

Focus: God blesses us

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
- Book: I can be happy because God Blesses Me.
- Foam Heart
- (Optional: cd to use instead of song in lesson plan)

Gathering (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about Bartimeus, the blind man that Jesus healed. Jesus helps us see the good in others and be the light of the world to those around us. This week we are going to hear a special teaching of Jesus called the Beatitudes, they tell us that we can be happy because we are blessed children of 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 are one God over all the earth. Help us to keep your word deep in our hearts, so we may love you as Jesus did. We pray in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Song/Movement

There is Power in the Name of Jesus, track: 19, 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.

There is _____ in the name of
Jesus. (3x)

There is _____ in that wonderful
name.

Blank is --- Power, Glory, Healing
and Salvation

There is salvation in that wonderful
name (2 extra times) Fades out.

Memory Verse

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

Jesus gives hope to the sad and the poor.

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

Say: God made us to be truly happy. Many people try to find happiness apart from God's truth. They try to fill their hearts with things to make them happy. But Jesus taught that our hearts are filled with God's blessings of truth, wisdom and love.

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. 246-247, *Jesus' Words About Happiness*

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

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

Discussion Starters:

- *Where was Jesus teaching?*
- *How many people were there?*
- *Why do you think so many people came to hear what Jesus had to say?*
- *What are these teachings of Jesus called?*
- *What does Beatitudes mean?*

Reflection on Reading:

In today's Gospel, Jesus teaches us about a new way of life. He teaches us that even if our lives aren't perfect, we are still blessed by God. Sometimes we feel all alone and only have Jesus to talk to, at these times we are to remember that we are blessed because our happiness comes from God alone. If we are sad, we can remember that God wants to make us feel better and help us find true happiness in him. God blesses those who are kind and peaceful and loving. We are closest to God when we do the things he wants us to do. Saying hi to a friend or helping someone who is hurting are good ways to be kind and loving.

Gospel ActivityActivity 1:

Read the book: *I can be happy because God Blesses Me*

Activity 2:

Love Go Round

Have the children sit in a circle. Hand the heart to one child and chant the following while they pass the heart around the circle:

There's plenty of love to go around,
The more and more we share.

Where is the love that goes around?
Where is the love, O where?

When the verse is done, whoever is holding the heart shares something they can do to be kind to others.

(you can play a portion of a song from one of the CD's instead-for example: Jesus loves me, this I know, Jesus loves the little children, I am so glad that Jesus loves me-instead of the verse.)

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: "I Believe!")

Ask: *Do you believe in God, who blesses us with happiness?*

Do you believe in Jesus, who gives us hope in sad times?

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us to be kind and loving to others?

Sending Forth

Say: Remember to show God's love to others every day by being kind and loving.

Lining Up/Closing Song

Play "O Lord, You're Beautiful" track 16 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.