



Date: _____
Series: Godly Actions Count (Summer)
Year 4, Lesson 12

You Have a Purpose in the Church

Primary Scripture:

Matthew 22:34-40; 1 Corinthians 12:20-27

Key Verse: 1 Corinthians 12:27, “You are Christ’s body and each of you is an individual part of it.”

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

Kids need to know that they belong to the body of Christ, and that they have an important purpose there. Kids, as well as adults, need a purpose for living. God gave us a purpose when he told us to love God with all our hearts, souls, and minds and to love our neighbors as ourselves. To accomplish this purpose, God fits us together as a church. As we show our love to him, we also have opportunities to show our love to each other. Kids have an important part to work together in the purpose of the church: love.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: Jesus first loved us and gave his life for us so that we might love him and live for him.

Jesus in us: Through faith in Jesus, we are connected together in one body as the body of Christ himself. Jesus not only lives in us individually, but also fits us together as his one body here on earth.

Jesus through us: Jesus connected us with one another in the church so that we can work together as the church to fulfill his purpose.

Lesson 12 - 1

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: two unusual objects, a hand-held eggbeater, box in which to place these objects (optional)

Place the two unusual objects and the eggbeater in a box or on the table. Pull them out one at a time during the discussion. Begin by saying:

I have some interesting stuff here. Let's see what these objects are. I will pull them out, and you tell me what they are for.

Take answers from the audience. If possible, describe each one and demonstrate its purpose.

After discussing the unusual objects, without saying a word, bring a child forward.

Now this is an interesting object. Refer to the child. I wonder what this object's purpose is. Who wants to guess?

Allow the kids to guess.

Well, if we want to check the purpose for this person, we had better go to the instruction manual written by the one who designed and created him/her.

Let's go to Matthew 22:37 through verse 39 to find out what God designed this person to do. It says,

“Jesus answered him, ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and most important commandment.’ The second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as you love yourself.’”

So what is this person’s purpose? Love. That’s right—love God and love people.

One of the reasons worship is so important is that it gives us a chance to say, “I love you, God.” And we get to do it with other people who are fellow believers – people to whom we can show love, as well.

Love is much more than just a nice feeling. Love is an action we give to another person. When you worship today, your songs are a gift to God. Your prayers are also a gift to him. Let’s show our love now as we worship 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!

The Power of the Cross:

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

Take out the eggbeater, and playfully use it on another leader or a child.

What is wrong with this picture? Is the purpose of this eggbeater to beat other people? No, of course not. Its purpose is to beat eggs or mix ingredients. When it is used for the wrong purpose, it is not good for the machine and it is certainly not good for people around us.

The same thing is true about us. When we don’t live up to our purpose, it is not good for us or the people around us. What are ways in which we don’t live up to our purpose? *(We don’t live up to our purpose when we fail to show love to God or love to others.)*

Let’s think about ways this week in which we may have failed to love God or to love others. Close your eyes, and think about your week. Was there anyone you hurt this week? Was there anyone to whom you showed disrespect? What about God? Did you intentionally disobey any of his commands? Did you get into trouble for anything

that would have displeased him? Let's tell God about these things so that he will forgive us and fix our purpose.

Dear God, you know the things that we cannot hide from you – ways in which we have not loved others. We may even have been disrespectful. You know the things we did wrong and what deserves punishment. We don't want those things to get in the way of our relationship with you. Please take away the wrong things we have done and nail them to the cross where Jesus died for us. Give us your forgiveness in Jesus' name so we can do your purpose for us. We want to better love you and others. 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.

Show a penny. Put it in an offering basket.

This doesn't seem like very much money, does it? It is just one penny. You may think this is not even worth giving because it has so little value. But think about this. What if every believer in Jesus in the whole city gave a penny? Do you know how much money we would have in this offering bucket? We would have over \$2,000 (or whatever amount = 1 penny times your population).

That would go a long way to help build the orphanage in India (or insert your mission project), wouldn't it?

God told us to give our gifts to him, but he wants us to give together with other believers. There is great power in many people working together for the one purpose to which God has called us – to love him and to love others. Let's do that together as we give our offerings to the Lord.



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.

Choose one of the following game options.

Option 1:

“Hula Hoop Hoopla”

Supplies needed: two hula hoops

Have kids hold hands in a circle. Undo the handhold between two children just long enough to place a hula hoop onto one of the children's arms. Now challenge the child to pass the hula hoop to the next child without breaking the handhold. That child is then challenged somehow to get the hula hoop around his body so that it would be on another child's arm and ready to pass it along to the next child. All the children need to work together to accomplish this, agreeing not to break their grip.

Comment [RT1]: Insert a picture of this activity

For additional fun, start two hula hoops at the same time at different parts of the circle. See if they can catch each other.

Option 2:

“Group Stand”

Select two children to begin the game. Have the children sit on the floor with their backs together. Direct them to lock their elbows while back-to-back. Now challenge them to try to stand. They will need to work together so they can push up at the same time. After demonstrating with two children, invite the rest to partner up and give it a try.

Comment [RT2]: Insert a picture of this activity

Do the same activity using three children all locking elbows with backs against one another. Can you do it with more than three? How about trying it with the whole group?

Next discuss the following questions with the children. The questions are intended to prepare the children for learning that God wants us to work together for his purpose. He fits us together as the church for the purpose of loving him and loving others.

As time allows, use some of these questions to discuss the experience.

What was hardest about doing this activity?

What would have made this easier to do?

How do you think this might be like the family of God?

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.

Scripture 1:

Supplies needed: five pieces of candy, a candy bar or a larger piece of candy

Give a piece of candy to each child that answers the following questions from Matthew 22:37-39.

Earlier, we read what Matthew says about each person's purpose. I have some special rewards for those of you who paid attention! Who can fill in the following blank?

Proceed through each statement below, and pass out candy as a prize to those who answer correctly.

Jesus answered him, " _____ the Lord your God with all your heart."
(Love)

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your _____."
(Soul)

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your _____." *(Mind)*

"This is the greatest and most important _____."
(Commandment)

"This is the greatest and most important commandment. The second is like it. _____ your neighbor as you love yourself." *(Love)*

Offer a bonus question and a bigger piece of candy.

I have a special reward for the person who can answer this important bonus question. Listen carefully. God tells us that we are to love him with all of our heart, soul, and mind, and we are to love others as ourselves. But the only way we can do that is to be filled with his love. What has God done for us that showed us how much he loved us? *(He sent his Son to die on the cross for us.)*

Our purpose is to love God and to love others, and we can do that because Jesus gave his life for us and he fills us with his love.

Scripture 2:

We Are the Body of Christ

Dramatic Presentation

Supplies needed: a mystery box made from a cardboard box; large old bed sheet with holes that are cut and labeled as described in the Dramatic Presentation

This dramatic presentation teaches using the object lesson found in the mystery box—a sheet that has several holes cut out of it. This sheet is just large enough for four children to stand behind. One child has his hand showing through a hole in the sheet, another child has a nose shown through a hole, another an ear, and another has an eye revealed. On the side of the sheet that faces the audience, the holes can be labeled for the body part that will be seen through it. For example, largely write “EAR” and point an arrow to the small hole through which an ear will be poking out, etc.

The following script should be put in the mystery box so it can be read as directions for this object lesson.

Mr. King: *(Looking in the mystery box.)* **What do we have here? These are the directions. Let’s see. It says, “First, ask two adult volunteers to tightly hold the corners of this sheet so four children can go behind it.”**

Call two volunteers forward to hold sheet.

It says that “this sheet is called the ‘we need each other’ sheet.”

Now I need four children to stand behind the sheet and get ready to show a small part of their bodies through one of the holes.

Ask the adult volunteers to help the children match the right body part with the appropriate hole in the sheet. Continue after the children are set.

It says here that I am supposed to read the Bible verse, Romans 12:5 which says, “*In the same way, even though we are many individuals, Christ makes us one body and individuals who are connected to each other.*”

I suppose that means we all need each other. In 1 Corinthians 12:20 it is explained like this. “*So there are many parts but one body.*” The same thing is true with the body of Christ, which is

God's family. We are all baptized into one body and we need each other.

For example, in the human body an eye cannot say to the arm, "Since I can't lift stuff or grab things, I'm not important." If that were the case, how could the body see?

Or suppose the ear said, "Since I can't see, I'm not part of the body." If the whole body were an eye, how could it hear? What if the whole body were an ear? Can you imagine trying to smell through your ear? It wouldn't work. Or how about seeing through your nose? Of course not.

Each one of the parts of the body is important to the other. Together they make up one unit. The same is true of you. If you trust Jesus as your Savior, then Jesus lives inside you and joins you together with other believers. Together you are God's family.

Because one of you might be good at singing and helping with worship, does that mean everyone should be able to do that? Of course not. Someone needs to help others by teaching. Another would help by encouraging others. Someone else would help by serving others and getting our supplies ready.

Each person in God's family needs other people so they can help the whole body of Christ work together. Remember, we are here to be part of God's family. Each one of you has an important part in it.

Teaching Experience 1:

Supplies needed: puzzles (one per nine kids) printed on colored cardstock, cut out and put in envelopes (See appendix.)

In advance, remove one puzzle piece from each envelope and set them out of sight.

Divide the children into groups of nine and have each child in the group take a puzzle piece from the envelope. Tell them that the puzzle will contain an important Bible verse, and they will race to see which group can complete their puzzle first. The first team to complete the puzzle will get a special prize. Watch the kids' frustrations when they discover that a piece of the puzzle is missing. Show kids the missing pieces and have one child from each group come up and get the piece to complete their puzzle.

After every group has completed their puzzle, ask the questions below.

What's the Bible verse in the puzzle? *(There are many parts but one body.)*

What does that verse mean when you think about believers in Christ? *(God has given each of us a unique role, and we work together as a group to accomplish God's purpose for us.)*

What is the meaning of the missing puzzle piece? *(This demonstrates what happens when people don't fulfill the purpose for which God made them. We each have a purpose in the body of Christ. When we choose not to serve God in the way in which he calls us, it leaves a hole that needs to be filled with the unique set of gifts that God has given us. It is important that every believer fulfills his own purpose so we can work together as a complete body.)*

Teaching Experience 2:

Audience Participation

Supplies needed: 8.5" x 11" pictures of five hands (cut out each hand along the lines ahead of time), closed eye, bald head, ear, name tags

Invite three girls and one boy to come forward. These volunteers will represent four attitudes that people have about the church and about the body of Christ. Give them different names and put name tags on them. You will need the printouts of the body parts.

The Hands:

This is Brittany. Brittany is very talented in many things. She is very smart, very good in school, and very good at sports. She even likes to dance, and she plays several musical instruments.

While you discuss each attribute, give Brittany a picture of a hand. Have her hold them like a deck of cards spread out so the audience can see them.

She does so many things well that sometimes she thinks that she doesn't need anyone else. Give her a picture of a hand. **Brittany learned in church that we all have an important purpose.** Give her a picture of a hand. **Brittany feels like she doesn't need anyone else to help her because, after all, she does everything better than anyone else. So who needs others?** Give her a picture of a hand. **But I ask you, what if the body of Christ was only one person?** Give her a picture of a hand. **It would be like having a body that would be nothing but five hands with no other parts. It wouldn't work.** Give her a picture of a hand.

The Closed Eye:

Now let me introduce Nicole. Nicole sometimes doesn't think very highly of herself. She feels like she can't do very many things well. And sometimes she is afraid she might be embarrassed. When she

heard at church that she was part of the body of Christ, it didn't make sense at all. She said, "After all, I can't do anything." But that is just like having eyes that are closed and can't see.

Hand her the picture of the closed eye, and have the picture face the audience.

For, you see, God has given her special gifts to see ways in which the church could do a better job of loving others. Instead, she thought she wasn't important and that no one would want to listen to her ideas anyway.

The Bald Head:

Now let me introduce José. He said, "I don't really feel like part of the body." When José came to church, he felt like all the messages were for other people – not him. He felt like he couldn't do anything, and he really wasn't interested in helping either. This is just like hair saying to the rest of the body, "I don't want to be with you anymore. So walk around bald for all I care. I'm leaving."

Hand José the picture of the bald person.

The Listening Ear:

Harriett said, "I can't do everything, but I can do some things. One thing I'm good at is listening to others and encouraging them."

Hand her the picture of the ear.

That's what she did. She listened well to others and then told them some of the things she liked about what they did. She blessed people and encouraged them and built up the body of Christ.

God made each of us unique, and he gave each of us a purpose. Like Harriett, God has designed us to do one or two things well. We can discover what that is, and then we can show love to God and others by using that gift the way God intended.



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 the kids to share ways in which they have been used in the church to show love to God and love to others. Maybe they helped lead worship songs. Maybe they encouraged a friend who was feeling down. Maybe they helped a teacher with an activity.

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.

Give thanks for God's gifts or pray for help in learning about how each person can better show God's love as a body of Christ.

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:

- two unusual objects (The kids will guess what they are. The more unusual they are, the better.)
- hand-held eggbeater
- box in which to place these objects (optional)

Offering:

- a penny
- offering basket

Learning Game:

Option 1:

- two hula hoops

Bible Reading:

Scripture 1:

- five pieces of candy
- candy bar or a larger piece of candy

Scripture 2:

- mystery box made from a cardboard box
- large sheet with holes that are cut and labeled as described in the Dramatic Presentation

Teaching 1:

- puzzle found at the end of the lesson plan (The puzzle can be printed on colored cardstock. Cut out the puzzle and put it in an envelope. Make enough sets for several groups of nine children.)

Teaching 2:

- 8.5" x 11" pictures of objects found at the end of the lesson plan
 - five hands (cut out each hand along the lines ahead of time)
 - closed eye
 - bald head
 - ear



Error!







