



Date: _____

Series: Advent
Winter Year 2, Lesson 29

Faith

Primary Scripture: 1 Corinthians 3:10-15

Key Verses: 1 Corinthians 3:11, 12a, "... no one can lay any other foundation other than the one that is already laid, and that foundation is Jesus Christ. People may build on this foundation..."

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

Kids, like adults, need clarification between faith and works. It is by faith alone that they are saved through the grace of Jesus' finished work. Works are the response of such a faith and they are vitally important. Kids need to understand that such a saving faith in Christ is active. What they do here really does make a difference in heaven. Too often, they do not see their actions as very significant expressions of faith. The Bible text today tells us that we can build acts of faith that, indeed, follow us to heaven.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: Jesus is the foundation for our lives in that he gave his life for us through his death and resurrection. Jesus is the foundation upon which we can have a life of service devoted to God.

Jesus in us: It is by the power of the Holy Spirit that we have a full, intimate relationship with Jesus here and now. We experience his presence in us as we become more and more like him.

Jesus through us: Our good works for the sake of Jesus, who saved us, is a way that Jesus will work through us to reach the world with His saving love.

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 needed: a telephone or cell phone

Light the Advent candle (the first one this week), explaining each candle's special meaning:

1. Blue – the candle of hope.
2. Blue – the candle of faith.
3. Rose – the candle of joy.
4. Blue – the candle of love.
5. Center candle – white – the candle representing Christmas.

Have the child light only the first candle today. Explain that two candles will be lit next week, three the following, four the Sunday before Christmas, and the fifth after Christmas.

While lighting the candle, read the following responsively (put on PowerPoint or overhead) or have another child read the scripture responses.

Presenter: **We worship in the name of the strong and living God – Father , Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen. The living flame that burns on our Advent wreath gives us a picture of Jesus. He is the living light of the world. At one time Jesus said...**

Reader: *"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will have a life filled with light and will never live in the dark." (John 8:12b)*

Presenter: The evergreen of the wreath represents the life that is found in Christ. At another time, Jesus said...

Reader: *“But I came so that my sheep will have life and so that they will have everything they need.”* (John 10:10b)

Presenter: What is the meaning of lighting the first candle?

Reader: This candle calls us to hope. Since Jesus has come into the world, we have a sure and certain hope of our future.

Presenter: What is the meaning of lighting the second candle?

Reader: This candle calls us to faith. Through faith in Jesus, we have been made right with God.

Presenter: Dear Lord God, thank you for now helping us get ready for Christmas. We want to get ready to receive Jesus into the world and into our lives. We open our hearts to you as we worship you. By the power of your Holy Spirit, let Jesus come into our lives. When he does, fill us with hope and faith. Amen.

Using the telephone or cell phone, pretend that you are dialing up God and then have an imaginary conversation with him. Tell him that you would like to talk to him about some important matters. You would like to tell him how much you like being his friend and what a good friend he is. As you are talking, pretend that God is talking back as you repeat what you pretend to hear him say:

Oh, you want me to give the phone to the kids so they can talk to you? Okay. Here, kids...

Explain to the kids that they don't need a telephone to talk to God.

While talking on a telephone, when we say something on one end, someone can hear us on the other. Worship is kind of like this. When we give God our praises here, he hears it in heaven and is delighted. One of the most important things we can remember is that there are certain things that we can do here on earth which make a difference in heaven. One of them is giving God our praises, worshipping him, and telling him how we love him. As we worship him today let's make a difference in heaven.

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.

Kids, I want to ask you something. If I give money to church, do I earn heaven? If I am nice to my little sister, do I earn heaven? If I obey my parents, do I earn heaven? Can any person earn heaven by doing good things? Of course not. How do we get to heaven? (By trusting in Jesus as our Savior.)

However, sometimes we get the wrong idea that since we will go to heaven because of what Jesus has done for us, it really does not matter what we *do*. We might think, “I don’t have to give any of myself or my offerings to God. I don’t have to be nice to my sister. I don’t have to obey my parents.” Maybe we even think that it does not matter since God will forgive us anyway. It is true that God forgives us, but what we do does matter. If we have been saved by Jesus, then we want to live for him.

If we have thought that it is not important to obey or to be kind and loving, then we should ask God to forgive us. Let’s pray.

Dear God,

Sometimes we think it really does not matter whether we try to obey you or not. We think that it might not matter if we don’t show your love and kindness to others. That is wrong. Just because we do something bad, that does not mean that we don’t want to do things well. Please forgive us if we think it does not matter. We trust Jesus as our Savior. Thank you for your forgiveness and your help to make us want to do good things for you. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

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 needed: two pennies and a twenty-dollar bill

Say:

Today's lesson focuses on faith, which produces works of love in God's kingdom. It is true that, as we are given faith that motivates acts of love and kindness, we make a difference in God's kingdom and in heaven itself.

Hold up two pennies and a twenty-dollar bill.

Which is worth more?

Read Luke 21:1-3.

"Looking up, Jesus saw people, especially the rich, dropping their gifts into the temple offering box. He noticed a poor widow drop in two small coins. He said, 'I can guarantee this truth: This poor widow has given more than all the others.'"

How is that like us today? If you only get an allowance of one dollar a week and you give twenty-five cents to the Lord, in God's eyes that is more than a rich man who might give two hundred dollars. Does this make a difference in heaven? Of course it does. We cannot buy heaven, but the things that we do here because we love Jesus might help other people come to know Jesus as their Savior, too. That makes a big difference in heaven.

Describe your current offering/mission project as kids bring their offerings forward.

Maybe your offering will help convince someone just how much Jesus loves him or her.



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.

The following game demonstrates the Bible verse, 2 Corinthians 5:7, “...our lives are guided by faith, not by sight.”

Supplies needed: blindfolds, a small packages of M&M’s per group, items to use as obstacles

Divide the kids into small groups. Give each group a blindfold and have them select one child to be blindfolded and sent on a treasure hunt. The object of the game is to find the treasure and return safely to the group so each member can share that treasure (a small package of M&M’s).

After the seekers of each group have been blindfolded, place their treasures in different places around the room. Each group must stay in one location and give directions to the treasure seeker to find their treasure. Place some obstacles around the room to be in the way. The treasure seeker must find his/her group’s treasure and return safely to the group.

After the groups have accomplished this, let kids share the M&M’s then discuss:

What made this job hard? How is that like our Christian walk? The Bible says that we walk by faith and not by sight. Sometimes when we follow Jesus, we must trust him even though we cannot see him. We listen to his directions and do what he says. The result is that we have treasures stored up for us in heaven. How we walk by faith in our life here makes a difference in heaven.

Bible Reading:

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.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:7, “... **our lives are guided by faith, not by sight.**”

We get to heaven through faith alone. When we get to heaven we can present to Jesus our gift, the good works that we have done for him. This is especially true of those good works that helped other people get to heaven.

Be careful to emphasize that it is not by faith AND good works that we are saved.

It is by faith alone that we are saved. Faith in Jesus leads us to do good works that help other people know about Jesus too. In that way, the things we do here on earth *do* make a difference in heaven. They are like gifts that we bring to Jesus.

Use objects to explain the reading 1 Corinthians 3:10-15. These objects would include a handful of straw, a small block of wood, a brick or box in aluminum foil, a brick or box wrapped in gold foil. A small cross is also needed.

As you read 1Corinthians 3:10-15, begin by placing the cross on the table.

This is the foundation of our faith. It is only through faith in Jesus that we can go to heaven. In living life, we can build on that foundation by doing things that show Jesus’ love to the world. When we do things that show Jesus’ love for the world, it might help other people come to heaven, too. This is very important. It is like building on the foundation of Jesus. It is putting our faith to work in our good deeds.

Look at the different things we use to build. We can build with straw. Would that last very long? *(No. It would not last.)*

It might give added effect to have a match available and pretend like you are going to light the hay on fire.

No, straw would not last. That is like people who know Jesus as their Savior, but they do not really do anything for him. They never help other people find out about Jesus and they never really practice their faith. They think that being a Christian is only going to church on Sundays.

Some people might build with wood. Would that last in a fire? No, it would not. This might be like people who know about Jesus’ love,

but they get too busy with the other things they are doing that they forget about doing things to serve God. They forget that it is important to be kind to other people so that we can talk to them about how Jesus has been kind to us.

Look at these bricks. They remind us of gold or silver. The Bible says that when Jesus comes on the last day, all the things we have done will be shown. These acts done because we love Jesus and to help people come to meet Jesus will be things that will not burn away. They will be the treasures in heaven that we can give to Jesus as a gift. What we do here in this world makes a big difference in heaven. The following life application story tells about this.

Application:

Option One:

Read a life application story from the book, *Tell Me the Promises* by Joni Eareckson Tada and Ron DiCianni. Read the story, "I Promise I Will Show You the Way Home."

To set the stage for this story, ask the kids to put on their imagination caps and pretend they are able to see angels and listen to them talk. The angels will be watching a group of friends at a camp out. The kids will need to be reminded that this is not a true story like the events in the Bible. It is true, though, that angels watch over us. It is also true that God recognizes the things we do because of our faith.

Allow 15 minutes to read this story. If time is not available, an effective storyteller could put it in his or her own words and tell it.

Option Two:

View "Vanity Fair," section 6 of the video "Dangerous Journey" based on John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, ©1985 by Yorkshire Television Enterprises Ltd. (Order from: http://www.visionvideo.com/111-1111111-1111111_389.vhtml or from: <http://www.musicchristian.com/sys/product.php?PRODUCT=22234>.) Each of the nine sections lasts about 15 minutes. This episode begins about one hour and 10 minutes into the video.

Say: Over 300 years ago, a man named John Bunyan preached the message of the Bible in England. But that was against the law if you weren't given permission to do so by the government. So he was thrown in prison and stayed there for many years. In 1676 he wrote a story called "The Pilgrim's Progress." It is history's all-time best selling book next to the Bible.

This is what happens in the story. There is a man named Christian who is on a sacred journey. That is why he is called a pilgrim. A pilgrim is someone who is taking a journey for an important religious purpose. He leaves his hometown, called City of Destruction, and

travels to a place called The Celestial City. The Celestial City reminds us of heaven. His journey is like our lives as Christians, as we, too, have a final destination of heaven. Along his way, he faces many dangers and obstacles, just like we face challenges in our Christian lives.

Today, we will watch a 15-minute section from the movie “Dangerous Journey” which is based on the book “*The Pilgrim’s Progress*.” We will see how Christian and his traveling partner are faithful even when people try to get them to say they don’t believe in Jesus or want to follow him. Remember that having faith means that you trust God no matter what, even if it is the hard thing to do!

When you listen to this chapter of his story, I want to see who can remember the answers to these questions. I will ask them after the story, and if I call on you and you have the right answer, you will receive a prize!

- What is the name of Christian’s companion at the beginning?
- Many things are sold at Vanity Fair. Christian and his companion are arrested because they only buy _____, which is not for sale there.
- What does Faithful say at his trial?
- Who is better off at the end of the video – Christian, or his companion? Why?

Show Part 6 of “Dangerous Journey”, titled “Vanity Fair.” After viewing the video, ask the Discussion Questions below.

- What was the name of Christian’s companion at the beginning? (*Faithful.*)
- Christian and Faithful were arrested because they wouldn’t buy any of the things for sale at Vanity Fair. What did they say was the only thing they would buy? (*Truth. Explain that the things being sold at Vanity Fair – power and wealth and fame – looked like they would make a person happy, but they were only temporary and would keep a person from reaching the Celestial City. The good things of this world might make us happy for a while, but heaven will be much better than the best of these – and it’s forever!*)
- How did they behave while they were in jail? (*They encouraged each other and spoke only positive words to people who made fun of them.*)
- What did Faithful say at his trial? (*The laws and religion of the people of Vanity were against the Word of God.*)
- Who was better off at the end of the video – Christian, or his companion? Why? (*Faithful – he was already in the Celestial City.*)
- What was the name of the man who helped Christian escape? (*Hopeful.*) Why did this man help Christian? (*Christian’s calm demeanor impressed him. In the same way, if we trust God, we’ll face difficult circumstances with*

less fear and panic. People will wonder why we have such peace. Some of them may become Christians – like Hopeful in the video - because of the peace they see in us.)

- **What was at the hill on the side of the road?** (A “silver mine.”) **Was it really a silver mine?** (No.) **What did Demas promise would happen if Christian and Hopeful would stop there?** (They would get rich effortlessly.)
- **What happened to the four men who stopped at the Silver mine?** (They fell in and were smothered.)
- **What lessons can we learn from this story?** (If we trust God – have faith – he will give us a peace that will draw others to him. The things of this world may look good, but they won’t give us lasting joy. Only Jesus can give us heaven.)



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.

Allow a few volunteers to share a time they had to have faith because they could not see what God was doing in a difficult time of their lives, or have kids tell about another person in their lives who demonstrated great faith.

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.

Options: (select one from the options below)

_____ **Prayer Line Option:** Kids line up and take turns stepping in front of the microphone to speak their prayers briefly.

_____ **Prayer Chair:** Adults or children with special prayer needs are invited to sit in the chairs. Kids gather around them, lay hands on their shoulders or knees and take turns praying.

_____ **Popcorn Prayer:** The leader moves through the crowd with a microphone and turns it toward kids who are raising their hands to pray. The kids speak their prayers into the microphone.

Lord's Prayer: Lead the children through the Lord's Prayer, phrase by phrase, or let them pray the entire prayer along with you.

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

Supplies:

Attention Grabber:

- Advent Wreath
- matches
- telephone or cell phone

Offering:

- two pennies
- twenty-dollar bill

Learning Game:

- blindfolds
- small packages of M&M's
- items to use as obstacles

Bible Presentation:

- a handful of straw
- a small block of wood
- a brick or box in aluminum foil
- a brick or box wrapped in gold foil
- small cross
- match

Learning Event:

- *Option One* - *Tell Me the Promises* by Joni Eareckson Tada and Ron DiCianni
- *Option Two* - "Vanity Fair," section six of the video "Dangerous Journey" based on John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, ©1985 by Yorkshire Television Enterprises Ltd. (Order from: http://www.visionvideo.com/111-1111111-1111111_389.vhtml or from: <http://www.musicchristian.com/sys/product.php?PRODUCT=22234>.)

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