

CONCEPTS that will be covered in the lesson

- Connect the similarities between this story and the other two healing stories we've read.
- Highlight how the involvement of one person or a group of people can be the opposite of helpful
- However, just like a person can block healing for another person, so too can one healthy person provide healing for others.

Materials needed:

1. Movie clip (available on rfour.org) from *Here Comes The Boom*
2. Electronics that show the video clip
3. For activity
 - a. Paper and pencils for everyone to write with
 - i. *Optional:* Some form of portable hard surface, like clipboards, to write on
 - b. Print out of dots "playing board" (1 for each 2 students) – located at end of lesson

THE LESSON

OPENING PRAYER

OPENING QUESTION

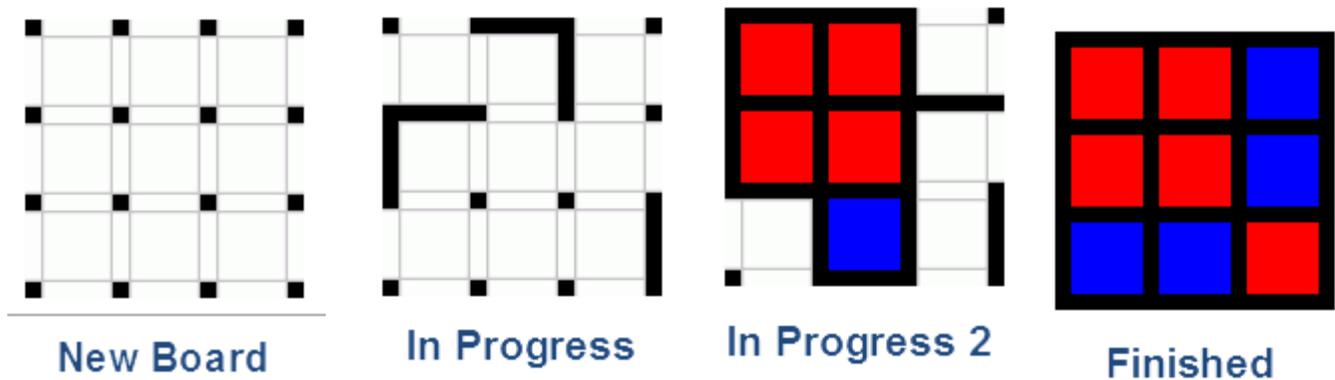
- One of the things we do every class is ask and answer the opening question at the beginning of class – because it helps us 1. Learn more about each other and 2. Helps "warm us up" for some of the ideas in the upcoming lesson. So we're going to do that now.
- So here's the opening question for today's class. I [the teacher] will ask the question and then to give you some time to think of an answer, I will answer first.
- Once I answer the question, we'll go around the circle and each of us will answer.
- When it's your turn, start with your name and then answer the question to the best of your ability.
- ***Here's this week's question:*** What is something that you prepared for and were then able to do well?

TRANSITION TO ACTIVITY

- In this session, we've been discussing healing stories by Jesus.
- In the first story, Jesus heals two people, one of which is a young girl that he brings back from the dead.
- In our second story, Jesus has a difficult encounter with a man with unclean spirits. We talked about how the man was not in his right mind and how Jesus helps him return to his right mind with a simple question of "What is your

name?"

- With today's story, we conclude our session with a story that combines elements from our previous two stories.
- Just like the first story, there is a parent who is asking for help for his child
- And, just like the second story, the child needing healing is described as having an unclean spirit.
- What is especially interesting in this story is how "involved" the entire community is about the boy's health.
- However, just because they are involved, does not mean they are being helpful.
- To help us think about how being involved is not helpful in and of itself, let's do the following activity called "Dots and Boxes"
- This activity is similar to a complicated game of tic-tac-toe.
- You will compete against another person on a "board."
- That "board" is a square grid of dots in a 4x4 pattern on a piece of paper.
- To start the game, the first player adds a single horizontal or vertical line between two adjacent dots.
- The player who completes the fourth side of a 1x1 box, puts their initial in the box and takes another turn.
 - Each time you close a box, you *must* take another turn. For example, it's possible to go four times in row.
 - However, if you complete two boxes in one move, you still only get another turn (not two extra turns).
 - If you complete a larger box, that does not count as a point. It **MUST** be a 1x1 box for you to get a point and go again.
- Game ends once all the dots have been connected.
- Tally the total amount of initials to see who won
- Then, play again, but this time the other person goes first. Play a best of 3 series (aka "First person to two wins, wins the series).
- Then find someone else to play against.
- Examples (with colors instead of initials):



ASK

- What strategies did you learn while you were playing (main one: don't add a third line because then the other person can add the fourth line)
- Did anyone play a game where the score was pretty lopsided?
- And in those lopsided games, was it true that the higher one person's score was, the lower the other person's score was? (yes)

- During the activity, were both you and the person you were playing against involved in drawing the boxes? (yes, hopefully)
- So, at first, an outside observer might think: “Oh, look at these two people who are drawing boxes together.” But just because you were both involved in doing the same thing, were you actually drawing boxes *together* or *against* each other? (argument can go both ways since they actually *were* drawing the boxes together—it was the completion of the boxes that pits the players against each other; let them discuss a little bit and then move to next question.)

TELL

- Even though you and your competitor were both involved in the activity, and even though both of you were drawing boxes, the involvement of the other person wasn’t actually very helpful because you were actually working against each other to see who could finish the most boxes.
- That same idea is at work in today’s scripture story; we will see some people who look like they are wanting to help, but are not actually helping at all, and we’ll see other people who actually *do* help.
- Also, just a reminder that “unclean spirits” is a term from Jesus’ time that people used to describe a condition of a person who wasn’t right in their mind or internally.
- So, if someone was mentally ill, like we saw in last class’ story, they would be described as having an unclean spirit.
- And in today’s story, we’ll see that the ailment is a neural condition, most likely epilepsy, that is being referred to as an unclean spirit.
- Last class, we saw that Jesus simply asking the man his name was the turning point in the story.
- In today’s story, look for another simple thing that Jesus does that leads to the boy being healed.
- Let’s see what happens

READ Mark 9:22-43 (recommendation: Have class read it aloud; one person per verse)

14 When they came to the disciples, they saw a great crowd around them, and some scribes arguing with them. 15 When the whole crowd saw him, they were immediately overcome with awe, and they ran forward to greet him. 16 He asked them, ‘What are you arguing about with them?’ 17 Someone from the crowd answered him, ‘Teacher, I brought you my son; he has a spirit that makes him unable to speak; 18 and whenever it seizes him, it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid; and I asked your disciples to cast it out, but they could not do so.’ 19 He answered them, ‘You faithless generation, how much longer must I be among you? How much longer must I put up with you? Bring him to me.’ 20 And they brought the boy to him. When the spirit saw him, immediately it threw the boy into convulsions, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. 21 Jesus asked the father, ‘How long has this been happening to

him?’ And he said, ‘From childhood. 22 It has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if you are able to do anything, have pity on us and help us.’ 23 Jesus said to him, ‘If you are able!—All things can be done for the one who believes.’ 24 Immediately the father of the child cried out, ‘I believe; help my unbelief!’ 25 When Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, ‘You spirit that keep this boy from speaking and hearing, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again!’ 26 After crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that most of them said, ‘He is dead.’ 27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he was able to stand. 28 When he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, ‘Why could we not cast it out?’ 29 He said to them, ‘This kind can come out only through prayer.’

ASK

- Verse 14 – who is arguing? (Jesus’ disciples and the scribes)
- Verse 14 – who is watching the arguing? (a great crowd)
- Verse 15 – How does the crowd respond to Jesus? (like he’s famous; they rush to him in awe)
- Verse 17 and 18 – What are the disciples and the scribes arguing about? (a father has brought his boy to be healed by Jesus, but the disciples tried without Jesus and could not do it – and then it sounds like the scribes were either mocking them or giving them unwanted advice or maybe both)
- Verse 19 – Does Jesus seem ok with this development? (Nope, not really – “you faithless and perverse generation, how much longer must I put up with you?” is not a term of endearment)
- Verse 18 & 22 – what does the unclean spirit do to the boy? (makes him convulse; tries to cast him into the water or fire)
- Verse 20-24 – Does Jesus ever talk to the boy? (no)
- Who *does* Jesus talk to? (the father)
- Verse 22 – 23: What does the dad say that Jesus then repeats (with incredulity)? (If you are able)
- Verse 24: What is the dad’s response to Jesus, then? (I believe; help my unbelief!)
- What do you think that means?
- Verse 25: How does Jesus heal the boy? (by speaking to the unclean spirit in him)
- Does Jesus touch the boy? (no – just speaks)
- Verse 26: Is the healing of the boy a peaceful process? (not at all; in fact, at first, some of the people think that the healing actually kills the boy)
- Verse 28: What do the disciples ask Jesus? (why couldn’t we do that?)
- Verse 29: What is Jesus’ answer? (these kind only come out through prayer)
- What does this suggest the disciples were not doing? (praying)

TELL

- Just like last lesson’s story, there is a *lot* in this story.
- We’re not going to be able to address everything in it.
- What we’ll mostly focus on two things that are the opposite of each other.
- We’ll look at how some people block healing for others (in this story) and we’ll also look at how just one healthy person can help others heal.
- When Jesus first enters the situation, he pretty quickly seems to understand that his disciples, the scribes, and the crowd aren’t seeking God’s direction on how to best offer God’s healing to this boy (thus the “faithless generation” comment)
- For instance, instead of talking to the dad, the disciples and the scribes are talking to each other – and not in a helpful way
- And the crowd is simply in the way – in v25 Jesus quickly heals the boy because he sees that the crowd is rushing towards him and the father.
- Before the crowd rushes Jesus, though, Jesus talks to the dad.
- And in that conversation, Jesus learns some things about the man.
- Specifically, once the man says, “If you are able,” Jesus learns that that the dad has little to no hope.
- We know this is an important line from the dad, because Jesus repeats what the man says.
- Repetition in scripture is like Biblical highlighter. It’s meant to underscore and highlight the importance of the line.
- Following Jesus’ repetition, the dad then expresses this plea for help, “I believe, help my unbelief.”

- This shifts the focus from the son’s issue to the dad’s issue.
- And, as we saw in last week’s story, putting a name to the core problem is a very helpful first step.
- Once Jesus has the dad diagnosing and understanding his own issue, then Jesus could turn his attention to healing the son.
- In other words, the dad’s ailment (unbelief) was blocking the healing of his son’s ailment (not being in his right mind).

TRANSITION TO MOVIE CLIP

- What’s interesting about this idea of the dad’s ailment somehow causing his son’s ailment (or at least blocking his son’s healing) is that just the opposite can also happen: Just one healthy person can help other people to heal.
- Which is what we see in today’s story, right? Jesus, who is healthy, helps two other people heal.
- In biology, we see the same thing happen.
- One cell can help other cells heal.
- For an explanation of how one cell can help other cells heal, let’s watch the following movie clip from “Here Comes The Boom”
- In the clip, a high school biology teacher teaches his classroom about how cells heal.
- Let’s see what happens.

WATCH VIDEO CLIP

ASK

- Was the class paying attention to the teacher at first?
- What did the teacher do to get their attention? (stand on the desk, do a funny dance, then walk on the students’ desks)
- What was the teacher teaching? (how if just one cell starts moving around, it can get all the other cells to move around, too)
- By the end of the clip, did it seem like the class was engaged with what the teacher was talking about? (For the moment, yes)

TELL

- In some ways, the teacher was enacting his own teaching.
- His momentum and objective was to get the class to focus on the topic he was talking about.
- By moving and talking and interacting with the class, he got the class to “move” (as in “pay attention”) to the same thing he was.
- The teacher’s way of interacting with the class and what the teacher was saying can be applied to Jesus.
- Jesus is the healthy cell that can help other cells in the system to heal.
- He helped the dad to heal.
- Then, Jesus helped the boy to heal.
- And after that, Jesus helped his disciples understand what they did wrong, so that they could choose differently next time.
- In fact, we’ve seen Jesus be the one cell who brings healing to the whole system throughout this session.
- And what’s impressive to me about how Jesus interacts with the unhealthy cells to help them heal, is how simple the

things are that he does.

a) He says yes to those who ask for his help.

b) He asks people for their name.

c) He has a conversation with people about their problems.

- Those are very simple things.
- Simple things that we can also choose to do.
- It is in these ways, then, that we, too, can help share God's healing with others.
- And that's really good news.

CLOSING PRAYER

See next page for "Dots and Dashes" playing boards to print out

