



Date: _____
Year 3, Lesson 55 (Spring)

Hearing and Obeying God

Primary Scripture: Matthew 7:24-27

Key Verse: Matthew 7:24, “Therefore, everyone who hears what I say and obeys it will be like a wise person who built a house on rock.”

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

Children and adults are faced with decisions every day. When God speaks to us, we must pay attention to what he is saying and then trust him enough to obey him. When we don't pay attention to him or choose not to obey him, our decisions can have some serious consequences. When we follow what God asks us to do, he often blesses our obedience.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: We can boldly follow God's leading because Jesus has won the victory for us over death and the enemy.

Jesus in us: Jesus dwells within us through the power of the Holy Spirit so that we can know what God is asking of us.

Jesus through us: As we focus on Jesus, we can obey what he asks of us. As a result, we can also be witnesses to others as they see our faith in action and the fruits of our obedience.

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: a pitcher that has about 10 ounces of water, three 20-ounce fast food take-out cups with lids, a thick sponge, a large plastic sheet

Arrange for a child volunteer ahead of time. Demonstrate to the child the process of stacking the cups as described in the message below. Tell the child to build his stack on the sponge instead of the table, even though others will be warning him not to. Let him know that the stack should fall over at the end of the demonstration in order to make the point—even if it takes a little nudge. A plastic sheet can be placed on the floor around or under the table to catch water. You may want to try the demonstration beforehand to figure out how wet or dry the sponge needs to be to create an unsteady surface.

I've got a challenge for you! Do I have a really daring volunteer?

Choose the volunteer that has been chosen beforehand. Describe the process while demonstrating how it is done.

You are going to build a tower, and you must start on this solid table surface. Set the first empty cup on the table and make sure the lid is on tight. Place the second empty cup with the lid on it upside down on the first cup. Then pour a half glass of water into the third cup, and place it on top. See? There it is!

Disassemble the tower.

Okay, now you can try it just as I described.

The child begins building the tower on the sponge. Look at the audience with a funny look as if to say, "What's he doing? That's not what I told him to do." This should give them the idea that they should warn him that he's doing it wrong. If the audience doesn't say anything, you can say something like this:

Are you SURE that's where I told you to build the tower?

The child places the cup with the water on top, and the tower comes tumbling down.

Wow! What a mess! Let's clean that up with a sponge.

Quickly clean up most of the water. The message in the "Power of the Cross" will refer to cleaning up the mess with a sponge.

What was the problem here? Let the kids answer.

He didn't pay attention to the directions, did he? Or, if he did pay attention, he didn't do it the way I suggested because he didn't set the first cup on the table.

Let everyone know that you had told the volunteer ahead of time to build it on the sponge to demonstrate what happens when we don't pay attention. Thank the volunteer and let him be seated.

Did you know that Jesus told a story very much like this? He told a story about two builders. One built his house on something firm and solid. He built it on a rock. The other built it on sand, just like building this tower on the sponge. One house came tumbling down. We know which one that was. It was the house built on the sand. But the house on the rock kept standing. Jesus said, "Do you know what the difference is between these two? The one who builds his house on the rock is the one who hears God's word and DOES what he says." In other words, he's paying attention to what God says. That's what we're doing today.

When we worship, let's pay attention to what God says. He speaks to us in his word. Now let's speak to him in our worship and praise!

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.

Go to the volunteer who stacked the cups earlier.

How did you feel when your tower fell over and water went everywhere? Allow the child to answer.

Yes, probably kind of silly, even though I had asked you ahead of time to not pay attention and to let it fall over. When we make mistakes, we sometimes feel silly or even ashamed. Maybe it's cruel things we've done to someone else or harsh words that we've said. Or maybe we've disobeyed our parents. Maybe we ignored God and did not spend time praying about what he wants us to do.

When we make mistakes, it's like making messes in our lives. Then we need something to clean up those messes. What was needed to clean up the mess earlier? Let a child answer.

Yes, we needed a sponge to clean up the mess. So, when we make messes in our lives, we need something that works like a sponge. We need something that can clean up our mistakes. God gave us that when he gave us Jesus. Jesus' cross is like a sponge that absorbs or soaks up all of our sins so that our messes can get cleaned up. He does that so we can be forgiven and then learn not to get into such messes again. Let's take time now and pray that he will help us clean up our messes.

Heavenly Father, you know the messes that we get into sometimes. When we think back on this last week, we think of some messes we made by disobeying you or by not showing love to others. We want to tell you that they were wrong and we're sorry for them. We would like to confess to you the things that are in our minds right now. Pause. Thank you, God, that you gave us Jesus, and Jesus soaked up all of our sins on himself when he went to the cross. Please forgive us, and now live in our lives through your Holy Spirit so we will gladly pay attention to what you tell us, and we'll do it. 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.

When we pay attention to God, he will sometimes tell us some things that are hard for us to do. Some people think it's hard to give money to God. That's because they trust money to take care of them more than they trust God. But if you pay attention to him and you do what he says, he will always take care of you. And you can show your trust in him by giving him the first part of your money in your offering.

Let's do that now as we put our offerings in one of these cups that we used as a tower, because this represents paying attention to what Jesus has told us to do and doing it.



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: a completed jumping Origami frog as described in the Appendix, 8.5" X 8.5" sheets of green paper (one per child), pens

Origami Jumping Frog

Make a jumping frog ahead of time as described in the Appendix. One child will attempt to make the jumping frog without any guidance or directions. At the same time, the leader will lead everyone else through each step of the process. The child will sit in a chair facing away from the rest of the group. Or a dividing wall can be placed between the child and the group so he can't look at what the group is doing.

Hold up the completed frog for everyone to see.

We're going to make jumping frogs like this today! Can I have a volunteer who has never made one of these before? Okay, I have a challenge for you. I'd like you to try to make a frog just like this on your own, but you can only look at this frog. You may not touch it. Would you like to try? Okay! Great! I'm going to have you face away from the group so that you can't see what the group is doing.

Have the child sit down. Turn to the group.

The rest of you will make this frog, too, but I'm going to lead you through each step of the process. Let's get started!

Pass out a sheet of paper to each child. Instruct the older kids to partner with the younger ones. Many children will need individual help. Lead the group through each step of the process. After the group has completed the frog, begin the group discussion. Ask the children who had the leader if they liked having a leader. Ask them why or why

not. Then ask the child if he liked not having a leader. Ask him why or why not. Thank the volunteer for his help and let him keep the frog that was made ahead of time.

Do we have leaders in our lives? Allow them to answer.

Who are our leaders? Take answers. (*They may say moms and dads, the president, etc. Hopefully, they'll also say God.*)

God is our leader and he knows much more than we do. It is wise for us to pay attention to what he says and to obey him, even if it seems hard to do. Nothing is too hard for us because we have the power of Jesus living in us. He lovingly takes us through the process, one step at a time.

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.

Earlier we saw what happens when we stacked cups on a solid surface rather than on a soft surface. Jesus told us a story like this. Let's listen to what he said in Matthew.

Read Matthew 7:24-27.

So when we hear God and obey him, we are like the wise man who built his house on the rock. When the storms of life come along, we can remain standing on a firm foundation.

Application:

Supplies: Goofy hat or blazer, toy snake, artificial tree

*Optional: Head coverings for Adam, Eve, and Noah
Masks or headband for a horse, a cow, and a sheep
Socks for the animals' "hooves"*

Wear a goofy hat or blazer to show that you are the host of a show.

This is "Imagination Theatre," and the name of today's show is "Who's Listening Anyway?" Who would like to be part of our first theatre scene?

Choose two boys and one girl. Give a toy snake to one of the boys who will be playing the serpent.

God placed Adam and Eve in the middle of this beautiful garden. And he said to Adam, "You may eat the fruit of any of the trees of this

garden. But... Are you listening to me, Adam? You must never eat the fruit from this tree.” Do you remember what tree that was, Adam? *(It is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.)*

God said, “If you eat it... Now, are you listening to me? If you eat it, you’re going to die. If you don’t, you’re going to live forever. Are you listening to me? Have you got it? Okay.”

How many people here would say that Adam and Eve paid attention to what God said? No, they didn’t. Something went wrong. Let’s check it out. Mr. Satan man, you came up to Adam and Eve, and what did you tell them? Let the volunteer holding the snake answer. *(He told them a lie.)*

Let me show you that you were lying. It’s right here in the Bible. You said, “Did God really say, ‘You must never eat the fruit of any tree in the garden.’” *(Genesis 3:1b)* So the serpent was mixing up the words that God said.

Then the devil said, “God is a liar. Don’t pay any attention to him. You won’t die. God was just telling you a fib because, if you eat it, you’ll be just like him.” So they didn’t eat it, and they lived happily ever after. That’s the end of the story, right? Wrong!

Adam and Eve, tell us what you did. *(They ate the apple from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.)*

So Adam and Eve fell for the devil’s lie. Adam and Eve, how did you feel after you ate it? *(They felt ashamed, and they wanted to hide.)*

Turn to the group.

Did they do a good job of paying attention to what God said? How many of you would say yes? How many of you would say no? The truth is, they did hear what God said, but they didn’t do it. It’s like building your house on sandy ground. It will fall down, and theirs did.

I’m curious, once that house falls, even though it can be very painful and very sad, is there still hope? Let a child answer.

Was there hope for Adam and Eve? Let a child answer. Yes, as a matter of fact, God went looking for them, and he made a promise. *(Genesis 3:15)* Though they would die and have struggles for the rest of their lives, he made a promise that some day his own Son would come into the world to take away the sin of the whole world so we could be back together with him perfectly.

Let's give a big hand to our contestants. Let's go to our next contestants, Mr. Noah and some of his animals. Who would like to be a part of our next scene?

Choose a boy to play Noah, and choose three others to play a cow, a horse, and a sheep. Allow them to put on their costume props, if any.

Do I hear some of his cows? Encourage the kids to Moo. **Mooo.**

Do I hear some of his horses? **Neigh.**

Do I hear his sheep? **Baaa.**

Okay, good, we're all gathered here at the ark. Noah, you've just gotten off the ark. When you built this ark, there weren't any lakes or oceans around. What made you want to build an ark and an entire zoo before there was any hint of rain? Let Noah answer. *(God told him to.)*

Did you pay attention to what God told you? Let Noah answer.

As a result, who was saved? Let Noah answer.

You and your family and all of these animals were saved. Can I hear the animals again? Let them make animal noises.

Okay, I want to hear happy animals. Let them make more animal noises.

You're happy because you're all saved and rescued on land. Good job to Noah for paying attention to what God says. You heard his words and you DID what he said. Let's give a big hand to our contestants!

So as you can see, it's very important that we pay attention to God and obey him. He knows what's best for us, and we need to trust him by doing what he asks us to do.

Pre-arrange to have a person tell his/her story about how he/she felt led by God to do something, and when he/she did what God asked, he greatly blessed him/her. For example, someone may have felt like he/she should help someone in a particular way, become involved in a certain type of ministry, or make a certain career choice.

And now we have a special guest who would like to tell us a story about how he heard God and did what he said. Let him tell his story.

Comment on his story and what a blessing it is when we follow God's requests.



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.

Ask the children to tell a story about a time when they felt like God was asking them to do something and they did what God wanted them to do. Ask them about the outcome.

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.

Supplies:

Safety and Security: Safety and security procedures are important for each church to carefully define and implement according to their unique needs. The security, safety, illness and accident procedures described in this curriculum are provided for example purposes only and may not be appropriate, applicable or adequate for every situation. Each church is responsible for determining whether any security, safety, illness and accident procedures contained in the curriculum are appropriate, applicable or adequate for its unique situation. The activities described in this curriculum require adult supervision and may not be suitable for each child and each situation. Each church is responsible for ensuring that adequate adult supervision is provided for all activities and for determining whether an activity is appropriate for each child and each situation. Kids Kount Publishing disclaims all liability for the implementation of any procedures or the performance of any activities described in this curriculum.

Attention Grabber:

- a pitcher that has about 10 ounces of water
- three 20-ounce fast food take-out cups with lids
- a thick sponge
- a large plastic sheet

Application:

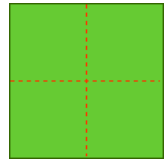
- goofy hat or blazer
- toy snake
- artificial tree
- *optional:* head coverings for Adam, Eve, and Noah
- *optional:* masks or headband for a horse, a cow, and a sheep
- *optional:* socks for the animals' "hooves"

Learning Game

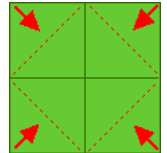
- a completed jumping Origami frog as described in the Appendix
- 8.5" X 8.5" sheets of green paper (one per child)
- pens

Appendix: Jumping Origami Frog

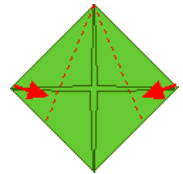
Fold the opposite edges together, and then unfold them. Repeat the process using the other edges. Open it up into a square again.



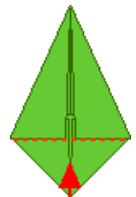
Fold each of the four corners to the center point.



Fold each of the two top edges to the centerline.



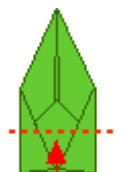
Fold the triangle at the bottom upwards.



Fold each of the bottom two corners to the middle of the bottom edge.



Fold the bottom portion upwards (along the dotted line).



Fold the top half of the lower rectangle downwards toward yourself. This forms the frog's legs.



Give your frog a head by folding a small part of the upper point downward. Draw two eyes, and your frog is done. To make your frog jump, push down on the "X" and slide your finger away from the frog.

