



Date: _____
Series: Lookin' for a Leader
Fall Year 3, Lesson 21

Jesus is God— Even if Some Don't Believe It

Primary Scripture: Matthew 21:33-45. The parable of the tenants.

Key Verse: Matthew 21:42, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.”

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

Kids today grow up in the world that says there is no such thing as absolute truth;; everything is relative. But Jesus makes a radical claim that he is the Son of God. He says he is the only way to get connected to God. Many people don't believe this. Some will even make fun of those who do trust Christ as their Savior. Kids today need the assurance that Jesus truly is God, even if others don't believe it. Kids need to know Jesus as their personal Savior and trust him wholeheartedly.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: Jesus claims to be God. The ultimate proof of this is his death and resurrection for us.

Jesus in us: When we trust in Jesus, he dwells in us and gives us the strength and confidence to stand up for him.

Jesus through us: As we worship Jesus with all of our actions, he uses us to be a witness to the world.

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 card made to look like a ballot that has a president's name on it and the person who ran against him in the last election. A second card made like a ballot and titled "King of the Universe" but there is only one name on it—and that is God.

Ask the kids:

Who knows the name of our current President? How did we decide who was to become President? (We voted.)

Show the ballot.

This voting ballot reminds us how our country chose the president—we either put a check by the name of one or the other and the one with the most votes became the President.

Show the kids the second ballot strip.

Do we ever take a vote on who will be King of the Universe? No, because the King of the Universe does not become King by a vote. The King of the Universe is king not because we voted, but because he made the entire universe. Who is it? God.

When God sent his own Son, Jesus, as King of all kings, he came and gave his life for us so that we could be part of his kingdom. Now we can show that we are loyal subjects to the King of the Universe and his Son, Jesus, by worshiping 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.

Let's imagine that you are in the woods at night and there is a fierce lion after you. You don't have a gun or any other weapon. What would you do to get away? How many of you would try to hide?

Hiding might seem like a good idea. But, did you know that hiding in the bushes would probably be the easiest place for the lion to find you?

The Bible says in 1 Peter 5:8, "Keep your mind clear, and be alert. Your opponent the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion as he looks for someone to devour."

The way to protect yourself from a lion or from the devil is not by hiding. Instead, the Bible says "Be firm in your faith and resist him. He will flee from you."

The best thing to do if a lion is hunting you is to go to an open area with a big light or torch. The lion is afraid of the light and will not come near you.

I wonder what that light might be for us Christians, as we want to keep that lion, the devil, away from us. How about Jesus? He says he will be right with us. He also says that he is the light of the world. When we trust in Jesus, his power in us is greater than the power of Satan to harm us.

Let's take time now to make sure that we are not hiding any of our sins from God. Let's talk to him about them. He will give us the power of his forgiveness to help us change. He will give us Jesus shining in our lives. We can resist the devil (the roaring lion) and he will not hurt us.

Let's pray:

Dear God, we don't want to hide anything from you that we may have done wrong. We are thinking of things that we may have done. (Pause) We may have not obeyed you or our parents or teachers—or we may have been unkind or unloving to others. For the sake of Jesus, please forgive us and give us your power in our lives. Jesus, live in our lives like a bright light. Help us to resist the devil so that he cannot hurt us. We know that he is afraid of your light. In your wonderful name. 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.

Supplies needed: crown

Put the crown in the offering basket and have the kids put their offerings in the crown. As kids bring their offerings forward, talk about the current mission project and how kids help others with their money to understand God's truth and walk in the light (Jesus) so they can be protected from Satan.



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.

Supplies needed: a ping-pong ball for each group of eight kids

“The Hunter and the Hunted”

Divide kids into groups of eight and have each group stand in a circle. Select one child from each group to be the hunter and stand in the middle of his/her circle. The other children in their groups hide both hands behind their backs.

While the hunter closes his eyes, the large group presenter places a ping-pong ball into the hand of one child in the circle. The child may not hold the ping-pong ball more than five seconds. He must pass it to another child.

The hunter's job is to find who has the ping-pong ball. It will be difficult for the hunter to spot the ping-pong ball being passed because any child may fake passes at any time.

The hunter has three tries to guess which child has the ping-pong ball and must point out that child at the time it is in his possession.

The lesson point will be obvious from the game as today's video talks about being hunted under persecution for one's faith. The truth of the matter is that we do not want to hide our faith. The lesson point is that Jesus is truly God. We are bold to worship him, identify with him, and witness for him. He is the King of the universe and will take care of us.

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 Matthew 21:42.

“The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.”

What does that mean? Sometimes when people build buildings they choose the best stones to place in their building. Jesus told a story to some of the religious leaders of his day. They did not believe that he was really from God. They did not believe he was God’s Son or that they should trust him as their Savior. Jesus said he is like a stone that builders reject or don’t want to use. But Jesus says although they (the religious leaders) didn’t want him, he is the most important stone in another building.

The most important stone is the cornerstone. It must be strong so that the rest of the stones can be built on it. This building is a building of people, not stones—people who follow him. We call this building today the church. It is not a church building, but a building of people. Even though others rejected Jesus, we follow Jesus because he is the most important stone in our building.

Let’s listen to the story that he tells in today’s video.

Application:

Supplies: video “Trapped” from the Story Keepers Series. This and other Story Keeper videos can be purchased by keywording, The Story Keepers A.D. 64 or using the vendor, www.storykeepervideos.com.

Show the video that is approximately twenty-six minutes long. When it is finished, ask these questions.

What was Jesus saying would happen in this parable? You can find it in the Bible in Matthew 21:39. (That he would be put to death by the people, and followers of Jesus would also be persecuted.)

I would like to take two answers from the audience on this next question. When you heard this parable that Jesus told and when you heard how he would be killed, does that make you feel more afraid or more brave? Why? (Point out that, because Jesus died for our sins, he gave us the power of his forgiveness and a friendship with God. We can be braver because of that, even if people make fun of us or persecute us.)



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.

Have kids tell about a time they were ridiculed for following Jesus. How did Jesus protect them?

Option: Have an adult share a personal testimony of facing ridicule for the truth and why they would still continue to follow Jesus.

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 Chairs:** 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 cards that look like ballots—on the one have it appear to be the vote for president and his opponent, and on the other have it titled as “King of the Universe”

Offering:

- crown

Learning Game:

- ping-pong ball for each group of eight kids

Application

- video *Trapped* from the Story Keepers Series, published by Focus on the Family. Vendors providing this and other Story Keeper videos may be found by keywording in “The Story Keepers A. D. 64” or going to www.storykeepervideos.com.

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