

Pleasing God – Not Man

LOWER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: Seeking God's approval rather than the approval of others.

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-4

Memory Verse: We speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts. -

1 Thessalonians 2:4

The Children's Sermon

A lot of people think the only way to find happiness is to get a good grade at school or a promotion at work or make lots of money. If all we do is aim to please people, we will be frustrated and disappointed. But in the Bible, it says that we should aim to please God. So that in everything we do, we should work to please God and not man. The Bible says that when we live to please God, we will have a full life ... a happy life.

Do you know that in God's eyes, you are so much more than the grade on your report card? Because of God's grace... In God's eyes, you are covered with gold stars!

Now, let's talk more about Pleasing God. Pleasing God doesn't mean we have to be perfect because nobody is perfect except God. But it means trying our best to do what God likes. It's like when you try to make a drawing for your mom or dad. You want them to be happy when they see it, right? Pleasing God is like that. We try to do things that make God happy.

One way to please God is by being kind. When you see someone sitting alone, you can go and sit with them. Or, if someone drops their books, you can help pick them up. These little acts of kindness show God that we love Him because we are loving others.

Another way to please God is by saying thank you. We can thank God for our food, our family, and our friends. When we say thank you, we show God that we see all the good things He gives us. It's like when someone gives you a present, and you say thank you. It makes them feel good. Saying thank you to God makes Him happy too.

We can also please God by listening. This means listening to our parents, teachers, and most importantly, listening to God. We listen to God by reading the Bible and praying. When we listen to what God says, we learn how to live in a way that pleases Him. It's like when you listen to your teacher's instructions and do your work well. Your teacher is happy, and you feel good too.

Pleasing God is not just for Sundays when we go to church. It's for every day. Whether we are at school, at home, or playing with friends, we can always find ways to please God. It's like having a special friend you want to make happy every day, not just on their birthday.

Sometimes, trying to please God might seem hard. We might mess up or forget. But the good thing is, God is very forgiving. When we say sorry and try again, God is pleased with our effort. It's like when you're learning to ride a bike, and you keep falling off. But you get back up and try again. Your parents are proud of you for not giving up. God feels the same way about us.

Pleasing God makes our hearts happy. It's a different kind of happiness than just getting what we want. It's a deep joy that comes from knowing we are living the way God wants us to. It's like the happiness you feel when you give someone a gift, and they really love it. Pleasing God fills us with that kind of joy.

So, remember, Pleasing God is the best way to find true happiness. It's not about being perfect or having everything we want. It's about trying our best to do what God likes, being kind, saying thank you, listening, and trying again when we mess up. And the most wonderful thing? God sees all our efforts, and He is pleased with us. Just like you are covered in gold stars in God's eyes.

Let's end with a prayer: Dear God, thank you for loving us and showing us how to live a happy life by Pleasing You. Help us to remember to be kind, to say thank you, to listen, and to try our best every day. We want to make You happy because You make us so happy. Amen.

Bible Memory Verse

We speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts. - 1 Thessalonians 2:4

You Will Need:

- Colored paper
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Stickers (optional)

Get Ready:

- Cut the colored paper into heart shapes, one for each child.
- Write the memory verse on a large piece of paper or a whiteboard where everyone can see it.

Do This:

1. Give each child a heart-shaped piece of paper and markers or crayons. Explain that the heart represents our heart and how we should aim to please God rather than others.
2. Ask the children to decorate their hearts with drawings or stickers that remind them of things they can do to please God (like helping others, praying, or being kind).
3. Once they are done, gather the children in a circle and have them share their decorated hearts, explaining how their decorations represent ways to please God. Encourage them to memorize the verse as a reminder to seek God's approval in everything they do.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- Paper hearts (one for each child)
- Markers or crayons
- A large poster board with "God's Approval" written at the top
- Tape or glue sticks
- Bible or printed excerpt of 1 Thessalonians 2:1-4

Get Ready:

- Prepare the paper hearts by cutting them out from colorful paper.
- Write "God's Approval" at the top of the poster board and hang it where all the children can see.

- Have the Bible passage (1 Thessalonians 2:1-4) ready to read or printed copies for the children.

Do this:

1. Start by reading 1 Thessalonians 2:1-4 together. Explain that sometimes people try to make others happy, but what's most important is making God happy because He loves us the most.
2. Give each child a paper heart and markers or crayons. Ask them to think about one thing they can do to seek God's approval instead of worrying about what others think. It could be being kind to a sibling, helping a friend, or saying thank you. Have them draw or write that action on their heart.
3. Once everyone is done, let each child come up and tape or glue their heart onto the "God's Approval" poster board. As they do, encourage them to say, "I choose to seek God's approval." Display the poster in your classroom as a reminder to always seek God's approval first.

Snack Activity: Heavenly Approval Fruit Boats

You'll Need:

- A variety of fruits (apples, bananas, oranges, etc.)
- Toothpicks
- Paper (to make sails)
- Markers or crayons

Get Ready: Wash all the fruits and set them on a table. Cut the paper into small squares to make sails for the boats.

Do this:

1. Choose your fruit and cut it in half. This fruit represents us, trying to be good and seeking approval. Just like we want to choose the best fruit, we should aim to seek God's approval because He knows what's best for us.
2. Use the toothpicks to attach the paper sail to your fruit half. On the sail, write or draw something that represents seeking God's approval, like a heart or a cross. This reminds us that just like the sail helps the boat move, seeking God's approval helps us move forward in life.
3. Share your fruit boat with someone else and tell them why seeking God's approval is important. This shows that just like sharing our snack, sharing God's love and what we learn is important too.

Game Activity: Heavenly Hopscotch

You'll Need:

- Sidewalk chalk
- A small stone or beanbag
- A large, open concrete area

Get Ready: Draw a large hopscotch grid on the concrete. Instead of numbers, write attributes that please God in each square (e.g., kindness, patience, love, joy, peace, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, and honesty).

Do this:

1. Before starting, gather the children and explain that in life, we aim to seek God's approval by living with the attributes that please Him, just like Paul talked about in 1 Thessalonians 2:1-4. Each square represents an attribute that God loves.

2. Have each child toss the stone or beanbag onto the hopscotch grid. They must skip the square with their stone and hop on one foot to the end of the grid and back, landing on the squares that represent God's pleasing attributes.
3. When they pick up the stone on their way back, ask them to say one way they can show the attribute they landed next to in their daily life. This encourages them to think about seeking God's approval in their actions rather than seeking approval from others.

Craft Activity: God's Approval Crown

You'll Need:

- Construction paper (various colors)
- Scissors
- Glue
- Markers or crayons
- Stickers or glitter (optional)

Get Ready: Cut a long strip from a piece of construction paper to make a crown band that can fit around a child's head. Prepare smaller pieces of paper for the children to write on.

Do this:

1. Have each child decorate the long strip (the crown band) with markers, stickers, or glitter. This represents their unique personality and the things they do.
2. Ask the children to think about things they can do to seek God's approval, such as being kind, telling the truth, or helping others. Have them write or draw these actions on the smaller pieces of paper.
3. Glue the smaller pieces of paper onto the crown band. Explain that these actions are like precious jewels in God's eyes, and when we seek His approval rather than others',

we are wearing a crown that pleases Him. Once the glue dries, fit the crown to each child's head and tape the ends together.

Prayer Activity: God's Thumbs-Up: Seeking His Approval

You'll Need:

- A copy of 1 Thessalonians 2:1-4 printed or available on a device
- Paper
- Crayons or markers

Get Ready: Read through 1 Thessalonians 2:1-4 and think about what it means to seek God's approval instead of trying to make everyone else happy.

Do this:

1. Start by asking the kids what it means to get a thumbs-up from someone. Explain that sometimes we want thumbs-ups from our friends, family, or teachers, but the most important thumbs-up we can get is from God.
2. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-4 together. Talk about how Paul was trying to please God, not people. Ask the kids why they think it's important to seek God's approval.
3. Give each child a piece of paper and crayons or markers. Ask them to draw a big thumbs-up on the paper. Inside the thumbs-up, have them write or draw things they can do to seek God's approval instead of just trying to make others happy. Examples could include being kind, praying, listening to their parents, or helping a friend.
4. Close with a prayer, asking God to help everyone remember to seek His approval in everything they do.