

Lesson 12 / November 22, 2009

“Michael Oher and the Mousetraps”

for use as

STEP 1

Lesson 12 Focus:

God calls us to
trust in Him.

Lesson 12 Bible Basis:

Genesis 22:1-12

Students will have an opportunity to experience how hard it can be to trust someone in the midst of a stressful and difficult situation. They will also be encouraged to trust God as they learn about Abraham’s faith.

Materials:

- blindfold
- 8 to 10 mousetraps
- vegetable oil (optional)
- tape or rope to mark your course

To start today’s exciting lesson, you’ll need to go to the store (or dig through your pantry) and find some mousetraps to bring with you to church. Eight to ten of the simple, inexpensive wood-based snap traps should be perfect and can be purchased in most hardware and grocery stores. Be sure you bring mousetraps and NOT rat traps. Rat traps are much stronger and could cause some pain.

Next, you’ll need to find a space outside your classroom that is out of the way of other people. This could either be an empty classroom, a gym floor, or some other space that is available to you. (If this is not possible for you, you can also do this activity in your classroom—but you’ll lose the element of surprise.) You’ll want to designate part of this area as your “course”. Before your students arrive, bring your blindfold and your mousetraps to your game area. Outline your course with tape or rope and then spread your mousetraps “haphazardly” across the course. They should be fairly close together. Your aim is to create a type of mini “Mousetrap Obstacle Course.” You want the mousetraps to be spread enough apart for a person to walk through but not much wider. If you want to add a degree of difficulty, you could consider making the course include a curve of some kind. Once your course is set, go back to your classroom and wait for your students!

When your students arrive, excitedly tell them that you’re going to start out today by participating in an obstacle course! Lead them to your Mousetrap Course and explain the game by saying, **Today we will each have an opportunity to navigate the Mousetrap Obstacle Course you see before you! There are five very important rules:** (1) Only one student enters the course at a time. (2) Any student entering the course must be blindfolded before they start. (3) Each blindfolded student must intently listen to my voice—I will lead them safely through the course. (4) No one but me is allowed to pick up or touch the mousetraps. (5) Each student must also take off their shoes before they enter the course.

Lesson 12 Memory Verse

Love the LORD your
God with all your heart
and with all your soul
and with all your
strength.

— Deuteronomy 6:5

From the moment your students enter the playing arena, you'll notice that there will be a new type of nervous energy emanating around the room. Kids are going to want to know what's going on. The intensity will go up when they realize that they'll have to be blindfold *and* have their shoes off. As your students watch, make sure all the traps are set and then ask, **Who wants to go first?**

As the teacher, you need to be aware that a regular mouse trap will not cause your students any harm. If they are wearing socks, the trap won't hurt at all. If, on the other hand, they are in their bare feet (which definitely adds to the fear level) the worst that will happen will be a small red mark and a brief pinched feeling. Your kids are in no danger of being harmed during this game. Nonetheless, if this opening activity is too extreme for you or your kids, you may instead consider using glue mouse traps. The activity will be more "ew, gross" instead of "fear factor." You can find examples of both types of traps online, using the websites that are listed at the end of Step 1. (If you do decide to go with glue traps, you should know that objects can be removed from a glue trap by pouring vegetable oil on top of them.)

Chances are high that you'll have at least one student who is very nervous about taking part in this activity. Don't force anyone to participate. Encourage them with statements like, **I promise I'll guide you through safely ... just go slow and listen to my voice. If you do, you won't get hurt.** If they still aren't convinced, move on to the next student.

- ▶ **Was anyone nervous about participating in this obstacle course? Why or why not?**
- ▶ **What was the most powerful emotion you felt during this experience?**
- ▶ **How did trust play a part in this activity?**

Be sure that your conversation includes some discussion on the important role of trusting your teacher. **If you really trusted, you'd be willing to walk through the course blindfolded.** Wrap up the conversation by saying, **Sometimes it can be really difficult to trust. Today, we're going to study someone from the Bible who trusted not a person, but God—completely.**

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your *Middle School Teacher's Guide*; Step 4 appears below.)

Websites:

[<http://www.domyownpestcontrol.com/victor-mouse-trap-m040-p-56.html>]
[www.saferbrand.com/store/sister-products/for-the-home/rodent-control/M180C]

Lesson 12 / November 22, 2009

“Michael Oher and the Mousetraps”

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STEP 4

Lesson 12 Focus:

God calls us to trust in Him.

Lesson 12 Bible Basis:

Genesis 22:1-12

Materials:

- a computer with Internet access (optional)

As we've seen in today's lesson, trusting God and other people can be very hard, especially in difficult situations.

▶ Why do you think it's so hard for us to trust sometimes?

- ▶ Have you ever had an experience where you had a very hard time trusting someone? Trusting God? If so, do you care to share?**
(Hopefully, some students will have stories to share that do not involve the mouse-traps from earlier.)
- ▶ Does anyone know anything about the new movie called *The Blind Side* that opened on Friday night (Nov. 20th)? If so, what do you know about it?**

Allow students to share. Chances are, most of them will know nothing about this film. If you have Internet access in your classroom, I would encourage you to show them the trailer which can be viewed here:

[<http://www.theblindsidemovie.com/>]

- ▶ What emotions and thoughts do you think Michael experienced when Mrs. Tuohy approached him?**
- ▶ Did it take a high level of trust for him to accept her invitation? Why or why not?**
- ▶ If you had been in the same situation as Mrs. Tuohy, seeing this young man out on the street, what would you have done?**
- ▶ Did it take a high level of trust for Mrs. Tuohy to make the decision to ask Michael to stay with them? Why or why not?**

To give you an update on where Michael is today, the Baltimore Ravens drafted him in the first round of the 2009 NFL Draft. Michael was the 23rd pick overall, and on July 30, 2009 he signed a 5 year, \$13.8 million contract with the Ravens. He has started every game for the Ravens this season.

It would appear that both Michael and the Tuohys were blessed because they trusted one another on that fateful night.

Lesson 12
Memory Verse

Love the LORD your
God with all your heart
and with all your soul
and with all your
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— Deuteronomy 6:5

▶ **Are we always blessed when we trust God? Explain.**

Just as Abraham, the Tuohys, and Michael were blessed because they trusted God, you too will be blessed when you trust the Lord. That doesn't mean life will be a cake-walk ... but you will be blessed. No matter how difficult or challenging a situation you find yourself in, always listen, trust, and obey.

Close in prayer, encouraging your students to always trust in God, who loves them so much that He died for them.

(David C. Cook is not affiliated with and does not endorse any website listed on these pages.)

Websites:

[<http://www.theblindsidemovie.com/>]

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Oher]