

Focus: Living for God

Materials:

Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest's vestment) and Altar Cloth
CD : American's 25 Favorite

Gathering (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: *Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about being with Jesus forever. This week we will talk about living our lives so that we will be the people God wants us to be.*

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.

Lord you sent Jesus to teach us the way to you in heaven. Please send the Holy Spirit to help us live our lives for you and the ways you have taught us. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Song/Movement

Come Let Us Worship and Bow Down, track:11, from America's 25 Favorite

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. Have children sit on their carpet squares when finished.

Come, let us worship and bow
down; Let us kneel before the Lord
our God, our Maker. (Repeat)
For He is our God, And we are the
people of His pasture

And the sheep of His hand,Just the
sheep of His hand.
Repeat all 3 times

Memory Verse

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

Putting God first, leads to everlasting life.

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

Say: *Truth and love are necessary to become the best person we can become. Toys and games are nice, but they don't help us to be good followers of Jesus. Our actions are what show others we are Children of God and want to live with God and Jesus always in our lives.*

Gospel Story

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

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,

It was time for Jesus to complete his mission.

[Point to your wrist as if pointing to a watch]

Jesus said:

[Chatty hand, thumb against fingers.]

“Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies,

[Hold an imaginary seed, drop it and watch it fall]

it remains just a seed.

[Shrug shoulders]

But if it dies, it becomes a wheat plant and bears much fruit.

[Push fingers of one hand up behind the other hand.]

Loving the life of this world

[Wave celebrating hands]

won't make someone live forever.

[Shake head.]

Putting God first

[Point heavenward]

leads to everlasting life

[Raise arms in praise.]

Whoever serves me must follow me.

[Gesture everyone to follow you.]

My Father will honor my servants.

[Extend hands in blessing.]

I am troubled over what I must do,

[Trace tears down your cheeks.]

but should I ask my Father to save me from it?

[Wondering hands out to sides.]

It was for this mission that I am here.

[Point to the ground where you stand.]

A voice from heaven told everyone:

[Point heavenward]

“I have glorified my name, and will glorify it again.”

[Extend hands in blessing.]

People who heard the voice

[Cup hands around your ears.]

thought it was thunder or an angel”

[Flap arms (angel wings) once slowly.]

Jesus said:

[Chatty hand, thumb against fingers.]

“This voice came for you, not for me.

[Point heavenward]

And all that is bad will end.

[Trace a frown on your face, then shake your head.]

I will be lifted up,

[Lift arms in praise]

And I will bring everyone back to me.”

[Hug yourself.]

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

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

Discussion Starters:

- *What did Jesus say about the seed?*
- *What do you think happens to a seed that is not planted?*
- *What does Jesus say about loving this life?*
- *What does Jesus say about putting God first?*
- *How can we put God first?*

Reflection on Reading:

A grain of wheat is a seed used to be ground into flour for bread or planted to grow more wheat. Some always needs to be planted so we will have more seed to use for baking. If we plant the seed it grows into a plant and produces more seeds, just what it was created to do. If you dig up the plant you won't find the seed anymore. It's as if the seed died. However, we know the seed became more than a seed. It became a living plant with many seeds.

Gospel ActivityActivity 1:

Follow the Leader

Have the children form a single file line behind you. Have them copy your actions:

Say: Let's start our adventure in the park. Someone didn't put this paper in the trash.

Action: Bend down to pick it up and throw it away. **Say:** "This is the way we care for God's creation"

Say: Look no one will play with that little boy, but I will.

Action: Throw a ball and pretend to catch one. **Say:** "This is the way we love others as God loves us."

Say: I'm so hungry, but there is a long line at the ice cream truck, should I cut in line? No, I won't I will wait for my turn.

Action: Fold hands in front of you and relax to wait in line. Then pretend to pay for your and eat your ice cream. **Say:** "This is the way we show we are Children of God."

Say: Uh, oh, it's time to go home, but I'm not ready, I'm having too much fun. Should I stamp my feet and refuse to go? No, I won't I will go home, I can always come back another day.

Action: Walk or skip back to your starting place. **Say:** "This is the way we show our love for others."

Conclude by saying: *See making good choices is easy, let's think of some other good choices we can make, at home and at school.*

Activity 2:

Guard in the Orchard

Have the children hold hands and stand in a circle around one child who was chosen to be the guard. As they move, they chant the rhyme below. When they finish the last word, but not before, they stop circling and each of them must touch the floor in front of them with both hands. The

guard determines who touched the floor last or let go of another player's hand before the last word is chanted. That player becomes the new guard in the orchard.

Explain that when we do caring things we are planting seeds of peace and we help ourselves grow into the person God wants us to be.

*We're planting seeds of loving deeds.
We'll water them with care.
We'll grow a tree for all to see,
With fruit enough to share.*

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 sent Jesus to teach us the way to eternal life?
Do you believe in Jesus, who leads us through death to life everlasting?
Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us live our lives for others?*

Sending Forth

Say: *This week remember to be more kind and caring to others. You can cheer up someone who is sad, play with someone who is lonely or many other things. Do this and show God you love him just like he loves you.*

Lining Up/Closing Song

Play "Kum Ba Yah" track 12 from America's 25 Favorite 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.