

LIVING FAITH: Chapter 7

Living Faith is a family activity that helps drive home the point from this week's chapter from The Story.

Gather a glass bowl filled halfway with water and a peppershaker or pepper mill. Make sure the bowl is totally clean and free from soapy residue. Put the bowl and the pepper on the kitchen table. Hide some liquid dishwashing soap near the table. Bring your family together at the table and ask one family member to sprinkle pepper on the entire surface of the water.

Say: The pepper is like the wall around Jericho. It protected the city by holding out enemies and couldn't be broken.

Have a child dip their finger into the bowl. Did anything happen?

Say: There was no way that the Israelite army could break through the wall by its own power. Only with God's help could they take the city.

As you say this, secretly put some liquid dishwashing soap on your finger and dip it into the bowl. Watch as the pepper is immediately slammed against the sides of the bowl, leaving much of the water clear.

Explain how you did this trick by getting a new bowl or thoroughly washing out the one you used. Show how the detergent lowers the surface tension of the water and forces the pepper to the side. Allow your kids to sprinkle pepper on the water and then watch it being drawn to the sides by adding detergent.

Say: From the beginning of time, God designed the water to react the way it does in this trick. He knew exactly what the reaction would be when the detergent hit the water. In the same way, God's power brought down the wall around Jericho. He knew it would crumble when the Israelites blew their horns and shouted out to Him.

Extra Mile

God brought people together to help the Israelites. In Jericho, Rahab helped the spies and encouraged them by saying, "Everyone in this country is weak with fear because of you." God used one person, Rahab, to make a big difference for the Israelites. Rahab even shows up in the genealogy of Jesus (Matthew 1:5), which demonstrates how God had a great plan for somebody who the world may have viewed as a castoff.

As a family, decide to make a difference in one person's life by showing him God's love in a tangible way. If you don't know of anyone to help, talk to your pastor, friends, neighbors, a local charity or community organization to find an individual who needs help. Maybe it's an elderly person who needs yard work (grass cut, sidewalk shoveled or weeds pulled). Perhaps it's a single mother who could be blessed by a bagful of groceries or a gift card to a grocery store. Maybe it's a military family who has a spouse overseas who would delight in a card of encouragement and dinner out. Be creative as you seek to serve one person in your community. Make sure this person knows that God cares for him or her.