

Eternity

UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: Jesus our Savior.

Scripture: John 10:18

Memory Verse: No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father. - John 10:18

The Children's Sermon

Good Friday is a very special day, and it's all about something amazing that Jesus did for us. You might wonder why it's called "Good" Friday when it's the day Jesus had to suffer and die on a cross. It seems like a sad day, doesn't it? But it's called "Good" because of the wonderful thing Jesus did for everyone in the world, including you and me.

Jesus wasn't caught by surprise or forced into doing something he didn't want to do. He told people, "No one takes my life away from me. I give it up of my own free will." (John 10:18a - GNB) That means Jesus chose to do this because he loves us so much.

This Good Friday sermon is a chance to think about Easter in a big, forever kind of way. It's not just about what happened a long, long time ago. It's about what Jesus did for you and for me. He made sure we could be with God forever. That's a huge, amazing gift!

When we talk about Good Friday, we remember how Jesus was very brave. He knew that to help us, he had to go through something very hard. But he did it anyway because he wants us to be with him forever. That's like the best gift ever!

Now, let's imagine something. Imagine you have a big, heavy backpack full of rocks. Each rock is a mistake we've made. Carrying it around would be so hard, right? Well, Jesus, on Good Friday, said, "Give me your backpack. I'll carry it for you." When he died on the cross, he took all those heavy rocks for us. That means we don't have to carry them anymore. We can feel light and happy because Jesus loves us that much.

But Good Friday is just the beginning of the story. Jesus did something even more amazing after that. But we'll save that part for Easter Sunday. For now, let's think about how kind and loving Jesus was on Good Friday.

This Good Friday sermon is a time to say thank you to Jesus. We can say, "Thank you, Jesus, for loving me so much that you would do something so hard for me." It's a good day to think about how we can show love to others, just like Jesus showed love to us.

We can also think about how to be brave like Jesus. Sometimes, we might have to do things that are hard or scary because it's the right thing to do. Jesus shows us that doing the right thing is always worth it, especially when it's about helping and loving others.

Now, let's do something special. Let's close our eyes and imagine Jesus is with us right now. He's smiling and giving us a big, warm hug. He's telling us, "I love you so much, and I'm always here for you." That's a pretty awesome feeling, isn't it?

And remember, Jesus wants us to share that love with everyone we meet. We can be kind, help others, and make sure no one feels alone or sad. That's how we can keep the spirit of Good Friday alive every day.

So, this Good Friday, let's make a promise. Let's promise to be kind, to be brave, and to love others just like Jesus loves us. And let's remember that because of what happened on Good Friday, we can be friends with God forever. That's the best news ever!

Dear God, thank you for loving us so much that you sent Jesus to be our Savior. Thank you, Jesus, for being so brave and loving us enough to take our mistakes onto yourself. Help us to remember your love and to share it with others. We love you, and we're so grateful for everything you do for us. Amen.

So, kids, that's what Good Friday is all about. It's a day to remember the big, amazing love Jesus has for us. And it's a day to think about how we can show that love to others too. Let's keep that love in our hearts, not just on Good Friday, but every day.

Bible Memory Verse

No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father. - John 10:18

You Will Need:

- Construction paper (various colors)
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Markers or crayons

-Stickers related to shepherding or sheep

Get Ready:

-Cut construction paper into large sheep and cross shapes ahead of time.

-Set up a crafting station with all materials easily accessible for the children.

Do This:

1. Have each child select a sheep and a cross shape from the construction paper.

Explain that the sheep represents us and the cross represents Jesus laying down His life for us, as mentioned in John 10:18.

2. Encourage the children to decorate their sheep and cross using markers, crayons, and stickers. While they work, discuss the meaning of the verse, emphasizing Jesus' sacrifice and His authority.

3. Once everyone has finished decorating, help the children glue their sheep onto the cross. This symbolizes our connection with Jesus through His sacrifice. Conclude the activity with a group discussion about how we can follow Jesus' example of love and sacrifice in our own lives.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A large printout of John 10:18

- Scissors

- Envelopes

- A blindfold

- A shepherd's staff (or any long stick)

- Small toy sheep or pictures of sheep

Get Ready:

1. Cut the verse John 10:18 into individual words or short phrases and place them into envelopes.
2. Hide these envelopes around your activity area.
3. Prepare a designated "sheepfold" area where the children will gather once they find an envelope.

Do this:

1. Divide the children into two teams: Shepherds and Sheep. Blindfold one child from the Shepherd team, giving them the shepherd's staff for guidance. This child is the "Shepherd seeking."
2. The Sheep team members are tasked with finding the hidden envelopes without being tagged by the Shepherd. If tagged, they must freeze until the round ends.
3. Once a Sheep finds an envelope, they must bring it back to the sheepfold without being tagged. If they make it, they open the envelope and read the part of John 10:18 inside, discussing briefly what they think it means regarding Jesus as our Savior.
4. The game continues until all envelopes are found and the verse is fully assembled and discussed. The roles then switch, with a new Shepherd seeking.
5. Conclude by discussing how Jesus, like a shepherd, willingly lays down His life for His sheep, highlighting His love and sacrifice for us.

Snack Activity: Shepherd's Staff Pretzels

You'll Need:

- Large soft pretzel sticks
- White chocolate chips
- Sprinkles (optional)
- Parchment paper

- Microwave-safe bowl
- Spoon

Get Ready: Lay out a piece of parchment paper on a flat surface where the pretzels can cool after being dipped.

Do this:

1. Read John 10:18 together and discuss how Jesus laid down His life for us willingly, like a shepherd protecting his sheep. Emphasize that no one took it from Him, but He did it out of love.
2. Melt the white chocolate chips in the microwave-safe bowl. Heat them in 30-second intervals, stirring in between, until fully melted. The white chocolate represents the purity and sacrifice of Jesus.
3. Dip one end of each pretzel stick into the melted white chocolate to create the look of a shepherd's staff. This represents Jesus as our shepherd, guiding and protecting us.
4. If desired, add sprinkles to the wet chocolate for decoration. Let the pretzels cool on the parchment paper until the chocolate has set.
5. As you enjoy the Shepherd's Staff Pretzels, reflect on the good shepherd's love and how we can follow His example by caring for one another.

Game Activity: Shepherd's Quest

You'll Need:

- A large open space, preferably outdoors
- Printed pictures of sheep (at least one per child)
- Printed picture of a shepherd's crook
- Tape or pins to attach pictures to children's clothing

- Blindfolds

Get Ready: Before the activity, print out enough sheep pictures for each child participating and one shepherd's crook picture. Attach a sheep picture to the back of each child's clothing using tape or pins, and choose an open area where the game will take place. Designate specific boundaries for the playing area to ensure safety.

Do this:

1. Explain to the children that this game is based on John 10:18, where Jesus talks about His authority to lay down His life and take it up again, showing His love and sacrifice for us. In this game, they will play the role of sheep who are trying to find their shepherd (Jesus) in the dark (blindfolded), symbolizing faith and trust in Jesus even when we can't see Him.
2. Select one child to be the 'shepherd' and give them the shepherd's crook picture to hold. This child will not be blindfolded. All other children will be the 'sheep' and will be blindfolded, representing our walk of faith where we don't see but still follow.
3. The shepherd will call out to the sheep from different areas within the designated playing field. The sheep must listen and move towards the voice of the shepherd, trying to find him. The first sheep to reach the shepherd wins the round and becomes the shepherd for the next round. The game continues as long as interest persists.

This game teaches children about trust, listening for Jesus' voice, and the importance of following Him, even when the path isn't clear.

Craft Activity: The Good Shepherd's Sacrifice

You'll Need:

- A large piece of construction paper (preferably green for grass)

- Cotton balls
- Glue
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons
- A printout of a simple sheep and shepherd outline

Get Ready: Print out enough sheep and shepherd outlines for each child in the class. Prepare a small reading area where you can read John 10:18 to the children.

Do this:

1. Begin by reading John 10:18 to the class, emphasizing Jesus' willingness to lay down His life for us, His sheep. Discuss the meaning of the scripture, focusing on the concept of Jesus as our shepherd who protects and sacrifices for us.
2. Give each child a piece of construction paper, a sheep and shepherd outline, cotton balls, glue, scissors, and markers or crayons. Have them cut out the sheep and shepherd and glue them onto the construction paper to create a scene.
3. Encourage the children to decorate their scene using the cotton balls to make the sheep fluffy and markers or crayons to add details to the shepherd and background. As they work, remind them that just like a shepherd cares for his sheep, Jesus cares for us and has given everything to keep us safe.

Prayer Activity: The Shepherd's Sacrifice

You'll Need:

- A Bible or printed verse of John 10:18
- Blank paper
- Coloring pens or pencils

Get Ready: Familiarize yourself with John 10:18 and think about the meaning of Jesus' sacrifice for us.

Do this:

1. Begin with a group discussion on John 10:18. Ask the children what they think it means when Jesus says, 'No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.'
2. Hand out the blank paper and coloring pens or pencils. Ask each child to draw a scene that represents the verse, focusing on Jesus as the good shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep.
3. After everyone has finished their drawings, gather the children in a circle. Invite each child to share their drawing and explain how it represents Jesus' sacrifice. End the activity with a prayer, thanking Jesus for His love and sacrifice, and asking for the courage to follow Him as our shepherd.