

Understanding Scripture

A day course of creative good practice for teaching KS1 RE

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Referencing the new RE Curriculum Directory

Session C:

Creative uses of the Bible that enable children to interpret.

Four key Biblical ideas

Neighbour: The Good Samaritan

Peace: Saint Francis

Sorry: Jesus + the crucified thief

Seeing the light: Saint Paul

So what is the real meaning of Christmas?



Religions of the World:

storytelling from the BBC for 4–7s in RE

Programme 2: Christianity The Christian stories of The Good Samaritan and The Lost Sheep

Background for the teacher

Jesus' teaching was often given in parables – stories with hidden messages.

In this programme, children will hear the stories of the Good Samaritan and the lost sheep, and they will be asked to think about the meanings of the stories for themselves.

They will learn about two key themes in Jesus' teaching: love is not just for your own friends, but must be for everyone, even those who we think are enemies. God cares especially for people who are 'lost' in any way. Both of these stories provide excellent opportunities for artwork as well. Can the children draw the key moment of the story in a close up? Can a small group make a storyboard for each parable, in five or six pictures? Focus on the deeper meanings!

Key words: religion, parable, lost and found, Samaritan, enemy, God



Jesus told parables – they are not 'stories with a moral', they are more like stories with many hidden messages, to keep the audience thinking deeply.

Learning idea 1: Drama and role play

Ask the class to split into small groups and improvise their dramatic versions of the two stories. The easiest way to do this is to have two narrators, your best readers perhaps, to read a line of the story each, and other children act out the meaning of each line. Give them 15 minutes to practice and then have a class drama show, where the children watch the work of other groups and show their own work.

Learning idea 2: Hidden messages?

Discuss the idea of a message hidden in a story with the class, and ask them to think carefully about the hidden messages of these two stories.

Ask the children with talking partners to suggest the 'hidden messages' of the story about the Good Samaritan. Make a list on the whiteboard or on cards of all the possible hidden messages. Do the same with the story of the lost sheep.

Compare the two lists: did Jesus use the same 'hidden messages' in his stories more than once? Which story do children like most? Discuss these messages with pupils: which message goes with which story? Which sentences say what Jesus stories mean the best? Keep asking 'Why?'

- Sometimes help comes from surprising people.
- When you get lost, someone will come to find you.
- Everyone should care for each other, not just for their own friends.
- God is like a Good Shepherd.
- Love your neighbour.
- God loves it when lost people come home.
- Don't make enemies: make friends!

Invite the children to retell the story by sequencing pictures or in art, drama writing or another form.

The quiz

Ask children to watch carefully and see if they can answer the questions. Teams of three are good for this.

1. Say what Jesus' message about neighbours was.
'Love your neighbour.'
2. Where was the Jewish man travelling to?
Jericho.
3. What did the group of bandits do?
Robbed the traveller.
4. Which two people walked past the injured man?
A priest and an assistant priest.
5. Who were the enemies of the Jewish people?
The Samaritans.
6. What drink did the Samaritan give to the injured man?
Water.
7. In the story of the lost sheep, how many sheep did the shepherd count?
99.
8. How did he carry the lost sheep home?
On his shoulders.
9. Who did the shepherd tell about the sheep he had found?
All his friends.
10. Can you say why Christians think God is like a shepherd?
Because God cares for everyone, especially people who are lost.

Saint Francis: Peacemaker for God and with humans and animals.

Show pupils the picture (you can download it from the RE Today members' website in PPT for your whiteboard). Tell the story, perhaps while the picture is displayed. This account is based on the 21st Chapter of the *Fioretti di San Francesco* (Little Flowers of St. Francis), over 600 years old.

All the people of the town of Gubbio, north of Assisi in Italy, were terrified of the wolf that came to attack their children. They couldn't catch the mighty beast, or kill it. When St Francis heard it, he went to visit Gubbio, full of compassion for the people. He heard their terrifying stories, and said 'Right, I will go and meet the wolf.' People were shocked! 'Don't be such a fool. You will be bitten – maybe killed. What good will it do? Don't meet the wolf. Kill the wolf!' That's what they all said.

Never mind. Francis and his Brothers went off to look for the wolf. The people of the town followed, at a distance, in a huge crowd. When they saw the wolf in the distance (truly a huge and fearsome brute, with massive teeth) Francis' brothers stopped, scared. But on went the monk. He made the sign of the cross and spoke gently: 'Brother wolf' he began 'Come here in the name of Christ! Do me no harm.'

The wolf, seeing all this multitude, ran towards St Francis with his jaws wide open, but when he heard Francis' gentle voice he closed his jaws, stopped running, and coming up to St Francis, lay down at his feet as meekly as a lamb. Then the saint said: "Brother Wolf, you have done evil. You have destroyed God's creatures, and even killed humans, who are God's image. Not surprising that people chase you and try to kill you. But Brother Wolf, stop your attacks and then neither men nor dogs will hunt you any more. The wolf bowed his head, and, by the movements of his body, his tail and his eyes, made signs that he agreed. So Francis added 'As you are willing to make this peace, I promise that the people of Gubbio will feed you each day so that you don't go hungry any more. I know it is hunger that has made you behave so badly. But you, Brother Wolf, must promise: no more attacks from you either.'" Then the wolf, bowing his head, showed he agreed. 'Can I trust you?' asked the saint, and held out his hand gently. The crowds gasped – so dangerous! But the wolf lifted his huge paw, drew in his might claws, and the two shook hands. Well, paws.

"Brother wolf, I command you in name of Christ, to follow me. We will go together to the people and show them the peace we have made in God's name." The wolf, obeying him, walked by his side as meekly as a lamb, to the great astonishment of all the people. And for the rest of the wolf's life, he lived peacefully with the people of Gubbio, and they proudly fed him each day.

- Maybe act the story out? The star part is surely the wolf! Have some chorus lines for both the crowds and the Brothers. You could present your drama to a younger class.
- Consider together what the hidden messages of the story might be. Here are 6. Cut them up, rank them in order, and make up two more of your own.

All God's creatures should be loved by humans, not just the fluffy and cute ones.	A really holy person doesn't just care for humans, but for animals too, and puts love into practice.	The story tells of a miracle. These don't happen often, but spiritual people think they do happen sometimes. Maybe it's true?
We all face 'wolves' in our lives: when something scary comes up, we are tempted to 'kill it off'. But it's better to make friends with what scares us.	This story is impossible, but it still has a good message: hunger can make any creature scary, so share food fairly and get rid of hunger.	Maybe animals do communicate, and it is humans who have a problem noticing what they are saying to us. Francis was a spiritual man, so he could communicate back to the wolf.

Make me a channel of your peace
Where there is hatred let me bring your love
Where there is injury, your pardon Lord
And where there is doubt true faith in You

Make me a channel of your peace
Where there is despair in life let me bring hope
Where there is darkness only light
And where there's sadness ever joy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DdGLaF1AmGY>



Hatred	Love	What can make the difference? Draw a cartoon to show one of the six words on the first column, and then in part two the opposite of that word. God in Jesus did all these things. Humans – including children – can do them too.
Injury	Pardon	
Doubt	Faith	
Despair	Hope	
Darkness	Light	
Sadness	Joy	

SASHA SAYS SORRY FOUR TIMES

When she woke up on Friday, Sasha was feeling grumpy. She didn't want to go to school.

'My best friend Josie is unwell, and I won't have any friends' she said, grumpily. 'I'm staying in bed.' And she did. Mum had to get Jamie and Dan, the twins, dressed (Sasha's little twin brothers were only 3). When her mum called her again, it was almost 8 o'clock, and they were all late. Mum sounded cross! Sasha sped up and ate her breakfast quickly. She suddenly noticed how tired her mum looked. Sasha got the twins' shoes on for them and packed her school bag. When they went out the house she said 'Sorry mum. I should've got up quicker. Can I push the twins' buggy?'



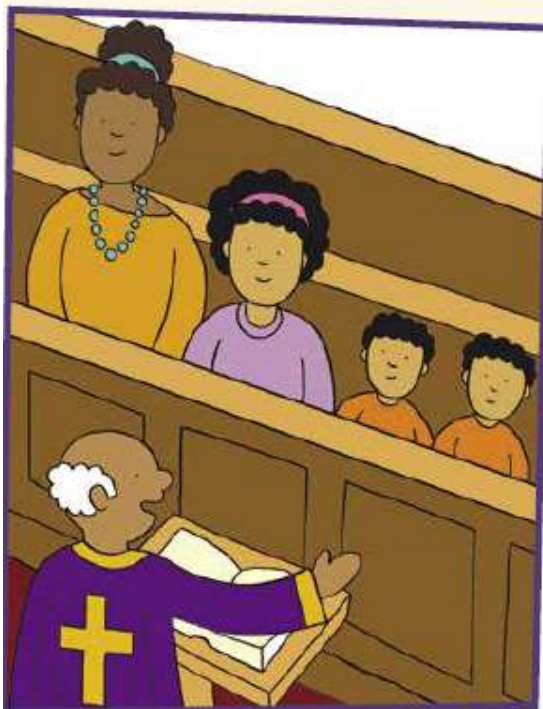
At school, it was not that bad. She got a good score in her maths. Then she sat with Harry during the art class. He was funny. Actually, Sasha laughed so much that she spilled her painting water on the table and it splashed over Harry's picture. 'Aaargghh!' he yelled. 'Sorry!' said Sasha. 'It was an accident.' They got a cloth and some paper and wiped it up. Harry said, 'My picture actually looks lots better now you've dripped water all over it.' Sasha laughed again.

After school, Sasha, Jamie and Dan were playing on their iPad. Jamie and Dan liked a game called 'Big Boggles', but Sasha thought it was babyish, and after the twins had been playing it for ages, she got impatient with them. She asked, 'Can I have a go now?' They carried on exploding the bogles in the game until Sasha was so fed up that she grabbed the iPad. Dan grabbed it back, but they dropped it on the floor. The screen went dark... Mum came in to see what the fuss was about. The children all said 'Sorry Mum, it wasn't me!' Mum restarted the iPad, and it all worked fine, but she took it away. 'Go in the garden and stop watching screens. You get grouchy when you are all on the screen together' she told them. They went out to play with their guinea pigs.

Oh no!

Aargh!

It wasn't me!



Jozie was better on Saturday, and Sasha went to her house to play. She didn't say sorry to anyone all day long. It was fun.

On Sunday, Jozie and Sasha and their mums and the twins all went to church. The minister said it was a good time to say sorry to God for anything they had done wrong. In the Lord's Prayer, they all said together: 'Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.' Sasha wasn't quite sure what it meant. The minister said 'God always forgives us when we are sorry.'

Sasha remembered being grumpy with her mum and spilling water on Harry's painting, and when they dropped the iPad. Everyone had their eyes closed to pray. Sasha closed her eyes too. 'Sorry for upsetting my family and my friends,' she prayed. 'Help me, God, to show them that I love them this week.' The minister said 'God hears all our prayers, and God always forgives us when we are sorry for anything we have done wrong.' Sasha sat quietly for a minute. She felt peaceful.

On the way home she asked her mum, 'Why do we say sorry to God?' Mum said, 'Ah, Sasha, you're a good girl. You're always quick to say sorry if you think you have upset anyone. God likes us to say sorry quickly, so we can forgive each other and be good next time. It's in the Bible.'

Questions to talk about

- Who did Sasha say 'sorry' to?
- Which of these 'sorrys' do you think was most difficult? Why?
- Sorry is sometimes very hard to say. Talk about times when it is hard to say sorry.
- If someone doesn't say sorry, what difference does that make?
- Sasha said sorry to God. Why do some people do this?

The life of Saint Paul in Thirty Sentences

A few years after Jesus was born, maybe in 8 or 10 AD, a little boy called Saul lived at Tarsus. He was super-clever.	Saul changed his old name to Paul. He and Barnabas set off together to spread the word about Jesus, starting in Cyprus.	Paul's letters were inspiring. To Corinth, he wrote about love: 'Love is patient and kind, never rude. Love never gives up. Love hopes all things. Love never ends.'
Aged 12, when it was time for his Bar Mitzvah, Saul had the chance to go to university in Jerusalem. His teacher was one of the best: Rabbi Gamaliel! Saul loved it.	For the next 12 years, Paul went from city to city all over the Roman world spreading the Gospel of Jesus everywhere. He started over 20 new churches.	In his letter to the Galatians, Paul described how to live: 'The fruit of the Holy Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness...'
As he got older, he was very committed to his religion, and he really didn't like new ideas. He specially opposed the followers of Jesus.	Paul was also a brilliant writer. He sent letters to all the new Christians in the different churches.	In his letter to Ephesians, Paul tells Christians: "wear armour like a soldier – the armour of God! The helmet of salvation and the shoes of peace..."
When Stephen, a leader of the early Christians, preached, Saul was furious. He organised a mob to stone Stephen to death, minding the coats while Stephen died.	There are 13 books in the Bible connected to Paul (maybe some were edited by his followers). They include the famous letters to Romans, Corinthians and Philippians.	In about 58AD Paul was arrested in Jerusalem and then sent to Rome by his enemies to be tried for his life. They said he was a troublemaker because of his new ideas about Jesus.
As Stephen died, he prayed for God to forgive those who stoned him! Saul found that dreadfully disturbing.	Paul had given up violence, but he was often treated violently by people who didn't like the message of love and peace he preached. He was imprisoned, beaten and chased by mobs.	After many adventures, Paul arrived in Rome as a prisoner. No one is quite sure what happened, but he was probably beheaded by the Romans in 62AD because he would not give up his faith in Jesus.

Saul got permission to go to Damascus to arrest any followers of Jesus there. Full of hate for the Christians, he travelled, but just outside the city...	One time he was in prison in Ephesus because of his preaching. An earthquake shook the chains and gates open: it was like being freed by an angel.	When the Christians put the Bible together, they included 13 books by Paul (maybe some were edited by his friends and followers).
...Saul's life changed forever. A bright light threw him from his horse, and a voice said 'Saul, Saul, why are you picking on me?'	One time Paul was on a ship to Rome and it was wrecked in a storm: he prayed for all the people to be safe, and everyone survived and came safe to shore.	Paul was involved with over 20 churches all over the known world, preaching, teaching, caring and sending letters about Jesus and the Gospel
It was the voice of Jesus. Saul was blinded by the light. He saw nothing for three days. Then a brave Christian came to visit him in Damascus and prayed for him. His sight returned.	Paul knew the Christians at Jerusalem were very poor so when there was a famine he raised money from all his new churches to help them. It was like an international charity.	After his death, Paul's fame grew stronger. 20 centuries after he lived, Christians today still tell his story and read his letters. Was he Jesus' greatest ever follower? Maybe.
Saul – who had hated Jesus and the Christians – became a follower of Jesus's way. He got baptised. But then for many years he went back to Tarsus. Had he wasted his life?	Paul was a very friendly man: one time in Philippi he met Lydia, a purple cloth dealer, and they started a church together by the riverside just out of town.	In one of his last letters Paul wondered why God had chosen him. He says 'I think it was because I was the worst. If Jesus could become my Lord, he could be Lord of all.'
Saul's Christian friend Barnabas went looking for him at Tarsus in 46AD. Saul was working as a tent maker. Barnabas encouraged Saul to use his wonderful talents and cleverness for God.	Could Paul hear messages from God? One time he had a dream inviting him to Thessalonica, in Greece. He went there and started a church, the very first church in Europe.	The message Paul always preached was: "You can't by yourself be good enough for God. But it doesn't matter. Jesus brought the gift of God's grace to save us all. Just trust Jesus." It's what he did himself.

My part of the story says:

Here's my picture to show what my sentence means:

What I learned about Saint Paul:

The important thing about my bit of the story is: