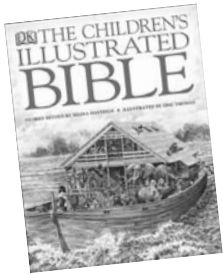


Ordinary Time, Proper 9



The Children's Illustrated Bible

Jesus came to his hometown Nazareth with his disciples. On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, "Where did this man get all this wisdom? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" They were offended at Jesus. Then Jesus said to them, "Prophets are without honor in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house." And he could do no deed of power there, except to cure a few sick people. Jesus was amazed that they didn't believe.

—Mark 6:1–6 adapted

The Weakling Club

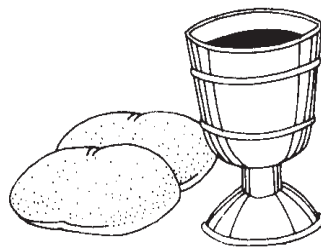
Both Jesus and Paul were seen as "weaklings" in some people's eyes. Although Jesus had been traveling widely, teaching powerfully, and performing miracles, friends and family in his own hometown did not understand or believe him. To them, Jesus was "just a carpenter," not someone doing great things through God's power. Paul writes about his weakness, although he didn't say exactly what it was. Instead of boasting, he said that only the power of God could have accomplished such great things through such a weak person.

Have one of the kids narrate the story of Jesus from Mark 6:1-6 in their children's Bible. The rest of the class can be those listening to Jesus in the synagogue. Instruct the listeners to portray a "who does he think he is" attitude toward Jesus. Gather in a circle and discuss how Jesus may have felt about this situation. If Jesus were here, what would you want to ask him about it? Do you ever think your closest friends don't appreciate your strengths? Do they emphasize your weaker points? God can do powerful things through us just the way we are.

Have another person narrate II Corinthians 12:5-10 while someone else pantomimes being Paul. What would you like to ask Paul? He gives us valuable clues as to what a Christian leader is all about. Can you find these clues? Conclude by emphasizing the wonderful things that can happen when we put our trust in God's unlimited strength, instead of our own.

Strong Words

Sacrament of Communion

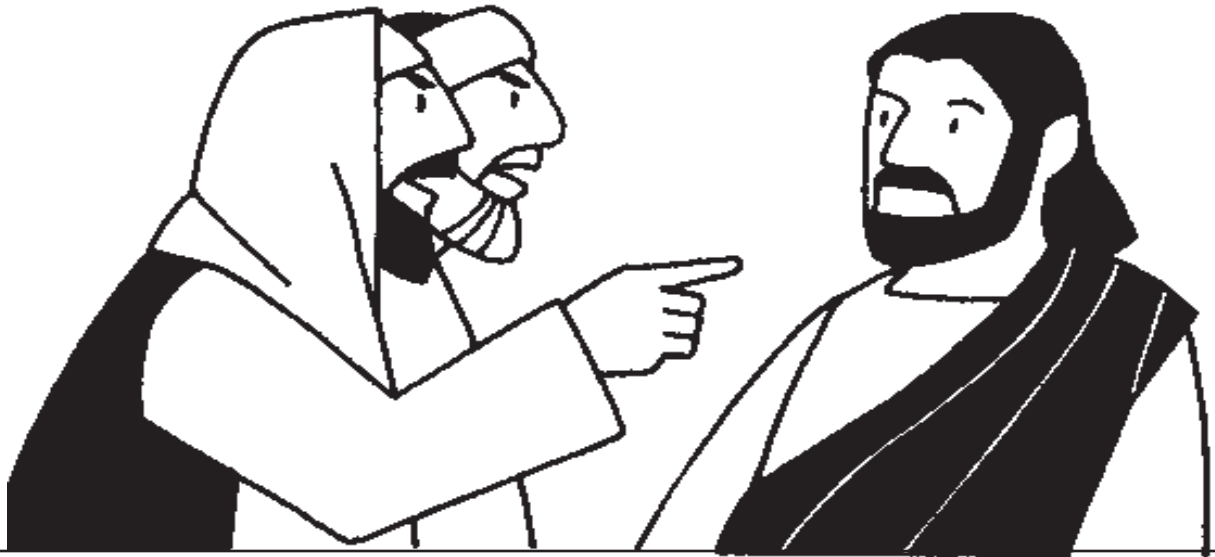


Gather around a table displaying a loaf of bread and a container of grape juice. Have hymnals open to the Communion prayers. Tell how Jesus ate with his disciples for the last time, now known as the Last Supper. That was a stressful and confusing time. Jesus reassured them that he would give them strength through his spirit. Read the prayers together. Discuss: In the Community of Christ and other churches, Communion is a sacrament, an important promise to God. What strength can we find in the Lord's Supper?

Strength in Numbers

Read Psalm 48:14, written by David. Discuss: What do David, Paul, and Jesus all have in common? (They allowed God's power to work in them, for example.)

Invite a youth or an adult to visit class and share an experience when they had finally admitted defeat only to find God turning their defeat into God's victory.



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Make a list or draw a picture of people who give you strength.