

**THE BOYS'**  
**BRIGADE**  
>the adventure begins here



**Junior Section**

**Scripture Project**

**2010 / 2011**

***“Circus Days”***

**The Boys' Brigade**  
*in the Republic of Ireland*

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This session the Junior Section Scripture project is a 4 week lesson plan written and designed for children of Anchors and Junior Section age. Each lesson is wrapped around the theme 'Circus Days' and should be presented in a fun and informative way. Each lesson gives ideas on presentation and involvement by the children but please feel free to adapt the lessons to suit your individual circumstances.

This session each Company is invited to submit a project that will be based on one of the four stories. All members of your Company should participate in this project and the project should include written stories and pictures.

A panel will be formed to judge the entries.

The enclosed material is supplied to help you present the various stories and may be spread over as many weeks as suits your own circumstances.

**Projects must be submitted no later than Tuesday 31st May 2011**

**Please note that there will be no extension to this date and late entries will not be accepted.**

**The four weeks are designed as follows:**

- 1) The Strong Man Act - Samson
- 2) The Lion Tamer - Daniel
- 3) The Man Who Was Swallowed by a Fish and Lived to Tell About It - Jonah
- 4) The Acrobat- Staying Focused on God

### **Suggested Preparation of Room**

Make a circus tent by gathering several foundation bricks: paint them colourful and line them in a semi circle at the front of your room. This will represent the circus ring. Gather 3-5 carpet roll tubes painting them white with stripes. Instead of the carpet tubes you could use PVC piping; however these may cost a little more. Secure these tubes upright by placing them into the holes of the cement foundation bricks then stuffing paper or wads of cloth around the posts to hold them securely. Use red and blue or other colours of crepe paper streamers attached from ceiling (centred above your circus ring) and twisted out to meet the top of each roll. This will be the tent top. Helium balloons at the corners of the tent are colourful and can be given as prizes for good behaviour. A ticket booth could set to the side (use refrigerator box painted and cut out).

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## **Story I - The Strong Man**

Objectives:

To help us understand that physical strength can not get us to heaven. Although it is important to be healthy and strong our spiritual strength is far more important. To help us understand how important it is to follow God's instructions.

Bible verse: Psalm 28:8

“The Lord is the strength of his people, a fortress of salvation for his anointed one”

Preparation of object lesson:

If you can have some exercise equipment brought in that would be great. Also a set of bar bells or weights that are very heavy. You can make a set of bar bells by using a piece of PVC piping and two brown paper bags, stuffed with paper then taped to each end of the pipe. Spray paint it black. You will act as if it is heavy.

Other items might be a large rubber snake hidden in a paper bag or a clown nose to wear while telling lesson. If you can find a poster with a picture of strong men on it to hang that would be good.... learn the names of the different muscles and point them out to the kids, Biceps, Triceps, etc.

Lesson:

Have any of you ever been to a circus or seen one on television? (responses) So have I. I went to one not too long ago. It wasn't a real big one but it sure was fun. I liked the clowns best. They can be so funny. Don't you think? A circus is a lot like a carnival in some ways. You buy tickets to see all kinds of things. I remember one time going into this small tent. I saw a lady with a big, huge, giant snake wrapped around her... (pull snake out of bag quickly) ...eweeeee. I didn't like that too much. Then there are kissing booths and side shows like the fortune teller, and games to play like trying to break balloons by throwing darts at them and all kinds of other things to do. You can walk around for a while before the circus acts begin and look at the lions and tigers in their cages and maybe even feed an elephant some peanuts. If you're not careful, a clown might come up to you and squeeze your ear.... A circus can be a lot of fun.

What are some other circus acts we might see at a circus? (allow for several responses- strong man, lion act, elephant riders, horse riders, clowns, trapeze artists, etc). That's right. And of course there are many more that we don't remember right now.

Well, I am going to tell you about one circus act that I think is amazing. (Point to the weights or bar bells). Do any of you know what these are? Yes, that's right. They are barbells (weights). Would anyone like to try and pick them up? Well, let me see your muscles. I want each of you to tighten up your bicep muscles. Those are your upper arm muscles. I want to feel them and see which one of you children might be able to pick up those weights. (Go around feeling the muscles then pick one or two children to come up and attempt to lift the barbells or weights-don't let them hurt themselves) That's pretty

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hard isn't it? You may go back to your seats. Can you imagine anyone being able to pick them up and lifting them way up over their head? Some very strong people can do that. Not me, that's for sure.

You know, strength is an important skill to have. Without our strength there are a lot of things we couldn't do. Such as open a jar of mayonnaise or hit a base ball with a bat.

Learning to be a weight lifter takes a lot of practice, it takes a lot of training, and physical growth. It doesn't happen overnight. Sometimes it takes years before someone can pick up this much weight without hurting themselves. You must gradually build your muscles. You must grow because a 60 pound boy or girl can not lift a 300 pound weight. Did you know this person (show poster) used to be little like you at one time? It took a lot of discipline and work to get to where he is in this picture...

The Bible tells us about a man who was very strong. Can any of you tell me what his name was? (responses) That's right, Samson. Samson was a very strong servant of God as long as he followed God's instructions. God's instruction was that Samson was not to cut his hair and He was not to tell anyone how he obtained his strength. It was to remain a secret. If he cut his hair he would become weak. Those seemed like silly instructions but not to God. I think God was testing Samson to see if he would obey him.

One day Samson met a very beautiful lady named Delilah. He fell in love with her. He trusted her. He decided to tell her the secret that made him so strong. Later, while he was sleeping, she carefully and quietly cut off his hair. Then she began to yell out telling him that the enemy was coming. And they were, for you see, she did not love Samson. She only pretended to love him so he could be captured. She was not a nice lady. The enemy came and Samson jumped up thinking he still had his strength, but realized it was gone. He had been tricked. He was captured and had his eyes destroyed. They blinded him. Then they threw him into prison. How sad for Samson. He now was blind and his heart was broken by the lady he loved. His strength was gone. I don't know just how long he was there but it must have been quite a long time because his hair began to grow again. One day the enemies brought him out before a large crowd of people so they could make fun of him. He was still blind, but his strength had gradually returned and they did not know it. He was placed beside some great pillars that held up the roof of the arena everyone was in. He began to push them with all his strength. They finally fell crushing and killing many, many people including Samson. How sad that was for Samson. If he would have only listened to God in the first place and obeyed him he would not have gotten himself in the mess he was in. He would not have lost his life in that terrible crushing accident.

Did you know your Christian life is a lot like weight lifting? First, God is the source of your strength. Second, he trains you in His Word so you will be prepared for situations in life. Third, you must practice and live your life to honour God. Fourth, you must grow in God so you can face each problem. As you grow bigger many times the problems we have grow bigger too, therefore having God beside you and strengthening you daily is a must. Remember, just as Samson, you are strengthened through the power of God. Follow his guidelines and instructions and you won't go wrong.

Craft time- barbell suckers

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Give each child two dum-dum suckers and a piece of masking tape about two inches long. Have them place the dum-dum sticks end to end and then slide them together side by side. Tape around them. They now have a set of barbells to eat later.

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## **Story 2 - The Lion Tamer**

Objectives:

To help us understand how important it is to follow God no-matter-what! We will have to make choices that are sometimes difficult. If we know what is right from wrong and we want to follow God no-matter-what, those decisions will come easier.

Bible Verse: Joshua 23:10

“...the Lord your God fights for you, just as he has promised”

Object Lesson Preparation:

If you can have a set of oars from a boat, that would be great. If you have one of those blow up boats made for one person that would be even better. If you are unable to get either, you can make oars or even a small boat using a refrigerator box, painted.

Lesson:

Have you ever heard this song? (Sing “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.”) Let’s sing it together. (sing) That was great. Did you catch the words the song was saying? It says to row gently down the stream. But, did you know that isn’t always possible? Sometimes you have to row upstream against the current to get to that secret fishing spot. Have any of you ever had a chance to row a boat? Now a days most boats have small motors on them making it much easier to move around in the water. But not too long ago (show oars) these items, called oars, were the source of power needed to get the boat to go where you wanted it to go. It took a lot more work to use these than the motor. It required more strength and muscles by the person rowing in order to go upstream in the opposite direction of the water flow. Sometimes they would get tired and would have to drop their anchor and rest for awhile before continuing.

Living a Christian life in today’s world is a lot like rowing upstream in a row boat. We have to be different and act different, too, so people will know we are kind, loving, and true to God’s Word. Some people will try to give us a hard time (just like the water current), but God says, “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” As we stand up for Jesus, we are blessed. That’s what that verse means. Don’t ever get discouraged; Jesus is always with you. We may have to stop and pause and pray for a moment when the going gets tough (dropping their anchor) but then He gives us more strength and power to keep going.

There was a man in the Bible that had to make a difficult choice which nearly cost him his life. He was going in the opposite direction than everyone else. Daniel was a servant for the King Nebuchadnezzar. He liked the king and the king liked Daniel. But like so many important people the king wanted everyone to notice him. A ruling was made, actually it was a law written, that ordered everyone to bow down to him at certain times of the day. No one was allowed to bow down to any other leader or god. If they were caught doing so they would be punished severely by being thrown into the lions den. Now these lions had not eaten for days. They would only feed them just enough to keep them alive. They would

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eat anything thrown into their den. How sad that was for someone who did not obey one of the king's laws.

There were a few other guys who were servants of the king. They did not like Daniel. I think they were jealous of his friendship with the king. They knew Daniel prayed to his God everyday, three times a day. They were the ones who tricked the king into making the new law. He had forgotten about Daniel praying to his God. But they didn't. They knew exactly when to stand outside Daniel's window and look in to see him praying. For you see, Daniel knew that no-matter-what, his God came first in his life. He knew that the law made by the king was a man-made law and it did not follow God's law. Therefore Daniel had to make a choice. And of course, he chooses God's law even if it meant being punished.

The "bad" guys stood outside Daniel's room and waited. Sure enough, just as they suspected, he began to pray to his God. They immediately went to the king with their findings. Or how sad the king was. As soon as he realized he had been tricked he tried desperately to change the law and the punishment, but wasn't able to. For you see, he knew if he changed the law now in order to save Daniel, the rest of the people would not respect him as a king any longer. They would think he was weak and not strong enough emotionally to be king. So, he sadly had Daniel taken to the lion's den. He may have taken time to talk with Daniel, I'm not sure. But sadly the king watched as Daniel was thrown in.

The poor king could not sleep that night. He tossed and turned thinking about his friend. He knew he would have to change that law as soon as possible. As soon as the sun rose the next morning, the king ran to the lion's den. He sadly called out, hoping to hear Daniel's voice, but being sure he probably would not.

"Daniel?" called the king. "Daniel? My friend. Are you there?"

"Oh, my King!" called out Daniel

What a surprised look came across the king's face, I'm sure. I'm sure everyone else was surprised too. He immediately had Daniel pulled out of the den.

"Why are you still here? How did you survive the night?" asked the king.

"My God sent his angel to close the mouths of the lions. They did not harm me." said Daniel.

The king immediately praised Daniel's God. He ordered the men who had tricked him into making the new law to be thrown into the lion's den. It didn't take long for the lions to finish their lunch. What a sad ending for those men.

The king commanded everyone to worship and honour the God of Daniel.  
and girls, we may have to make a decision to follow God's law or man's law. Our country has many laws and some of them do not follow what God wants us to do. So far we are not punished like the Bible day people were, but there may come a time when we will be. It is important for us to know ahead of time what we will decide to do. Will you follow man? Or will you follow God? The choice is yours.

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### Craft time: Lion's mask

Each child will need a paper plate, one sheet of yellow or orange construction paper, a tongue depressor, a dark magic marker, one q-tip, scissors and a little glue and one two-inch piece of masking tape.

Have the children cut their construction paper into length strips (about three) then cut along the edges to make them look like fringe. This will be the main of the lion. They should draw the eyes, nose and mouth of the lion onto the back side of the plate. Cut out the eyes, making sure they can see out of them. Glue the yellow/orange fringe around the outside edge of the plate. At the chin of the lion they should glue or tape the tongue depressor so they can hold it up to their face. Have them practice their roars

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### Story 3 - The Man Who as Swallowed by a Fish and Lived to Tell About It.

Objectives:

To help us understand that God has given us all a specific job to do. We must listen for his call on our life and follow his guidance. We should never run from God. If God gives us a job to do, he will be there to help us do it.

Bible verse: Ephesians 6: 14 & 15

“Stand firm with the belt of truth around your waist, the breastplate of righteousness in place and your feet fitted with readiness from the gospel...”

Object lesson preparation:

Have a gold fish bowl with one goldfish in it.

Lesson:

Have any of you ever owned a fish tank? (responses) What kind of fish did you have in it? I had a fish tank once. But I didn't take real good care of it and all my little fishy died. Shame on me...It takes a lot of care to keep it clean and the fish healthy. Do you see this fish bowl? Now this one should be easy to care for. It's small and there is only one fish in it. Fish can be fun to watch. They can be relaxing to watch too.

Did you know there are thousands of different kinds of fish in the rivers, the ponds, the seas, and the oceans of the world? That's a lot of kinds of fish isn't it? This is a very small fish compared to some fish I've seen. Why did you know there are fish in the world that are bigger than this room? There is one fish that the scientists say is not really a fish at all, but it is very, very big, and it looks like a fish. That is the Great Blue Whale. I read in a book recently that the Great Blue Whale can be as long as 95 feet!! It can weigh over 100 tons!! Do you know how many pounds that is? That's 200,000 pounds; its heart can weigh ½ ton by itself. That's 1,000 pounds....Wow! Now that's a big fish with a big heart!

The Bible tells us of an incident that happened a long time ago about a man who was swallowed by a large fish. Can anyone tell me what his name was? (responses) That's right. It was Jonah. Jonah loved the Lord. He told people about the Lord. Every thing seemed to be going fine for Jonah until one day God asked him to do something that was pretty scary for Jonah. God had asked him to go to a very evil town called Ninevah. He was to go there to tell the people about God. Jonah did not want to go. He was afraid of the king and the people. They did not believe in God. They did many terrible things. It was just plain awful. But God told Jonah to go. Jonah should have known that God was in control and he was already working to make it easy for Jonah. But Jonah did not want to do this for God. Instead, he packed his bags and ran. He ran all the way to a ship yard and when no one was looking he climbed onto one of the ships and hid himself way down deep inside the ship. After a while the ship began to move, and out into the ocean it went. It wasn't long before a great storm arose on the ocean. It tossed and tilted the ship. The men became frightened. They tossed over some of their belongings hoping to lighten the ship so it would not tip over. This did not help. Someone spotted Jonah and Jonah explained that the Lord God

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must be angry with him because of what he had done. It was his fault the storm was so bad. The men decided to throw Jonah over into the ocean. Maybe this would calm the Lord down and the storm would stop. So that is what they did. Over the side went Jonah. Almost as soon as he was in the water he was swallowed by a large fish. We don't know if it was a whale but it probably was. God had placed that fish right there in the right place just at the right time to swallow Jonah. As soon as Jonah was in the water guess what happened to the storm? Yep, you're right. It stopped. I'm sure the men on the ship were happy about that. But what about poor Jonah? Inside the belly of a stinky old fish. Peeeee-ewwwwww There he sat for three long days with nothing to do but think...and think some more. He didn't have a television to watch, or a radio to listen to, or even a window to look out. It must have been dark in there, wet, slimy, and maybe cold too. What could he do but think about what he had done. He decided if he got out of this mess he put himself into he would go to Ninevah and preach the gospel to those evil people, even if it meant he would be killed. Well, what do you know. As soon as he decided that God caused the big fish to get an upset stomach and guess what he did? He threw him up!!! Out onto the beach flew Jonah. He probably didn't smell very good. He may have had seaweed all over him. But it didn't matter to Jonah now. He was ready to go to Ninevah. And to Ninevah he went. Do you know what happened when he got there? Why, like I said before, God had been working, and the people were ready to hear about God. They listened to Jonah and believed him. Even the king believed him. The king ordered everyone to believe in the God of Jonah.

What a great story. You see, boys and girls, God has a plan for each one of us. He knows just the right job for us. He is preparing us and those we come in contact with so when we do what God asks us to do it will turn out right.

If you listen to God, he will guide you on the right path. He will not let you down. There's no point in hiding from him because somehow, someway, somewhere, he will get your attention, just like he did with Jonah. It would have been a lot easier on Jonah if he would have done what God asked him to do in the first place. And the same is true for us. Listen when God speaks and follow his call.

Craft time- fishing game

Give each child an envelope, two half sheets of coloured construction paper that you have drawn or printed several simple fish on, some paper clips, a new pencil (not sharpened), a magic marker, a pair of scissors, a round disc magnet with a hole in the centre, and about 15" of yarn or string.

Have the children cut out the fish and put one paper clip on the nose of each one. Tie the string to the pencil (eraser end-it won't slip off this way) and the other end of the string to the magnet. They may add eyes and scales to their fish or you may run off small copies of the Bible verse for them to glue onto their fish. Time them for 20 seconds to see how many fish they can catch. They can take their game home in the envelope.

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## Story 4 - The Acrobat

Objectives: To help us know the importance of staying focused on God. When we lose focus on God we can fall into the many traps Satan places in front of us.

Bible lesson: Genesis 19

Preparation of object lesson:

Make a simple balancing beam using a 2 x 4 x 8 (a little longer is better using some form of support in the centre to keep it from dipping down) directly on the floor or lift it slightly for more fun. You may want to have a rod or broom handle to be used for a balancing pole as you and the children take turns walking the beam...

You will want a picture of Jesus which you have attached to the wall across from the end of the beam so when the time comes in the lesson they can look straight ahead at it while walking the beam.

You may want a salt shaker or a moulded piece of salt (add a little water to some salt moulding it into a mould the night before and allowed to harden.)

If you have a small statue or bust you may want to bring that as you talk about statues.

### Lesson:

Have any of you children ever seen a statue? What are they like? Are they soft? Cuddly? Warm? Are they alive? Can they think? Love? Of course not. Most of the time they are big. Where are some places we might find a statue? Sometimes you will see them in a park or at a museum. Sometimes they can be small like this one I have brought with me today. (show statue) A statue is usually made of stone or metal, maybe even plastic, aren't they? Did you know, however, I read a story about a statue made of salt? I sure did. It looked and felt a little like this salt here (show your moulded salt or salt shaker)

The story I read comes from the book of Genesis chapter 19 in the Bible. Many years ago there was a man named Lot. He had a wife and some daughters. They lived in a city called Sodom. Most of the people in Sodom were very mean and wicked. They did not love God. They were very sinful...full of sin. They worshipped idols, they hurt each other, and they broke every commandment God had given us to live by...Lying, stealing, killing, and more. It was a very evil city. But Lot lived there. Even though he lived there he did not turn his back on God. He continued to worship Him.

Now, I want you to remember what I have just said to you...and I will come back to it. But for now I want us to do something fun.... (point to the balancing beam) Do any of you know what this it for? (take guesses)

Well, let me show you...(walk on it acting as if you will fall...be dramatic) Have you ever seen someone at the circus walk on the 'high wire'? It's way up in the air. Sometimes they will ride a bike across it. Sometimes they walk across it. Sometimes they will stand on someone's shoulders and walk across it...it looks really scary to me. Sometimes there will

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be a big net under them and sometimes there is not a net. The people who perform these scary trips across the high wire are called; can anyone tell me? ACROBATS. The acrobats sometimes will swing back and forth on high swings and other special tricks. It would be terrible if they fell. They must concentrate very carefully at all times. Usually they will keep their eyes on another person waiting for them on a little platform on the other side of the high wire. Or they may look at some object across from them so their minds stay focused on what they are doing. What might happen if they take their eyes off of their goal? What if they stopped concentrating? (responses) That's right; they may fall and get hurt very badly.

I want us to pretend we are an acrobat and see if you can walk across this beam without falling off. It's not very high so even if you fall you should be OK. Who would like to try it? (Allow them all to try it if time allows)

That was fun, wasn't it? But, let's see if we can do it again, only this time let's do it without looking down... (for you see, in most cases, everyone would look down at the beam as they walk it...) I want you to concentrate on this picture of Jesus. Do not look down at your feet. Who would like to go first? (Allow children to try the beam again without looking down-keep having them concentrate or focus on Jesus).

Ok. That was great and fun too. Did you notice that when you did not look down at the floor and you kept looking at Jesus it was easier?

Now I would like to go back to the story I was telling you a little while ago. Who remembers what kind of a city Sodom was? (evil) Sodom was a city that was filled with very wicked people. They absolutely did not have anything to do with God. They loved only themselves and their wickedness. Lot and his family lived there. We don't really know why, unless Lot felt like he might be able to help the people become closer to God. But anyway, he and his wife and their daughters lived in Sodom.

One day Lot's uncle, Abraham, was talking with God. God told Abraham he was going to destroy that wicked city because it was SO wicked. But Abraham said, "OH, God. What if there are righteous people living there?" Do you know what the word righteous means? It means people who are right with God. People who love God. He said to God, "Would you still destroy it?" God said he would not destroy it if there were righteous people there. In fact, God said, if there were just a small handful of people in the city he would not destroy the city.

Well, we know Lot and his wife and their daughters lived there. And so did Abraham. And, so did God. So God decided to give Lot and his family a chance to leave the city of Sodom before he destroyed it. Guess what he did? He sent two special people to Lot. Some people believe they were angels. They came into the city and went right to Lot's house. Lot came to the door. As he was speaking to them many wicked people came to them and wanted to see them but Lot was afraid the wicked people wanted to hurt the men (the angels) so he invited them to come into his house where they would be safe. At first they said, No, they would be ok. But Lot insisted and finally they went into his home. Lot fed them and gave them a place to sleep. The angels asked Lot if he knew of anyone else in the city that loved God and would like to leave. What about friends? Or his daughter's boyfriends? Well, there was no one else in the city who wanted to leave...so Lot, his wife and his two daughters were the only ones who left out of the city with the angels. The angels told them to head to

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the mountains...they should hurry...and not look back. There was nothing left in the city for them. They travelled to a small town called Zoar. And guess what? The name Zoar means small. As soon as they got to the town God began to cause fire and brimstone to fall from the sky. It fell on the city and the city began to burn. Everything was destroyed. The buildings, the trees, the grass, and yes, even the wicked people.. How sad that was... If only they had loved God.....

Another sad thing happened about that time too. Mrs. Lot stopped concentrating on what the angels told her to do. They had said....go quickly and don't look back....She looked back at the city...that was not a good decision on her part. At that point she stopped trusting in God. God was very sad about what she did. She had been warned not to look back, but she did. When she did look back something happened...do any of you know what happened? She was turned into a pillar of salt.. That's right. And there she was. Just like a statue. Mrs. Lot took her eyes off of Jesus. Just like an acrobat who may lose their concentration and may fall, Mrs. Lot lost her concentration and she fell into sin. She should have kept her eyes forward and never looked back...

Boys and girls, when we keep focused on Jesus we will always be going in the right direction and God will always be there to help us. Satan will try, ALWAYS TRY, to make us lose our way. He will always try and put things in our path to make us look away or in a different direction than Jesus. But if we can concentrate on Him we will be there and we can be assured we will reach our goal.

Craft: Give each child a small picture of Jesus-maybe 2"x2". Have them decoupage it to a small piece of smooth wood-maybe 4"x4". If time allows you could have the children sand paper the wood before they decoupage. Add a string for hanging by stapling string to back (you may want to do this first). A printed out "Keep your eyes on Jesus" could be added and decoupage under Jesus' picture.