

The Chief Priests

Lesson At-A-Glance

Scripture Reference
Matthew 21:23-32

Church Season
Pentecost

Lesson Focus
God gives us second chances.

Bible Memory Verse
**He answered, "I will not"; but later he changed his mind and went.
Matthew 21:29**



Tear here for easy use!

Gather (10 minutes)

| | Spark Resources | Supplies |
|--|---|------------------------------|
| Arrival Activity Kids play a question game. | Activity Pages  | Pencils, note cards, markers |
| Opening Conversation Kids review previous week, build relationships, and learn the new Bible Memory Verse (BMV). | Spark Bibles | None |
| Opening Prayer Kids point to who prays next. | None | None |

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

| | Spark Resources | Supplies |
|--|------------------------------------|---|
| The Chief Priests Story Kids hold up question marks for questions in the story. | Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers | Question-mark cards from Arrival Activity |
| Arrrrre You Sure About That Pirate? Kids take a second look at a suspicious character. | Leaflets | None |
| There and Back Kids play an X and O game with second chances. | Leaflets | Pencils |

Lesson At-A-Glance

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

| | Spark Resources | Supplies |
|---|-----------------|---|
| Fun Facts Kids turn facts into true and false statements. | Leaflets | Paper, pencils |
| Fortunate Questions Kids make paper fortune cookies containing questions. | Leaflets | Scissors, pencils, glue dots, hot glue gun (optional) |

Tear here for easy use!

Send (5 minutes)

| | Spark Resources | Supplies |
|--|---|----------|
| Closing Conversation Kids review the BMV and look at the Faith on the Go! options. | Leaflets | None |
| Closing Prayer Kids add on to how many chances God gives us. | Family Pages  | None |



Visit www.sparksundayschool.org for more Spark content! Watch a short Lesson Prep Video that will prepare you and give you confidence to explore this Bible story with the kids you are leading. You will also find four downloadable resources for this lesson: an Activity Page, a Family Page, and two additional in-class activities.

Gather (10 minutes)

Arrival Activity

If some kids arrive earlier than others and you need a lesson-based activity, make copies of the downloadable Activity Page and set them out for kids to try.

As kids arrive, give them each a note card and ask them to draw a big question mark on it. Once a few kids have arrived, teach them how to play the question game. There's only one rule to this game: You can only speak in questions. If someone says a statement instead of a question, the other kids hold up their question-mark cards to remind them to only use questions.

Spark Resources

Activity Pages



Supplies

Pencils
Note cards
Markers

Opening Conversation

Who was able to try a Faith on the Go! activity this past week? Tell us what you did. Allow some time for sharing.

Who can tell me the Bible Memory Verse from last week? If kids remember the BMV, invite them to recite it for the group. Guide the kids to help them remember parts they don't.

Wow! You sure have a lot of questions! Hold on to your question-mark cards. We'll use them in a second. We started with a lot of questions because today we'll learn about asking Jesus questions, and Jesus asking questions back. Look at the bottom of page 1085 in your Spark Bibles. Ask someone to read the Did You Know? Ask Around section.

Sometimes people asked Jesus questions to try and trick him, and other times they asked him questions because they really wanted to know the answers. Jesus knew when they were trying to be tricky and would ask questions back or tell parables to answer their questions. By doing this he gave people second chances to think about the questions they had asked and why they had asked them.

Let's think about second chances or do-overs. Raise your hand if you had a second chance at something this week. Raise your hand if you wish you could have had a second chance at something this week. Let's share a few of those. Give everyone a chance to share and perhaps share something from your own week as well.

Part of today's story is about a second chance. Look up Matthew 21:29. Ask someone to read the verse from page 1085 in the Spark Bible. **That's this week's memory verse and a great reminder that we get second chances to change our minds and follow Jesus!**

Spark Resources

Spark Bibles

Supplies

None

Tear here for easy use!

Opening Prayer

After I say the word “again,” I’m going to point to someone. That person will then say “and again” and point to someone else who says “and again.” Keep going until everyone has said “and again” once. The last person points back at me.

Dear Jesus,

You never stop loving us. Thank you for giving us second chances and allowing us to return your love again. . .

In Jesus’ name we pray,
Amen.

Spark Resources
None

Supplies
None

Tear here for easy use!

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

The Chief Priests Story

I’m going to read today’s story from **Matthew 21:23-32**. Look it up in your Bibles too, so that you can follow along with me. The story is on page 1085 in the Spark Bible. **As I read it, hold on to your question cards. If I read a question, if I say the word “question,” or if there’s something that makes you want to ask a question, hold up your card. Let’s see how many times those cards go up!**

Read the passage. If kids have questions about different parts of the story, ask them to put Makes Me Wonder stickers in their Bibles. Come back to these spots after you’ve finished reading to discuss their questions.

There are two parts in today’s story. The first part is about the chief priests asking questions, and the second part is a parable about two sons. How did Jesus respond to the chief priests’ questions? (with a question) What was the difference between the two sons in the parable? (One said he wouldn’t go but did. The other said he would go and didn’t.) Which son had a second chance?

Even when parents get upset with their kids for not doing what they’re asked to do, parents still love their kids. Even when we don’t do what God asks us to do, we know that God still loves us. And because God always loves us, we know that we can respond to that love with a second chance, just like the first son did.

Let’s work on our Bible Memory Verse to remember that God gives us second chances. I’m going to ask you four questions. If you can answer all four questions you’ll have the verse memorized. Look at Matthew 21:29 for help.

Spark Resources
Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies
Question-mark cards from
Arrival Activity

Tear here for easy use!

What did he answer? He answered I will not
Did he change his mind? But later he changed his mind
Did he go? And went
Where did you learn this? Matthew 21:29

Practice it with open Bibles, then close them and try it again. When kids get it, have them put I Memorized It stickers in their Bibles.

Arrrrre You Sure About That Pirate?

Arrrrrrrrre you ready for another story? Get out your leaflets and look at the front page. Choose three readers for the story: one narrator and one for each of the dialogue parts. After reading it you may need to define some of the words.

Who can tell me what a penitent pirate is? I'll give you a clue: penitent is similar to the word repent. Work with kids on this idea a bit and then sum up by explaining that being penitent is being sorry or apologizing for things that were wrong in the past.

What sort of things would a pirate do that would make us judge him or say that he couldn't be trusted? But this pirate is different. What did he do with his second chance?

If it fits your church's tradition, you can also connect the idea of being penitent or repentant with the practice of confession and forgiveness that many worship services start with. When we confess our sins we are reminded that God forgives us and never stops loving us. It's our second chance!

Discuss the I Wonder statements on the first page of the leaflet.

Spark Resources
Leaflets

Supplies
None

There and Back

Let's play a game where we get to take advantage of second chances to make it to our goal! Ask a volunteer to read There and Back on the second page of the leaflet. Help pairs of kids play the game.

This sample shows what a game might look like. Player X took a second chance between moves 6 and 7, moving one space over and one space diagonally. Player O took a second chance between 9 and 10. Emphasize working together and ask kids to pair up with someone new for the second round.

Spark Resources
Leaflets

Supplies
Pencils

This sample has the moves numbered—Player O took a second chance between 9 and 10 and X took a second chance between 6 and 7. A similar diagram with arrows pointing from square to square would be helpful.

| | | | | | |
|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | x1 | x11 | o6 | |
| | x2 | x10 | o7 | | o5 |
| x3 | x9 | o8 | | o4 | |
| | x4 | x8 | o9 | | o3 |
| | | x5 | x7 | o2 | o10 |
| | x6 | | o1 | o11 | |

Tear here for easy use!

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

Fun Facts

Divide into two groups. Give each group a pencil and 12 pieces of paper that are each large enough to write a sentence on. **Check out the Fun Facts on the third page of the leaflet. As a group you can write or rewrite these Fun Facts to make 12 true or false statements. So if you copy a Fun Fact word for word it would still be true, but if you change one or two words it could be false. See how tricky you can be with it. Out of the 12 you can have as many be as true or false as you want. They don't have to be equal numbers.**

Give the kids a few minutes to work on the statements. Now, with leaflets closed, groups trade their 12 statements and sort them into true and false piles. When the groups have them sorted, read them out loud and see how each group did.

Good job, everyone! Some of these were pretty tricky. It's times like that when it's nice to be able to ask a few questions!

Spark Resources

Leaflets

Supplies

Paper

Pencils

Fortunate Questions

Direct kids to Fortunate Questions on the third page of the leaflet. Have them cut out the circle and the rectangle. Demonstrate how to make a fortune cookie out of the circle.

If kids want to make more, use a roll of tape or cup to trace circles on colored paper. Try different sizes and different colors, but make sure each one has a question inside.

Kids can take the Fortunate Questions home to share with their families or, if time permits, have kids share some of their questions. You might also have kids save them for a time when a special guest such as a pastor or youth director can come in and discuss them with the class.

Spark Resources

Leaflets

Supplies

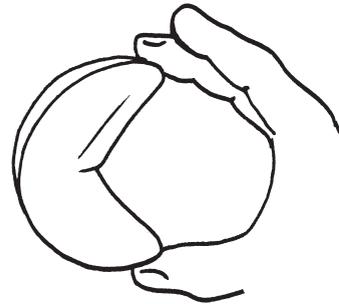
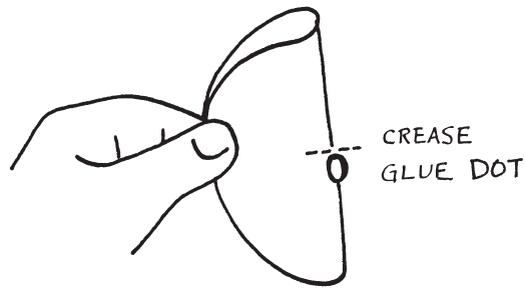
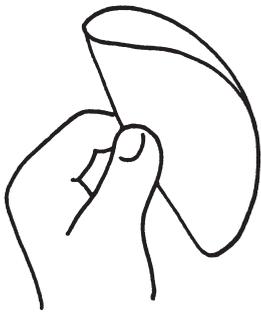
Scissors

Pencils

Glue dots

Hot glue gun (optional)

Tear here for easy use!



Send (5 minutes)

Closing Conversation

Today's lesson is great! Not only were we reminded that it's okay to ask God questions, we also learned that we get all the chances we need to follow Jesus. God gives us second chances! Take a look at the Faith on the Go! options on the last page of the leaflet and talk about which ones the kids want to try this week.

If you could share one thing about today's Bible story with a friend, what would it be? Give everyone a chance to share.

We've asked a lot of questions today but before we close in prayer, I've got a couple more about the first son in our story. Ready?

What did he answer? He answered I will not

Did he change his mind? But later he changed his mind

Did he go? And went

Where did you learn this? Matthew 21:29

Spark Resources
Leaflets

Supplies
None

Tear here for easy use!

Closing Prayer

Stand or sit in a circle. **In our closing prayer I'm going to say "second," and then we'll go around the circle and say "third," "fourth," "fifth," "sixth," and so on. Each of you just add whatever comes next. Let us pray.**

Dear Jesus, thank you for loving us. Teach us to respond to your love by following you. Sometimes we mess up but you always give us a second, (kids fill in third, fourth, etc.) chance. Thank you! In your name we pray. Amen.

Be sure to send a leaflet and a Family Page home with each kid.

Spark Resources
Family Pages



Supplies
None