

BRUISED REEDS AND SMOLDERING WICKS GALLERY

An A.M.O.K. approach to Max Lucado's *He Still Moves Stones*
Independent Study Project for Senior High Youth

By Dave Weiss

Over this past summer I started reading, for the second time, Max Lucado's *He Still Moves Stones*. I read it once before as curriculum for an adult Sunday School class I was in. On rereading it, I was struck by the visual imagery of the book and the issues that

it faced head on. I thought that it would be great for youth ministry. Well, we dug in and in the first few weeks

I quickly began to see that it was not hitting the kids the same way that it hit me. I still thought that these topics were extremely important to teens but how could I make them see the relevance. A.M.O.K. to the rescue.

The book deals with how Jesus moves the stones in peoples lives, how He works in our times of struggle and pain and how His power is enough to bring us through anything. It is a very hopeful book especially for people living in the post World Trade Center world.

If you look at the first chapter of the book, Lucado looks at making a trip to a fictitious art exhibition called Bruised Reeds and Smoldering Wicks. Planning to see a nature exhibition he goes. When he gets there he is

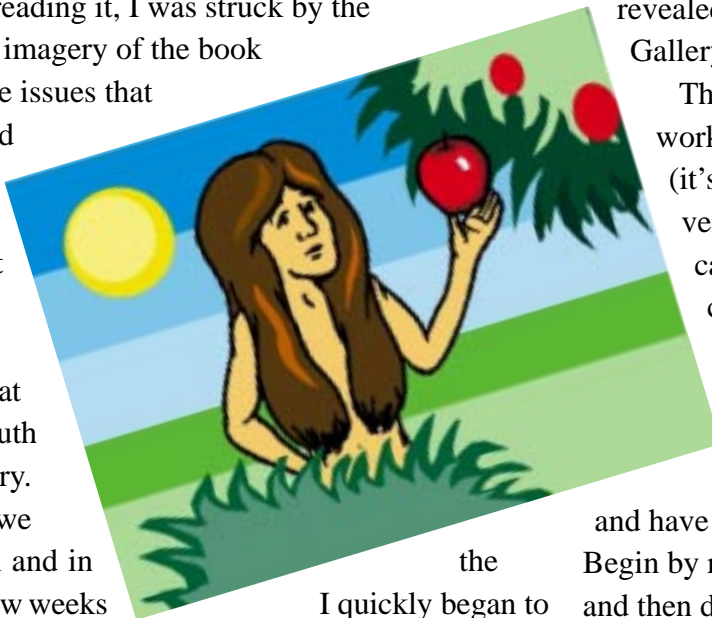
faced with paintings back to back on easels. On one side is a hurting person from the Bible and on the other is the same person made whole by Jesus Christ. It was then that the key was revealed to me. My class would recreate the Gallery and your can too.

The first step is to read the book and work through the study guide on your own (it's only a little over 200 pages and is a very quick read.) If you think your kids can benefit from this study secure a copy of the book for each kid in your class.

We started independent study of the book. I created a study guide which you can use with your kids and have attached it to the end of this guide. Begin by reading the first chapter of the book and then discussing the gallery in greater detail. Hand out the study guide.

In *He Still Moves Stones*, most of the chapters begin with a passage from the Bible. The first step is to assign a chapter to each student. Then they need to go through the following steps:

1. Each Student in the class will be assigned a chapter of *He Still Moves Stones*. Each of these chapters is based on a section from the Bible.
2. First carefully read the read the scripture, then read the chapter of the Book.
3. Go to the back of the book and answer the



questions from your chapter's study guide on the yellow sheet, take your time and answer them as accurately as possible.

4. Read the Scripture again carefully. Look at the presentation guide at the back of this packet and answer the five questions on the page. This is important because everyone will give a brief presentation to the class on your chapter.
5. Think about the person in the scripture before and after their encounter with Jesus and picture in your mind how each situation would have looked.
6. Sketch and paint the before and after scenes to be added to the gallery.

Limit the time to a few weeks to finish the project. Time varies depending on how long your sessions are. Each student will have completed two pieces of art. One showing the person from the Bible story before Christ and the other after Jesus has touched his or her life. Some students will say that they have no art ability. For them, have a supply of magazines and other photos on hand for them to create collages. While this is an art project the main point is not to create great works of art but rather to illustrate the story and to learn the important points.

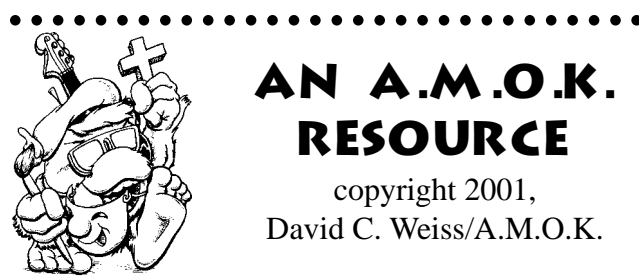
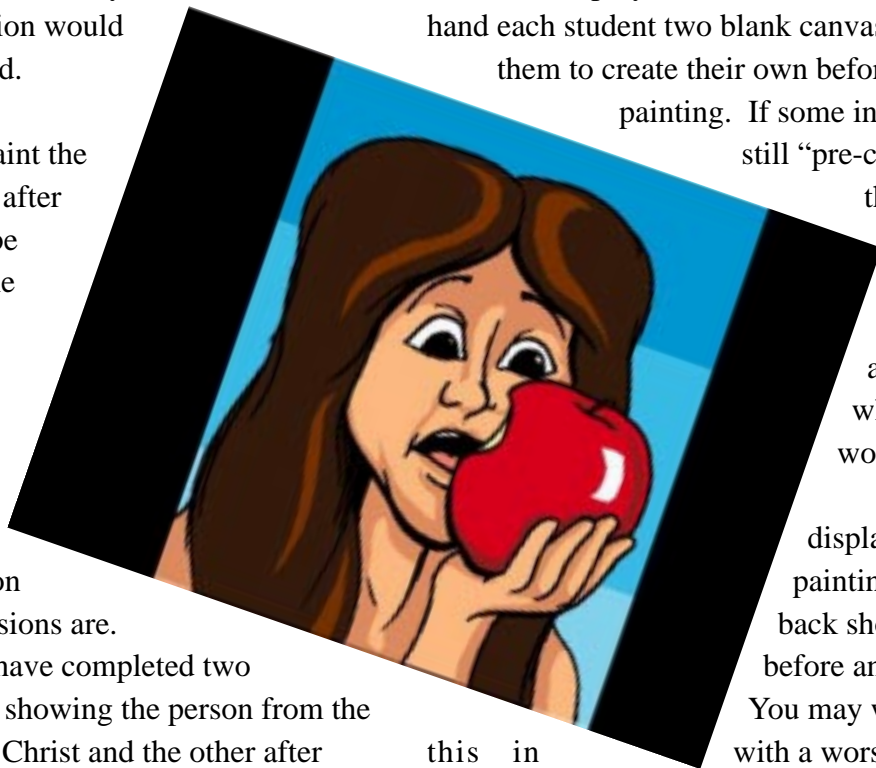
After the project is done, have each student do a presentation on his chapter for the

rest of the class. During this time period, be sure to have studied thoroughly so that you can back up the student and cover anything missed. After all the presentations are completed you are ready for the two final steps of the project. Talk about salvation and share your testimony. Ask your students about the difference they would like to see in their lives or what stones they would like to see moved in their lives. Ask them about their struggles. Ask them if anyone in the book's story touched them. For those students who have already accepted Christ, ask them to share the difference that He has made in their lives. Have the students get together in small groups and talk and pray. Give an invitation. Then hand each student two blank canvasses and tell them to create their own before and after

painting. If some in the group are still "pre-christian," ask them to create one painting of where they are now and on of where they would like to be.

Lastly, display all the paintings back too back showing the before and after shots. You may want to tie with a worship service

this in and display the paintings in the lobby of the church and then preach on one of the selected passages.



AN A.M.O.K. RESOURCE

copyright 2001,
David C. Weiss/A.M.O.K.

BRUISED REEDS AND SMOLDERING WICKS GALLERY

He Still Moves Stones Independent Study Project

In the first chapter Max Lucado speaks of a fictitious art gallery in a library. Throughout the library are paintings on easels, back to back. On the first side is a person in a difficult situation or in pain and on the opposite side is the same person released by the love of Christ. For a better understanding of this reread Chapter one of *He Still Moves Stones*. Over the next few weeks we are going to replicate that gallery for ourselves.

Here's how it will work:

1. Each Student in the class will be assigned a chapter of *He Still Moves Stones*. Each of these chapters is based on a section from the Bible.
2. First carefully read the read the scripture, then read the chapter of the Book.
3. Go to the back of the book and answer the questions from your chapter's study guide on the yellow sheet, take your time and answer them as accurately as possible.
4. Read the Scripture again carefully. Look at the presentation guide at the back of this packet and answer the five questions on the page. This is important because everyone will give a brief presentation to the class on your chapter.
5. Think about the person in the scripture before and after their encounter with Jesus and picture in your mind how each situation would have looked.
6. Sketch and paint the before and after scenes to be added to the gallery.

We will spend several weeks working on this project independently. Joe and I will be available to help you with the questions. After the projects are completed, each person will do a brief presentation on his or her chapter to the class.

I know some will say that I don't have any art ability. I have good news, it doesn't matter. We will also make pictures available for you to make collages or to include in your paintings. The important thing is not that you create beautiful pieces of art, the important thing is that you learn and that you express the message of the story in whatever you create. The gallery will be displayed at a future Worship Service.

HE STILL MOVES STONES

Read _____

Then read Chapter _____ of He Still Moves Stones.

Then answer the questions from the Study Guide in the back of the book in the space below. Answer carefully and go to the back of the page if necessary.

HE STILL MOVES STONES

Presentation Study Guide

1. Rephrase the Bible story in your own words.
2. What is the main character in the story's problem?
3. How is his/her need met?
4. How does the Bible Story apply to real life.
(You can get clues to this by reading your He Still Moves Stones by Max Lucado.)
5. How could what you learned be used to help a struggling friend?

HE STILL MOVES STONES SKETCHES