

10 Rulz: Session 4 – Rule 3

Title: God says 'Do not misuse my name'

Bible base: Exodus 20:7

Aim: To understand that God's name is special and is not to be used in wrong ways.

Note to leaders

You may be aware that some children in the group will say things like 'Oh God!' if something goes wrong. But equally, some KS1 children may be wonderfully unaware that anyone ever uses God's name in wrong ways! Handle this session with care and sensitivity: most children have picked up habits of misusing God's name from their parents or in the playground.

Some children may recognise this habit in others among the group! If comments are made, encourage children to try to stop themselves whenever they misuse God's name. Explain that they can say 'sorry' and ask God to help them to stop this.

Point out that nobody likes to be told when they have got things wrong, so the children should not correct each other, or grown ups.

Introduction: 'The Wrong Name' game

You will need: two bags (for simplicity described here as the red bag and the blue bag, but the colour of the bags does not matter); the following lists, cut up into separate slips of paper.

Red bag list

Hamster
Banana
Cup
Light
Car
Dog
Telephone
Teddy bear
Playstation
Television

Blue bag list

Mobile phone
Chair
School
Pencil
Shoe
Table
Clock
Apple
Frog
Carrot

Put the red list into the red bag and blue list into the blue bag (or whichever colour bags you are using).

Divide the children into two teams. Use one leader as a scorer and time keeper.

As a demonstration, have a leader take a slip of paper from each bag. They should explain the meaning of the word from the blue bag, but replace that word with the one from the red bag. For example, if the word from the blue bag is 'school' and the one from the red bag is 'hamster', they should say something like this: 'A hamster is where lots of children go to every day. You can learn

lots in a hamster. Hamsters are fun places to be but sometimes the work they give you to do in hamster is quite hard.'

For KS1 children: a leader describes the words as above and each team in turn guesses what the real word should be.

For KS2 children: After the leader does the demonstration, one child is chosen to do a description while the other team guesses the word being described. If the child describing the object uses the actual word by mistake (eg if the leader were to say 'school' in the example above) then their turn ends; otherwise a turn lasts up to 30 seconds then teams swap roles.

Score 10 points if a team guesses the 'blue' word correctly without that word being used.

Application: there was a lot of laughter from wrong use of words – it was very funny. But using God's name in the wrong way makes him sad.

Game: Circle catch with names

You will need a ball that is appropriate for the age of children and size of room (it could be as small as a ping pong ball).

Standing in a circle, the person with the ball calls the name of one other person in the circle and throws the ball to them. Keep this up for a couple of minutes playing as quickly as possible.

Penalties:

1. If the person throwing uses the wrong name, they must go down on one knee and only use one hand to throw or catch.
2. If the ball is thrown to someone who has already had a turn in that round, the thrower can only use one hand for throwing or catching.
3. You can make it more fun by using a timer – many mobile phones have this as one of their functions – and set it for one minute or less. Keep this time secret from the children. If the timer goes off and they are holding the ball then they must go down on one knee.

Bible narrative

Our names are very precious. Lots of people hate being called by nicknames because it feels as if people are making fun of them and it makes them feel less special. Explain that to use God's name in the wrong way – to use it as a swear word, or to make fun of him – is to forget that God's name is special. There are lots of ways that you can show disrespect to God, such as using his name when you are surprised or get things wrong.

For KS1, talk with the children about the use of names. If people have called you by a nickname and you did not like it, explain how it made or makes you feel. We would feel very upset if someone kept shouting out our name if they hurt themselves or were surprised. In the same way, it upsets God if we don't treat his name as special.

For KS2, you might like to do the following **drama**.

One leader walks around the group of children and starts to chat very informally to the children saying how nice someone looks, what pretty shoes a child is wearing, great trainers etc. Every now and again the leader is either surprised or trips over and calls out the name of one of the other

leaders, eg 'Oh Lucy!' Each time this happens the leader named Lucy (or whatever name is being used) stands up and says 'Yes?' but then realises that it's not her they are calling. After bringing this to a close, Lucy explains how hard it was to hear the other leader calling her name and then, when she answered, to be ignored. This is just the same for God: when sometimes he hears people calling out, he's really sad or upset when they are just saying his name like a swear word, or don't even believe he is there, never mind wanting to listen to him.

The Bible tells us that even though we get things wrong like this, God forgives us when we say sorry.

Response: challenge the children that when they hear someone using God's name as a swear word, they could say in their heads 'God, I think you're special'.

Craft: poster

You will need a large sheet of card or strong paper, A4 card, pens, collage materials, scissors, glue.

Before the club begins, make a poster advertising the club, giving details of day, time, place and name of the club. Make it bold and bright, perhaps using clip-art and print lettering off from the computer. Ask every child and leader to put their names on the poster. Whilst the children are waiting to sign it they could be making their own smaller posters as a reminder of the club. They too could ask the other members of the club to sign it. Use the large poster to advertise the club, asking the school for a place to display it to act as a reminder.

Memory verse

'Do not misuse the name of the Lord your God' (Exodus 20:7). Write each word of this verse on a separate sheet of paper. Have children hold these up in a line and say the verse through together several times. After each repetition tear up one piece of paper, until only the words 'Lord' and 'God' remain, reinforcing the point that God's name is important.

Prayer activity

Have the children stand in a circle and place the poster that you made earlier in the middle. Going around the circle clockwise, starting with a leader, say a repetitious prayer of 'Thank you God for ... (name of person on your left)'. The prayer continues around the circle and everyone shouts a big 'amen' when it gets back to the leader who started.

Song

Sing 'God is an awesome God' from the CD *Light for Everyone* (available from www.scriptureunion.org.uk/light/lightforeveryone.asp).

Tablets of stone

Don't forget to add this week's rule to your stone tablets.