



Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Series: Memorial Day  
Summer Year 3, Lesson 1

# Memorial Day

**Primary Scripture:** Exodus 20:5-6; Deuteronomy 6:2, 6, 7, 12; Proverbs 22:6

**Key Verse:** Deuteronomy 6:6, 7, 12, "Take to heart these words that I give you today. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you're at home or away, when you lie down or get up... Be careful that you don't forget the Lord, who brought you out of slavery in Egypt."

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

Kids need the assurance that their faith is established by their own personal trust in Christ and not simply their family's religious beliefs. However, it is easier to believe when one has been nurtured in the faith while growing up. God blesses spiritual heritages that are passed from generation to generation. Kids can understand the importance of parents passing a spiritual heritage to their children. The faithfulness of a child's parents, grandparents, and ancestors gets across for great thanksgiving. This helps kids to understand their spiritual roots. Many kids are rootless because there might not be a sense of spiritual grounding in their families. Kids, even today, can see the importance of passing their faith along to future generations including their own family members today.

## **How does Jesus fill this need?**

**Jesus for us:** All spiritual roots come from the victory that Jesus has won for us at Calvary, whether we are a first generation believer or a twentieth generation believer.

**Jesus in us:** Through faith in Christ we are assured of Jesus' presence in us just as he was in the lives of earlier believers.

**Jesus through us:** Jesus lives through us so that we might pass his presence to others through our words and examples.

**Preparation Note:** In preparation for the Memorial Day lesson, invite some adults from the congregation to share how they watched faith practiced in their homes while growing up and how it was passed down to their children or grandchildren. Some faith practices could be; church attendance, praying together, talking about how God works in their life.

## 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.*

The large group presenter needs to select an item or two from his/her home that was passed down from a parent, grandparent or great grandparent. This item needs to have significant meaning to the presenter. It might help kids to understand that person's heritage or identity as a descendant of the parent, grandparent or great grandparent. The following is given as an example.

### Object and description

**I brought in a chair from home today. No, there isn't a shortage of chairs at church but I brought this particular one in to show you. It may look like an ordinary, old chair. But actually it is a chair that my great great grandfather sat in when he lived in Germany. After him, my great grandfather, my grandfather, my dad, now me, and my own children have sat in it. What might seem like an old chair to some people is much more than that to me. Seeing it and sitting in it reminds me that these men once sat in this chair when they were**

**reading their Bible. Each one of them trusted in Jesus as his Savior and wanted to follow God. They passed on that faith by setting an example with the way they lived and their words. Their sons, after them, also came to trust Jesus and follow him. Someday, I hope my son sits in this chair and reads the Bible and maybe his son after him will too.** (If you don't have a chair illustration, use whatever heritage items you have available to tell about your family.)

### Remembering

**Today we will talk about remembering what God has done in the lives of the people who lived before us. It is important to do this so that we see that we can trust that God will work in our lives now and even in the lives to come after us.**

### What never changes

**Now as we worship God, we know that we may not be singing the same songs or using the same music that our great grandparents sang. But the meaning is the same. In a timeless way, we all say that God is the ruler over all. We thank him for sending Jesus and in our worship we're inviting the presence of his Holy Spirit and telling him that we love him.**

## **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.*

Make a paper table tent with the word "sin," on it. Put it on the altar and remove the cross.

### Sin defined

**Many of us know what sin is. Sin is a word to describe our disobedience of God. But the reason it can be so bad is because sin can get in the middle of our relationship with God causing a separation.**

## Change

Sometimes we may choose to keep on sinning instead of telling our sin to God. When that happens, it's very hard to change. Also, that type of sin can then be passed down to others in our family. For example, if there is a dad who gets angry very easily and often yells hurtful things to his children, what do you think his children might grow up and do? They might also get angry easily and yell hurtful things to others. In that same way, the Bible says that sin can be passed down from fathers to their children. It says something like this in Exodus 20. It says, "When parents continue to sin, the punishment for their sin even goes to their children and their grandchildren. This happens because those children are hurt by sin."

## Visual demonstration: Crush sin with cross

**How do we stop this? It's like this.**

Take the cross and place it over the paper tent of sin.

**The cross stops the sin from being passed down. When we say, "Jesus, I need your forgiveness. Forgive me so that I can stop from doing that same sin." It also says in the Bible that God shows mercy to thousands of generations of people who love him and obey his commandments. When we receive his forgiveness and live for him, it not only helps us, it helps all of our families who come after us. It helps our children, our grandchildren, and all of our families who come after us. Let's pray for that today.**

## Prayer

**Dear God, we need the power of the cross in our families. Sometimes we might not even realize that something we are doing is wrong. When that happens, other people learn to do the same things. Please show us if there is any sin we need to tell you about, because then we have the power to change. We pray that you would do this because Jesus gave his power when he died on the cross for our sins to take them away. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

## **Song of Response:**

*Choose a song to help the children turn to Jesus. Or, you may want 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.*

Place the offering basket over the table top of sin.

**When we give our offerings to God, it's a way of saying, "I love you." Our offerings help us tell more and more people how they can be freed from the power of sin as it's passed down in families. Just like this offering plate covers up sin, it reminds us that our money can be used for more people to trust Jesus and be freed from sin.**



# 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.*

### **Old-fashioned relays:**

Three options for relay games are offered in this lesson. This should help in gathering fewer supplies because you can divide your large group into three smaller groups and have relays within teams of those smaller groups. For example, if you have 60 children, 20 of them will participate in the three-legged race while the other 40 watch. Those 20 might be divided into four teams of five or even two teams of ten.

**In many years past, oftentimes, families or church families gathered together and played games. Some of the popular games are relay games that we will play today.**

### Game 1 – Tag

*Supplies: tape lines on the floor, burlap bags or a substitute such as old pillowcases.*

Divide the teams evenly and spread them out so that the game becomes a relay. A contestant may run from one side to the next to tag the next partner who takes a turn, or runs around the line and comes back to tag the next partner.

### Game 2 – Three Legged Races

*Supplies: tape*

Have kids put their arms around each others' shoulders and use two strips of masking tape at the thigh, calf, or ankle to tape their legs together. Tell them the secret of the game is to talk so that you're both moving with the same motion. Any pair who's tape breaks, will have to go back to their starting line, tape their legs back together and continue.

### Game 3 – Ping Pong ball on a spoon

*Supplies: spoons, Ping Pong balls or alternative.*

Everyone in line needs a spoon (or two spoons can be alternated so the person who is carrying the Ping Pong ball can drop it into the person who has an empty spoon). Make

note that this game was played in yesteryear by balancing eggs on spoons although for this game we are balancing Ping Pong balls. Another type of small ball or fruit may be used as well.

### Learning point

**Notice how each one of these relay games was about passing a tag or object to the next person in line. That's the way it sometimes works in families. A parent passes something to their children who pass something on to their children. They can pass good things or bad things. The best things you can pass aren't just things like money, or a car. The best thing you can pass to your children is faith in Jesus.**

**Notice that in one of the games it was easy to drop the Ping Pong ball when you passed it. That's how it is with families. Sometimes it's easy to run the race of faith by yourself. But when you try to share it with someone else, they, too, will believe. Or when you share it with a child and they, too, believe, it may get dropped. That's why today we're talking about how important it is not to drop our faith, but pass it down to our children and grandchildren and even great grandchildren.**

## **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.*

### Teaching Point #1—Spiritual heritage in the home.

*Invite some older members of the congregation who will share some of their stories of how they practiced their faith in their family growing up and also what they did to pass their faith along to their children and grandchildren. Ask that they bring with them any old Bible storybooks or other objects that help them tell their story. Also ask that they would pick a Bible verse to begin their story. Some suggested Bible verses are listed below, or they may choose their own.*

*Optional Bible verses for guest presenter:*

Proverbs 22:6

***Train a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not turn away from it.***

Exodus 20:5-6

***Never worship them or serve them, because I, the LORD your God, am a God who does not tolerate rivals. I punish children for their parents' sins to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me. But I show mercy to thousands of generations of those who love me and obey my commandments.***

Deuteronomy 6:2

***As long as you live, you, your children, and your grandchildren must fear the LORD your God. All of you must obey all his laws and commands that I'm giving you, and you will live a long time.***

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

***Take to heart these words that I give you today. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you're at home or away, when you lie down or get up.***

Deuteronomy 6:12

***Be careful that you don't forget the Lord, who brought you out of slavery in Egypt.***

**For today's lesson we're going to listen to some moms and dads and maybe even some grandparents who will tell us how they watched their parents practice their faith and it helped them trust Jesus for their own and they want to pass that down as well.**

### Teaching point #2—Spiritual heritage in the church

*Preparation note: Invite some older members of the congregation who will share some of their stories of how the church was started and what they remember about it from many years ago. Ask that they would bring in or discuss objects that remind them of those days. You may want to take a visual tour of the church as he/she discusses its history. Again, have the speaker share a special Bible verse. The listed verses might be examples.*



*Optional Bible verses for guest presenter:*

**Being part of a family involves receiving an inheritance. The promise to those who follow Jesus is that they shall "inherit" God as their Father as they become his children.**

Revelation 21:7

***Everyone who wins the victory will inherit these things. I will be their God, and they will be my children.***

**The church is known as the family of God. Not only do we have families at home, but also at church where everyone who knows, loves and follows Jesus is a family together.**

Ephesians 2:19-22

***That is why you are no longer foreigners and outsiders but citizens together with God's people and members of God's family. You are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Christ Jesus himself is the cornerstone. In him all the parts of the building fit together and grow into a holy temple in the Lord.***

**Sometimes it's helpful to know about our family's history when our parents or grandparents were young. It's also helpful to know about our church and what it was like several years ago.**

Optional activity—Thank you card

*Let the kids write thank you cards to parents or others who have helped them grow in knowing Jesus. Some of the words need to be written out on the board for kids who are learning to write. It can be as simple as, "thank you for helping me learn about Jesus."*

**These are ways we can say thank you to those people who have come before us. They are especially appropriate for some of the senior members of our congregation whose support has helped you grow in faith.**



# 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.*

Let the kids talk about special times in their families when their families talk about God together at home.

## 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.*

Your choice of music.

# Supplies:

## *Attention Grabber:*

- an item from presenter's home with significant meaning

## *The Power of the Cross:*

- paper table tent with the word "sin," on it

## *Offering:*

- plate or basket

## *Learning Game:*

- Game 1 supplies: tape lines on the floor, burlap bags or a substitute such as old pillow cases
- Game 2 supplies: tape
- Game 3 supplies: spoons and Ping Pong balls (or alternative)

## *Bible Reading:*

- invited guests

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