

The Kingdom of God Was Not What They Thought

Materials I Need:

Legend:

 = Option 1, Appropriate for 1st – 2nd Grade

 = Option 2, Appropriate for 3rd – 6th Grade

Bolded Words in Story = Key Concepts to Highlight during the Bible Adventure

Aim Questions:

1. Jesus told parables about a fig tree, a mustard seed, a woman making bread and a feast at a man's house. Pick two of these, tell them in your own words, and then explain what Jesus was teaching with this parable.
2. What did Jesus do on the Sabbath, and how did the people react?
3. Why was Jesus going to Jerusalem?
4. Jesus said we must enter by the narrow door. Is there any other way to enter the Kingdom of God?
5. What did He mean, and how are you going to enter by the narrow door?

Hook:

Tied up in Knots (Activity). Bring several lengths of cord. Let students play with tying and untying knots. Students could challenge each other to untie the cords they have knotted. Jesus is going to have an argument with the leaders in our lesson today about who or what should be untied.

That's Embarrassing! (Discussion). What does it mean to be embarrassed or humiliated? Have students share stories of times when they were embarrassed. (*These should be the funny times, not the painful ones*). In today's story, Jesus finally humiliates His opposition in the Jewish leadership. Listen to find out how this happens.

The Kingdom of God (Learning Activity). Give each child a small amount of plain colored play-dough. Then place a few drops of food coloring in each piece. Have students mix the food coloring into the play-dough thoroughly. **DEBRIEF:** The food coloring is like the Kingdom of God, it cannot be stopped. Just a little bit of color takes over and spreads throughout the play-dough, completely changing it into something new. Listen to the story today to see to what things Jesus compares the Kingdom of God. **Variations:**

1. Fill a beaker or glass pitcher full of water. Stir it until it is swirling at the top and then add a few drops of bright food coloring. Watch as the color quickly spreads through the entire beaker.
2. Mix up a small batch of yeast dough at the beginning of class. Discuss with students what they think will happen to the dough if left in a nice, warm spot. See the application in **TOOK** time.

Recipe for yeast:

Melt **2 Tbsp. margarine** in medium-sized bowl (*one that has a lid*).

Add **one egg** and beat with a fork.

Mix in **2 Tbsp. sugar**, and **½ tsp. salt**.

Add **¾ cup warm water**.

Then add **2 ¼ cups flour** and beat until smooth.

Cover and store in the fridge. - until the day of class.

Remove early to allow time for batter to return to room temperature.

At beginning of class-time, **mix one package quick-rising active dry yeast** with **¼ cup warm water**.

Add this mixture to the dough and mix thoroughly (*allow students to help*).

Put in a warm place to rise until later.

3. Combine 1 cup of very warm water, 2 tsp of sugar, and 1 packet of dry yeast. Stir to dissolve. Set aside for five minutes and see what happens.



Book:

Presentation Ideas -



The Crippled Woman (Illustration/Overhead). Luke 13:10-17 Jesus heals a woman on the Sabbath who had been bent over double for eighteen years, **BLUK12.GF1**.



The Narrow Door (Illustration/Overhead). Luke 13:24 He said to them, "Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to. Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, 'Sir, open the door for us.' But he will answer, 'I don't know you or where you come from,'" (**BLUK12.GF2**).

Bible Adventure -

We've all seen movies or television shows where the hero, against impossible odds and in a deadly situation, manages to find a way to escape to safety in the nick of time. We give a sigh of relief and think, "That was really cool the way he did that." We might even go so far in our thinking that we imagine things are going to go that way in real life. You and the people you love are always going to escape danger, just in time.

There were people in Jesus' time who thought that way. The danger they were in was spiritual, and it came from wrong thinking about God and about His Kingdom. While Jesus continued to teach the crowds, some of the people who were there were talking to Him about some Jews who had been killed by Pilate and about others who had died when a tower collapsed on them. The people were asking Jesus if the death of those Jews was punishment by God because they were actually bad people. Jesus asked them if they really thought the ones who died were more guilty than any other of God's people. Jesus answered His own question with a definite, "No!" and gave a warning; unless they changed their ways, they would perish and miss out on eternal life. When Jesus used the word perish, He was not talking only of physical death. He was telling them that unless they entered the Kingdom of God, they would be separated from God forever. The way to enter that Kingdom was standing among them, speaking God's Words. Yet still many rejected Him. They refused to repent of their sin.

Jesus went on to tell a story to let the people know how important repentance is. The story was about a landowner that had planted a fig tree. Every year for three years he had come to his vineyard to see if there were any figs on the tree. Every year he was disappointed to find a bare tree. The landowner talked to the caretaker of the vineyard, saying he wanted the tree cut down because it was just using up good soil and not producing anything. **The caretaker knew that fig trees normally took three years before bearing any fruit, so he begged the landowner to leave the tree alone for another year and give it one last chance to bear fruit.** Like the tree, the people of Israel were also being given one last chance as Jesus spoke. He was calling them to respond, and the fruit He was looking for was true repentance. This was a difficult thing for many of them to understand. They had a long history of thinking of themselves as God's chosen people. Each one thought he was doing fine, just because he

was Jewish. It would be like us thinking that we are all going to heaven, just because we are Americans. Here in this country there are many people who believe that going to church is all you need to get you into heaven. If we fall into that way of thinking but our lives do not show that we have turned the control of our lives over to Jesus, we are no different than the Jews Jesus spoke to that day.

Luke recorded a meeting between Jesus and a crippled woman that further illustrates to us Israel's need for repentance (*place Illustration BLUK12.GF1*). The woman had been doubled over by an evil spirit for eighteen long years. As Jesus was teaching in the synagogue He saw her, called out to her and healed her on the spot. She immediately stood up straight and tall and began to praise God. Were the synagogue leaders happy to see this woman set free from her pain? Not them! Instead, the leaders began to talk to the people gathered there, telling them that there were six days of the week when they could come and be healed. They should not do it on the Sabbath. Imagine that. The nation of Israel was like that crippled woman, bent over because they listened to the lies of the devil instead of the heart of God. To Jesus, the woman's need was more important than rules and regulations. To Him, the synagogue leader's disapproval of healing on the Sabbath was typical of the way the leaders of Israel scoffed at Him as He tried to show them what God's character is like. **Jesus reminded the leaders that they would certainly untie their donkey or ox and lead it to water on the Sabbath.** Wasn't the crippled woman worth more than an animal? They were humiliated by Jesus' words to them. People were beginning to see the startling contrast between their ways and God's ways. Luke wrote that some of the people were delighted with all the things Jesus was doing. **Jesus told them God's Kingdom was growing, like a tiny mustard seed grows into a huge plant and like a little bit of yeast in bread that makes the whole batch rise.** Nothing could stop it. Eventually the whole world would be changed.

The people of Israel believed the Kingdom of God was open only to them, but the way they reacted to Jesus showed that they were not in tune with God's plan. Their Messiah, Jesus, was standing before them, and they consistently resisted His teaching and His leadership. Jesus told them another story that reminded them again that He was their last chance to enter God's Kingdom. The story was about the owner of a house. Everyone was very anxious to go into the house. **There was only one door by which they could enter,** (*place Illustration BLUK12.GF2*). Once the owner closed that door, there was no way to enter. People would be standing outside, knocking on the door and begging to be let in, but the owner would say he never knew them. He saw them only as evildoers and would not open the door for them. Jesus told the people that the house was the Kingdom of God. There was only one door into it, and that door was Jesus, Himself. There is one door, and when it is closed, it will be too late. Jesus was and is the only One who can offer us entrance into the Kingdom. Those on the outside of the door may have seen Jesus, may have listened to His teaching, but if they had not entered by accepting Him, they would never enter. Hey kids, there is such a thing as too late to enter. The Jewish nation was getting their final warning. For many of them, their decisions to reject and even kill Jesus would close the door forever. If they could look inside the house, inside the Kingdom, they would be surprised. Of course Isaac, Abraham, and Jacob would be inside. The prophets would be sitting at the banquet table, too. They were the best of Israel. But there would also be people from the Four Corners of the earth, Jews **and** non-Jews. The kingdom was going to look like nothing the Jews expected.

At this time some Pharisees came to Jesus, trying to frighten Him by warning Him that Herod planned to kill Him. They may have been trying to keep Him from going to Jerusalem, which was what Jesus intended to do. He was not going to let Herod or anyone else stop Him. He knew He had to go to Jerusalem and die. We get a glimpse of the Savior's heart when He said of the Holy City, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing." Can you imagine His sorrow? His people would reject Him, their last chance. So many had closed the door and would now never gain entrance to the Kingdom. Others put off the decision, thinking it not important enough or that they had time later to respond to Him.

Jesus knows our hearts so well. He knows that people are the same today as they were when He walked this earth. Some will reject Him outright, others will put off making a decision. Jesus warns that when we fail to accept Him, the door into His Kingdom becomes closed to us. For the people who Pilate killed, it was too late to decide. When the door to the house was closed, it was too late even for those who had seen Jesus face to face.


Putting our faith in Christ is not something to be taken lightly. It's not just older people who reject Him or

fail to decide to follow Him. You can make a final rejection of Jesus when you are still quite young. Jesus' message to us is crystal clear, "Believe now, repent now, enter the Kingdom."



Look:




Enter Through the Narrow Gate (Game).  Beforehand, make small paper hearts from red construction paper on which is written "Jesus Free Me." Pin each child with a paper heart and play "London Bridges Falling Down" with the words:

Enter through the narrow gate, narrow gate, narrow gate
Enter through the narrow gate, my dear children.

When a student gets trapped, they can only be freed by using their heart to get out of the trap. The gatekeepers of the bridge take the heart and place it at the "gate entrance" which would be at their feet. Play continues until a player who has already used up their card gets trapped again. They are now "out" and must join the other gatekeepers. Only Jesus can free us! Play continues until each sinner has entered through the narrow gate. **DEBRIEF:** Can we enter through the narrow gate just by chance, or is it by choice? What choice do we have to make before we can enter in? Why Jesus?



Red Rover, Red Rover (Game).  Cut apart **BLUK12.GF3** and pin one heart on each student. The object of the game is for the students to gain access to the other side by presenting their heart to the "Gatekeepers." Line up students in equal teams with a teacher/helper as "Gatekeeper" on each team. Before the game, secretly inform the "Gatekeepers" that only the hearts represented with a cross can enter in, they are not to tell the other students nor are they to suggest who is called over. As students are called over they must present their heart to the "Gatekeeper" at which time they will be granted or denied entrance. If the heart is represented by a cross, the "Gatekeeper" takes the heart off the student without showing it to the rest of the class. The student now passes safely through the gate and can no longer be asked to go to the other side as he or she does not have a heart pass. Set a time limit. Some students may figure out quickly what it is that gains them entrance. The team with the most hearts collected by the "Gatekeepers" wins.



I Want Jesus Most of All (Game). The intent of this game is to teach students to respond as Jesus would. Give each student a card from **BLUK14.GF4**. Have kids sit in a circle but not show anyone what their card says. Have "IT" stand in the middle and go up to any student they choose and say, "Can you help me?" Anyone with a day of the week says, "Sure, it's _____ (*Monday, Tuesday, etc.*). Anyone with a Sabbath cards says, "No, I can't help you, it's the Sabbath." Anyone with a Jesus card replies, "Of course, I know Jesus." "IT" trades cards and places with whomever they spoke. The new "IT" now approaches someone else but must wait 3 turns before they can approach someone that has just been called, that way people have to remember who has the Jesus cards and also more students get to participate. The goal is to find and keep a Jesus card as those with Jesus cards at the end of the set time limit wins.



The Narrow Door in 3-D (Craft).

Materials needed for each student:

1 duplex copy of **BLUK12.GF5 Pg. 1 and Pg. 2** (*When copying, make sure feast is at opposite end of page where door is located.*)

Scissors

Instructions:

1. Cut the instructions off of **BLUK12.GF5**. Color the picture.
2. Cut off the segmented strip located on side of main section. Cut in half at mark. Cut slits on the other marks. This will serve as stands for the completed craft.
3. Cut top, bottom and right side of door. Fold it open along the uncut side.
4. Cut slits in bottom of the main section and fold on the broken line so that the door is on the outside. Insert main section into stand pieces. When the door is opened, the "feast" inside should be revealed.

DEBRIEF: Why isn't there a knob on the outside of the door?

Kingdom of God (*Worksheet/Craft*). 🐘

Materials needed for each student:

1 copy of BLUK12.GF6	Raisins	Piece of heavy string about 6" long
Scissors	Glue	Tape

Instructions:

1. Cut on the line to separate instructions and "extras" from the main part of the page.
2. Glue raisins on the tree.
3. Tape a heavy string on the donkey's neck to tie and untie.
4. Cut out the bowl and glue it in place. Glue only where indicated on the page.
5. Slip "rising" dough into the bowl.
6. Tape the door on top of the "feast" using one long piece of tape at **one side**. This will act as a hinge.

DEBRIEF: Who or what is the narrow door?

Kingdom of God (*Poem*). This can be framed with construction paper and a "pop can top" hanger attached, **BLUK12.GF7**.

They Thought - He Taught (*Worksheet*). 🦋 Connect each mistaken idea in the first column with the correct teaching of Jesus in the second column. Then connect the picture that applies to this theme. Hint: Look for the word in bold print, **BLUK12.GF8**.

Fig Futures (*Discussion*). Read the story from Luke 13:6-9. Have students speculate on what might have happened a year later. Did it bear fruit? What did it mean for the tree? How does it represent Israel?

Closed Doors (*Discussion*). Does the narrow door remind you of another story of a door that was open for a time, but then was closed for good? See the story of the door into Noah's ark. What are the similarities?

Rising Dough (*Object Lesson*). Take a look at our rising dough (*this may need to wait until the last bit of class-time*). What has happened? How is the Kingdom of God like this dough? Could we change our minds and make the dough go back to the way it was before?
If the dough rises too much, stir it down. Take the dough home.

To make rolls, drop the batter into greased muffin tins. Bake at 400° for 15 minutes. Makes 1 dozen.

(You might freeze them and serve them for snack and review next week)



Took:

Good or Bad Fruit (*Activity*). Make a big tree on butcher paper. Hand out apple cut-outs from **BLUK12.GF9** to students and have them write down things they did this week that pleased God or things they will do next week to please God. Then have each student come up front, present their apple to the class and stick it on the tree. **Teachers:** Please follow-up next week on what the students said they would do.

All Directions (Object Lesson). Show a compass. Find east, west, north and south. Read Luke 13:29. "People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God." Which nationalities of people are invited to enter God's kingdom? How's that for multi-cultural? Aren't you glad He wants everyone? Aren't you glad He wants you?

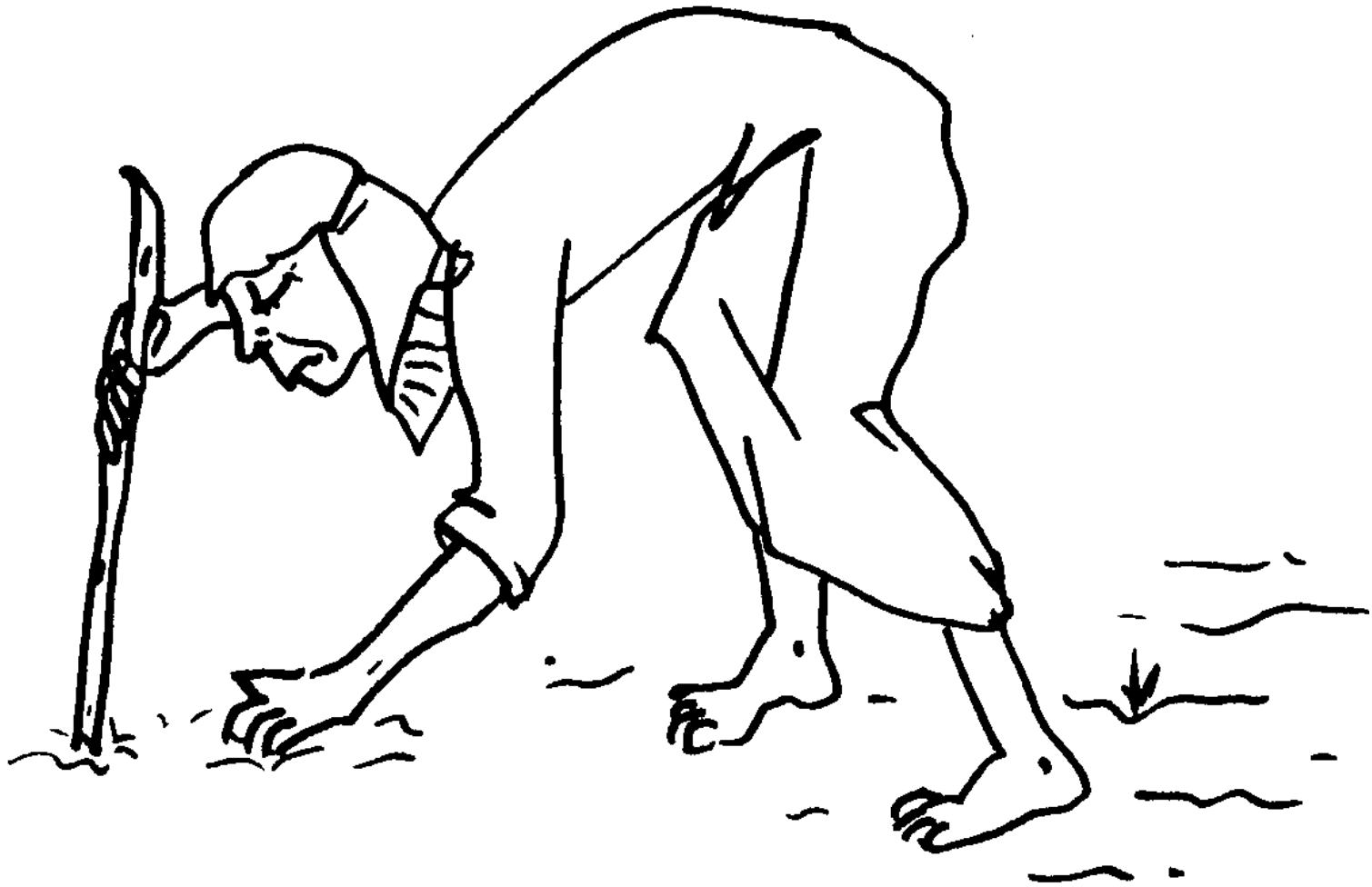
Feast of the Kingdom (Maze). Find your way to join the feast, **BLUK12.GF10.**

Journey with Jesus (Journal). Make an entry into your journal. Any disciple might write something like this:

We were in the synagogue for the Sabbath today. Jesus was teaching the people. He stopped to heal a crippled woman and the synagogue ruler criticized Him. The ruler told the people to come on other days for healing. But Jesus asked them why they were allowed to untie an animal on the Sabbath when they wouldn't do anything to help a person. For once the rulers were humiliated! The people are becoming very pleased with what Jesus is doing.

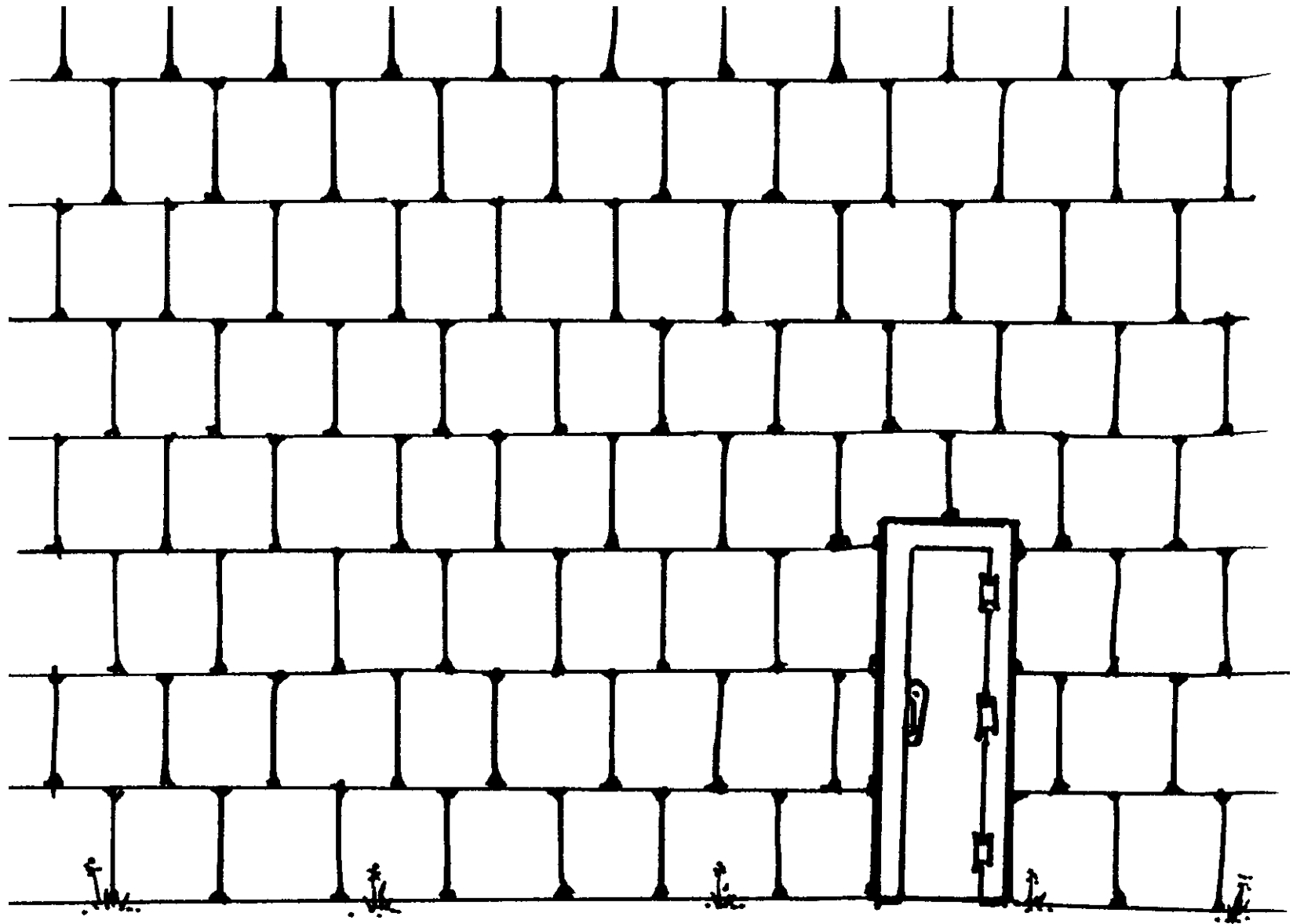
Special Invitation (Invitation to Come to Christ). Teachers: Students have been shown through the lesson that there is a narrow gate and it will be too late someday. Explain the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and give them an opportunity to come to Him today. Be prepared to counsel them after class and give them additional materials if needed. Plan to check on them during the week if they've made a decision.

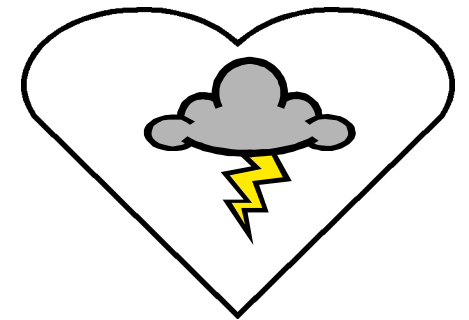
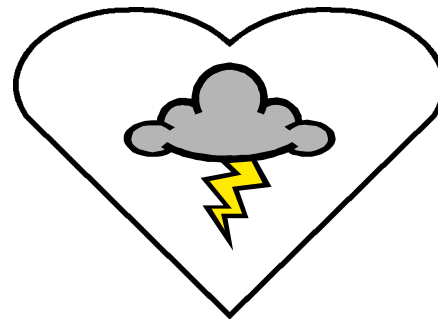
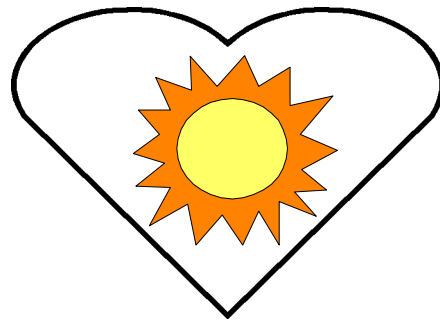
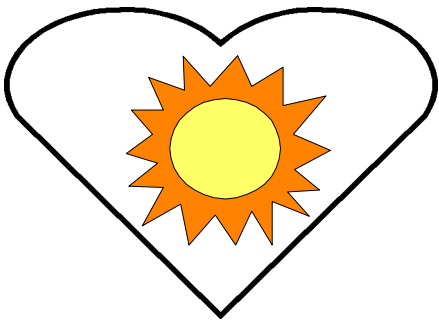
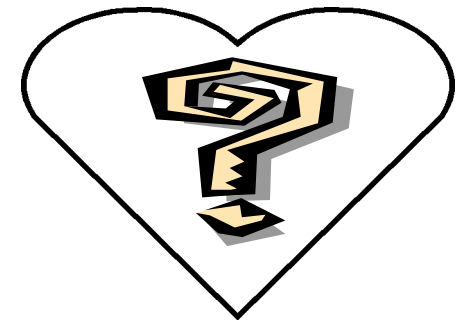
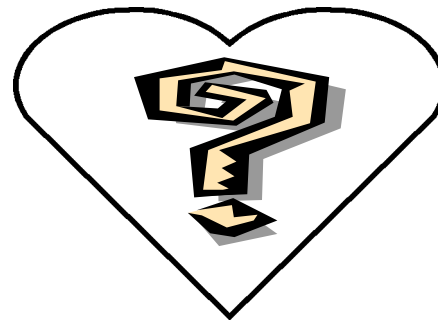
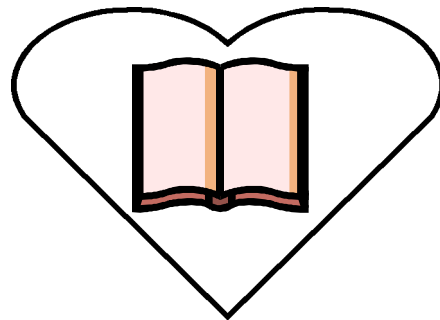
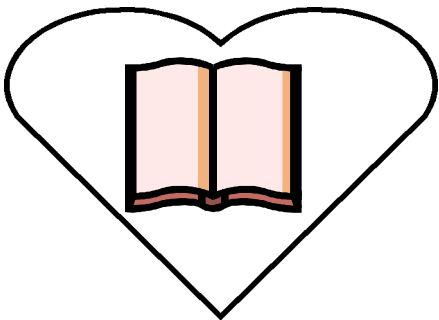
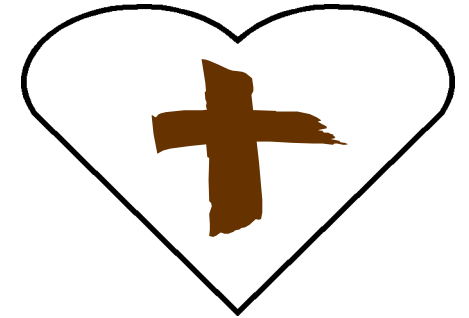
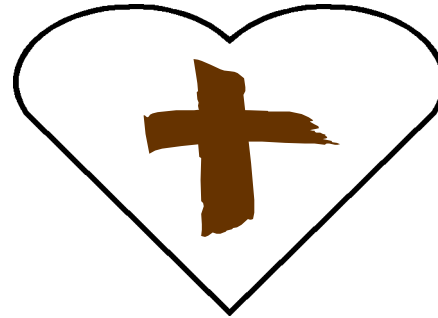
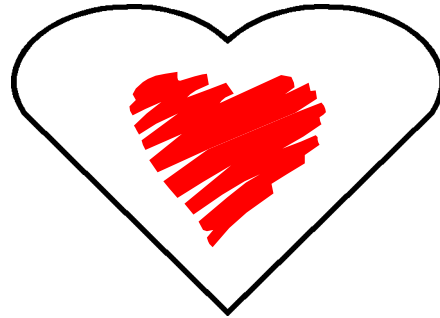
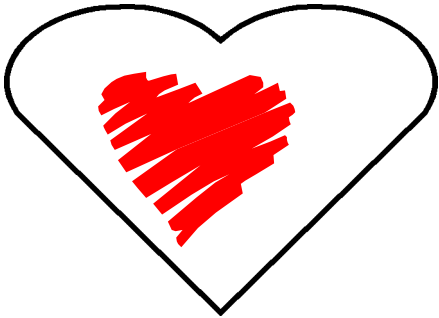
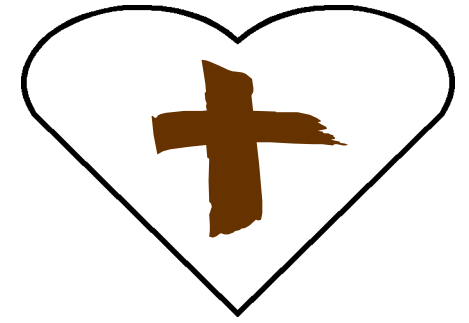
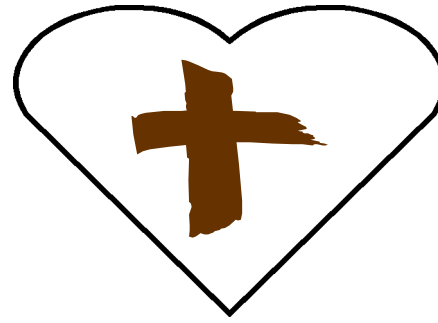
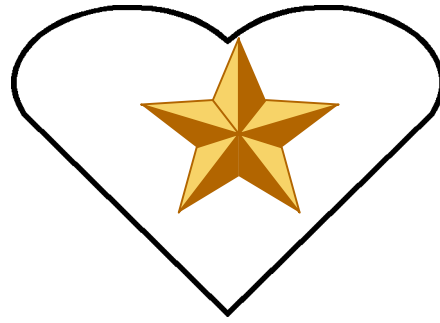
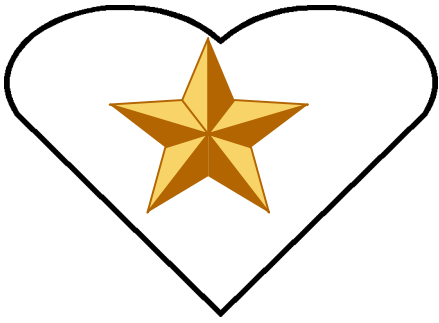
The Crippled Woman



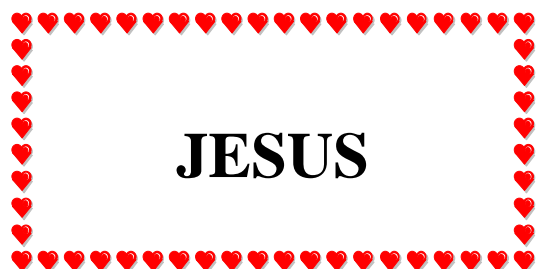
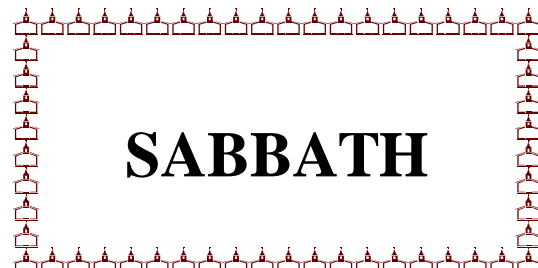
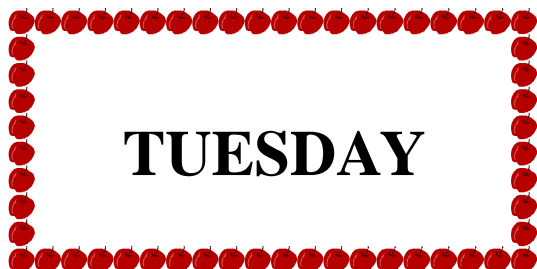
BLUK12.GF1

The Narrow Door



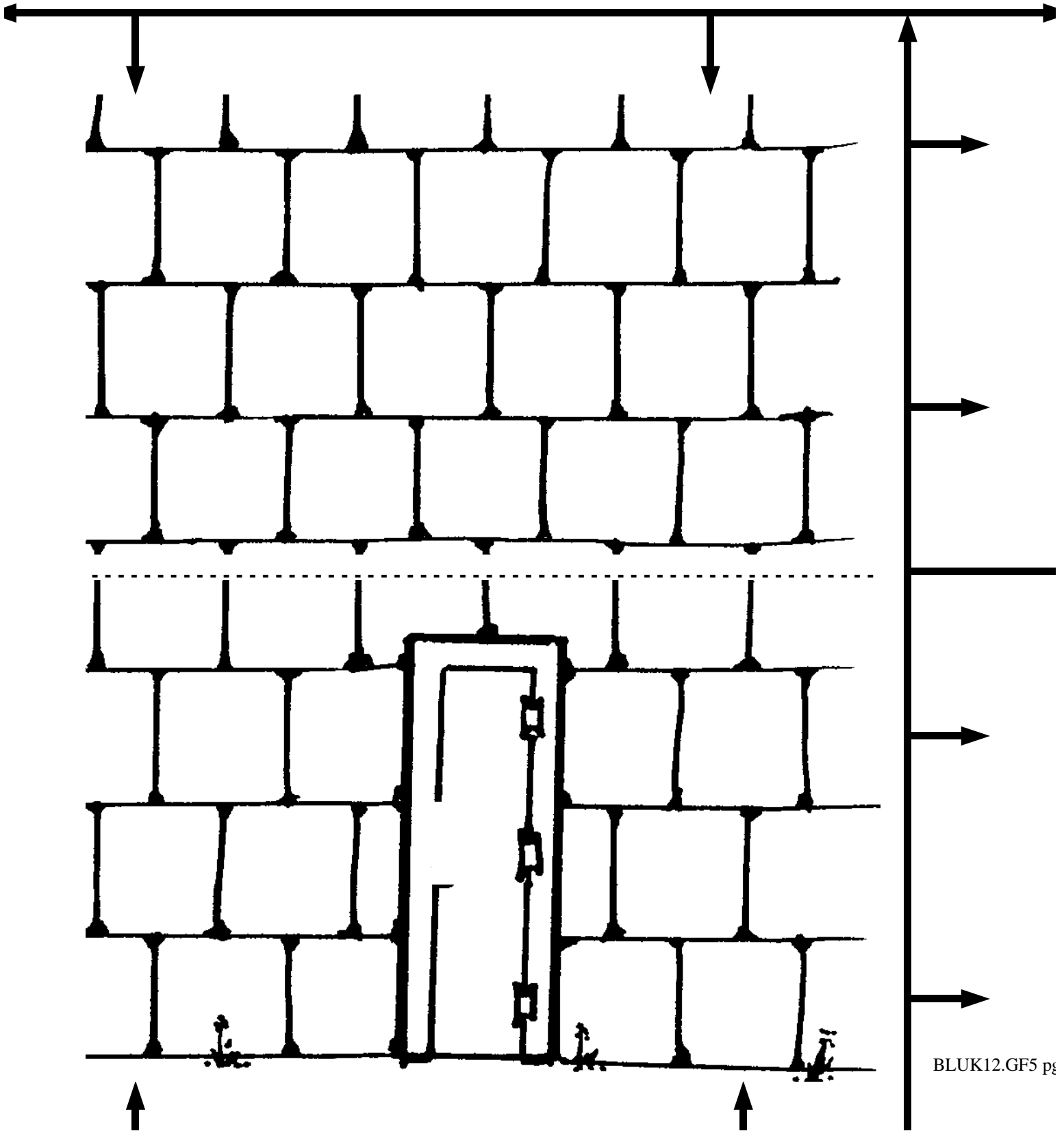


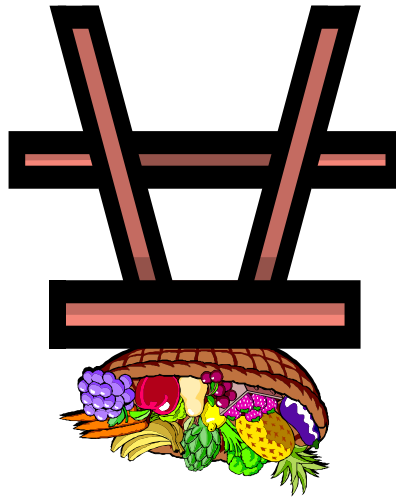
I Want Jesus Most of All



The Narrow Door in 3-D

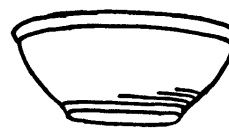
Cut away these instructions on the arrowed line. Cut off segmented strip on right side. Cut in half at mark. Cut slits on arrows. Cut top, bottom and left side of door. Fold it open along uncut side. Fold main section in half on the broken line so that door is on the outside. When the door is opened, the “feast” inside should be revealed. Cut slits in bottom of main section and “stand” pieces where indicated. Insert door section into “stand” pieces. Think: Why isn’t there a knob on the outside of the door?





Kingdom of God

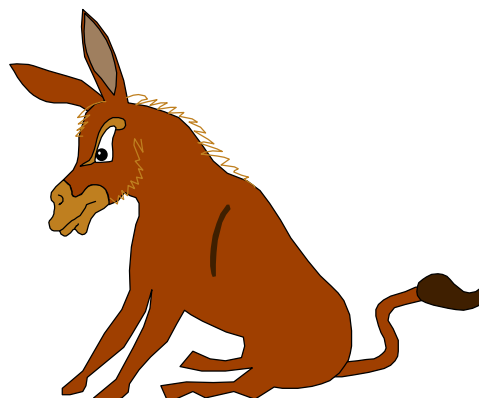
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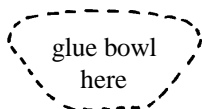
His tree had no figs,
but the farmer would wait.
Repent and bear fruit
before it's too late.



They kept lots of rules,
but also their sin.
When they came to God's Kingdom,
they couldn't get in.



Yeast spreads and rises
when mixed into dough.
The same way God's Kingdom
will flourish and grow.



Now enter
the Kingdom
through the
narrow door.

When you've
missed every
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You can
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Kingdom of God

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They Thought - He Taught

Connect each mistaken idea in the first column with the correct teaching of Jesus in the second column.

Connect the picture that applies to this theme. Hint: Look for the word in bold print.

They Thought

People who suffered greatly were sinful. So, since they were wealthy and comfortable, maybe they didn't need to **repent**.

Keeping **rules** was more important than helping someone in need.

They could trap Jesus and stop the Kingdom of God from **spreading**.

They could **enter** the Kingdom any time because they were children of Abraham.

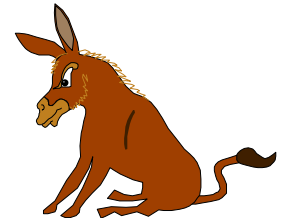
He Taught

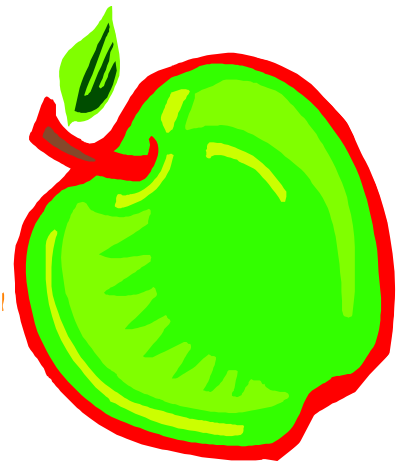
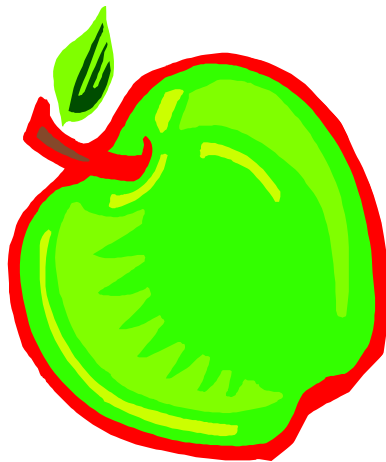
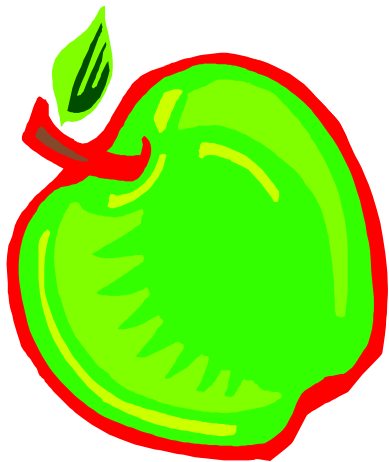
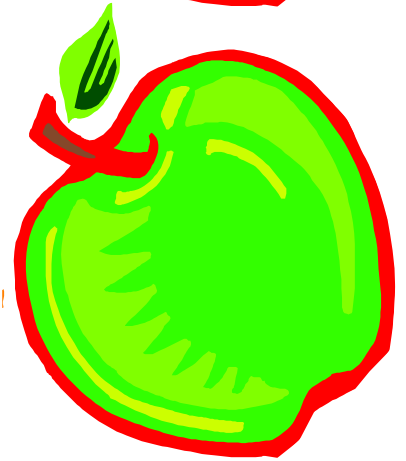
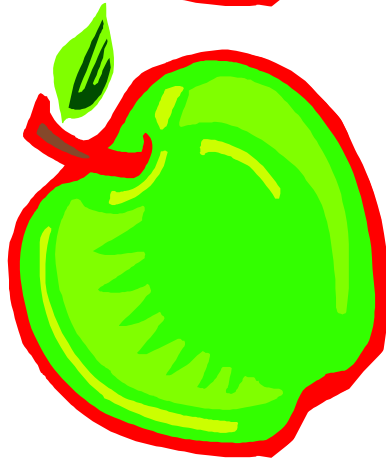
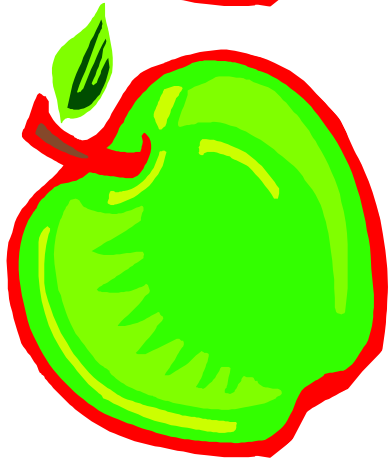
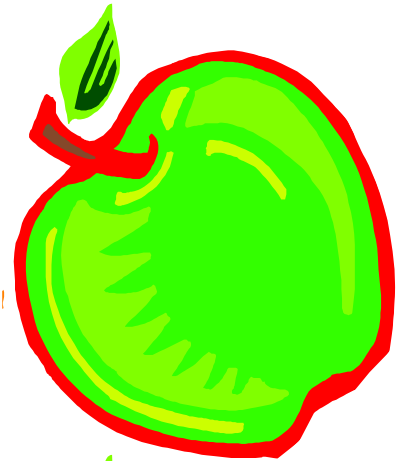
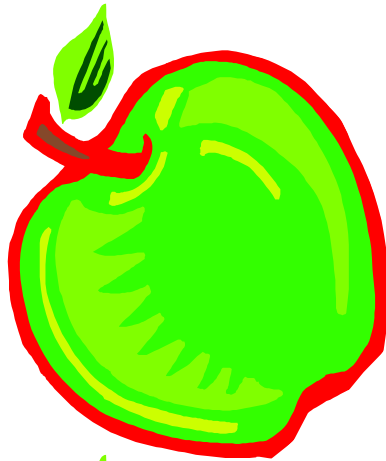
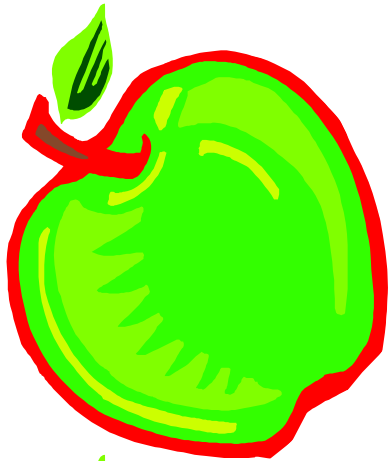
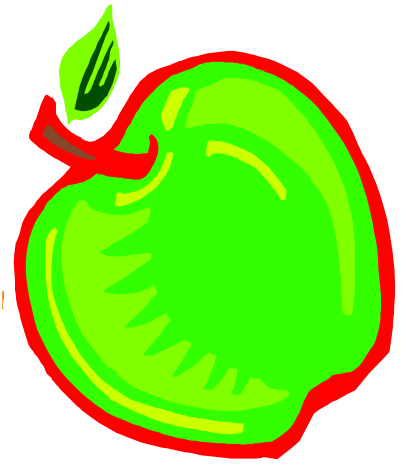
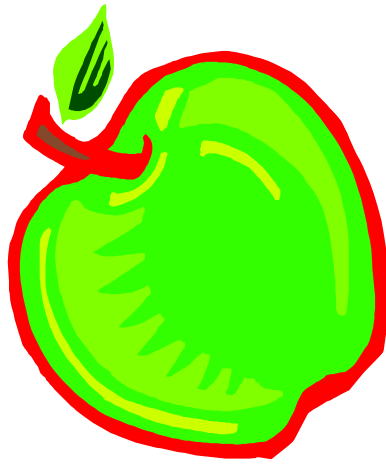
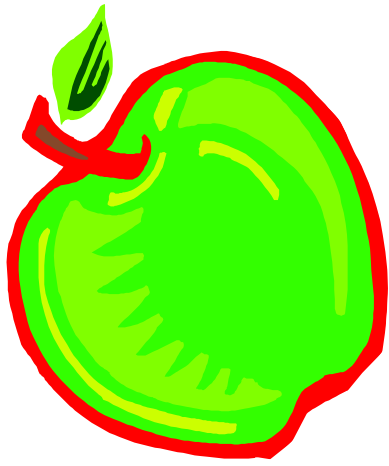
You are hypocrites when you treat your animals better than a crippled woman because of your rules.

The farmer will wait for his fig tree to bear fruit, but not forever. You need to repent and bear fruit or you will perish.

Enter into the Kingdom now while you have the chance. Someday, the narrow door will be closed for good.

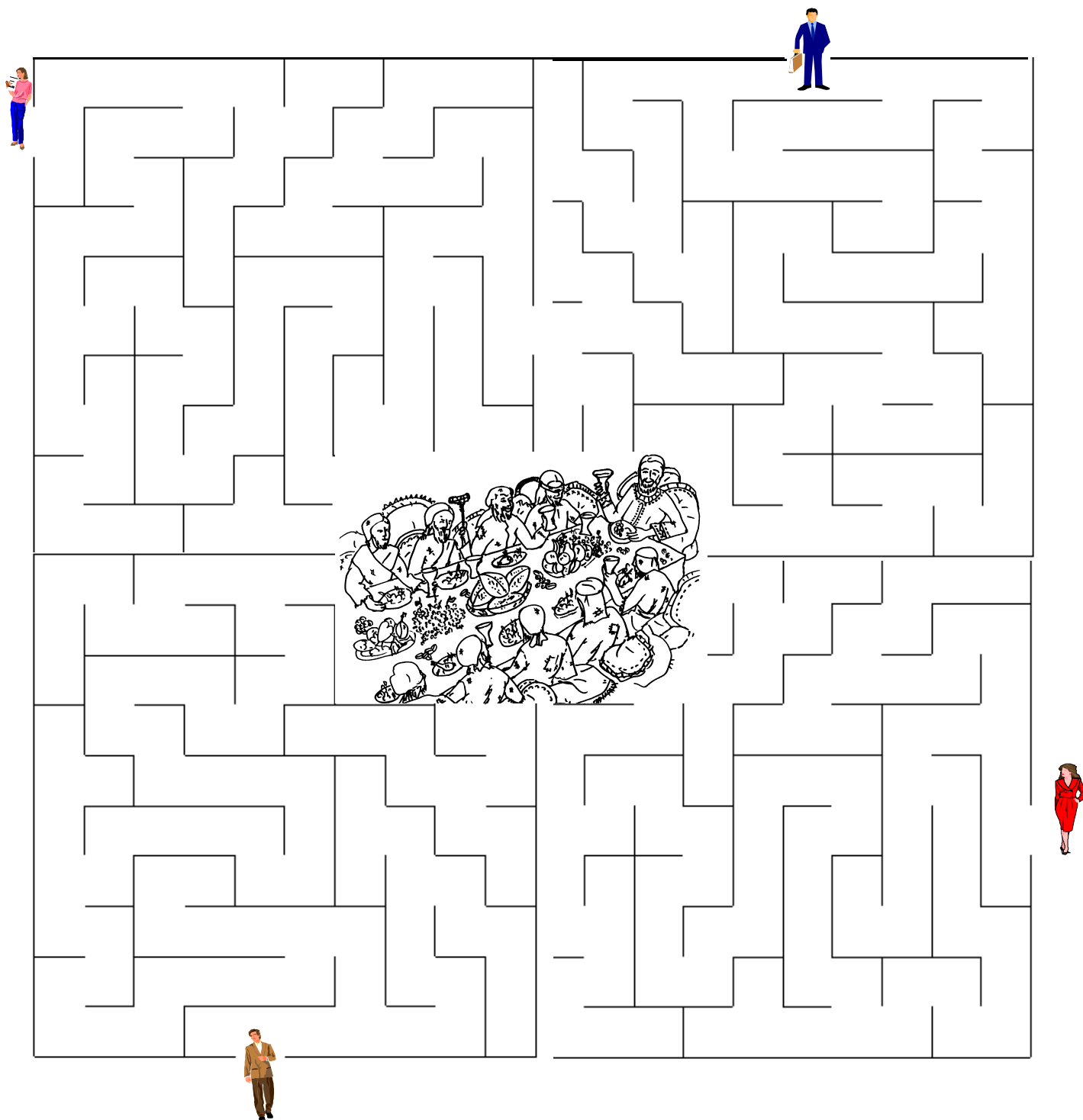
Like yeast that was mixed through the dough and like a mustard seed that grew into a tree, the Kingdom of God was spreading and could not be stopped.





FEAST OF THE KINGDOM MAZE

Help these people find their way to the great banquet God will spread out for those who do not reject Him.



People will come from east, west, north and south,
to take their places at the feast in the Kingdom of God.