



LESSONS 157-169

GOD MEETS OUR NEEDS

THE Answer

www.apostolicfaith.org

A Bible study resource for use at home and church.

The Answer is a Bible study course for fourth grade through junior-high level. Bible references are taken from the King James version of the Bible. A Teacher's Guide accompanies this series and is available online, on our app, and in print.

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GOD MEETS OUR NEEDS

Have you ever checked out the contents of a bulging diaper bag?

One good look convinces you that babies need lots of things. They must have clean diapers when they're wet, bottles when they're hungry, toys when they're restless, pacifiers when they're fussy. And the list goes on and on.

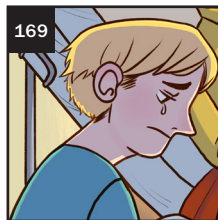
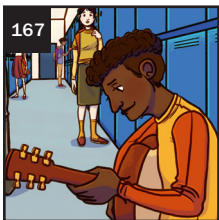
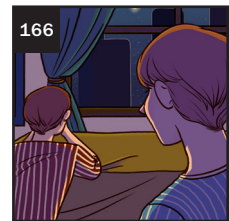
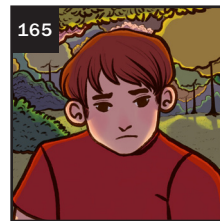
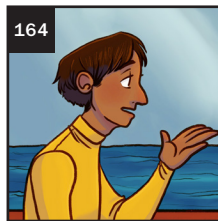
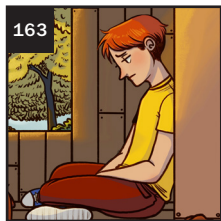
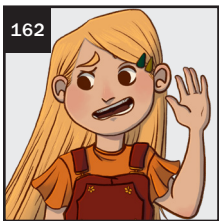
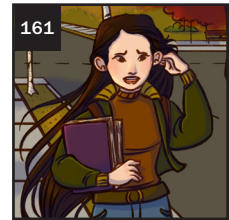
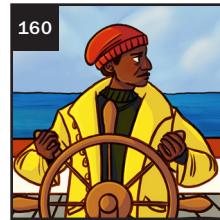
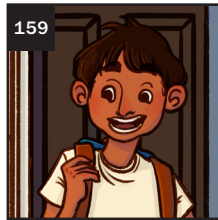
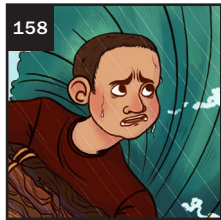
Dependent little creatures, aren't they? If babies are to grow and thrive, someone nearby must be willing and ready to meet their needs. Did you know that we have a heavenly Father who is concerned about us?

*He's nearby, He anticipates our needs, and we have His written Word that He will supply all of them. In this quarter, we're going to look beyond physical needs and focus on some of the other things God has provided for us. What are they? You'll find *The Answer* as you study with us this quarter!*

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THE Answer

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SHOULD I SHOW MERCY?

LESSON 157 → John 8:1-11; Titus 3:3-7

In my position as judge, I had never heard such an unusual case.



I stared in amazement at the nicely dressed, well-groomed man in front of me. A murderer? Armed robber? Man of the underworld? I could hardly believe it. This man before me had just presented the most unusual case I'd heard in all my thirty years as circuit court judge. The string of crimes he confessed to took my breath away.

What a story he told! At the close of his testimony, with tear-filled eyes, I looked down at my podium and then spoke briefly to him. "You are dismissed from this courtroom. Be here tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock for sentencing."

I couldn't wait for the stenographer's copy to reach me; I immediately began going over the testimony in my mind. This young fellow's early home life had been good. His dad was an engineer on the railroad and earned good money. His mother was a Christian. She read from the Bible each morning and prayed with her boys. So why had this man, Bruce, gone so far astray, I wondered. With such a seemingly stable upbringing and loving family he shouldn't have had such an incredible story to tell.

By his own admission, he hadn't come under his father's rule. At fifteen, he dropped out of school and ran away from home—straight to the oil fields of Oklahoma. There he got a job his first day in town. He started gambling and, because of that, soon saw he would need a lot more money than his salary provided. So when he noticed his boss's long-barreled pistol lying under the counter he decided to steal it, and use it to get more money.

For the next ten years he wore a mask and carried two big guns. He stole automobiles, held up people, and robbed businesses. And then came the fateful day. In one of the holdups, he accidentally shot and killed a man. Oh, the remorse Bruce had carried through these years. The man's haunting cry rang in his ears, "Why did you have to kill me?"



GOD'S MERCY IS FOR YOU.

*O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. —
Psalm 106:1*



There was a knock on my door and the court reporter brought in the copy of the admission plea. Glancing through part of the transcript, I noticed where Bruce told about being picked up by the United States marshals.

"I slipped out of the handcuffs and escaped. It was just God's mercy that I didn't get killed. The officers' bullets flew all around me. I looked up to the sky and said, 'God have mercy—don't let them kill me!' I knew too well where I would go."

I tried to imagine this fine-appearing man wrestling his way out of handcuffs, then escaping with bullets flying around him. The effort failed. It seemed impossible to believe. How could it be the same man who had stood before me this morning?

Looking back at the document, I skimmed the part where he had almost been caught another time. For fifteen days he had been hiding in the swamps of Arkansas. With a Winchester rifle strapped to his back, he had caught snatches

of sleep up in a treetop. A posse of about twenty-five men were instructed to take him dead or alive. They came within thirty yards of him, but again he escaped by the "mercy of God."

Then one night, when he decided it was time to move on, the Lord spoke to his heart and told him to go out West. I continued reading, "It was God's great love and mercy that brought me to a street corner in Portland, Oregon, where I chanced to hear a group of Christian people telling what God had done for them. They spoke of having peace and happiness—something I knew nothing about. If they had asked me about misery, heartache, and remorse, I could have told them about that from A to Z.

"They invited me to church, and I knelt one night before a holy God and told Him, 'Lord, if You will save me I'll go to work and be the man I should be. I'll confess out that old life, let them do to me what they want to do.' Oh, the change! There on my knees the Lord saved me. I now had peace and happiness. Misery moved out. I walked the streets for days saying, 'Oh, it's wonderful! It's wonderful!'"

"And now I stand before you, Judge, to confess all. I am saved. I am going over my old life. I have already begun to pay back stolen money—thousands of dollars. Now do to me what you will."

I realized tears were dropping onto the paper as I finished reading. If only all cases ended like this! Justice demands a penalty—years behind the jail bars—but I will recommend mercy.

From the beginning of time, the breaking of God's laws required a penalty. Society also demands payment for lawbreaking—a jail term, a fine to be paid or worked out. Such sins as Bruce's cry out for justice, for a punishment. But as Jesus Christ can extend mercy to a sinner, and freely forgive and forget all sins, so Bruce was freely pardoned and forgiven. He was a free man and never had to spend even one day behind bars. You may read Bruce Archer's own testimony in Tract No. 64, "Pardoned!"

IT'S FOR ME!



God's mercy is for anyone who seeks it. Titus 3:5 tells of one thing His mercy can do for us. Write the verse on the lines provided. Then fill in the grid using all those words. One word, MERCY, and two letters, H and G, have been provided for you.

A crossword puzzle grid with the following pre-filled letters:

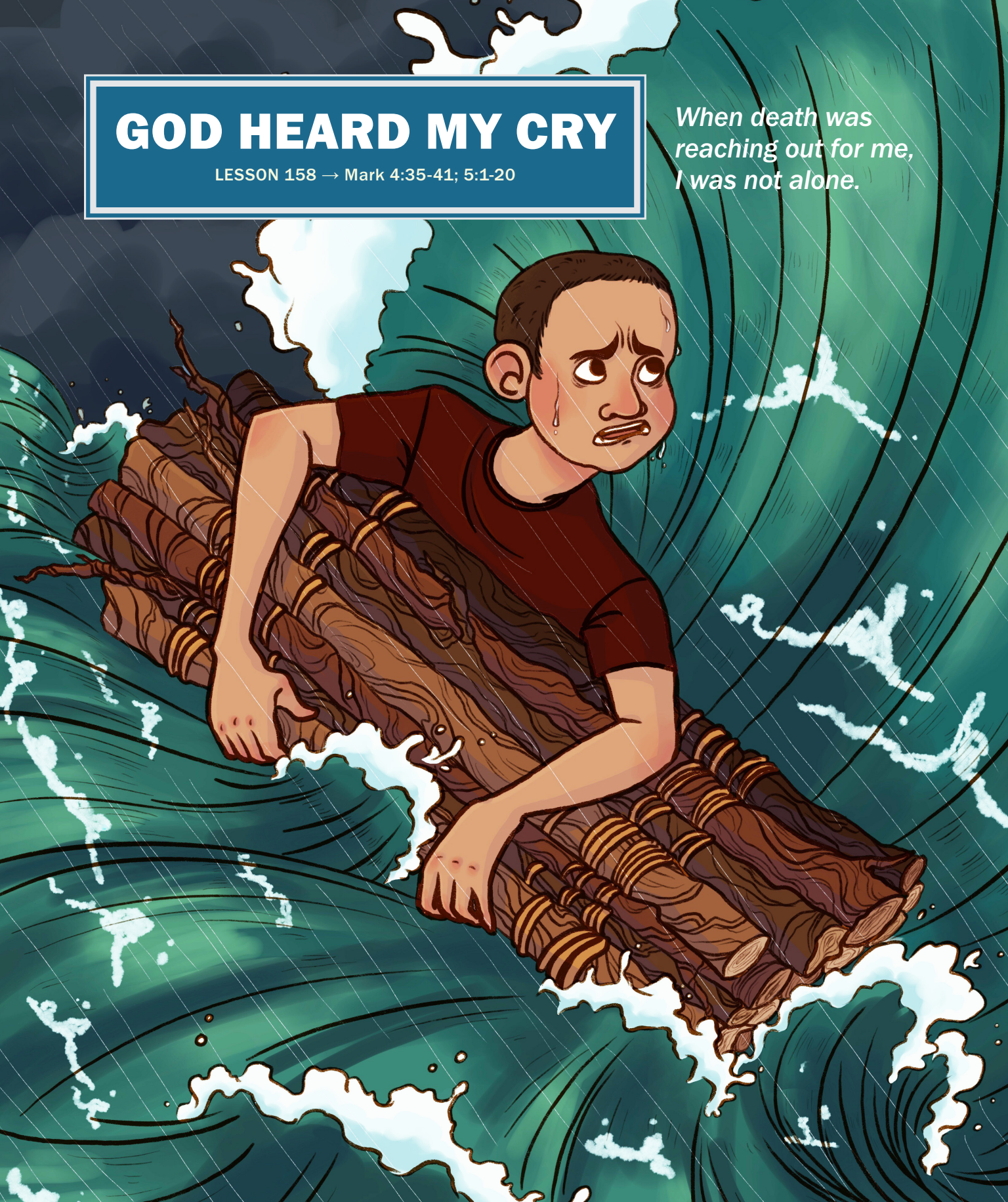
- Vertical word on the left: M, E, R, C, Y
- Horizontal word in the middle: H, G

The grid consists of white squares for letters and black squares for empty space. The words are arranged in a complex, interlocking pattern.

GOD HEARD MY CRY

LESSON 158 → Mark 4:35-41; 5:1-20

*When death was
reaching out for me,
I was not alone.*





GOD GIVES ME PEACE.

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. — John 14:27

Fear exploded deep inside me as I watched the wind whip the water into foamy waves around my small raft. It pitched and rolled, and I clung desperately to the side, fighting simply to stay on. This can't be happening to me! I thought wildly. But the awful truth was staring me in the face—in another moment, I could be stepping into eternity and I wasn't ready to meet God!

A few hours earlier, I had set out to go duck hunting on the Upper Klamath Lake. Thoughts of the disaster that would face me just a short while later couldn't have been farther from my mind. The lake had been calm and the sky a patchy blue, with only small clouds hanging on the tips of the surrounding mountains. The air had been brisk and my luck was good—I had shot a couple of ducks just a few minutes after nearing the lake.

Pushing my way through the reeds and brush that surrounded the lake, I discovered that the ducks had gone down out in the water. Determined not to lose my prize, I found some old logs floating in the shallows and tied them together. Climbing on board my makeshift raft, I grabbed a stick and poled my way out onto the lake, toward where my ducks had gone down.

Intent on reaching the ducks, I hadn't noticed that the weather had undergone a dramatic change. As I pushed and paddled my precarious float farther and farther out onto the lake, one of those freak autumn storms had come up. In a matter of moments the wind whirled the lake into madness and I knew I was in trouble. I was being carried away from the shore, and my frantic efforts to change my direction made no difference at all. I knew I could die at any moment.

As I clung to those old logs, sudden regrets swept over me, and I remembered the little church in Klamath Falls where I had attended services.

I had always sat in the last pews with my friends, sometimes even making fun. The testimonies had bothered me so I had tried to shut them out. I hadn't listened with much interest to the sermons, nor had I taken advantage of the altar calls and prayer times. I had firmly resisted any tug of conviction. But now, as I looked up into that storm-shrouded sky, I began to pray.

My raft was breaking apart and the water washing over me was bitterly cold. I knew I could never swim the distance to shore. "O God," I cried out, "if You will spare my life, I'll serve You." I meant that prayer from the bottom of my heart—and the Lord knew I meant it. In an instant, a miracle happened! The direction of the wind changed! It started blowing from the east across the water, something very unusual in that area.

God was giving me another chance! I began to paddle furiously, and finally, just as the raft broke apart beneath me, I struggled into shallow water. Stumbling onto the shore, I fell face down on the bank and lay there exhausted, but thanking God.

My promise to God wasn't forgotten. Just a few days later, on a Sunday morning, I made my way to church, and there I gave my heart to God. He had some surprises in store for me that day! The devil had convinced me I would be miserable being a Christian, but as I prayed, God flooded my heart with peace. In a moment of time I felt all the unhappiness and the weight of bitterness leave, and joy I can't describe filled my soul.

There is so little peace in this world today, but there is peace in my heart. The God who controls the wind and the waves has control of my life, and I wouldn't have it any other way.

ALL AROUND YOU



The peace that God gives encircles you and you know that He is in control. The words listed below are from the text and can be found in the word-find. Remember, they read up, down, across, backwards, and diagonally.

B P E R I S H X Q M L A C F A Q X M
 R B F Y Q Z T J F Y P E A C E B Z O
 T E A B X Q Y I Z J Q Z J X S Y Q U
 N S I Z Q P I L L O W A V E S F T N
 E O T Y J E S U S L I X B Z Y O A T
 M R H K F Q J Q L B N Q Y J M J M A
 R A J M U L T I T U D E X B A B E I
 O B X Q Y B X J A Q F Z S Q S X Q N
 T S T O R M J Q E Z J R F Y T J F S
 J H Q F J X D Y R K F Q A J E Q R X
 Q I J X Y F Q E G F A Y K E R Y E Q
 D P E E L S A J S J X W J B F F N Y
 N X J Y X J Y K Q A K Y A Q J X N J
 U B Q T I R I P S J E Y E B O K A Z
 O R E B U K E D F Y Q C J F X Q M J
 B F Q X J Y Q X U N C L E A N Z Y X
 D W E L L I N G D E P P I H S R O W

SEA
 CALM
 OBEY
 SHIP
 TAME

WIND
 AROSE
 AWAKE
 BOUND
 FAITH
 GREAT

JESUS
 PEACE
 STILL
 STORM
 TOMBS
 WAVES
 ASLEEP

CEASED
 MANNER
 MASTER
 PERISH
 PILLOW
 SPIRIT
 FEARFUL

REBUKED
 TORMENT
 UNCLEAN
 DWELLING
 MOUNTAINS
 MULTITUDE
 WORSHIPPED

BRANDON'S EXCITING PLANS

LESSON 159 → 1 Kings 19:1-18



Brandon's first reaction was happy anticipation, but something didn't feel right.

“Mom!” Brandon yelled as he bolted into the house, “You’ll never guess what happened today at school!”

“Calm down, Brandon. What is it?”

“I got invited to go camping with CJ McNallie and his family!”

Brandon’s mother looked puzzled. “Who is CJ McNallie? You’ve never mentioned him before.”

“Oh, he’s new at school but already he’s one of the most popular guys and hangs out with the other popular kids. If I go camping with him I have a good chance of finally being in that group.”

“I don’t know, Brandon. That doesn’t sound like a very good reason to go camping. Do you know much about this CJ?”

“Well, no, not really. But he’s a cool guy. Please, Mom, I just have to go.”

Brandon’s mom still looked doubtful. “Well, let’s wait and see what your father says.”

Brandon waited impatiently for his dad to come home that evening. When he heard the door open, he rushed into the kitchen and began his appeal.

“Dad, I’ve been invited to go on a camping trip with a guy from school. His name is CJ



I'LL LISTEN WHEN JESUS SPEAKS.

Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not. — Jeremiah 33:3

McNallie. It would really be a lot of fun, and I want to go. Can I, please?”

“Slow down, Brandon. Who is this CJ? Have you talked to his parents? I’ll have to know a little more about this before I can make a decision.”

After discussing the matter at some length during dinner, Brandon’s dad finally called CJ’s parents and arranged a meeting with them to talk over the proposed plans. An hour later, the two of them drove to the McNallie home, and the decision was made. As they returned home, Brandon’s dad told him, “I think it will be all right if you plan to go. The McNallies seem like nice people and it would probably be fun for you.”

Brandon was really excited. He hardly slept that night, and the next few days were filled with planning.

At school Brandon found that he was being accepted into the group of popular kids. This is what he had wanted, but as the big day approached, he felt uneasy. He couldn’t put his finger on it, but the excitement he’d had was gone. In its place was a nagging feeling that he shouldn’t go.

I just don’t understand this, Brandon thought as he lay in bed one night. I want to go, I want to be friends with CJ, but something doesn’t feel right. Maybe I’ll feel differently tomorrow.

The next day Brandon felt no different. In fact, that nagging feeling that he shouldn’t go was even stronger.

That evening Brandon’s mom received a phone call. Afterward she came into the living room where Brandon and his dad were reading. “That was quite a surprise.”

They both looked up. “Who was it, Mom?”

“The call was from my sister, Lori. She and her family are coming to visit us next weekend. They haven’t been here in years. I wonder why they decided to come now, it isn’t even summer vacation.”

“Mom, that’s the weekend I’m supposed to go camping!”

“I know Brandon. I’m sorry, but we’re going to have to ask you to cancel your trip. You haven’t seen your cousins in a long time. I know how much this trip means to you, but . . .”

“That’s okay, Mom. Maybe I’m really not supposed to go.”

“What do you mean, Brandon?”

“Well, ever since you said I could go camping with CJ, I have had a funny feeling about it, like I shouldn’t go. I just now realized that it was God speaking to me—for some reason He doesn’t want me to go. Now that Aunt Lori and Uncle Greg are coming on exactly the same weekend, I know for sure I’m not supposed to go. If God is saying no, even though I don’t know why, I guess I’d better listen.”

Brandon’s dad smiled. “I’m proud of you, Son, for coming to that decision. God sometimes uses a still small Voice inside us, as well as circumstances, to speak to us. He’ll bless us if we listen to Him.”

A week after the planned camping trip, as the family sat together at the dinner table, Brandon’s mom noticed that he was hardly eating. “What’s wrong, Brandon? Is something bothering you?”

“Well, sort of. I found out why God didn’t want me to go camping last weekend. CJ and the guy who took my place got caught drinking and smoking pot up there.”

“What about that group you wanted to be a part of? Are they all involved in things like this?”

“I really don’t know, Mom. But I’m going to go slower about getting mixed up with them. I have a feeling this may be God’s way of letting me know I shouldn’t be part of a group like that. And I want to listen if it’s God talking to me!”

GET THAT CALL!



God has different ways of communicating with us. We must be listening when He speaks. Use the cell phone to decode the message below. Find the letter that each number represents. The first number represents the number on the phone button. The second number tells you which of the three letters on the button to use.

23 21 53 53 82 62 81 63 61 32 ' 21 62 31 43 91 43 53 53

21 62 74 91 32 73 81 42 32 32 ' 21 62 31 74 42 32 91

81 42 32 32 41 73 32 21 81 21 62 31 61 43 41 42 81 93

81 42 43 62 41 74 ' 91 42 43 23 42 81 42 63 82 52 62 63 91 32 74 81

62 63 81 51 32 73 32 61 43 21 42 33:3

TELL ME THE STORY AGAIN

LESSON 160 → Genesis 6:5-22; Hebrews 11:7



“Dad, tell me again about the time Grandpa’s boat sank,” Robbie begged.

“Robbie,” his dad laughed, “you must have heard that story a hundred times! But I don’t blame you for liking it. It really is exciting the way the Lord protected your grandpa. I was just five years old when it happened, but I still remember when he came in the next day and told us all about it.

“Your grandpa had been sick, when a businessman in town asked to hire him to take him across the Straits of Juan de Fuca to Port Townsend, Washington. Grandpa had an old fishing boat with a small engine, but it was seaworthy.

“On the trip over, the businessman poked a little fun at Grandpa. ‘Mr. Green, you say you’re a Christian. So how come you’re sick? If religion is so good, why aren’t you living on easy street without a care in the world, and certainly not sick and coughing like you are? Isn’t your God taking care of you?’

“Your grandpa simply answered him, ‘God does take care of me.’

“The businessman just snorted and the subject was dropped. Later, as that day wore on, Grandpa’s simple statement was proven true.” Robbie interrupted. “Get to the part where the boat was sinking, Dad.”

“Hold on, I’m about there,” his dad chuckled. “The business-

man took care of his concerns and they started back home, toward the San Juan Islands. About four or five miles out, the engine started coughing and sputtering. Grandpa went below to work on the motor, leaving the other man to pilot the boat. Maybe the man didn’t know what he was doing, because somehow they ran into something—perhaps a partially sunken log. It broke a hole in the boat’s hull and in moments they were taking on water and beginning to sink.”

“I remember that part, Dad! They got life preservers and climbed up on top of the pilot house,” Robbie interjected.

“Well, sort of . . . behind it, actually. They were sinking fast and soon a big wave crashed across



NEVER FEAR, JESUS IS NEAR.

The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. — Psalm 34:7

the top and almost washed them off. The man with your grandpa was terribly afraid and he screamed out, ‘There’s no hope! The tide is going out and the wind is blowing us out to sea.’

“Your Grandpa had hope though! He had a promise of God’s protection. As the waves crashed over him, a verse from the Bible came to him: ‘When thou passest through the waters . . . they shall not overflow thee.’

“Just think what that promise meant to Grandpa! There he was with absolutely no help—it was nighttime; there were no ships around; and he had no radio to let anyone know he was in trouble. Grandpa didn’t even know how to swim! No one knew of their predicament—except Jesus! He knew . . . and He helped.

“The next few waves tore the boat apart. Grandpa and the man were clinging to a section of the front deck and Grandpa began to help the man tie himself to the deck rail with some rope. As Grandpa was praising the Lord, ‘Glory to God, I have Jesus,’ the man was crying out ‘I’m not ready to die!’

“Not ready to die—what a terrible thing! At the moment of death, there was no peace. In his last few moments of life, his cry was, ‘If I ever get out of here, Lord, I’ll live differently.’ But Grandpa said he felt as happy as though he were home, because he had the promise that the Lord would protect him and take him safely to shore.

“And the Lord did! Grandpa was in the water, lashed to a bit of the boat and paddling with a board, for six hours. Then, after he had crawled up onto the beach, he had to try to find help. He had seen a light

afar off, but he was so worn out that whenever he tried to stand up, his legs cramped and he fell. Finally, he found two sticks and used them for canes. Somehow he managed to stumble the three miles to a little cabin where he was given dry clothes, food, and a warm bed. God had brought him to safety!”

Robbie let out a sigh of relief. As often as he had heard the story, he was always glad when he could picture Grandpa safe in the little cabin, getting warm. His dad went on.

“There’s a lesson in this for you, Robbie. God will protect you, too! You might never be shipwrecked, but someday you may face a situation just as serious. God did not promise that if we are Christians we’d never have a problem, but He did promise to make a way through our problems—a way of escape!

“Sometimes you might be tempted to wonder, Why didn’t God keep it from ever happening at all? I can’t answer that. We must not try to outguess God. We only trust Him; He knows the end from the beginning. He knows what difficulties face us, and He promises a way through.

“The important thing to remember Robbie, is that ‘all things work together for good to them that love God.’ He will protect you and take care of you if you keep on loving Him.”



HE IS MY SHIELD

What did David, the Psalmist, write about God's protection? Find out by copying the letters indicated by an X in the puzzle below. Start at the top of column 1 and, going down, write each letter in that column on the lines provided at the bottom. Then go to column 2, then 3, and so on.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
A											X						
D				X								X					
E			X		X			X		X						X	
F								X						X			
G									X								
H		X		X													
I					X												
L			X														
M						X							X				
N											X						
O			X											X			
R			X				X							X	X		
S					X											X	X
T	X													X			
U								X									
Y						X							X				



HOW CAN I COMFORT HER?

LESSON 161 → Genesis 28:10-19; 32:24-30; 33:1-4



*Lydia was
distressed by
Grace's troubles
at home and
wanted to help.*



JESUS IS MY COMFORT.

I, even I, am he that comforteth you. — Isaiah 51:12

L Lydia and Grace walked slowly up the pathway in the early autumn sunlight. As best friends, both valued these morning walks to school as their time to visit with each other.

“Things are just awful at my house,” Grace spoke sadly. “Mom and Dad had another fight last night—they fight almost every night. I have to plug my ears to get to sleep. I can’t stand to hear the terrible things they say to each other!” She stopped as her eyes filled with tears.

Lydia nodded sympathetically. Her own home was so happy and full of love it was hard for her to imagine what her friend was going through.

“What will happen if they get a divorce, Lydia?” asked Grace, her face tense and white. “It really scares me. What will happen to us?”

“Don’t worry, Grace. God will take care of you. He will help you no matter what,” Lydia tried to encourage her friend. Inside she was praying, Dear Lord, what can I say to make her feel better? She is so frightened for her family. What can I do to help her?

All during her classes that day, Lydia’s thoughts went back to Grace and the problems she was facing. Lydia knew that her friend loved and obeyed God. Ever since Grace had gotten saved at a youth meeting a little over a year ago, she had been so excited—telling people about Jesus and inviting them to church. Seeing her in need like this made Lydia want to comfort and help her.

That evening, as Lydia was curled up on her bed reading her Bible, she suddenly realized that only God could give Grace the comfort she needed through this hard time. She came across the verse in Isaiah where God said, “I, even I, am he that comforteth you.” That gave her an idea!

I’ll copy down all the Scriptures I can find on comfort from the Lord. Then when Grace is afraid or upset, she can read them and be comforted by His words.

Jumping up from her bed she dug through her desk for a piece of paper and a pencil. She set to work and soon had a page full of Scriptures.

The next morning Lydia was all prepared.

“Grace, even though I’m your good friend, I don’t think there’s much I can say to make you feel any better about what’s happening between your parents.” She smiled and handed her the sheet of Scriptures. “Here is something that will help, though. Look at this!”

Grace took the paper Lydia held out and looked at it curiously. She read aloud the first line. “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you’ (John 14:18). That’s from the Bible . . . oh, they all are!” she said, glancing down the rest of the page. She studied the list in silence for a moment, and then looked back at her friend. “I know that everything God says is true, Lydia. I guess I’ve forgotten about His promises since I’ve been so upset—and right when I needed them most!”


That very afternoon, during her English class, something said in reference to the short story they were reading brought the thought of her parents’ angry voices to Grace’s mind. She felt the familiar feeling of dread begin to creep into her heart. Then she remembered the list Lydia had given her. Reaching into her notebook, she brought out the verses and read, “Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.” As she thought about the verse, the fear gradually subsided. O Jesus, she thought, thank You for being so close and comforting me. Help me to remember that You will always take care of me.

Do you have fears and worries like Grace had?


Do you have problems that seem way too big for you to handle? Trust God! Ask Him to help you, and take comfort in His strong, sheltering arms. If you belong to the Lord, you have the promise that you will be comforted in all the hard places of life.

IT'S A BIG HELP!


God offers comfort to all who love and obey Him. Below are three verses concerning God and comfort. Cross out all the Q's, X's and Z's and write the rest of the letters (which compose the verses) on the lines provided. Can you memorize them?



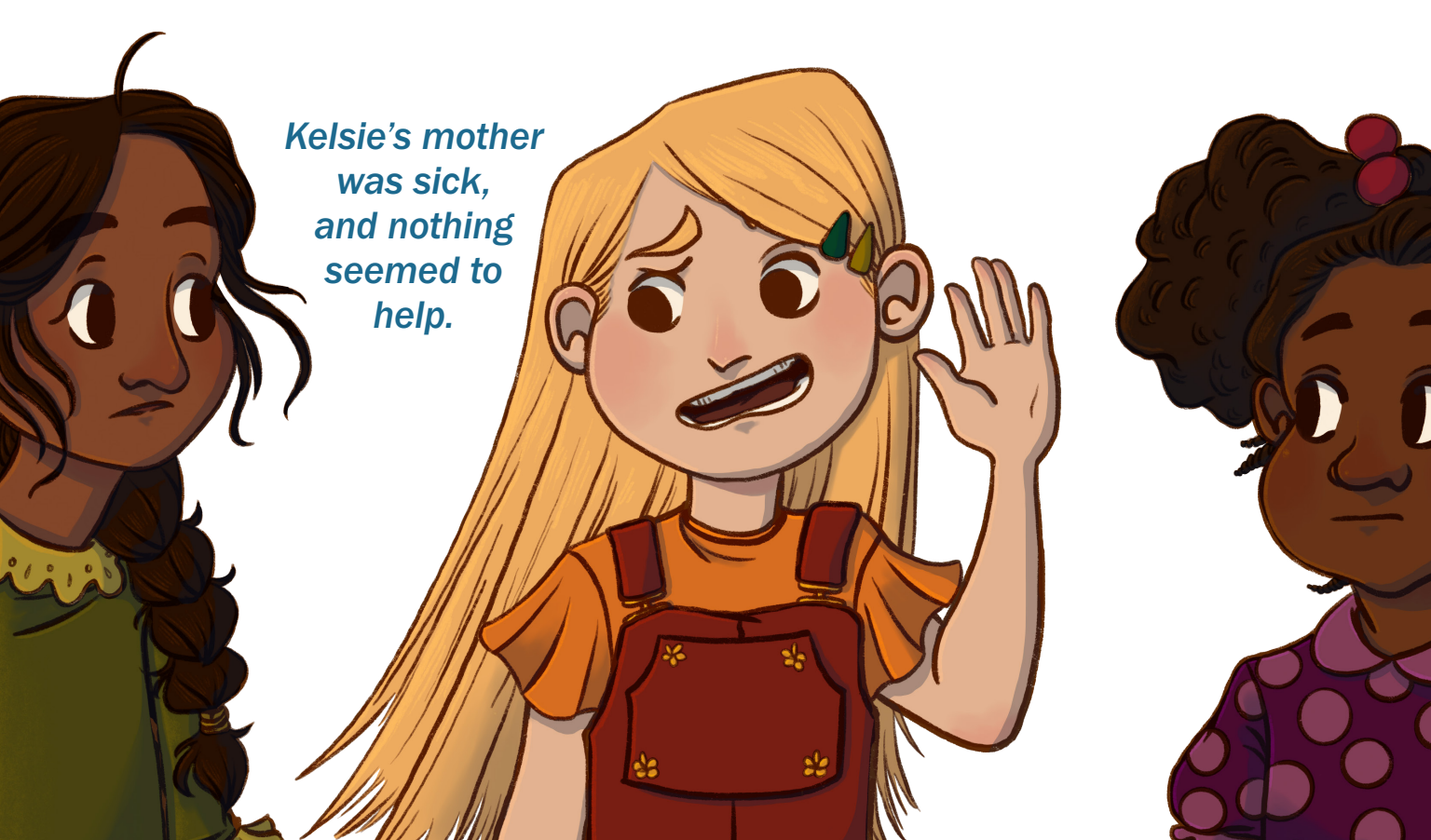
I Q Z W I Q X K L Z L Q N O Z X T Q L E A K Z V E Z
Y O Q U X C O M Z F O Q R T Z L E Z S Q S,
X Z I Q W Q I Z L Q L C O Z M Q E Z X T Z O Q Y Q O Z U.
Q X J Z Q O X H Q Z N X Z 14:18



I, Q E V Z E X N I,
Q A Z M Q H E Z T H X A Z T X C O Z M Q
F O Z R X T Z E Q T Z H Q Y Q O Z X U.
I X Z Q S K A Z Q I Z A X Q H Z X 5:12



Q Z W X H Q E X R Z E F X O R Z E Q C O M Z F Z
O Q R T Q Y O U Q R Z S E L X V Q E S Z T O G X E T H
Q Z E R A X N Z D Q E D I Z F Z Y O Z N X E Q A N O Z T
H Z E X R. I X Z T H Q Y K E Z S X S A K Q L
Z O K N I X A Z N Q S 5:11



*Kelsie's mother
was sick,
and nothing
seemed to
help.*

DOES JESUS STILL HEAL TODAY?

LESSON 162 → Isaiah 53:1-5; Mark 5:22-42; James 5:13-16

“**T**eacher Jennifer,” Kelsie asked, “is it really true, all that stuff about healing?”

Her Sunday school teacher looked up, puzzled. “Why, Kelsie, of course it’s true!”

“Well, I mean, I guess it was true in the old days, like the stories we studied today about Jesus’ healing the little girl and the lady and all those others. But you just said Jesus still heals today.”

“That’s right, He does, Kelsie. Jesus never changes.”

Kelsie still looked unconvinced. “Where in the Bible does it say that Jesus can heal us today? I want to read it.”

“All right, Kelsie, we can do that. Turn in your Bible to the fifth chapter of James.” She glanced around at the other girls in the class, who had been listening to their conversation. “Why don’t all of you open

to that chapter. Let’s look at the fourteenth verse. Kelsie, read it aloud, please.”

Kelsie began, “*Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.*”

When she paused, her teacher said, “Go ahead and read the next verse too.”

“*And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.*”

“*But wasn’t that just for those days?*” Kelsie asked as she looked up from her Bible. “How do you know God still heals?”

Jennifer closed her Bible and smiled at Kelsie. “I know from personal experience, Kelsie. Just a



JESUS HEALS ME WHEN I'M SICK.

I am the LORD that healeth thee. — Exodus 15:26

little over a year ago, our little Brianna was so sick. She had run a high fever for a couple of days, and we were really desperate. That night we called the ministers and asked them to come over and pray for her. Within ten minutes of their prayers, her temperature was down two degrees, and in just an hour it was back to normal. She went to sleep and slept all night, and the next day she felt fine—just a little weak. God still works today!”

As she finished speaking, the bell rang, calling them to sing. But after Sunday school, as Jennifer was straightening up her room, she saw Kelsie lingering nearby, a worried expression on her face. Going over to her, she put an arm gently around Kelsie’s shoulders. “You’re worried about something, Kelsie. Anything I can do to help?”

Kelsie looked down. “Well . . . I don’t know. It’s about my mom. You know she’s been sick. Last night I overheard the doctor and my dad talking, and they said she just isn’t responding to the medicine they are giving her. Nothing seems to help.”

Jennifer drew Kelsie to a chair and sat down beside her. “You know, I wondered during class if your questions regarding healing didn’t have something to do with your mother’s illness, but I didn’t want to ask in front of the other girls.” She paused, and then con-

tinued. “Kelsie, you’re saved, aren’t you?”

“Sure. I got saved last year at youth camp. God’s really helped me since then.”

“You believe God’s Word, don’t you? Do you believe that your mom can be healed?”

“But, Teacher, my mom’s not saved! She’s prayed a couple of times, but . . . well, she says it’s different for her.”

“Kelsie, the Bible doesn’t tell us that Jesus healed only those who had already believed on Him. God can heal your mother too. I’ll tell you what, you talk to your mom and see if she’d mind if our pastor came out to pray for her this afternoon. In the meantime, I’ll put in a prayer request this morning and the whole church will be praying. And Kelsie, you just believe that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. If He could create life, He can heal the diseases that trouble our bodies.”

The next Sunday, Jennifer opened her class session by looking at Kelsie. “Kelsie, you asked a lot of questions last week about whether God could heal people today. Will you tell the class what happened this week?”

“I sure will!” she beamed. “Some of you probably know that my mom has been sick. I found out last week that the doctors felt she didn’t have long to live. Last Sunday she was

really bad, and that was why I asked so many questions about healing. I wondered if God really could help when the doctors hadn’t been able to do anything.

“Well, last Sunday after class I talked to Teacher Jennifer, and she told me that the pastor would come out and pray for my mom, and she would put in a prayer request. That afternoon he and another minister and Teacher Jennifer came to our home. They prayed for Mom.

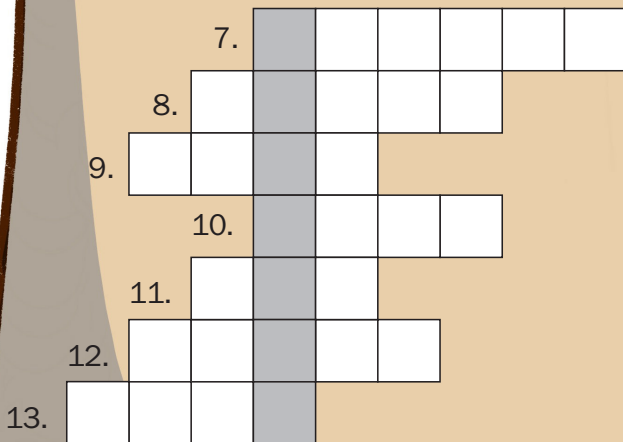
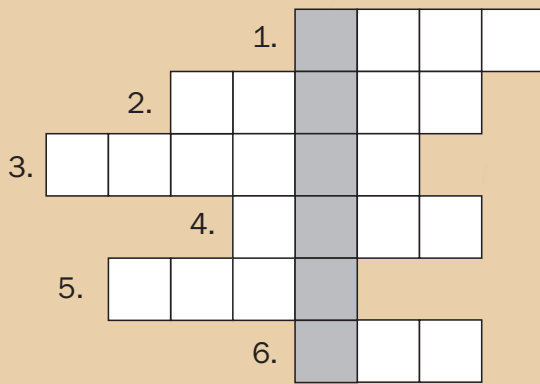
“That night she slept for the first time in a long while. The next day she felt stronger than she had for weeks and even wanted to get out of bed. My dad called the doctors, and they asked her to come in. This week they gave her a lot of tests, and they said she looks fine. They can’t find anything wrong with her except that she is a little weak. God healed her!”

After class, Kelsie had one more bit of good news to pass on to her teacher. “The best news is that Mom said she and Dad might come to church. She’s been praying some. She says she knows it was God who did this for her.”

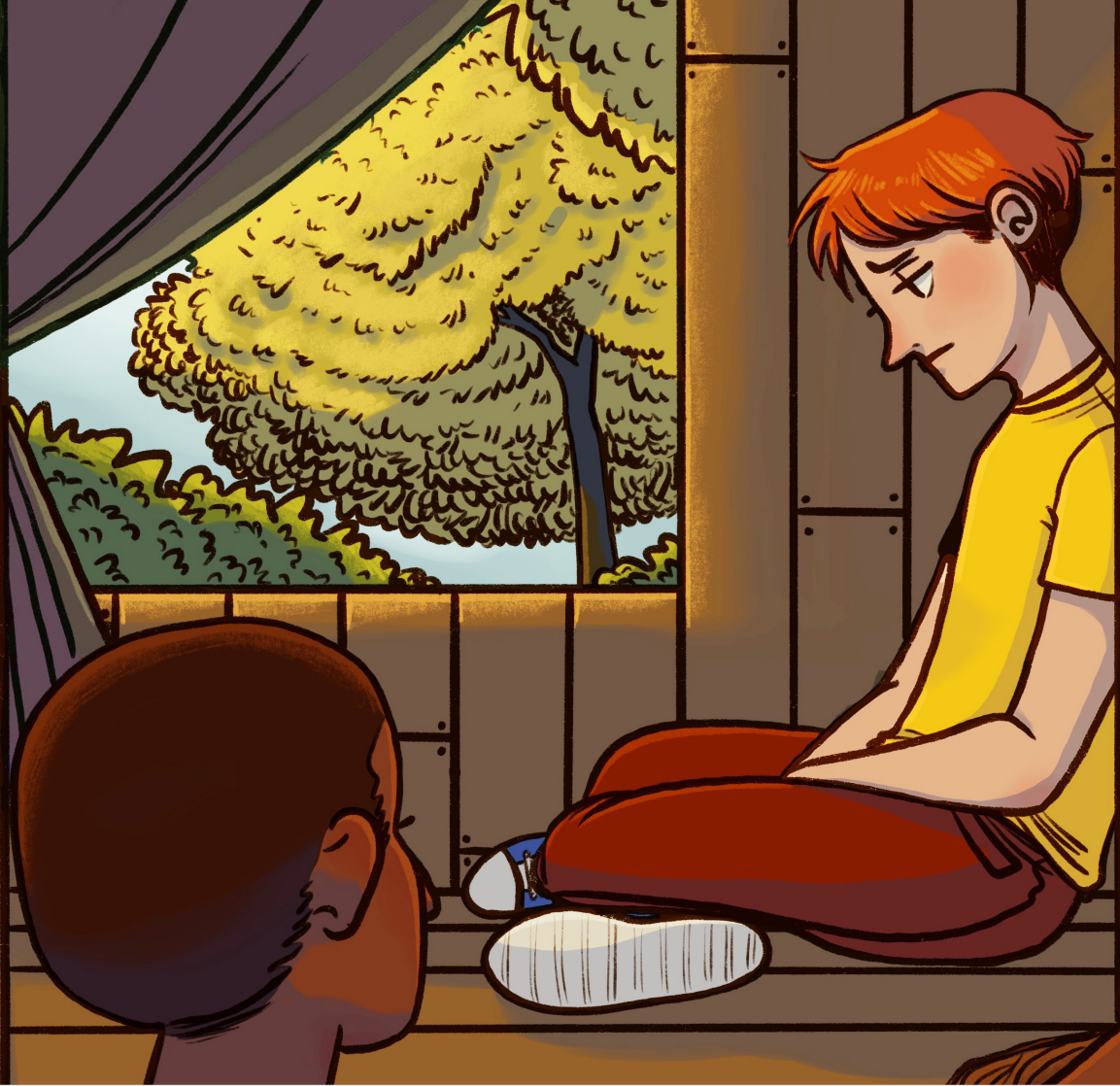
Jennifer hugged her student. “That is just great, Kelsie! We’ll keep praying for your folks. I believe God is going to work another miracle!”

A SPECIAL TOUCH

All the words listed for the acrostic puzzle below are from today's Bible text. Read each clue. Then unscramble the word beside it, and write the word in the puzzle. The shaded area will tell you a great miracle that only God can do.



1. Opposite of alive (aded)
2. To get up (sirea)
3. How old was the daughter? (velwet)
4. If you're not well, you're ... (kics)
5. One of the men who went with Jesus (honj)
6. Consume food (tea)
7. Made well (leadeh)
8. Son of God (sejsu)
9. Talk to God (yrap)
10. Not die (viel)
11. The elders anointed the sick with ... (loi)
12. Fingers are on your ... (dhasn)
13. Say a song with a tune (gins)



IS SOMETHING THE MATTER?

LESSON 163 → Daniel 1:17-20; 2:1-13, 24-30

His parents' decision-making process had Derek concerned.

Jordan took hold of the boards nailed up the side of the tree and climbed quickly up to the secluded tree house. Tossing his backpack into a corner, he grinned at his friend Derek, who was sitting against a short wall, staring out into the brown and gold branches surrounding them. Reaching into his jacket pocket for an apple left from his lunch, Jordan nudged Derek with his foot.



TRUE WISDOM COMES FROM GOD.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally.
— James 1:5

“Hi . . . you beat me today. Did you get out of class early or something?”

“Yeah.” Derek’s reply was brief, and he didn’t look at Jordan.

Jordan took a second, longer look at his friend. “Hey, is something the matter? You look kind of upset.”

For a moment there was only silence, then Derek sighed and said, “No . . . well, I hope not . . .”

“C’mon, Derek,” Jordan said as he flopped down beside him. “Tell me what’s bothering you. I know something is.”

After a minute, Derek admitted, “Yeah . . . well, it’s my folks. They have some problems and they don’t know what to do. Last night they were consulting Dad’s horoscope—as though that should make their decision. Then they decided to have this guy over who is really into astrology. They think he might be able to come up with some answers for them.”

“Do they really think astrology is going to help them?”

“I don’t know. That’s just the problem! Mom always listens to her daily horoscope on her phone, but I thought it was just kind of a joke. I can’t believe she really thinks it’s true.”

Jordan frowned. “I remember reading somewhere in the Bible about astrologers and magicians. God wasn’t pleased with people who trusted in them instead of Him.”

Derek nodded in agreement. “Yeah, that’s what got me concerned. Have you read the Sunday school lesson for this week? It’s about how God gave Daniel and his three friends wisdom that was ten times greater than the wisdom of all the magicians and astrologers in the kingdom.”

“Yeah, that’s right. Hey, have you tried talking to your parents about this? Maybe they don’t know how God feels about astrology and stuff like that.”

“Naw, you know they don’t go to church. Although, I don’t think they would intentionally try to displease God.”

“Why not tell them about your Sunday school lesson? Try to get them to see the difference between God’s wisdom and man’s wisdom,” Jordan suggested. “Whatever their problems are, I know that God could work them out. And if you ask God for wisdom in talking to them, He’ll give it. Isn’t that the key verse this Sunday—‘If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally?’”

Derek nodded thoughtfully. “I think I’ll talk to them tonight.”

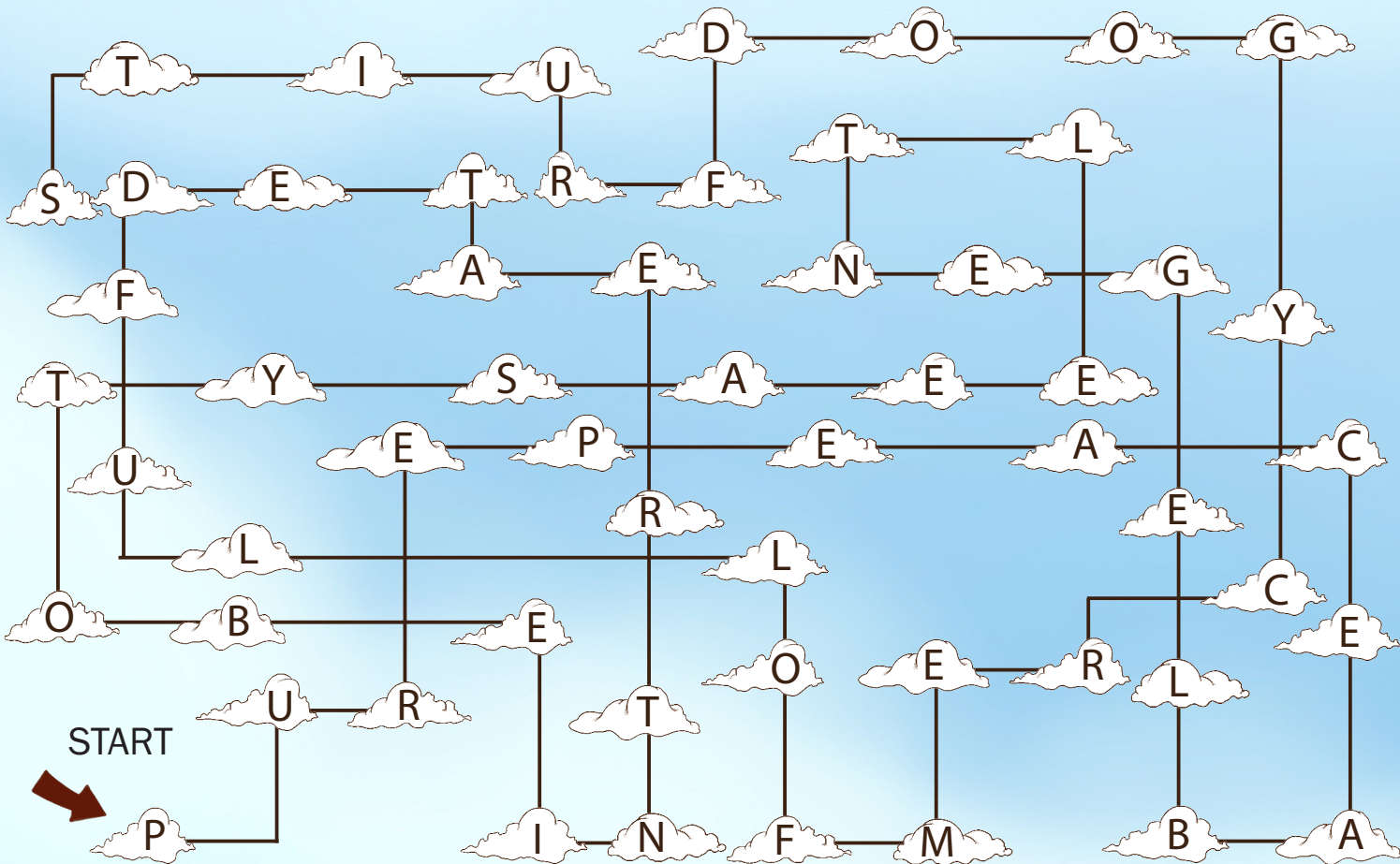
The next day when Jordan arrived at the tree house, he again found Derek already there. A closer look told him the answer to the question he had planned to ask. After an awkward moment that seemed to last forever, Jordan finally managed to mumble, “Didn’t work, huh?” Derek’s only reply was a slow shake of his head as he stared somewhere past Jordan. “Hey man, I’m sorry,” Jordan finally squeezed out. Derek didn’t seem to hear him. Slowly Jordan backed down the ladder, wishing he could think of some right words to say. None came.

The next morning Jordan was just opening his locker when he was startled by a brisk slap on his back. Turning quickly he looked into Derek’s broadly grinning face. “Guess what?” Derek exclaimed. “This morning Mom came to my room and apologized for yelling at me the other night. She said she started thinking about the things I said and it made her feel really bad; especially when I didn’t argue or answer her back like I used to before I was saved. Jordan, she wants to go to church with me this Sunday! Isn’t that great? You know, I asked the Lord for wisdom to say the right things. Would you believe it, He even helped me to know when not to say anything!”

“Yep,” Jordan smiled as he nodded. “I believe it.”

FROM ABOVE

What is this wisdom that is from God? Finish the verse below and find out. Begin at START and write each letter in the cloud on the lines below as you follow through the puzzle. When you have finished the puzzle ask your teacher to help you find this verse in your Bible.



The wisdom that is from above is first _____,
 Then _____, _____, and _____,
 _____ and _____.

GOD TAUGHT ME A LESSON

LESSON 164 → Exodus 13:17-22; 14:19-31

I thought I could direct my own life, until our fun day of fishing spun out of control.

It started out as such an ordinary day. Zayn, Vadim, and I had been looking forward for weeks to a day of trolling for salmon, and our spirits were high as we launched the Suzy Q. The sun was shining and just a slight breeze tugged at our clothes as we rounded the spit and headed for the open sea.

The morning brought only moderate success, so about noon we decided to pull in our lines and eat lunch. We dug into the ice chest for turkey sandwiches and helped ourselves to some coffee warming on our portable stove.

“Hey, let’s go out farther to try our luck,” Vadim suggested. Zayn and I scanned the horizon. I noticed that the waves were beginning to roll a little more heavily and the wind was picking up. But there was nothing that could cause any problems for experienced fishermen like us.

As we worked our way farther out into the Pacific, Zayn and Vadim’s conversation took a familiar turn—to a wavelength I just couldn’t identify with. Vadim was telling how God had helped him make a certain decision, and how much he depended on the Lord’s guidance. I gave an exasperated sigh and pointedly turned my back on them, but they didn’t seem to notice, so I tuned them out.

I had long since decided that I didn’t need God telling me what to do. How could He know what I wanted to do with my life? I could handle things





JESUS IS MY GUIDE.

I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. — Psalm 32:8

without any direction or help from Him—I was sure of it.

A fierce gust of wind slapped at my jacket, and suddenly my thoughts came back to what was going on around me. I was jolted by the realization that the slight breeze which had been blowing as we started out was quickly becoming a full storm. It hit Zayn and Vadim about the same time, and their conversation ceased abruptly as we hurriedly started pulling in our lines. In just moments, waves had begun to crest and to crash around us. All thoughts of fishing departed, and we concentrated on heading for shore.

A bone-jarring wave accompanied by an ominous tearing sound set me rushing to the stern of our boat. To my horror, I saw that the gas tank was breaking loose. If it did, it would shut off the fuel supply to our engines—and engine failure meant sure disaster in these raging waters. I shouted for the others, but they were busy at the bow of the boat, and the roar of the wind made it impossible for them to hear me.

Then disaster struck! One of the engines stopped!

I was completely paralyzed with fear. My mind seemed to go blank, and I stared unmoving at the silent engine. I simply did not know what to do.

Suddenly the question came to my mind: Could I decide how to get out of this one on my own, or was I ready to ask God for help?

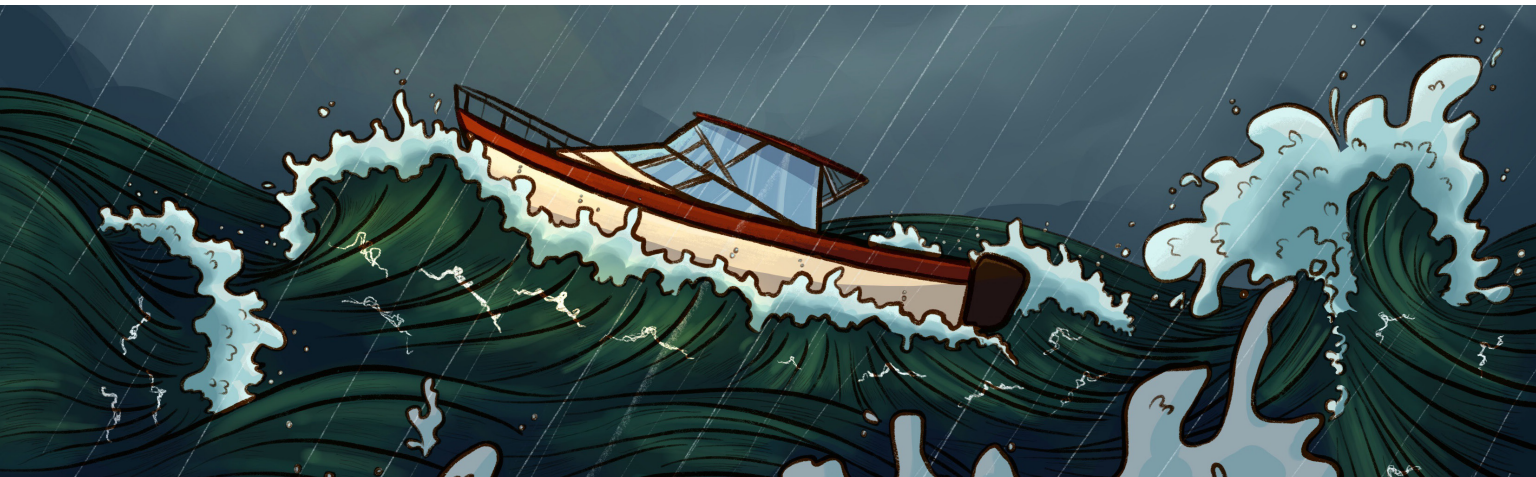
The boat jerked about and gas from the loosened tank splashed onto my arms. A sense of helplessness surged through my being.

“O God, help me!” I cried, not caring if the whole world heard me. In that instant of time, I realized I really needed Someone to guide me. Things were beyond my control.

I thought that we’d had it. But suddenly, just as if a Voice was speaking to me, I knew what I had to do. I turned off the stove—the spilled gasoline could turn our boat into a flaming bombshell in seconds. I tied down the gas tank. Then I moved to help Zayn and Vadim try to maneuver our boat toward shore with the one remaining engine.

We couldn’t do it. We had lost our steering power and were helpless. But then it seemed a guiding Hand took over at the helm. A large wave bore down on us. Instead of smashing us to pieces, it tucked around us, swung the bow into the waves, and then seemed to give us a boost toward the shore.

We made it to safety that day. And I learned a lesson I have never forgotten—I need God to be in control of my life and to be my Guide.



**A GUIDING
LIGHT**

God has promised He would guide those who look to Him. The Scriptures listed in the lighthouse show some ways that God guides us. Look them up in your Bible and write the promises on the lines below.

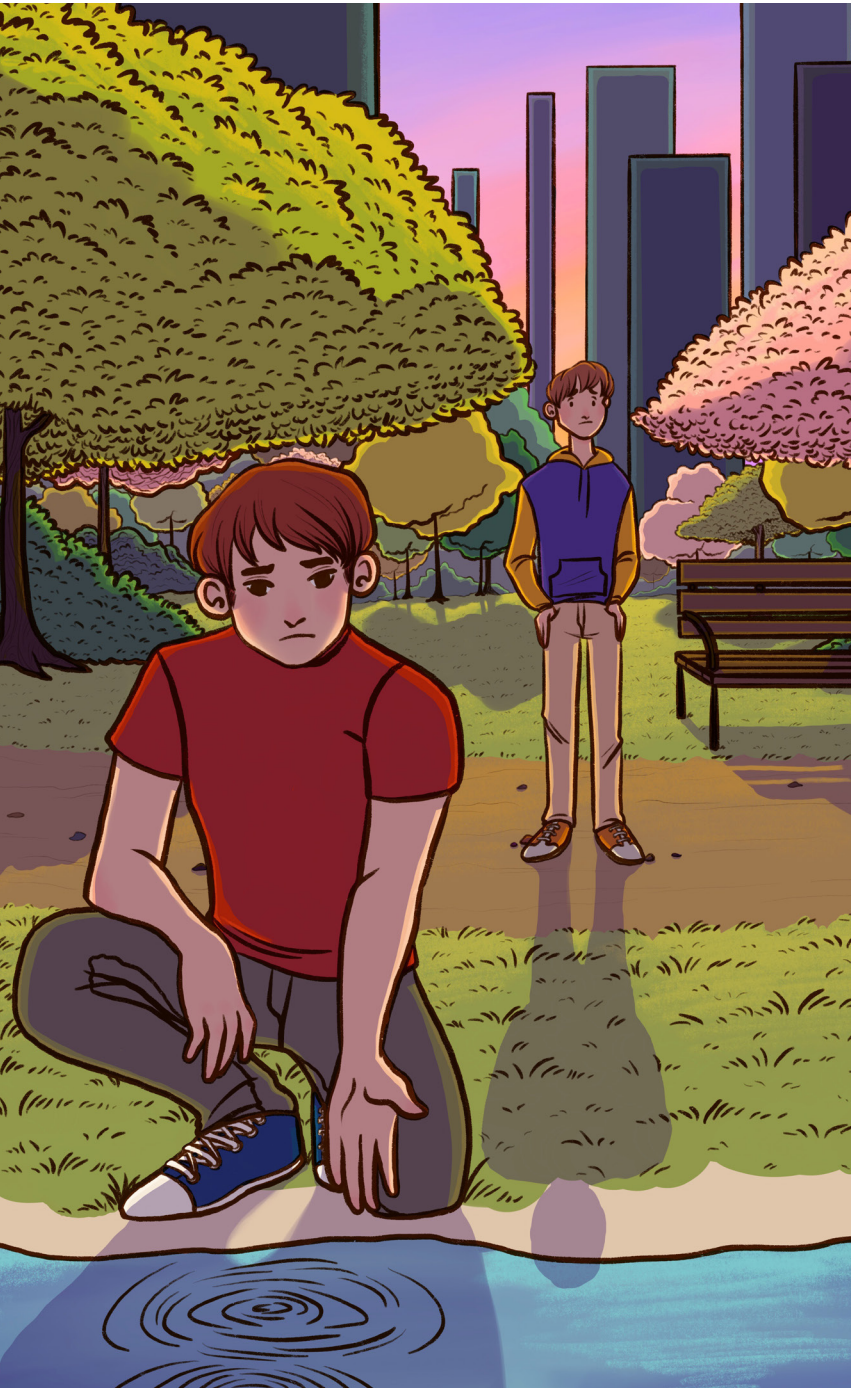


Exodus 33:14
Psalm 27:11
Psalm 32:8
Psalm 73:24
John 16:13

HOW CAN I FACE THIS?

LESSON 165 → 1 Samuel 17:19-51

Owen needed courage, because the gang he used to run with would be there waiting.



Tossing another stone into the pond, Owen wondered how he could possibly face going to school the next day. School itself was no problem, but he knew the six-block walk to get there was going to be more than he could handle by himself.

“Hey Kid, what’s the problem?”

Owen jumped with surprise. “Cyrus, where’d you come from?”

“Oh, I just happened to spot you on the way home from my trumpet lesson. What are you doing here alone in the park?”

Owen stared out over the pond and sighed as he picked up a small stone. He looked at his older brother, “I guess I’m trying to find the right stone to slay a giant with.”

“Oh, right . . . there are a lot of them around today. Be sure you find plenty of stones.”

“Come on, Cyrus, I’m serious.”

“I guess you really are. Well, let’s go home and you can tell me about it on the way, okay?”

The low autumn sun glinted off the glass windows of the skyscrapers as the two brothers headed out of the park’s little patch of green into the often cold and unfriendly big city where they lived. At least they could look forward to the warm, comforting atmosphere of their home in a large apartment building in the middle of the city. Home hadn’t always been comfortable. No one had seemed to be able to get along and life had been one continual argument. But their parents had started attending church, and in time, both were saved. Then what had



I DON'T EVER HAVE TO BE AFRAID.

Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law. — Joshua 1:7

been a very unhappy home suddenly became something altogether different. Not long afterward, Owen and Cyrus were saved also. Truly, their home was now a happy one, but Owen was discovering that the world outside was just as evil as ever, if not worse.

As they rode the elevator up to their apartment, both brothers were looking a bit glum after discussing Owen's problem.

"I know I can't run from the situation, Cyrus, but I have to admit I'm afraid."

"I don't blame you. I'd go with you like I said, but I understand why you think you've got to go alone. You'd better talk to Dad when he gets home and then really pray about it tonight."

After dinner that evening, Owen joined his father in the living room. "Dad, you remember that street gang I was in before I got saved?"

"Do you really think I'd ever be able to forget it, Owen? Remember, I was the one who found you lying in a pool of blood with a knife wound in your stomach."

"I guess I had pretty well put those months with the gang out of my mind . . . until recently."

"What do you mean, 'until recently'? Are you having problems with the gang?"

Owen looked out the living room window at the lights of the city. "The gang has a saying, 'It ain't easy to get into the Southside Crew and it's impossible to get out.' I kind of hoped I'd be the exception to the rule. Since the Lord saved me, none of them have said much to me at all, which is a miracle. But today was different."

Owen's father was now very concerned as his son continued.

"They're all planning to meet me on the way to school tomorrow. If I don't show up in my Southside Crew jacket and plan to go with them

to meet the 33rd Street Gang tomorrow night . . . well, there's going to be trouble."

"I had a feeling, Owen, you'd be facing something like this eventually. I know that even if the whole city police force were to go with you it still wouldn't solve the problem in the long run. Those gangs are ruthless. We can't move and you can't just quit going to school so I think we've only one place to look for help."

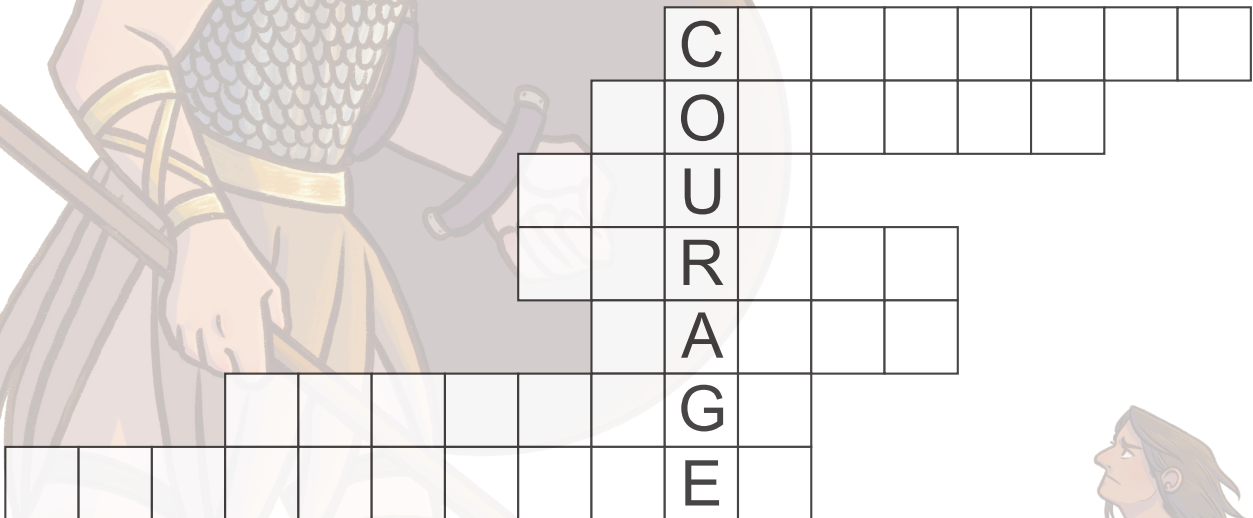
Without another word the two of them slipped down on their knees and presented the problem to their heavenly Father. They both felt that God was near as they prayed. Afterward, Owen's dad read the Bible story of David and Goliath. Owen had told him he felt a little like David having to face the monstrous giant. "David was courageous," his dad commented, "not because he trusted in his own strength, but because he had learned to trust in the strength of God."

By the time Owen went to bed that night, he still felt like David, but now he felt like David the Courageous, with the God of Israel on his side! He knew deep within himself that he could walk those six blocks with a confidence in his Savior instead of a fear of what man might do to him.

(To be continued next week.)

HAVE NO FEAR

God wants His people to be courageous. He will be their strength in difficult times. Fill in the acrostic puzzle with words from this lesson on courage. The answers can be found in the Bible text, 1 Samuel 17:19-51.



- C** - “There came up the _____, the Philistine of Gath.” (v. 23)
- O** - What was the name of the Philistine of Gath? (v. 23)
- U** - Who sent for David? (v. 31)
- R** - Who was fighting against the Philistines? (v. 21)
- A** - Who said, “Thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine?” (v. 32)
- G** - What did David leave before he ran to meet his brothers? (v. 22)
- E** - Who fled when their champion died? (v. 51)

GOD GAVE THE VICTORY

LESSON 166 → Joshua 6:1-20

Owen learned that prayer is the key.

(Continued from last week.)

Owen awoke to the muffled sound of his older brother's talking to someone. Their room was still veiled in the early morning darkness, but he could just make out his brother's form kneeling beside the bed across the room.

"Cyrus," Owen interrupted, "What are you doing up so early?"

Without moving from his knees, Cyrus answered slowly, "I was just praying that the Lord would help you face the Southside Crew this morning. I'm really concerned."

"Well, I'm not worried about that anymore. I know the Lord will take care of it."

As Owen walked out into the living room and opened the curtains, thoughts began to trouble him in spite of the bold statement to his brother only moments before. I know the Lord can see me through like He did David facing the giant. I'm just wondering how He's going to do it. I threw away all my weapons after I left the gang when the Lord saved me. Besides, Jesus said to turn the other cheek, not strike back.

Hoping to find the answer he needed, Owen opened the big family Bible which was on the coffee table. An illustration depicting the Children of Israel circling Jericho caught his eye and he stopped to think about their situation at that time. He realized that all the mighty men of Israel could do nothing as long as the walls of the city towered firmly between them and the enemy. Turning to the Scripture reference given, he read the story of how the walls miraculously fell





GOD GIVES ME VICTORY.

The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.
— Hebrews 13:6

down when Joshua and the people did as God had commanded them.

“Well, Lord, how do You want me to go about this battle?”

Owen got down on his knees beside the couch and began to seek the Lord’s guidance. And he didn’t stop praying until he had an answer. When he looked up, he realized his parents and his brother were praying with him.

“Your mother wants me to go with you to school today, Owen, but I told her that would only put off for a time what we know you must face,” his father said.

Owen sighed deeply. “I know I brought this on myself by ever getting involved with the gang. But I also know that the Lord is walking to school with me today. He even showed me while I was praying, what weapon to take.”

“Owen, no!” gasped his mother.

“Don’t worry, Mom. He told me to take my Bible with me. I’m not sure why, but I’m going to obey just like the Israelites did when they won the victory at Jericho.”

The sun was shining and Owen smiled as he headed down the street to school. He walked one, two, then three blocks without spotting the Southside Crew. His eyes quickly scanned the shadowed alleys as he passed them one after another. Four blocks and still no sign of the gang. Only two blocks left, thought Owen. I wonder if they’ll show?

“Slow down!” growled a voice abruptly.

Owen stopped, recognizing the voice of Maddox, the Southside Crew’s leader. Clutching his Bible and breathing a quick prayer, he looked up to face the gang as they stepped out in front of him and stood with their arms crossed.

“Ya haven’t got your Southside Crew jacket on . . . did ya forget?” Maddox was a big guy and no one messed with him or the two knives he

always carried, one of which he was fingering as he spoke.

Owen’s throat was dry, but his heart was still full of the confidence God had given him as he spoke.

“No, Maddox, I didn’t forget—I’m not a member of Southside Crew anymore. The Lord saved me and, like I told you guys when I left, He delivered me from the life you are still living.”

“Well, how would you like to be delivered from the life you’re livin’ right now?” snarled Maddox as he pulled his other knife from its sheath.

Owen opened his Bible to a Scripture his brother had found in Hebrews that morning. “The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.’ Maddox, the worst you can do is kill me, but that would just put me into the presence of Jesus. And don’t think that worries me, my soul is safe and you can’t touch it. Do what you want to my body. But remember, this Word of God I have in my hand is the best weapon man has, and as I just read, the Lord himself is my helper.”

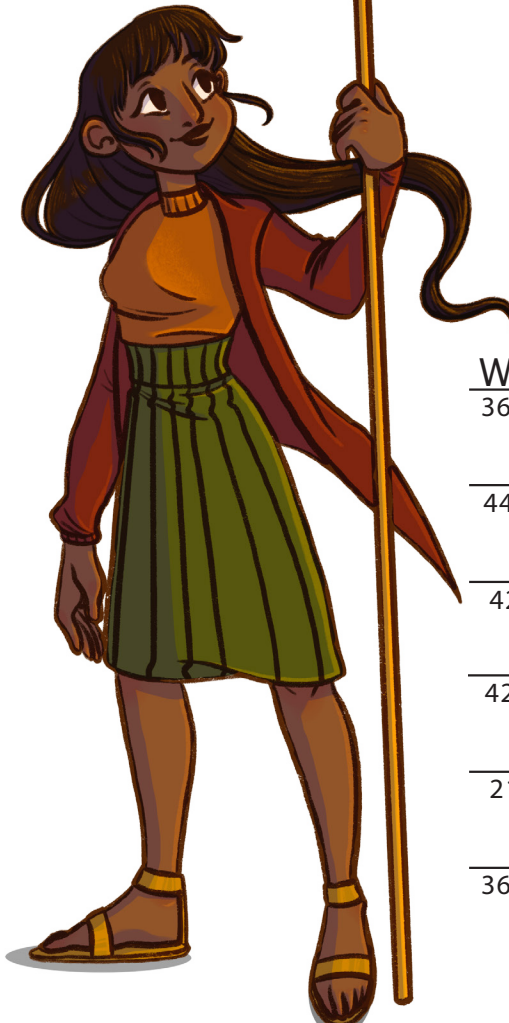
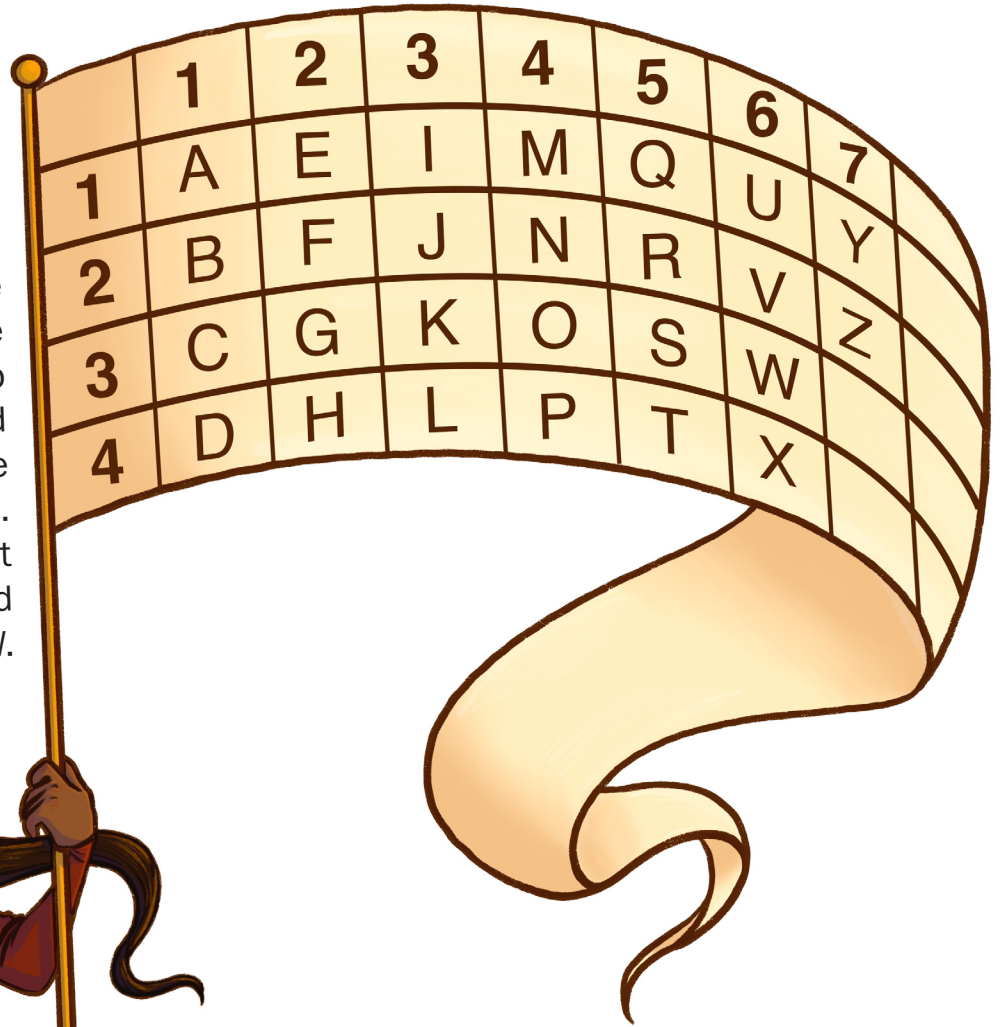
Several tense moments passed as Owen faced the gang, still holding the open Bible only inches from Maddox’s outstretched knives. Maddox loomed over Owen who still stood firm.

“The Lord loves you, Maddox.”

There was a long silence. Then, with a slight change of expression, Maddox abruptly turned and headed the other direction, sliding the knives into their sheaths. Within seconds, the rest of the gang wheeled and followed him. As Owen watched them disappear, a feeling of relief swept over him. He knew the battle was over and the victory was won!

VICTORY IN JESUS

The Lord is our help against enemies. The coded verse below tells us what God can do for us. Use the grid code to fill in the verse. The first number is the up and down column and second number is the number that goes across. Example: To find the first letter go down 3 and across 6 and find a W.



W
 36 42 12 24 11 14 11 24 35 36 11 17 35
 44 43 12 11 35 12 45 42 12 43 34 25 41
 42 12 14 11 33 12 45 42 12 26 12 24
 42 13 35 12 24 12 14 13 12 35 45 34
 21 12 11 45 44 12 11 31 12
 36 13 45 42 42 13 14 44 25 34 26 12 25 21 35 16:7

CONFLICT!

LESSON 167 → Acts 12:1-11; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Peter 2:9

Griffin couldn't be in two places at once.



“**H**ey man, you're really good at that thing!”

Griffin scarcely dared look up from his guitar. He recognized that voice. It was Malcolm, head of the most feared gang on the west side of town. He was the kind of guy you'd better like if you had anything to do with him at all, because if you didn't he would beat you up.

“Thanks,” he finally muttered, and looked up only to see the hulking form heading away down the hall.

Griffin shook his head in amazement. Can you beat that! Malcolm Young noticing my guitar playing! Griffin had been using every spare moment to practice the accompaniment for his sister Lilly's song. They had to have it ready for the youth service coming up in just two days. But who would have thought Malcolm would notice the chords he was quietly strumming as he leaned against his locker?

The next day, during lunch hour in the cafeteria, Griffin had another surprise. Crossing the whole room, with everybody watching her, came Jessie.

Yes, the Jessie. Malcolm's girl. She walked right up to the table where Griffin sat.

“Malcolm thinks you're one of the best guitar players he's ever



JESUS WILL ALWAYS HELP ME.

The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer. — 2 Samuel 22:2

heard,” she said. “He wants you to be lead guitar in his rock band. Practice is at eight tomorrow night at his house. Don’t be late! Malcolm has fits if anybody’s late.”

With that, she whirled around and left.

Everybody around Griffin looked as shocked as Griffin felt. “Wow, can we touch you, Griffin?” someone teased. “That’s something, Griffin,” another added. “Lead guitar in Malcolm Young’s band! I heard they’ve got a contract with one of the big labels. Maybe you’ll be rich!”

“But I’m not going to play in Malcolm’s rock band!” Griffin blurted out. “I don’t want to have anything to do with that kind of music or his group at all!”

“Well, you’d better be careful about shouting that kind of stuff around, Griffin,” warned one of the boys. “Not wanting to join Malcolm’s band would be an insult to him. Why, he’d beat you to a pulp! Now that he’s noticed you, you’re probably stuck whether you like it or not. You’ll be in real trouble if you don’t show for that practice.”

That evening at the dinner table, Griffin’s sister noticed that he wasn’t saying much. “Boy, you’re quiet tonight, Griffin. Thinking about playing guitar at meeting tomorrow?”

“I’m expected to play my guitar in two places tomorrow night,” Griffin replied, “at church, and for a professional rock band.”

“Rock band?” his mother exclaimed. “What are you talking about, Griffin?”

“Don’t worry, Mom, I have no intention of playing in it. I’ll be at church. But I may get beat up for it!”

“Maybe you’d better explain, Griffin, before your mother has a heart attack,” his father interjected.

While the rest of his family sat in silence, Griffin described what had happened at school. When he had finished, his dad nodded slowly. “Well, you’re facing quite a challenge, Son. But I think

Proverbs 16:7 might help you.” He reached behind him and picked up a Bible. “Here, read it.”

“When a man’s ways please the LORD,” Griffin read, “he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.”

Those words helped Griffin, but he was still nervous when he walked into the school two days later. He hadn’t “showed” for the practice last night at Malcolm’s, and for sure he wasn’t going to seek the guy out. But he figured Malcolm would get to him before the day was out. And he did.

Heading down the hall to get his jacket just after his last class, Griffin spotted Malcolm lounging against his locker. He gulped a little prayer as he headed toward the big figure. The crowd seemed to step back some as he approached. He didn’t know what to say, but he didn’t need to worry. Malcolm talked first.

“I understand you don’t want to play in my band, kid.”

“No, I don’t.” Griffin looked him squarely in the eye. “I’m a Christian and I’m pretty involved in music with my church. I don’t have time or interest in taking on anything else right now.”

A gasp went over the crowd that had gathered. Would Malcolm Young flatten Griffin on the spot?

But Malcolm just smiled a conceited smile. “Well, I certainly can’t use anybody in my band who doesn’t want to be in it.” And with that, he strolled off.

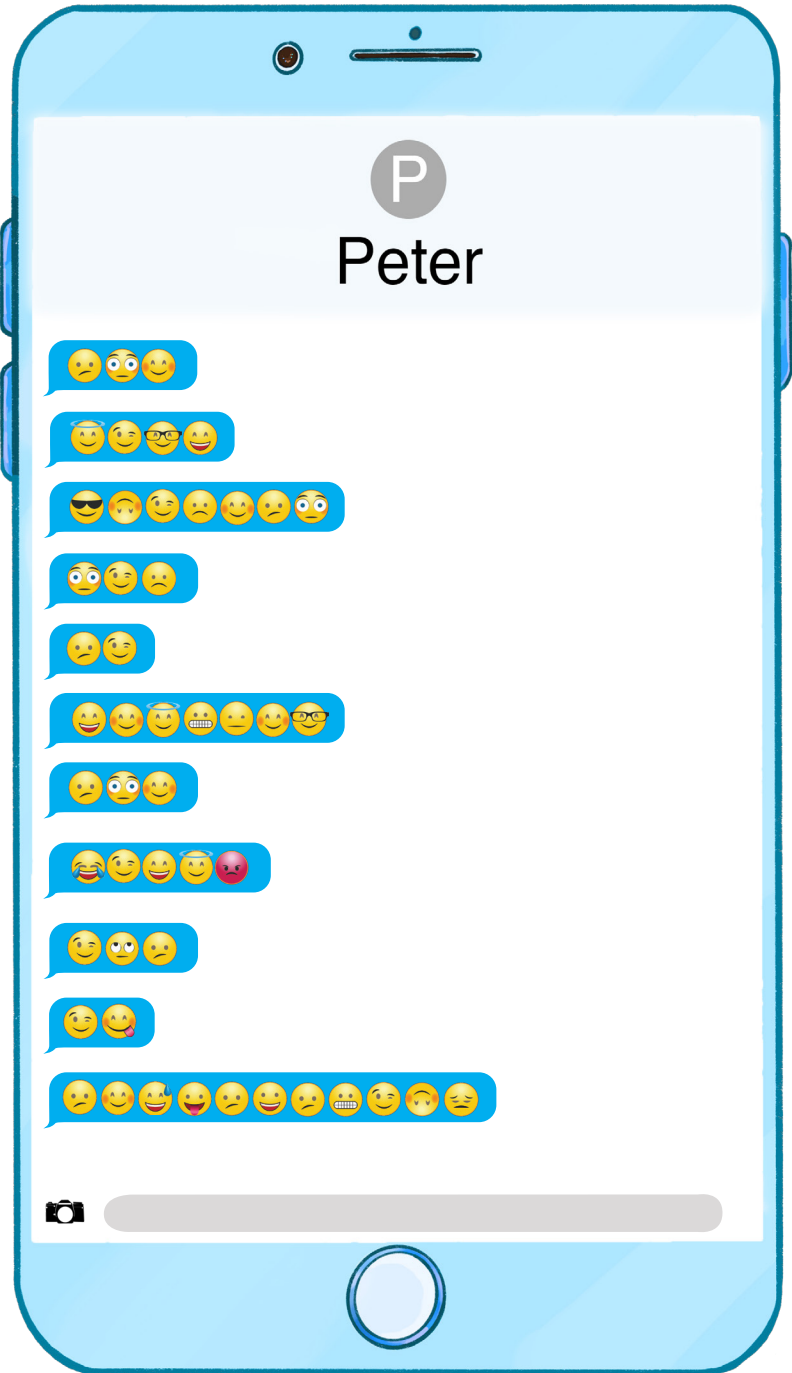
Griffin felt a sigh of relief come up clear from his toes.


Thank you, Lord! he breathed. You sure helped me through that one!

JESUS TO THE RESCUE

God is able to deliver us from dangers and temptations that may come our way. Decode the text message and write the verse on the lines below.

- | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 😊 = A | 😬 = H | 🙄 = N | 😞 = T |
| 😄 = D | 😬 = I | 😏 = O | 😡 = U |
| 😊 = E | 😎 = K | 😄 = P | 😞 = V |
| 😄 = F | 😇 = L | 👓 = R | 😞 = W |
| 😂 = G | 😄 = M | 😞 = S | 😡 = Y |





I could hardly believe my eyes when I saw that baskets of food were left over.

ENOUGH FOR EVERYONE!

LESSON 168 → 1 Kings 17:1-16; Matthew 14:15-21

I don't think my mother will ever forget the lunch that she packed for me a few weeks ago—two fresh little brook trout, and five of those crunchy brown loaves made of barley. My favorites! Afterward when I told her all that had happened that day, she just laughed and said I must have been out there in the sun too long. Then the neighbors came over and started talking about the great miracle and she began to listen! Let me tell you about it.

When we heard that Jesus was in a desert area outside of our town, a few of us kids decided to go and hear Him. I'd heard Jesus once before, and I really liked Him. He tells a lot of neat stories and there's usually a big crowd following Him.

I didn't know when I would be home so my mother packed a lunch for me. My friends and I set off early that morning. Even so, the roads were already filled with people from around the



THANK YOU, JESUS, FOR ALL YOU'VE GIVEN ME.

It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD. — Psalm 92:1

countryside. They were all going to hear Jesus speak. It was hard to push past the crowd, but we did, and soon we were way ahead of most of them. That's how we happened to get places to sit right behind Jesus and His disciples! When Jesus saw us spreading out our cloaks and sitting down, He smiled and seemed really glad to see us.

Though there was a huge crowd gathered by the time Jesus began to speak, everyone was quiet. Even the little children sat still and listened. Then something happened! A crippled man from our town hobbled over to where Jesus stood, and the next thing I saw was this man laughing and running! Just like that. Then more sick people came, and mothers with their babies. Jesus just stood there with His arms outstretched to them, touching and healing them.

I can tell you, the crowd was surely excited. They were praising God and singing songs. Some people were laughing, others were crying. Jesus seemed to know just what everyone needed. My friends and I just sat and watched it all. Nobody wanted to leave—it was too exciting!

It wasn't until the sun was beginning to set that I even thought about my lunch, and then I realized I was really hungry. Hours and hours had gone by and I had forgotten all about it. Just as I looked around for some spot where I could slip away and eat, the little boy behind me told his mother that he was hungry. I heard her tell him she hadn't brought any food, and he started to cry.

I saw some of Jesus' disciples

talking together. By leaning forward, I could hear what they were saying. "The people are hungry. Should we tell the Master?" One of them went over to Jesus and said, "It's past meal time and there is nothing here for the people to eat. Send them away now so they can go to the village to buy food."

That's when I jumped up, the dusty brown knapsack containing the loaves and fishes in my hand. I tugged on one of the disciple's sleeves. "Here's some food. Maybe you can use this." He looked at me for a moment, surprise on his face. Then suddenly he smiled. "Maybe," he said softly.

Slipping away from the others he went over to where Jesus was standing. They talked quietly for a moment and then I saw Jesus bow his head over the knapsack. He reached inside.

It was then we saw the miracle with our own eyes. The next thing I knew, the disciples were taking pieces of the bread and fishes and handing them out to all those around Jesus. In a few moments we were sitting down munching on my mother's home-baked barley bread. A big basket of my little trout was passed around next. Now, how can you explain something like that? The food just kept coming and I kept eating until I was stuffed, and so did everyone around me. There were even twelve baskets filled with the leftovers.

Jesus knew just what we needed—and He gave it to us through a miracle!

Everyone in our town has been talking about it for days. One thing is sure. If Jesus cares enough to give food to that many people, I know He will take care of me.



**HE WILL
PROVIDE**

Read the text, Matthew 14:15-21. Fill in the missing vowels (A,E,I,O,U) and complete this story of how God provided for those with a need. (It is not an exact quote.)

__n th__ __v__n__ng, J__s__s' d__sc__pl__s
__sk__d J__s__s t__ s__nd th__ m__lt__t__d__
__w__y s__ th__y c__ld g__t s__m__th__ng
t__ __t. J__s__s t__ld th__ d__sc__pl__s
th__y c__ld f__d th__m. __ll th__r__
w__s t__ __t w__r__ f__v__ l__v__s __nd
tw__ f__sh__s. __ft__r J__s__s br__k__ th__m
__n p__c__s __nd g__v__ th__m t__ th__
d__sc__pl__s t__ f__d th__ m__lt__t__d__,
__v__ry__n__ w__s f__ll__d __nd th__r__
w__r__ tw__lv__ b__sk__ts l__ft.



Vincent didn't want to say goodbye to his grandfather, and he didn't have to.

LOOKING AHEAD!

LESSON 169 → Luke 16:19-31; John 14:1-3



ETERNAL LIFE IS MY GIFT FROM GOD.

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life. — Romans 6:23

Vincent walked quietly into the room where his grandfather lay. Sliding a chair near the bed, he reached to take the gnarled, outstretched hand. “Gramps . . .” he said softly, then hesitated, not knowing what to say next.

Grandpa turned his head toward Vincent. “Hi, Fella.” Grandpa’s familiar smile accompanied his greeting, though his voice was weak. “I wanted to talk to you . . .”

. . . *one last time.* Vincent added the words in his mind though he didn’t say them aloud. A huge lump seemed to catch in his throat as he looked down at the fragile form in the bed. Grandpa looked so terribly thin now. He must have lost quite a bit of weight even since the last time Vincent had been there.

A wave of memories flooded over him . . . sitting by the campfire listening to Grandpa telling stories of his childhood; hiking through the wet grass to the lake for an early morning fishing trip; Grandpa’s face when he told Vincent he had been healed of cancer when the doctor said he couldn’t live more than a few months; listening to Grandpa as he gave his testimony in church . . .

Grandpa just couldn’t die. The good times they had shared couldn’t be over. Abruptly,

Vincent turned his face away and looked fixedly out the window, trying to hold back the tears that were coming into his eyes.

The old man lying on the bed seemed to sense the turmoil that was going on in Vincent’s mind. “Vincent,” his gentle voice broke into the boy’s thoughts. “We’re not going to say goodbye. This isn’t the end.”

Vincent looked again at his grandfather, a question in his eyes. Didn’t Grandpa know he was dying? Hadn’t anyone told him yet?

“Remember the adventure story we read together a few months ago, Vincent?” was the surprising question Grandpa asked next. “You could hardly wait to find out what would happen in the next chapter.”

Vincent looked even more puzzled. Was Grandpa’s mind wandering? But he listened as the old man went on.

“God has written many chapters in my life during the eighty-three years I’ve been around. But the last chapter isn’t written yet!” A reminiscent note crept into his voice. “There was a chapter on mercy—God saved me! A chapter on guidance—God directed me to move our family clear across the country to Oregon so we could worship with a

people that taught the whole Word of God. He has protected me, been my comfort . . . I remember how His arms were around us when we lost your Uncle David in the war.

“These last few weeks I think He has helped me work out a chapter on courage. But there is still a chapter left, Vincent. Jesus told His disciples, ‘I go to prepare a place for you.’ Before long, I’m going to see that place! I believe the most exciting chapter of all is about to be written.”

Suddenly the whole thing started to make sense in Vincent’s mind. The struggle that had been going on inside him for the past two weeks—ever since he had finally realized that Grandpa was not going to get better—began to resolve. God hadn’t forsaken them. He had heard all the prayers Vincent had prayed for Grandpa. And His plan really was being worked out.

“God has met all of my needs through these years since I turned my life over to Him. And now—eternal life, Vincent! That’s what I’m looking forward to. I’m going to be in Heaven soon, and I’ll wait for you there.”

Vincent squeezed the hand he still held tightly. “Okay, Grandpa,” he said softly. “We won’t say goodbye then, just . . . see you later.”

LIVE FOREVER

God does provide for all our needs, but the most important thing He has for us is yet to come. To find out what it is, follow the number code and fill in the correct letters to complete the verse.

11 21	16 7 4 4 14	7 4 1 15	
11 21	19 13 8 2 4	1 12 3	
8	9 12 13 20	17 7 4 11	
1 12 3	17 7 4 21	5 13 10 10 13 20	
11 4	1 12 3	8	6 8 19 4
18 12 17 13	17 7 4 11		
4 17 4 15 12 1 10	10 8 5 4		

John 10:27-28

From: Jesus

1 - A	9 - K	17 - T
2 - C	10 - L	18 - U
3 - D	11 - M	19 - V
4 - E	12 - N	20 - W
5 - F	13 - O	21 - Y
6 - G	14 - P	
7 - H	15 - R	
8 - I	16 - S	



What kind of story could be told about seeds?

To find out, and also learn of some other interesting things that Jesus used for illustrations . . .



READ THE ANSWER NEXT QUARTER!



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