



Date: _____

Series: God is Our Rescuer
Summer Year 2, Lesson 9

No Other Gods Before Me

Primary Scripture: Matthew 19:16-30 The rich young man

Key Verse: Matthew 19:22, "When the young man heard this, he went away sad because he owned a lot of property."

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

Kids are materialistic. The type and the amount of toys they have can become a status symbol. Even if children do not take good care of the toys they have, they are quick to tell you which toy they desire next. This can become a spiritual problem when they begin to love things more than they love God. Jesus points out how difficult it is to be rich in things of this world and to be willing to love Christ enough to let those things go. In fact, by man's power, this is impossible. But when we meet Jesus in salvation, we have access to his power through the Holy Spirit. God makes it possible to be saved. He also makes it possible for us to give up things and follow him.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: Jesus denied himself not only the comforts of this world, but also the comforts of heaven. He did this to make his way to the cross and give his life for us. He puts nothing above doing his Father's will.

Jesus in us: We can trust Jesus to help us grow in dependence upon him for everything. It is that daily dependence that keeps us seeking the source of our strength from God, not from ourselves.

Jesus through us: Jesus would want us to use our wealth to share his love with others. When God is first in our lives and we reject following false gods or self-securities, God can use our wealth to influence others for his kingdom.

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.

Have a participant from the audience pantomime the following story with an adult beside that child coaching him and handing him props. Or, the story may simply be read in dramatic fashion.

I have a story for you that illustrates a simple truth. Satan and all of his unholy angels, or demons, sometimes have planning meetings to decide what is the best way to keep people from having happy lives and being friends with God. They know how important it is for people to worship God. They know that, in worship, kids and adults not only sing praises to God, but we also experience God coming to us. God reminds us how Jesus gave his life for us so we can be sons and daughters of the King.

Satan and his demons would love to stop kids who follow Jesus from worshiping. It would really help take away the power kids receive through God.

One time, Satan tried to rob the children of their worship experience. Satan had Edgar... Pull a participant from the audience... locked up in jail where the demons told him, "You may not worship."

Do you know what Edgar did? He worshiped even more. Being locked up in jail made him depend more and more on God. He believed God would help him and get him out of jail.

Trying to stop Edgar's worship by putting him in jail just did not work. Another demon raised his hand in the planning meeting. "I have another idea. Let's make Edgar really sick and then he will forget all about God." The demons all seemed to agree and watched eagerly as Edgar got sicker and sicker and his body got weaker and weaker.

But as Edgar's body became weaker and weaker, his spirit became stronger and stronger. He knew he needed God. He remembered God's promises to him. He remembered how Jesus gave his life for him. Edgar felt loved by God. He felt full of courage. He felt a lot of people praying for him.

And do you know what the devils thought? They thought this didn't work either, so back to the planning meeting they went.

Finally Satan himself spoke. "I know what we can do that will keep Edgar from worshiping. Let's just give him lots of stuff to think about and lots of stuff to do. Let's not tell him he can't worship and let's not even make him sick because in both of those cases it is too easy to learn to trust God and not yourself. So this is what we will do. Let's give him lots of stuff—more toys than he could even play with! And let's keep his parents busy, too. Let's give them so much to do to earn enough money to buy so many things that they have little time. They will just forget about church and forget about God.

Boys and girls, what do you think? Did it work? The sad truth is that it did. Edgar became so involved with the stuff he got that he started to love stuff more than he loved God. And all that stuff not only blocked him from worship but also blocked him from his friendship with God.

Today, we will read from the Bible about a man who is just like this. He met Jesus, but he was so busy with all the stuff that he had, he turned away.

We don't have to turn away, do we? We can come to Jesus right now and tell him how wonderful he is. We can remember that Jesus gave his life for us. He died on the cross to forgive us our sins so we don't have to make other stuff more important than him. Let's worship Jesus. Let's tell God he is #1 in our lives!

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.

Have two kids come forward, one to hold a cross and the other to hold up a dollar bill. Ask a third child to come forward and make his way toward the other two. Have this child choose what he would like to receive. Will this child go toward Jesus? Or will he go toward money and possessions?

Sometimes it is easy to think of money and possessions as more important than the Son of God who gave himself for us. Sometimes we can be pulled to something we can see or we think is going to make us happy. But it really doesn't. When that happens, we need to go back to Jesus. We do this when we come to Jesus and say, "Jesus, I am sorry for my sin and I need your forgiveness." Let's take some time and confess our sins now.

Confession of sins and announcement of forgiveness.

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. Talk about the mission activities they are supporting.

Needed: a treasure box or gift-wrapped box

Pass out slips of paper and pencils.

Boys and girls, I would like you to write the name of one of your favorite possessions. It might be a bike, a video game, a doll, or another toy.

Now I want you to think to yourself, "Does this belong to me only?" Think about it. Where did you get it? Who gave it to you? Where did *they* get it and who gave it to them? If it is a toy, it didn't come just from the toy store. It came from a company that made the toy and they got the things to make it, like plastic or metal. They got those

things from the ground. That's where they get metal and that's where they get the stuff to make plastic.

And who made the earth? Right, it was God. And was it just the toy store that gave it to you? No, it was your mom or dad or someone else. Where did they get the money? From a job? Well, who gave them the ability to do a job? Right, It was God.

The truth is that your favorite toy actually came from God. He is the one who provides it for you.

So, who does your favorite toy belong to, you or God? The Bible says that everything on the earth is the Lord's. But the Lord is happy to share these good things with you. He gives them to you so you can use them, enjoy them, and give thanks to him for giving them to you. But God wants to make sure that they never become so important to you that you hang onto them more tightly than you hang onto him. He doesn't want you to serve those things instead of serving him. That's why it is important to think of your offering as a way of taking all that you have and giving it to the Lord. He then blesses you by giving it right back so you can use it.

Take the slips of paper on which you described your most prized possession and bring them as a part of the offering. Here is a treasure box on the table where the offerings are gathered and it is a place for you to put your treasure. It is a way for us to say God is #1 in our lives!

You can also bring up any of your money offerings and put them inside the treasure box. When we give our money offerings, it is a way of saying God is #1 in our hearts and lives.



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.

Too Much To Carry Relay

Divide the kids into two teams for a relay. Have the teams line up behind their team line. Each team has its own “storehouse” approximately 15 yards away. In this storehouse will be a wide array of possessions. Both storehouses need to be similar in the possessions they contain. Possessions could include sports balls, games, books, clothes, and videos. There needs to be at least 15 items for each team.

Starting from behind the team line, the first contestant from each team walks to his team’s storehouse. He must pick up an object and carry it back to his team’s line. This player will pass the object to the next person in line. This person will carry the first object to the storehouse, pick up a second object and return to the line to pass both of his objects to the next person in line. The number of objects one hands to the first person in line continues to grow until it is impossible to gather any more objects.

There is one catch to this game. Throughout the process, the relay person must be holding the hand of an adult at all times. (One adult can help the entire team, trading hands when it becomes another child’s turn.) What will likely happen is the child will pull his hand out of the adult’s to pick up objects or balance them in his arms. This will become a teaching point after the game.

Any time a child drops an object, the child must stop and pick up the object. The secret rule for the adult is that he can never help pick up an object and put it in a child’s hand—unless the child asks him. But if asked, the adult may pick up dropped objects, carry one or more objects for a child, or even have a box available to put the objects in and carry them for the child. The key is, the adult can only help if the child asks for help. The adult may not hint to the child in any way that he could help.

The game continues until it becomes impossible to carry the objects without letting go of the adult’s hand or dropping the objects, or until one or more teams think to ask its adult to help.

Gather the children together and discuss:

How did you feel when you couldn't hold all of the objects and they kept dropping?

How many of you let go of the adult's hand?

Were you ever upset that it was a rule to always hang onto the adult's hand?

Did you find the adult able to help you in any way?

Did you know there was a secret rule? If you ever had asked the adult to carry something for you, the adult would have carried it all. He even had a box to carry it in.

Do you know how this game shows God is #1 in our lives? God wants to hold our hands through life but sometimes we're too busy trying to own lots of stuff that we let go of his hand. When this happens, God is not #1. These objects become #1 to us. We can trust God by reminding ourselves that God owns all that we have. That way we remember that God is always #1 and the things we own are not #1.

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.

Read Matthew 19:16-30 from an easy reading translation such as the God's Word translation. Also, using a treasure box as a visual aid during this reading might help kids better picture what is said. The treasure box could be filled with small candies that can be rewards for those who listen well and can answer any review questions you might give them.

Use Glen Keane's book, *Adam Raccoon at Forever Falls*, published by David C. Cook, to apply the Bible teaching. Order from <http://www.cookministries.com/catalog/index.cfm>. You can enlarge the pictures from the book for everyone to see by taking pictures of the illustrations on slide film or scanning the pages to project on power point. A color copier on transparency might work as well. Permission to do so needs to be gathered from the publisher.

Application: Object Lesson

Jesus Is #1

In advance, prepare a copy of the Appendix. First fold the paper as follows so crease marks will be left for you to easily do your presentation.

For the first fold, fold the top down so it covers the word “STUFF.”



Next, fold the left and right corners to the center. Notice it will be shaped like a house.

Unfold the paper and notice the crease lines.

You are now ready to tell the story as you fold the paper and make a cut.

The story begins with this sheet of paper that represents our lives. We can have many wonderful things in our lives. But if any of those things become too important and they are #1, then it is very bad for our hearts.

Think about all the toys in your room. If toys become more important than anything else, they are nothing but junk. Point to the word “junk.” Toys are not bad unless they become #1 in your life.

What about friends? Point to the next word. Are friends good to have? Of course they are. But if friends become #1 in our lives, then we will miss having the best friend of all.

The next word in our picture is “myself.” Is it okay to love myself and take care of myself? Of course it is! But if all I ever think about is myself and I make myself #1, that is not good for me at all.

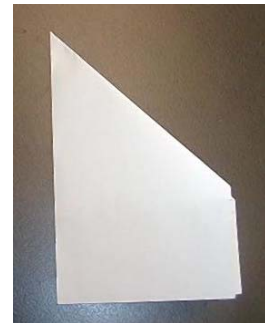
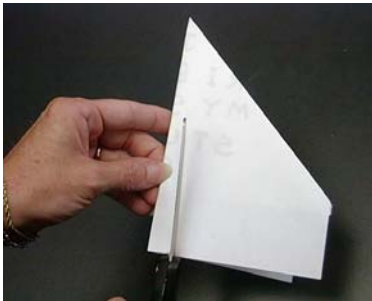
What’s the next word? Right, it’s “stuff.” What do you think we mean by “stuff?” Accept any answers. Stuff can be all the busy activities we do or the things we own that become so important that it seems they are #1. Instead we need to remember that *God is #1.

Finally we have the word “sports.” Are sports good? Of course they are, unless they become #1 in our lives.

Let me fold this into a house. Refold the paper on the previously made creases. This house reminds me that God wants our lives to be a house where he can dwell. He wants to live in our hearts. He did that by giving his only Son, Jesus. Jesus died on the cross to take away our sins and all the times we have let other things become #1.

When we trust Jesus as our Savior, he is #1 to us. He helps us cut out anything else that may become #1. Let’s make a cut in our paper house and see what happens.

Fold the house in half vertically, from the top of the roof to the bottom of the house.



Make a vertical cut bottom to top, approximately 1/2 inch from the center crease.

When the house is unfolded, everything is cut out except for the word “Jesus.”



Let's pray that if there is anything more important to us than Jesus, and it is getting in the way of loving and following him, he would help us cut it away so we would know for sure that God is #1.



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.

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.

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:

Offering:

- slips of paper
- pencils for all the kids
- treasure box

The Power of the Cross:

- dollar bill
- cross

Learning Game:

- a wide collage of possessions to fill two “storehouses.” Both storehouses need to be similar in the possessions they contain. Possessions could include sports balls, games, books, clothes, and videos. There needs to be at least 15 items for each team.
- couple of boxes for the adult helpers

Bible Presentation:

- treasure box filled with small candies
- easy-reading Bible like the God’s Word translation
- Glen Keane’s book, *Adam Raccoon at Forever Falls*, published by David C. Cook—order from <http://www.cookministries.com/catalog/index.cfm>

Object Lesson:

- copy Appendix on paper
- scissors

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