



Date: _____

Series: The Early Church
Spring Year 1, Lesson 54

The Look-On- The-Inside Church

Take Home Point: *Don't put on an act to look good, but do good for Jesus. *Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

Bible Event: Acts 5:1-11

Key Verse: 1 Samuel 16:7b "Humans look at outward appearances, but the LORD looks into the heart."

We will help kids know:

- The Bible event of God cleansing the early church through the dealings of Ananias and Sapphira.
- The Christian life is not merely judged on outward appearances.

We will help kids feel:

- Conviction to examine their own motives for their actions.
- Security in God's love for them through Jesus.

We will help kids do:

- Talk about ways they can be a cool Christian on the inside and the outside.
- Throughout the week, consider how their outward actions match their inside motives.

THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
Small Group Warm-Up 	3-4	<p>By examining two lunch bags, kids will share their feelings. They will begin to understand that sometimes we look different on the outside than how we are on the inside.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • two lunch bags per group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ lunch bag #1: 2 pieces of bread in a baggie, a single serving of jelly or honey, a plastic knife, and fruit (an orange, a banana, or raisins) ○ lunch bag #2: stuff with paper to make it look very similar in shape to the first bag. • napkins
Large Group 	4 8 9-10 10-11 11-12	<p>Overview</p> <p>Video: <i>The Visual Bible: Acts 5:1-11</i>--- Ananias and Sapphira</p> <p>Puppet Presentation: “Gordy Tries Out for Super Cool Christian,” Gordy tries to be impressive with his offering.</p> <p>Interactive Drama: “Super Cool Christian Contest,” Volunteers demonstrate what looks like good Christian characteristics.</p> <p>Puppet Presentation Conclusion: “Gordy Tries Out for Super Cool Christian”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 ½ X11-inch envelope with “TIE BREAKER” written on it. • a card inside the envelope that reads “WHY?” • Gordy • offering envelope that contains approximately \$4.63 in pennies. • video, <i>The Visual Bible: Acts</i>, produced by Visual Bible International, Inc. (1995) Show Acts 5:1-11.
Small Group Application 	5-7	<p>Kids eat a popsicle while talking about what it means to be a super “cool” Christian.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • popsicle for each child (a variety of flavors and colors) • wet wipes to clean up any mess.

Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes



Purpose: Get pointed in the right direction! Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.

Show the group two similar looking lunch bags. One bag should be filled with stuffed paper and the other filled with an authentic lunch of an orange and a jelly sandwich wrapped in plastic. Without opening the sacks, have the group choose which lunch bag they would like to share.

If they choose the “dummy” bag, show them the true lunch. Let them persuade you to share it. Likewise, if the group chooses the true lunch, show them the contents of the “dummy” bag first. While cutting the sandwich into small bites using a plastic knife and dividing the orange into slices, ask the kids some questions.

What is it that makes a lunch? Is it what’s on the outside, the lunch bag, or what is on the inside?

As you talk about this and share the food, continue with this line of thought.

When you are really feeling good on the inside, your heart is joyful. How does your body act on the outside when you are joyful inside? What things do you do when you are happy? (Laugh, clap, skip.) This is acting the same on the outside as we feel on the inside.

Can you think of a time when you didn’t act the same on the outside as you felt on the inside? For example, maybe you were feeling really sad on the inside but you pretended to be happy on the outside. Who would like to tell us about when that happened to them? (You may begin with your own example.)

The purpose for these questions is to introduce the kids to the concept that our inward motivation is very important for our outward actions. A phrase that might express this is, “Do we act the same on the outside as we are on the inside?”

Today we will hear about some people who acted differently on the outside than they were on the inside. They did some religious things so that on the outside they would look good to others. But on the inside, they weren’t really thinking about serving God.

They were like this phony lunch. They looked good on the outside, but on the inside there wasn’t much to them. We will learn: **Don’t put on an act to look good, but do good for Jesus.*

If time allows, ask these additional discussion questions.

Can you think of some religious things that kids might do to look good on the outside, but they may not be doing them for God? Instead, they are doing them just to get noticed by others?

What would be different about a person who does something because he loves God instead of doing something just because he wants to get noticed?

Large Group: 20-30 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible Event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

Overview:

Video: *The Visual Bible: Acts 5:1-11---Ananias and Sapphira*

Puppet Presentation: “Gordy Tries Out for Super Cool Christian”

Gordy tries to be impressive with his offering but is humbled to learn God cares about his motives on the inside.

Interactive Drama: “Super Cool Christian Contest”

Volunteers demonstrate what looks like good Christian characteristics and the audience votes for their favorite.

Puppet Presentation Conclusion: “Gordy Tries Out for Super Cool Christian”

Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.

Observation Questions: What happened?

Have kids refer to Acts 5:1-11 in their Bible for the majority of questions. Some answers are at the end of chapter four as well.

What kinds of things were the believers doing that showed they loved each other? *(Acts 4:32-35. They sold their property and shared the money with other people who didn't have very much)*

What did Ananias and Sapphira do that was good? *(Acts 5:1-2. They sold their property and gave most of the money to the apostles to help people who didn't have much.)*

What did they do that was not good? *(Acts 5:3-4. They tried to deceive the disciples and kept some of the money for themselves.)*

What happened to them? *(Acts 5:5 and 10) They both dropped dead.*

Interpretation Questions: What does this mean?

Why do you think God was not happy with Ananias and Sapphira's gift? *(Because they were lying, saying they had given everything when they had held some of it back. This shows that in their hearts they were trying to do something just to impress other people.)*

What do you think the people saw on the outside and what do you think God saw on the inside? *(People saw Ananias and Sapphira giving lots of money. God saw their hearts and that they were not giving the money because of their love for God. Ananias and Sapphira were lying about their gift and giving their money just so they could look religious.)*

How would you describe what a super cool Christian would do in this story?

Application Questions: What does this mean to me?

Application Activity:

Give the kids each a popsicle so they might have something super cool to eat. Talk about how this applies to their life. Discussion could be as follows:

A popsicle tastes good and looks good on the outside. It also tastes and looks good on the inside. In fact, it looks and tastes the same on the inside as it does on the outside. That is the way a super cool Christian should be. The things we do on the outside, like giving money to church or helping others, should be because we are right on the inside. That means on the inside we want to please Jesus. Our actions on the outside match what's on the inside.

Let's think of some other examples. What are some very religious things people might do just to receive the applause of others? For example, people might give money to the church like Ananias and Sapphira, but they do it only to get credit for being generous.

What are other things that people might do to look religious? *(Go to church, wear certain church clothes, pretend to worship when they really*

aren't, help poor people.) Is there anything wrong with doing these things? No, we should do them. But on the inside we should love Jesus and do them to please God instead of doing them to be recognized by others.

Our key verse says in 1 Samuel 16:7b, “Humans look at outward appearances, but the LORD looks into the heart.”

Let's think about acting like a super cool Christian at church but not being a super cool Christian at school. Can you give examples? (*Saying bad words, cheating, being mean to others, being disrespectful to the teachers, repeating dirty jokes.*)

Super cool Christians have a love for Jesus on the inside and want to do what he wants. Can you give examples of how being a super cool Christian at school matches what's on the inside?



Think about a time someone was picked on or left out at school. Tell the group how a super cool Christian might help?



Think about a time when someone talked about God or asked a question about God at school. How might a super cool Christian say something to help others understand more about God's goodness to us?



Think about a time when you were really worried about doing well on a test or project at school. What might a super cool Christian have done in that situation?

The hardest place to be a super cool Christian is sometimes in our own homes with the people we live with all the time. Sometimes it is hard to show respect or patience or the forgiveness that Jesus would want us to show. But if we have Jesus in our hearts and know his love on the inside, we will be able to do loving things on the outside. God will help change us.



Think about a time your brother or sister took something of yours and you became very angry. What did you do? What do you think a super cool Christian would do?



Think about a time you read the Bible or had devotions at home. Did you do it by yourself or with your family? Should you do this just to look religious on the outside or because you love Jesus? If Jesus is making you a super cool Christian, how do you think you might be different in your home for your devotions or Bible reading?

Suggest that your kids talk to their parents about doing the “God Talk at Home” sheets.

Collect the popsicle sticks and ask the kids if they can tell what color popsicle their friends ate. They might simply remember, but another way to check is to have them stick out their tongues.

See the connection? Who you are on the inside (what color your tongue is) makes a difference on who you are on the outside.

What did you learn today? **Don't put on an act to look good, but do good for Jesus.*

Remember we want to do good for Jesus, because he was good to us first. He loves us so much he gave his life for us.

Closing Prayer:

Ask each child to pray for one specific thing they could do on the inside and on the outside to be a super cool Christian in either their church, their family, or their school. Then thank God for sending Jesus and ask his Holy Spirit to help them love love him with all their hearts so they are doing good from the inside.

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Large Group Presentation

Take Home Point: *Don't put on an act to look good, but do good for Jesus.

Holding his Bible, the presenter reviews some of the last few weeks' Bible events as follows.

Review is important for children so they can fit new concepts and facts into their thinking. They need to be reminded often of what they have learned and what they will be learning.

Mr. King: We have been learning about the Christian church that started after Jesus ascended into heaven. Jesus had sent the Holy Spirit to his followers. Do you remember how we learned the early church was an infant church but was growing in Jesus? Do you remember last week that the early church was a power church? Peter healed a crippled beggar and showed us that Jesus can change us also.

This week we will learn that God wanted the church to be filled with super cool Christians. He wanted the church to be a look-on-the-inside church. Do you know what that means?

You are looking on the inside when you search your heart to see if you do good things pleasing to Jesus because you love and trust him. (Stop and repeat this concept again.) This is being a super cool Christian.

Some people might do good things, not because they want to please Jesus, but because they want recognition from others. Such a person cares only how they look on the outside. That's not what God wants. He wants super cool Christians.

Let me read what happened in the early church when God wanted to teach us all, **Don't put on an act to look good, but do good for Jesus.*

This is the event of Ananias and Sapphira found in Acts chapter 5.

Show Acts 5:1-11 from the video, *The Visual Bible: Acts: Ananias and Sapphira.*

As you saw, Ananias and Sapphira were more concerned about putting on an act to look good, rather than pleasing God. They tried to look more religious than they were and it had deathly consequence.

“Gordy Tries Out for Super Cool Christian”

Puppet Presentation

Gordy needs as a prop an offering envelope loaded with pennies.

Gordy: Mr. King. Did I hear you say you were looking for super cool Christians?

Mr. King: No, I said I was going to read about super cool Christians. But I suppose I am looking for super cool Christians, too.

Gordy: Well, look no further. I’m your guy.

Mr. King: You are?

Gordy: I sure am. I just want to show you this right here.

Mr. King: What do you have?

Gordy: Right here in my hand is my offering and it is—get this—four hundred sixty-three pennies!

Mr. King: Four hundred sixty-three pennies. Wow! That is quite a bit.

Gordy: I know it is. I had four dollar bills at first, but I had them changed into to 400 pennies. It just seems like so much more money when you carry around so many pennies.

Mr. King: I’m glad you are giving it to the Lord, Gordy.

Gordy: So am I. I know that this is what will make me a super cool Christian.

Mr. King: It makes you a super cool Christian?

Gordy: Sure. Did you give \$4.63?

Mr. King: Not exactly that amount. But I don’t think that would make me a super cool Christian.

Gordy: I guess you’re right. It might cost someone like you a whole lot more. Maybe you had best leave the super cool Christian business to me.

Mr. King: Gordy, I’m not sure you know exactly what it means to be a super cool Christian. Super cool Christians do give money, but that is not what makes them super cool.

Gordy: I suppose it’s also how they give it. Like if they have it all changed into pennies so everyone can see how much money it really is!

Mr. King: Gordy, you need to change your idea of what is a super cool Christian. Go back behind your stage and watch this contest and maybe it will help show you.

Gordy: Okay, Mr. King. What kind of contest is it?

Mr. King: It's a super cool Christian contest.

Gordy: Why didn't they invite me? I'm the coolest.

Mr. King: Just go back behind the stage and watch, okay? Afterward, I'll let you judge who is the super cool Christian.

Gordy: Cool! I'll be watching. But I'll leave my money up here just in case you want to show the kids how many pennies that really is!

Mr. King: Whatever. Now kids, I introduce the super cool Christian contest...

Mr. King continues the dialogue as host of the super cool Christian contest. See the script for this interactive drama. Then conclude with the puppet presentation.

“Super Cool Christian Contest”

Interactive Drama

In advance, recruit three volunteers (adults or children) and rehearse their parts. Their names are Giving Gus, Singing Susan, and Bible Billy. These three characters will each have about thirty seconds to describe what might qualify them as a super cool Christian. All three will demonstrate characteristics of only being concerned about outward appearance and not about matters of the heart. They will make up their dialogue based on the following.

Giving Gus might talk about how he remembers to bring his offering every week, how he gives half of his allowance, and how he gives more money than anyone else in his grade. Singing Susan might talk about how she always claps in time to the songs, how she always sings the loudest, how she is the first one to do the sign motions to the songs, and how everyone thinks she is cute. Bible Billy might talk about how he has the newest, coolest Bible, the biggest Bible, and the best Bible cover. He might also talk about how good he looks as he carries the Bible into church because he never forgets it.

After all three have given their “personal testimonies,” the large group presenter is hesitant about selecting any one of them to be a super cool Christian. He continues with the following.

These discipleship activities are great outward signs of super cool Christians. These are the things we, as Christians, should do. But super cool Christians are determined by their motive, what's on the inside, as to why they do these activities. If they do them just for the applause of people, it is not pleasing to God. They simply seek the glory for themselves that should be given to God.

Announce the contest is a tie.

Therefore, a tie breaker is needed. For the tie breaker we will have one question that will show us what it *really* means to be a super cool Christian.

Pull out the tie breaker envelope with a card that has "Why?" written on it. Ask the contestants why they do what they do. All three contestants respond in accord that they do these things to look like super cool Christians. At this point, Gordy interrupts and provides the solution.

"Gordy Tries Out for Super Cool Christian"

Puppet Presentation Conclusion

Gordy: Mr. King, wait a minute. I have an answer.

Mr. King: **Are you interested in competing for the super cool Christian award?**

Gordy: No, not really. After listening to these guys, I understand that just trying to look like a super cool Christian on the outside isn't being super cool at all.

Mr. King: **What do you mean, Gordy?**

Gordy: I was trying to impress people with how much money I gave, kinda like Ananias and Sapphira, but that doesn't mean God would be impressed with it.

Mr. King: **I think you're right, Gordy. What is God looking for?**

Gordy: God doesn't want us to put on an act to look good. He wants us to do good for Jesus.

Mr. King: **How do you do that?**

Gordy: Instead of worrying about getting the applause of people, I want my actions to be pleasing to God.

Mr. King: **I think you understand why we do these things.**

Gordy: Yeah, I want to do these things because I love Jesus and because he gave his life for me so I can do things for him.

Mr. King: Gordy, I think you will be the winner of this super cool Christian award.

Gordy: That's great, Mr. King, but I don't want to be a super cool Christian. I just want to please Jesus. Do you think he would still take all of my pennies?

Mr. King: What do you think, kids? Do you think God would be pleased with why Gordy is giving his offering now?

(Kids answer, "Yes.")

Mr. King: Gordy, I think in God's eyes you are becoming a super cool Christian, even if you don't care if you look that way. Why don't you lead us in closing prayer.

Gordy: Dear God, I'm sorry that I sometimes try to do things that just look good on the outside so others will think I am a super cool Christian. Please forgive me. Thank you for giving Jesus to die on the cross for my sins. Help all of us look on the inside to see that we can do things for you because we love you so much and want to do what you want. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Mr. King: Thanks, Gordy. I hope you don't mind if we all thank God for what he taught us through you today by giving a handclap. (Lead kids in clapping.) This is an applause for the Lord and thanking him for teaching us through Gordy.

Gordy: Aw shucks. I'm outta here. Bye, kids!