

Following The Leader

UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: Following Jesus

Scripture: Leviticus 22:31

Memory Verse: Keep my commands and follow them. I am the Lord. - Leviticus 22:31

The Children's Sermon

Hey kids! Today, we're going to talk about something really important. It's about who we choose to follow in our lives. Imagine you're playing follow the leader. You would want to follow someone who knows where they're going, right? Well, in life, we have the best leader we could ever choose to follow, and His name is Jesus.

In the Bible, in Leviticus 19:37, it says, "Keep all my decrees and all my laws and follow them. I am the LORD." That's like God saying, "Hey, I've got some really good advice for you. If you follow it, things will go well." And then, in Matthew 4:19, Jesus tells us, "Come, follow me," and He promises to teach us how to fish for people. That means He wants to show us how to help others and share His love.

Jesus said "Follow me" a lot of times. I found at least 20 times in the Bible! So, it's super important. When we choose to follow Jesus, we're choosing the best leader ever. He knows everything, loves everyone, and always knows the right thing to do.

Now, you might wonder, "How do I follow Jesus?" Well, it's like following the best kind of friend. You listen to what He says, you learn about His life, and you try to act like Him.

Jesus is kind, loving, and forgiving. So, when we follow Jesus, we try to be kind, loving, and forgiving too.

Imagine you're on a playground, and you see someone playing alone. Following Jesus might mean going over to that person and asking if they want to play with you. Or, if someone says something mean, instead of saying something mean back, you remember that Jesus teaches us to be kind and forgiving. So, you choose to be nice or walk away instead.

The apostle Paul, a very wise man who followed Jesus, said in 1 Corinthians 11:1, "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ." That means we can also look at people who follow Jesus and learn from them. Maybe it's your parents, a teacher, or a friend at church. When they do things like Jesus, we can learn to do the same.

Following Jesus isn't just for Sundays at church; it's for every day. When you wake up, you can say, "Today, I'm going to follow Jesus." That might mean sharing your toys, helping your parents without being asked, or saying kind words to your brother or sister.

Sometimes, following Jesus can be hard. Maybe your friends want to do something you know isn't right. Following Jesus means choosing to do what's right, even when it's tough. But the cool thing is, Jesus promises to be with us and help us when things are hard. He's like the best coach, cheering us on and giving us tips on how to do better.

And guess what? When we follow Jesus, we get to share His love with others. It's like being a light in a dark room. When you're kind and loving, other people see that light

and might decide they want to follow Jesus too. So, by following Jesus, you're helping others find the best leader too.

Remember, following Jesus is a big adventure. It's not always easy, but it's the best choice we can make. Every day, we can choose to listen to Him, learn from Him, and love like Him. And when we mess up, because everyone does sometimes, Jesus is always ready to forgive us and help us try again.

So, let's all try to follow Jesus every day. Let's be kind, let's be loving, and let's share His light with everyone we meet. And when we're not sure what to do, we can ask ourselves, "What would Jesus do?" That's a great way to make sure we're following the best leader of all, Jesus.

PRAY: Dear Jesus, thank you for being the best leader we can follow. Help us to listen to You, learn from You, and love like You. When things are hard, please help us to remember You're with us, guiding us every step of the way. We want to follow You every day and share Your love with everyone we meet. Amen.

Bible Memory Verse

Keep my commands and follow them. I am the Lord. - Leviticus

22:31

You Will Need:

- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons
- Stickers with themes of commandments (optional)

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into heart shapes, one for each child.
- Write the memory verse on a large piece of paper or whiteboard for all to see.

Do This:

1. Give each child a heart-shaped piece of construction paper and access to markers or crayons. Explain that the heart represents their love and commitment to following God's commands.
2. Ask the children to decorate their hearts with drawings or stickers that remind them of different commands of God they can follow in their daily lives. Encourage creativity!
3. Once everyone has finished decorating, gather the children in a circle. Have each child share one way they can follow God's commands, inspired by their decorated heart. Conclude by reciting the memory verse together, emphasizing the importance of keeping and following God's commands.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- Bible or printed verse of Leviticus 22:31
- Large poster board
- Markers or colored pencils
- Sticky notes
- A "Follow Jesus" path made from paper or cloth on the floor

Get Ready:

- Write Leviticus 22:31 on the poster board and decorate it.

- Create a "Follow Jesus" path on the floor with paper or cloth, making sure it has a clear start and end point.

Do this:

1. Start by reading Leviticus 22:31 together: "Keep my commands and follow them. I am the Lord."
2. Discuss what it means to follow God's commands in everyday life. Have each child write one way they can follow God's commands on a sticky note.
3. Each child takes turns walking the "Follow Jesus" path, placing their sticky note on the poster board at the end. As they walk, encourage them to think about their commitment to follow Jesus and keep His commands.

Snack Activity: Follow the Recipe: Keeping My Commandments Cookies

You'll Need:

- 1 cup of unsalted butter (softened)
- 1 cup of sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract
- 3 cups of all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon of baking powder
- A pinch of salt
- Cookie cutters (cross and heart shapes)
- Rolling pin
- Baking sheets
- Parchment paper

- Mixing bowls
- Electric mixer or whisk

Get Ready: Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C) and line your baking sheets with parchment paper.

Do this:

1. In a large mixing bowl, cream together the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg and vanilla extract. Gradually blend in the flour, baking powder, and a pinch of salt. Mix until the dough comes together.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the dough to 1/4 inch thickness. Use your cookie cutters to cut out shapes that remind us of Jesus' commandments - hearts for love and crosses for sacrifice. Place cookies on the prepared baking sheets.
3. Bake in the preheated oven for 8 to 10 minutes or until cookies are lightly golden. Let them cool on the baking sheet for a few minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

As you enjoy your 'Keeping My Commandments Cookies', remember Leviticus 22:31, 'Keep my commands and follow them. I am the Lord.' Just like following a recipe leads to delicious cookies, following God's commandments leads to a fulfilling life.

Game Activity: Follow the Commandment Path

You'll Need:

- Sidewalk chalk
- A large open area (preferably a paved surface)
- Bible verses printed on paper (including Leviticus 22:31)

Get Ready: Use the sidewalk chalk to draw a large path on the pavement, making sure to create enough space for multiple 'stations' along the path. Write a different commandment or Bible verse at each station, ensuring Leviticus 22:31 is one of them. Place the printed verses next to their corresponding station.

Do this:

1. Divide the children into teams. The goal is for each team to hop from the start of the path to the end, stopping at each station to read and perform a task related to the verse written there. For Leviticus 22:31 ('Keep my commands and follow them. I am the Lord.'), the task could be to come up with a real-life scenario where they can apply this commandment.
2. Each team takes turns navigating the path. At each station, one team member reads the verse aloud to the group, and then the team performs the task or answers a question related to the verse.
3. After completing all stations, teams gather to discuss what they learned about following Jesus and keeping His commandments. The game concludes with a prayer, asking for God's help in applying these lessons in their daily lives.

Craft Activity: Faithful Footsteps

You'll Need:

- A large roll of paper (butcher paper or something similar)
- Markers or paint
- Bible verse cards (create cards with Leviticus 22:31 written on them)

Get Ready: Lay the roll of paper out on the floor to create a long path. Write 'Leviticus 22:31' at the start of the path.

Do this:

1. Discuss Leviticus 22:31 ('Keep my commands and follow them. I am the Lord.') with the children. Talk about what it means to follow God's commands in our daily lives.
2. Have each child take a Bible verse card and read it aloud. After reading, they will dip their feet in paint (or use markers if preferred) and walk along the paper path, leaving footprints. As they walk, encourage them to think about the ways they can follow God's commands.
3. At the end of the path, have the children write one way they can follow God's commands this week next to their footprints. This creates a visual and physical representation of their commitment to 'follow' God's commands.

Prayer Activity: Walking in His Commands

You'll Need:

- A Bible or printed copy of Leviticus 22:31
- A large poster board and markers
- Sticky notes and pens

Get Ready: Write Leviticus 22:31 on the poster board in large, readable letters. Prepare a space in your classroom where all students can gather around the poster board.

Do this:

1. Begin by reading Leviticus 22:31 together: 'Keep my commands and follow them. I am the Lord.' Discuss what it means to follow God's commands in our daily lives.
2. Ask each student to think of one way they can follow God's commands this week. They should write this commitment on a sticky note.

3. Have each student come up and stick their note on the poster board. Then, as a group, pray over the commitments, asking God to help each person follow through with their promise to keep and follow His commands.