



Journeys in the Spirit

inward outward upward downward

Children's work edition March 2012 Issue 61



Some Bible stories - the lost sheep & the lost son.

Getting ready

This issue gives suggestions and ideas to explore with children their understanding of two parables from the New Testament in the Bible.

There are two stories which have similar themes – The Lost Sheep and the Lost (Prodigal) son. The Lost Sheep is a simpler story and may be more suitable for using with a younger age group. The Lost Son is a longer and more complex story which may be more suited for using with an older age group (for example 8 – 12 year olds). The versions given in this issue are quoted from the Message Bible and have a modern flavour in translation - you may wish to research other versions which are more familiar to your ears!



Journeys in the Spirit offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with children and young people.

This children's work edition comes out monthly. It offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with 5–12 year olds in a Quaker setting.

It provides opportunities for exploring, creating and learning in an atmosphere of worship in partnership on our shared journey in the spirit.

Gather

Once everybody has settled lay down several different versions of the bible – include a very big, older copy if you can. Also lay down the Bible bookshelf picture from *Journeys in the Spirit* children's work edition issue 59 *Additional Resource 59.A*. This is available to download at:

www.quaker.org.uk/sites/default/files/Journeys-Issue-59-Additional-resources_0.pdf Say that it is a special book read by Christians and that the first part is the holy book for Jews and that people in the stories are also in the Quran, the Muslim holy book. The last part of the book, the New Testament, is mostly about the life of Jesus and what he said and did. Point to where the New Testament is in the bookshelf picture.

What is a parable in the bible?

Say that Jesus told stories called parables. A parable is a special sort of story – you have to listen really carefully to find out its secrets. Have a little quiet time before telling a parable.



See

www.biblegateway.com
for quotes from lots of different Bibles



Engage

Read one of the parables below to the children. There are pictures to use as you tell the parable on *Additional Resources 61.A* – see sidebar. These versions of the two parables draw on the Message Bible – you may have another version you prefer to use.

The Lost Sheep – The Bible: Luke 15: 1 - 7

Jesus was sitting on the ground under a tree. It was a hot day. There were lots of people sitting and standing around waiting to hear what he might say. Some of these people had done bad things. Some important people looking at Jesus grumbled and said, “Huh, look, he sits, eats and talks with bad people”. Their grumbling started Jesus telling this parable:

“Suppose one of you had a hundred sheep and lost one. Wouldn’t you leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the lost one until you found it? When found, you can be sure you would put it across your shoulders, rejoicing, and when you got home call in your friends and neighbours, saying, ‘Celebrate with me! I’ve found my lost sheep!’ Count on it—there’s more joy in heaven over one sinner’s rescued life than over ninety-nine good people in no need of rescue.”

Now go to one or more of the activities in Respond.

The Lost son - The Bible: Luke 15:11 - 32

Use the same introduction as in the Lost Sheep parable above. Then say:

“There was once a man who had two sons. The younger said to his father, ‘Father I want right now what’s coming to me.’ So the father divided his money between his sons. It wasn’t long before the younger son packed his bags and left for a distant country. There he wasted everything he had. After he had gone through all his money, there was a bad famine all through that country, there was no food and he began to hurt. He got a job feeding and cleaning pigs. He was so hungry he would have eaten the pig food, but no one would give him any.

That brought him to his senses. He said, ‘All those farm workers working for my father sit down to three meals a day, and here I am starving to death, I’m going back to my father. I’ll say to him, “Father, I’ve been bad, I don’t deserve to be called your son. Take me on as a farm worker.” He got right up and went home.

When he was still a long way off, his father saw him. His heart pounding, he ran out, embraced him, and kissed him. The son started to say, “Father, I’ve been bad, I don’t deserve to be called your son. Take me on as a farm worker.” But his dad wasn’t listening. He was calling his servants, ‘Quick, bring a clean set of clothes and dress him. Put the family ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Cook a special meal. We’re going to feast! We’re going to have a wonderful time! My son is here - given up for dead and now alive! Given up for lost and now found!’ And they began to have a wonderful time.

All this time his older son was out in the field. When the day’s work was done he came in. As he approached the house, he heard the music and dancing. Calling to a farm worker, he asked what was going on. He told him, ‘Your brother came home. Your father ordered a feast - because he has him safe and sound.’

The older brother stalked off in an angry sulk and refused to join in. His father came out and tried to talk to him, but he wouldn’t listen. The son said ‘Look how many years I’ve stayed here serving you, never giving you one moment of grief, but have you ever thrown a party for me and my friends? Then this son of yours who has thrown away your money shows up and you have a big feast!’

His father said, ‘Son, you don’t understand. You’re with me all the time, and everything that is mine is yours—but this is a wonderful time, and we had to celebrate. I thought this brother of yours was dead, and he’s alive! He was lost and he is found.’

Now go to one or more of the activities in Respond.

References & other resources

We believe in overcoming evil with good. We must speak and act from our inner light to the inner light in all others as Jesus did. He showed and taught love, respect and concern for all, particularly those rejected by others, reaching out to the good in them.

Six Quakers, 1979 Quaker faith & Practice 23.102

Walk cheerfully over the world answering that of God in everyone – QF & P, 19:32. Quakers believe that there is **‘that of God in everyone’**, even people who have done bad or selfish things to others and that all people deserve a second chance.

The additional resources listed in the text are available at:

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/resources-children>

References & other resources

Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted - Mairi Hedderwick

Katie starts behaving very badly at home when her baby brother is born. She goes to stay with grandma and calms down and goes home in a much better mood.

Then she begins to be a helpful big sister.

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The Quaker
Bookshop: 0207
6631030 or
www.quaker.org.uk/shop

Take heed, dear Friends, to the promptings of love and truth in your hearts. Trust them as the leadings of God whose Light shows us our darkness and brings us to new life. **Advices and Queries 1.**

Respond

The Lost Sheep – what was Jesus trying to get people to think about?

Some questions you could ask after reading the parable include:

Have you ever been lost? Have you ever been found?

How has it felt or would it feel to be lost or forgotten by your mum or dad?

How would the sheep that was lost and then found feel? (It has been established that sheep are very communal animals).

Has anybody ever done something they wish they hadn't done to someone else (e.g. not sharing toys with a sibling) but been forgiven by that person for what they did?

How important is it to have a chance to say sorry and start again?

Activity – Using ready mixed poster paint poured into shallow trays each child makes a handprint painting on a large piece of paper (by painting their hands and pressing them onto paper) using a range of colours to create a picture or a design. Look at the paintings when they are finished – discuss how each one is beautiful, different and unique. Relate this to the story of the Lost Sheep, how each person is unique, equally important and that we all have gifts and something special, 'that of God' in us.

Activity – make a group picture of the story using collage materials to make woolly sheep. For younger children, have paper sheep already cut to stick wool on or the children can draw and cut out their own sheep.

Activity – If appropriate, ask each of the children to say, write or draw how they are going to try and help someone they know who might be feeling lonely or angry or sad. It could be another child at school or someone in their family.



The Lost son - what was Jesus trying to get people to think about?

Some questions you could ask after reading the parable include:

What does the story mean?

Was it fair that the lost son was welcomed back by his father?

Why was his older brother angry?

Ask if it can sometimes be hard to see 'that of God', something special in other people and to put ourselves in the shoes of another person, think what their life is like – especially if we don't like them.

How important is forgiving somebody and giving someone a second chance?

Activity - act out the story but, if you think it is appropriate, change it into a modern day setting with a contemporary family – ask the children to think about conflicts between them and their sisters and brothers in their own families. If you have a large group, split them into smaller groups to do this. Perform the mini-dramas to the rest of the group.

Activity – ask children to draw their own version of the story with a biblical or contemporary family by making a simple cartoon strip with speech bubbles. Share their stories with the group. Ask who they like in their story.

Activity – go to <http://daniellesplace.com/html/r/sampleprimaryprodigal.html> for a simple maze puzzle – 'help the son find his way home'.

Reflect

Gather everybody together and read the George Fox quote (QF&P 19.32)

'Walk cheerfully over the world answering that of God in everyone'.

Ask the children to share, if they want to, any thoughts about what they might do to 'answer that of God' in other people, especially when it might be difficult, if they aren't very nice and or if it is hard to forgive them, even if it is about something small. Decide who is going to say what in Meeting for Worship to tell the adults what has been happening in children's meeting. End with stillness and quiet.



Review

Reviewing can happen at the time or later, and may be particularly helpful where a series of activities is planned around the same themes. Some useful questions to consider are:

- What went well, and why?
- What didn't go so well, and why?
- What might you do differently another time?
- What were children's responses to the parables? Is there anything to remember when working on other stories in this series?

This issue was written by Emily Janes and edited by Chris Nickolay and Howard Nurden. Chris Nickolay wrote the Topical activity.

Issue 62 explores the story of David and Goliath – how the smallest can challenge what appears to be very powerful. This will be available on April 2nd 2012.

Issue 63 looks in a different way at the story of Jesus feeding 5,000 people. This will be available on May 1st 2012.

Issue 64 explores the story of Moses. This will be available on June 1st 2012.

Materials available online are:

Current issue additional Resources Sheets

An easy to use plan for a Children's Meeting

A simple plan for an all age Meeting for Worship

A topical activity – 'what do prayers look like?'

Also a 'How to use *Journeys in the Spirit*' guide; a link to special issues; an archive of previous issues; a discussion forum and a link to the *Journeys in the Spirit* Youth edition.

All these are available at:

www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren

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Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resources 61.A



Engage The Lost sheep and the lost son - pictures

