

Focus: We give God everything we have.

Materials:

- Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest’s vestment) and Altar Cloth
- CD: America’s 25 Favorite Bible Songs
- Gospel: The Bible for Children
- Red/Green squares
- Mirror and flashlight

Gathering (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about how God invites everyone to be a part of his Kingdom. Today some of Jesus' enemies try to trick him. Jesus tells them we belong to one God.

Opening Prayer

Together we make the Sign of the Cross (do in reverse so children can mirror).

Say: Now let’s put our hands together and bow our heads.

Let us pray.

*O God, you created us. Thank you for giving us minds to learn about you and hearts to love you. You are the one true God. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.
Amen.*

Song/Movement

I Will Call Upon the Lord, track: 17, from America's 25 Favorite Bible Songs

Play music, encourage children to stretch or move to the music (clapping, stamp feet march in place to the beat), turn to each other and shake hands, saying hello, etc.

I will call upon the Lord
Who is worthy to be praised
So shall I be saved from my enemies

Refrain:
(Echo in parentheses)
I will call upon the Lord (I will call upon the Lord)
Who is worthy to be praised (Who is worthy to be praised)
So shall I be saved from my enemies
(So shall I be saved from my enemies)

Chorus: The Lord liveth, and
blessed be the Rock
And let the God of my salvation be
exalted
The Lord liveth, and blessed be the
Rock
And let the God of my salvation be
exalted

Repeat the Chorus 2 times

Memory Verse

Say: Now let’s take a moment together to learn a verse from the bible.

Give to God what belongs to God.

Have the children repeat the verse after you a couple of times.

Say: *What belongs to God? All of creation belongs to God. Most importantly we belong to God. When we decide to make good choices, we are giving God what belongs to him. Our hearts.*

Gospel Story

Say: *Today we are reading from the Gospel of Matthew.*

Have children make sign of the cross on their forehead, mouth and heart saying. *“Lord, open my mind, my lips and my heart so that I may learn it, speak it and love it.”*

Read: The Bible for Children, pp. 279, *A Hard Question*.

After the reading say: *The Gospel of the Lord*

Children respond: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

Discussion Starters:

- *What do the Pharisees ask Jesus?*
- *Why does Jesus ask the religious leaders to show him a coin?*
- *Whose image is on the coin?*
- *What does Jesus tell the Pharisees?*
- *What can we give to God?*

Reflection on Reading:

Sometimes, the government uses tax money to pay for things that everyone wants, like a park or keeping the streets clean. But other times, the government has to use the money to help a small number of people, like schools or sick people or even the water supply. Then, people get angry because they aren't getting any use of what the government is using the tax money for. We can get more done when we all work together to make the world better for all people.

In Jesus' day, the emperor (Caesar) was taking a lot of money from the people of Israel and keeping it for himself or to help people far away in Rome.

This was a trick question for Jesus. If he said to give money to Caesar the people would not like him and if he said to give it to God, it would make the Roman leaders angry. Jesus' answer lets us know that we are to be more concerned with making sure that everyone gets what they need, rather than everything benefiting everyone. If the town buys a bus for those in wheelchairs to get to shopping, it doesn't help those without wheel chairs, but we shouldn't be jealous because others are being helped.

Gospel Activity

Activity 1:

In the Gospel story today we heard Jesus told us to give to God what is God's. Our good choices gives back to God what it his.

All good things come from God. Without God there is no goodness. Who would want to live in a world without goodness? Those who love God are filled with his love and goodness.

Even the simplest prayer or smallest kindness to someone else, if it is done in the name of Jesus, becomes an act of love for God.

Let's play a game to see if we know how to be kind to someone else.

Red Light-Green Light

(Use the colored paper squares) Have children raise Red for a bad idea (STOP), Green for a good idea (GO). These are just a few examples. Please make up some more of your own. (Can also use Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down)

Help grandma up the stairs

Not including someone at playtime

Listen to our parents

Going to church

Say mean words to a friend

Doing what your teacher tells you

Making fun of someone

Helping mom set the table

Helping dad rake the leaves

Hitting someone

Not sharing toys

Pray at dinner time

You see a friend crying so you just walk right by.

You hear your parents talking so you wait patiently before asking a question.

It is very late and you are tired, so you cry loudly and complain about everything.

You don't really like peas, but you eat two more bites for mom.

Time for bed, so you stomp your feet and say, "NO!"

It is morning and everyone is waking up. You still feel tired, but you give a big smile and a hug good morning to your mom and dad.

You give your unused toys to the homeless shelter

A friend asks to play with your new game and you won't share.

You help your mom and dad deliver food to the food bank

A child at the playground makes a mistake and you make fun of them.

There is a new kid at school and you ask him to play with you on the playground.

You throw a temper tantrum when you don't get what you want

Before you go home from a play date you help clean up

Listen to your parent when they tell you it's time to clean up your room

You don't pay attention at the grocery store and you hit someone with a shopping cart

You run or skate around inside a store

Visit someone in a nursing home

Make a card for a sick friend

You get mad and hit your brother or sister

You help a friend who is hurt on the playground

Join with others to pick up trash in the community

Activity 2:

Have you ever sat outside on a bright sunny day and used a mirror to reflect the sun's light? If one of you will take this flashlight and shine it on me I will show you what I mean. You see, as the light shines on me, I hold up my mirror and I can reflect the light to shine on you. I am not the light; I am just letting my mirror reflect the light to shine on you.

If I am going to reflect the light on you, there are a couple of things that are very important:

- I must keep my mirror facing toward the light(keeping our eyes on Jesus). If I turn away from the light (stop listening to Jesus), I cannot reflect the light.
- I must make sure that nothing comes between the light and me. If that happens, I cannot reflect the light.

Jesus is the light. He isn't from the dark, he is from God. He shows us how to be the light in the world so that we can bring God's peace to others.

The Bible says that we are to let our light shine, but we need to remember that "Our Light" is Jesus. We are not the light, we are just mirrors that reflect His light.

If we are going to reflect the light of Jesus, we must remember a couple of things:

- We must keep our faces turned toward Jesus.
- We must not let anything come between us and Jesus.

(If time allows, have each child hold the mirror while you shine the light on them. Then have them share how they can show Jesus' light in the world.)

When we remember those two things, we will reflect His light to the entire world.

Dear Jesus, we want to reflect your light in the world. Help us to keep our faces turned toward you and help us to keep anything from coming between us and you. Amen.

Complete the weekly bulletin as a group-let the children color them if there is extra time

Closing Prayer

(Children respond: "I Believe!")

Ask: *Do you believe in God, who is the one true God?*

Do you believe in Jesus, who was sent by God to help us know and to serve the one true God?

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who fill us with the life of the one true God?

Sending Forth

Say: *This week let's remember to give to God what belongs to him. Remember to make good choices to show our love for him.*

Lining Up/Closing Song

Play "Change My Heart O' God" track 23 from America's 25 Favorite Bible Songs while children put away any materials and lineup. Hand out weekly bulletins. Remind them it is important that they return to their family quietly so that we may all listen and pray together in church.