**Bible Point**

**We can tell God anything.**

**Bible Verse**

“So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most” (Hebrews 4:16).

**Growing Closer to Jesus**

Students will
- learn that they can be honest with God,
- express their concerns to God, and
- understand that God loves us in spite of our sins.

**Teacher Enrichment**

**Bible Basis**

- **Job angrily tells God how he feels.**

  The book of Job deals with questions that eventually cross nearly everyone’s mind: Why do bad things happen to us? Does God just let them happen?

  In the ancient Near East, it was widely assumed that good people prospered while bad people suffered. But why would a person who is apparently good suffer? This is exactly the problem the book of Job is addressing. The book opens by stressing the fact that Job “was blameless—a man of complete integrity. He feared God and stayed away from evil.” This is a claim of overall moral integrity, not sinless perfection (Job admits he has sinned in 7:21). Chapter 1 makes clear that Job was a man of unmatched integrity; by Chapter 3 Job had suffered immeasurable pain and suffering.

  Israel’s neighbors believed in many gods. It was not uncommon for those who believed in many gods to live in fear, hoping by whatever means to keep the gods happy with them. Job and the Israelites, on the other hand, believed in the one, true, all-powerful God, who was perfect ethically. As the book of Job proceeds, Job’s friends offer various reasons why Job might be suffering and they suggest solutions. Job is not really helped, however, until God himself speaks.

  During his struggle to remain faithful to God despite the pain he was suffering, Job spoke his heart to God. The Bible is clear that people can approach God honestly. God is neither fooled nor impressed with false displays of spirituality. The opportunity we have in prayer is one we shouldn’t take for granted. Not only is God willing to hear our most honest prayers, he is even willing to help us pray in the manner most beneficial to us (see Romans 8:26-27).

  Other Scriptures used in this lesson are Job 1:1-3, 13-19; 2:7; 38:1-7; 42:12-13, 16-17; Matthew 6:9-13; and Psalms 5:1-3; 74:1-3; 139.

**Prayer**

- Read Hebrews 4:16.
- What does it mean to come “boldly” to God in prayer? Can you think of times you came boldly to God in prayer?
- How has God answered a prayer when you needed it most?
- Pray: Lord, help me never succumb to false piety. I’m thankful that you allow me to be honest with you. Teaching children can be difficult. Help me to remain prayerfully dependent on you as I…”
Lesson 3

Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Hands-On Fun at Home” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for your students and for God’s direction as you teach the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

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This Lesson at a Glance
Welcome

As kids arrive, ask them how they applied last week’s lesson to their lives. Ask questions such as “What prayers are you waiting for God to answer?” and “How did you wait for God this week?”

Remind the kids that whenever you sound the giggle hammer, they are to stop talking, raise their hands, and focus on you. Remind them that when their hands go up, their mouths go shut. Explain that it’s important to respond to the signal quickly so the class can do as many fun activities as possible.

Attention Grabber

■ You Can’t Say That!

SUPPLIES: “You Can’t Say That!” (p. 45), scissors, paper clips

Before class, photocopy one “You Can’t Say That!” handout for every three students. Cut apart the three sections, and then use a paper clip to hold the sections together.

Have kids form trios. Have trios choose a Reader and a Responder. Distribute handouts, and have each trio member take one section. Instruct kids to keep the papers facedown.

Say: Each of you has a question that you’ll ask someone in your trio. Underneath your question, there’s a list of words that the Responder can’t use in his or her answer. Unfortunately, he or she won’t know what those words are! If the Responder uses one of those words in his or her answer, put your hand over the Responder’s mouth. Then the Responder may read his or her question to the person on the left. When everyone in your trio has tried to answer a question, put your hand over your own mouth, and wait for other trios to finish.

Give kids three or four minutes to work on their handouts. When all students have their hands over their mouths, collect the handouts and put them out of sight. Then have kids answer the following questions in their trios. Invite volunteers to share their group’s answers with the rest of the class.

Ask: • What was the hardest part of this activity? (Knowing what we could and couldn’t say; not being able to say anything we wanted to say; saying something without saying the most important words.)

• What would it be like if you could never talk about how you felt? (Frustrating; it would make the situation worse; you’d feel like no one really knew you.)

• If you had a list of things you could never talk about with a friend, how would that affect your friendship? (I wouldn’t feel very close to that person; that person wouldn’t know me very well; it would make things weird between us.)

• Why is it important to tell someone exactly how you feel? (You can’t be good friends with someone unless you’re honest; it makes you feel better; it shows you trust that person.)
• Why is it important to tell God whatever is on our minds? (Because he knows us anyway; because it helps us feel closer to him; so that we can be honest with him and never try to hide things from him.)

Say: **God wants to hear about everything we’re going through, no matter what it is. Whether we’re upset, sad, angry, or happy, we can tell God anything. God wants us to be close to him and honest with him. Today we’ll hear about a man named Job who told God exactly how he felt during a very difficult part of his life.**

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**Bible Exploration & Application**

### Just Like Job

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, treats, tray

Have kids form pairs. Say: I’m going to give each pair some great wealth. In fact, the things I’m giving you are so valuable that you’ll be able to trade them for a treat at the end of this activity.

Give each pair a Bible, a foam flower, a plastic stirrer, and one other gizmo from the Learning Lab. Place a tray or large box lid in the middle of the room.

Say: **Job was a wealthy man just like you’re all wealthy with your gizmos. Let’s look at Job 1:1-3 to see how rich he was.**

Have a volunteer read the passage while others read along silently. Then say: **Unfortunately, Job’s riches didn’t last long because Satan wanted to see if he could make Job turn away from God. Let’s read some more to see what happened.**

Choose a volunteer to read **Job 1:13-16** aloud while others follow along silently. Then say: **None of you seemed to object to the Sabeans stealing Job’s oxen and donkeys, so you probably won’t object to me taking one of your gizmos. Go ahead and put one of them on the tray.** Despite their protests, make sure each pair turns in one gizmo.

Then have another volunteer read **Job 1:17-19** aloud while others follow along. Say: **Wait a minute! I noticed that no one cried when Job’s children were killed. I’ll have to take another one of your gizmos for your coldheartedness.** Have each pair turn in another gizmo.

Ask a third volunteer to read **Job 2:7** aloud while others follow along. Say: **Well, since no one offered a remedy for Job’s sores, turn in the rest of your gizmos so we can buy one for him.** Then have partners answer the following questions.

Ask: • **What was it like to have your things taken away?** (No fun; a letdown; a bummer; it stunk.)

• **What did you feel like saying to me when I asked you to turn in your gizmos?** (Hey, that’s not fair; now I won’t get a treat! Why do we have to? Do we get them back?)
Job Angryly Tells God How He Feels

- How do you think Job felt about his things being destroyed? (Mad; sad; afraid; poor; like it wasn’t fair.)

- What do you think he wanted to say to God? (That’s not fair; give me a break; help me; you’re mean; why did this happen?)

Say: The Bible tells us that Job didn’t sin in the midst of his misfortune. But let’s see what Job did say to God after all of this. With your partner, read Job 3:1-10, 20-26. Then reflect on what Job said to God.

Allow a minute or two for kids to read and think, and then ask:

- What did Job tell God? (He wished he hadn’t been born; he was mad; it wasn’t fair; he wanted to be dead.)

- Do you think it was OK for Job to say those things to God? Why or why not? (Yes, because that’s how he felt; no, because he might make God mad; no, because God was still in control.)

- How would you expect God to react to Job’s words? (He might make things better; he’d get mad because Job was speaking rudely; he might tell Job why the bad things happened.)

Say: Let’s look at part of God’s response to Job.

Choose a volunteer to read aloud Job 38:1-7 while others follow along. Then say: God asked Job many questions about the earth. They showed Job that he knew very little compared to God’s wisdom. God’s questions reminded Job that God is all-powerful and controls everything in the world—even our lives. Let’s see how the story of Job ends.

Read Job 42:1-13, 16-17 aloud while kids follow along in their Bibles. Then say: Job didn’t understand everything about God. When Job realized this and admitted it to God, God rewarded Job. Since you all lost your wealth like Job did, you’re going to get it back just like Job did.

Have a partner in each pair take a plastic stirrer, a foam flower, and one other gizmo from the tray. Allow kids to exchange their “wealth” for a treat. As kids are enjoying the treats, ask:

- How did God respond to Job’s words? (He reminded Job that he was strong; he reminded Job that he was in control; God told Job that he was wiser than people.)

- What do you think Job learned from his experience? (That God is powerful; that he could trust God; that God was wiser than he was.)

- What does this story tell you about God? (That he’s the best; that he takes care of us; that he listens to everything we say; that he’s more powerful than anyone.)

Say: We can tell God anything. Job told God how he felt, and he learned what a powerful God he served. It’s important for us to be honest with God so that we can see his power, too. Our next activity will help us see how awesome God is.
Lesson 3

HANDS-ON BIBLE

Have kids turn to the “Father Knows Best” activity on page 525 in the Hands-On Bibles. Set out construction paper, crayons, colored pencils, markers, and stickers. Have kids draw pictures according to the directions in the activity.

When kids have finished drawing, have them form pairs. Let partners show and explain their pictures to each other. Then have kids answer the following questions in their pairs. After each question, invite volunteers to share their answers with the rest of the class.

Ask: • How would you have felt if you were Job? (Upset; mad; depressed.)
  • What did you think of God’s answers to Job? (They were amazing, because they showed that God knows everything; cool, because of the way he explained nature; awesome.)

Say: God knows everything, and we can always trust him. That’s why we can tell God anything and everything!

No Hiding!

SUPPLIES: Bibles, newsprint, markers

Have kids form a circle. Choose someone to be the Watcher and stand in the middle of the circle. Place the crayon bank at the Watcher’s feet.

Say: I’m going to walk around the circle and gently clip the heart clip on someone’s clothing. If I clip the heart clip to your clothes, take the crayon bank from the Watcher and hide it somewhere in the room while the Watcher watches. Then come back and gently clip the heart clip on someone else’s clothes. Then the Watcher will have to find the crayon bank, bring it back, and place it at the feet of a new Watcher. Ready?

When everyone has had an opportunity to be the Watcher and to hide the crayon bank, collect the heart clip and crayon bank and return them to the Learning Lab for use in later lessons. Then ask:

• What went through your mind when you were hiding the crayon bank? (This is silly; the Watcher can see me; he’s going to find this in a snap; I feel weird doing this with everyone watching.)

• How was this game like trying to hide something from God? (It’s impossible to hide things from God; God is always watching and knows everything.)

• What kinds of things do we try to hide from God? (Wrong things we’ve said or done; our sins; our bad feelings.)

• Why do we try to hide things from God? (We’re embarrassed for him to know; we’re ashamed of what we did; we’re afraid he won’t love us if he knew.)

Say: Hiding the crayon bank from the Watcher is just like trying to hide our thoughts from God. He knows everything that we think or do. Psalm 139:1-18, 23-24 tells us just how well God knows us.

Have kids form four groups. Have each group choose a Reader to read the Scripture passage, a Recorder to write the responses, an Encourager to encourage everyone to brainstorm, and a Reporter to share the answers with the class.

If you have more than 15 students in your class, form two groups and choose another object from the Learning Lab to hide.

If there are more than 16 students in your class, form more than four groups and duplicate the Scripture assignments. Or form four groups, and choose more than one Encourager. If there are fewer than 16 students, have kids combine roles or simply form two groups.
Job Angrily Tells God How He Feels

Give each group a sheet of newsprint, a marker, and one of the following Scripture passages to read.

- Psalm 139:1-6
- Psalm 139:7-12
- Psalm 139:13-18
- Psalm 139:23-24

Give kids a minute or two to read their verses and list on the newsprint no more than five things that God knows about them. Sound the giggle hammer after a minute or two, and have Reporters share their groups’ lists. Then ask:

- Why is hiding from God impossible? (God knows everything about us; God sees everything that happens; God wants to be close to us, so he’s always watching.)
- What are some good things about God knowing you so well? (He’s my closest friend; he’s watching over me and protecting me; he knows how I feel when I’m sad.)
- How might Psalm 139 change the way you pray? (I won’t feel like I can hide anything from God; I’ll be honest since he already knows; I’ll tell him everything.)

Say: You can’t hide anything from God because he already knows you so well. God wants you to talk to him about things you’re afraid of, questions you have, things that worry you, or even bad things you’ve done. God loves you in spite of whatever you say in prayer. He can tell God anything.

Say Anything

SUPPLIES: Bibles, paper, pencils

Have kids form groups of four, and have each group form a circle. Give each foursome a plastic stirrer and a Bible. Have them place the Bible in the middle of the circle and lay the plastic stirrer on it.

Say: We’re going to play a game called Say Anything. I’ll read a situation that might bring up some strong feelings you’d like to express. After I’ve read the situation, choose someone in your group to toss the plastic stirrer into the middle of your circle.

When it lands, whoever the top of the stirrer is pointing to will answer how he or she would feel in that situation. After a few seconds, I’ll sound the giggle hammer and then read another situation. The person who just shared may toss the plastic stirrer.

Read the situations below. Pause for about 30 seconds between situations to let kids answer, and then sound the giggle hammer before reading the next situation.

Situation 1:
You’re having a great year at school. Not only are your grades up, but you’ve got great friends and the best teacher you’ve ever had. Then, last night, your parents told you that they’re thinking of moving to a different state for a new job. What would you like to say to them?

Situation 2:
You’ve always looked up to your older brother and feel close to him. You tell him whatever’s on your mind because he listens well and gives good advice. Then, yesterday, you overheard him talking to a friend and making a joke about something you told him in confidence. What would you like to say to him?
Lesson 3

Situation 3:
You practiced hard for soccer tryouts, spending most of your free time getting ready. You did your best, but when the results were posted, your name wasn’t on the list. You didn’t make it. Then you notice that every one of your best friends did make the team. What would you like to say to the coach? to your friends?

Situation 4:
Mr. Sanders was your favorite adult in church. When you were younger, you often visited him with your parents. But lately you’ve been so busy with other activities, you haven’t been by to see him. Then your mom tells you Mr. Sanders got very sick and died suddenly. What do you wish you had said to him? to God?

When each group has finished responding to the last situation, squeak the giggle hammer to get everyone’s attention. Collect the plastic stirrers for later use. Have group members number off from one to four. After you ask each of the following questions, call out a number so that group members with that number can share their responses.

Ask: • Was this activity easy or difficult? Why? (Easy, because I wasn’t really in that situation; easy, because I could say whatever I wanted; hard, because it’s hard to say those things out loud.)

• What’s so hard about saying what we feel? (Sometimes we have bad feelings; we’re not sure how people will react; we don’t quite know what to say.)

• Why is it sometimes hard to tell God our most secret thoughts? (He might get mad; he’d know I’m not perfect; he might punish me; those things are too private to say.)

• What would happen if we kept all of our thoughts and feelings inside? (We’d explode; we’d be quiet; we wouldn’t have any friends because no one would know us.)

Say: The psalmists wrote many songs to God about their feelings. Let’s take a look at Psalm 5:1-3 and Psalm 74:1-3.

Have each group select two Readers to read the passages aloud and two Reporters to share responses to the following questions with the whole class.

Ask: • What was the psalmist feeling in these verses? (Sad; upset; confused.)

• How might talking to God ease those feelings? (He might realize that God was listening; he might feel God’s peace; God could take away the bad feelings.)

• How does talking to God ease your bad feelings? (I remember that God’s in control; I know that he hears me; I feel better when I can tell someone my bad thoughts.)

Say: God is like a best friend we can share our deepest secrets with. He always listens, and he always cares. There’s a verse in the Bible that talks about how approachable God is. Let’s look at that verse now.

Have kids read Hebrews 4:16 in their groups. Then have kids say the verse aloud with you: ►“So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most” (Hebrews 4:16).

Ask: • Why do you think God wants us to come before him boldly? (He doesn’t want us to be afraid of him; because he loves us; he wants us to know he loves us.)
Job Angrily Tells God How He Feels

• How does knowing that God wants you to come boldly before him make you feel? (Great; a little scared; not worthy.)

• What will we receive if we come boldly before God? (Grace; mercy; love.)

Say: God loves you. He wants you to come before him boldly, because you can tell God anything. You know, we have a great example in the Bible of someone who knew the value of prayer. And that person is Jesus! Jesus stayed in close communication with God all the time. Plus, he taught us exactly how to pray. Let’s review that now.

Have kids form trios, and give each trio paper and pencils. Have kids in each trio read Matthew 6:9-13. Then have each group rewrite the prayer in their own words. After a few minutes, let groups share their interpretations with the rest of the class.

Say: Jesus teaches us exactly the best way to pray. This week when you pray, try to remember the model prayer Jesus gave us!

Say: And remember, we can tell God anything!

Think of one thing that you’d like to tell God. It can be good or bad—just be honest with him. We’ll take about 30 seconds of silence for you to tell God what’s on your heart.

After 30 seconds of silence, say: No matter what you’re going through, remember that we can tell God anything.

Closing

Tell It to Jesus

SUPPLIES: CD player

Before class, cue the CD to “Pray About Everything” (Philippians 4:6-7) (track 6).

Have kids form trios. Say: In your trios, share something you’re concerned about or thankful for. Then take turns in your trio praying for the person on your left. After two minutes, sound the giggie hammer to get everyone’s attention.

Say: Now let’s learn a song about telling God whatever is on our minds.

Play “Pray About Everything” (Philippians 4:6-7) (track 6) on the CD while kids sing along. (Lyrics are at the back of this book.) Periodically, pause the CD. Put a heart clip on a student, and have that person call out a prayer concern or praise. Then have that person clip the heart clip onto someone else the next time you stop the song. When the song ends, collect the heart clip and say: We can tell God anything. Let’s thank God for that privilege right now.

Pray: Dear God, thank you for wanting us to come to you with all of our thoughts, needs, and praises. Help us to be honest with you so that we can know and love you more. In Jesus’ name, amen.
Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Hands-On Fun at Home" handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your kids. Encourage kids and parents to use the handout to spark meaningful discussion on this week’s topic.
You Can’t Say That!

Have the students ask the following questions. Tell them to make sure the Responder doesn’t use any of the words listed underneath each question!

What do you like best about December 25?
- I or me
- Christmas tree
- Vacation
- Presents
- Jesus’ birth
- Family

What are you the most afraid of?
- Dying
- Dark
- Accidents
- Shots
- Scared
- Kidnapping

What’s the best part about summer vacation?
- School
- Swimming
- Trips
- Bike riding
- Friends
- Playing
We can tell God anything.

Bible Verse: “So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most” (Hebrews 4:16).

Check It Out

• Read Psalm 51:3-9. Why is it important to tell God even our worst sins?
• Read Hebrews 4:14-16. What wrongdoings do we need to talk to God about?
• Read Jonah 4:9-10. Why is it good to tell God when we’re angry?

Way to Pray

Have each family member think of two words and write them on two different slips of paper. Put the papers in a bowl and have each person silently act out the word he or she drew. When all the words have been acted out, talk about how God knows our words before we even speak them. Have a time of silent prayer to thank him for knowing us so well.

Faith Walk

Set an extra place at the table and have everyone imagine that Jesus is sitting at the table with you. After dinner, decide how having Jesus at the table changed the table conversation. Were there things you normally say that you didn’t? Did you talk about things that you normally don’t?

Idea!

To see how God knows us inside and out, fold a piece of white paper in half to make a card. Use crayons to draw a picture of yourself on the outside. On the inside, draw pictures of things that tell about you—your hobbies, pets, friends, or other interests. Then unfold your card. Take a paintbrush and paint a little cooking oil over your self-portrait. Let it dry for a moment, and then fold the card again. You’ll be able to see right through your picture to the interests inside!