

LESSON SNAPSHOT

BOTTOM LINE:

Jesus wants us to be concerned with removing sin from our own lives, not judging others for their sins.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn to ask God to forgive their sins and to not judge others.

KEY PASSAGE:

Matthew 7:1-5. Do not judge others.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Do not set foot on the path of the wicked or walk in the way of evildoers.” - Proverbs 4:14 (NIV)

Try to say the verse from memory. See who can say it backwards from memory.

SUMMARY:

Operation is a game where players try to remove body parts from a sick patient. It takes a steady hand and a keen eye to win, and in the end it's all in good fun. What's not so fun is when Christians try to remove the speck from someone else's eye. First remove the log in your own eye, Jesus warns, and then you can see clearly to remove the speck. In other words, deal with your own sin first, and get it out of your life. Stop judging others.

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Forgive us for our sins, and forgive us for judging others. Help us to live a life that pleases you.

*In Jesus' name,
Amen*

EASY AT HOME OBJECT LESSON

ITEM NEEDED:

A pair of tweezers

Have any of you ever had a splinter? Splinters seem to come out of nowhere when they strike, and they can be very, very painful. Splinters are usually teeny, tiny... like the speck Jesus talks about in today's lesson. And being both tiny and painful, they are incredibly difficult to get out!

The fastest way to remove a splinter is with a pair of tweezers, like these. If you're lucky, the splinter's sticking out of the skin enough that you can grip it and pull it right back out. It takes a steady hand - just like a game of Operation - because you don't want to break it off as you're pulling it out. If that happens, the only thing to do is wait until the skin works it out naturally. That can take some time, and that pain will linger with you until it happens.

You wouldn't want someone to remove a splinter unless he had that steady hand AND could see clearly. In a similar manner, we can't go around judging others for the speck of dust in their eyes while we have logs in ours.

Jesus makes it very clear that our job is to deal with our sin - not everyone else's! If we believe in Christ, we have an obligation to turn away from sin. We are obligated to share the gospel, too, but sharing the gospel does not mean we stand around pointing fingers at other people. It means we show them the love of Christ by our words and actions.

Jesus will deal with the sins of others in the same way he deals with ours. Let's stop focusing on the speck of dust in everyone else's eye and take a look in the mirror. We'll do far more for the gospel by addressing our own sin than we ever will by picking at someone else's.

FAMILY GAME TIME

OPERATION: JELL-O

ITEMS NEEDED:

Two pairs of salad tongs/or chopsticks

Four bowls

20 cubes of Jell-O/M&Ms/Cereal etc. (Something difficult to pick up)

INSTRUCTIONS:

Place 2 bowl with 10 Jell-O cubes on the table - this is the "patient".

The players are the "surgeons". Their job is to remove the Jell-O from the bowl on the patient and place them in a bowl off to the side, using only the salad tongs.

The first person to remove all their Jell-O successfully wins.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

God doesn't want us to nitpick at others and their sins. He wants us to confess our sin.

FAMILY BIBLE LESSON

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INTRO

How many of you have one version or another of the game Operation? Seems like every year there are more and more versions of this game. There's Shrek Operation, R2-D2 Operation, and SpongeBob Operation. Anyone have any versions I missed?

The characters on the game board and the pieces that go inside the game change, but the basic game stays the same. You have an electrically charged game board filled with holes that allow you to reach in and remove different parts of the patient's anatomy. But don't touch the sides of the holes with your surgical tools, or BUZZZ! The patient's nose lights up in the classic version, and you lose a turn.

Operation's one of those games that everyone, no matter how old, still loves to play. Some people may find it a bit stressful, but it's all good fun and it's usually a lot of laughs.

What isn't so funny is when we start picking at other people in a similar way. When we as Christians begin to judge other people, we're playing a game similar to Operation. Only this game has consequences a little more serious than a red nose on a pretend patient. The game isn't played with a game board and surgical tools, but with words. It may sound a little like this.

"Brian never comes to Sunday School."

"Helen never puts anything in the offering plate."

"Have you heard Kathy? I can't believe how much she cusses all the time."

FAMILY BIBLE LESSON

"Troy doesn't go to church at all."

It almost sounds innocent. But this kind of nitpicking is exactly what Jesus talked about in Matthew 7.

READ Matthew 7:1-5

MAIN POINT

Sounds a lot like Operation, doesn't it? Jesus says that when Christians judge others, we are trying to remove a speck - just a tiny speck - from the eye of that person. But there's a problem: we can't see clear enough to remove the speck because there's a log in our own eye!

You'd think that log would be easier to remove than the speck, but most Christians never know that log is there!

The log is our own sins, our own faults that need to be corrected. Brian may not go to Sunday School, but if you're talking in Sunday School, what right do you have to judge someone for not coming? And how can you judge Kathy for having a foul mouth when you not only use cuss words, but you gossip about Kathy with that same mouth?

Jesus is telling us we have no right to judge others. As Paul wrote in Romans:

READ Romans 3:23

DRIVE IT HOME

We are all sinners, and we are just as dependent on God's grace for forgiveness as anyone who doesn't know Jesus.

But our sins are no bigger than anyone else's. One sin isn't bigger than another. Sin is sin. So why does Jesus say we have logs in our eyes while other people have specks?

It's because we are Christians! The spot in our eye is magnified because we already know Jesus and have received his forgiveness. Because we are forgiven, God expects us to live by a higher standard. What's more, when we let others know we are Christians, THEY expect us to live by a higher standard too!

The world knows what the Bible says about sin. It also knows that Jesus taught his disciples to go and sin no more. So when we go around judging others for their sins while continuing to sin ourselves, it tells the world we are hypocrites. It tells them that our faith is not real. And if our faith isn't real, why should they believe it for themselves?

FAMILY BIBLE LESSON

Jesus doesn't need us to judge other people for their sins. Most people are well aware of their faults, whether they acknowledge them or not. Jesus wants us to be concerned with our own sins, and he needs us to share his love with other people. Jesus knows that as long as we live here, we will never be perfect. But when we do stumble, we need to confess our sin to him and to those we've wronged.

God doesn't need us to pick at the sins in other people. We have enough sin in our own lives to pick at for the rest of our lives. Ask God to give you the sight to remove the sin from your own life, and ask him to make you a witness to those who need God in their lives!

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER

Dear God,

Forgive us for our sins, and forgive us for judging others. Help us to live a life that pleases you.

*In Jesus' name,
Amen*

LESSON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

ICEBREAKER

What's the hardest body part to remove in Operation?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Read Matthew 7:1-5

Why is it so hard to remove the speck from our brother's eye, according to Jesus?

In what ways do kids your age judge each other?

Why would Jesus tell us not to judge others?

Why do you think we as humans like to judge others?

Why might it be a bad idea for us to judge others when we have sin in our own lives?
How would that turn someone away from becoming a believer himself?

Read Romans 3:23

Based on this verse, are we as Christians in any position to judge non-Christians for their sins?

What can we do to help one another to repent of our sins and keep from judging others?

SIMPLE PRAYER

Dear God,

Forgive us for our sins, and forgive us for the way we judge others. Teach us how to share the gospel with love the same way you did. And help us to be a people whose actions draw people to you.

*In Jesus' name,
Amen*

LESSON REVIEW GAME

True or False.

In Matthew 7, Jesus teaches us the proper technique for cleaning our eyes.

FALSE

God says we can't judge others because we are sinners too.

TRUE

We need to focus on other people's sins, not our own.

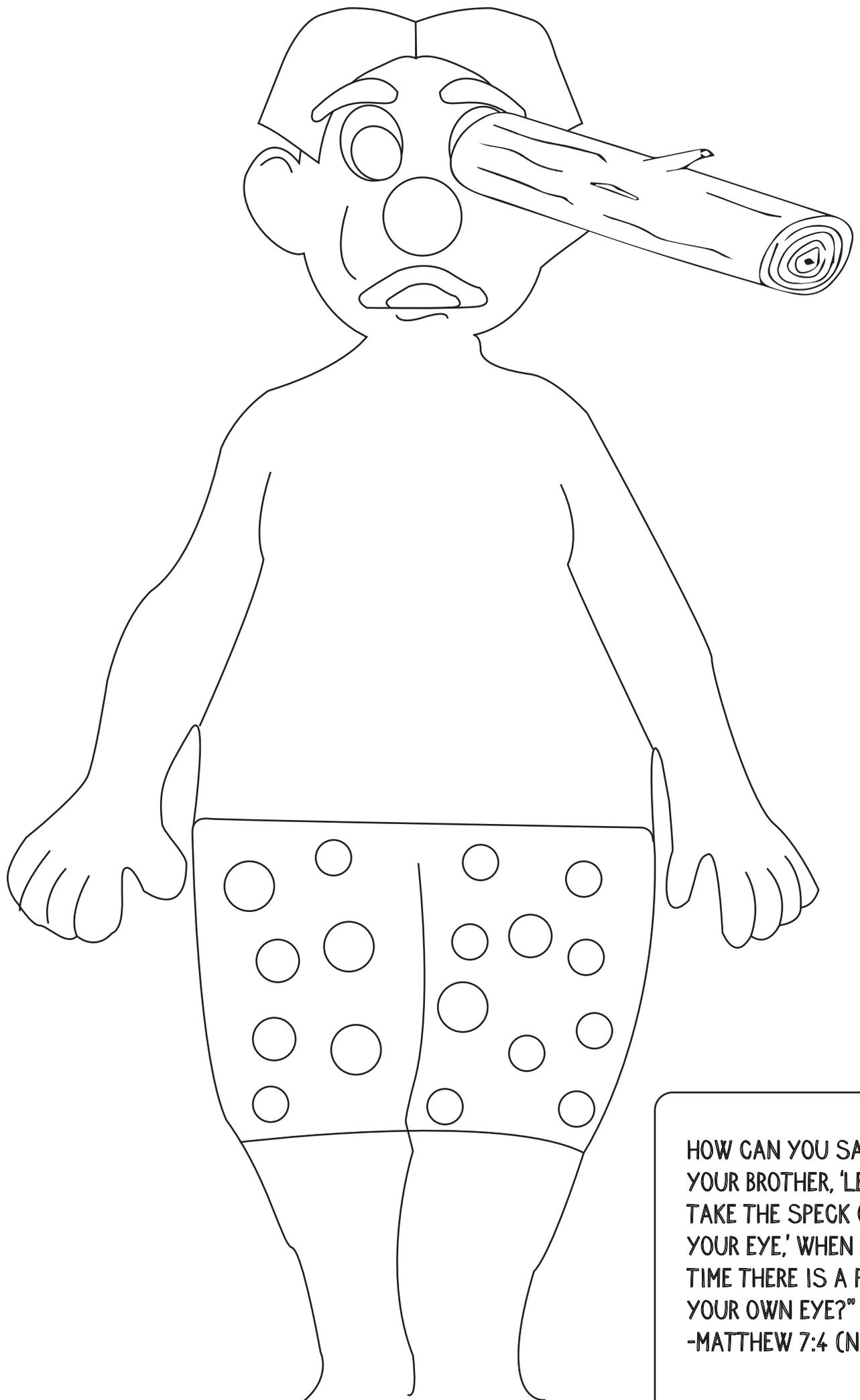
FALSE

Judging others is a great way to show them that Jesus loves them.

FALSE

We are all sinners and we all need Jesus.

TRUE



HOW CAN YOU SAY TO
YOUR BROTHER, 'LET ME
TAKE THE SPECK OUT OF
YOUR EYE,' WHEN ALL THE
TIME THERE IS A PLANK IN
YOUR OWN EYE?"
-MATTHEW 7:4 (NIV)