



SESSION **4**

Year of jubilee



MEETING AIM

To discover what Jesus came to Earth to do!



BIBLE PASSAGE

Luke 4:14-30



BACKGROUND

This session continues the story of Jesus and what he came to Earth to do: to bring good news, freedom and sight to everyone. The deeper context of this may not mean much to our children at the moment, but it is good to focus on the fact that Jesus came to do some amazing things! He came to bring freedom and good news. Help children realise what this good news is – that Jesus came to reconcile his people to God.

+ CIRCLE TIME



As you begin the session, invite the children to sit together in a circle and share a story from their week. Sometimes it's helpful to have a sand timer so that you have time for each person to share if they want to. If a child doesn't want to say anything, that's fine. Pray and thank God for all the stories shared and the stories that weren't mentioned.

+ SCROLL-MAKING



You will need: sheets of A4 paper; cold tea; paintbrushes; lengths of ribbon

Give the children a sheet of paper each and show them how to paint cold tea onto paper to make it look old. Let the paper dry out and then help the children to roll up the paper into a scroll and tie it with a piece of ribbon. As you work, talk about whether the children have ever seen old books or scrolls themselves. What does the paper look like?

If you're short of time, stain and dry the paper before the session.

+ BIBLE STORY



You will need: cushions and / or rugs; an aged scroll with Jesus' words written on

Explain to the group that today you are going to become part of the story. Start by getting the children and leaders to sit or

kneel on cushions around you, as if they were in the synagogue. Ask one leader to play the part of Jesus:

After he had been baptised, Jesus went into the desert for 40 days. Imagine that! The Holy Spirit was with him and he amazed the people with his teaching. He went to Nazareth, the town where he grew up and spoke in the synagogue. He read from the scroll that was given to him.

Give the scroll to the leader playing the part of Jesus and ask them to read out the words.

"God's spirit is with me! He has asked me to tell the good news to the poor, to let prisoners go and help blind people see again, to set people free and to tell everyone that the time has come for God to save them!"

He sat back in his place. (*Your 'Jesus' should sit back down.*) He said: "Today, right here, this has come true!" The people were impressed but confused. Jesus was just a local boy, a carpenter's son. He wasn't anyone special!

Encourage the children to look confused and ask each other: "What is he talking about?"

Jesus said to them: "I expect you want me to do wonderful things here like I did in Capernaum. But I know that if I did you would not appreciate them. A prophet is never welcomed in his home town. The scriptures tell us this is true. Elijah was sent by God to help a hungry widow far away even though people at home were starving too. Elisha cured a Syrian man with a horrible skin disease, not an Israelite."

This made the people very angry and they chased him out of the synagogue and to the edge of a cliff in the village.

At this point have the group form an angry mob and encourage them to shout and wave their arms as they 'chase' Jesus.

They were going to hurt him, but Jesus turned and walked away through the crowd.

+ CHATTING TOGETHER



Ask the children these questions, encouraging everyone to take turns to contribute:

- Which part of the story did you like the most? Why?
- Which part didn't you like? Why?
- Which bit that Jesus read from the scroll did you like the best?
- Has Jesus helped you? How?

+ CREATIVE RESPONSE



You will need: cushions and / or rugs from the Bible story

Return to sitting as though you were in the synagogue. Ask the children to imagine how the people of Nazareth felt hearing such an ordinary person say such amazing things. Can they imagine why the people became so angry?

Have a leader pretend to be a listener in the synagogue. The children can ask them questions about how they knew Jesus before and what they think of what he is saying now.

The helper who played Jesus could also be interviewed, you may want to give them time before the session to prepare their answers!

The children may ask some unusual questions, but that's OK. They will be working out who Jesus is and trying to make sense of that in the light of other things they have discovered about him. These things may manifest themselves in questions that seem random, but answer them anyway!

+ PRAYER



You will need: incense burner and incense; lamp or lantern; cushions and / or rugs from the Bible story

Light some incense (be mindful of where you put it and never leave it unattended) and a lamp or lantern to continue the synagogue theme. Encourage the children to lie down and get comfortable on the cushions and / or rugs. Allow them some quiet, reflective time to soak up the atmosphere before you close in prayer. Use this prayer or one of your own:

"Heavenly Father, thank you that you sent Jesus to earth for us. Help us to listen to what he tells us through the Bible stories we hear, through the people who guide us and through our own hearts prompted by the Holy Spirit. In Jesus' name, amen."

If the incense will set off smoke alarms, then just use your lamps / lanterns or use an air freshener with frankincense aroma.

XANA RIDLEY

is an early-years specialist and works as an HLTA in a Catholic primary school.