

Week 3:

Theme: The Security Guard: God's call to defend it– faith in hard times

Games: Help – You will need 2 “flags”. Divide the children into 2 teams and send them to stand either side of a dividing line. These are team bases and children cannot be tagged whilst in their own bases. Each team has a flag which is placed towards the back of the team playing space. The aim of the game is to capture the flag of the opposite team, and return it to team base without being tagged by a member of the opposing team. Anyone who is tagged whilst attempting to capture the flag is held prisoner and must stand by the flag, calling for help. If tagged by player of their own team, they are freed. All prisoners must be released before the flag can be taken.

Blindman Squirt: You need: Loaded water pistol, 2 blindfolds! Divide children into two equal teams. Allocate a number to each child. Leader calls out a number and the player from each team with that number is blindfolded. A leader spins each of the players around to disorient them. On Go, the blindfolded players find their way into the centre to find a water pistol aided by their team mates shouting directions. First player to find it may squirt their opponent. Repeat with new players.

Memory verse: Psalm 27: 1a. *“The Lord is my light and my salvation; I will fear no one.”* Divide the verse into 8 sections for each team. Place all the pieces, jumbled up in one big pile, away from the teams. On Go, players run to them, grab a piece and return. If they do not have that piece, they retain it. If they already have it, the next player returns that piece to exchange for another. Continue until all the pieces have been collected and put together.

Introduction: *There is a sketch in the resources.* This would be best performed by 2 leaders unless you have an older child with good sight reading skills.

Story: While the people were working on the wall, their enemies Sanballat and Tobiah bullied them by making fun of them and planning harm to them but the people were committed to completing their task and stood up to the bullies. (Nehemiah 2 : 19 and 4 : 1 - 23) See *resources*. Have a piece of paper. Each time the builders are mocked or made to feel small in the story, tear off a piece of the picture.

Application: Sanballat and Tobiah were on the “opposite team”. They didn’t like to see the people working together to build the wall and so they made fun of them and tried to make them feel bad. Often that is what bullies do too. They think it is fun to make people feel scared or bad about themselves. Sensitively, ask the children about any experiences they may have had of bullying. Make sure children know they should report bullying to an adult. Refer to sketch. What if the Coach in the sketch was God? When we are on God’s team, and turn to Him when we need help, He will guide us.

Prayer: Prayer meditation (see resources)

Final Game: Sucking seed relay: You need a straw for each child, 2 saucers for each team, dried peas or beans. Divide the children into teams. The children must transfer the dried peas from one saucer to the other by sucking them onto the straw. If the pea is dropped it doesn’t count.

Song: *“Great, great, brill, brill”*, **My God is so big Vol 2 CD**

Resources: There is a story, sketch, prayer, “Say No” sheet and fun sheet in the resources.

Week 3

Say “NO!” to Bullying

1. You know it is wrong.
2. You know it hurts others.
3. Bullying is no joke. It is never funny.
4. If you see someone being bullied, tell a teacher immediately.
5. Never copy others who bully.
6. Never join in with bullying.

If someone bullies you:

1. Try to stay calm and firm. Tell them to stop and walk away.
2. Go and tell a teacher immediately. Take a friend with you.
3. If you cannot get free, ask a friend to fetch an adult.
4. Tell your family what has happened.

God cares

If you are affected by bullying, why not pray to God. Tell him about how you feel, and ask him for help.

Probably the worst thing about being bullied is the feeling that you are about to be picked on by people, and that there is nothing that you can do about it. It could be that you are attacked through horrible words, or it could be that you are physically hurt. Both of these attacks hurt in different ways. Fear is normal - it is understandable. However, knowing that God is there with you - even when you are being bullied, can really help. God understands completely how you feel.

He shares your fear, sadness and sense of isolation. God is in support of you. He is on your side.



“If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31).

Even if bullies can make you suffer, hurt you and make your life a misery, they cannot take away your friendship with Jesus. There is nothing that they can say or do to stop that friendship.

All you have to do is start talking to Jesus - anytime, and you will remember that he is with you, listening and encouraging you. If you are afraid that Jesus will abandon you, do not be. Even if others have done this to you, Jesus promises in the Bible that,

“I will never leave you, or forsake you”
(Joshua 1:5, Deuteronomy 31:6).

He is always there, even if life is really horrible and scary, and it certainly does not feel as if he is with you.

If you have bullied others or are feeling guilty about something you have done wrong, which you know is separating you from Jesus, just say sorry to him, and he will forgive you. Again, God promises in the Bible that he will forgive people’s sins (1 John 1:8,9)

Even if you feel that no one else cares - there is no doubt

Week 3 – Sketch

Sticks and Stones

It is half time in an important football match. The Coach is talking to one of his players in the changing room. Tom is dejected, his head in his hands.

Tom: Coach, I don't think I can play the second half.

Coach: (surprised) Why not ? Are you injured? We need you out there?

Tom: No, it's not that, but, well, they keep calling me names. Especially when I scored. I don't think I can take it any more.

Coach: You don't think you can play because the opposing team are calling you names? What did they call you that was so bad?

Tom: They were calling me Weasel. And then started calling me Baggy Pants and then Loser! They make fun of my hair, my boots Everything. Why do they hate me so much?

Coach: Tom, they are from the other team. They'll do anything to help their team win! The only reason they are saying so many things to you is that you are doing a great job. They're trying to make you lose your nerve. Make you feel bad about yourself. And they seem to be doing a good job.

Tom: I guess so. They know it bugs me and the more upset I get, the more they do it. I don't usually miss penalties but all their shouting was making me feel so bad about myself that I missed an easy shot.

Coach: Don't listen to them, Tom. *I'm* he coach. If I think you are doing something wrong, I will tell you. If you're not sure what to do, look at ME and I will guide you. I want you to win. They don't. They aren't on your team.

Tom: Thanks Coach, I'm sorry I let them get to me.

Coach: That's ok. It's easy to do when there are hundreds of them and only one of me. Just remember that nobody wants you to win more than I do and nobody knows what to do for this team more than I do. Well, it's time to go out and win this game!

Tom: Let's do it!

Ask the children to sit or lie quietly in a space with their eyes closed.

Read this reflection:

Somewhere in the world, a boy is refusing to go to school. He is saying that he is feeling sick, that he is dizzy, that he wants to go back to bed. But he is not telling the truth. Really, he is too frightened to go to school. He knows he will be teased and made fun of if he goes, for that's what happens at school. He is made fun of every single day.

PAUSE

Somewhere in the world, a girl is creeping home the back way. She doesn't dare to go along the main road. A gang that hangs out there will get her for sure if she does. Whenever that girl leaves home, she creeps along back streets, terrified that she's going to be knocked around some more by a group of kids that pick on her simply for kicks.

PAUSE

Somewhere in the world, lonely kids are walking around crowded playgrounds all alone, unable to join in any of the games taking place because they are unwanted, unable to laugh and talk and fool around with the other kids, hating every moment of their long, lonely lunchtimes.

PAUSE

But this is not the way things are meant to be. If we cared for each other the way Jesus cared for those around him, none of us would cruelly inflict pain on another person. Teasing and bullying and other forms of cruelty would be things of the past.

Kind and caring God,

At times so many of your people hurt those around them. We offer you our prayers and trust that you will give us the strength to help rather than hurt. Jesus always treated others with kindness and care. Please help us to follow his example. Amen.

Week 3:Story

Sanballat ! You're a bully !

If you don't want to use the torn paper illustration, this would still make a great drama to act out !

When Sanballat and Tobiah, an official in Ammon heard that someone had come to restore the walls of Jerusalem, they were annoyed. They began to mock Nehemiah and the builders. *(tear piece off the picture)*

Sanballat, his companions and the Samaritan troops gathered where the Israelites were working. They pointed and laughed amongst themselves and ganged up against the Israelites, making fun of the builders. *(tear piece off the picture)*

“Look at that lot! Those pathetic Jews haven't a hope of rebuilding the walls! They are simply wasting their time!” laughed Sanballat unkindly. The others laughed at them too. *(tear piece off the picture)*

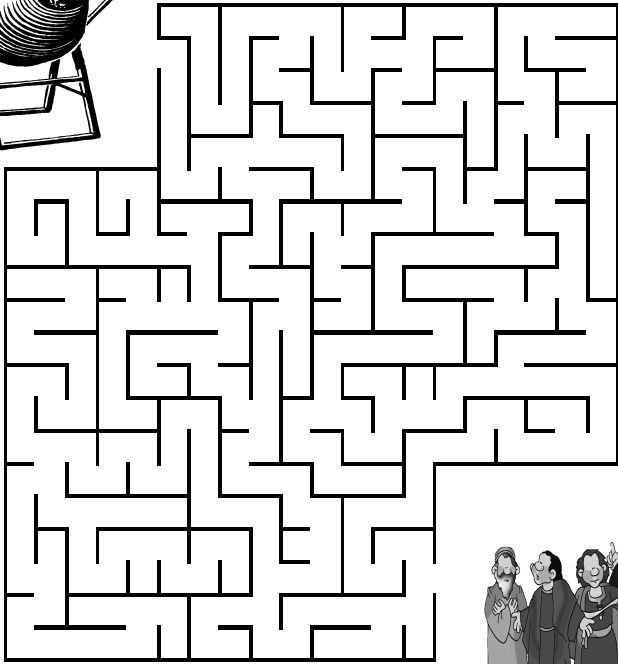
Tobiah was standing there beside him and sneered. “What a pathetic wall ...Just look at it. Even a fox could knock it down!” *(tear piece off the picture)*

Sanballat and his friends sniggered *(tear piece off the picture)*. The builders felt discouraged and sad. They felt like giving up *(tear piece off the picture)* but Nehemiah tried to motivate them. He prayed to God asking God to deal with the bullies severely. Then he persuaded the builders to carry on working.

But this just made Sanballat, Tobiah and their followers angry. They plotted against Nehemiah and the builders, looking for ways to make them feel useless or to get them into trouble. *(tear piece off the picture)* They were determined to stop the work on the wall. Luckily, God provided people who came and warned Nehemiah about the plans to harm him and the Israelites. Nehemiah was determined NOT to give up no matter how many plots were planned. He saw that the people were afraid and discouraged *(tear piece off the picture)* so he said to them, “Don't be afraid of our enemies. We are going to stand up to these bullies. Remember how great and powerful God is and fight for your wives, your children and your homes!”

He told the workers to arm themselves with spears and swords. Then he positioned half of the workers along the walls to protect those who were still building. If they saw the enemy, they were to sound an alarm and soldiers would rally to their defence. From then on, half of Nehemiah's men worked on the walls and half stood guard armed with spears, shields and bows. Even those who were building used just one hand and kept a weapon in the other. They worked day and night like this, sleeping in their clothes and keeping their weapons close. The Israelities stood up to the bullies! God was going to have the victory!

Week 3. God's call to defend it – faith in hard times



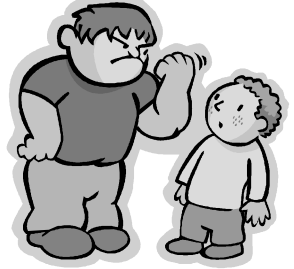
“The Lord is my light
and my salvation;
I will fear no one.”

*There's more building
to be done! Help the
workers find their
cement.*



Try and work out the
message by moving the 8
tiles around. The message
has 4 words.

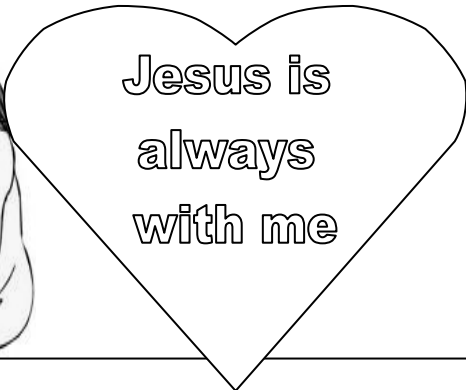
Psalm 27 v 1



**Find the words in the word
search below.**

f o x l q t s e r i s s
g o l e o y l j e n w r
q a r b f u p l b s e e
w n i e c i x u u u j n
x a b i i k p v i l n o
h r d w w g e o l t c s
z i p e m g n u d s w i
r e l b b u r t i a g r
j t t a l l a b n a s p
p r o g r e s s g r a l
g x c v t t v z k n u i
f r e q b g i l w h w b

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Jesus is
always
with me

- | | |
|-----------|------------|
| burnt | rebuilding |
| foreign | temple |
| fox | rubble |
| insults | ridicule |
| jews | sanballat |
| prisoners | tobiah |
| progress | wall |

Do you know any one who has been bullied or have you ever been bullied? Maybe, you know that you have acted as a bully yourself. In the space below, write a prayer asking God to help you.