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| ***Title:*** | ***Enter the Land--Failure*** |
| **Goal/Objective:** | Using the story of Israel’s failure to enter into the Promised Land, show the contrast between our attempts to fulfill God’s desire and our trust in His ability to bring about what He desires. |
| **Scripture Passages:** | Excerpts from Numbers 13 and 14 [**click here for Scriptures**](http://www.cmintl.webspaceforme.net/pages/EnterLandFailureScriptures.htm) |
| **Materials:** | Enough pipe cleaners for each student to have at least one, two fairly large googly eyes per student and glue. (A glue gun works better than a glue stick or craft glue.)  Snack suggestions: Grapes (for the fruit from the land), milk and Bit-O-Honey candy (land flowing with milk and honey), Eyeball bubblegum or you can create “eyes” with round crackers topped with round pieces of white cheese and black olive slices (seeing the Lord rather than looking at ourselves) |
| **Introduction:** | We will read sections from the story of the Israelites failing to enter into the Promised Land. We will see how their view of their own ability and strength, instead of God’s promise, caused them to refuse to enter the land and then later try to enter the land on their own. |
| **Development Activities:** | Read the portions from Numbers chapters 13 and 14. (Depending upon the age, you can provide snacks during the reading to go along with the story to reinforce the accounts and break up the reading.)  Israel viewed entering the land as a command for them to fulfill. They saw that they could not accomplish this in their own strength. Instead of realizing that they were unable to complete this and trusting in the Lord, they began blaming God. They had unrealistically thought that they could serve and obey the Lord through commandments. The idea of entering the land was just another commandment in their minds. This time, however, they realized their inability—as they should have realized from the beginning with all the rules, laws and sacrifices. They saw entering the land as if they were entering real estate rather than entering a finished work that was completed by the Lord Himself. When faced with the consequences of their actions, they tried, apart from the Lord, to enter the land. They were soundly defeated. We will always fail to accomplish in our own efforts what God  never expected us to do in the first place. Instead of choosing to trust God and His completed work, Israel blamed Him and failed to see the rest and provision of the land. He has provided that rest in His Son. The Land represents being in Christ. |
| **Practice:**  **http://www.cmintl.webspaceforme.net/gifs/EnterLandFailure.jpg** | Make Googly Eye “finger puppets”--Take the pipe cleaner at the middle and twist it around your middle finger so that the two ends are sticking up on top of your hand. (Take the pipe cleaner off your finger but leave the loop intact.) Curl both ends around to make loops for eyes. Glue the googly eyes on the round loops. Allow to dry long enough to keep the eyes from falling off. Slide the pipe cleaner back on your finger so that the eyes set on top of your hand. Hold your four fingers tightly together to create the top of the mouth and the thumb creates the bottom of the mouth. You can make them as simply as this or add other features such as earrings from loops hanging down from the first finger and pinky. Another pipe cleaner can be hair arched over the eyes and anchored to the other pipe cleaner (make the pipe cleaner curly by twisting it around a pencil and then sliding it off to create a long spiral curl).  This can alternatively be a good outdoor lesson, because you can send restless students with their puppets to go spy out the land by running around the yard and then come back with the first snack (grapes). Then, all the puppets act scared to go into the land because of the giants. Two puppets are Caleb and Joshua who assure them that it is a great land flowing with milk and bit-o-honeys…um honey. The next snack is passed out (milk and bit-o-honey). Unfortunately, the other puppets get angry and whine and grumble and carry on and just say, “no, no, we won’t go”. God (probably the teacher or older helper) tells them that they can’t go in because they didn’t trust Him but looked at their own inability and got scared and refused to go in to the land. They’ll have to wander around in the wilderness for the rest of their lives. At this the puppets suddenly have a change of heart—just like when you find out you’re REALLY in trouble and you try to get out of the punishment. The puppets all scramble around to go into the land. Moses (probably the teacher or older helper) shakes his puppet head and says, “It won’t work. You can’t go in on your own. Only God can take us in.” The puppets try anyway and they all run away in defeat (some can die a horrible puppet death if it’s not too crazy by this point). Final point: Look at the Lord and trust Him. Give eyeball bubblegum—or “eye” crackers. |
| **Checking for Understanding:** | Ask each puppet:  Did the Israelites look at the Lord and trust Him? *No*  Who were the Israelites afraid of? *The people in the land*  Why did the Israelites try to go into the land without the Lord?  *They didn’t want to be in trouble.*  Were they able? *No*  Why didn’t they succeed in entering the land? *Because the Lord was not with them.*  Are you looking at the Lord and trusting Him? |
| **Optional Songs:** | *Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus*  Make up a song or chant—such as:  We’re gonna see, see, see the Lord  We’re gonna trust, trust, trust the Lord  We’re gonna see, see, see the Lord  And take Him at His word! |
| **Extended Lesson:** | If there is extra time, you can play a game where the students and puppets are told to look at the Lord no matter what. The Lord can be represented by a picture or even a Bible. (For young children, stress that this represents the Lord and isn’t actually the Lord Himself. We see him with our hearts rather than our physical eyes.) Try to distract them by turning on and off the lights, slamming the door, stomping around the room behind them, describe imaginary spiders that are crawling up their chairs or a circus outside the window, etc. Allow the student that best kept his eyes and puppet eyes on the Lord to be the one to try to trick the others or simply take turns. |
| **Independent Practice:** | Send home Maze fun sheet[**click here for Maze**](http://www.cmintl.webspaceforme.net/pages/Enterlandfailuremaze.htm) |