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New Testament

Deity of Jesus



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To teach that Jesus is fully equal to God the Father.
- To show how the Old Testament points to Jesus.



SCRIPTURE PORTION

Genesis 12:1-3; 18:17-18; Isaiah 45:5; Ezekiel 34:11-13; Zechariah 13:7; Matthew 11:4-6



MEMORY VERSE

John 1:18: "No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is Himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made Him known."



RECAP

- What lesson did we learn last week?
- Recite the Memory Verse given for last week.



INTRODUCTION

The New Testament Gospels describe Jesus and His teachings in great detail. They help us gain an accurate picture of the Lord. This is important for us because Jesus said, "... Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). Nobody has ever seen God with their human eyes. So the only way we can understand God is by knowing more about Jesus. Over the following weeks, we'll do a brief study of the different aspects of Jesus' life and teaching.



ATTENTION GETTER

Story: The Jews try to stone Jesus
(Based on John 8)

Note to Facilitator

The Student Workbook contains 'story pictures.'

- Before narrating the story, you could probably ask the children to guess the story-line, based solely on the pictures in the Workbook. Some of the children may be able to guess part of the story-line on their own.
- Doing this will help get the children's attention.

The Woman

Many of the Jewish leaders did not like Jesus because the common people loved Him far more than they loved the hypocritical leaders. They were afraid that Jesus would become the chief leader and ruler of the Jews, and after gaining power He'd throw them out of their powerful positions because of their hypocrisy.

So they constantly looked for opportunities to get Jesus into trouble. One day, these leaders brought a very sinful woman to Jesus and said, "According to the Bible, we should stone this woman to death. Are you willing to let us do this?"

This was a trick question that could create a lot of trouble for Jesus.

- Because Jesus was loving and forgiving towards sinners, they were hoping that Jesus would say, "No. Let's leave her alone." Then they'd be able to say

to Him, "What kind of a spiritual leader are you if you allow sinful people to escape punishment?"

- On the other hand, if Jesus said, "Yes. Let's stone her to death," then the Romans would arrest Jesus for murder. (The Roman government was ruling over Israel in those days. And the Romans had not given the Israelites the authority to give anyone a death sentence, without prior permission from the Roman Governor).

Jesus knew what they were thinking. So He said to them, "Whoever has never sinned, has every right to kill her. So let those of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her."

When Jesus said this, the leaders got really worried! They were hypocrites with a hundred hidden sins in their hearts. They were scared that Jesus would expose their secret sins right in front of everyone. So they quietly left the place without stoning the woman.

Jesus then commanded the sinful lady to stop living in sin, and He sent her away with His forgiveness and blessings.

The Dispute

After this incident, the humiliated Jews began to pick many arguments with Jesus. They refused to accept anything that Jesus said. So Jesus finally said to them, "I keep telling you about the things of my Father and you refuse to believe me. That's because you are too busy doing what your father is teaching you."

To this, the leaders confidently replied, "Abraham is our father." But Jesus pointed out, "If you were truly Abraham's children, you'd put your faith in me. But because the devil is your father, you're looking for opportunities to kill me."

This made the Jewish leaders extremely angry. Because Satan is such a horrible character, not even wicked people like to be called his children!

Then Jesus went on to tell them, "Abraham was greatly excited about the fact that I would come to the earth one day." The angry leaders retorted, "Oh yeah! How do you know he was glad? Were you alive when Abraham was living? You're not even fifty years old."

Jesus calmly replied, “Very truly I tell you ... before Abraham was born, I am!” (John 8:58).

Stoning Attempt

These words stunned the leaders. During Moses’ time, God described Himself as “I AM.” Now Jesus was using the very same words to refer to Himself. In other words Jesus was openly saying, “I Myself Am God.”

The Jewish leaders immediately picked up stones, to kill Jesus. But Jesus knew that it wasn’t yet the right time to die. He needed to stay on earth a little longer and do many more things. So He hid Himself in the temple grounds, so that the leaders would not be able to find Him. Then later, after they had stopped searching, He quietly slipped away.



TEACHING CONTENT

God Announced a Shepherd EQUAL to Him

In the Old Testament, this is what God taught the Israelites:

- **Isaiah 45:5:** “I am the LORD and there is no other; apart from Me there is no God.”

So the Israelites believed in one Creator—God and worshipped Him.

Then, later on, God taught them a second truth. He promised that one day He would send them a Savior who would be equal to Him:

- **Zechariah 13:7:** “Awake, sword, against my shepherd, against the man who is close to me!” declares the LORD Almighty. ‘Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered ...’”

God used the word ‘amiti’ to describe this shepherd. This word literally means ‘companion’ or ‘partner.’ In other words, God promised to send His own companion as a shepherd to the earth.

This made the Israelites realise that even though God is One, there is more than one person in God. (God is One—but He is made up of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit).

So the Israelites began to eagerly wait for this Shepherd—Savior who would come down to the earth, in human form, to save them!

Jesus Claimed to be the Shepherd—Savior Who Is EQUAL to God

When Jesus came, He began to preach that He is the Shepherd—Savior they had been waiting for. But people found it difficult to believe Him.

- They thought the Shepherd—Savior would be born in a palace and hold a high position and power.
- They thought He would become one of the powerful Pharisees and Sadducees, and use their help to start a new kingdom.
- They thought He would raise up an army and drive the Romans out of Israel.

But Jesus didn't do any of these things, and it confused them. However Jesus declared again and again that He had always been with God and He was equal to God:

- **John 1:18:** "No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is Himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made Him known."

He claimed to be the Shepherd—Savior that God had promised to send:

- **John 10:11:** "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep."
- **Mathew 26:31:** "Then Jesus told them, 'This very night you will all fall away on account of Me, for it is written: 'I will strike the shepherd and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'"

Jesus PROVED that He Was the Promised Shepherd—Savior

Jesus knew that the people would find it difficult to believe His words. So He performed various miracles that only God can perform—to show them that He is FROM God and that He IS God.

- **John 14:11:** "Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves."

When John the Baptist developed doubts about whether or not Jesus was the promised Shepherd—Savior, Jesus responded by saying:

- **Mathew 11:4-6:** “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. Blessed is anyone who does not fall away on account of Me.”

Jesus scolded the Jews for refusing to believe in Him even after He performed great miracles to prove His Godhood to them:

- **John 10:24-25:** “The Jews gathered around Him, saying, ‘How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.’ Jesus answered, ‘I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father’s name speak for me.’”
- **Mathew 11:20-21:** “Then Jesus began to denounce the cities in which most of His miracles had been performed, because they did not repent. ‘Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.’”

Why do we accept Jesus to be equal with God?

We accept that Jesus is equal to God the Father because the Bible says so. We’ll look at a few verses that clearly state Jesus is Himself God:

Read Aloud

(Ask volunteers to read out the verses loudly and clearly.)

Romans 9:5: “Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, **who is God over all**, forever praised! Amen.”

- Explain: In this verse, Jesus is described as “God over all.”

Hebrews 1:8: “But about the Son he says, ‘**Your throne, O God**, will last for ever and ever; and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom.’”

- Explain: In this verse, The Father Himself addresses Jesus as God. God the Father has no doubts about whether or not Jesus is equal to Him!

Titus 2:13: “... while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of **our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.**”

- Explain: In this verse, Jesus is described as “our great God.”



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and **NOT** by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.

John 8:54, 56: “Jesus replied, ... Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.”

Abraham lived at least two thousand years before Jesus. How do you think he knew that Jesus would come one day?

The Bible says that God used to discuss future events with Abraham, because God was planning to bless all the nations through Abraham. This was the reason why God chose to discuss the destruction of Sodom with Abraham before the event occurred.

- **Genesis 18:17-18:** “Then the LORD said, ‘Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him.’”

In the same way God told many of the Old Testament Prophets about Jesus. The prophets were so excited about Jesus’ future coming that they spent years studying the Scriptures, trying to figure out exactly when and where He would be born, and what He would do.

- **1 Peter 1:10-11:** “Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when He predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow.”

So based on these verses we can guess that God probably told Abraham too, about the future coming of Jesus the Messiah.

Genesis 12:1-3: “The Lord had said to Abram ... ‘I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you ... and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.’”

How do you think God used Abraham to bless ALL peoples on earth? Did Abram visit India and bless Indians?

It was God's plan to send Jesus to the earth, to save the world and bless it. But God wanted Jesus to be born as a descendant of a godly man.

Because Abraham was very godly, God chose him to be the person through whom Jesus would be born one day. So Jesus was a direct descendant of Abraham. And through Jesus, just as promised, all the peoples of the earth—including Indians—have been blessed. Now anybody who wishes to, can be saved through Jesus and go to heaven.

Zechariah prophesied about this and said:

- **Luke 1:68, 72-73:** "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because He has come and has redeemed his people ... to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, the oath He swore to our father Abraham."

Zechariah pointed out that God had remembered His promise to Abraham and sent a Savior to bless the peoples of the earth.

The Bible refers to Jesus as 'Messiah' on many occasions. What do you think the word means?

The Hebrew word 'Messiah' means Chosen One or Anointed One. It refers to the 'amiti' (companion) of God who would be 'chosen' and sent into the world as a Shepherd to rescue people.

In the Old Testament God referred to the coming Savior as a 'Shepherd' on many occasions. Why do you think He used this description? Why didn't He describe the Savior as 'carpenter,' 'farmer' or 'fisherman?'

A loving shepherd searches out lost sheep and brings them back into the fold. He doesn't mind risking His life to protect them and provide for them.

Therefore God used the description of 'shepherd' to describe the coming Savior. He promised that when the Savior came, He would search for each person who is lost in sin, and bring them back into God's family.

- **Ezekiel 34:11-13:** "For this is what the Sovereign Lord says: 'I myself will search for my sheep and look after them ... I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness. I will bring them out from the nations and gather them from the countries, and I will bring them into their own land ...'"



APPLICATION

After Jesus resurrected from the dead, He appeared to all His disciples. At that time Thomas saw the nail—wounds in Jesus' hands and believed that Jesus is indeed God!

In response Jesus said, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20:29).

We have not seen Jesus physically the way Thomas did. But in spite of this, if we still choose to believe that Jesus is God, and make a commitment to follow Him, then we're more blessed than Thomas!

Jesus said, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am" (John 14:1-3).

Jesus says that He has a home awaiting us in heaven. If we choose to believe in Him and follow Him, He'll take us to His heavenly home after our physical deaths.

Make a Commitment

- If you have not done so earlier, make a commitment to follow Jesus for the rest of your life.
- If you have already made this commitment, then examine yourself to see whether you are truly following Him. Are you a lamb that has strayed away? Return to Jesus because He is a gentle shepherd who wants only the best for you.



CLOSE WITH PRAYER



New Testament

Humanity of Jesus



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To teach that Jesus chose to become fully human for our sakes.
- To explain the concept of the Incarnated Christ.



SCRIPTURE PORTIONS

Isaiah 53:3, 9:6; Micah 5:2; Matthew 1:1, 3:17, 13:55; Luke 3:23,38, 19:10; John 1:1, 8:40



MEMORY VERSE

John 1:14: "The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us ..."



RECAP

- What did we learn last week?
- Why did the Jewish leaders try to stone Jesus?
- What did Jesus do to prove He was equal to God?
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week.



INTRODUCTION

The New Testament Gospels describe Jesus and His teachings in great detail. They help us gain an accurate picture of the Lord. This is important for us because Jesus said, "... Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). Nobody has ever seen God with their human eyes. So the only way we can understand God is by studying Jesus. Over the following weeks, we will do a brief study of the different aspects of Jesus' life and teachings.



ATTENTION GETTER

(Taken from www.middletonbiblechurch.org)

Ask the children to look up the Bible references and fill in the blanks:

As we read God's Word, we make an amazing discovery.

- Not only is Jesus called "GOD" (John 1:1; Titus 2:13), but He is also called "the _____ Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5).

In fact, in John 8:40 Jesus calls Himself "a _____."

- Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Matthew 16:16), and He is also the Son of _____ (Luke 19:10).

He is God's Son (Matthew 3:17), and He is also Mary's son (Matthew 13:55), David's son (Matthew 1:1), Abraham's son (Matthew 1:1), and Adam's son (Luke 3:23,38).

- He is called "the L _____ of G _____" (1 Corinthians 2:8), and He is also called "a _____ of suffering" (Isaiah 53:3).

We find the very same thing in the Old Testament. In Isaiah 9:6, He is called "The mighty _____" and "The everlasting Father."

- In this same verse He is also said to be a C _____ who is born!

In Micah 5:2, He is described as the everlasting King (the eternal One), who would be born as a human baby in Bethlehem!

Ask

Some of the verses describe Jesus as God. But other verses describe Jesus as a man. So is Jesus God? Or is He just a man?

(Ask the children to give their opinions.)

**TEACHING CONTENT****The Promised Messiah**

In Old Testament times God promised King David that He would appoint one of His descendants as King over the entire world forever and ever. This King would be a Savior to the world and establish justice for everyone. He would be called the 'Messiah' which means 'anointed one.'

David wrote about this promised descendant in Psalms 110:1 saying: "The Lord says to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'"

- He referred to God as 'Lord' in this verse.
- And he referred to his human descendant too as 'Lord.'

We can definitely understand why David referred to God as 'Lord.' But why did he refer to one of his future descendants as 'Lord?'

(For instance, if I were writing about one of my future descendants I'd probably say, "The Lord said to my great-grandson ..." I would NOT say, "The Lord said to my Lord").

Jesus asked the Pharisees this very same question; but they refused to answer Him. Let's find out why ...

The Pharisees

After coming to the earth, Jesus performed extraordinary miracles, like raising people from the dead, to show that He was the promised Messiah.

People noticed that Jesus was a direct descendant of David—both on His human father's side, and also His mother's side. And they also noticed that He could perform miracles never performed before. This made them realise that Jesus was the Messiah who had been promised to King David.

When this Messiah (i.e., Jesus) declared that He was equal to God, many believed Him, because the Scriptures claim the Messiah is equal to God (Zechariah 13:7). However the Pharisees refused to admit that Jesus is equal to God because they hated Him.

(Jesus had criticized the Pharisees on many occasions for their hypocrisy. The Pharisees ordered people to lead holy lives, but they themselves secretly lived sinful lives. When Jesus pointed out this hypocrisy to them, they began to hate Him).

These Pharisees picked arguments with Jesus, hoping to confuse and embarrass Him. But Jesus cleverly turned the tables on them by asking them a significant question.

Mathew 22:41-45: “While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, ‘What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?’ ‘The son of David,’ they replied. He said to them, ‘How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him ‘Lord’?’ For he says, ‘The Lord said to my Lord: Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.’ If then David calls him ‘Lord,’ how can he be his son?”

The Answer

The Pharisees knew the answer to this question. The reason why David called his descendant ‘Lord’ is because the Messiah was equal to God. The Messiah was not an ordinary human descendant.

But the Pharisees were reluctant to admit this fact.

- If they said, “David called his descendant ‘Lord’, because he knew his descendant wouldn’t be an ordinary human ...”
- ... then Jesus would respond, “If you know this, then why are you not admitting that I’m more than an ordinary human? Why are you not admitting that I’m equal to God?”

To avoid being exposed by Jesus, the Pharisees decided to stop picking arguments with Him.

- **Mathew 22:46:** “No one could say a word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask Him any more questions.”

Jesus is Fully God and Fully Man

Read Aloud

Romans 1:3-4: "... regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord."

Verse 3 describes Jesus as a "descendant of David."

- In this sense, because He was a human descendant of David, He was a "Son of David." But Verse 4 points out that Jesus is also the "Son of God."
- Therefore, even though Jesus was a descendant of David, He was also David's Lord and Master.

| The God-Man | |
|---|---|
| As God He is David's Lord and Master ↓ THE SON OF GOD (Romans 1:4) | As Man He is David's Son (He descended from the line of David) ↓ THE SON OF DAVID (Romans 1:3) |



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.

John 1:1-2: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning."

How is Jesus described in these verses?

He is described as the 'Word.'

John 1:14: "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."

What does this verse say about "Jesus the Word?"

It says He became 'flesh.' In other words, He became a human being, with normal human flesh—just like all of us.

According to John 1:1-2, Jesus existed along with God the Father, in the beginning. At that time, do you think Jesus was God or was He a man?

John 1:14 says that Jesus "became flesh" when He came to the earth to live with us. This means Jesus became something that He wasn't before. He was fully God earlier; but after He came to the earth, He became human as well.

When Jesus became a man on earth, did He stop being God?

During Jesus' stay on the earth, He openly declared that He is God (John 8:58). So even though Jesus became a man, He did not stop being God.

When Jesus returned to heaven, did He stop being a man?

No, the Bible says that we have a mediator in heaven who is called "the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5). So even though Jesus has returned to heaven, He continues to be a man because He is in a human body, but a transformed human flesh which we will be given when we are with Him. Luke 24: 39.

One day Jesus will return to this earth in power and great glory. At that time He will be called "the Son of Man" (Matthew 24:30).

So Jesus will never stop being a man; and He will never stop being God. He will be fully GOD and fully MAN forever!

Do you know what the word 'Incarnation' means?

When God comes *in the flesh*, taking on a human body, and becomes a real man, this is called 'incarnation.' Jesus is the Incarnation—God in human form.



APPLICATION

God chose to become fully human by becoming an ordinary man. He did this so that He could share in our troubles and provide help.

- As a human being, Jesus took the punishment for our sins upon Himself.

- As a human being, Jesus also experienced all the suffering that we endure on a daily basis, such as hunger, tiredness, emotional pain and hurt, etc.

Because Jesus suffered all the things that we humans suffer, He knows how we feel. So when we go to Him for help, He is able to help us perfectly. He knows exactly what kind of help to provide for each situation that we face.

- **Hebrews 4:15-16:** “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”

This should give us the confidence to approach God with all our needs. Let us commit to do this during the coming week!



CLOSE WITH PRAYER



New Testament

Jesus Said 'I Am'



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To explain how Jesus is the Bread of Life for us.
- To teach that Jesus is the only Gate through whom we can reach Heaven.



SCRIPTURE PORTIONS

John 6:1-48, 10:9; Acts 4:12 (Jesus—Bread of Life and the Gate.)



MEMORY VERSE

John 6:35: "Then Jesus declared, 'I am the Bread of Life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and who believes in me will never be thirsty.'"

Materials Needed:

- Bread slices
- Hammer
- Hat
- Toy
- Spoon; etc



RECAP

- What did we learn last week?
- What does 'Incarnation' mean?
- Why did King David refer to his future descendant as 'Lord'?
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week.



INTRODUCTION

The New Testament Gospels describe Jesus and His teachings in great detail. They help us gain an accurate picture of the Lord. This is important for us because Jesus said, "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). Nobody has ever seen God with their human eyes. So the only way we can understand God is by knowing more about Jesus. Today, we'll take a look at what Jesus said about Himself.

Note to Facilitator

This session dwells briefly on the - I AM sayings of Christ:

Primary Level:

- I Am the Bread of Life
- I Am the Gate

Junior Level:

- I Am the Good Shepherd
- I Am the Light of the World
- I Am the Resurrection and the Life

Senior Level:

- I Am the Way, Truth and Life
- I Am the Vine



ATTENTION GETTER

Bread Maze

(Taken from Christian Endeavour.)

The Student Workbook contains a Maze for the children to work on. They must find their way through the maze, writing down each letter in turn, to find out what Jesus said to the people.

Jesus declared, "I am the Bread of Life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty" (John 6:35). Let's find out **when** Jesus spoke these words, and **what** He meant.



TEACHING CONTENT

Jesus—The Bread of Life

On one occasion, when the people were very hungry, Jesus took five loaves of bread and two fish, and performed a 'food-miracle.' He was able to multiply this small quantity of food, to feed five thousand men and many other women and children (John 6:1-15).

Word of this extraordinary miracle spread far and wide; and so the next day a huge crowd came to meet with Jesus. However Jesus realised that many of these people were not really interested in what He had to teach. They simply wanted Him to do one more food-miracle, so that they could fill their stomachs.

Jesus lovingly told them not to focus all their time and energy on earthly things like food. Rather, He advised them to work on gaining "heavenly bread" (John 6:33).

When the people asked Jesus to supply them with this "heavenly bread," He replied that He Himself was this bread (John 6:35).

What did Jesus mean?

(Taken from "Jesus the Bread of Life" by Andrew Hewlett.)

What did Jesus mean when He called Himself 'Bread?' Let's use a small object lesson to understand this better.

Object Lesson

This morning I want you to imagine that you are really hungry. Imagine that you haven't had any food for two days.

- What would that be like?
- How would your stomach feel?

I'm going to show you some things and I want you all to respond by saying YES and nodding, or all saying NO and shaking your head. Ready? Here we go.

- Now, what if I gave you this (pull out an object—a hammer). Would that help you? No it wouldn't.
- What about this (pull out another object—a hat). Would this satisfy you? No! It wouldn't.
- Continue on with some toys or other objects. Then pull out the bread. What about this bread? YES! You're right!

When we are hungry in our stomachs we need food, like this bread. Only food will satisfy that type of hunger.

In the same way, we face another type of hunger. It is a hunger for LIFE—a hunger for meaning, for peace, for love. Our hearts are hungry for friendship, love, happiness, help, answers to big questions, etc.

This hunger for real LIFE, the life God gives cannot be filled with things (*hold up some items, toys, etc.*) The Bible says that only Jesus can satisfy that type of hunger.

Many Rejected Jesus

When Jesus said that He was the Bread of Life, the people were shocked. They said, "How can He be bread? We can't eat Him!"

But Jesus was speaking symbolically. He meant that they had to receive Him into their life if they were to have their sins forgiven and receive His gift of everlasting life. If they did this, then He would fill their hearts with His love, joy and peace, and give them a new life.

But many of the people were not interested in Jesus; they just wanted free bread. So they refused His offer of salvation and went away.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

John 6:47-48: "I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life. I am the bread of life."

What do you think is 'eternal life?' What was Jesus promising to those who believed in Him?

The word 'eternal' means "forever and ever." Jesus promised that those who believed He was the Son of God, and made a commitment to follow Him, would live with Him "forever and ever" in heaven.

Why do you think many people rejected Jesus' offer of eternal life? Did they have a deep desire to go to hell instead?

Most of the people in John Chapter 6 rejected Jesus because they didn't like the idea of following Him. They knew that He would expect them to live holy lives, and they were not yet ready to give up their sinful ways. They believed that they could get to heaven even without submitting their lives to Jesus.

Is it possible to live eternally in Heaven, without accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior?

Acts 4:12 explains, "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

- Jesus is the **ONLY** one who can provide a full and satisfactory life on earth.
- And Jesus is the **ONLY** one who can provide us with eternal life in heaven.

There are no alternate options available!

John 10:9: "I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out and find pasture."

What is Jesus saying in this verse?

Jesus is saying that only those who accept Him as Lord and Saviour will receive salvation. He also says that only through Him can we find 'pasture'. In other words, our spiritual hunger can be satisfied only by Him.

Jesus used two different objects—the “Bread of Life” and the ‘Gate’ to describe Himself. What main lessons did He convey to us through these two objects?

- Our spiritual hunger for love, joy and salvation can be satisfied only by Jesus (the same way our physical hunger can be satisfied only by physical food like bread).
- Similarly, we must pass through “Jesus the Gate” to satisfy our spiritual hunger (the same way a sheep passes through the gate to enter the pastures and feed itself).
- Jesus is also symbolically the only ‘Gate’ through whom we can enter heaven. We cannot enter heaven in any other way.

So Jesus used these symbols to convey two teachings:

- Salvation is possible through Him alone.
- Spiritual satisfaction is possible through Him alone.



APPLICATION

In John chapter 6, Jesus told the people that they shouldn’t worry so much about what they were going to eat. He said that they should think more about having a relationship with God. Jesus explained that HE was the way to have eternal life.

We only have to ask Jesus into our heart one time to receive eternal life. But to stay close to God, we need to spend time with Him every day. We have to eat food every day to stay strong, and we need to read the Bible and pray each day to stay strong spiritually.

Think about how you spend your time and energy. Do you make time to be with God each day and receive your spiritual food?

Jesus wants to be a part of our life. He wants to help us make good choices and live for Him. The more time we spend with Him, the more He can help us.



CLOSE WITH PRAYER



New Testament

Character of Jesus



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To expound on the obedience, humility and forgiveness of Christ.
- To encourage the children to be more Christ like in their personal lives.



SCRIPTURE PORTIONS

Philippians 2:8; Luke 23:34; Isaiah 53:7; Acts 2: 23, 40-41



MEMORY VERSE

Philippians 2:8: "And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!"

Materials Needed:

- White paper
- New unused pencil
- Sharpener



RECAP

- What did we learn last week?
- How often did you read your Bible this week? Last week, what did we learn about Bible reading?
- What did Jesus mean when He said, “I am the Gate?”
- Recite the Memory Verse given for last week.



INTRODUCTION

The New Testament Gospels describe Jesus and His teachings in great detail. They help us gain an accurate picture of the Lord. This is important for us because Jesus said, “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14:9). Nobody has ever seen God with their human eyes. So the only way we can understand God is by studying Jesus. Today we’ll take a brief look at some key aspects of Christ’s character and see how we can emulate Him in our own lives.

Note to Facilitator

This session dwells briefly on different aspects of Christ’s Character:

Primary Level:

- While on earth, Jesus was **Forgiving**
- He was Meek and Lowly
- He was **Obedient**

Junior Level:

- While on earth, Jesus was Compassionate
- He was **Disciplined**
- He was **Fearless**

Senior Level:

- While on earth, Jesus was **Pure and Holy**
- He was **Selfless**
- He was **Zealous**



ATTENTION GETTER

Activity: Humble Pencil

Give a child a new unused pencil (which has not yet been sharpened) and ask her to draw a teddy bear. If she protests that she can't, ask her to try anyway. Next provide her a sharpener and again ask her to draw the teddy bear. (*The child will probably shave the pencil and draw with the now—exposed pencil—lead.*)

Explain

The useful part of a pencil is in the middle. And in order for it to be useful, something sharp has to wear away the outer covering.

It's the same with us, who are God's children. Jesus lives in our spirits; so we have His humility within us. But it is covered by our own selfishness, pride and arrogance.

When we choose to submit to the Lord's correction, and begin scraping away at our pride, then the humility of God will flow out of our lives.

Today, we'll take a closer look at the amazing humility of Jesus Christ, and learn how to be more like Him.



TEACHING CONTENT

The Meek and Lowly Jesus

(Adapted from DLTK Bible Stories for Children.)

Jesus was very sad the night before He was to die on the cross. Even though He was in the beautiful garden of Gethsemane, He was very close to the place where He would die the next day. He knew He would soon suffer a painful death for the sins of the whole world, including yours and mine.

Because Jesus knew what was about to happen, we see that Jesus asked if there was any other way for salvation to be given to the world ... that this "cup" would pass from Him. The "cup" that Jesus was about

to take was His death. Jesus was horrified at the thought that the Father would leave Him temporarily when He took the world's sins upon His shoulders. He didn't want the Father to abandon Him at the time of His deepest pain and need. However notice what Jesus said, "Nevertheless, not MY will, but Your will be done." Even though it would be difficult, Jesus only wanted to do the Father's will. Philippians 2:8 says, "And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!"

So Jesus allowed the Roman soldiers to arrest Him in the Garden of Gethsemane. Very early the next morning, the soldiers brought Jesus to Pilate, the governor at the time. Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus replied, "Yes, I am." Pilate listened to the complaints of the people that brought Jesus, but he couldn't find any reason to punish Him. So Pilate questioned Jesus again, but Jesus didn't stick up for Himself. He knew that they wouldn't listen even though He had done nothing wrong.

Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people and said to them, "I have talked to Jesus, and I find no reason to kill Him." But the people shouted again and again to crucify Jesus. Pilate wanted to please the crowd; so he sent Jesus away to die.

The soldiers led Jesus into the palace and made Him put on an old royal robe, and they twisted together a crown of thorns to put on His head. Then they made fun of Him and said, "Hail, king of the Jews." They didn't understand that He was already the King of Kings; that's why they made fun of Him.

Next the soldiers led Jesus toward a hill called Golgotha. They made Him carry the cross on His back, but Jesus couldn't carry it the whole way; He fell down. The soldiers had whipped His back and it hurt so much that Jesus couldn't handle the weight of the cross on His shoulders.

A man named Simon happened to be near Jesus when He fell, and the soldiers grabbed Him and made Him carry the cross the rest of the way. The soldiers offered Jesus wine mixed with myrrh. This was supposed to help make it less painful, but Jesus refused to have any.

When they reached the top of the hill they nailed Jesus to the cross. There were three crosses; Jesus was in the middle and there was a criminal on His right and

on His left. Pilate made a sign to be put on the cross. It read what He was being punished for: Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.

The soldiers watched Jesus and made fun of Him. To be even more mean they even divided up His clothes. But Jesus simply said to His Heavenly Father, "... Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). He forgave them even though they were treating Him so badly!

Then some people walked by and shouted, "You saved others, why can't you save Yourself?" Jesus could have saved Himself, but He chose not to; He wanted to obey His Father and save us.

Once Jesus had finished taking the full punishment for all our sins, He said loudly, "It is finished." Then Jesus bowed His head and gave up His spirit.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.

Obedience of Christ

Why do you think Jesus was so reluctant to die on the cross? Was He afraid of the pain that crucifixion involves?

Crucifixion is considered one of the most painful forms of torture in existence. Today some of the Middle Eastern nations use this method to torture criminals and victims testify that the pain involved is unbearable.

I'm sure that Jesus found pain as unpleasant as we all do, and therefore wanted to avoid death through the cross. However, there were other stronger reasons for Jesus' request for an alternate method to save us.

- One, Jesus had never sinned and found it repulsive. The thought of bearing our filthy sins on His holy shoulders must have been terrible (probably equivalent to soaking oneself in putrid gutter sewage).
- Two, Jesus was fully aware that the Father would turn away from Him, as soon as He took our sins on His shoulders. Having never

been separated from the Father throughout eternity, this must have been an unbearable thought for the Lord.

It was probably these two reasons that made Jesus wish there was some other method of rescuing us.

The soldiers offered Jesus wine mixed with myrrh, to reduce the pain; but Jesus refused it. Why do you think He did this? Did He enjoy suffering more pain?

Wine mixed with myrrh reduces pain; but it also makes the mind dull. It's similar to cough syrup that makes a person dull and drowsy.

Jesus didn't want His mind to be dulled. He wanted to be fully alert so that He could obey His Father properly, without making any mistakes.

This was the level of Jesus' obedience! He preferred to suffer unbearable pain rather than accidentally make mistakes in obeying His Father.

Only after finishing everything that needed to be done did Jesus take a sip of wine vinegar and then give up His Spirit.

Humility of Christ

Isaiah 53:7: "He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth."

Isaiah made this prophesy about Jesus 700 years before Jesus' birth. In what way does this prophesy match the Bible story we listened to just now? In the story, when did Jesus act like a silent sheep?

- The religious leaders made many false accusations against Jesus. But Jesus didn't defend Himself before Pilate. He remained silent.
- Similarly, when the Roman soldiers dressed Him up in a purple robe and made fun of Him, Jesus didn't retaliate. He could have struck them down with a bolt of lightning; but He kept silent.
- In the same way, when Jesus was made to carry the cross to Golgotha hill, He didn't protest even though He was weak and drained out after the whipping and beating. He silently carried it until His weakened human body collapsed under the strain.

Through all the whipping and ill treatment, Jesus did not curse the soldiers even once! This shows His great humility and meekness.

Forgiveness of Christ

Why do you think Jesus forgave the people who were crucifying Him?

Jesus loved the people who were crucifying Him. It was His hope that one day these people would realise the mistake they had made and repent of their terrible sin. So He didn't ask the Father to punish them. Rather He asked God to forgive them.



APPLICATION

Am I Obedient like Jesus?

Jesus did not obey the Father only when pleasant things were asked of Him. Jesus obeyed with the same level of commitment even when God asked Him to do something as unpleasant as die on the cross for our sins.

- Do I obey the Lord cheerfully and sincerely when He asks me to do something I dislike?

Am I Humble like Jesus?

Jesus did not curse or retaliate when He was mocked and beaten. He continued to express love towards those who were persecuting Him.

- How do I respond when people offend me or are rude to me?

Am I Forgiving like Jesus?

Jesus forgave those who crucified Him. Later, when some of the people who had crucified Him repented, He fully forgave them and made them part of God's family (Acts 2: 23, 40-41).

- When people hurt me do I forgive them only partially, or am I willing to forgive and forget completely?

Make a commitment to be more Christ like, with the Lord's help, in these three areas of your life.



CLOSE WITH PRAYER



New Testament

Fruit of The Spirit



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To explain how to bear good fruit in our lives.
- To teach practical ways in which we can stay attached to Jesus.



SCRIPTURE PORTIONS

Matthew 12:33, 7:16-18; 2 Corinthians 5:17; John 15:4; Galatians 5:22-23



MEMORY VERSE

John 15:4: "Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me."



RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- The soldiers offered Jesus wine mixed with myrrh, at the cross. Why did Jesus refuse it?

- This week, did you display the obedience, humility or forgiveness of Jesus? Give examples.
- Recite the Memory Verse given for last week.



INTRODUCTION

Over the last four weeks, we studied different aspects of who Jesus is. We saw His deity and His humanity. We studied the different symbols He used to describe Himself (His 'I Am' sayings). And we looked at His character. Over the remaining weeks, we will look at some important teachings of Jesus on key themes. This week we'll cover the New Testament teaching on Fruit Bearing.

Note to Facilitator

This session dwells briefly on a few key aspects of Fruit Bearing, at different age-levels:

Primary Level:

- How Fruit of the Spirit grows in us

Junior Level:

- Lessons from the cursed Fig Tree

Senior Level:

- How/Why God prunes us



ATTENTION GETTER

Activity: Name the Tree

The Student Workbook shows some fruit trees. Ask the children to identify the trees by name.

Ask

How did you identify the apple tree? What helped you to recognise it?
The fruits on the tree made it easy to identify.

Explain

We recognise a tree by its fruit. When we see apples on a tree, we realise it's an apple tree; we don't eagerly run to that tree hoping to pick mangoes from it. In the same way, if we see only thorns on a bush, we realise it's a thorn bush. We don't hope to get grapes from it.

Jesus pointed out that people too are like trees.

- Good people produce good fruit like showing love, displaying joy and being patient with irritating people.
- Bad people on the other hand produce bad fruit like speaking lies, hurting people and being selfish.

Jesus said, "By their fruit you will recognise them. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit" (Matthew 7:16-18).

According to Jesus a bad tree can never produce good fruit—just as a thorn bush can never produce grapes. Therefore Jesus promised to make us "good trees" so that we would bear good fruit in our lives.

- **Matthew 12:33:** "Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognised by its fruit."



TEACHING CONTENT

How to Bear Good Fruit

When we accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour, He makes us into a "new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17). We become brand new persons with the ability to bear good fruit; in other words we become good trees.

However, many Christians don't bear good fruit even after becoming new creations. This happens because they don't stay attached to Jesus on a daily basis.

Jesus used the example of a grape vine to explain the importance of staying attached to Him. The branches on a grape vine bear lots of

grapes only if they stay attached to the main vine. In the same way, we too can bear good fruit in our lives only if we stay attached to Jesus on a daily basis.

- **John 15:4:** “Remain in me, as I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.”

But what does it mean in practical terms? How does a person stay attached to Jesus daily? What must they do?

Let’s look at some practical ways to “remain in Jesus” each day:

1. Stop being Selfish

Let’s assume that your little sister wants to play with your toys. You may not feel like sharing. But God wants you to ‘choose’ to share your toys ‘cheerfully’—even when you don’t feel like it. The more you crush your selfish feelings, the more you will discover a change happening deep inside your heart.

- You will find God’s love beginning to flow inside your heart for other people. You will begin to ‘feel’ loving and you start ‘wanting’ to be selfless. God Himself will produce the Fruit of Love inside you.

If you observe, God expects you to take a small step of obedience and crush the selfish feelings inside. Then God Himself does the much bigger job of turning you into a loving person.

- When you choose to crush your selfishness, it shows God that you want to stay attached to Him; and then He does the rest for you.

2. Stop Grumbling

Let’s assume that you don’t get the birthday gift you had been hoping for. You may probably feel disappointed and irritated. But God wants you to ‘choose’ NOT to grumble—even though you didn’t get what you had hoped for. God wants you to continue trusting Him for good things in the future.

- When you crush the grumbling and the anger, and choose to continue trusting God to do good to you, He will begin to fill up your heart with joy. Soon you start feeling a calm assurance that God will take care of everything in your

life. And that is when you feel joyful all the time. This is the Fruit of Joy that God Himself will produce in you.

If you observe, God expects you to take a small step of refusing to grumble and choosing to trust. When you do this, God Himself does the much bigger job of filling you with joy.

- You get rid of the negative (the grumbling). Then God will fill you up with the positive (the Fruit of Joy).

3. Stop Worrying

Let us assume that you have to act in a skit at school and you are worried that you will do badly. You don't feel confident at all. You will be laughed at by all your friends. But God wants you to 'choose' to trust Him—even though you don't feel confident. God wants you to fully believe that He WILL help you.

- When you make your choice and crush all thoughts of worry, you will begin to find faith growing inside you. God Himself will produce the Fruit of Peace inside you.

If you observe, God expects you to take a small step of obedience and crush the worry inside. Then God Himself does the much bigger job of filling you with His peace.

- When you choose to crush your worry, it shows God that you want to stay attached to Him; and then He does the rest for you.

4. Don't React immediately when someone Hurts/Upsets you

Let us assume that your brother keeps picking on you all the time. You will probably feel like yelling at him or hitting him. But God wants you to 'choose' NOT to react angrily—even though you are 'feeling' angry. So don't react immediately ... choose not to hit back.

- When you choose to crush your irritation and anger and you make this choice again and again, slowly you will begin to see a great change inside you. To your wonder you will discover that you are becoming more and more patient with your brother—even though he is just as irritating as before. This is the Fruit of Forbearance (Forbearance means "to endure patiently") that God Himself will produce in you.

If you observe, God expects you to take a small step of refusing to hit out or snap back. When you do this, God Himself does the much bigger job of filling you with patience towards your brother.

- You get rid of the negative (by refusing to snap back). Then God will fill you up with the positive (the Fruit of Patient Forbearance).

5. Stop being Uncaring

Let us assume that you see a classmate crying in the corner. You may be playing with your friends and having a great time. So you will not really feel like going and comforting your class mate. But God wants you to ‘choose’ to care—even when you do not feel like it.

- When you choose to start caring for people—even when you don’t really ‘feel’ like it— you will see a gradual change in your attitude towards people. You will begin to ‘feel’ more concerned and more burdened about them. God Himself will produce the Fruit of Kindness inside you.

6. Stop being Lazy to Help

Let us assume that your classmate was crying because she has no friends. It is not enough if you pat her on the back and say you are sorry. God will expect you to be a friend to her. If your other friends are not willing to let her join in the group, then you will have to sacrifice some of your time with them and create time for your new friend.

- It’s very easy to feel sorry for someone. But it takes much effort to go beyond merely feeling sorry and DO something about it. If you are willing to do this, over time you will start becoming more generous in your behavior with people. God Himself will produce the Fruit of Goodness inside you.

7. Don’t Give Up doing Good

Let us assume that you have been working very hard to be obedient and submissive to your parents. You have been doing it for an entire month and your parents are very pleased. But now you ‘feel tired’ of being good ... your patience is running out and you ‘feel’ like throwing a huge tantrum. What should you do?

- God says not to give up. Continue the good things that you were doing ... don’t stop! When you choose to ‘continue’ doing good, when you crush the

tempting thoughts of stopping, God will begin to produce inside you the Fruit of Faithfulness. You will see yourself turning into a stable and reliable person who doesn't change every other day.

8. Stop Hurting People

Let us assume that it amuses you to call your sister “funny names.” You're just being funny and you don't wish to hurt her. But if you notice that she doesn't like it, then God wants you to 'choose' to stop.

- Different people find different things 'hurtful.' If something you're saying or doing is hurting another person, then don't do it—even if you personally 'feel' it is harmless. If you start placing the needs of others first, in this manner, God will begin to produce in you the Fruit of Gentleness. You will turn into a person in whom people can actually see Christ!

9. Stop Ignoring the Holy Spirit's whisper

Let us assume that every time you do a particular thing, you feel a pricking in your heart. That's the Holy Spirit reminding you it is wrong. Make a deliberate choice to stop doing all such things—even if you don't feel like it.

- The more often you respond to the Holy Spirit in this way, the more God will start producing in you the Fruit of Self-Control. You will begin to notice inside you a special strength to resist sin and temptation.

Please Note: God DOES NOT forcefully produce His fruit in any person. He waits patiently for them to 'remain' in Him. When, through their actions, they show Him clearly that they want to remain in Him, then He begins to produce His fruit in us.

- **Galatians 5:22-23:** “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control ...”

Do you want the Fruit of the Spirit in your life? Then show God that you want to “remain attached” to Him by doing the following:

- Stop being Selfish
- Stop Grumbling
- Stop Worrying

- Don't react immediately when someone hurts/upsets you
- Stop being Uncaring
- Stop being Lazy to help
- Don't Give Up doing Good
- Stop Hurting People
- Stop ignoring the Holy Spirit's whisper

It is Your responsibility to get rid of the negative
It is God's responsibility to produce the positive inside you



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

If I choose not to be selfish, if I choose to share my things, will I immediately change into a perfectly loving person?

Spiritual growth doesn't happen instantly.

Did you know that the branches on a grape vine do not immediately start producing grapes, as soon as the vine is planted in the ground? The branches patiently remain attached to the vine for three years before grapes begin to grow on the branches.

In the same way, nobody can become perfectly Christ-like the moment they choose to stay attached to Jesus. It happens gradually.

Every day, we must patiently continue to stay attached to Jesus by giving up our selfishness, by refusing to grumble, by continuing to trust God, etc. Even as we do these things daily, we gradually begin to see a change in our attitude and behavior. We notice that we are becoming more loving, more joyful, and more patient with people.

To see these changes in our lives, we have to stay attached to Jesus on a daily basis.

What are some things I can do to stay attached to Jesus daily?

(Ask the children to come up with practical examples. The Teaching Content mentioned above contains some examples.)

What will happen if I don't stay attached to Jesus daily?

Such a person will not grow spiritually. They will not become Christ-like in their thoughts, words and deeds. The plans God has for their lives will never be fulfilled. They will live average lives and never experience the level of joy, peace and success (fruitfulness) that God had planned for them.



APPLICATION

Make a decision today to stay attached to Jesus on a daily basis. If you stick with your decision, you will see the Fruit of the Spirit coming alive in your life.



CLOSE WITH PRAYER



New Testament

Beatitudes



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To explain the background of the first two Beatitudes.
- To teach the importance of repentance.
- To emphasise that a personal belief in Jesus is the only way to heaven.



SCRIPTURE PORTIONS

Matthew 5:3-4, 19:16-26; Luke 6:20-21, 24-25; 1 Peter 5:7



MEMORY VERSE

Matthew 5:3-4: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted."

Materials Needed:

- Scissors
- Duct Tape
- Soft toy
- Other miscellaneous objects (bead, bowl, hanky, stapler, etc.)



RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- According to Jesus, what must we do to bear fruit in our lives?
- This week, what choices did you make to show Jesus you want to stay joined to Him? Give examples.
- Recite the Memory Verse given last week.



INTRODUCTION

In the first four weeks, we studied different aspects of who Jesus is. We saw His deity and His humanity. We studied the different symbols He used to describe Himself (His I Am Sayings). And we looked at His character. Then we began to study some of Jesus' teachings, starting with His teaching on fruit-bearing. This week we are going to take a closer look at the Beatitudes that Jesus taught during His Sermon on the Mount.

Note to Facilitator

Different Beatitudes are being covered at different age-levels:

Primary Level:

- Blessed are the poor in spirit
- Blessed are those who mourn

Junior Level:

- Blessed are the meek
- Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness
- Blessed are the merciful

Senior Level:

- Blessed are the pure in heart
- Blessed are the peacemakers
- Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness



ATTENTION GETTER

Activity: Stuff It!

Bind duct tape / cello tape around the closed blade of the scissors, so that the children cannot open the scissors or hurt themselves. Give the children different items, and ask them to squeeze these items through the eye-rings of the scissors handles.

Some items will be small enough to squeeze through. Others will be too large to squeeze through. Finally give them a small soft toy, and ask them to squeeze it through the eye-rings of the scissors handles. They may or may not be able to do it, depending on the size and flexibility of the toy.

Explain

The handle rings of a pair of scissors are called 'eye-rings.' In the same way the hole in a stitching needle is called the "eye of the needle."

Jesus said, "Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God" (Matthew 19:24).

What did Jesus mean by these words? And what does this verse have to do with the beatitudes? We will study these matters today.



TEACHING CONTENT

The Rich and the Needles' Eye (Matthew 19:16-26)

There was once a rich young man who worked very hard to be good. He told Jesus, "See, I have been very good. Is there anything else I have to do?"

Jesus said to the young man, "Go and sell everything you have and give your money to the poor." The young man was very surprised when Jesus said this. He had A LOT of money and he didn't want to give it away.

Jesus asked him to do this because He knew that the rich young man only loved God with a little bit of his heart. But he loved money with

soooooo much of his heart!

Sadly, the rich man walked away from Jesus because he thought his money was more important than God.

As Jesus watched the man go, He told His disciples, "Do you have any idea how difficult it is for the rich to enter God's kingdom? Let me tell you, it's easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for the rich to enter God's kingdom." When the disciples heard this, they were greatly surprised and asked, "Then who has any chance at all?"

Why the disciples were greatly surprised:

The disciples were under the wrong impression that it's easy for rich people to enter heaven. Rich people had enough money to sacrifice lots of animals at the Jerusalem Temple, whereas the poor could afford to sacrifice a lamb only once or twice a year. The disciples believed that the more sacrifices a person offers, the greater were the chances of God forgiving that person's sins!

However Jesus corrected the wrong impression they had. He looked hard at the disciples and said, "There are some things that people cannot do, but God can do anything."

What God Can Do

Later Jesus explained this teaching more clearly to all His followers, so that they could record it in the Bible (Luke 24:27, 44-47; Acts 1:3).

Jesus explained that a person's sins are not forgiven simply because he sacrifices a hundred animals at the Jerusalem temple. Rather a person's sins are forgiven because Jesus paid the punishment for that person's sins on the Cross.

So a person does not have to be rich and make lots of animal sacrifices to enter heaven!

Jesus' Words On the Mountain Near Galilee

On one occasion, when hundreds of people gathered on the mountain near Galilee, Jesus decided to teach them some important things. So He started off by saying this:

Matthew 5:3: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

The people must have been so thrilled when Jesus spoke these beautiful words to them!

- It gave poor people the assurance that even if they were extremely poor, it was okay (Luke 6:20). God had made an arrangement so that anyone who believed in Him could go to heaven—irrespective of whether they could afford animal sacrifices or not.
- It also gave a deep assurance to sinful people who were “spiritually poor.” Even if they were rotten sinners God was willing to forgive them, if they repented of their sins and made a commitment to follow Him!



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

Who are the “spiritually poor?”

Some people do lots of good deeds, and they believe God will reward them for their good deeds. They ‘feel’ spiritually rich. But some people are so sinful that they know they have no hope of getting any reward at all! Such people feel as if they’re “spiritually poor.”

Jesus explained that, both the people who do good deeds and those who are spiritually poor, can enter heaven ONLY by placing their trust in Him. He is ready to forgive the sins of both categories of people if they put their faith in Him and commit to follow Him.

Note: Spiritually speaking, ALL people are spiritually poor (including those who do lots of good deeds) because nobody’s good deeds can match the level of spiritual perfection that God expects.

On the mountain near Galilee, Jesus said “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.” What do you think ‘mourn’ means? What was Jesus trying to say?

To mourn means to “feel very sad about.” Jesus talked about two kinds of mourning (Matthew 5:4, Luke 6:21).

- He wanted people to mourn—to feel very sad about—their sinfulness, and repent of their sins. He promised to comfort all such repentant people by forgiving them and taking them to heaven after death.
- Also there are people who ‘mourn’ because they are facing great difficulties in their personal lives. Jesus promised to comfort and help even such people (1 Peter 5:7).

Jesus said, “... it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God” (Matthew 19:24). What do you think Jesus meant by this?

Do you remember how you tried to squeeze the soft toy through the eye-rings of the scissors, and how tough that was! It’s easier for that soft toy to squeeze through the eye-rings than for a rich person to squeeze into God’s kingdom!

Ever year Forbes Magazine gives a list of the richest billionaires on earth. Many of the people mentioned on this list know who Jesus is. They are educated people who have heard His name. But almost none of them are believers!

Do you know why this is so? It’s probably because they’re too busy making money to find time for spiritual things. Their money makes them feel so safe and secure that they don’t worry about death and hell. Because they don’t take the time to find out about Jesus, they don’t discover the important truth that a person can enter heaven only by making a commitment to Jesus.

This is why Jesus said that many rich people will not be able to enter heaven. He knew that the greed for money would distract them from turning to Him.

Jesus said, “But woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort ... Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep” (Luke 6:24-25). What do you think ‘woe’ means? What was Jesus trying to say?

The Israelites used the word ‘woe’ when speaking a curse upon someone. Jesus said that the rich who refused to trust Him and follow Him would be cursed. Their

riches would comfort them as long as they remained alive; but after death they would go to hell and receive no comfort there. Rich people, who laughed over their sins and failed to repent, would mourn and weep in hell one day!



APPLICATION

It doesn't matter whether we're rich or poor, and whether we have done lots of good deeds or lots of rotten deeds. God expects all of us to 'mourn' for our sins and repent.

It's not enough to just feel sad about our sins ... we must be willing to give them up and make a commitment to follow Jesus. If we sincerely do this, then the Lord will forgive us and take us to heaven after death.

- So the first step is to repent of our sins and commit to follow Jesus for the rest of our lives.
- Second, we must stop worrying about our needs and place them before the Lord, fully expecting Him to answer our prayers (because Jesus said, "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God" Luke 6:20).
- Third, we must fully expect the Lord to heal us of our emotional hurts (because Jesus said, "Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh" Luke 6:21).

Note: If any of the children have not accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior, please explain the salvation plan to them and lead them in prayer.



CLOSE WITH PRAYER



New Testament

Kingdom of God



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To show how the Kingdom of God is already here.
- To teach that we are officers in the Kingdom of God.
- To explain how we can spread the Kingdom of God.



SCRIPTURE PORTIONS

Luke 17:20-21; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; Acts 22:15; Matthew 5:16; 2 Thessalonians 2:7



MEMORY VERSE

Luke 17:21: "... the kingdom of God is within you."

Materials Needed:

- Yeast or baking powder
- Dough
- Plate
- Finger Bowl of water



RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- Who are the “spiritually poor?”
- How do we become “spiritually rich?” (Through salvation)
- Recite the Memory Verse given for last week.



INTRODUCTION

In the first four weeks, we studied different aspects of who Jesus is. We saw His deity and His humanity. We studied the different symbols He used to describe Himself (His I Am Sayings). And we looked at His character. Then we began to study some of Jesus’ teachings, starting with His teaching on fruit-bearing. This week we will take a closer look at Jesus’ teaching on the Kingdom of God.

Note to Facilitator

Different aspects of the Kingdom of God are being covered at different age-levels:

Primary Level:

- Invisible Kingdom of God

Junior Level:

- Power of the Kingdom of God

Senior Level:

- What is the Kingdom of God?
- Who is part of the Kingdom of God?



ATTENTION GETTER

Activity: Invisible Yeast

Take some yeast to the class and show it to the kids. Explain that when the yeast is mixed into the dough, it causes the dough to rise, thus

creating a pizza-base. While they're watching, mix the yeast into a plate of dough. Then ask a volunteer to find the yeast in the dough. The child will be unable to do so.

Explain

Once the yeast is kneaded into a lump of dough, you can't see it anymore. You can pick the lump apart, but you will never see the yeast. It is working, though; you can count on that. In the same way, we can't always see what God is doing in the world. His plans may seem to be hidden, but He is working all the time. Today we are going to learn about the very powerful Kingdom of God, and the important role that we play in it.



TEACHING CONTENT

The Hidden Kingdom of God

Ask

What is a 'kingdom?'

It is a country ruled by a king or queen.

Barbie is supposed to be the princess of which kingdom?

Kingdom of Meribella (*according to one of the animation movies*).

Where do you think Barbie's kingdom is located? Do you think it's in the Australian continent?

It's an imaginary kingdom that doesn't exist. It's purely fictional.

Where do you think God's kingdom is located?

(Some children may suggest that God's Kingdom is located in heaven.)

Explain

We read about imaginary kingdoms in fairytales. But the Kingdom of God is very real. This is what Jesus said about His Kingdom:

- **Luke 17:20-21:** “Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, ‘The coming of the kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is within you.’”

According to Jesus, the Kingdom of God is not just up there in heaven, but it is also down here among us right now. Even though God sits on His throne in heaven, He also lives in the hearts of believers. And through these believers, He accomplishes His purposes for the world.

Officers of the Kingdom

We don’t have ruling kings in most countries today. But we’re familiar with Presidents and Prime Ministers. How does a President rule? He has a lot of officers under him, and he exercises control through them.

- For example, the President uses the Police Department to control crime and maintain law and order.
- He uses the Municipal Department to ensure that everybody gets drinking water supply.
- He uses Government hospital staff to take care of the sick people.

In other words, he uses a lot of people to rule the land.

In the same way, God uses ordinary believers like you and me to take care of this world. Here are some practical ways in which God expects us to participate (including even children in the third or fourth standard!).

God Expects Us to Pray

1 Timothy 2:1-2 says, “I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanks giving be made everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.”

When God gave this instruction to believers, He genuinely expected them to obey what He had commanded. Yet most Christians do not bother to pray for the human rulers in their country.

You may be only a child, but the God living within you is NOT a child—He is the Great I AM! So if you sincerely pray to Him for the leaders and officers of the country, God will release His power to answer your prayers. Are you willing to make this commitment? Here are some simple points that you can pray for, starting today:

- Pray that no leader will be able to stop the preaching of the Gospel in India.
- Pray that God will place honest officers in important positions, to stop the corruption and injustice that’s going on in the country.
- Pray that God will anoint believers to become political leaders who will rule in a godly manner.

The prayers of little children are very powerful because they have a childlike faith that seems to be lacking in many grown-ups. So take this task seriously. You’re an Officer in God’s Kingdom, and God wants you to pray for the country!

God Expects Us to Talk About Him

Acts 22:15 says, “You will be his witness to all men of what you have seen and heard.”

Witnessing is NOT something that only pastors and preachers should do. It’s simply telling your friends what Jesus is doing for you on a daily basis.

- Tell them how Jesus answers your prayers.
- Tell them how Jesus has granted you salvation, making it possible for you to go to heaven after death.
- Tell them how Jesus healed a family member of some serious sickness.

Witnessing is simply telling people how Jesus has been blessing you and your family. When people listen to such witnessing, they too will want to become part of God’s Kingdom and enjoy the same benefits.

God Expects Us to Set an Example

Jesus commanded, “... Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).

Do not entertain evil, sinful thoughts in your mind. Do not speak rudely or use cheap

language. Choose to behave in a loving and godly manner. If you do these things, people will notice that you are different from others. They will begin to respect you; and they will want to know more about the Jesus whom you worship.

If you genuinely practice these three things in your school and neighbourhood, without your realizing it, the Kingdom of God will secretly begin to spread.

The Yeast

We cannot see the yeast in the dough. But we know that the yeast has been secretly working inside the dough when we see the dough rise. In the same way when you start practicing the three things mentioned above, you may not see any sudden changes. But God will begin His secret work inside the hearts of the people whom you have influenced and one day they will be changed.

Today, we are seeing a lot of corruption and injustice being exposed in India. It's because of the prayers and influence of Christian believers who have been sincerely playing their part.

When we sincerely do our part in the Kingdom of God, the Lord can transform an entire nation! Are you willing to play your part in this great move of God?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

Where is the Kingdom of God located?

God's throne is in heaven. But He also lives in the hearts of believers. So God's Kingdom is in heaven; but it is also here on the earth.

Then why is there evil?

God has given us the freedom to choose whether or not we want to serve Him. Many people use this free choice to do sinful things. As a result other people suffer. For example, if a person chooses to get drunk and drive and causes an accident, another innocent person may pay the price for it and end up in the hospital. So there is evil in this world mainly because people are using their free choice to do wrong things that hurt themselves and others.

On the other hand, we are the officers of the Kingdom of God. God expects us to bring people to the Lord so that they change their ways. And He expects us to pray and serve in society to bring about changes for good. 2 Thessalonians 2:7 says that the Holy Spirit is working through us to restrict the evil in this world.

How does a person become a part of the Kingdom of God?

By accepting Jesus as Lord and Saviour. No additional qualifications are required!



APPLICATION

- Ask the children to make a commitment to pray specifically for the country throughout the week (at least one prayer point per day). Some simple prayer points have been mentioned in the lesson above.
- Ask them to jot down the name of at least one non-Christian that they will witness to during the week (Witnessing can be as simple as sharing with someone about how Jesus answered a prayer request, etc.).
- Ask them to think of changes they can make in their behaviour/speech which will help them represent Christ better.

By doing these things, they can quietly begin to spread the Kingdom of God in their schools and neighbourhoods.



CLOSE WITH PRAYER

