

Jesus Blesses the Children

Overview



Materials You'll Need

- large paper plates
- colored construction paper
- scissors
- paper fasteners
- markers
- white paper



Scriptures

Mk 10:13-16

Bible Truth Objective(s)

God is loving and compassionate; He loves all who come to Him

Behavioral Objective(s)

To know Jesus loves the children and that He is their friend; they can talk to Him anytime in prayer

Memory Verse

"Let the little children come to Me."
(Mk 10:14)



Bible Knowledge

Children of God

In today's lesson, many people brought their children to Jesus, hoping He could touch them. They had probably heard of Jesus' power and wanted Him to bless the children. When the disciples saw the young children, they assumed that Jesus was too busy and too important to deal with them. So the disciples tried to send them away. However, when Jesus saw what they were doing, He quickly rebuked them. He said, "Let the children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God." Jesus said this to demonstrate several things.

First, He wanted people to know He came to the world to save everyone. No one was too small or unimportant for the kingdom of heaven. There are many examples in the Bible where He showed His care for the needy, the outcasts and the sinners. Truly He had come to offer salvation to all mankind.

Second, Jesus wanted the people to understand that believers need to exhibit the characteristics of a child in order to obtain eternal life. Children are

trusting, eager to learn, and depend completely on their parents. Similarly, Jesus wants us to trust Him. He wants us to recognize that He is our true source of strength. When we need help, we can always go to Him. In addition, He wants us to be eager to learn from Him, to grow in knowledge and spirit. Only when we are filled with the word of God can we understand the mysteries of His kingdom. He is also our Father in heaven. Just as children depend on their parents, we should rely on God and accept His teachings and guidance. When we are able to demonstrate these child-like attitudes, then the kingdom of God will be ours.

Lastly, Jesus wanted to emphasize our special status as the children of God. Though we were separated from Him because of sin, when we choose to believe, repent, and be baptized, we can once again become the children of God (Eph 5:8). We are all created by God, in His image. We need to remember that privilege and live a life worthy of His calling.



Understanding Your Students

Children in today's society are materially blessed. They are showered with the latest toys and gadgets. They own brand name clothing. Their rooms are filled with various electronic entertainment equipment. This is partially because parents feel that they are giving to their children things they were not able to have when they were growing up. By doing this, parents feel they are making their children happy. Of course, children love toys and video games. But we often forget that what our children really want and need is our attention and time.

When Jesus was on earth, He didn't shower children with gifts or bribe them to get them to come to Him. He understood what they needed most, and made Himself available to them. We can tell they were attracted to Jesus because they were often surrounding

Him. Otherwise, the disciples would not have had to try to keep them away.

In our busy lives, it is easy to send our children off to play by themselves with all their toys and games. While they may seem content, in the long run, it can be detrimental to their growth. We are their role models. We are the ones whom they look up to. They will notice the difference when grown-ups spend quality time with them. We don't necessarily have to set aside a huge amount of time. We only need to be consistent. Each night before bedtime, for example, we can read the Bible together and share what our day has been like. Or in the mornings, we can pray together before heading off to school or work. On the weekends, we can make an effort to play with our children, even if it is only an hour of uninterrupted time. Our gift of time speaks volumes about our love and willingness to build a meaningful relationship with our children.



Vocabulary

Disciples

the followers and believers of Jesus Christ

Bless

when Jesus blessed the children, He probably said He wanted many good things to happen to them



Before You Teach

Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it" (Mk 10:15). As Jesus blessed the children who had been brought to Him, He emphasized that only those who are like infants can enter into the kingdom of heaven. Of course, Jesus did not mean for His followers to stay young and immature. Rather, He said this because young children are innocent, trusting and thirsting to learn. These are the kinds of qualities God seeks in His people. But how can we maintain this child-like innocence in today's age? How can we depend on God when we are taught to only depend on ourselves? In our fast-paced society, how can we slow down and take time out to spend with God so that

we may grow spiritually?

Though it is difficult, it is vital that we set aside time each day to meditate on the words of God and pray to our heavenly Father. These are the only ways through which can we remain connected to God and recognize our true source of strength. When God is a part of our daily lives, we will naturally rely in Him in all circumstances. He will not only be our God on the Sabbaths or during family services. Spending time with God regularly also allows us to reflect on what our faith was like when we first received Christ. Although our roots may not have been deep and we may not have known many Bible verses or stories, we were eager to learn. Our minds were like a sponge, ready to soak up God's teachings and words. When we renew ourselves each day, God will dwell within us and be our guidance and stay. Then we may grow in the image of our Lord Jesus.



Bible Story

Jesus Fed the Five Thousand

We learned from the last lesson that Jesus fed five thousand people with just a little bit of food. It was a great miracle because only Jesus could do something like that. A big crowd of people had followed Jesus to listen to His teachings. But when it got late, Jesus knew the people were hungry. He did not want to send them home hungry. The disciples said that there was not enough food there to feed so many people. Do you remember how much food a boy had to share? He had five loaves of bread and two small fish. Jesus took the food and blessed it. Then He started to break the bread and fish into pieces. Jesus gave the pieces to the disciples. The disciples passed out the food until everyone was full. That is amazing. Even after everyone had eaten, there were still twelve baskets of food leftover. Jesus performed this miracle to show everyone He is powerful. He can make anything happen, even when it seems hard or impossible for us. We also learned that Jesus loved the people. He knew they were hungry but they did not have food to eat. He took care of their needs by giving them food. Jesus always takes care of the things we need when we follow what Jesus tells us to do.

How do you know Jesus loves you too? The Bible story today tells us about how Jesus loves children.

Jesus Shows His Love for Everyone

After this great miracle, Jesus and His disciples continued to go around to different places to tell more people about God. They also helped the people they met. A lot of people had heard of Jesus and all the great things He had done. Some people probably talked about Jesus.

"Have you heard about Jesus? He makes the sick well. I heard He made a lame man walk and a blind man see! He is wonderful," someone said.

"He loves everyone, He is really nice," other people said.

"He is very kind too. He was kind to me and helped me," another person said.

"He tells lots and lots of stories about God, too!" others said.

As the grown-ups talked about Jesus and all the wonderful things He had done, the children were probably listening too. Sometimes, when our parents talk, we also listen to what they are saying.

Some of the boys and girls who had heard these great things about Jesus wished they could see Jesus too.

Jesus Is Coming to Town

One day, in a town, the people heard that Jesus was coming to tell them about God. He was going to be there very soon. The people were excited. The children were excited too because their parents were going to bring them along. They couldn't wait to see Jesus.

Then the people heard that Jesus was already in town. So the parents gathered their children and they walked to where Jesus was teaching the people about God's kingdom. Soon, they saw a large crowd of people. Jesus was probably surrounded by all the people who wanted to meet Him and hear Him speak. There really were a lot of people.

Some of the disciples standing near Jesus saw the parents and children coming towards them.

The disciples said to the parents, "Go away! Jesus is very busy talking with other people. He doesn't have time for all these children."

The parents were sad when they heard this. The children must have felt sad too. They had been so excited as they walked to meet Jesus. They really wanted to talk to Jesus. But now, the disciples said Jesus didn't have time for them.

Jesus Blesses the Children

As the families started to walk away, they heard a kind voice saying, "Don't send the children away! Let them come to me!"

Can you guess who said that? It was Jesus! Jesus had seen His disciples trying to send the children and their families away. But Jesus wanted to talk to the children. He wanted them to come to Him.

The children and their families felt very happy as they quickly went to Jesus. All the other people who had been standing around stepped back and let the children through. Jesus opened His arms and welcomed all the children. All the children could tell that Jesus loved them. He was their friends!

Then Jesus said, "People who want to enter

into the kingdom of heaven must be like these little children." Do you know why Jesus said that? He said that because He wanted the people who were listening to Him to know that His followers must love Jesus the way the children did. The children were excited to get to know Jesus. We should be excited too when we come to church so that we can learn more about Jesus. As the children gathered around Him, Jesus held them in His arms and blessed them.

We learned from today's story that many chil-

dren went to see Jesus. The disciples thought that Jesus did not have time for young children. But Jesus told the children to come to Him. That means Jesus had time for them. Jesus always makes time for people who want to know Him because He loves them. Even though we can't see Jesus the way the children did in the story, we know we can always talk to Him when we pray. He will make time for us too because He loves us and He is our friend.



Check For Understanding

1. **Who were the parents and children going to see?** (Jesus Christ.)
2. **What did the disciples do when they saw the children coming towards Jesus?** (The disciples told the parents to take the children away because they thought Jesus was too busy with other people.)
3. **How do you think the children felt when they couldn't meet Jesus?** (They were probably very sad.)
4. **What did Jesus say to the parents and children?** (He told them to come to Him. He wanted them to know He always had time for children and He was their friend.)

5. **What did Jesus do as the children gathered around Him?** (He blessed them.)
6. **How do you think the children felt after they got to see Jesus?** (They felt happy; they knew He was their friend and He loved them.)
7. **How do you know that Jesus loves you?** (Allow students to answer. Some possibilities: He gives us families, He provides us with food, He gives us nature to enjoy.)
8. **We can't see Jesus the way the children did in the story. How can we get to know Jesus? How can we be with Him?** (Allow students to answer. We can pray to Him, go to church, attend class and read the Bible. Jesus is always our friend.)



Life Application Story

God Is Always Ready to Listen

Michelle couldn't believe her ears! She had been picked to be the queen in the class play. She was so excited she couldn't wait to tell everyone, especially her mom. Mrs. Marsh knew how much she had wanted to be the queen. She really wanted it to be the end of the school day so that she could go home and tell her mom all about it. For the rest of the day, her friends kept telling her she was going to make a great queen.

Finally, the bell rang and Michelle rushed out

the door with her backpack. She walked as quickly as she could to the sidewalk and waited for her mom. She looked around but couldn't see her. As she scanned the parking lot, she saw someone who looked like her grandmother. As the old lady walked closer, Michelle realized it was her grandmother.

"Grandma!" yelled Michelle, as she gave her a hug. "What are you doing here?"

"Well, a sister from church called your mom this morning and needed some help. Your mom is helping her now. She didn't think she could make it on time to pick you up, so here I am!" replied Michelle's grandmother.

"Oh, that means I will have to wait to tell her about my great news," said Michelle.

"Well, maybe your mom will be home by the time we get back. She did say she was almost done. What's the good news, anyway?" asked Michelle's grandmother. As they walked, Michelle told her grandmother all about her part in the play.

"I am so excited, I think I am going to have a hard time sleeping tonight," said Michelle.

"I can see that," said her grandmother. "Well, we are almost home. Maybe your mom is waiting for you."

Michelle ran past four houses and up the driveway to her house. She didn't see her mom's car. Maybe she parked it in the garage today, thought Michelle. As she thought about how to tell her mom, her grandmother came up the walkway and opened the front door. Michelle ran past the door, and threw down the backpack.

"Mom, are you home? I have some great news to tell you!" yelled Michelle, as she went from room to room.

But after looking around the house, there was no sign of her anywhere. Michelle was a bit sad. She was so excited, she wanted her mom to hear all about her great news.

"I guess I will have to wait to share my news," said Michelle.

"Well, you don't really have to wait. There is someone else who would love to hear your news," said Michelle's grandmother.

Michelle looked surprised. There was no one else in the house. Who else could she tell now?

"Who are you talking about, Grandma?" asked Michelle.

"I am talking about God, Michelle. He is your friend too and I am sure He would love to hear all about your play," explained her grandmother.

"God?" thought Michelle. She hadn't thought about that. Michelle's grandmother continued to speak.

"You know, we always think about God when

we have problems we want Him to help us with. Remember last week, we prayed for Mrs. Dobson because she wasn't feeling well? God listens to our prayers when we have hard times. But He also listens when we are happy and have exciting things we want to share with Him."

"Do you mean I should just kneel down and tell God the good news?" asked Michelle.

"Well, why not? He is our friend. He wants to hear about all the good things and the bad things that happen to us. When no one is around, we can be sure that God is always waiting to listen to us," said Michelle's grandmother.

"Okay, Grandma. I will pray to Him. I am so excited that I really want to tell somebody and I don't know when Mom will get back. Will you pray with me too?"

"Of course."

So Michelle and her grandmother went to the living room, knelt down and began to pray to God to tell Him all the news.

Questions to Think About

1. **Why was Michelle so excited?** (She was chosen to be the queen of the class play.)
2. **How did Michelle feel when she realized her mother wasn't home yet?** (She was a bit sad because she really wanted to tell her mom the good news.)
3. **Michelle's grandmother told her she could tell God the good news because He is our friend. He is always ready to listen to us. What is something you have prayed to God about?** (Allow students to share. Take note to see if they are mostly "problems." Encourage the students to pray to God too when they are happy and thankful.)
4. **How do we know that God is our friend?** (Allow students to answer.)



Activity 1

Jesus Loves the Children

Help the students fill in the blanks (Jesus loves the children). Have the students color the picture. They can also draw themselves in the picture.



Activity 2

What Kind of Children Does Jesus Love?

Look at each picture. Share each situation with the students and talk about why Jesus loves these children. Also share the key words for each picture.

Honest- "I broke the vase by accident. I am sorry."
Obedient- "I always hold hands with my mom or dad to cross the road."
Helpful- "I help clean the dishes or table."
Cheerful giver- "I am happy to share my things."



Activity 3

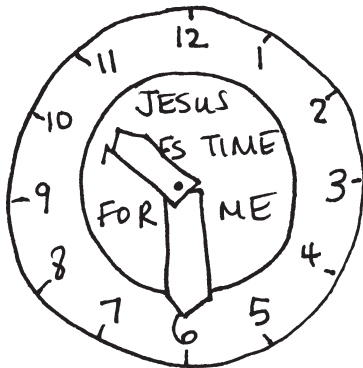
Jesus Makes Time For Me Clocks

Materials:

1. large paper plates
2. colored construction paper
3. paper fasteners
4. markers
5. scissors

Directions:

1. Give each student a paper plate. It will be easier if the teacher can pre-mark each plate with short lines to indicate where the numbers go for the clock.
2. Help them write the numbers 1-12 for the clock using a dark-colored marker.
3. In the middle of the plate, help students write, "Jesus Makes Time For Me."
4. Using the construction paper, cut out two hands (one longer than the other) for the clock.
5. Help the students fasten the hands to the clock. They can set the clock to a certain time (e.g. when they pray at night).
6. Encourage the students to hang their clocks so that they will remember that Jesus always makes time for them, just like in the Bible story. When they need to talk to Him, He will listen to them.



Optional Activity

Jesus Loves the Children

Materials:

1. white paper (one per student)
2. crayons or markers

Directions:

1. Give each student a sheet of white paper. Have them draw a self portrait. For added fun, they can trade papers and draw their friends.
2. After they have colored their portraits, hang them under a banner that reads, "Jesus Loves the Children."

Activity 3:1



Jesus loves the

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Activity 3:2


What Kind of Children Does Jesus Love?

Look at each picture. Share each situation with the students and talk about why Jesus loves these children.

HONEST




"I broke the vase by accident. I am sorry."



OBEDIENT


"I always hold hands with my mom or dad to cross the road."

HELPFUL



"I help clean the dishes or table."

CHEERFUL GIVER



"I am happy to share my things."