

Focus: Putting God First

Materials:

- Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest’s vestment) and Altar Cloth
- CD-Bible Songs for Kids-Vol 2
- Bible: Children’s Everyday Bible
- Actions on footprints/felt board

Gathering (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: *Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about caring for those that cannot take care of themselves. Jesus loves all people and he wants us to do the same. This week we will talk about what we have to give to God so that we can be better followers of 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.*

Loving God, you sent Jesus to us so we could understand how you want us to live. Guide us in your way and help us be followers of Jesus. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Song/Movement

God is So Good, track: 2, from Bible Songs for Kids - Vol 2

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.

*God is so good.
 God is so good.
 God is so good.
 He’s so good to me.*

*He’s all I need.
 He’s all I need.
 He’s all I need.
 He’s so good to me.*

*He cares for me.
 He cares for me.
 He cares for me.
 He’s so good to me.*

*God is so good.
 God is so good.
 God is so good.
 He’s so good to me.*

Memory Verse

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

You must be willing to give up everything to follow me.

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

Say: *This is a hard verse for us to understand. How can we give up our family, friends, even our house and school and teachers?*

Jesus doesn't want us to stop loving our family and friends. God gave us our families and he wants us to love them very much. Jesus tells us that we should remember that we wouldn't have our families if it wasn't for God. We must remember that in making choices God comes first. When we choose, love comes first.

One way we put God first is choosing to come to church each week, even if we have other things we could be doing, playdates, sports, dance and other events aren't as important as putting God first. This verse reminds us that we can choose to put God first in everything we do and every choice we make.

Gospel Story

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

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. 279, *Becoming a Disciple*

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

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

Discussion Starters:

- *Why were the crowds of people following Jesus?*
- *What did Jesus say a good builder does before he builds a tower?*
- *What did Jesus say a good king does before a battle?*
- *What do we need to do to be good followers of Jesus?*
- *How can we get ready to follow Jesus?*

Reflection on Reading:

In the Gospel today Jesus tells his followers that they need to put God first above everything else, even family and friends. Jesus makes it clear that those who follow him should give all their cares and worries to God.

Jesus talks about building a tower and says that we must prepare to be a follower or Jesus, just like a builder prepares for a tower. We don't want to start something unless we know we can finish it. Jesus wants us to follow him and we need to be sure that we are ready to do things even if we don't feel like it. When we are tired sometimes it's easy to be cranky and whine. A follower of Jesus still tries to be good, even when they are tired. Sometimes we will have to share when we don't want to share. Following Jesus means we have to love everyone, even those that are hard to love.

Jesus teaches his followers how to be a disciple. Disciples must be ready to give up what we want to do. We have to give up always doing the fun things, when the hard choice is to do what Jesus wants us to do.

Gospel Activity

Activity 1:

Jesus Followers

Preparing to be a disciple isn't something we do once and we are done. We work on it every day. Jesus wants everyone to live with him forever so we must be ready to be good disciples even when it is hard to do the right thing.

We are going to play a little game. I will read an action and if the action is something we should do to prepare for Jesus we will place it on the board facing Jesus. If it is not, we will put it facing away from Jesus.

Actions: *Say your prayers, Put your toys away, Tell someone they did a good job, Help put the laundry away, Think of what Jesus would want you to do, Tell the truth, Do what your parents tell you, Fight with your brother or sister, Say you are sorry when you do something wrong, Help without being asked, Return toys or books that you borrow, Let your friend choose what game to play, Tell a lie, Share your toys, Go to church, Be kind to animals, Give someone a hug, Say thank you, Bring a friend to church, Be noisy during prayers in church, Forgive someone who was unkind, Listen quietly to the prayers in church*

Activity 2:

Following in Jesus' Footsteps

Play "Follow the Leader"

Have your children stand in a circle. Explain to the children that you are playing follow the leader and that their leader is the child standing to their right. So they do whatever that child does after he does it. Start by turning to the child on your left.

Say, "Jesus was friendly" and shake the child's hand. That child will do the same thing to the person on his left until it goes all the way around the circle and back to you. Start another round by saying,

"Jesus was kind." Bend over and pretend to tie the child's shoe lace.

"Jesus was giving." Pull a penny or something out of your pocket and give it to the child.

"Jesus was happy." Smile at the child.

"Jesus studied the Bible." Open your hands, palms up like a book and pretend to read.

"Jesus told others about God." – Say "God is good."

"Jesus praised God" - Hold up your hands and say "Praise the Lord"

"Jesus cared about others" - Pat the child's shoulder.

"Jesus was honest" - Hold up one hand like you were going to take an oath.

"Jesus was encouraging" – Give them a hi-5 or a fist bump and give a cheer like "You can do it."

"Jesus prayed" - Get down on your knees and fold your hands.

"Jesus loved everyone" - Give the child a side-hug.

End in prayer: *Dear Jesus, help us to be like you, thank you for teaching us to be kind and loving. We love you and always want to follow in your steps. Amen.*

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 always?*

Do you believe in Jesus, who teaches us how to put God first?

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us to know what pleases God?

Sending Forth

Say: This week pay special attention to those times when you can share, let others go first or stop what you are doing and help someone carry a heavy load. These are times when we can be a follower of Jesus and help others.

Lining Up/Closing Song

Play "*Fairest Lord Jesus*" track 19 from [Bible Songs for Kids-Vol 2](#) 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.