

Focus: Accepting others and being open to God's will

Materials:

Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest's vestment) and Altar Cloth
 CD: Bible Songs for Kids Vol. 1
 Gospel: In Lesson Plan

Gathering (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: *Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about spread God's kingdom by doing good deeds with love and kindness in our hearts. This week Jesus shows us that we should be open to what God wants us to do and we will be happy.*

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.

Dear Lord, may our ears and mouths hear and speak of your words. Strengthen us to do what you ask so that we may give others courage and strength. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Song/Movement

Praise Him, Praise Him All ye Little Children, track: 29, from Bible Songs for Kids-Vol 1

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.

Praise Him, Praise Him
 All ye little children
 God is love, God is love

Replace Praise Him, Praise Him for verses 2-4 and repeat Praise Him on the final verse.

Praise Him, Praise Him
 All ye little children
 God is love, God is love

Love Him
 Serve Him
 Thank Him
 Praise Him

Memory Verse

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

Jesus looked up to heaven and prayed.

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

Say: *Whenever Jesus wasn't sure what to do, or knew what to do but didn't have the strength inside to do it by himself, he prayed to God the Father in heaven. Jesus showed us many times that praying is a way of life for his followers. Praying is how we can communicate with God. When we are in prayer, our minds become quieter and we can think of stories we have heard about what Jesus would want us to do.*

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: None, pp. N/A,

Jesus was in an area far from his home.

[Searching hand above eyes]

Some people brought him a man who could neither hear,

[Hold hands over ears]

Nor speak.

[Hold hand over mouth]

The man had never heard music.

[Pretend to play the violin]

He had never heard someone say they loved him.

[Cross hands over heart]

He had never been able to sing.

[Pretend to sing with one hand over chest, the other extended and mouth open wide.]

He had never been able to tell anyone that he loved them.

[Bow your head and shake head sadly]

His friends begged Jesus to help him.

[Press hands together as in prayer]

Jesus took the man aside from the crowd.

[Beckon for someone to follow you]

Jesus put his fingers gently in the man’s ears.

[Place fingers gently in your ears]

Jesus touched the man’s tongue.

[Touch your tongue/mouth]

Then Jesus looked up to heaven

[Point and look heavenward]

and prayed to his Father.

[Looking up, press hands together as in prayer]

Turning to the man, Jesus said, “Be Opened.”

[Spread arms open wide]

Right away the man could hear

[Cup hands behind ears]

and speak.

[Chatty hand, thumb against fingers]

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

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

Discussion Starters:

- *Where was Jesus?*
- *Who did the people bring to him?*
- *Why did the man need to be healed?*
- *What did Jesus do before he healed the man?*
- *Who did Jesus pray to?*
- *What did Jesus say to heal the man?*
- *What do you think in means to “Be Opened” to God’s will? = do what Jesus teaches, listen to our parents, without argument.*

Reflection on Reading:

>Jesus came to do his Father’s will. He prayed to his Father often. Especially when he had something important to do. Like we talked about earlier, we should pray for help in following his will.

>What would you say to God if you were asking him to help you help someone else? God gives us the ability to help others. Everything we have comes from God. We should ask God’s help and guidance in all we do, like Jesus did.

>We can learn to open our ears and be good listeners. Being able to hear isn’t much good unless we use that ability to listen. Sometimes when others are speaking, we don’t pay attention and then we are lost because we don’t know what was said. Sometimes we don’t listen go God either. When we listen to the reading from the Bible and pay attention to what God is teaching us, we’re using our ears the way God intended.

>The man in the story couldn’t tell others he loved them. But after Jesus healed him he could tell them. He could also tell them that Jesus loves them too. The more we hear and learn about Jesus the better we will be able to tell others about Jesus’ love for them too.

Gospel ActivityActivity 1:**Important lesson on listening**

Divide the kids into four groups; making sure that there are older kids in each group. Whisper instructions to each group:

1. Sing “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star” –Loudly
2. Shout out their favorite foods
3. To jumping jacks and count them out loud as they do them
4. Use their normal “inside” voice to say “God Loves You” over and over.

On “go” have each group begin. Allow them to do this for 15-30 seconds. Then call them all together and ask each of the groups to say what the others were doing. They will probably be able to tell you what the first three groups were doing, but only the last group will be able to tell you what they were doing.

Draw a parallel to how distractions keep us from listening to God in prayer. If we want to know what God wants to tell us then we need to be still and listen.

Activity 2:**Jesus Says:**

Play the game “Simon Says” with the children for a few minutes. (Have the children stand and explain the rules: They are to follow the directions only if you say “Simon Says”) Give commands such as “touch your nose” “clap your hands” “ hop on one foot” If they follow the command without you saying “Simon Says” then they sit out for the round. Play a couple of rounds if time allows. After the last round, explain that you played the game to show that they had to listen carefully to be able to follow the rules. If they didn’t pay close attention they lost and had to sit out.

In everyday life, there are things you know God wants you to do things such as show kindness to others, obey your parents, tell others about Jesus, etc. There are also things you know God doesn’t want you to do, hitting, being selfish etc. When you don’t feel like doing something you know God wants you to do, talk to him about it. Ask for his strength and desire to do it and then go ahead and do it.

When you are tempted to something wrong, ask Jesus for his help to make the right choice.

Play the game again, but know it’s “Jesus says” ...say a prayer-hands folded together/read a bible story-hands open palms up/go to church (march in place)

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 loves us and heals our hearts when w make a bad choice?
Do you believe in Jesus, who loves us just the way we are?
Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us to be open to others who are different from us?*

Sending Forth

Say: This week we can show Jesus that we listened very carefully to his story by helping someone feel better. Maybe a friend falls on the playground and you can give them a hug or you can ask a new friend to play with you or share a toy you brought on a playdate.

Lining Up/Closing Song

Play “*Jesus Loves the Little Children*” track 1 from Bible Songs for Kids-Vol 1 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.