

INTRODUCTION

The God we serve is full of kindness and grace! Have you ever thought about that truth? He created man in His image to know Him and have fellowship with Him forever. But Adam fell and with him all Creation. Now everyone is born in sin and deserves to be separated from God forever. But God sent His Son to die—to be cursed for all Creation—so that all Creation can be restored to fellowship with Him. Because of His sacrifice, all who trust Him as Savior can have everlasting life and be clothed in His righteousness. God’s kindness and grace is poured out on all people.

The memory verse, Ephesians 2:8, talks about God’s amazing kindness. It is only by God’s grace that anyone can be saved from sin.

King David is used as an example of God’s kindness in the Bible lesson today. According to the customs of the time, David could have killed Mephibosheth, the grandson and heir of Saul—the king before David. Instead, David remembered his promise to Jonathan—to show kindness to all of his family. He found Mephibosheth and summoned him, not to kill him but to honor him. David took him in and treated him like one of his own sons.

This is a picture of what God has done for us! We deserved death but He took us in and made us His children. Remember God’s kindness to you and let the Holy Spirit guide you as you share this exciting story with the children.

Concepts covered in this lesson include:

- **God:** Merciful/ Gracious—God shows me mercy (doesn’t give me the punishment I do deserve) and grace (gives me blessings I don’t deserve.)
- **Bible:** Theme of Redemption—From the beginning to the end, the Bible tells of God’s plan to redeem people.
- **Bible:** Uniqueness—The Bible is living and powerful, different from any other book.
- **Prayer:** Prayer is talking to God. I can talk to God.

Demonstrations of the lessons and songs in this series are available at: cefonline.com/freedemos/5dc

Tell the children to listen for the words *turned around*. Every time you or another teacher says that phrase, the children should stand up, turn around and sit down. This will help keep the children engaged and help them get some of the wiggles out.



LESSON

INTRODUCTION

“The king is dead! Prince Jonathan is dead! They were killed in battle. Run for your lives! When the new king and his family take over, we will all be killed!” Mephibosheth (*meh-FIB-oh-sheth*) was only five years old when his father, Prince Jonathan, and his grandfather, King Saul, were killed in battle. The people were upset and afraid. Would the enemy attack? Would they be safe? Who would be their new king?

PROGRESSION OF EVENTS

One of the people who was most worried about this news was a nurse, the woman who took care of Mephibosheth. She knew he was in great danger! Why? When the new king took over, he would probably have the former king’s family members, especially the boys and men, put to death. The king did this so they could never take his place as king.

Mephibosheth was King Saul’s grandson. The new king might consider him an enemy. That meant his life was in danger.

What would the nurse do? She had to save Mephibosheth from the new king! What would you have done if you were the nurse? (*Allow response.*) She picked up Mephibosheth and ran, hoping to save his life. He was too heavy for her because he was no longer a baby. But she knew he would not be able to run quickly enough to get away. How many of you are five years old? If I tried to pick up one of you and run as quickly as I could down the street, do you think I’d be able to run very well? (*Allow response.*) Not really!

Slide 1

As she ran, Mephibosheth suddenly slipped from her arms and tumbled onto the hard ground. His feet were badly injured in the fall.

But there was no time to stop. They had to keep going to escape. Poor Mephibosheth! He had lost everything important in his life. His father and grandfather had died, he had to leave his home and live in a strange place, and now he would have trouble walking for the rest of his life because of his fall. There was nothing he could do about these things. It seems he was in a hopeless situation.



Everyone in the world is born into a hopeless situation because of sin. (*Read Ephesians 2:12c.*) Sin separates you from God right now and will separate you from Him forever if you are not forgiven. Why? Because the wrong things you do are against God. When you become angry and hit your brother because things are not going your way, that is sin. When you are mean instead of kind to others, that is against God. You are in a hopeless situation because you are separated from God now if you are not His child. There is nothing you can do about that without God’s forgiveness. We are born in a hopeless situation because of sin.

Preschool Application

Use the sin application visuals in the back of the flashcard book to help preschoolers identify sin in their own lives. When talking about the punishment for sin say, “The punishment God gives you and me for sin is separation (being away) from God forever.”

Preschool Song

“I Believe the Bible,” vv. 1-3

Mephibosheth was in a hopeless situation. He had lost everything important to him in just one day. The nurse and Mephibosheth traveled until they found a safe place with a kind family who took them in. Mephibosheth grew up there in hiding, possibly afraid of what the new king would do if he knew Mephibosheth was alive.

Slide 2

But since King Saul was dead, the people of Israel needed a new king. Who should rule over them? Many people wanted a man named David to be their king.

It was an exciting day in Israel when David was made king! Let's cheer for King David! (*Cheer with children saying, "Long live King David! Hooray!"*) It was not an accident that David became king. God had planned this many years before. The Bible calls David "a man after God's heart." David loved God and wanted to please Him.

Slide 3

David had served King Saul when he was a young man. He was best friends with King Saul's son Jonathan. This was the same Jonathan who was Mephibosheth's father! The last time David and Jonathan saw each other they had made an important promise to each other. They had agreed to show kindness to one another and to each other's families as long as either of them lived.

Sometime after David was made king, he remembered his promise. He started to search for Jonathan's family to show them God's kindness.



If you are a child of God, **God wants you to show His kindness to others.** God showed you the biggest kindness of all when He forgave your sins! When you realize how much kindness and grace God has given to you, God begins to change you to want to become more and more like Jesus.

Slide 4

Say with me, "**God is kind!**" (*Say with children.*) If you allow God to change your life, He helps you want to show kindness to others. Maybe there is someone who said something mean about you. God can help you not say something mean but to try and work it out instead. God can help you be kind to him or her because God has been so kind to you. He will help you want to be kind. Can you be kind to him or her by yourself? Probably not. But God the Holy Spirit will help you show kindness to that person. When you remember how kind God has been to you in forgiving you, He helps you show that same kindness and love to others and really mean it. (*Read Ephesians 4:32.*) Showing others kindness is a way to help them see how much God loves them. If you are a child of God, **God wants you to show His kindness to others.**

David wanted to show kindness to Jonathan's family.

Preschool Song

"God Makes Me Glad"

Materials

Word Up! Booklet
(See 5-Day Club kit.)

Preschool Song

"God Made the Mountains High"

Have children role play this scene. It will engage the kinesthetic and visual learners to help them understand and remember the lesson.

King David quickly called in his servants and asked, "Is there anyone alive in Saul's family, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?"

Slide 5

A servant named Ziba (*ZIE-bah*), who had worked for King Saul, was found and brought to King David. The king asked, "Are you Ziba?"

Ziba replied, "I am he."

(*Read 2 Samuel 9:3.*) David wanted to show God's kindness to anyone left in Jonathan's family! Do you remember who was left in Jonathan's family? (*Allow response.*)

Mephibosheth! God had not forgotten about him. He loved Mephibosheth!



God has not forgotten about you either. He sees you right where you are and He loves you very much. (*Read John 3:16a.*) Because God is perfect, His love for you is always perfect. You are special to God because He made you. He also created a wonderful world for you to enjoy. He made the birds, the clouds, the trees and the flowers! He shows His kindness to you in many wonderful ways. What are some ways God shows His kindness to us each day? (*Allow response.*) God wants you to know He loves you. He will never forget about you.

God had not forgotten about Mephibosheth.

Ziba told David, "Jonathan has a son who cannot walk well." Then Ziba told the king where Mephibosheth was living.

"Go bring him," David ordered.

The servant of King David came to Mephibosheth's house and told him, "King David wants you to come to the palace." How do you think Mephibosheth felt when he heard this news? (*Allow response.*)

Perhaps Mephibosheth wondered, *How did he find me? Why did he find me?* Maybe Mephibosheth was afraid to go because he thought he might be killed.

But he knew he must obey the king's orders. He went to the palace with the servant. He limped slowly to the throne and bowed low.

Slide 6

King David spoke kindly, "Mephibosheth."

"I am your servant," answered Mephibosheth. But the king did not invite Mephibosheth to come to the palace to be his servant. He had something else in mind.

King David must have noticed that Mephibosheth was afraid of him, for he said, "Don't be afraid! I will surely show you kindness for the sake of your father, Jonathan." King David was showing Mephibosheth God's kindness and grace in his hopeless situation!



In a far greater way God shows His kindness and grace to you in your hopeless situation. During the time of David and Mephibosheth, God required people to sacrifice animals to pay for their sin. God requires a high price for sin. Many years after this true story happened, God sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, from Heaven to Earth to pay that high price for us. He is the perfect one who never sinned. But He was willing to die and take the punishment for your sins and mine. Wicked men beat Him, spat on Him and nailed Him to the cross. Why did He allow men to do this? (*Allow response.*) So that you and I would no longer be in the hopelessness of sin, separated from God. (*Read Ephesians 2:12b-13.*) Because Jesus died on the cross, giving His life's blood as a sacrifice to pay for your sin, you can be brought from the hopelessness of sin into friendship with God! That is God's greatest kindness to you. We call that grace—kindness you don't deserve. What happened to Jesus after He died? (*Allow response.*) He came back to life on the third day and is alive today in Heaven ruling over everything! When you believe on Jesus, you are saved from the hopeless situation of being lost in your sin. How great is God's kindness and grace to you!

King David was showing God's kindness and grace to Mephibosheth, keeping his promise to his friend Jonathan.

Mephibosheth's eyes must have opened wide in surprise as he listened to the king's words: "I will give you the land your father owned and from now on you will come and eat at my table." David gave back to Mephibosheth his land and gave him a home in the palace because David was keeping his promise!

CLIMAX

Slide 7

Mephibosheth's life was forever changed! God showed His kindness to Mephibosheth through David and now Mephibosheth would be part of the king's family for the rest of his life!

CONCLUSION

King David ordered Ziba, his sons and servants to farm Mephibosheth's land and to treat him as David's own son. From then on Mephibosheth's life was different. In fact, his life was *turned around* because of David's kindness. Mephibosheth had not done anything to deserve it but God showed him kindness in making him part of King David's family!

Preschool Song

"I Believe the Bible," vv. 4-6

Important Reminder

Remember, it is not the prayer that saves the child. Salvation is the work of the Holy Spirit convicting the child of his or her sinful condition and drawing him or her to trust completely in Christ and His work on the cross. The prayer is the child's expression of that belief to God. (See "Guiding a Child to the Savior" on the inside front cover.)

Preschool Invitation

When presenting the invitation to preschoolers, use John 3:15 and "believe in" terminology. Ask those who have questions to stay with you while the others move on to another activity.

INVITATION



Today, although you have done nothing to deserve it, **God shows His kindness by making a way for you to become His child.** He wants your life to be *turned around!* Jesus, God's perfect Son, died on the cross and came back to life so you can have your sins forgiven. (*Read John 1:12.*) To receive means to take Jesus as your own. To believe on His name means you are trusting in Him alone to save you from the hopelessness of sin. When you believe, your sin is forgiven and you are given the right (power/authority) to become His child—a member of God's family. You are still part of your family at home but you will be part of God's family too! God will care for you always and will never leave you. Someday you will live with Him forever in Heaven. Will you become a member of God's family by believing in the Lord Jesus? Please bow your head and close your eyes. If you believed in Jesus today or you have questions about what that means, please show me by raising your hand. (*Pause and acknowledge responses.*) You may all open your eyes. Those of you who raised your hands may meet me (*designate time and location*) so that I can show you from God's Word what it means to be God's child.