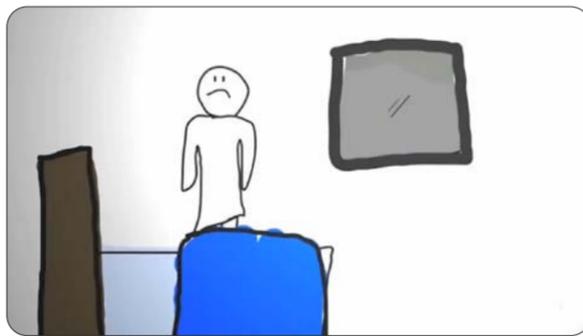
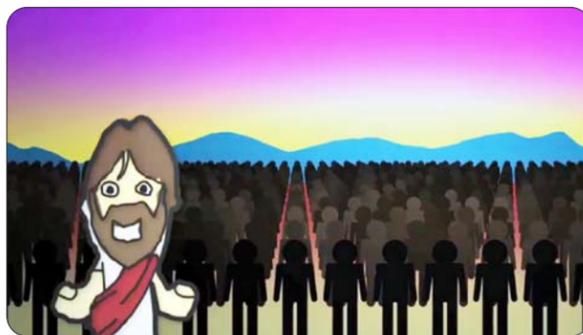
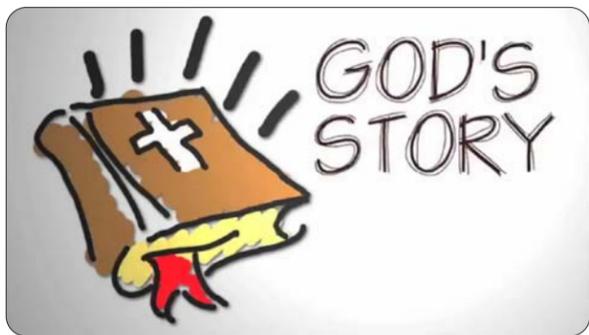
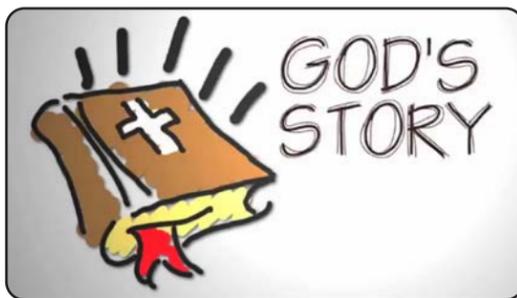


GOD'S STORY



JESUS



Part of God's story is about his son Jesus. It goes like this:

You might have already heard some stories about Jesus. Some stories are really famous. Like how Jesus was born at Christmas or how he died on a cross and then came back to life on Easter. You also might have heard that Jesus taught big crowds or made sick people feel better.

He did do all those things, but that's not all there is to know about Jesus. He also did a lot of normal stuff, like help his mom with chores, play with his brothers and sisters, and maybe even pick his nose.

The Bible never actually says Jesus picked his nose, but it does say he was just like you and me. One normal thing we know Jesus liked for sure was playing with his friends. Do you like to play with friends?

You probably have friends who like to play different things. Some of your friends might like to play video games. Some go swimming or to the playground. Some like to chase around fake aliens with lasers. The really fun thing about friends is being together, no matter what you're playing.

Jesus spent a lot of time with friends doing different sorts of things. He would go over to their houses just to hang out, and usually eat some food. They sometimes went fishing or rode on a boat. Jesus had twelve best friends. They were called his disciples. A disciple is anyone who follows Jesus. We can be disciples, too, if we follow Him.

The really cool thing is, Jesus wants to be friends with us and everybody else. And we know that because He was always making new friends. He even made friends with people nobody else liked, because Jesus likes everyone.

If Jesus wasn't with his friends, he might have been doing a normal thing like resting. Just like how you might take a nap or play alone in your bedroom.

One day, Jesus was so tired that he took a nap on a boat and he didn't even wake up when a HUGE storm came. Have you ever woken up in the middle of the night because you heard thunder and lightning?

Imagine how scary it would be if your whole bed was jumping up and down, too. Not you jumping up and down on your bed...the BED jumping up and down on the FLOOR! That's what it felt like for Jesus in that boat. But He was so tired, he was sleeping right through it. Jesus knew God was with him, so he could sleep even during a storm. And He knew it's important to rest when you're tired.

Sometimes, Jesus rested by going somewhere by himself so he could talk to God. One place He really liked going was into a garden. Picture sitting under a big tree in the shade, or climbing up your favorite tree. We don't know if Jesus liked climbing trees, but we do know Jesus liked to be alone to pray, and that sometimes he prayed outside.

You also might not have known that Jesus loved going to parties! Think about the parties you've been to, you're not the only one there, right? Usually lots of people go, because parties are a way for us to celebrate something really cool with people we care about. Jesus loved doing that, too.

Once, Jesus celebrated when he went to a wedding with his family and friends in a town called Cana. Right in the middle of the reception, the wine ran out. There was only water left. Jesus saved the day by turning that water into wine. It was his first miracle. A miracle is when something happens that humans can't do by themselves. God has to help them. When Jesus did this miracle, the people at the party were able to keep on having a good time. Jesus showed us that he cares about celebrating special things.

Jesus played with his friends, rested, and celebrated many times in the Bible. We just don't talk about those things as often because they are regular activities that regular people, like you and me, do all the time. But, even though Jesus was the son of God and able to heal sick people and tell amazing stories to huge crowds, he was also a lot like us.

And THAT'S a part of God's story.



Family Challenge: Pretend

Try an evening of imagination by playing dress-up or building an indoor tent with blankets and chairs. Even older kids will go for dress-up in the form of a fashion show, and the oldest teens might be willing to take on a fake name, accent and maybe even moustache during dinner.

Why?

Having fun as a family is a beautiful picture of the joy God has for us (Psalm 16:11).

Tip

Admit it, your kids know more about rest and play than you do. Two through teen, they just know how to goof off, so learn something from them.