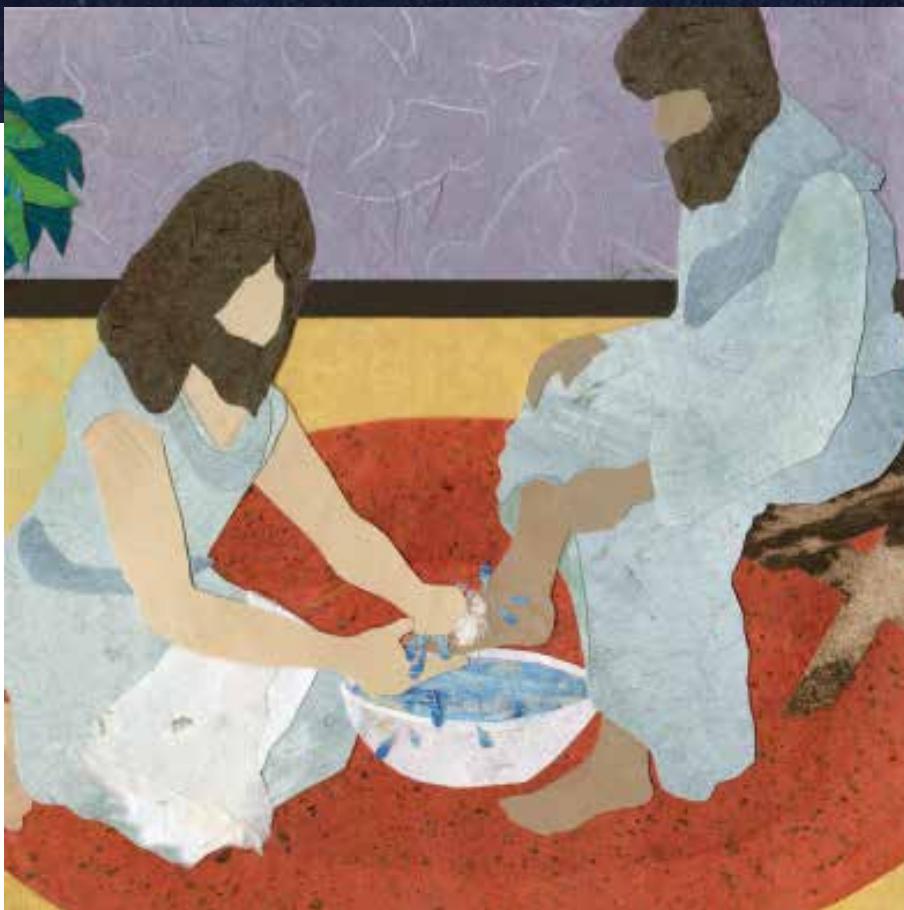


**This story makes me imagine**

Where do you see repeating themes?

28-2



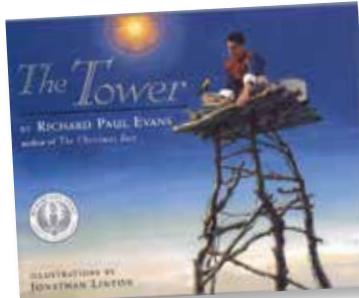


### Think about:

**What would it be like for Jesus to wash your feet?**

**What does it mean to serve others? How do you serve?**

**Do Jesus' disciples serve today? How so?**



Find and read:

### The Tower by Richard Paul Evans

In *The Tower* by Richard Paul Evans, a young man wishes to be great so he builds a tall wooden tower so everyone can look up to him. One day a bird tells the man about an old woman who is greater than he. The man descends from his tower and discovers the poor woman feeding a flock of birds. She tells him that to be great is not being higher than others, but to lift up others. Then the young man meets a child who wants a tall tower so he can be happy. The young man tells him he will not be happy in a tall tower away from others, and he chops down the tower, giving away the wood to people who need it. Only then do people see him as a great man.

**What does it mean to be great?**

## Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

*So, if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.*

—John 13:14

Jesus knew that it would soon be time when he would leave the world. He ate one last meal with his disciples. During the meal, Jesus got up from the table, took a basin of water, and began to wash his disciples' feet. Peter said, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus said, "I am setting you an example. If I, your Lord and Teacher, wash your feet, you need to wash one another's feet."

**Read the whole story:**  
**John 13:1-17**

### Foot washing in the news

Pope Francis washes the foot of a refugee on Maundy Thursday in 2016. Why do you think he chose refugees?

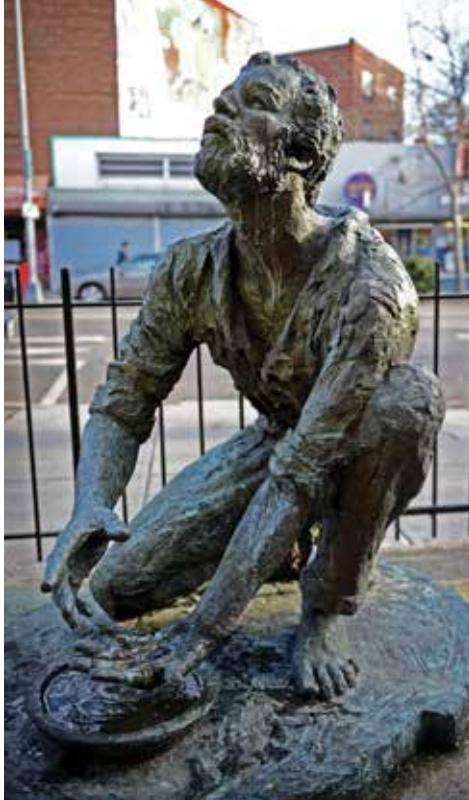


Losseratore Romano



## **Jesus washing feet in Washington, D.C.**

This life-size statue of Jesus shows him barefoot, dressed in work-pants and a sweatshirt with rolled-up sleeves, ready to wash people's feet. This statue is not in a museum; it is in front of a clinic for people who are homeless in Washington DC. The artist, Jimilu Mason, was asked why she would put a beautiful statue in a place where it could be vandalized. She answered,



*"There is very little they could do to him that hasn't already been done."*

**What does your church do to serve others?**

**Make a list of 10 things you can do to serve others.**

## **Get up and go:**

Musicians transpose music by writing it in a different key to make it sound higher or lower.

### **Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star**

The image shows two musical staves. The top staff is in C major and the bottom staff is in G major. Both staves have lyrics: "Twin-kle, Twin-kle, lit-tle star, how I won-der what you are." The notes and rests are written differently between the two keys to maintain the melody.

Same melody, different key.

Now, try transposing today's story from Jesus' day to our day. In Jesus' day it made sense to wash feet after long walks on dusty, unpaved pathways.

### **Consider what is comparable to washing feet today:**

- A principal serves lunch to students.
- A physician helps the janitor clean the hospital.
- A politician stays overnight at a homeless shelter.
- What else?

## **Be a: Food Pantry Volunteer**

Judith Permann, a grandma, had a great idea. She knew how much her granddaughter, Elena, loved birthday parties. Judith thought of families who could not afford special birthday celebrations. So she started making "Birthday Bags" for the local food pantry. Each bag contains everything necessary for a grand birthday bash. It was a big project for one grandma, so now the Sunday School children in her church make the birthday bags.



### **Make Birthday Bags to share:**

#### **You need:**

- A cake mix
- A can of frosting
- A package of candles
- Foil baking pans
- A package of fun plates
- A package of fun napkins
- A special decoration

Put everything into a decorated grocery bag.

#### **How is making a Birthday Bag serving others?**

#### **How did Judith's idea start small and grow?**

#### **How can serving be contagious?**



**This story makes me curious  
about \_\_\_\_\_.**

**Where do you see  
repeating themes?**





### Think about:

To betray means to be disloyal, unfaithful, or to intentionally mislead someone. How does this describe Judas?

Passover celebrated God saving the Jews from slavery in Egypt. Now the Jews were oppressed by the Romans. If you were Jewish what would you hope for?

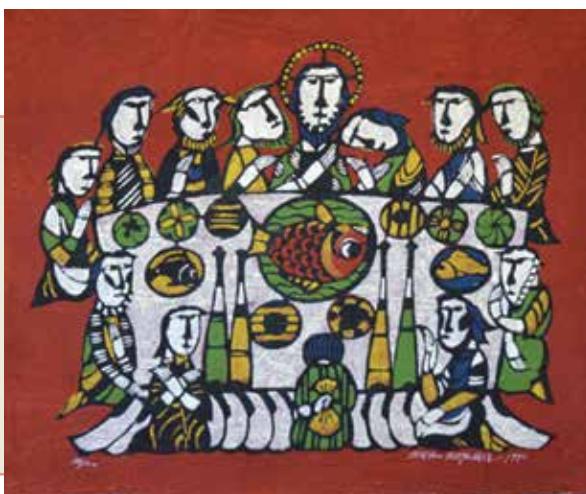
When you take Jesus' body and blood inside you, Jesus becomes part of you. Describe how people should live when they are part of Jesus.

**Last Supper** is a print made by Japanese artist Sadao Watanabe.

**Who is the largest person?  
Why might that be?**

When you look at this scene, you see it with the same perspective as the disciple in the front middle. Who is it? How can you tell? Why do you think Watanabe did that?

Used by permission.



## The Last Supper

*Take, this is my body...This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.*

—Mark 14:22, 24

Jesus and his disciples ate a meal together. While they were eating Jesus said to the disciples, "One of you will betray me." Then Jesus took bread and gave thanks. He gave it to the disciples to eat and said, "This is my body." Then Jesus took a cup of wine and gave thanks. He gave it to them to drink and said, "This is my blood."

When they were done, they went to the Mount of Olives to pray.

**Read the whole story:**  
**Matthew 26:17-25;**  
**Mark 14:12-21;**  
**Luke 22:7-23**

Mark tells us Jesus shared the bread and cup during a Passover meal. In this meal the old and the new come together. In the old days God saved people through the Exodus. Now through Jesus, God is again saving people and giving them a future.

## Communion is a sacrament.

Sacraments have:

**A command.** Jesus gave the disciples bread and cup and said, "Do this in remembrance of me."

**A symbol.** The symbols in communion are bread and wine.

**A promise.** Jesus is with us, forgives our sins, and promises us new life.



## Be a: Newspaper Reporter

**Jesus was betrayed by Judas.** Today the body of Christ is betrayed when people are unfair, hurtful, or uncaring to others. Consider these headlines. Do they honor or betray the body of Christ? How so?

### Food Pantry Receives Largest Ever Donation

### Car Bomb Injures 40

### Sister Donates Kidney

### Child Visits Elderly Neighbor Every Afternoon

### Reports of Bullying Increase at Elementary School

### School Children Make "Friendship Benches"

### Millions of People Won't Have Enough to Eat Today

Reporters write the headline and the first paragraph of the story, called the *lead*, to give the reader most of the basic information. Usually the lead is about 25 words.

**Brainstorm a list of happenings in your community.** Write a headline and lead that honors the body of Christ, and a headline and lead that betrays the body of Christ.

## Get up and go:

### Communion Bread

2 cups whole wheat flour  
1 cup all-purpose flour  
1½ teaspoons baking powder  
1½ teaspoons salt  
4 teaspoons olive oil, plus additional oil for top  
¾ cup + 2 tablespoons very hot water  
3 tablespoons honey  
3 tablespoons molasses

#### Directions:

1. Pre-heat the oven to 350 degrees.
2. Sift dry ingredients together.
3. Stir olive oil into dry ingredients.
4. Combine water, honey, and molasses.
5. Add wet ingredients to flour mixture and mix well. The dough will be slightly sticky.
6. Gently shape dough into four balls. Do not knead.
7. Flatten each ball into a round loaf approximately ¼-inch thick. Place on parchment-lined baking sheet.
8. Using a knife, gently score a cross into the top of each loaf.
9. Bake 10 minutes.
10. Remove from the oven and brush tops of loaves with olive oil.
11. Bake for an additional 5-8 minutes. Let cool.

Headline:

First paragraph of story:

Headline:

First paragraph of story:



**This story makes me concerned that** 30-2

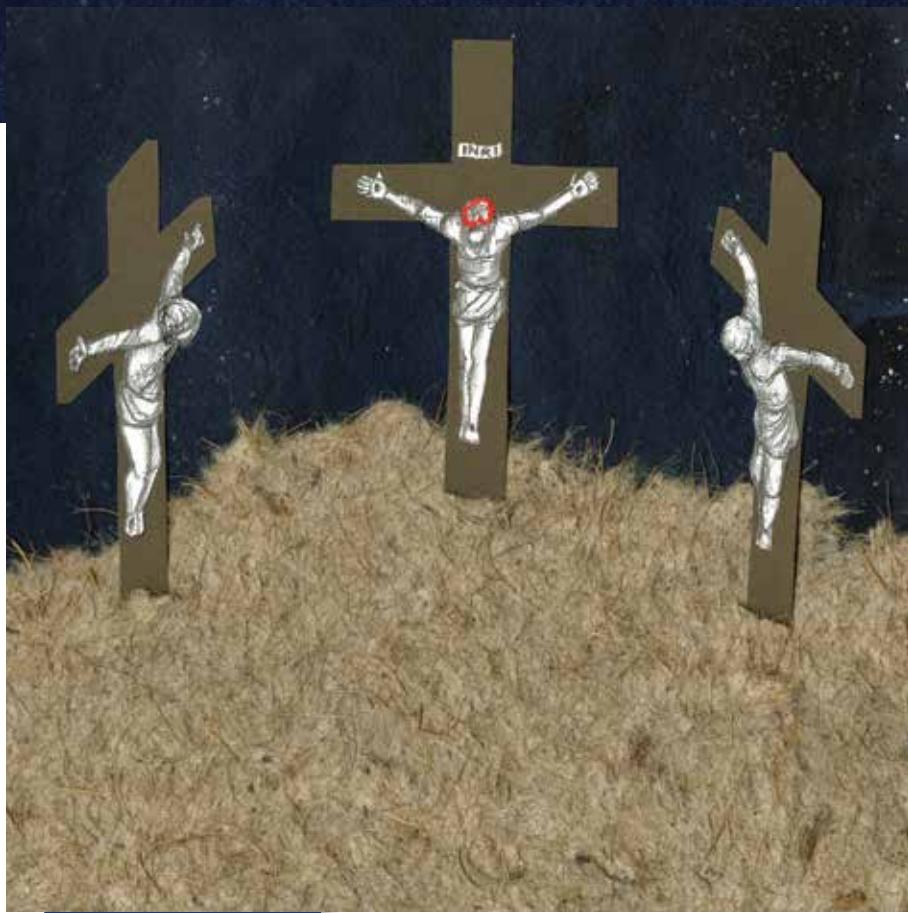
**Where do you see repeating themes?**



Redemption



Love one another



### Think about:

Think of several possible meanings for “darkness covered the earth” when Jesus died.

Why do you think the disciples were frightened and ran away?

Think of the people who thought Jesus was the promised Messiah.

What would they think to see Jesus dying on the cross?

## Jesus is Crucified

*Now when the centurion...saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, “Truly this man was God’s Son!”*

—Mark 15:39

The chief priests and leaders wanted Jesus to go away forever. One of Jesus’ disciples, Judas, told the soldiers where to find Jesus. The soldiers arrested Jesus. The disciples were frightened and ran away. Jesus was put on trial and even though he did nothing wrong, he was nailed to a cross to die. When Jesus died, darkness covered the earth. Jesus’ body was put in a tomb.

**Read the whole story:**  
**Matthew 27;**  
**Mark 15;**  
**Luke 23;**  
**John 19**

## Seven Words from the Cross

The Bible tells us Jesus said seven things from the cross, but not all seven things are in each gospel story. This reminds us that although all the gospels tell stories of Jesus’ life, they each do it differently.

### What do these words tell you about Jesus?

#### Matthew and Mark

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34)

#### Luke

Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing. (Luke 23:34)

Truly, I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise. (Luke 23:43)

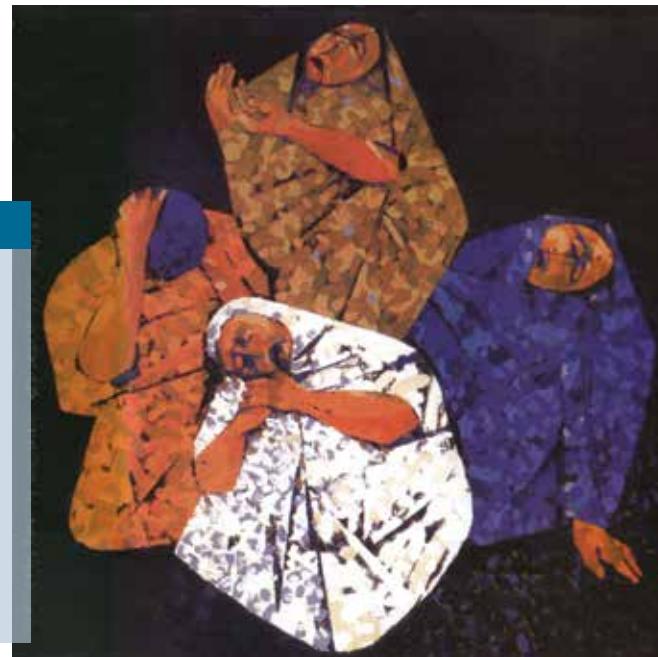
Father, into your hands I commend my spirit. (Luke 23:46)

#### John

Woman, here is your son...Here is your mother.” (John 19:26-27)

I am thirsty. (John 19:28)

It is finished. (John 19:30)



Weeping Women in Jerusalem by J. Elizalde Navarro Asian Christian Art Association Permission requested.



## Be a: Playwright

**Make the Bible into a play.** The director says you can have three acts, a prologue and an epilogue.

A **prologue** is like an introduction. Think of it as the commentary at the beginning of a football game. The **epilogue** is the commentary at the end of the game.

**Cut out the images.** Arrange them into the acts of the play.

### Act One

**God Calls Sarah and Abraham:** God calls Sarah and Abraham to live in and show God's way. Their family grows. Eventually they are enslaved in Egypt.

### Act Two

**In the Beginning:** God creates the world out of nothing. People are unfaithful. God tries to wash the world so it can be right in God's eyes.

### Act Three

**From Slavery to New Nation:** God, through Moses, saves the people from slavery and gives them a future. Israel becomes a nation.

### Epilogue

**Surprise!** It seems as if the curtain has already fallen and the play is over. But...surprise! God's way is the most powerful! Alleluia!

### Get up and go:

#### Make a painted cross.

Cut cardboard into a 5" x 7" rectangle (or use painter's canvas). Use two pieces of tape to make a cross. You will have divided the cardboard into four sections. Using paint in various colors, paint the sin of the world across your board. When the paint is dry, pull off the tape. **What does this say about the cross of Christ and sin in our world?**

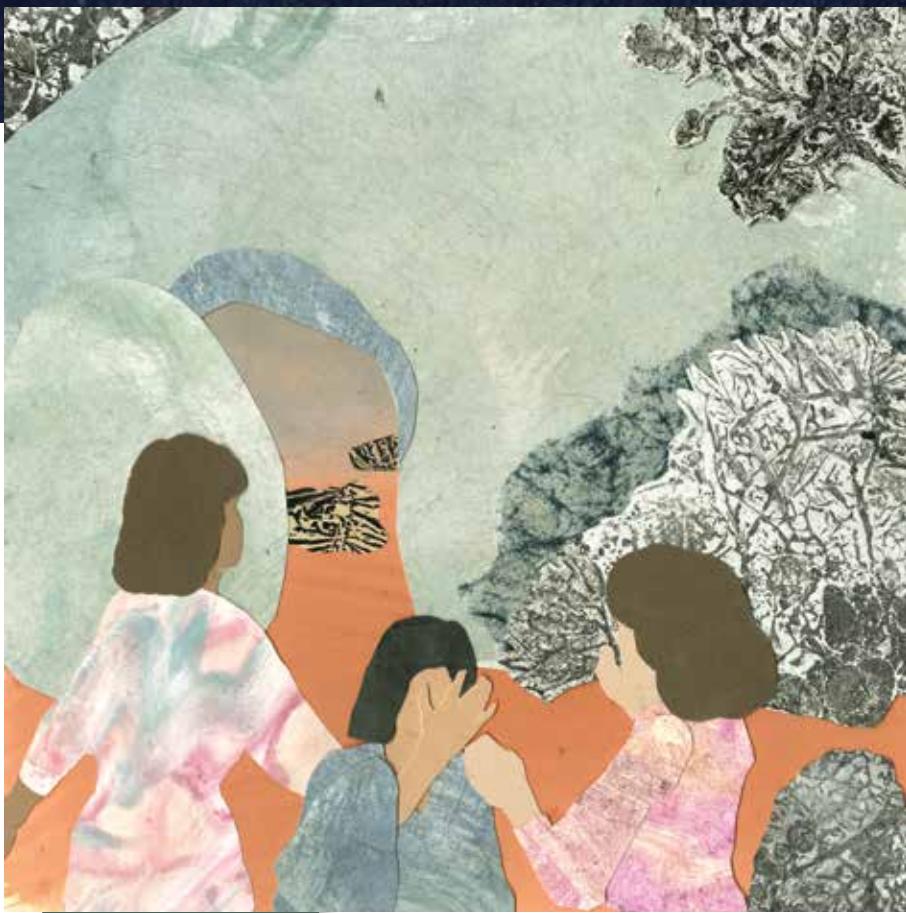


**This story troubles me because**



**Where do you see repeating themes?**





### Think about:

**Each gospel writer tells this story differently, but all of them tell us that after Jesus died, God gave Jesus new life. How is this amazing? Confusing? Surprising?**

**Why do you think the women were afraid?**

**Consider what this means:**

**"Christians are resurrection people, not crucifixion people."**

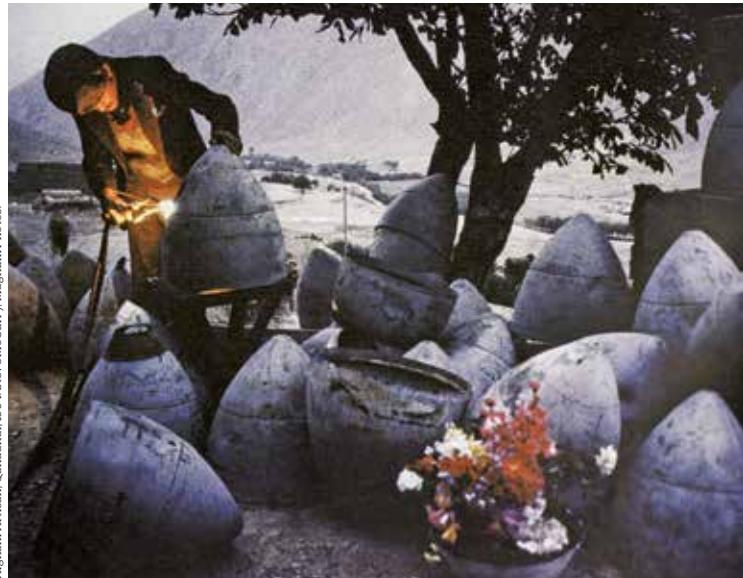
In 1981 a car bomb damaged the First Lisburn Presbyterian Church in Northern Ireland. The church's windows were blown out. The glass pieces were gathered and made into a new window called "The Resurrection Window." The new window shows the power of Christ overcoming death and violence.

**How does the artist show light and life are stronger than darkness and violence?**

Jim Diamond



Afghan Artisan, Qandahar, 1994. Steve McCurry/Magnum Photos.



### Bombs to Flowerpots

The United States' war in Afghanistan lasted for 13 years. This Afghani artist is making flower pots out of bomb casings. **How do these vases stand for peace and new life?**



## Jesus is Alive!

***Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here.***

**—Mark 16:6**

**E**arly in the morning three days after Jesus died, some women went to Jesus' grave to rub spices on his body. But his body was gone! An angel messenger told them that Jesus was not there. He had risen! The angel said, "Go and tell Peter and the disciples that Jesus will meet you in Galilee. You will see him there."

The women were afraid and said nothing to anyone.

**Read the whole story:  
Mark 16:1-8**

**Butterfly:** The adult butterfly hatches out of the chrysalis. It no longer eats leaves, but drinks nectar from flowers. And it can fly!

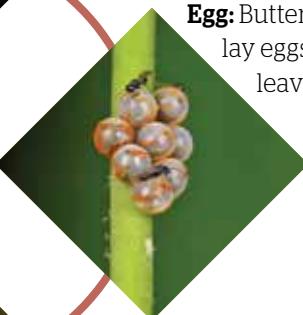


Pupa:

The caterpillar is now a pupa. It stays inside the chrysalis while it changes into a butterfly. Changing from a pupa to a butterfly is called *metamorphosis*.



**Egg:** Butterflies lay eggs on leaves.



**Larva:** A larva hatches from the egg. The larva eats the shell. The larva is now a caterpillar, and eats leaves. As the caterpillar grows it sheds its skin. The last time it sheds its skin, the skin becomes a chrysalis.

Images Wikipedia Commons

Be a:

## Lepidopterist

A butterfly is a symbol of the resurrection because the life cycle of a butterfly reminds us of Jesus. There are some things about caterpillars, chrysalises, and butterflies that help us think about Jesus' life, death, and new life.

Jesus lives, eats and walks on earth.



The caterpillar lives, eats and walks on earth.

Jesus dies and his body is put in a tomb.



The caterpillar spins a chrysalis—the chrysalis is like a tomb.

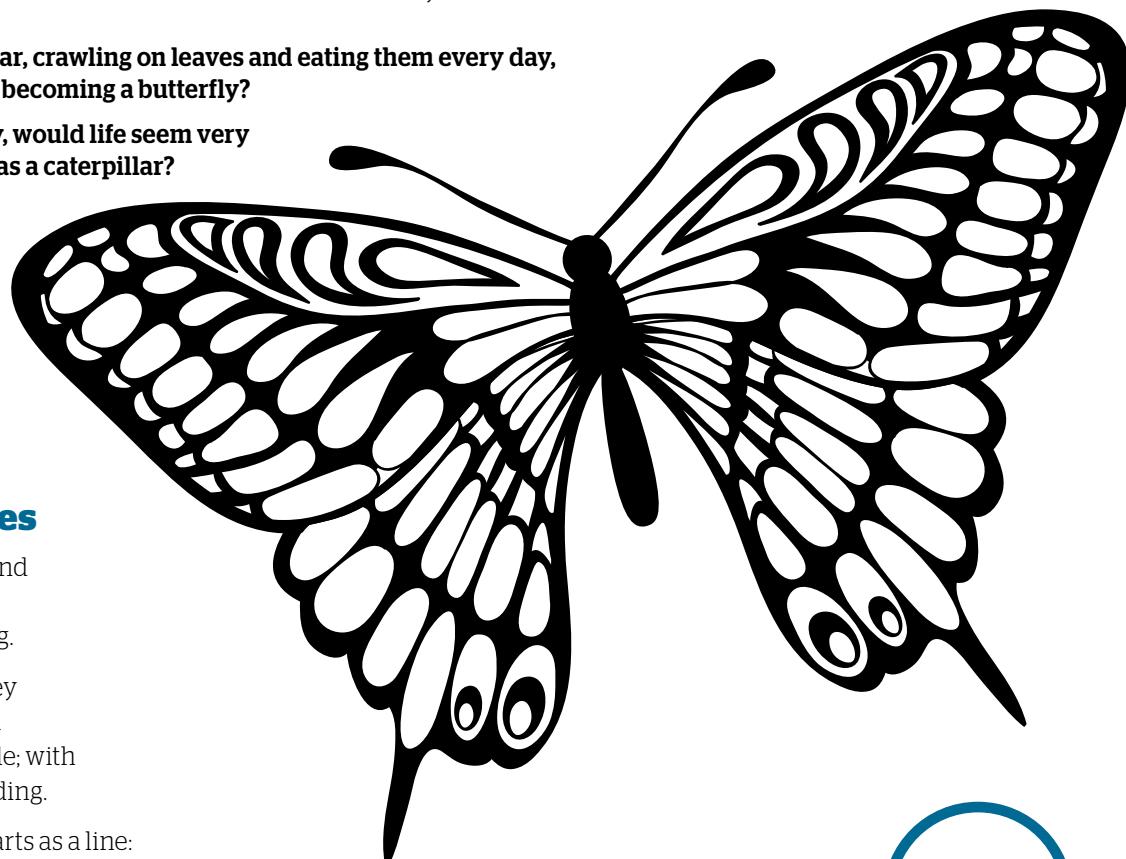
Jesus gets new life from God.



A butterfly emerges with new life.

## Get up and go:

**Color the butterfly.**



## Lines and circles

Lines have beginnings and endings. Circles have no beginning and no ending.

People are like lines. They have a beginning and an ending. God is like a circle; with no beginning and no ending.

**Think of Jesus' life.** It starts as a line:



At the end of the line, God gave Jesus new life. This new life is with God and has no beginning and no ending, just like a circle. Your life is a line, too, and at the end is a circle.

**What are your questions about living, dying, and new life?**

Paraphrased from *Thank God for Circles* by Joanne Marxhausen.

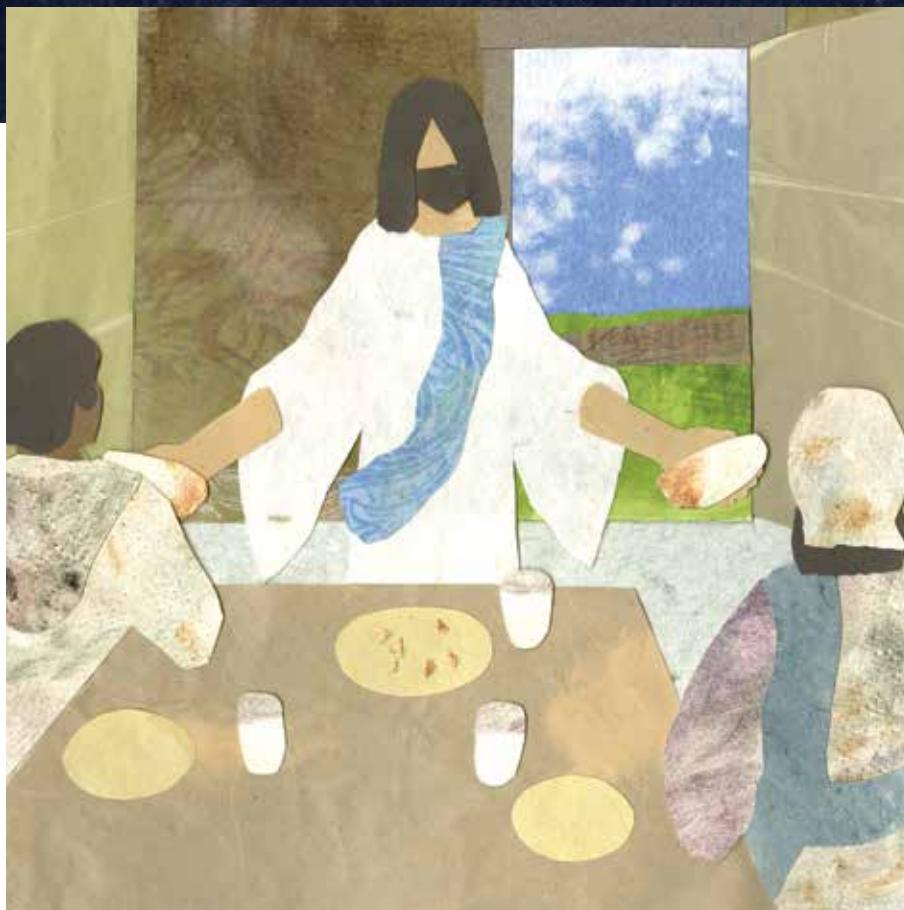
**This story amazes me because**

32-2



**Where do you see repeating themes?**





### Think about:

**Think of possible reasons why the travelers did not recognize Jesus.**

**If you were to describe to someone what happened in Jerusalem before Jesus rose, what would you say?**

**The travelers recognized Jesus when he broke the bread. Why then?**

Go and find:

**Find where paraments are kept at your church.** Ask if you can have a tour. Look at the colors and symbols. Parament colors match the liturgical season:

**White:** The most important days in the church year, including Christmas, Easter, and the Day of Epiphany, are white.

**Purple:** Lent, and sometimes Advent. Lent and Advent are both seasons of preparation. Lent prepares for Easter.

**Blue:** Advent, a season of preparation for Christmas.

**Red:** The Day of Pentecost, Reformation Sunday.

**Green:** The Season of Pentecost and the Season of Epiphany.

## The Road to Emmaus

***Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road?***

**—Luke 24:32**

**T**he day Jesus rose from the dead, two travelers walked from Jerusalem to Emmaus. Jesus joined them but the travelers did not recognize him. As they walked, Jesus taught the travelers and explained to them the words of the prophets. Later, Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it. The travelers recognized Jesus! Jesus disappeared and the travelers went to tell the disciples. They had seen the Lord!

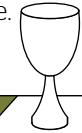
**Read the whole story:  
Luke 24:13-35**

Often people say “Amen!” after receiving the bread and cup. “Amen” means “let it be so.”

### Holy Communion

#### A Chalice

holds wine, poured from the Flagon, that will be given to people.



#### A Flagon

is a container that holds wine.

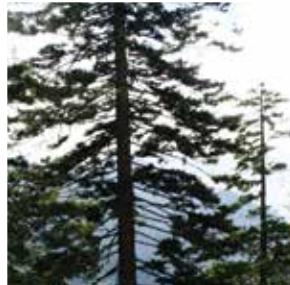


The **Communion Table**, also called an Altar, is where people gather to share bread and wine or grape juice.

A **parament** is a banner that hangs on the front of the Communion Table. The color of the parament matches the liturgical season.

A white **Altar Cloth** is on top of the Communion Table.





**What do you see in each image?**

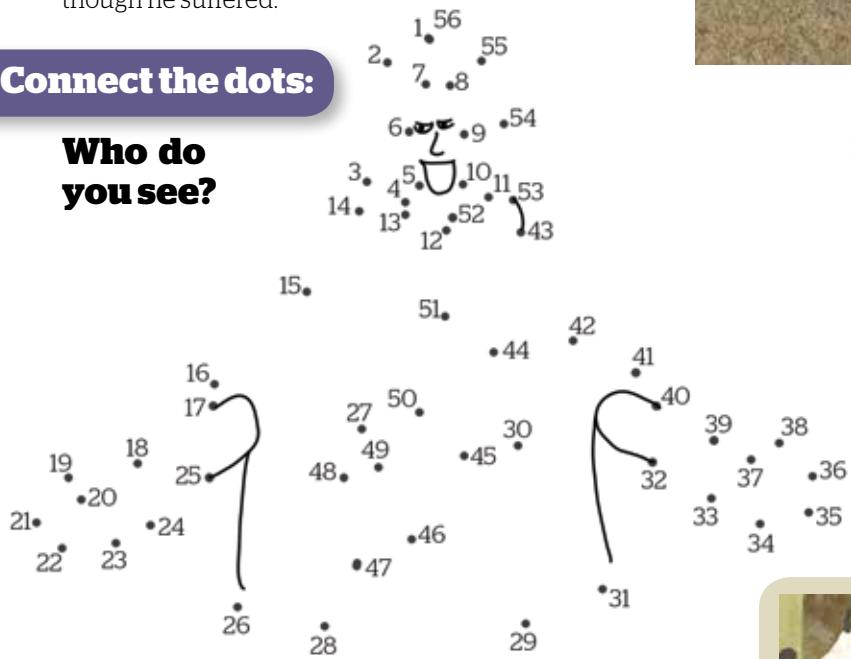
**What difference does it make to know one tree is part of a landscape?**

**If you only saw the one tree, what would you miss?  
Why is context important?**

Jesus helped the travelers interpret or make sense of the scriptures. He helped them see familiar ideas differently. The travelers had hoped Jesus would make everything right in Israel, but when he was crucified they lost hope. On the road to Emmaus, Jesus helped them understand that suffering is how Jesus made things right. Jesus gave his life to show God's way, even though he suffered.

## Connect the dots:

**Who do you see?**



Dear Pastor Chris:

Why would I want to eat Jesus' body or drink his blood? It's kind of gross.

-Grossed Out

**Dear Grossed Out:**

Communion is not magic. Bread stays bread, it does not change into skin or flesh. Wine stays wine, it does not change into blood. Somehow, in a way we can't understand, Jesus is part of the bread and wine. Then when we eat and drink, Jesus becomes part of us and we are part of him.

-PC

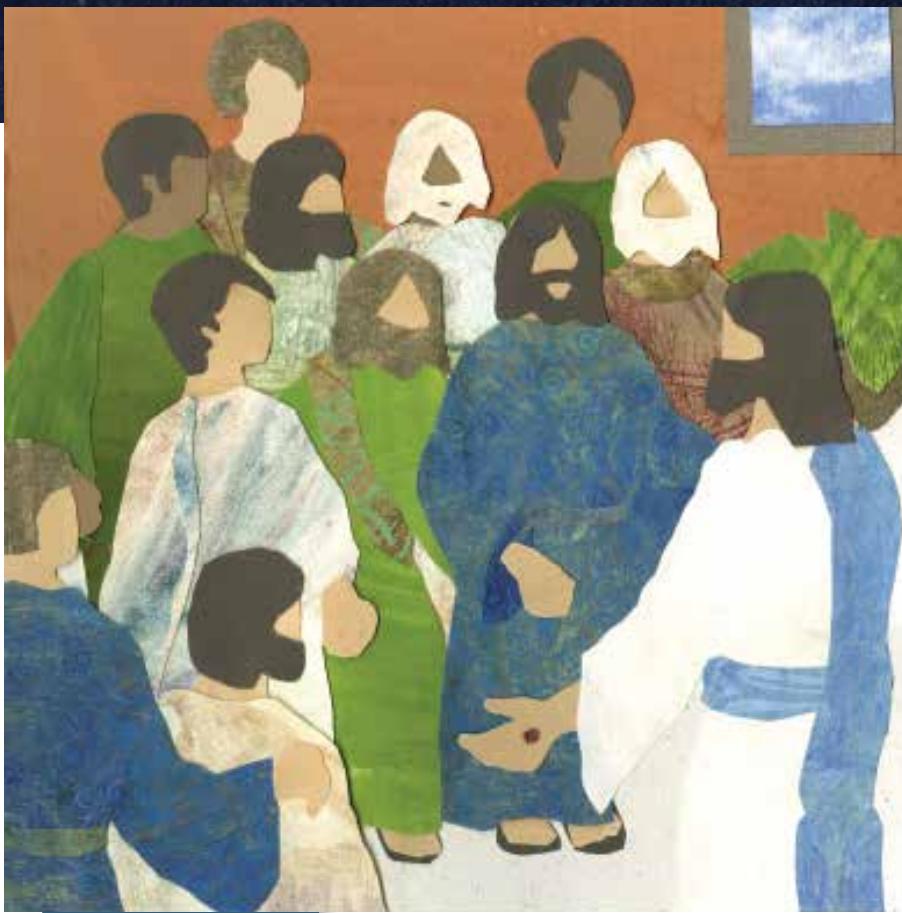
**This story confuses me because**

33-2



**Where do you see repeating themes?**





### Think about:

**What did God send Jesus to do?  
What does Jesus send the  
disciple to do?**

**The Bible doesn't tell us if Thomas actually touched Jesus' wounds or not. What do you think?**

**If you could ask Jesus one question, what would it be?**

**Why does it take courage to ask big, important questions?**



**Hear Ye! Hear Ye!  
Faith and doubt belong together!**

### Two sides of the same coin

If you say "two sides of the same coin" you mean there are two different parts that can't be without the other—they belong together.

Faith and doubt are two sides of the same coin.

If you have faith, you HAVE TO have questions and things you doubt. Douglas John Hall, a theologian, calls this "faithful doubt."



*"Believing takes practice."*

**—Madeline L'Engle,  
*A Wrinkle in Time***

**How can you practice believing? How can you practice doubting?**

**Go and think:**

## Thomas

**Jesus came and stood among them and said,  
"Peace be with you."**

**—John 20:19**

**A**fter Jesus died, the disciples were afraid and locked themselves in a room. Jesus came to them and said, "Peace be with you. Just as God sent me to you, now I send you out into the world." Thomas wasn't with them and didn't believe Jesus rose. A week later the disciples were together again and Jesus came among them. Jesus held out his hands so Thomas could touch the nail wounds. He said, "My Lord and my God!"

**Read the  
whole story:  
John 20:19-31**



**Add your own ideas:**

I don't understand why God...

I can't figure out if the church...

I think my biggest doubt is...

I am confused about how Jesus...

I want to know why the Holy Spirit...

**It's good  
to have  
doubts.**

### Who can you talk with about your questions?

Sometimes questions don't have answers, but it is still important to ask them and think about them.

To keep your faith alive and growing...be a faithful doubter.



## Be a: Papyrus Paper Maker

Long ago people wrote on paper made out of papyrus.

The papyrus plant's stalks were cut thin and laid in two crossways layers, and then beaten together. You can see the crossing directions of the plant stems in the paper.



To learn more: [https://www.lib.umich.edu/papyrus\\_making/index.html#](https://www.lib.umich.edu/papyrus_making/index.html#)

### Put this manuscript back together

Can you piece together this ancient manuscript fragment? This fragment, called Papyrus 46, is the oldest known extant copy of the Epistles of Paul. This is the *recto* side of leaf 41, one of 30 pages in this papyrus manuscript at the University of Michigan Papyrology Collection. Cut out the pieces and put it back together. Matching papyrus lines will help you.

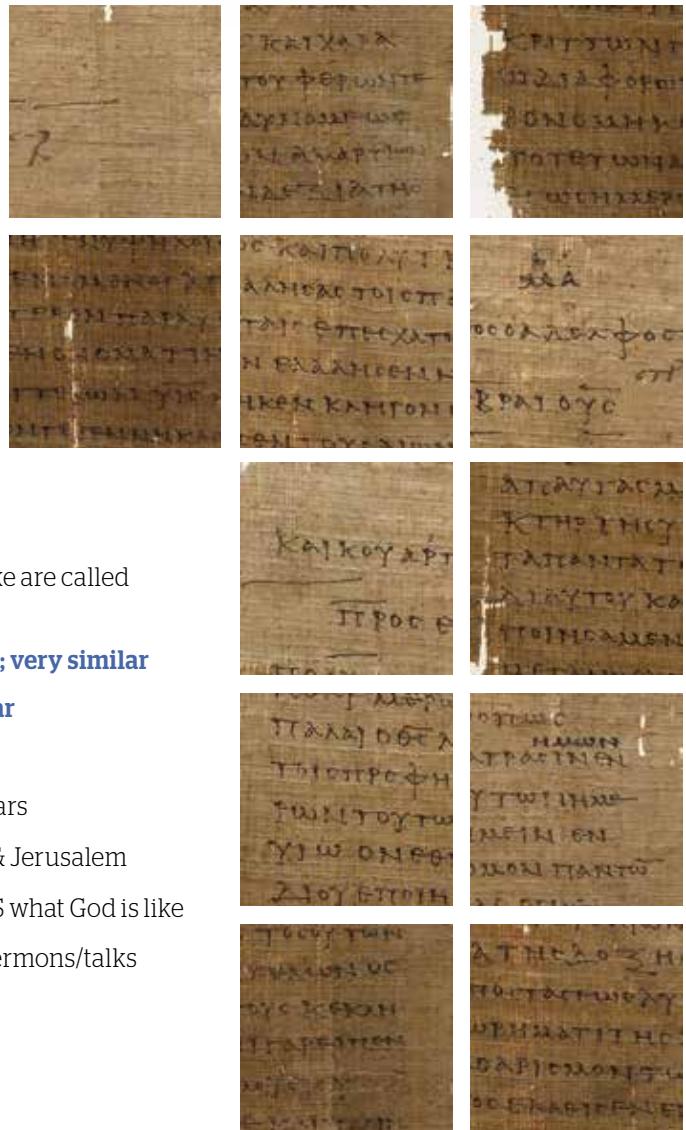
University of Michigan Papyrology Collection



John Rylands Library

This is the earliest known fragment of the New Testament. It is John 18:31-33 and is written on papyrus. It dates to about 125 CE and is in Greek. This is shown just about actual size.

One way people can piece together ancient manuscripts is to match lines in papyrus.



## Get up and go:

### Four Gospels

The four gospels tell stories of Jesus' life. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the synoptic gospels. Synoptic means "seen together."

**Compare the Synoptics: Matthew, Mark, Luke = a little different; very similar**

**Compare the Synoptics with John= very different; a little similar**

	Synoptics	John
Length of Jesus' ministry:	1 year	3 - 4 years
Place of Jesus' public ministry:	Galilee	Judea & Jerusalem
Focus of Jesus' teaching:	The kingdom of God	Jesus IS what God is like
How Jesus taught:	Short parables	Long sermons/talks

**John** tells stories that are not in the synoptics. These are a few of the stories only in John. **What are they?**

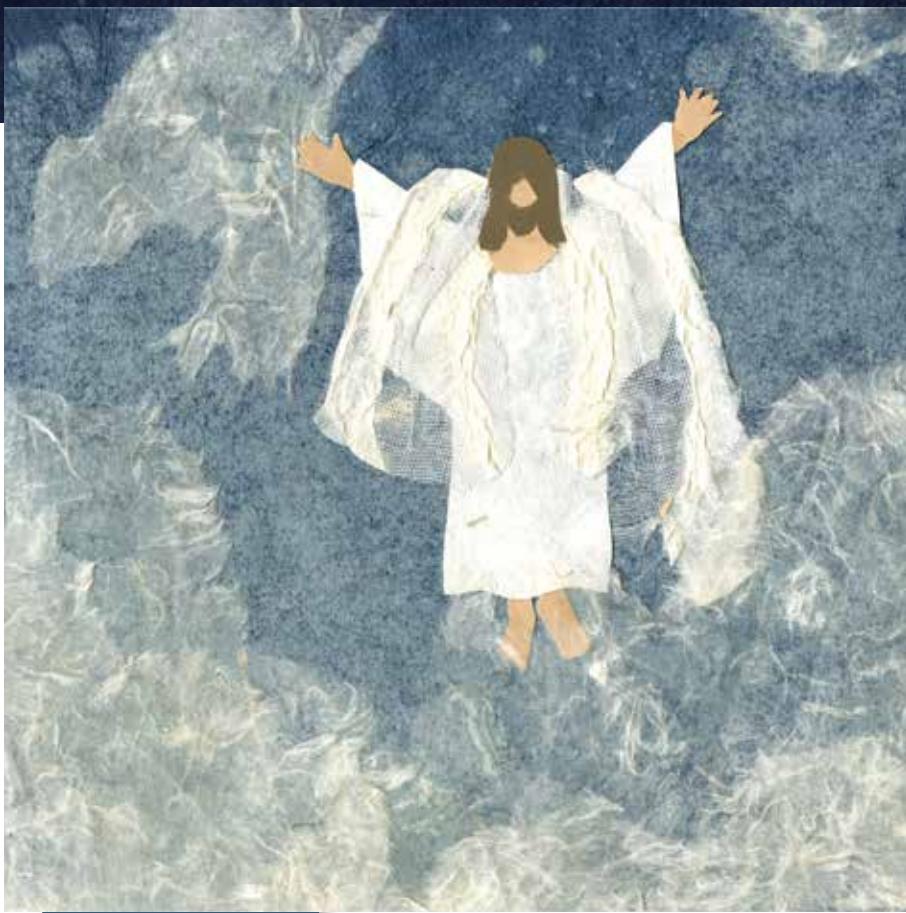


**This story makes me wish I could**



**Where do you see a repeating theme?**



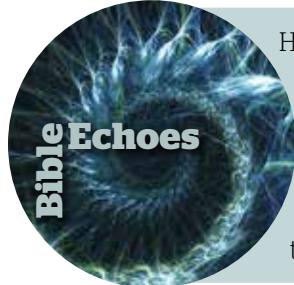


### Think about:

**Where do you think the men in white robes wanted the disciples to look?**

**What does it mean to be a witness?**

**What work did the disciples need to do?**



**Bible Echoes**

Here is another 40 story. Add it to your list! “40” connects us to stories in the Old and New Testaments. Find some of them on the timeline.

### Ascension

*noun • as·cen·sion • ə-sen'shan*

To “ascend” means to go up, as in climbing up a mountain. In this story,

**where we will find Jesus** is more

important than **where Jesus went**.

It reminds us that if we want to see Jesus, it is no use looking up, trying to see heaven. If we want to see Jesus we need to look out and around. To find Jesus today we need to look to each other, to those in need, and to the world.

**F**or 40 days after Jesus rose from the dead, Jesus went among his followers, teaching them about God’s way, and promising that the Holy Spirit would come. Jesus said to the disciples, “You will be my witnesses.” Then, all of the sudden, Jesus was lifted up and they couldn’t see him anymore. Two men in white robes said, “Why are you looking up to heaven?” The dis-

ciples had work to do—Jesus’ work—on earth.

**Read the whole story:  
Acts 1:6-14**

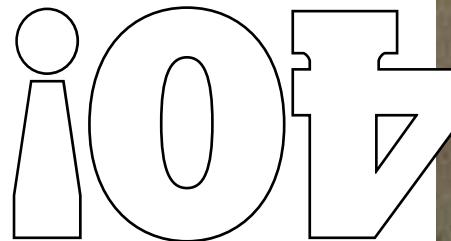
### Go and solve:

### Solve this riddle:

by Stephen Pepper

I can sometimes be a verb  
And I can sometimes be a noun  
I'm a piece of silverware  
That can reflect things upside down.

**What is it?** (Hint: Turn the page!)



Sometimes it is hard to tell if you are upside down or right side up.



## Be an: Dishwasher

Dishwashers wash silverware. Next time you dry a spoon, look into the "bowl" part of the spoon. What do you notice? Are you right side up or upside down?

### Why?

Light travels in parallel lines. If you look into a regular mirror, the light rays travel to the mirror and then reflect back to you in straight lines. But if you look into something concave, like the inside (the "cave") of a shiny spoon, the light rays curve. When the rays travel back to you, they are bent. The rays at the top of the spoon reflect downward and the rays at the bottom reflect upward...and pretty soon you look upside down...but are you?

Stock/Samuel Borges, alt.



Inside (front) of spoon bowl



Outside (back) of spoon bowl

To learn more, check this out:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=prWjk8UlRPs>

**Imagine these spoons are the characters in today's story. Add enough details so the spoons tell the story.**



## Get up and go:

The men dressed in white (pretty much) said: "Snap out of it!" when Jesus' witnesses looked away from the world. Witnesses serve the world, not look away from the world..

**Where are these witnesses looking? How are they serving?**

**How can you witness (serve)?**

iStock/Katja Bone



## Places and ways you can serve:

**food pantry**

**shelter**

**praying with someone**

**working together to plant a garden**

**reading to a child**

**visiting with an older person**

**listening**

**This story makes me look**



35-2

**Where do you see repeating themes?**



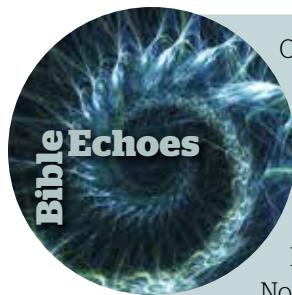


### Think about:

**The Holy Spirit is with us even when we can't see it. How did the disciples know the Holy Spirit was there?**

**The disciples were not scared but excited about the flames on their heads. Why might this be?**

**We say that the Christian Church started on Pentecost. What is the Church's job?**



On Pentecost, Jewish people celebrated God giving Moses the 10 Commandments on Mount Sinai. The 10 Commandments were to organize their new community. On this Pentecost, God sent the Holy Spirit, just as Jesus' promised. Now what was the new community? Hint: Where do you worship and serve?

Imagine you were in a church far from your home and you didn't understand one word the people were saying.

Then the people had communion.

**Do you think you would understand what was going on? How so?**

## Day of Pentecost

***Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.***

**—Acts 2:21**

**50** days after Jesus rose, the disciples celebrated the festival of Pentecost. All of the sudden a strong wind blew and it was as if flames of fire danced on their heads. It was the Holy Spirit! The people began speaking in different languages but they could all understand each other. Peter taught about Jesus. He said, "Repent! Be baptized in Jesus' name, and live in the Holy Spirit!" On that day, Jesus' church began.

**Read the whole story:  
Acts 2:1-21**



**What happens when people don't listen to each other?**

**What can we learn from people we don't agree with?**



## Be a: Bumpersticker writer

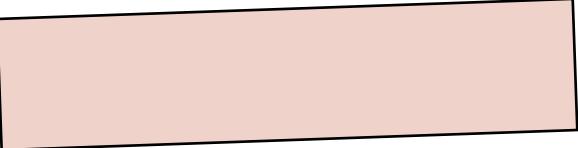
Peter told the disciples that they need to go out with the Holy Spirit and tell people about God and how God wants people to live.

Finish these bumper stickers to tell people about Jesus.

**Jesus wants you to**

**God's way is**

**Get up, follow, and**



## So what is the church?

The church is more than a building. The church is Christ's body in the world. The church continues to do what Jesus did.

**What did Jesus do? How can you continue Jesus' work?**

**Jesus preached God's way.  
What is God's way?**

©Stockatenabs.all



Lisa Hayes/Church World Service

## Churches worship, serve, teach—they also dig wells!

According to UNICEF, 6,000 children die every day from water-related illness. Safe drinking water saves lives.

**Research Church World Service and Lutheran World Relief, two church organizations. What is their witness?**

<https://cwsglobal.org/our-work/global-development/water/>

<https://lwr.org/?s=wells>

## Look at all the timeline pictures.

- Mix them up.
- Put them in order.
- Find Bible echoes.
- Find repeating themes.
- Ask questions.
- Tell others.



**This story makes me wonder about \_\_\_\_\_.**

**Where do you see repeating themes?**

