

Focus: Building the Kingdom of God

Materials:

Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest's vestment) and Altar Cloth
CD-America's 25 Favorite
Paper Church
Bible: In lesson
Building blocks

Gathering (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about always being God's children. This week Jesus will tell us what it is important in the Kingdom 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.

Dear God, you want us to show love and respect for others. Help us to be peacemakers. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Song/Movement

This Little Light of Mine, track: 15, 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.

1. This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine,
let it shine, let it shine.

2. Hide it under a bushel - NO!
I'm gonna let it shine.
Hide it under a bushel - NO!
I'm gonna let it shine, Let it shine,
let it shine, let it shine.

3. Don't let Satan blow it out.
I'm gonna let it shine.
Don't let Satan blow it out.
I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine,
let it shine, let it shine.

4. Let it shine til Jesus comes.
I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine til Jesus comes.
I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine,
let it shine, let it shine.

Memory Verse

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

God's Kingdom is built on love and truth.

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

Say: *Building God's Kingdom is different from building a church or house or other physical building. God's kingdom is built of kind things we do for others, prayers that we say, forgiving each other, patience and love.*

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: None, pp. N/A,

Place the paper church on the prayer table before you start the story.

At the time when Jesus lived, there was a very beautiful temple in the city of Jerusalem. The temple was the church for Jesus and his friends. It was made of pure white stone and lots of gold. It sparked in the sunlight, and was almost as bright as the sun itself.

One day, some people were talking about how beautiful the temple was. Jesus told them that someday it would all be gone.

Remove the steeple from the church as you continue speaking.

Jesus said that bad weather, wars and hard times would come. The beautiful temple would fall apart. People would think that it was the end of the world.

Remove the roof of the church as you continue speaking.

The temple, though, is only a building. It may be a very beautiful building, but it is only a building. Jesus told the people that no matter what happened, because God is greater than any building. When everything else is gone, God will still be here. The important things, like love and truth, will still be here because they come from God.

Bend down the walls of the church to show the words.

Those who live in love and fairness will still live because they believe in God. God and his people, living in love and truth and fairness, is what we call Kingdom of God.

The Gospel of the Lord

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

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

Discussion Starters:

- *What kinds of things were the people saying about the temple?*
- *What did Jesus tell them would happen to the temple?*
- *What did Jesus say would still be here when the temple was gone?*
- *What is important for the Kingdom of God?*
- *What are some ways we can live in love, truth and fairness?*

Reflection on Reading:

In today's Gospel Jesus tells of the events that will happen in the end times. He tells his followers that in the final days, wars, earthquakes, famines and plagues will take place on earth. Jesus wants his followers to trust that God will always be here for us.

Jesus offers his followers comfort and hope. In times of hardship we are to remember that God is with us. God protects us when we are alone or afraid. We have reason to trust in Jesus who will protect them. Jesus promises that "not a hair of your head will be harmed."

Gospel ActivityActivity 1:**Build the Kingdom**

Say: God's Kingdom isn't made of stone or gold, but of the love, truth and fairness that we share with each other.

Have the children to sit in a circle and place the building blocks around the circle. Begin creating a building by selecting a block and placing it in a clear spot in the middle of the circle. As you place the block, tell the children one thing we can do to build the kingdom of God. Go around the circle and allow each child to contribute a block to the building while naming another thing that we can do to build up God's kingdom. When the building is finished, allow the children to knock it down.

Say: See, even when the building falls down the group is still together, taking turns, playing fairly and enjoying God's love. The kingdom of God is not a building. It is the love, truth and fairness that we enjoy together with God.

Activity 2:**Constructing the Kingdom of God**

Ask: Can anyone name a construction machine or vehicle?

As they give examples, point out that each of these machines has a specific function that helps builders create a structure. The same is true for the kingdom of God. There are many things that we can do to help build the kingdom.

Say: When I say "go" I want each of you to stand up and turn into a machine that is helping build the kingdom of God. You can show what your machine can do by using your bodies.

You could be praying, you could read the Bible, give a hug, forgive someone, teach someone about Jesus, feed the hungry, care for the sick etc.

“Go!”

Once each child has established a machine, go around the room and ask for volunteers to tell what their “machine” does and how it helps to build up the kingdom of God.

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 is always just and fair?*
Do you believe in Jesus, who will rule in glory at the end of time?
Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us make good choices?

Sending Forth

Say: *We had some very good ideas about how to build the kingdom of God. Choose one or two that you will do this week so that we can make the world a nicer place.*

Lining Up/Closing Song

Play “*Amazing Grace*” track 24 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.