



Date: _____

Series: The Early Church
Spring Year 1, Lesson 52

We PENETRATE the World for Jesus

Primary Scripture: Matthew 5:13-16 and Acts 2:42-47

Key Verse: Matthew 5:13-14(NIV), “You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world...”

How does this address a need in our kids' lives?

Kids are excited about doing things that are truly important. They like doing things that make them feel grown up! As disciples of Jesus Christ, kids can respond to Jesus' call just as adults do. Today Jesus calls the kids to be salt and light of the world. They are to PENETRATE the world with Jesus' love and his message.

PENETRATE is a new word the kids will learn today as they see that church is not just a place they come to, but a place from where they are sent!

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: Jesus penetrated our world by coming to give his life for us on the cross. He continues to penetrate our world as a light that drives out the darkness of sin in our souls.

Jesus in us: Jesus fills us with himself by the power of the Holy Spirit to be lights that shine through our words and actions.

Jesus through us: It is the power of Jesus, not our own, that changes the world. Jesus has chosen to penetrate this world through us as we let our lights shine and also become salt of the earth. We need to think of church not just as a place in which we gather, but a place from which we are sent back into the world.

Stamp of Excellence:

Remind the kids what excellent worship looks like. We are in God's presence to honor him. Put on your best manners. This might include wearing your name tag, participating eagerly at all times, listening when the leader is talking, raising your hand to speak, not distracting others, playing the learning game with cooperation, singing enthusiastically, and praying reverently. Offer rewards or positive reinforcement to those who worship with excellence.



Worship

Invocation:

Let kids bring forward the worship symbols such as the cross, candles, Bible, and offering plate. Invite God's presence and call by name Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Attention Grabber:

Capture the children's attention and help them focus on the worship theme for the day.

Supplies: wooden dowel, two hearts hung from 9 x 12-inch construction paper

Hearts Together

The Book of Acts describes a church alive in love and commitment. The following six characteristics of the church are mentioned in Acts chapter 2:

1. All the believers kept meeting together.
2. They sold their property and possessions and gave the money to anyone who needed it.
3. They went to the temple every day.
4. They were joyful.
5. They ate at each other's homes and shared their food.
6. They praised God and enjoyed the good will of all the people.

Have kids help with the Bible reading. In advance, have each of the six characteristics above printed on a separate 3 X 5 card. As kids arrive, ask six of them to read one of the cards.

Songs of Worship:

Choose two or three songs. Briefly introduce songs so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God!

Your choice of music.

The Power of the Cross:

Jesus has given his life for us that we might have forgiveness and power to live for him.

In Kingdom Quest today, we read from Acts 2 about how the early Christian church acted. Listen as some volunteers read what it says in verses 44-47...

Have the volunteers read the six characteristics of the early church. Then say:

There is one more characteristic of the early church. "Every day the Lord saved people, and they were added to the group."

Boys and girls, does it sound like the early church liked to get together? Does it sound like they had fun together? Do you like to get together here at church? Well, I'm glad that you do, and I am glad that they did, too. I'm going to use these hearts to help us picture what it was like.

Use the "Hearts Together" trick to describe the early church.

In advance, make two hearts out of 9 x 12-inch construction paper. Cut a strip of paper about four feet long and connect a heart to each end.

Drape the connected hearts over a wooden dowel or some other object and then blow air (from your mouth to sound like wind) between the two hearts. They will come together.

Talk about how the hearts of believers from the early church came together to praise God, just like these hearts come together now. The believers really loved each other and were very excited. Say:

Remember last week. What was the sound the disciples heard on the day of Pentecost? That's right—the sound of wind. My breath just now was like that wind, like the Holy Spirit who comes into our lives and brings our hearts together. When our hearts are together, we feel close to each other and we show we love each other. Our hearts come close together at church when we fellowship and praise God together.

What happened to the hearts when I stopped blowing on them? They separated, didn't they? They went back where they came from. This is a picture of how Christians come together in church. But then, after our time of fellowship and worship, we separate and go back out into the world to help lead others to Jesus.

That is why we worship together—not just so we can get together, but also so we can go out excited and refreshed from this place.

Now let's come together in praise and thank God for what he has done for us so we can get filled with his Holy Spirit. Then we will be ready to go out to the world, and we can help change the whole world with the love of Jesus.

Song of Response:

Choose a song to help the children turn to Jesus. Or, you may want to help them celebrate what God has done by singing a song of praise.

Offering:

Teach the importance of giving and talk about the mission activities they are supporting.

Supplies: hula hoop and offering bucket

Have kids come forward to lay their offerings inside a hula hoop. Two people are brought to stand inside the hula hoop. Point out that, just as the early Christians got their hearts together to worship God, they shared everything. This is something we are doing in our offering.

Let two kids give thanksgiving prayers for some of the things they have and some of the friends that God has given them. Dismiss the kids, put the loose offerings into an offering bucket, and remove the hula hoop



The Word

Learning Game:

Some churches dismiss children from the adult service at this time to join Kids Church. The learning game provides a fun kinesthetic activity to help kids connect with each other. The learning point will help reinforce the theme of the day.

Supplies: two pairs of oversized long johns or overalls and oversized shirts, both of which are the same size, many inflated red balloons, pin to pop balloons

Filling Your World With Love

Have a boy and a girl contestant come forward. Have each put on an oversized pair of long johns (overalls would also work) and an oversized shirt. *(To make the game fair, be sure the oversized clothes are the same size.)*

Next, have the rest of the boys line up in a column from the back of the room to the boy contestant. Do the same with the girls, lining them up from the back of the room to the girl contestant. At the back of the room in front of each column, put a bag of red inflated balloons.

Explain that the object of this game is to see how many balloons each team can stuff inside its contestant's oversized clothing. The balloons can only be passed by hand up to the front. No one can do any walking, except to pick up a lost balloon. Have three helpers from each team up front stuffing the contestants' oversized clothing with balloons.

When time is up or there are no more balloons, have everyone but the two contestants sit down. Explain:

We are like the balloons, filled with God's Spirit. The air in the balloons reminds us of the Holy Spirit.

It is our job to go fill up (point to the contestants) this world with God's Spirit. We are to PENETRATE the world just like these balloons went right inside these people. It is a Christian's job to get God's love *out* of the church and *inside* the lives of people.

To see which team won, count the balloons while popping them with a pin. Have the audience help count.

This can be especially fun if you don't remove the balloons from the long johns before popping—Have lots of fun with it! Just be extra careful not to poke the child with the pin!

Bible Presentation:

Help children pay attention by giving them a word or concept to listen for as you read. Consider letting a child read who could do so with excellence.

Matthew 5:13: Salt of the Earth

Supplies: two small cups(or bags) of popcorn per child—one is salted and one is not salted, flashlight, basket or bucket

Tell the kids that you are conducting a taste experiment. Give each child a small cup (5 oz.) of unsalted popcorn. Let them eat half, BUT NOT ALL, then ask:

How does that taste? *(They might say fine, or they might complain that it is plain, not salted.)*

Give each child a small cup of salted popcorn. Ask them to eat half of the popcorn, BUT NOT ALL. THEN ASK:

How does *that* taste? *(Most will likely say it is much better because it is salted.)*

Do you think you could close your eyes and tell without looking which kind of popcorn you are eating? Let's see.

Have kids pair up with someone and have their partner serve them some popcorn without revealing whether it is salted or not. Then reverse roles so both partners get to guess. Make the following point:

Salt PENETRATES food and makes it taste better. It is so good you can even recognize it with your eyes shut. People like to season their food with salt, don't they?

Read Matthew 5:13. Then ask:

What does it mean that we are the salt of the earth?

What does salt do? *(It PENETRATES food and makes it taste better.)*

What do you think a Christian would be like if he were like salt? *(A Christian PENETRATES the world with the love of Jesus and that tastes good to our souls.*

Application:

Read Matthew 5:14-16

Light of the World

Supplies: small flashlights (or penlights) for each child, large butcher paper cross that has "Jesus is Savior and Lord", printed on it. This should be hard to read in a dimly light room.

Turn the lights off to read Matthew 5:14-16. Read it with a flashlight. As you get to the part about the lamp and the bushel, put a basket or bucket over the flashlight so you can no longer read. Have a fun time play-acting the stress of not being able to finish reading the Bible verse and the dilemma of not knowing how to fix it. Let a volunteer take the bushel off the flashlight, and then continue reading.

What does light do to darkness? It PENETRATES it. It goes into the darkness and drives the darkness out.

Jesus was the light of the world and PENETRATED the darkness of sin. He gave his life for us by his death and resurrection. God's light shines in the lives of those who believe in Jesus. Because of this light, we can shine. We can be light to the world and PENETRATE the darkness because Jesus' light shines through us.

We are going to do something to help us understand what this means.

Pass out small flashlights to the kids while keeping the lights dim. As this is happening, hang up a large cross cut from butcher paper with the words "Jesus is Savior and Lord" (Luke 2:36). This cross should have been folded up so the kids cannot yet read the words. When hanging, the words should be hard to read because of the darkness.

Darken the room completely and ask that just one small flashlight from the back be turned on. Ask if they can read the words on the cross. Hopefully, you will have adjusted this so it cannot be read.

Have the child with his light on tag the person next to him. After being tagged, the child may turn on his light and then may tag another. Soon the room will be filled with lights.

Have all the lights pointing to the cross. This illuminates the fact that Jesus is Savior and Lord.

Optional adapted activity:

Supplies: large newsprint banner that has printed on it "Jesus is Savior and Lord"

While keeping the lights dim, have the kids tiptoe to an area of the room where you will display a banner (described in next paragraph).

Once kids are lined up side by side in a line parallel to where the banner will be hung and about 3-5 feet from where it will be, hang in front of them a paper banner with the words "Jesus is Savior and Lord" lightly printed on it.

This can be made with a computer banner program, using an ultra-light color setting. Or you might experiment with pastel markers to find the right color. The room should be dark enough and the letters pale enough that the kids cannot see the message on the banner, even though they are just a few feet from it.

Give the child on the farthest left end a penlight and have him shine it on the banner directly in front of him. Ask if the kids can read the message on the banner with only one light shining on it. No one will be able to read the whole banner.

Give the next child in line a penlight and have him shine it on the banner also. Continue down the line, each child shining his/her light on the banner as they receive it. As whole words become illuminated, encourage kids to tell the rest of the word(s) they see, until all kids have a penlight turned on and all the words have been read. Have the kids put all the words together again, from left to right, until they have discovered the message: *Jesus is Savior and Lord.*

Because we are all together, our light shines all the brighter. That is why God brings us together. He gives us his light so that all of our lights together make a bright light pointing to Jesus, who is Savior and Lord.



Witness

Witness and Tell:

Give children opportunities to share how God is working in their lives. It is best to use a microphone to ask children interview questions around the theme for the day.

Ask some kids to come forward and pray for special places where God might be sending us from this place to be salt and light. Examples are on the playground at school, at home, or on the soccer field. Specific people could be named as well.

The objective is to dedicate the worship center as a place to come together and then a place from which to leave. We come to get salt and light, and then we go out to be salt and light to the world!

Prayer:

Let the kids pray out loud. If you are using a microphone, invite children to form a prayer line and speak their thanksgivings or requests. If you have portable microphones, you can roam the audience. Kids can also go to prayer stations set up for specific types of prayer.

Supplies: video, Who Cares by Missionary Kids, produced by Gospel Publishing House, 1997—order from

<http://www.paoc.org/ministries/MAK/pdf/MAK%20Resources%20Order%20Form.pdf>

Show the video *Who Cares* by Missionary Kids. (6-7 minutes) Order from:

<http://www.paoc.org/ministries/MAK/pdf/MAK%20Resources%20Order%20Form.pdf>

After the video, remind the kids that this video is based on a true story. A young boy actually shared his faith with another kid, who then received Jesus as his Savior! Say:

**Do you think God could use you to bring a friend to faith in Jesus?
Let's pray: Lord, help us have the courage and the wisdom to know
when to talk to others about your love for them. Thank you for loving
us so much. Amen.**

Blessing:

Speak a blessing prayer over the children. Personalize this to your setting. Use a special scripture verse or blessing around the theme of the day.

Song of Sending:

Choose one song. Briefly introduce songs so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God.

Six Characteristics of the Early Church

1. All the believers kept meeting together.
2. They sold their property and possessions and gave the money to anyone who needed it.
3. They went to the temple every day.
4. They were joyful.
5. They ate at each other's homes and shared their food.
6. They praised God and enjoyed the good will of all the people.

Supplies:

Attention Grabber:

- wooden dowel
- two hearts hung from 9 x 12-inch construction paper

Offering:

- hula hoop

Learning Game:

- two pairs of oversized long johns or overalls and oversized shirts, both of which are the same size
- many inflated red balloons
- pin to pop balloons

Bible Presentation:

- two small cups (or bags) of popcorn per child—one is salted and one is not salted
- flashlight
- basket or bucket

Application:

- small flashlights (or penlights) for each child
- large butcher paper cross that has “Jesus is Savior and Lord” printed on it—this should be hard to read in a dimly lit room

OR

- large newsprint banner that has printed on it “Jesus is Savior and Lord”
- video, *Who Cares* by Missionary Kids, produced by Gospel Publishing House, 1997—order from:
<http://www.paoc.org/ministries/MAK/pdf/MAK%20Resources%20Order%20Form.pdf>

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