

**BIBLE VERSES:** 2 Kings 5:1-14, Luke 1:36-48, Acts 9:36-43, 1 Corinthians 4:2.

**The aim of this session is to look at what it means to be faithful to others, to our duties and to God.**

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## LEADER'S NOTES

Faithfulness is one of the characteristics which we, as followers of Jesus, should display. We are not just talking about being faithful to God, but faithful to other people and faithful in our duties. If we were working with older children we could also talk about faithfulness in relationships.

Faithfulness means sticking with something, even when a better option presents itself – a faithful friend will keep a promise to play with you even if they are invited to play with the popular group. A faithful child will have a teddy bear that is always their favourite and has been for years.

Faithfulness means that you can be trusted to do as you have been asked. A faithful child will conscientiously do any jobs they have been assigned, and the teacher will know that they can be trusted to go on errands.

When we demonstrate faithfulness in these two areas, we show people that Christians are reliable – and that this is because God is reliable.

And of course we should be faithful to God. Faithful Christians believe God, and trust him even when things look difficult.

The Bible stories in this session look at all three types of faithfulness. Anna was faithful to God. Even though she had been widowed young in a culture which made little provision for widows, she trusted and worshipped God.

The servant girl in the story of Naaman was also faithful to God, even though her world had been turned upside down and she was in slavery. She was also faithful in her work, doing her best to please her new master and mistress and doing her best for them: if that was not so she would not have cared enough to tell them about Elisha's ministry.

And Tabitha was faithful. I like Tabitha: I imagine that she was a quiet person, possibly overlooked, obviously not in a position of importance or she wouldn't have had time to do all that sewing. Like so many of us she just did her duty to God and to others, quietly where she was, no fuss. And when she died everyone realised how much they owed to her, how much they depended on her, how much they had relied on her faithful service.... so they sent for Peter, and the rest is history.

Being faithful is not exciting, but it is a Christ like quality to have. Let's encourage the children to be faithful in their day to day lives.

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## CONES AND DOMES

### GAME | 📌 WARMING UP

Divide the children into 2 equal teams. Place the bowls randomly over the floor. Half should be standing on their bases – these are the cones – and the other half upside down on their rims – the domes.

The aim of the game is for one team to try to get all the bowls on their rims, looking like cones and the other team to try to get all the bowls to stand on their bases – as cones. Make sure everyone knows which team they are on and which way they are supposed to be turning the bowls.

When you say, “Go!” both teams go at the same time and turn over as many bowls as they can. (This means that most bowls will be turned over several times first by one team then by the other.) After about 2 minutes stop the game. Stand the children at the sides of the room and count up how many cones/domes there are. Declare a winning team and then have a rematch. Depending on time you could do the best of 3 or the best of 5.

If your group is very large, or if you have a limited number of bowls, you may prefer to divide into 4 teams and play in heats.

**The Point:** Just for fun.

### EQUIPMENT

A large number of plastic bowls, or football cones.

**DURATION: 10 MINS.**

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## ARE YOU RELIABLE?

### QUIZ | 🪑 WATCHER | 📌 WARMING UP

Ask the children if they know what “faithful” means? Say that when we are faithful it means that we can be trusted to do things that we have said we will do. It also means that we will stick by our friends.

Ask them to put their hands up if they think they are faithful people? Say that we are going to do a quick quiz to find out how faithful all of us are!

Place the chairs at 3 locations and call them A, B and C. Say that you are going to call out a question with 3 answers. The children need to decide which answer best describes them and go to that chair. When they are there, the leader will call out what you have scored. You can either give the children points by drawing dots on their hands or you can give them a sheet of paper each and draw the points onto them. After you have finished all the questions ask the children to add up the points they have got (some will need help with

this).

Read out the scores so that they can see how faithful they are.

Questions:

1) How often do you read your school reading book at home?

a everyday?

b once or twice a week?

c almost never?

2) Your mum asks you to tidy your room. Do you...

a carry on watching television?

b go up and tidy everything away?

c go and make a start but then start playing with the things that you find?

3) You have a pet. How well do you look after it?

a Mum does everything for it

b I feed it most days

c I always feed it and change it when it gets dirty

4) How often do you come along to this group?

a every week unless I'm ill

b when I have got nothing else to do

c most weeks

5) Your friend is away from school. Do you...

a play with someone else and say horrible things about your friend?

b sit next to someone else and stay there, even when your friend is better?

c play with someone else but send a card to your friend to say that you miss them?

6) How long have you been friends with your best friend?

a for a year

b since nursery school or even before

c I get new friends every few weeks

Scores:

Question 1: a5, b3, c1

Question 2: a1, b5, c3

Question 3: a1, b3, c5

Question 4: a5, b1, c3

Question 5: a3, b1, c5

Question 6: a3, b5, c1

Results:

If you scored between 6-12:

Oops! It looks like you perhaps need to learn to stick with things for longer.

Between 13-23:

You are quite faithful. You still need to take a bit more responsibility for things that are really your job.

Between 24-30:

Well done! You are very faithful to small duties and also to your friends.

**The Point:** To think about how faithful we are as individuals.

## EQUIPMENT

3 chairs, 3 pens. Optional: a sheet of paper for each child.

**DURATION: 10 MINS.**

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## CHOICES

**FOOD AND COOKING** |  **WATCHER** |  **WARMING UP**

Provide an assortment of sweets – exactly enough for 1 per child. Let everyone choose one. Ask if anyone would like to change, and who is happy with what they had? Stand the children who want to change in a small group. You could ask them why they want to change – their reasons will probably be that they don't like that sweet, but it was the only one left.

Provide a new batch of sweets – significantly more exciting, or bigger, than the first lot. Allow the children who said they wanted to change to choose one of the new sweets instead.

Look at the children who said they were happy. Are they still happy? Ask if anyone else wants to swap? Allow them to do so.

Sit the children down. Say that the first children to swap did so for good reasons, because they had never been happy with the sweet they had. The second group, however, were happy with their first choice until they saw a better option.

Say that today we are going to look at being faithful. Being faithful means that when we make our mind up we stick with that thing, even if something better comes along. So when we have promised to do something – such as go to a friend's house for tea – we should do that thing even if we are offered something more exciting – like going to the cinema with another friend. God wants us to be faithful!

**The Point:** To illustrate being faithful in a yummy way...

## EQUIPMENT

A huge selection of sweets.

**DURATION: 5 MINS.**

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## A LONG WAIT

Summary of clip:

In this scene, Fiona (who has been locked in a tower due to turning into an ogre each evening) is waiting for her prince to rescue her.

Clip start time: 33:50 (Shrek arrives and Fiona sees him)

Clip end time: 41:31 (“Well, he’ll have to rescue me right here!”)

Length of clip:7:41

Play the clip and talk about these questions:

- Fiona has been waiting for a long time to be rescued. Why did she know that a rescuer would come?
- Do you think Fiona might have got fed up of waiting? Why didn’t she try to escape by herself?
- Fiona’s faithfulness was rewarded – she was rescued! Why wasn’t she happy with her rescuer?
- How was Lord Farquar NOT faithful to Fiona? (i.e. he sent someone else to rescue her.)
- How was Shrek faithful to both Fiona and Donkey?

(Make the point that Fiona was prepared to wait because she trusted the stories – she knew the prince would come.... even though she was disappointed to see him!)

Say that in the Bible, people also waited for a long time. A lady called Anna knew that God was going to send the Messiah – the saviour – into the world and she believed that she was going to see him before she died.

Read Luke 2:36-38, making sure that the children understand it.

Ask them:

- What do we know about Anna?
- How old was she?
- How long was she married before her husband died?

Say that it was difficult to be a widow in Bible times, because there were no benefits – if you didn’t have a husband or children to provide for you, you might starve! But Anna wasn’t angry with God. She praised him and worshipped him every day.

Ask the children how we know that Anna was faithful to God?

Let’s work out how long Anna was faithful for. (Do the sum together, allowing the children to help with the working out.)

She was probably married by the time she was 14, because that was the custom.

How long was she married for? (7 years)

Add that to 14. (21)

How old was she now? (84)

So how many years (approximately) was she faithful to God for? (63)

Anna went into the temple to worship God every day for 63 years! Multiply 63 by 365 to find out how many times Anna went to the temple – 22,995 times -and that’s if she only went once a day!

And in the end Anna's reward was that she saw Jesus - she saw what God had promised. How did she feel?

Conclude by saying that Anna was faithful to God because she trusted him. She never stopped loving and trusting him! Challenge the children to be faithful to God as well, and to trust his promises in their lives. (You might like to wind up by thinking about the promises God has made for us, or you may prefer to leave the activity here.)

**The Point:** To see how long Anna was faithful for.

### **EQUIPMENT**

A copy of "Shrek" and the means to play it, calculator, Bible.

**DURATION: 20 MINS.**

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## **FAITHFUL FROM FAR**

### **STORY | TEACHING TIME**

Begin by playing a short game of charades. Choose a child to come and mime an order – e.g. sweep the floor. The first child to guess the instruction should mime the next. Make the instructions increasingly complex.

Suggested instructions:

- Sweep the floor.
- Make the beds.
- Wash the dishes.
- Go and buy some flour.
- Mix the flour and the water together.
- Kill the chicken and get it ready for cooking.

Say that this story starts with a girl who had been taken prisoner and was living in a foreign country as a servant. Ask the children what sort of problems that girl – who might only have been 8 or 10 – would have faced? What would be most difficult? (They can think about the game they have just played.)

Ask the children if they think this girl would have stayed faithful to God – would she have continued to believe in him or would she have decided that she might as well worship the foreign Gods that her new family worshipped?

Read the story of Naaman from the children's Bible. In the "Read with Me" Bible it starts on page 210.

When you have read the story ask the children how the servant girl was faithful?

She was faithful in 2 ways. First she was faithful to God, because she continued to believe in him even though her life had been turned upside down. Second, she was faithful to her new mistress because she did

what she could to help. And because of her faithfulness, Naaman was healed from his leprosy, and he worshipped God for the rest of his life.

Say that when we are faithful in our duties – when our teachers can trust us to do jobs properly – when family members see that we always do our best – then it helps people to see that our God is good.

**The Point:** To see how the little girl was faithful to her God even though she had been taken captive, and faithful to her new employers.

## **EQUIPMENT**

The story of Naaman from a children's Bible.

**DURATION: 20 MINS.**

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## **GOOD AND DEAD**

### **DRAMA | TEACHING TIME**

Tell the story of Tabitha as found in Acts 9:36 – 43. You can read it from the Bible or tell it briefly in your own words.

Say to the children that we are going to act this story. Who will we need? Peter, Tabitha and some people to be upset.

Ask where we should begin the story – should it be when Tabitha dies, or shall we show her making things for the poor people around her?

Make up the play together. Start with Tabitha giving some clothes to someone. Move on to her feeling ill and laying on the blanket. Then someone finds her dead. Have a group of people come in and start crying. Then some boys run to the side of the room and ask Peter to come. Then Peter comes. Have a line of people holding clothes that Tabitha has made and crying. Have Peter pray for Tabitha and Tabitha get up. Finish with everyone cheering.

Say to the children that Tabitha wasn't some kind of superwoman – she wasn't really important, she was just an ordinary woman. But she was faithful to God and to the people around her because she looked after everyone whom she knew was in need. Say that Tabitha is like us – we are all ordinary people but we can be faithful to God and to other people by doing what we can to help others.

**The Point:** To see how Tabitha was faithful in small ways.

## **EQUIPMENT**

A selection of garments, a blanket and pillow. Bible.

**DURATION: 15 MINS.**

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# TO BE FAITHFUL

## WORSHIP AND REFLECTION | 🙏 RESPONSE

Ask the children to close their eyes and to think of a way that they are faithful – and a way that they need to be more faithful – either to other people, to their duties, or to God. (For example they might decide to be faithful in feeding their guinea pig, or faithful in tidying their room, or faithful in reading the Bible.)

Ask them to write or draw that thing on their card, so that they can be faithful in it during the coming week.

Remember to ask them who managed to be faithful next time you meet.

**The Point:** To apply today's teaching to our own lives.

### EQUIPMENT

Small cards, pens.

**DURATION: 5 MINS.**

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# FAITHFUL POSE

## GAME | 🙏 RESPONSE

Ask the children what it means to be faithful? Can they think of a pose which shows faithfulness? Choose 2 or 3 poses which you agree together. For instance, one pose could show someone praying. One pose could show someone cleaning the floor – working for others. One pose could show two friends shaking hands.

Play the music. When the music stops the children have to get into one of these poses. To add an element of competition you could say that the last person into a pose is out – and play until you have a winner.

**The Point:** A game to reinforce the idea of how we can be faithful.

### EQUIPMENT

Music and the means to play it.

**DURATION: 10 MINS.**

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# FAITHFULLY SERVE

## MEMORY VERSE | 📖 WATCHER | 🙏 RESPONSE



[Download activity worksheet](#)

***“Our first duty is to be faithful to the one we work for.” 1 Corinthians 4:2***

Print off the sheet with the verse on it, one for each small group of children.

Ask them to think about who they work for and to write or draw these people around the edge of the sheet. Then they should write, around these words, examples of the things we do to work for these people.

Make sure that each group has “God” as one of the answers and say that when we are faithful to other people it is a way of being faithful to God.

**The Point:** To encourage children to learn the Bible.

### **EQUIPMENT**

The attached sheet, pens.

**DURATION: 10 MINS.**

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## **THE BABY**

**CRAFT IDEAS** |  **WATCHER** |  **TAKE AWAY**

[Download activity worksheet](#)

This activity will work well with the following Teaching Time activities: A Long Wait.

Give each child paper and paints. Ask them to paint a picture of Anna holding Jesus. Ask them to think about what Anna’s face would have looked like.

There is a picture of a woman with a baby attached to this activity which you can print off for the children to copy or trace if you like. Or you could print it off and ask the children to stick pieces of paper over it as a collage activity.

**The Point:** To remember the story.

### **EQUIPMENT**

Paints and paper. Optional - copies of the attachment.

**DURATION: 15 MINS.**

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## FOOD AND COOKING | 🍴 TAKE AWAY

This activity will work well with the following Teaching Time activities: Faithful From Far

Remind the children that the servant girl had been taken to a very different culture, and all the food and drink would have been different to what she was used to. To think about this, let's make and taste a traditional eastern drink, lassi. (This is popular in India and Pakistan, but similar drinks would have been drunk in Persia.)

First recipe:

450ml low fat yogurt, 300ml water, 2 tsp ginger, 1 tsp chilli powder, 1/2tsp cumin, salt and pepper, jug and whisk for mixing, small cups.

Whisk the water and yogurt together for 2 minutes Add the spices, whisk for a further minute, and serve.

Second recipe:

300 ml low fat yogurt, 300 ml water, 1 tsp sugar, 2tbsp pureed fruit. Jug and whisk for mixing, small cups.

Whisk the yogurt and add the sugar. Add the water and whisk for 2 minutes. Add the puree and whisk for a farther minute before serving.

Encourage each child to taste both versions.

**The Point:** To remember that the servant girl was faithful while living in a different culture.

### EQUIPMENT

Low fat yoghurt, water, ground ginger, chilli powder, cumin, salt, pepper, sugar, pureed fruit, jug, whisk, cups.

**DURATION: 10 MINS.**

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## FINGER KNITTING

### CRAFT IDEAS | 🍴 TAKE AWAY

This activity will work well with the following Teaching Time activities: Good and dead.

Teach the children to finger knit:

Each child needs a length of wool, about 1 metre. They should wrap the wool around their finger 3 times.

The first loop – that nearest the knuckle – should stay around the finger for the first two knots.

Lift the middle loop; take it over the loop nearest the end of the finger and off the finger. Pull it tight underneath your finger, it forms a type of knot and is the first stitch. (Keep holding the very first loop while

you do this.)

Now make a new loop with the wool at the end of your finger. Move the loop that is farther up your finger (the new middle loop) over the new loop and off your finger, and tighten it below your finger, above the first knot/stitch. Now it is okay to let that very first loop go, as the knitting should be secure. Carry on until you have a length of knitting formed.

To finish, do a last stitch and lift the remaining solitary loop off your finger. Pass what is left of the wool through the loop and pull tight.

(If you have not done finger knitting before, practise at home. It really is incredibly simple.)

When each child has a length of finger knitting ask them to form it into a letter. Together, spell out "Tabitha was faithful". Or "Tabitha faithfully served other people" (depending on how many lengths of wool you have.)

The children can take their own piece of finger knitting home with them.

**The Point:** A reminder craft.

### **EQUIPMENT**

Wool, scissors.

**DURATION: 15 MINS.**

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