The Little Engine That Could Not

**Samson Lesson**

**Starting Line**
Let’s spend some time looking at the biggest and strongest train in our story, Samson. When Samson meets Peter, he advises Peter to become much stronger and believe in his own strength in order to cross the Bridge of Grace into the City of Promise. Our Samson is much like the Samson we can read about in the Old Testament of the Bible, found in the book of Judges. This Samson also believed in his own strength, but eventually he realized the only strength he had came from God.

**Finish Line**
Our goal with this lesson is to help children understand that all of us are truly weak without the strength of the Lord, and that when we are weak, His strength is all we need. God sent Jesus for the weak, and when we understand and admit this, we find ourselves becoming strong with His strength, not our own.

**Whistle Stops – Vocabulary**
- sufficient
- similarities
- promise

**The Right Track – Developing the Lesson through Scripture**
Our scripture for this lesson is one of my favorites and is found in 2 Corinthians 12:9. I have presented the passage in three ways in the hope that children who are in various stages of learning and spiritual development will understand it.

1. And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” (NAS Bible)
2. Jesus said to me, “My grace is enough for you, for my power is made perfect in your weakness.” (paraphrase)
3. Joshua said to Peter, “No matter how hard you try, you do not have the power to cross the bridge on your own.” Joshua’s strength became awesome once Peter realized his own weakness! (concept from the story)

**All Aboard! – Main Lesson**
My favorite superhero of all time is Superman. I know some people really like Iron Man and Batman and Wonder Woman, but for me, the greatest superhero ever is Superman. He can fly, he has those laser eyes to burn through things, and he can freeze things with his breath. He is strong enough to hold up a train, and he has a cape. Now that is just cool! But did you know that even Superman has a weakness? All of his strength goes away whenever he is around the dreaded Kryptonite. The truth is there is no one, not even a superhero, who is as strong as the God of the Bible. He created the whole universe by just speaking words out loud. You and I could never be strong enough to impress Him. We are weak and small compared to Him, and until we understand how weak we are, we will never be able to experience the true strength of God.
Discussion Depot – Developing the Lesson through Questions
I encourage you to read the Biblical account of Samson in Judges 16, and then share the story with students in your own words. Remember to point out that Samson had power only when God was helping him. (See Judges 16:28.)

1. What are the similarities between Samson in our story and Samson in the Bible? (Both are very strong and dependent on their own strength.)
2. What did Samson tell Peter he should do so that he could cross the Bridge of Grace? (He told Peter to pump iron to become stronger and believe in his own strength.) Did this work?
3. Which character in our story truly had the power to help Peter cross over the dark canyon? (Joshua had the power to help Peter.)

Cross Ties – Developing the Lesson through Activities
For all age levels:
Click below to download a printable coloring page that shows Peter and his strong friend Samson. Give each student a copy of the page to color.

Climbing Higher Activity
This activity should be really fun and will hopefully encourage students to think deeply about the true strength of the Lord. Identify three items of varying weights. (Use items light enough for a child to carry and lift.) Ask each student (or volunteers, as time allows) to carry each item one at a time and place it on a table. Ask: Do you think you are strong enough to lift the whole table? Do not allow the student to try, but instead explain how we are often tricked into thinking we are strong on our own and do not need help. Ask students if it will be possible to lift the table if more than one person does it together. Explain how, most often, we want to rely on our own strength, but God literally holds the entire world in His hand. Ask: Do you sometimes think that you are stronger than God? Explain to students that while we are often too weak, God is always strong.

Keep on Rolling – Developing the Lesson through Daily Application
Give students a homework assignment to do before bedtime. Ask them to do a set number of push-ups, sit-ups, and jumping jacks and then run in place for a specific amount of time. (Choose numbers based on the ages and physical abilities of your students.) Tell them that once they have finished the exercises and feel tired they should simply take a second to thank God for always being strong, even when we are weak and tired.