

Unit 2. Children of the Bible - NT

Lesson 2.3: Afonos the Afflicted

Teacher Preparation and Materials Needed:

Bible Story:

Biblical reference on John 9:1- 42

*The story is adapted from Hyde, Katherine Bolger. Brave, Faithful, and True: Children of the Bible. Ancient Faith Publishing, 2023. (Please note that, although this is a biblical story, the character in this story is named Afonos by the author and does not appear in the Bible.)

Activities:

**Implement based on available time. Detailed instructions and materials list are provided in the lesson.*

Activity 1: “Jesus Brings Light” Lantern Craft

Activity 2: “Eyes of Love” Craft

Words of the Week:

Կոյր - gooyr - blind

թուք - took - spit

ծնող - dzuh-nogh - parent

Objective

Children will understand that Jesus has the power to heal and bring light into our lives, and that we can trust Him even when things feel dark or difficult.

Moral Character Focus:

Knowledge: Children will learn that Jesus healed Afonos, a young man who was blind, to show God’s love and power.

Understanding: Children will recognize that sometimes God allows hard things so His goodness can shine even brighter in our lives.

Application: Children will identify ways to trust God when they are sad, scared, or hurting—by praying, being patient, and remembering that Jesus is always near.

Values: Children will develop compassion for others who are sick or suffering and learn to see everyone with eyes of kindness and love.

Memory Verse:

“I was blind, but now I see.”

— John 9:25

Lesson

Open with prayer:

Wisdom of the Father, O Jesus, grant to me the wisdom to think, speak, and do that which is good in Your sight. Save me from all evil and distracting thoughts, words, and deeds. Have mercy upon your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.

Lesson Body: Afonos the Afflicted

In the busy city of Jerusalem, there was a young man named Afonos. From the day he was born, he could not see. The world was dark for him, an endless night that never broke into dawn. He could not see the golden sunrise painting the eastern hills, his mother's tender smile as she sang him to sleep, or the endless blue sky stretching above the temple walls. He did not know what colors looked like or how shadows danced across the ground. But even though Afonos could not see with his eyes, his heart was bright with love and faith. His spirit held a light that no darkness could dim.

Every morning, his parents would gently lead him by the hand to a quiet place near the temple gates, where the stones were smooth and worn by countless feet. There, he would sit on a small mat and listen carefully to the footsteps of people passing by. He could hear children laughing as they chased each other through the narrow streets, merchants calling out their prices with loud, eager voices, and the sweet songs of birds nesting in the olive trees nearby. The world came to him through sound and touch and smell: the warmth of the sun on his face, the scent of fresh bread from the baker's shop, the cool breeze that whispered through the city at evening time. Sometimes he felt sad, wondering what it would be like to see those things with his own eyes, to watch the flicker of lamplight or the faces of the people who passed him each day. But even in his sadness, Afonos whispered prayers to God. "Lord," he would say softly, folding his small hands together, "You made the eyes that see and the hands that help. I know You love me, even in this darkness."

One warm afternoon, as Afonos sat quietly in his usual spot, he heard a group of men talking nearby. Their voices were kind and gentle, and their footsteps slowed as they came closer. One of them spoke with such peace and power that Afonos felt warmth fill his heart, as if the sun itself had drawn near to him. It was Jesus. The disciples, puzzled and curious, asked, "Teacher, who sinned, this young man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered with a voice full of compassion, "Neither he nor his parents sinned. This happened so that the works of God might be shown in him." Then Jesus knelt beside Afonos, and the young man could feel His presence close by: strong, comforting, and full of love. Jesus gently took some clay from the dusty ground, mixed it with His own saliva, and softly touched it to Afonos' closed eyelids. The cool mud felt strange but somehow hopeful. "Go," Jesus said kindly, "and wash in the pool of Siloam."

Afonos felt the cool, damp mud on his eyelids, and his heart began to race with something he had never felt before: hope mixed with wonder. With the help of a kind neighbor who had seen everything, he made his way through the winding streets to the pool of Siloam. His hands trembled as he knelt down by the water's edge. He scooped up the clear, cold water in his palms and carefully washed his face, feeling the clay dissolve and slip away. And then, suddenly, the darkness was gone. For the first time in his life, light poured in like a river of gold. He blinked once, twice, and gasped aloud. The world shimmered with color: brilliant blues and greens, the warm glow of sunlight on stone, the sparkle of water, and his own reflection smiling back at him with wide, astonished eyes. He could see!

"Mother! Father!" he shouted with joy, running through the streets as fast as his legs could carry him. "I can see! I can see everything! The sky! The trees! Your faces!" Tears streamed down his cheeks, but they were tears of pure happiness. People ran to him in amazement, gathering in a crowd around the young man who had once sat silent and still. "Isn't this the boy who used to sit and beg by the temple?" they asked each other in disbelief. "How can he see now? What happened to him?" Afonos laughed through his tears, his voice ringing with gratitude. "A man named Jesus healed me! He touched my eyes with clay and told me to wash, and now I see! I see all of you! I see the world God made!"

From that day on, Afonos never forgot what Jesus had done for him. He told everyone who would listen about the man who gave him sight: not just a traveling teacher or a miracle worker, but the Son of God who loved him enough to stop and heal him. But more than that, Afonos learned to see with more than just his eyes. He learned to see the love of God shining in every person he met, the kindness in a stranger's helping hand, and the beauty in both the seen and unseen gifts of life. He had once lived in darkness, knowing the world only through whispers and echoes. But now his heart and his eyes were filled with light, and he walked each day in the glow of God's great love.

Words of the Week:

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Memory Verse:

**"I was blind, but now I see."
— John 9:25**

**Bible Verse Game
to Remember**

"I was blind, but now I see."
— John 9:25

"I was blind"
cover eyes with hands

"but now I see"
open hands wide and smile

Connection: Jesus opens not only our eyes but our hearts, so we can see His goodness everywhere.

Activity 1: "Jesus Brings Light" Lantern Craft

Materials: White paper cups, LED tea lights, tissue paper, glue, black marker.

Instructions:

1. Cut small shapes or crosses in the paper cup.
2. Glue small pieces of colored tissue paper inside to let light shine through.
3. Place the LED candle inside and turn it on.
4. Write on the cup: "Jesus gives light to my heart."

Connection: Jesus brought light to Afonos's eyes. He also brings light to our hearts when we love and trust Him.

Activity 2: "Eyes of Love" Craft

Materials: Paper hearts, crayons, scissors, glue, googly eyes.

Instructions:

1. Cut out large paper hearts.
2. Glue two googly eyes on each heart.
3. Write or draw ways we can use our eyes to see love; smiling at others, noticing people who need help, looking at the beauty God made.

Connection: When Jesus gives us new eyes of love, we see the world the way He does.

Review

Memory Verse Review:

“I was blind, but now I see.” (John 9:25)

Lesson Review:

1. What was Afonos born without? (He was born blind and could not see)
2. Who came to visit Afonos? (Jesus came and showed God’s love)
3. What did Jesus tell Afonos to do? (To wash his eyes in the pool of Siloam)
4. What happened after Afonos washed his eyes? (He could see for the first time)
5. How can we share God’s light with others? (By being kind, helping others, and thanking Jesus for His love)

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Life Application:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

Just like Afonos, we can trust Jesus even when life feels dark or confusing. Jesus brings light to our hearts when we pray, listen, and believe in His love. When we are kind and help others, we let that same light shine through us. Every time we show love, we help someone else “see” Jesus too.

Close with prayer:

O Christ, guardian of all, let Your right hand guard and shelter me, by day and by night, at home and abroad, in sleeping and in waking, that I may never stumble. Have mercy upon Your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.