

BELONG

Starter Questions: If you could instantly become really good at one skill without having to practice, what would you choose? Why? Ask your students if they would like to share their highs and lows from the week.

Become Challenge Check-In: Ask students how they allowed God to use them in their circle of impact this week. Celebrate any wins. How did they demonstrate their heart for Jesus to those around them?

BELIEVE

Scripture: 2 Kings 5:9-19a

Main Idea: God's way is the best way.

Focus Question: Will I trust God's way, even when it's different from what I expected?

Context:

After King Solomon died, God's people divided into two kingdoms: Israel in the north and Judah in the south. Although Israel repeatedly turned away from God, He continued to send prophets to speak His truth. One of those prophets was Elisha. At the same time, Israel often faced conflict with neighboring nations, including Aram. Naaman was the commander of Aram's army. He was respected, successful, and powerful, but he also had leprosy, a serious skin disease that had no known cure at the time. After hearing that Elisha could help him, Naaman traveled to Israel hoping to be healed.

Summary:

Naaman arrived at Elisha's house expecting an impressive display of power. Instead, Elisha sent a messenger telling him to wash seven times in the Jordan River. Offended by the simple instruction, Naaman almost left without obeying. But after listening to the advice of his servants, he humbled himself, obeyed God's word, and was completely healed. Naaman returned to Elisha praising the God of Israel as the only true God.

Read 2 Kings 5:9-12

→ **Bible Study Tip:** Before you answer, notice the **contrast** between what Elisha does and what Naaman expected him to do. **When Scripture highlights a contrast, it's often inviting us to ask why.**

- Notice what Naaman says he expected Elisha to do. What do his expectations reveal about the way he thought God should work? *(Naaman expected a dramatic ceremony and special treatment. He assumed God would work in a way that matched his expectations instead of simply trusting God's word.)*
- When someone in Scripture has a strong emotional reaction, slow down and ask why. According to verses 11-12, what was really making Naaman angry? *(Naaman wasn't angry because God refused to heal him. He was angry because God didn't work the way he expected. His response revealed that he wanted God to work on his terms rather than simply trust what God had said.)*

Read 2 Kings 5:13-14

- What truth did Naaman's servants help him recognize? *(They pointed out that Naaman was willing to do something difficult but was unwilling to do something simple because it seemed beneath him. Their words exposed his pride and encouraged him to trust God's instructions.)*

- The Jordan River itself had no power to heal. So why was washing in the river necessary? *(God wasn't testing whether the river could heal; He was inviting Naaman to trust His word. The healing came from God's power, while washing was Naaman's response of faith.)*

Read 2 Kings 5:15–19a

- How do Naaman's words and actions show that something greater than physical healing happened? *(Naaman didn't simply celebrate being healed. He confessed that the God of Israel is the only true God and desired to worship Him alone. God changed not only his body but also his understanding of who He is.)*
- What had to change in Naaman before he experienced God's healing? *(Naaman had to stop insisting on his own expectations and trust God's word instead. He experienced God's healing when he responded to God in faith rather than demanding that God work on his terms.)*
- How does Naaman's story point us to Jesus? *(Like Naaman, we have a problem we cannot fix ourselves. Jesus is the only One who can cleanse us from our sin. We don't come to Him on our own terms or because of what we've done. We come by faith, trusting Him and His finished work on the cross.)*

Read Isaiah 55:8–9

→ **Bible Study Tip:** When you come across a repeated idea in different parts of the Bible, ask how the passages help explain one another.

- How do these verses help explain why Naaman struggled with Elisha's instructions? *(Naaman expected God to work according to his own ideas. Isaiah reminds us that God's wisdom and plans are greater than ours, even when we don't understand them.)*

Read 1 Corinthians 1:18, 22–25

- How does Paul build on the truth we just read in Isaiah? *(Paul explains that God's way often seems foolish by human standards. Yet God's wisdom is greater than ours, and His plan through Jesus accomplishes what human wisdom never could.)*

Final Reflection

- Where are you struggling to trust God's way because it isn't what you expected? *(Students may mention unanswered prayers, difficult circumstances, waiting on God's timing, relationships, school, family, or struggles with sin. Others may realize they've been asking God to fit their plans instead of trusting His. Remind students that trusting God doesn't mean understanding everything He does. It means believing that His wisdom is perfect and His ways are always right, even when they don't match our expectations. Encourage students to bring their expectations honestly to God in prayer and ask Him to help them trust His way above their own.)*

BECOME

Circle of Impact Challenge:

Naaman needed people to help him trust God's way. His servants lovingly spoke truth when he needed to hear it. This week, look for an opportunity to help someone trust God's way. Whether it's reminding a friend what God says, praying with someone, or sharing a Scripture that's encouraged you, trust God to use your words to point them toward Him.