



RISING STRONG

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CHILDREN'S MOMENT RESOURCES

WEEK 1 CHILDREN'S MOMENT RESOURCES: RISING FROM SKEPTICISM (THOMAS) | JOHN 20:24-28

LESSONS & ILLUSTRATIONS

1. We can learn more about God through our experience.
2. Sometimes trying something, by encountering it, helps us to know or understand it better.

Ideas to illustrate:

- Focus on concrete elements of spirituality: baptismal water, Communion, gathering. Talk about how experiencing these different things can help them learn more about God.
- If there are enough children (or you can borrow some adults from the congregation), try a trust fall exercise where you have one person volunteer to “fall” and everyone else catch them together. Debrief the experience. How did the person feel before they fell? Did they trust that the others would catch them? Even if they did, was there still a nervous part of them when they were falling? It is hard to completely get rid of doubts or fears but experiencing the support and love of others and God, can help relieve our fears.
- Place something with an interesting texture in a box that cannot be seen from the outside. Create a hole just large enough for the children put a hand in. Ask them what they think is in the box. Offer them to put their hand in, feel it, and guess what it might be. Sometimes experiencing is our way to knowing and it also helps us feel more comfortable with the unknown.

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- Ask the children how old they turned at their most recent birthday and then follow up, “What was it like to be (for example) an 8 year old? What was it like to be (for example) a 9 year old?” Chances are, it doesn’t feel very different. So, what are some of the things we do to point to the change in our age? (Examples of answers: eat cake, have a party with friends, sing happy birthday). Just like we need an experience to know that something is different, Thomas needed an experience to know it was really Jesus resurrected.

CALL TO ACTION:

Modify the call to action to match with your illustration. Some examples could be:

- Every time you wash your hands this week, remember what baptism means and your own baptism.
- Every time you eat dinner, remember that God is feeding you.
- Every time you turn off your light and see your nightlight, remember that God is light and is there to comfort you in the dark.

PRAYER:

Dear God, thank you for showing your hands and side when we are afraid. Help us to let go of our doubt and fear and hold your hands to trust you and know you better. Amen.

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WEEK 2 CHILDREN'S MOMENT RESOURCES: RISING FROM DENIAL (PETER) | JOHN 21:15-19

LESSONS & ILLUSTRATIONS:

No matter how many times we might make a mistake or what mistakes we make, God not only forgives us, but has something for us to do.

Ideas to illustrate:

- Ask the children, "How do you feel when you get in trouble (e.g., break something)?" Some possible answers include: afraid to tell somebody, embarrassed, scared, guilty, sad. Ask, "How do you feel when you can't change or undo your mistakes?" Using a pencil with eraser, draw or spell something with a "mistake" in it. Do the same using a marker. Describe how with a marker, you can't really undo your mistakes, with a pencil and eraser you can. Sometimes we feel like our mistakes cannot be undone or they define us. But really, God forgives us. When God forgives us, it is like erasing our mistakes, and we get to use the pencil to write or make something new. How can you be an eraser for your friends?
- Consider sharing a story about something you did wrong when you were a child and how it made you feel. Choose a story where when you confessed, told a parent/teacher, etc., they forgave you, and you were able to move on.

CALL TO ACTION

How can you be a forgiver for your friends so they can improve and do new good things?

Practice this week any time you make a mistake or do something wrong, praying to tell God about what happened. You don't have to be afraid!

PRAYER:

Dear God, thank you that when we make mistakes, you forgive us and we can keep going and doing new, good things. In Jesus' name, amen.

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WEEK 3 CHILDREN'S MOMENT RESOURCES: RISING FROM HATRED (SAUL/PAUL) | ACTS 9:1-22

LESSONS & ILLUSTRATIONS:

Our differences are not reasons to hate each other; our differences are there to be embraced.

In our passage, Saul has been mean to people like Ananias and wants to hurt them. But then God comes to Saul while he's traveling to hurt Ananias's friends, and Saul changes. God makes him a friend. It's like God gives him an instrument and says, "Come, join the band and make music with us!"

Ideas to illustrate:

- Give the children different instruments. God knows when we each need to come in and play our part to make the music together. There is an instrument for everyone, even the kid who doesn't start out in the band. When you play your own instrument by yourself it is different from playing together. It's about creating harmony, not being the solo star. (If you have church musicians, you could get them to help illustrate this.) Sometimes we wish we had someone else's instrument, but then we are forgetting how important our own part is.

CALL TO ACTION:

Say something kind to or compliment someone who has something you wish you had.

PRAYER:

God, you created each of us different, yet each of us has a place in your band. Thank you that through Jesus, you include us and help us include each other. Amen.

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WEEK 4 CHILDREN'S MOMENT RESOURCES: RISING FROM QUARRELING (THE CHURCH) | ACTS 15:1-21

LESSONS & ILLUSTRATIONS:

When we get in arguments (with friends, siblings, parents), we often want things to go our own way, but God teaches us to remember how important each person and their perspective is. It is worth trying to understand each other because we are all precious in God's sight – and to each other.

Ideas to illustrate:

- Talk to the children about the experience of trying to build something with a group of people (e.g., Lego sets, puzzles, or for grownups – Ikea furniture). Sometimes you have disagreements, but when you realize there are instructions to follow to get to an end result that everyone wants (a common vision), it becomes a lot easier. God has given us instructions of grace and love. What if we were to turn to God for instructions when we get in arguments?
- Sometimes we argue about which parts to include and we don't realize that each part (person) is precious for the integrity of the final product.
- Play a game of "Whisper down the lane"/telephone, where one person whispers something to another person, who whispers it to another, and another. You can only say it once and have to repeat what you think you heard. Compare what the first person said with what the last person said. Sometimes when we get in arguments, we don't know what the real problem is because it's based on hearsay. We resolve it better if we go straight to the source and understand where people are coming from.

CALL TO ACTION:

If/when you get mad at someone this week, remember God loves them just like God loves you.

PRAYER:

Dear God, you know sometimes we disagree. When we do, help us to remember that you teach us to treat every person with love, just like you love us. Amen.