



WILDERNESS FAITH: JOURNEYING WITH GOD IN THE WORLD

Family Sunday School
“Life Can Be Hard” Series
Lesson 3 - How to deal with... mistakes

Introduction: Our series on handling tough times continues with this lesson on dealing with our own sins. Everybody makes mistakes. Sometimes we do things that are so terrible we feel like God won't forgive us. We can even feel worthless. To help us deal with bad feelings about ourselves, we will be using verses from the prophet Ezekiel. You will be able to hear these verses during the Kitchen Table Gathering (Sundays at 10:30am on our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/elcserve>) and revisit them during the week with your family.

Start the Fun!

For this lesson a parent will need to provide a five-, ten- or twenty-dollar bill. Ask the child(ren) if they want it. I'm pretty sure they will say yes. Ask them what they would buy with it and list a few ideas. Now crumple the bill up. Open it and show them the wrinkles. Ask them if they still want it. Again, they will say yes because they know it is still worth the same amount, wrinkled or not. Ask them if they could still buy the items on the list with it to illustrate it still has the same worth. Now draw a line or blot on the bill with a marker. Go through the same process. Does the money still retain its same worth? Finally, tear it in half. Ask the children if they still want the money (both halves). Yes, it is still worth the same amount; they could tape it together or take it to a bank and receive a fresh new bill in its place.

The object of this lesson is to illustrate that God sees everyone for their potential and not their current state. Their soul, their life, their very being is worthy of God's love, because God knows what it is capable of, even if it is crumpled and seems worthless now.

Read together

The One Who Sins... Ezekiel 18:27-28, 30-32 (New International Version)

But if a wicked person turns away from the wickedness they have committed and does what is just and right, they will save their life. Because they consider all the offenses they have committed and turn away from them, that person will surely live; they will not die....

“Therefore, you Israelites, I will judge each of you according to your own ways, declares the Sovereign Lord. Repent! Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall. Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and get a new heart and a new spirit. Why will you die, people of Israel? For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign Lord. Repent and live!

Discuss:

First, to clarify, “just” means “fair.” Second, when God says people will die because of their sin, it means they will not have the new life promised to the followers of God. Before Jesus came to save us from our sins, the people who wanted to follow God had to try very hard to obey God’s laws. By following them, they had a new life with God.

Ask: God encourages the people who have done bad things to repent and live. To repent is to say you’re sorry and try to do better. How do you know God will forgive anything you do?

Talking Points: One’s past doesn’t determine the future. A person’s past guilt doesn’t condemn them to a life of punishment or separation from God. In verse 32, God says, “I take no pleasure in the death (or separation from God) of anyone. Repent and live!” God sent Jesus so we could be forgiven our sins and have a relationship with God that no sin can ruin.

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Related verse:

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope” Jeremiah 29:11

Pray

Think about a mistake you have made recently or one that you made a while ago that still bothers you. Ask God to forgive you. Be assured that God already has and thank God for loving you and forgiving you for all of your mistakes.

Participate

When we teach our children how to forgive the shortcomings and transgressions of others, we are teaching them that no one is perfect... yet we don't seem to teach them how to offer that same tolerance to themselves. In this activity, making mistakes and being okay with that, is the goal. (Accepting that mistakes are part of learning is a key concept of "Growth Mindset," the basics of which are illustrated here: <https://biglifejournal.com/blogs/blog/books-activities-kids-learn-mistakes>)

Blind Contour Drawings

For this art activity, "mistakes" are to be seen as creativity. Encourage the children to embrace the idea of surrealism. Their finished piece should NOT look realistic. Perfection is NOT the goal.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Paper
- Pencil or other writing instrument
- A human subject to draw (participants can draw each other drawing each other!)



Directions

Today we are creating blind contour drawings. This means you are looking only at your subject and NOT at the paper until your drawing is done. Focus your eye on some point—any point will do—along the contour of the model. Place the point of your pencil on the paper. Imagine that your pencil point is touching the model instead of the paper.

Once you're convinced that the tip of the pencil is synonymous with the sight of the eye, slowly follow the contour of the model across the surface of the page. Be guided more by the sense of touch than by sight. The chances of making a realistic drawing are slim. Instead, you'll likely create a complicated mix of scribbles, lines, and suggested forms. Everyone worries that their drawing is going to look silly or goofy or funny—but they will, and they're hilarious.

Instead of inciting anxiety, for those who approach blind contour drawing with patience, the technique can be a calming experience, kind of like a meditation.

Wrap Up

God loves us, imperfections and all. God forgives us our mistakes and expects us to forgive and love ourselves so that we can keep on trying our best and not get discouraged.

Take a Moment to Breathe

Sit up straight in your chair. Begin to inhale and exhale through your nose for the same amount of time. On your inhale, slowly count up to four (1, 2, 3, 4). On your exhale, slowly count down from four (4, 3, 2, 1).

Once you feel the rhythm of your breath, place your hands on your knees, palms facing up, and think of two or three good things in your life and picture those things resting in your hands. Imagine them settling into your palms. Hold onto them as you return to your day.