

PK-2nd

Spirit & Truth

*Teaching Kids
the Heart of Worship*



Teacher's Guide

Lesson #L2:

Confession

Contributors

Writer

Gregory Rawn

Grade-Level Editor

Kara Smith-Laubenstein

Illustrators

Jennifer Morris

Nicholas McDougal

Graphic Designer

Nicholas McDougal

Published by

Spirit and Truth Publishing

Copyrights

Spirit and Truth: Teaching Kids the Heart of Worship

Text, illustrations, and characters copyright © 2010-2012 by Spirit and Truth Publishing

All rights reserved. Please see the *Spirit and Truth Copyright and Reproduction Agreement* for details as to permissible reproduction of these curriculum materials. No part of this curriculum may be used or reproduced in any other manner whatsoever without written permission. For information, contact Spirit and Truth Publishing at www.SpiritAndTruthPublishing.com.

The liturgical text used in this curriculum is from Evangelical Lutheran Worship, copyright © 2006 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Published by Augsburg Fortress, Publishers. All rights reserved.

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture is quoted from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

When noted, Scripture taken from The Message, copyright © 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002. Used by permission of NavPress Publishing Group.

Lesson #L2

Confession

Lesson Topic:

Confessing our sins.

Key Themes:

Sin keeps us away from God.
Confession brings us closer to God.

Key Verses:

Luke 18:9-14
1 John 1:8-10

Lesson Goals:

After completing this lesson, students will be able:

- † To define sin and confession by exploring how two characters in a story both learned of their sin and confessed to their wrongdoing.
- † To compare sin and confession by demonstrating how sin takes us away from God and confession helps us return to God.

Lesson At-A-Glance

Activities

Supplies

Music and Transition

20 min. † Music Leader Guide

Opening

Plugged/Unplugged

Dance for joy when you're "plugged in" to God!

5 min.

† A radio or cassette player that plugs into the wall (unfortunately, CDs and MP3s won't work for this activity)

Storytime

"Confessing Coyotes!"

Mrs. Heron illustrates sin and confession with a retelling of one of Jesus' parables.

10 min.

† Lesson #L2 Story: "Confessing Coyotes!"

Putting It Together

Walking Away

Contrast sin and confession with this active game.

10 min.

† A Bible
† A large, clear area in your classroom

Additional Activities

Missing Something

Don't miss out on the joy of God's love!

10 min.

† Pudding or applesauce (something you need to eat with a spoon)
† Bowls (unless the food is in individual snack cups)
† Spoons

Closing Activities

5 min.

Total Time: 60 minutes

Background for Teachers

As adults, we sometime use words, especially “churchy” words, with kids and don’t explain what they mean. And, sometimes (we might be embarrassed to admit) we do not even fully understand what they mean. So, in these lessons, the “churchy” words will be defined for those who are not ready to explain them to kids, or to let you know what aspect of the words are intended in the following lesson.

A sin or not a sin?

Sin is the word we use to name the thoughts, words, and actions that go against the way God wants us to live. Kids understand this as the bad choices and mistakes we make. The simplified definition of sin we will be using for the students is this: If what you are doing is hurtful to someone (even yourself), it is a sin. A sin necessarily harms someone, even if it just their relationship with God.

Images for Sin

There are many images or metaphors for sin used in the Bible and the church. We sometimes talk about sin as something that disconnects us from God. Truly, God is the source of all life, so if we are “unplugged” from him or “walk away” by committing sins, then we are slowly dying. When God warned Adam and Eve to not eat the forbidden fruit, or “you shall die” (Genesis 2:17), he was not talking about dropping down dead, but dying like a flower cut from the plant and put in a vase.

Confession

The basic meaning of the word “confess” is “to tell.” Therefore, confessing sins is simply telling God about the choices and mistakes that we feel bad about. Children are familiar with the act of

“saying sorry,” so that is one useful way to explain confession to your students.

Going further...

One tricky aspect of confession is the explanation of what it “does.” Are we forgiven when we confess (and therefore, what we do not confess is not forgiven), or are we forgive everything, even without confessing? The Lutheran response is that we are forgiven of all of our sins, past, present, and future, confessed and unconfessed, when we are connected to Jesus in faith (more on that later). So, confessing our sins is not a part of being forgiven. However, confessing sins is important for two reasons. First, when we are ashamed or bothered by guilt, confession gives us the opportunity to get it out in the air and receive the declaration of forgiveness. Second, taking the time to recognize our sins and confess them to God allows us to remember the great love and generous forgiveness that we have in Christ. That gives us even more to thank God for!

In the story...

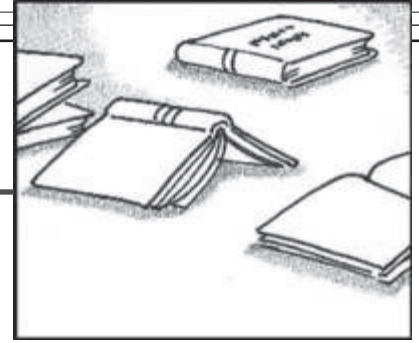
In “Confessing Coyotes,” Mrs. Heron gets the opportunity to teach her class about sin and confession when Chloe Jackrabbit makes a bad choice. She retells the story of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector from Luke 18:9-14, illustrating the benefits of confessing our sins to our loving God.

In practice...

Take time this week to confess your own bad choices and mistakes to God and remind yourself that God never stops loving and forgiving you.



Lesson Plan



Music (15 minutes)

See Music Leader Guide for more information.

Transition to Classrooms (5 minutes)

Greeting and Opening Activity (5 minutes)

Gather the students and focus them by using the Apostolic Greeting (using a cue card as necessary):

*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and
the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

And also with you.

Plugged/Unplugged

Dance for joy when you're "plugged in" to God!

You will need:

- † A radio or cassette player that plugs into the wall (unfortunately, CDs and MP3s won't work for this activity)

Before class:

1. Tune the radio or set up the cassette player for some fun dance music.

During class:

1. Explain to the students that when we sin it is like being unplugged from God (demonstrate by unplugging the radio), the source of all life. But, when we confess to God, then God plugs us back into himself (plug the radio back in).
2. Have the students play "Freeze Dance" by dancing when the music is on and freezing when you unplug it.
3. When you unplug the radio, say, "Sin" or "Freeze!" and when you plug it back in, say, "God forgives you!"
4. Bring them over to your story time area and have them sit down.



-
-
5. Ask: **Was it more fun when the music was plugged in or unplugged?** *[Plugged in]*
6. **Is it better to be plugged into God, or unplugged from him?** *[Plugged in]*

Snack Time (Optional)

If you want to serve a snack, you may hand it out before the story so that the kids can eat while they listen or have snack during the activity Missing Something.

Storytime: "Confessing Coyotes!" (10 minutes)

Discussion Questions

The following questions give you some suggestions on how to help your students reflect on the story, so do not feel that you have to stick with each one verbatim.

What did Chloe say happened to the books that fell in the hallway?

A wind knocked them over.

In Mrs. Heron's story, what did the mouse think about himself?

That he was perfect, the best animal in the desert.

What bad choices did the coyote make?

He stole from the farmer and lied to the animals.

How did the two animals react when they met the angel?

The mouse was proud and told the angel that he was better than the others. The coyote was scared and ashamed of his bad choices. He asked for God's forgiveness.

What did the angel say to the coyote?

That God loves him and has gotten rid of his sins.

How did the coyote feel after that?

Very happy.

Which characters both sinned and confessed in this story?

Chloe confessed about lying about the books. The coyote confessed about stealing and lying.

Can you remember a time when you had to confess to someone (a parent, teacher, or friend) because you had done something wrong? How did it feel when they forgave you?

Answers will vary. If they begin talking about being punished, admit that there are consequences to our actions, but that our parents love us even when we do bad things. And, God loves us and forgives us perfectly, even when our parents are not perfect.

Putting It Together (10 minutes)

Walking Away

Contrast sin and confession with this active game.

You will need:

- † A Bible.
- † A large, clear area in your classroom.

During class:

1. In a clear area of the classroom, hold a Bible and have the students form a circle around you (they should be as close to you and each other as classroom management will allow).
2. Say: **In the story we learned that when we sin, we are taking steps away from God. But, when we confess, we come back to God. Let's play a game to see this in action.**
3. Hold up the Bible. Say: **The Bible is the way that God teaches us about himself. So, when I name a bad choice, a sin, then take a big step away from me** (if the space is smaller, then they can take smaller steps).
4. **When I say "Confess", then you say "Sorry, God" and run** (or walk quickly if the space does not allow for running) **back and gently touch the Bible. Any questions?**
5. If necessary, after you name the following sins (and feel free to name more or less to adjust the length of the game) you may say: **Take a big step.**
6. As they are moving farther away from you, make sure that they are also moving farther away from each other.
7. When they are far enough away, say "Confess" and have them run or walk back to you. If you have extra time, you can keep going, adding in a surprise "Confession" sometimes.
8. For a trickier version of the game, add in good things (like helping your mom, etc.) so that the students must figure out what is a sin and what is not.

Sins:

Stealing something.	Lying to your parents.	Teasing someone at school.
Hitting someone.	Saying bad things about someone.	Ignoring God.
Kicking a dog.	Lying to your teacher.	Kicking your brother.
Disobeying your parents.	Borrowing without asking.	Painting on a stop sign.
Ignoring people needing help.	Shoving your friend.	Blaming your sister.
Saying you'll help and then you don't.		



Additional Activities

Missing Something (10 minutes)

Don't miss out on the joy of God's love!

You will need:

- † Pudding or applesauce (something you need to eat with a spoon).
- † Bowls (unless the food is in individual snack cups).
- † Spoons.

During class:

1. Place a bowl or snack cup in front of each student (but, don't give them a spoon).
2. Say: **God said that you were his when you were baptized and he always loves you, no matter what you do. But, you cannot feel and enjoy that love if you have sins that keep you away from God. When you confess your sins, God totally gets rid of them so you can enjoy God's love for you.**
3. Ask: **Are you missing something that you need to enjoy this snack?** [Yes, a spoon.]
4. Have each student say something like "I confess that I need a spoon."
5. Respond with something like "Jesus loves you, here is a spoon" before giving them the spoon.
6. Enjoy the snack!

Closing Activities (5 minutes)

Prayer

Ask your students if there is anything that they want to confess to God. Tell them that there will be a time in the prayer for them to think or whisper to God what they want to confess. You can set up a cue (such as pointing to them) when it is their turn to pray.

God,

Thank you for always loving us. Help us to make good choices. Forgive us when we do bad things. Please forgive us for... (pause to allow students to silently confess). Thank you for getting rid of all of our bad choices. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Use the cue cards as necessary.



Blessing

Teacher: May the Lord bless you and keep you, may he make his face shine upon you, and give you peace.

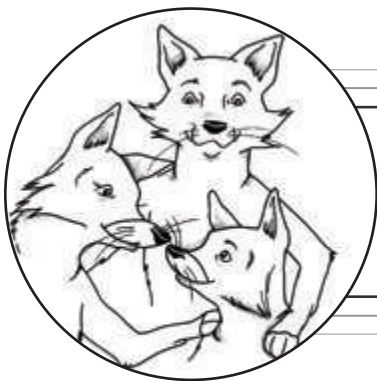
Students: Amen

Dismissal

Teacher: Go in peace, serve the Lord!

Students: Thanks be to God!





PK-2nd

Worship @ Home

Lesson #L2: Confessing Sins

As adults, we sometime use words, especially “churchy” words, with kids and don’t explain what they mean. And, sometimes (we might be embarrassed to admit) we do not even fully understand what they mean. So, in these lessons, the “churchy” words will be defined for those who are not ready to explain them to kids, or to let you know what aspect of the words are intended in the following lesson.

A sin or not a sin?

Sin is the word we use to name the thoughts, words, and actions that go against the way God wants us to live. Kids understand this as the bad choices and mistakes we make. A simple, basic rule for sin is that if an action hurts someone (including yourself), then it is a sin. Any basic rule is an oversimplification, and this is no exception. As adults, we can see that there are times when we have to do something that might hurt someone (like giving a vaccine, for example) that is not a sin. But, for the most part this rule holds. A sin necessarily harms someone, even if it just their relationship with God.

Confession

The basic meaning of the word “confess” is “to tell.” Therefore, confessing sins is simply telling God about the choices and mistakes that we feel bad about. Children are familiar with the act of “saying sorry,” so that is one useful way to explain confession to your child.

One tricky aspect of confession is the explanation of what it “does.” Are we forgiven

when we confess (and therefore, what we do not confess is not forgiven), or are we forgive everything, even without confessing? The Lutheran response is that we are forgiven of all of our sins, past, present, and future, confessed and unconfessed, when we are connected to Jesus in faith (more on that later). So, confessing our sins is not a part of being forgiven. However, confessing sins is important for two reasons. First, when we are ashamed or bothered by guilt, confession gives us the opportunity to get it out in the air and receive the declaration of forgiveness. Second, taking the time to recognize our sins and confess them to God allows us to remember the great love and generous forgiveness that we have in Christ. That gives us even more to thank God for!

Try it out!

Here are some questions to spark a conversation. Let your child answer, and then share your own thoughts.

- † What things do you do that make you feel bad?
- † How does it feel to know that God always loves you, no matter what you do?

Invite your child to pray with you and confess their sins silently or aloud.

The story this week... *Confessing Coyotes!*



Crash! The sound of falling books filled the hallway.

"I didn't do it," said Chloe Jackrabbit. "It was the wind."
"That must have been some wind," said Josh Grayfox.



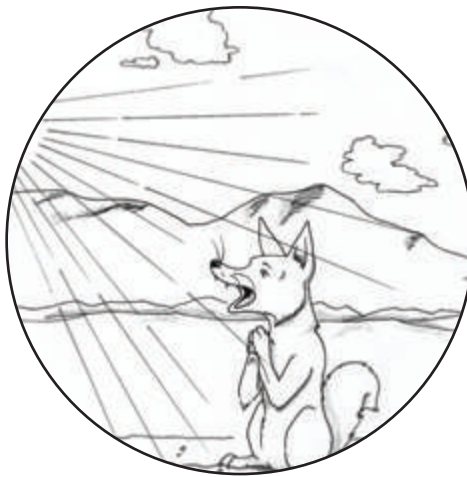
"The pastor talks about sin a lot," said Olivia Porcupine.
"What's sin?" asked Ethan Raccoon.
"Sin is a bad choice that hurts someone, including lying," explained Mrs. Heron. "Let me tell a story."



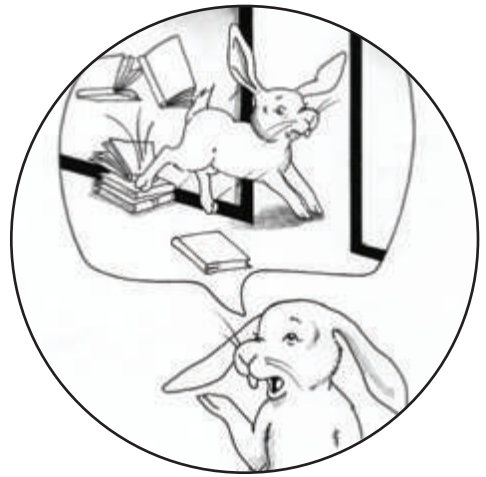
She told a story about a mouse who thought he was the best. He hears that an angel has appeared and hurries off to tell her about how wonderful he is.



On the other side of the hill, a coyote escapes from the farmer he was stealing from and gets chased toward the angel. Ashamed when he sees her, he hides and asks God to get rid of his bad choices.



The angel tells the coyote that God has heard his confession and forgives him of all his sins. The coyote is happier than he's ever been!*



"I should confess, too," said Chloe. "I knocked over those books in the hall and lied about it."
Mrs. Heron gave Chloe a hug. "Jesus forgives you," she said. "And so do we!" said her friends.

* For more, read Luke 18:9-14.

The End (until next week!)