

Blessing Bowl

Materials

- A bowl to use as a mold (any shape will work - it doesn't need to be circular!)
- Paper (2-3 sheets for a small to medium sized bowl)
- Paper shredder, paper cutter, or scissors
- Plastic wrap
- Glue (1:1 ratio with water)
- Water (1:1 ratio with water)
- Plastic wrap

Steps

1. First, you'll want to select a bowl to use and cover the bottom and outer sides with plastic wrap (the bowl mold will be turned upside down when assembling the paper bowl).
2. Then get your paper together. This is a great way to recycle junk mail, newspapers, etc. but decorative paper looks great too. The paper needs to be cut in thin, 3 inch long strips. Paper shredders are great for this, but using a paper cutter or scissors is fine too, just more time consuming. The strips don't all have to be uniform but work best when cut to 1/4 inch width and 3-4 inch length.
3. All you need to use as an adhesive is a combination of water and glue. To make two small to medium sized bowls I used a regular 8 oz. bottle of Elmer's glue with 8 oz. of water. Whatever size or number of bowls you choose, make sure there is a 1:1 ratio of glue to water and that the two are well-mixed.
4. First, coat the plastic-wrap-covered bowl with the glue and water mixture (I used by hands throughout the whole process but a paint brush could work too). Then you can start applying the paper. I found it easiest to grab a handful of paper strips, put them all in the glue mixture, and take them out one by one. For best results, start by layering the bottom of the bowl and, once the base is complete, work down the sides until the whole bowl is covered.
5. Before you throw out the glue mixture, make sure you like what you've got: check that all the sides are even, that there aren't any bald spots, etc. If there are pieces that aren't sticking too well, don't be afraid to add more glue to keep them in place.
6. Then you just have to wait 2-3 days for the drying process to run its course. Once dry everything is dry, the plastic wrap makes it easy to remove the paper bowl from the mold bowl, and then the plastic peels quite easily from the inside of your brand new paper bowl!

The Blessing Bowl

A craft for your family to center conversation and thinking on the Lord

After following the instructions for how to make your blessing bowl, you are invited to make it a part of your dinner conversation. Hopefully it will be a way for your family to have your eyes opened to the work of God all around you and provide opportunity for you to share these moments with one another.

Each week will have a different theme for which you can use your new blessing bowl to guide, lead, and encourage one another in your life of faith together.

Week 1 (June 1-7)

Each day of this week, have each member of your family write down (or draw a picture) about a blessing—big or small—that they experienced that day. Make the deadline for the blessing bowl before dinner starts. And then, around the table share the blessings that your family saw that day.

Week 2 (June 8-14)

Each day of this week, write or draw how you “caught” someone doing good that day. Share what they did. Extra credit if the person did the good thing for someone other than the person writing on the card.

Week 3 (June 15-21)

Each day of this week, write or draw a prayer request or petition. And, end your family meal with the prayers of your family. Consider breaking the week down in this way. On Monday make the prayers all about adoration—attributes about the Lord that you love. Tuesday is prayers of confession—mistakes you’ve made and seeking God’s help to fix them

Wednesday is prayers of Thanksgiving—what are you thankful for.

Thursday is prayers of Supplication—making requests to God

Friday and Saturday can be any combination of these petitions.

A.C.T.S. for short

Week 4 (June 22-28)

Using the bowl that you originally used to help hold the water, each night at dinner (or before bed) put water in the bowl and dip a finger in the blessing bowl. Trace the sign of the cross on each person’s forehead. As you do say words of blessing such as, “Jesus Loves you and so do I.”

A good conversation to have during dinners during this week is to retell the stories of the baptisms of each child.

M&M science rainbow

Materials

- M&Ms
- Plate
- Water

Procedure

1. I started by putting some M&Ms onto a plate.
2. My kids arranged the M&Ms in a large circle at the outside edge of the plate.
3. Gently add enough water to the middle of the plate until the water is touching all of the M&Ms. Be careful not to add the water too roughly or it will cause some of the M&Ms to move out of the circle.
4. Then just watch. Over the next few minutes, a beautiful rainbow will form right before your eyes!

What's the science behind the M&M science rainbow?

The hard shell of the M&Ms is made with water soluble colors. When the water touches the M&Ms, the colors begin to dissolve off of the M&Ms and run into the water. Because of the shape of the plate and the positioning of the M&Ms, the colors have no where to go except into the middle of the plate, forming a beautiful rainbow as they do.

The M&M Rainbow

Processing the Object Lesson Together

1. What did you see that was surprising?
2. Why do you think this happened?
3. Any ideas of what this experiment could teach us about God?

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-13 (*There is also a worksheet in the Taking Faith Home Packet*)

1. What did you hear in this section of scripture? What words stand out?
2. Some key words the Bible uses to describe love are: Patient; Kind; Rejoices in truth; it never ends. Tell a story or about a time when someone was kind, patient, or truthful with you—maybe even when you did not deserve it.

Going back to the M&M Rainbow, do you have any ideas about how LOVE might be connected to this experiment?

One of the big words that we have at church is Mission. An Astronaut may have a mission—a big job to do that only works when a bunch of smaller jobs are linked together. Or a soldier may have a mission too. The fun news about following Jesus is that He has given us a mission too. And one of those big picture ideas that helps us in this mission is LOVE. We have a job to do—and it is to love. We are to Love God and Love one another. And to Love ourselves too.

What's one way you love:

God?

Others?

Yourself?

I think Love is beautiful. And love makes the world around us beautiful. Beautiful just like your M&M Rainbow.

FINAL QUESTION: What is something you can do to help color the world around you with the beauty of LOVE?

Dancing Rice Experiment

Materials Needed

- White Vinegar
- Baking Soda
- Instant Rice (non-instant rice is too dense for this project)
- Clear Jar
- Water
- Food Coloring (Optional)

How To

1. Fill the Clear Jar 3/4 Way Full Of Water. If desired, mix in food coloring.
2. Add in 1 TBS of Baking Soda and Stir. Mix completely.
3. 1/4 Cup Of Uncooked Rice. Note that instant rice is needed for this project! Non-instant rice is too dense and won't result in a "dancing" reaction.
4. Add in 1-2 TBS of White Vinegar.

The reaction didn't happen at first, I had to add in a little more vinegar than I had initially expected. When we did, though, it was awesome. The top fizzed slightly but then the rice just started dancing around the jar. It was fantastic.

The Dancing Rice

Processing the Object Lesson Together

1. What did you see that was surprising?
2. Why do you think this happened?
3. Any ideas of what this experiment could teach us about God?

Read Genesis 1:26-27

1. Retell as best you can the story of creation. (There are two parts—the 7 days is in chapter 1 and the story of Adam and Eve is in chapter 2)
2. What do you think it means to be made in the Image of God?

Going back to the Dancing Rice, do you have any idea as to what dancing rice has to do with how you were created?

Another of the big words we have in the church is purpose. Last week we talked about mission—which is the “What” we do. Purpose is why we do the things we do. In creating you, God has put a purpose within you. More than just things to do, you were created for a reason. And one of those reasons is to dance through this life. Did you know that one of the earliest words to talk about how the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit related to one another means “to dance around.” And, if we are called to be in relationship with the Lord—one faithful thing we can do is dance. Dance together. Dance with music. Dance through life.

Turn on some music, and dance like the Dancing Rice. And then keep dancing together. Share about the first song that Mom and Dad danced to when they were dating or as a married couple.

Dancing is fun—and it brings joy. Dancing through life is one of the things that is put within us.

Final Question: One thing that is almost always necessary to dance is music—how can you make music (literal and figurative) this week to help other people dance with you for Jesus?

Salt Dough Recipe

Ingredients

1 cup salt
1 cup warm water
2 cups flour
aluminum foil



Making the Dough

1. Stir the water and salt together. Let stand for about 1 minute to allow the salt to dissolve.
2. Add the flour and stir. When the dough becomes too stiff to stir, use your hands.
3. Dump the dough out onto a hard floured surface and knead it. (To knead dough, hold it with one hand while you push it away from you with the other. Then fold it back on itself.)
4. The dough should feel soft, not sticky. If it is too sticky, add more flour. Continue kneading until the dough is smooth.
5. Store the dough in a plastic bag so it won't dry out.

Creating Projects

1. If your project is thicker than 1 inch, ball up aluminum foil or form it into the desired shape.
2. Flatten a piece of dough until it is about 1/4 inch thick.
3. Wrap the dough around the foil. To seal the dough and make seams disappear, wet your finger and smooth out the seams.
4. Place your project on a cookie sheet. If parts of your project need to be propped up, use foil to prop them and help them hold their shape.
5. Ask an adult to help you use the oven. Heat the oven to 200 degrees and place the dough project into the oven. Bake for 1 to 4 hours, depending on the thickness of the project. Remove the cookie sheet using an oven mitt.
6. When your project is cool, paint it with an acrylic paint. After the paint dries, seal it with an acrylic spray, or make your own sealant by mixing 1 tablespoon of Elmer's glue with 1 tablespoon of water.

Salt Dough

Processing the Object Lesson Together

1. What did you see that was surprising?
2. Why do you think this happened?
3. Any ideas of what this experiment could teach us about God?

Read John 10:1-11 (*There is also a worksheet in the Taking Faith Home Packet*)

1. What stands out in this scripture?
2. Why do you think Jesus says he is the Good Shepherd? What were shepherds in charge of doing?

Any idea how the salt dough connects to our life of faith?

The big idea word for this week is courage. Because of Jesus we have the courage to live with purpose and complete the mission that we have been given. Courage is about the willingness to move forward even in the face of fear. Jesus, our Good Shepherd gives us courage because we know that He will protect, provide, and lead us forward in the ways we are to go. Even when things are hard and scary.

When was a time you had courage to face your fears?

When molding with the salt dough, the instructions are clear. In order to build up the dough or help hold up elements of the structure, you can use aluminum foil as supports. Jesus, our Good Shepherd, is our great support. He is the extra strength within us and the one who holds us up and holds us together. Jesus gives us courage as the Good Shepherd—and one reason is that He has promised us abundant life.

What makes you afraid?

How does Jesus give you courage?

Final Question: How can you help your family live with courage in the face of their fears this week?

Rainbow in a Jar Science Experiment

Materials

Approx. 2 cups of warm tap water

1/2 cup measuring cup

1 Tablespoon measuring spoon 4 small jars or glasses

Approx. 1 1/2 cups of granulated white sugar

Red, blue, yellow and green food coloring

Tall thin glass or test tube. I used an old Starbucks bottle

Straw

4 popsicle sticks

Microwave

Experiment Steps

Step 1: Measure a 1/2 cup of warm tap water into the 4 jars.

Step 2: Add 2 drops of food coloring to each of the 4 jars

Step 3: To the jar of red water, add 2 tablespoons of sugar. To the jar of yellow, add 4 tablespoons of sugar. To the jar of green water, add 6 tablespoons of sugar. To the jar of blue water, add 8 tablespoons of sugar.

Step 4: Stir each of the jars to dissolve the sugar. If your water is not warm enough to dissolve the sugar, put the jar in the microwave for 30 seconds at a time, stirring in between until the sugar is dissolved.

Step 5: Pour about an inch of the blue water into the bottom of your glass or test tube.

Step 6: Use your straw to gently drip the green water on top of the blue layer. It works best to place the straw to the side of the glass just above the blue layer. You want to add the layers to the glass slowly and carefully, otherwise they'll mix together resulting in a muddled rainbow.

Step 7: Add the yellow layer next using the same method and last the red layer. Stand back and admire your beautiful rainbow!

Rainbow Jar

Processing the Object Lesson Together

1. What did you see that was surprising?
2. Why do you think this happened?
3. Any ideas of what this experiment could teach us about God?

Read Matthew 4:18-22 (*There is also a worksheet in the Taking Faith Home Packet*)

1. What key word stands out in this passage?
2. It says “immediately” what are some things you do immediately?

Any idea how the Rainbow Jar connects to our life of faith?

The big idea word for this week is follow. If we are the followers, that makes Jesus our leader. Do you think Jesus will ever lead you in the wrong direction? NO! Of course not! Following Jesus is hard because sin tempts us and it can be difficult to know where Jesus is calling us to go and what we are called to do.

What are some ways you can know where God is leading you?

The rainbow jar works because the different amounts of dissolved sugar makes the different colored water layer accordingly. The heaviest water goes first and the others follow after it. And so it is in life. One of the ways that we know what God is calling us to do is by looking at the people who have gone before us in faith. This can be the immediate people that we are close with in our family and our church family. We can also look at other faithful people—some historical—to see their faithful lives and follow them as they follow Jesus. (1 Corinthians 11:1)

Who are some of the people that have helped you in your life of faith?

If you can, tell a story of how one of these people has helped you follow Jesus.

Final Question: What can you do this week to say thank you to one of the people (outside your home) that helps you follow Jesus?