

DOT CONNER

WEBTECTIVE

8-WEEK CHILDREN'S MINISTRY CURRICULUM

WEEK ONE: "PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT?"

OPENING GAME: BLIND Pictionary

Supplies: Large poster paper, markers, blindfolds

How to Play: It's Pictionary, but with a twist! Call up a volunteer and have them pull a prompt from the suggested list. They must draw the prompt on the poster paper until the guessers correctly identify the drawing. The twist is that the artist must wear a blindfold! You can either play this game with one artist and the audience guessing, or perhaps breaking the audience into teams and having a volunteer from each team take turns. More than anything, have fun!

Suggested Prompts: Bible, cross, angel, Ten Commandments, Noah's ark, magnifying glass, hat, smartphone, soccer ball (feel free to add your own)

INTRODUCTION

We're starting a brand new series today called "Dot Conner: Webtective." This is going to be a really fun and unique series because for the next eight weeks we're going to be following the adventures of a young girl named Dot Conner who is, as you might have guessed, a Webtective! What's a Webtective? Well, it's a detective who uses the internet to solve mysteries, and to a curious girl like Dot there's no greater mysteries than the questions she has about her Christian faith.

Each week we're going to follow along as Dot discovers a new question for her to solve, and we're going to work right alongside her using the same detective skills she uses: research, interviewing an expert, and following the clues until we arrive at a solution to the case.

Today, Dot discovers a mystery surrounding a question she asks herself after a particularly rough day at school. Think about how Dot investigates this mystery so that you can be ready to put your detective skills to the test too!

[PLAY EPISODE 101: "PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT"]

MAIN LESSON

Solution: Jesus is perfectly God and perfectly man.

Introduction:

[Introduce yourself to the audience and share a fun story from the week]

Wasn't that such a fun case for Dot to solve? Now, you might have thought it was too easy of a case to solve at first: "Dot, there's definitely not a perfect person; everybody knows that!" But let's be honest, even though we all claim to know that no one is perfect, there are plenty of people you know that you might think are pretty close to it: celebrities, athletes (like Ryan Hollingshead), influencers, that kid in your class at school that never gets in trouble. You know who she is. And, come to think of it, how many of us go through our every day lives trying to be perfect too? I know I do. And if you were being honest, you'd admit it that you do too. And yet, even though we try as hard as we can, we can't seem to make it to always being perfect all of the time, can we? And the people you thought were so close to perfect they probably were? Well, you don't see what their lives are like all the time. And if you did, you'd soon found out they are as far from perfect as you are too.

In today's episode, Dot used her detective skills to discover that Jesus was indeed the only perfect person who ever lived. Believe it or not, that's one of the Bible's greatest mysteries that even today we still sometimes can't fully understand. So today we're going to use our detective skills to examine the Bible and see how Jesus achieved this great feat. Our investigation is going to start right there, with research, and our source for our research is going to be the Word of God. God's Word is a trustworthy source because all the truth it contains has been proven to be true. And our expert testimony for this case is going to a man by the name of Paul. Paul was an apostle during the time of Jesus, and was called specifically by God to teach and encourage the new Christians after the death, resurrection, and ascension (a big word that means departure) of Jesus. Paul wrote a letter to one of the earliest churches in a town called Philippi, and his letter is what we call the Letter to the Philippians (or just Philippians). If you brought a Bible with you this morning, turn to Philippians. We're going to be reading from Chapter 2.

So we've got our research, our expert, and now as we read and discuss what we find we can follow the clues to arrive at the solution to our mystery this morning: **why was Jesus perfectly God and perfectly man?** Before we begin, **let's pray.**

Clue 1: Jesus was perfectly God from before the world began.

As Paul wrote the letter to the Philippians, he wanted to remind them of who Jesus was and what Jesus came to do. He knew this was important for the young Christians to understand and remember because it would help them do their best to live like Jesus did (since that's what it means to be a Christian). Paul structured his recap of Jesus's person and mission in three phases: before Jesus was

born, when Jesus was born, and after Jesus died and was resurrected. Our first clue in solving the mystery of Jesus being both perfectly God and perfectly man comes from Philippians 2:5-6:

“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,”

As we already knew, Paul’s purpose in writing this is to encourage the young Christians to have the same mind as Jesus, so he’s going to show what kind of mind Jesus had. This is the first phase in Paul’s structure, which means as he writes this he’s thinking about who and where Jesus was **before** he was born as a human. Jesus was “in the form of God.” Whoa! And not only that, Jesus “did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped.” What that means is that Jesus wasn’t so high on himself, even though he had every right to be. Did you catch that clue? Jesus was **equal** with God! That pretty much confirms Jesus was perfect, since God is perfect. And we know he’s as powerful as God because we’re even told what he was doing all that time before he became human:

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.”

That was Paul writing again in Colossians 1:15-17. Isn’t that amazing? You might not have ever thought about it before, but when the world was being created Jesus was right there doing all that creative work himself. And man, was all that work good. But... and I think you know what happens next... it didn’t stay that way. Something happened that caused the whole world to break. Do you remember what that was? That’s right the first man and the first woman, Adam and Eve, chose to disobey God. That’s what sin is: doing the opposite of what God tells you to do. And that choice carried with it a terrible curse. They would have to pay for their sin. But just any person couldn’t take the punishment. It had to be someone who wasn’t cursed themselves. And the bad news was, all of Adam and Eve’s descendants would be subject to the curse as well.

Clue 2: Jesus was born perfectly human.

In Philippians 2, Paul moves to the next phase in Jesus’s existence: when Jesus became human. Let’s read verses 7 and 8:

“but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

Remember, Jesus didn't think the fact that he was equal with God was “something to be grasped” or something that made him better than everyone else. And when he saw his chance to save human beings from their sin, he took it... literally! Jesus took on “the form of a servant” and was born as a normal human being. That “form of a servant” expression is to make us think of how awesome it is that the one who created all things was willing to live like one of his creations. But Jesus wasn't just any human being. He was born in a miraculous way, in a way that prevented him from bearing Adam's original curse. He was a perfect human. And that's why he obeyed the will of God the Father and allowed himself to be crucified on a cross. Paul once again in another letter tells us that Jesus was the perfect human, and the reason for it:

“For our sake he [God] made him [Jesus] to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him [Jesus] we might become the righteousness of God.”

2 Corinthians 5:21

I want to be clear that when Paul says Jesus “emptied himself” what he isn't saying is that Jesus was now no longer also perfectly God. Jesus was both perfectly God and perfectly human after his birth. But for a time, Jesus did give up the rights he had as a perfect God so he could experience life as a human. Jesus could give those rights up (he's God, so he can) and he can take those rights back (he's God, so he can!). And that's exactly what he did.

Clue 3: Jesus is alive right now as a perfect God and a perfect man.

After Jesus died on the cross for our sins, do you remember what happened? That's right! He was buried in a tomb, and then three days later he came back to life, knocked over the stone, and walked out like a boss. He was alive again! Paul cuts to who and where Jesus is right now in our present day in verses 9-11:

“Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Isn't that awesome! At the end of Jesus's time here on earth, he gave his disciples some final commands and then ascended into the clouds. The disciples missed Jesus in the beginning (until God sent his Holy Spirit to them), and even after they started planting churches and telling the good news some of the early Christians thought they had missed Jesus coming back. But Jesus isn't missing. We know exactly where he is: in heaven, installed as king, and ready for the day when every knee will bow. Isn't that exciting?!

Closing:

Jesus was perfectly God and perfectly man so that he could do what only he could do: save us from our sins. He did the work... all we have to do is accept his gift. Paul again writes:

“...if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”

(Romans 10:9)

What's so cool about this fact is that it doesn't matter if we're perfect or not. God holds all people to his perfect standard, and we fall way, way, way short of it. But, as Small Group Leader Jesse said, we don't have to be perfect because Jesus was perfect for us. When God looks at those who follow Jesus he doesn't see a bunch of imperfect people. He sees the perfect obedience of his only son in whom he is well pleased.

Let's pray.

PREVIEW