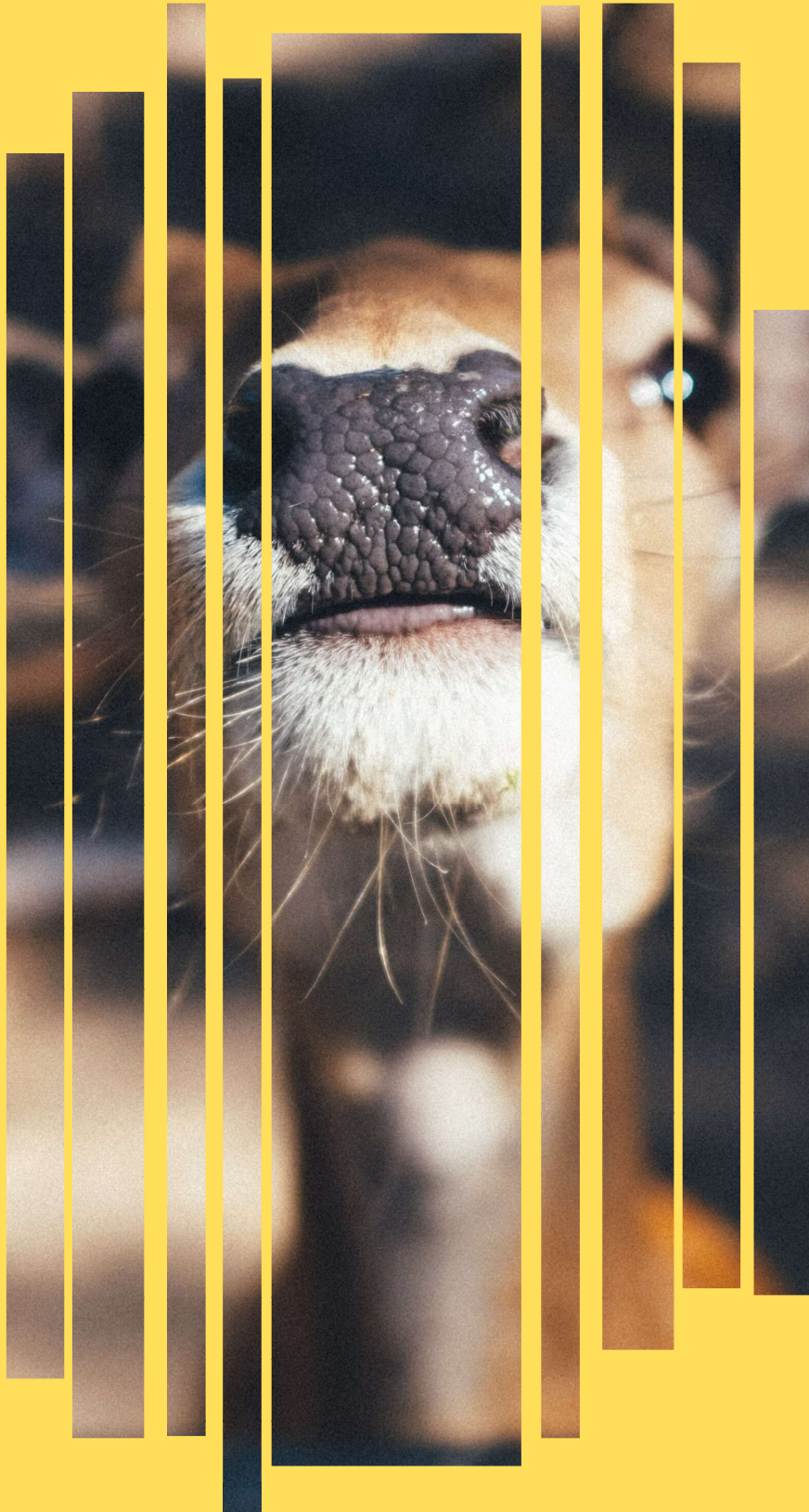


Who's in the Zoo?

Pre-school



Written by Lynette Snyman
Illustrations by Jeremy Snyman

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A Note from Lynette

Who's in the Zoo is a series of animal Bible stories. Weaved into each lesson is the story of how much God loves us.

- The first story takes us on a journey through Creation and explores God's love for us and His perfect plan for intimacy with us.
- The second story shares about Adam and Eve's sin and the fall of man. It tells of how sin came into the world and messed up God's perfect plan.
- The third story, Noah's Ark, explores God's decision to get rid of all evil in the world, and to start again with Noah and his family, who were righteous.
- The fourth story, Elijah and the ravens, teaches us about God's provision for us.
- The fifth story, Daniel in the lion's den, tells of God's supernatural protection and care of us.
- The sixth story, Jonah and the big fish, tells the story of how God wants everyone to know that He loves them.
- The seventh story shares about the coming of Jesus – sent by God to show us how much He loves us.
- The eighth story, Jesus our sacrificial Lamb, explores Jesus' death on the Cross as way for us to become a part of God's family and have intimacy with Him again.
- The ninth story shares about Holy Spirit as a dove who is always with us to remind us of God's love for us and to help us to love others.

Each lesson features a Bible story, games, question time and a craft. Each lesson also allows for time alone with God, and the opportunity for the children to speak and hear from Him for their own lives. I provide a spiritual challenge for each week, based on what has been discussed during the lesson. My hope is that the children will apply what they have learned in the week following each lesson.

Please ensure that you read the Scriptures listed for each lesson. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but these are the verses I meditated on while writing these lessons. It is a good idea to have a children's picture Bible to use as part of your lessons. By telling the story instead of reading it, you can maintain eye contact and interact with the children as you speak. I have found the Beginner's Bible to be an excellent resource - ISBN 978-1-4153-0965-0

You will find a block on the left-hand side of the page that highlights what you need for that section of the lesson. I have assumed that you would have the essentials such as coloured pencils, scissors, glue sticks and craft glue as part of your supplies and have therefore not always added it to the requirements. Each child also has an A5 unlined book that they use as their journal.

I have used either the International Children's Bible or the NIV Bible when quoting Scripture.

All the ideas in these lessons are my own, with the help of Holy Spirit. Please respect my work and don't break copyright laws. Should you want to use this material and not be able to afford to buy it, please contact me and I'll gladly send you a copy.

Should you have any questions about the material, please contact me at lynettesnyman@gmail.com

Enjoy!

Lynette Snyman

How the lessons work

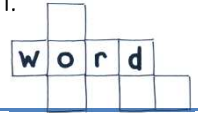
I started writing my own material for children's church because I felt that there was a lack of material that not only taught children about God, but encouraged them to communicate with and experience God for themselves. Right from the start I developed the lesson format below. Each lesson has most of these things. Lessons for older children might not have a craft section, and lessons for younger children might not have a restore section.

Connect



This part of the lesson is for you to connect with the children in your class. It might be a game or a fun activity or even a discussion. The point of it is to lead you into your lesson.

Word



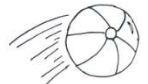
This part of the lesson is the Bible story part of the lesson. A portion of the Bible is told through a story and pictures, acting it out, puppets or any other creative means.

Review, Relate, Reveal



This part of the lesson is to check that the children understand what they have heard from the Bible. This is often done through questions, sometimes along with a game or activity. It is also the part where real life is discussed, and how your life relates to what has been heard from the Bible. God's truths are revealed.

Move



This part of the lesson is a chance for the children to move around. Most of the time the movement activity ties in with the aim of the lesson.

God Time



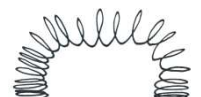
What sets these lessons apart from most other children's church material is the God Time section. In this part of the lesson children are guided by the teacher into spending time in God's presence. Different ways are used to encourage children to spend one on one time with God, speaking to Him and listening to Him too. Most of the time the children are encouraged to journal what they have heard God say.

Restore



This part of the lesson is for fixing what might be broken in a child's life because of misunderstanding or wrong teaching. It is a time to speak God's truth and break any lies that a child might believe. Forgiveness might have to be extended or received, and hurts might have to be prayed for and healed asked for.

Extend



This part of the lesson is to equip the children to extend the Kingdom of God. Every week they are given a challenge to complete. The challenges encourage them to take what they have learnt and put it into practice in a concrete way

Make and Do



In this part of the lesson the children make a craft or do an activity that goes with the aim of the lesson. Most of the time this part is not included in lessons for Grade 5-7 children.

Who's in the Zoo

God made animals

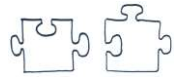
Pre-school

Lesson 1

Aim: To help the children understand that when God made the world His intention was to have a close relationship with people. God loves people. It's our choice to love Him back.

Bible: Genesis 1,2

Connect

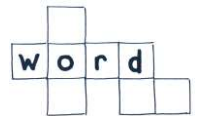


Need:
Playdough for
each child
Wet cloths

Do: Give each child a piece of playdough.

Say: I am going to give each of you a piece of playdough. I want you to use the playdough to make an animal. It can be a real animal, or an imaginary animal.

Word



Need:
Creation
pictures

Do: Show the pictures as you speak about the things that God made.

Say: Before God made the world there was nothing. God spoke, and things were made. Who can name something that God made? God spent five days making the sun, moon, stars, trees, flowers, fish and birds. On the sixth day God made all the animals. He said that everything that He had made was good. Then God made Adam and Eve. God had a special job for Adam and Eve. They were to look after the garden and all the animals that God had made. They also had to name all the animals. God loved Adam and Eve very much. He took care of them and spent time with them. He gave them everything that they needed. The world that God had made was a perfect place. There was no evil or sin. Everything was good.

Review, Relate, Reveal

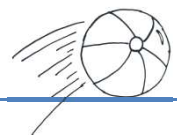
Need:
Download
pictures of
wild and farm
animals
Pictures of a
heart and a
person

Do: Have separate pictures of wild animals and farm animals. Turn them face down in front of the children. Show the picture of the heart when you speak about God, and the person when you speak about people.

Say: I have animal pictures on the pieces of paper in front of you. We need to decide whether these are animals that live on a farm or in the wild. We will put all the farm animal pictures together, and all the wild animal pictures together. Who would like to choose a picture first? *Choose a child to pick up a picture and show it to the class.* Does the animal on your picture live on a farm or is it a wild animal? *Continue until all the pictures have been turned over.* God made many different kinds of animals. All of the animals are different and can do different things.

On the same day that God made animals, He made people. God loved the animals, but He loved (show heart picture) the people (show people picture) much more. He made the people in His image, which means that people are a bit like God. He made people able to think and make things. He made people to imagine things and understand things and most important of all, He made people able to connect with Him. (Put the picture of the person on the bottom of the heart). People can be God's friend. God loves the people that He made very much and wants to be their friend, but He lets them choose whether they want to be friends with Him or not.

Move



Do: Make sure that all the children are spread out.

Say: I want everyone to find their own space. Make sure that if you swing your arms around you are not touching anybody else. I am going to say the name of an animal and I want you to show me how that animal moves. Make sure you don't bump into anyone else! I want you to move like a:

- snake
- tortoise
- frog
- horse
- lion
- fish

Well done everyone!



God Time

Do: Use what the children say about how they know that someone loves them to speak about how much more God loves them.

Say: How do you know if someone loves you? How do they show you that they love you? Who do you think loves you the most? Do you know that God loves you much, much more than anyone else in the whole world? * I want everyone to find their own space where you won't be bothered by anyone else. We are going to spend some special time with God. I want you to close your eyes and think of a person that loves you very much. Do you know that God loves you much, much more than that person loves you? God shows us in all sorts of different ways how much He loves us.

I want you to wrap your arms around yourself and give yourself a great big hug. Now I want you to imagine that God is standing in front of you. He puts His arms around you and gives you a great big hug. You feel so safe in His arms. You know that He loves you. God kisses the top of your head and tells you that He loves you very much. Let's pray: "Father God, thank You for loving us! Thank You that You love us more than anyone else in the whole world! Amen"

Whenever you feel as if you need more love, just imagine God giving you a great big hug and telling you how much He loves you.



Extend

Say: Your challenge for this week is to tell your family how much God loves them.

Make and Do



Do: Give each child a worksheet and a red heart. Make sure the pencil crayons and glue are easily accessible to all.

Say: I am going to give each of you a worksheet. This worksheet tells us why God made people. Can you remember why God made people? Yes, because He loves us. At the top of your worksheet it says "God made people because He loves them". I am going to give you a heart to stick on your worksheet. I want you to draw a picture of all the

Need:
Worksheet
Red heart
stickers/foam
Project glue

people God loves on the rest of the worksheet.

Who's in the Zoo

A Sneaky Snake

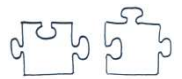
Pre-school

Lesson 2

Aim: To help the children understand that when God made the world His intention was to have a close relationship with people. God loves people. It's our choice to love Him back. Adam and Eve chose to listen to the devil instead of God. With that, sin entered the world.

Bible: Genesis 3

Connect

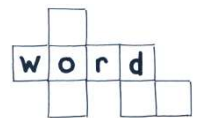


Need:
Pictures of
animals that
make sounds

Do: Place the pictures of the animals face down in front of the children.

Say: I have a whole lot of pictures here. They are pictures of animals. One of you will get a chance to choose a picture, look at it, and then hold it up for the rest of the group to see. The rest of the group has to make the sound that the animal on the picture makes. We will carry on playing until all the pictures have been picked up. Who would like to go first?

Word



Need:
Picture Bible

Do: Show the Bible pictures where appropriate.

Say: Last week we spoke about how God spoke and the world was made. The world was filled with beautiful plants and animals. God made Adam and Eve too. He loved them very much. He took care of them and spent time with them. He gave them everything that they needed. God also gave them one rule. He told them that they were allowed to eat fruit from any tree in the garden, except for one tree. If they ate fruit from that tree then they would die.

One day Eve was in the garden. The devil made himself look like a snake and spoke to Eve. He asked her whether God had really told

them not to eat the fruit from the special tree. The devil wanted Eve to disobey God. He was jealous of the special friendship that God had with Adam and Eve. He wanted to spoil it. He knew that if he could get Eve to listen to him instead of to God, that he would spoil Adam and Eve's friendship with God. So the devil told Eve that she wouldn't die, but she would become like God. She would know about good and evil. She thought she would become wise. She ate some and gave some to Adam. He also ate some. They chose to listen to what the devil told them to do, instead of listening to what God had told them to do. Immediately they knew that they had done something wrong, and they went and hid. When God found them in the garden He asked them whether they had eaten fruit from the tree that they were not allowed to. They said that the snake had told them that they could eat the fruit.

God was sad because Adam and Eve, whom He loved very much, had decided to listen to the devil instead of listen to Him. Because they had not listened to Him, they could no longer live in the garden, close to God. Sin had entered the world. But God had a plan...



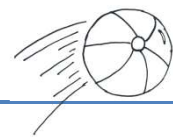
Review, Relate, Reveal

*Need:
Pictures of a
heart and a
person*

Do: Take note of how you have to move the pictures of the heart (God) and person (mankind).

Say: God made a beautiful world for people to live in. He loved Adam and Eve so much. He spent time with them and took care of them. He gave them everything they needed. God had a special, close relationship with Adam and Eve. (Show the picture of the heart and person and put the picture of the person on the bottom part of the heart.) When Adam and Eve chose to listen to the devil instead of to God, their close relationship was broken. Sin came into the world because Adam and Eve had not obeyed God. Can anyone remember what they had done? Yes, they had eaten fruit from the tree that God had told them not to eat from. They no longer had a close relationship. (Move the picture of the person away from the picture of the heart, so that there is a gap.) Sin moves us away from God. But God had a plan. Many years later He sent Jesus to earth to show us how much God loves us and to die for our sin. Jesus took all the punishment for all the sin of the world onto Himself. When we sin, if we come to God and say sorry, then He forgives our sin. It is as if we have never sinned. When we say sorry for our sin, our close relationship with God does not get broken. (Move the person back to the heart).

Move



Need:
A Bible and a
toy snake or
picture

Do: Have your Bible and the toy snake or picture of a snake close by. Hold up the Bible when you say “God says”, and the picture of the snake when you say “the devil says” just to make it easier for the children.

Say: We are going to play a game. I need everyone to find a space where you won’t bump into anyone else while we play. You need to listen very carefully. If I say “God says jump up and down” (hold up Bible), then you must do the action. If I say “The devil says jump up and down” (hold up toy snake), then you must *not* do the action. You don’t want to listen to the devil, like Adam and Eve did!

Let’s start:

- God says jump up and down
- God says touch your toes
- God says touch your elbows
- The devil says wave to someone
- God says flap your arms
- The devil says run on the spot
- God says touch your knees
- God says turn around

Well done everyone!

God Time



Say: Just like God gave Adam and Eve a choice of whether to listen to Him or listen to the devil, He gives us a choice too. We get to decide who we are going to listen to. Sometimes it is hard to choose to listen to God. It is easier to listen to the devil. Sometimes it seems as if it is more fun to listen to the devil. If your mom says: “do not jump on the bed”, you have a choice whether you are going to listen or not. It is fun to jump on the bed, but if you do, you will be disobeying your mom. God tells us in the Bible that we need to obey our parents. So when you do not obey your mom, you are also not obeying God.

Let’s ask God to help us to choose to obey Him. Let’s talk to God together. Please close your eyes while I pray. “Father God, please help us to choose to obey You. Help us to do what You tell us to and not just what we want to do. Amen.”

What happens if we make a bad choice and disobey God? What do we need to do to fix it? (Give the children a chance to respond.) Yes, we can say sorry to God and ask Him to help us to make good choices and obey what He tells us to do. Is there anyone who needs to say sorry to God for anything? Let's say sorry now. Everyone close your eyes, and you can quietly say sorry to God for what you have done wrong. (Have a few moments of silence.)

What happens when we say sorry to God? Yes, He forgives us and forgets about what we have done. It is as if we never did anything wrong.

Extend



Say: Your challenge for this week is to choose to listen to God. If you make a bad choice and do something wrong, remember to say sorry to God.

Make and Do



Need per child:

Paper plate
Googly eyes
Half a red pipe cleaner
Paintbrush
Paint
sticky tape
Wet cloths
Scissors, glue

Do: Set out the paint and the paintbrushes. Give each child a paper plate. Once they have painted and cut their plate, give each child a pair of googly eyes and a small piece of red pipe cleaner.

Say: We are going to make a snake. I'm going to give each of you a paper plate. I want you to use the paint on your table to paint the paper plate all over on one side. When you have finished painting you need to stand outside and wave your plate in the air so that it will dry. Now cut your plate in a spiral motion towards the centre (cut one to demonstrate). Paste the googly eyes in the centre of the plate. Use the red pipe cleaner to make a tongue. Poke the pipe cleaner through the plate and tape it to the back of the plate.