

# The Present Is A Gift From God

## UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

**Theme:** Worship

**Scripture:** Ephesians 1:18-19

**Memory Verse:** I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you. - Ephesians 1:18

## The Children's Sermon

Today, let's talk about a very special gift we all get, but sometimes we forget how special it is. This gift is called "today." You know, we often think about yesterday, which is all the days that have already happened. And we think about tomorrow, which are the days that haven't happened yet. But today, the day we are living right now, is a very special gift from God.

Yesterday is like a history book. It's full of stories that have already been told.

Tomorrow is like a mystery book. We don't know what the stories are going to be. But today, today is like opening a present from God. That's why we call it the "present." It's a gift!

Dear Lord, we want to thank you for today. Thank you for the sunshine, for letting us pray here in church, and for being with our family and friends. We know today is a special blessing from you.

Now, let's talk about something really cool in the Bible. In Ephesians 1:18-19, it talks about "Hope and Power." These are two amazing things that God gives us. Hope is like

when you really want something good to happen, and you believe it can happen. Power is the strength to do things, even when they're hard.

God's hope and power are special. They help us do good things today. When we wake up, we can say, "God, please give me hope and power for today." And guess what? He will! Because God loves giving us what we need to make today awesome.

Sometimes, we might feel sad or worried about yesterday or tomorrow. But Ephesians 1:18-19, "Hope and Power," reminds us that God is with us today. He gives us hope to feel happy about today and power to do our best.

Let's think of today like a big, beautiful playground. God gives us this playground to explore, learn, and have fun in. But, just like in a playground, we need to be kind, share, and help each other. That's how we make today even better, not just for us, but for everyone around us.

Remember, every morning when you wake up, God has already wrapped up a brand new day for you. It's like getting a present every single day! And inside this present are more gifts - hope and power. These gifts help us to do amazing things, like being kind to a friend, helping our family, or learning something new.

So, let's make a promise to each other. Let's promise to open today with a big smile, ready to use God's gifts of hope and power. Let's promise to make today the best day we can, filled with love, kindness, and fun. And let's remember to say "thank you" to God for this wonderful gift of today.

And at the end of the day, before we go to bed, let's think about all the fun things we did, the new things we learned, and the ways we were kind. Let's thank God for giving us the strength and hope to make today great. And let's ask Him to help us do it all over again tomorrow.

## Bible Memory Verse

**I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you. -**

### **Ephesians 1:18**

You Will Need:

- Blank paper
- Colored pencils or markers
- Glitter glue

Get Ready:

- Gather all materials and set up a workspace for each child.
- Print out or write the memory verse on a large piece of paper to display.

Do This:

1. Ask the children to draw what they think 'the eyes of your heart' might look like on the blank paper using pencils or markers. Encourage creativity!
2. Have them write the memory verse around or below their drawing.
3. Let them decorate their artwork with glitter glue to 'enlighten' it, symbolizing the enlightenment of our hearts to God's hope.

# Bible Interactive Experience

## You'll Need:

- A large poster board and markers
- A small flashlight for each child
- Printouts of Ephesians 1:18-19 (NIV or preferred version)
- Sticky notes and pens
- A world map or globe

## Get Ready:

- Write Ephesians 1:18-19 on the poster board in large, readable letters.
- Prepare the small flashlights by ensuring they work and have batteries.
- Print enough copies of Ephesians 1:18-19 so each child can have one.
- Set up a designated area with the world map or globe.

## Do this:

1. **\*\*Illuminate the Scripture\*\***: Hand out the flashlights and dim the lights. Ask the children to shine their flashlights on the poster board while you read Ephesians 1:18-19 aloud. Discuss how God's power and hope can illuminate our lives and the world around us.
  
2. **\*\*Eyes of Your Heart Craft\*\***: Give each child a printout of Ephesians 1:18-19 and sticky notes. Have them write or draw on the sticky notes about the hopes they have for themselves, their family, or the world that align with the scripture. They will then stick these notes around the verse on their paper, symbolizing the "eyes of their heart" being enlightened by God's promises.

3. **\*\*Prayer Globe\*\***: Gather the children around the world map or globe. Ask them to think of a country or place they feel needs hope and God's power. They will then say a short prayer for that place, asking God to enlighten the hearts of people there, as described in Ephesians 1:18-19. This activity helps children apply the scripture by praying for others and recognizing the global church community.

## Snack Activity: Eyes of Your Heart Fruit Parfaits

You'll Need:

- Clear plastic cups
- A variety of colorful fruits (e.g., blueberries, strawberries, kiwi, mango)
- Vanilla yogurt
- Granola
- Plastic spoons

Get Ready: Wash all the fruits and cut them into small pieces.

Do this:

1. Discuss Ephesians 1:18-19, focusing on the phrase 'the eyes of your heart being enlightened.' Ask the kids what it means to have the 'eyes of their hearts' enlightened by God's wisdom and hope.
2. Begin layering your parfait by placing a spoonful of vanilla yogurt at the bottom of your clear cup. Explain that the yogurt represents the foundation of our faith - God's love and grace.
3. Add a layer of fruit on top of the yogurt. Choose different colors to represent the diversity of God's gifts and blessings. As you add each layer, encourage the kids to share a blessing in their life or a way they've seen God's power at work.

4. Sprinkle a layer of granola on top of the fruit. The granola represents the 'riches of his glorious inheritance' mentioned in Ephesians 1:18. It's something special and valuable, just like the inheritance we have in Christ.

5. Add another layer of yogurt and repeat the process until the cup is full. Finish with a final layer of granola.

6. As they eat their parfaits, encourage the kids to reflect on the hope to which God has called us, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and His incomparably great power for us who believe.

## Game Activity: Ephesians Power Path

You'll Need:

- Sidewalk chalk
- Small stones or beanbags
- Printed verses from Ephesians 1:18-19

Get Ready: Use the sidewalk chalk to draw a large hopscotch grid on the ground. Each square should be large enough for a child to stand in comfortably. Number the squares from 1 to 10. Write one word from Ephesians 1:18-19 in each square in order, so as they hop through, they're also reciting the scripture. Place the printed verses at the start for reference.

Do this:

1. Each child takes a turn tossing their stone or beanbag onto square one. Before they start hopping, they must read Ephesians 1:18-19 aloud to the group.
2. The child then hops through the path, skipping the square with their stone or beanbag. If the path has a square with two feet, they land with both feet, and if it's a

single square, they hop on one foot. They must say the word in each square as they hop on it.

3. When they reach the end of the hopscotch, they turn around and hop back, picking up their stone or beanbag on the way back. Upon returning to the start, they share one thing they hope for in their future, inspired by the 'hope to which he has called you' from the scripture.

The game continues until all children have had a turn. The aim is to reinforce the scripture in their minds and hearts through physical activity and reflection on their personal hopes and God's power.

## Craft Activity: Ephesians 1:18-19 Treasure Chest

You'll Need:

- A small cardboard or wooden box (treasure chest)
- Paint and paintbrushes
- Glitter, stickers, and decorative items
- Printed verse Ephesians 1:18-19
- Scissors

Get Ready: Prepare a workspace with newspapers or a tablecloth to protect the surface. Pre-cut the Ephesians 1:18-19 verses into small strips that can fit inside the treasure chests.

Do this:

1. Have each child paint and decorate their treasure chest. Encourage creativity, they can paint it gold or any color they like, and use glitter and stickers to make it unique.

2. While the paint is drying, discuss Ephesians 1:18-19. Ask the children what it means to have the 'eyes of your heart enlightened' and how knowing the 'hope to which He has called you' is like discovering a great treasure.

3. Once the chests are dry, have the children cut out the Ephesians 1:18-19 verse if not pre-cut and place it inside their chest. Explain that this verse is a treasure for their heart, reminding them of the hope and power we have in Christ.

## Prayer Activity: Eyes of Your Heart

You'll Need:

- A Bible or printed copy of Ephesians 1:18-19
- A large poster board
- Markers or colored pencils

Get Ready: Before the activity, write 'Ephesians 1:18-19' at the top of the poster board. Draw a large, open eye underneath it to symbolize 'the eyes of your heart.' Leave plenty of space around the eye for writing.

Do this:

1. Begin by reading Ephesians 1:18-19 aloud together. Discuss what it means to have 'the eyes of your heart enlightened' and how this can help us know the hope to which God has called us.
2. Ask each child to think of a prayer request that reflects the hope and power mentioned in these verses. It could be a personal hope, a hope for the community, or a hope for the world.
3. Have each child write or draw their prayer request around the eye on the poster board. Encourage creativity! They can write words, draw pictures, or both.

4. Once everyone has added their prayer request, gather around the poster board. Lay hands on it as a symbol of unity and pray together, asking God to open the eyes of our hearts to see His hope and power in our lives and in the world.