

Focus: Listening to Jesus

Materials:

- Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest’s vestment) and Altar Cloth
- SEED CD
- Children’s Everyday Bible
- Book: The Story of Jesus

Gathering (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about how Jesus wants us to be fishers of men and help more people know about Jesus. Today we are going to talk about how important it is we listen to Jesus.

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.

Dear God,

Thank you for sending us Jesus to teach us how to live. Help us listen to his words and do what he says. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Song/Movement

Follow Me, track: 10, from Seed CD

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.

Follow me-Follow me-Jesus says
 “come follow me”
 Follow me-Follow me -Come and
 follow me

Hop-Hop-Hop, Hop-Hop-Hop
 Jump-Jump-Jump, Jump-Jump-Jump
 Run-Run-Run, Run-Run-Run

March-March-March March- March-
 March-Jesus says come follow me
 March-March-March March- March-
 March –Come and follow me.

End with falling down-Come and
 follow me

Memory Verse

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

Jesus is God’s Holy One.

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

Say: Sometimes it is hard to remember that Jesus is God’s one and only Son. We hear his stories and sometimes forget that Jesus is real because we can’t see him. But he is real and he is the only person who can tell us what God really wants for us.

Gospel Story

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

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: Children's Everyday Bible, pp. pg . 234, *Jesus Heals a Man with an evil Spirit*

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

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

Discussion Starters:

- *Why was the synagogue full?*
- *Why do you think they wanted to hear Jesus?*
- *How did the man try to stop Jesus from teaching about God?*
- *Why do you think the people were amazed at Jesus' power? – They had never seen anyone with as much power as Jesus. And no one else does—he is the Son of God.*
- *What do you think people thought about Jesus when they heard his words and saw his actions?*
- *What are some of the ways we can still hear Jesus' voice today teaching us how to live?-bible stories, coming to church, Little Lit, parents, teachers.*

Reflection on Reading:

In today's Gospel story, Jesus' teaching takes place in a synagogue, a place where Jewish people went to pray and learn about God. His listeners are surprised by the knowledge and authority of Jesus. He surprises them when he casts out an evil spirit from one of the men. The man wasn't close to God. Maybe the man had anger or bad thoughts in his heart. Jesus sent the bad spirit away and healed the man's heart. Sometimes we are tempted to do things we shouldn't do, like talk out in class or run around when we should be sitting quietly. Sometimes it is hard to be good and we should pray to Jesus to help us be better and he will help us make the right choice.

The man called Jesus "God's Holy One." The people don't understand this meaning. However, they are impressed by Jesus' deeds and bring others to him for healing.

Gospel ActivityActivity 1:**Jesus Says:**

Play the game "Simon Says" with the children for a few minutes. (Have the children stand up. Give various commands, such as touch your nose, clap your hands, hop on one foot, touch the ground, etc.) The children are to follow your commands only if you say "Simon says" before giving the command. If you just give the command without saying "Simon says," they are not to follow it.

Those who do are out and help catch others. Play a couple of rounds if you have the time. After the last round, have the children sit down and then explain why you played the game.

In order to do well in the game, what did you have to do? You had to listen closely to what I said. You didn't know when I'd say "Simon says" so you had to listen carefully and also think about what you were doing. When you stopped paying close attention, it was easier for you to do the wrong thing. When playing the game you have to follow the instructions. If you choose to disobey the instructions, you're out. The choice is up to you.

Every day, there are things you know Jesus wants you to do such as show kindness to others, obey your parents, tell others about Jesus, etc. There are also things you know Jesus doesn't want you to do, hitting, being selfish, taking something that isn't yours, etc. Sometimes it's hard to do what Jesus wants you to do, talk to him about it. Ask for his strength and the desire to do the right thing and then go ahead and do it.

The more we listen to Jesus our good choices become a habit and it's easier to follow Jesus.

Play again, but now it's "Jesus Says" ...say a prayer (hands folded together), read a bible story (hands open palms up, looking at your palms), go to church (march in place), kneel down....etc.

Activity 2:

Read the book: The Story of Jesus by Patricia Pingry

- Ask what their favorite story of Jesus is. Why?
- Ask them why we love Jesus—because he loved us first. Reinforce Jesus' special love for children. He wants everyone to trust him like children trust him.

[For use only if the subject is broached by a child.] If a child should ask about why Jesus (or God) doesn't heal sick people anymore tell them that Jesus did that while he lived on earth. Today when we are sick or sad, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to be with us and let us know that Jesus is caring for us even if we can't see him. He wants us to listen to what he taught and that will help make the journey a little easier.

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 about God's law of love?*

Do you believe in Jesus, who is the Son of God?

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us to listen to the teaching of Jesus?

Sending Forth

Say: Listen very carefully in church today and in the prayers and the songs you will hear the words of Jesus. Think of one thing you can do to make the world a happier place, and then Do It! :)

Lining Up/Closing Song

Play "Like Jesus" track 6 from Seed CD 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.