



OBJECT LESSON

Relief in God's Love

[10 min]

Experience Muscle Fatigue

Say: Today we learned about the most amazing—and important—way that God showed us he is loving. When God sent his only Son, Jesus, to take the death punishment for *our* sin on the cross, God showed us just how much he loves us. Let's do a test of our strength that'll show us just how big and strong God's love is.

- Have everyone stand facing you.
- Guide everyone to hold both arms up and out to their sides, shoulder height, making a cross shape with body and arms.
- Challenge everyone to hold their arms like this for as long as they possibly can. Encourage kids to keep holding their arms up even when their arms start to get tired.
- As everyone's arms are held out, invite kids to think of how every one of us sins—we *all* do and say wrong things every day. Invite everyone to think of sins we all struggle with and call them out as everyone fights muscle fatigue to hold their arms up. You can call out a few examples too, such as:
 - telling little lies
 - gossiping or talking behind someone's back
 - saying mean things to someone else
 - feeling jealous toward people because of what they have or their abilities
- After some answers have been called out, reflect with kids on how their arms are feeling and how our sins carry a weight, too. Jesus took the *huge* weight of *all* our sins with him to the cross.
- Continue holding arms up as long as possible, and when anyone can't do it anymore, he or she can rest arms by wrapping them around his or her middle in a "self hug." Wait to move on until everyone has moved to the resting position.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What did you feel in your arms as you worked hard to hold them up?** Encourage answers beyond just "tired." Kids likely experienced a burning in their muscles, a sense of heaviness, some tingling or numbness in their fingers, and muscle shakes or twitches.

Say: **Holding your arms up like that requires many muscles in your arms to contract, or tense up. We can hold muscle contractions for only so long. It's different for each person, but with enough time everyone will start to feel everything you felt. It's all part of muscle fatigue. Now imagine your arms being in that position for hours and hours. That's only a small part of what Jesus experienced on the cross. Jesus surely felt a physical weight like we did, but he also carried the weight of our sins.**

Ask: • **What feels heavy when we do or say something wrong?**

• **What does it tell you about Jesus that he took that weight and the punishment for your sin in your place?**

Say: **Jesus is God's Son, so Jesus could have stopped it all when things got painful and heavy that day on the cross—but he didn't. Jesus endured the death punishment that brought us God's forgiveness for our sins, all because God is loving. Have everyone give themselves a squeeze in their "self hug." **Because of Jesus, we can rest in the relief that we're forgiven****

and God loves us so much.