

Focus: Being Humble

Materials:

- Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest’s vestment) and Altar Cloth
- CD: America’s 25 Favorite Bible Songs
- Gospel: In lesson plan
- Easel, pad and marker
- Bible Cut out

Gathering (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about the 2 most important commandments, to love God and to love our neighbor. This week Jesus tells us the no one is more important than anyone else. We are all important to God our one and only leader.

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.

Thank you, God, for sending us good teachers who show us how to live as your children.

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

Alternate Creative Movement

Have kids form two equal lines facing each other, or a big circle. To the beat of the music have them take four steps toward each other and clap the hands of the child facing them (or their own), then take four steps back and clap their hands together. Repeat.

Memory Verse

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

The greatest of you must serve others.

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

Say: *Jesus knows the religious teachers of his time were not very good teachers of God's way. The thought they were too important to do nice things for other people. They thought that everyone should take care of them because they were so important. Jesus says this is not right, all people must serve each other. The ones the have the most, should serve the most.*

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: None, pp. n/a,

Jesus was talking to his disciples about the Pharisees and Scribes who were not living as they taught others to live. Jesus said:

[Chatty hands, thumb to index fingers]

"Listen to the leaders and teachers,

[Cup hand around ear]

and do the good they tell you to do,

[Touch lips and draw finger slowly away]

but do not follow their example.

[Wag a warning finger]

They preach

[Touch lips and draw finger slowly away]

what they do not practice.

[Wag a warning finger]

They want to be honored as leaders and teachers.

[Take a proud little bow, slightly to your right]

They pretend that they are better than everyone else.

[Take a proud little bow, slightly to your left]

Don't act proud, as they do.

[Wag a warning finger]

Remember that you are all God's children.

[Point heavenward]

You have one teacher and Master, Jesus.

[Raise your index finger, pause, put hands over heart.]

The greatest among you must serve everyone else."

[Extend hands in a serving gesture]

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

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

Discussion Starters:

- *What does Jesus tell the people about the scribes and Pharisees?*
- *Do the religious leaders practice what they teach?*
- *What does Jesus teach about being the greatest?*
- *The Pharisees and the scribes were not teaching by their example. How could teachers teach by their example?*
- *Why does Jesus want the religious leaders to serve others?—Because he wants us all to show love and caring to our neighbor.*
- *How is Jesus the greatest teacher? Because he knows God the Father better than anyone else who ever lived and he will teach us God's way by his words and deeds.*

Reflection on Reading:

In today's gospel Jesus tells his listeners to do what the religious leaders say, but not what they do. Jesus accepts that the lessons of the religious leaders are teaching the people the right way to God, but at the same time he points out that their words do not always match their actions. Many of the scribes and Pharisees were overly concerned with power and status. Jesus tells his followers to forget about status and concentrate on serving others. Being the greatest means being willing to serve others.

Gospel ActivityActivity 1:

1. Tell the students that there is going to be a contest today. Introduce them to each of the contestants. Draw two large stick figures side by side. Say: *Meet Proud Kid and Humble Kid.* As you compare and contrast these two during the lesson, write down brief captions next to the figures. (sample caption underlined below)
2. As you draw the eyes on each, explain that *Proud Kid only likes to look at himself. Occasionally he sees other people, but when he does, it's only to see their mistakes, weaknesses, and failures. Humble Kid sees God first and then others. He knows that people matter to God, so he treats them with dignity and respect.*
3. As you draw the mouths, explain that *Proud Kid brags about himself constantly. He's always telling us about his good grades, his 4 soccer goals, how he is the most popular student and so very adorable. He complains about other people and talks about them behind their backs. Humble Kid is often talking about how awesome God is. He also is known to brag about others. Like, "Did you see her art project? It's amazing! I can't believe that anyone can draw like that. What a gift!" Humble Kid uses his words to encourage everyone!*
4. As you draw the ears, talk about how *Proud Kid hates to be told what to do. He doesn't like to hear that he is wrong about anything, so he starts fights when he is corrected. Humble Kid realizes that sometimes he makes mistakes, so he hears people out and he apologizes for doing the wrong thing.*

5. As you draw the hands. Tell the students *that Proud Kid is always causing fights because he never gets what he wants.* Humble Kid- draw a balloon, a flower, or any other treat in his hand. *Humble Kid honors other people above himself and is peaceable and considerate. He makes people happy.*
6. As you draw the feet, say that *Proud Kid often stomps his feet. He demands his own way. He thinks he deserves to have other do whatever he says.* In contrast, *Humble Kid is always walking towards those who need help. He helps people without being asked.*
7. Draw little stick figures surrounding each of them (to represent their friends, teachers, neighbors etc.), ask the students *Do you think that Proud Kid gets along with anyone? What about Humble Kid? What might God say to of each of them?*
8. As the students answer, draw x's through Proud Kid's relationships. Tell them that *Pride is a source of destruction. It destroys everything – friendships, relationships, even the person who is prideful. **Pride ends up all alone.*** Add more stick figures to Humble Kid's group. ***Humility builds relationships** because people feel loved and valued.*
9. Write, "GOD" one time at the top of the paper. *What does God think? The bible tells us that God does not like Pride. Proud Kid is not making the right choice. But, Humble Kid just keeps getting blessed by God over and over because he makes the right choices.*
10. So, the question is this: *Who wins the fight of life in the end? Who would be the champion? Have the students give applause to declare the winner. Will it be Proud Kid? (No.) Will it be Humble Kid? (Yes!)*

Activity 2:

In today's Gospel Jesus tells us that even though the leaders were telling the people to do the right thing, they were not doing the right things. Sometime people will say "Practice what you preach" this is just what Jesus was saying the church leaders should do. They should not act so important, they should help others like they are teaching others to do.

Have the children sit in a circle and pass around the Bible, as you recite the following poem:

*You can know a lot of Scripture
And have the gift to teach,
But what is more important-
Is to practice what you preach!*

Ask whoever holds the Bible at the end of the poem, to offer a suggestion for practicing what we preach-actions are best-things they can do (not "be nice to my friend"-they should say what they could do to be nice to their friend.) (Examples: donate to a food drive, give clothes you've out-grown to those who don't have any, help your sister clean up her toys, be extra quiet so your big brother can do his homework. etc.) Repeat as time allows.

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

Closing Prayer

(Children respond: "We Believe!")

Ask: *Do we believe in God, who sent Jesus to show us how to serve God?*

Do we believe in Jesus, who is our Master Teacher and servant, who teaches us ways to be humble and shows us how to serve?

Do we believe in the Holy Spirit, who fills us with the power to love as Jesus loves?

Sending Forth

Say: *It is important to "practice what we preach". This week try to do at least one new thing that shows others that God (and you) love them.*

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.