

# Seashells

## UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

**Theme:** Seeing beauty in others

**Scripture:** John 9

**Memory Verse:** While I am in the world, I am the light of the world. - John 9:5

## The Children's Sermon

I remember the stories from Sunday School when I was a little kid... about how Jesus stopped what he was doing to help broken people... The blind man he healed or the man who couldn't walk or the man who had sores on his body; Yep, Jesus stops to pick up broken people; I'm SO GLAD Jesus is not a bad friend. Jesus sees something beautiful in each of us, and He knows just where He can use us. And He especially likes the broken ones, cause we've been stepped on and thrown back so many times, we're just happy He could see something pretty in us.

Let's Pray: Lord, We know God made us all, and even though we aren't perfect, there's something beautiful in each of us that You can see; Teach us to have eyes like Jesus; Eyes that look beyond the broken parts to find something in everybody that is beautiful. Slow us down so that we take the time to look, stop, and pick up the beautiful people and shells scattered in our path.

Now, let's talk more about how Jesus helps those who are hurt or feel left out. One day, Jesus was walking with his friends, and they saw a man who could not see. This man was blind from when he was born. People walked by him every day, maybe not even

saying hello. But Jesus stopped. He always had time for people who needed help. This story is called Jesus heals the blind man.

Jesus didn't just walk by; he saw the man and wanted to help. He knew that everyone deserves love and kindness, no matter what. Jesus then did something amazing. He made mud, put it on the man's eyes, and told him to go wash in a pool. When the man did what Jesus said, he could see for the first time! Imagine how happy he must have been. This shows us that Jesus has the power to change things. He can turn sad things into happy things.

But why did Jesus use mud? Well, sometimes Jesus does things in ways we don't expect. It's like when we're making a picture. We might use different colors or shapes to make something beautiful. Jesus uses different ways to show his love and make our lives better.

Remember, Jesus heals the blind man, not just to show he could do miracles, but to teach us something very important. He wants us to know that everyone matters. No one is too small or too unimportant for him. He looks at us and sees what we can be, not just what we are right now.

And you know what? Just like Jesus helped the blind man, he wants to help us too. Sometimes we might feel sad, or we have problems that seem too big. But Jesus is always there. He listens when we talk to him, and he can help make things better. We just have to trust him and follow what he says, just like the blind man did.

Jesus also teaches us to be helpers. When we see someone who is sad or needs a friend, we can be like Jesus. We can stop, look, and help. Maybe we can share our toys,

give a hug, or just listen. It's not always about doing big things. Small acts of kindness show Jesus's love too.

And remember, it's okay to be different. Jesus didn't choose people who were perfect. He chose people who were different, people who made mistakes, and people who were not always chosen by others. He made them his friends and showed them they were special. So, if you ever feel left out or think you're not good enough, remember Jesus heals the blind man and he sees something beautiful in you too.

Let's try to be like Jesus. Let's be kind, let's help others, and let's see the good in people. Even when someone seems different, remember, Jesus loves them, and we should too.

So, what can we do this week to be like Jesus? Maybe we can help at home without being asked. Or we can play with someone at school who is often alone. Every time we do something kind, we are showing Jesus's love to the world.

Let's finish with a prayer: Dear Jesus, thank you for loving us and for showing us how to love others. Help us to see the good in everyone, just like you do. Give us the courage to help and to be kind, even when it's hard. We want to be like you, Jesus, loving and caring for all. Amen.

Remember, kids, Jesus loves each of us, no matter what. He's always ready to help, just like he helped the blind man. Let's go out and share that love with everyone we meet.

**Bible Memory Verse**

## **While I am in the world, I am the light of the world. - John 9:5**

You Will Need:

- Blindfolds
- Obstacle course materials (chairs, cones, soft toys)
- Flashlights

Get Ready:

- Set up an obstacle course in a safe area, using chairs, cones, and soft toys as obstacles.
- Gather enough blindfolds and flashlights for each child.

Do This:

1. Divide the children into pairs. One child in each pair will be blindfolded, and the other will have a flashlight. The child with the flashlight is the 'light of the world' for their partner.
2. The child with the flashlight must guide their blindfolded partner through the obstacle course using only the light from the flashlight. They cannot touch their partner or the obstacles.
3. After each pair completes the course, discuss how Jesus being the light of the world helps us see and navigate through the obstacles in life. Encourage the children to memorize John 9:5, reminding them that Jesus guides us through our challenges.

## **Bible Interactive Experience**

You'll Need:

- A Bible or printed copies of John 9
- Blindfolds (1 per child)

- A variety of objects with different textures (e.g., a soft toy, a piece of sandpaper, a smooth stone, etc.)
- Art supplies (paper, crayons, markers, etc.)
- Sticky notes and pens

#### Get Ready:

- Set up an area where the texture objects can be easily reached by blindfolded children.
- Prepare a space for the art activity with all supplies easily accessible.
- Have John 9 ready to be read aloud or assign parts to children for a more interactive storytelling experience.

#### Do this:

1. **\*\*Introduction to Seeing Beyond Sight\*\***: Begin by discussing the story of Jesus healing the blind man in John 9. Emphasize how Jesus saw the man's potential and worth, beyond his physical blindness. Ask the children how they think the blind man felt before and after his encounter with Jesus.
  
2. **\*\*Blindfolded Discovery\*\***: Pair the children up and blindfold one partner. The non-blindfolded partner will gently guide their partner to the table with the textured objects. The blindfolded child will then guess the objects by touch alone. After each child has a turn, discuss how relying on other senses can offer a new perspective on the world, similar to how Jesus wants us to see the beauty in others beyond their appearance.
  
3. **\*\*Seeing Beauty in Others Art Project\*\***: Have the children remove their blindfolds and provide them with art supplies. Ask them to draw or write about a time someone

saw the beauty in them or a time they saw the beauty in someone else, inspired by the story of John 9. Encourage creativity and sharing of stories.

4. **Affirmation Sticky Notes**: Conclude the activity by having each child write a positive attribute or an encouraging message on a sticky note. Then, have them exchange notes with someone else in the class, sticking the note on their partner's back like a "pat on the back." This act symbolizes seeing and affirming the beauty in each other, as Jesus does for us.

5. **Reflection and Prayer**: Gather the children and reflect on what they learned about seeing the beauty in others and how they can apply this lesson in their daily lives. Close with a prayer asking God to help them see others as He does, with love and compassion.

## Snack Activity: Blind Man's Faith Fruit Cups

You'll Need:

- Variety of fruits (e.g., grapes, strawberries, blueberries, bananas)
- Clear plastic cups
- Honey or yogurt
- Plastic knives
- Cutting boards

Get Ready: Wash all fruits and set them out on a table along with the cutting boards and plastic knives.

Do this:

1. Discuss John 9, focusing on how Jesus healed the blind man and how we can 'see' the beauty in others through acts of kindness. Ask the children to think of a fruit that represents a friend or family member's best quality (e.g., strawberries for love, bananas for uniqueness).
2. Have each child select fruits that represent positive qualities of people they know and carefully cut them into smaller pieces if necessary. Remind them to see the beauty in the variety of fruits, just as we should see the beauty in the variety of people around us.
3. Let the children layer their fruits in the clear cups, creating a 'Faith Fruit Cup.' As they do this, encourage them to share why they chose each fruit for their cup. Drizzle honey or add a spoon of yogurt on top to represent the sweetness of seeing and bringing out the best in others.
4. Conclude by enjoying the fruit cups together, reflecting on how we can be more like Jesus by recognizing and celebrating the unique qualities in everyone.

## Game Activity: Blindfolded Beauty

You'll Need:

- Blindfolds (1 per child)
- Large open space
- Obstacle course items (cones, ropes, soft balls, etc.)

Get Ready: Set up a simple obstacle course in the large open space using the cones, ropes, and soft balls. Make sure there are clear start and finish lines.

Do this:

1. Divide the children into pairs, and explain that one partner will be blindfolded while the other will guide them through the obstacle course using only their words. The goal is to navigate the course without touching any obstacles.
2. Before starting, gather the children and discuss John 9, focusing on how Jesus helped the blind man see and how we can help others 'see' the beauty in the world and in themselves.
3. After the discussion, let each pair take turns navigating the obstacle course. Once everyone has had a turn, gather the children again and encourage them to share how it felt to trust someone else's guidance and how this relates to trusting in God and seeing the beauty in others.

## Craft Activity: Seeing Beauty Through God's Eyes

You'll Need:

- Construction paper in various colors
- Markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Magazines for cutting out pictures (optional)
- A printed copy of John 9 for each child

Get Ready: Before the class, read through John 9 to familiarize yourself with the story of Jesus healing the blind man. Prepare a short summary to share with the children. Set up a crafting area with all the materials neatly organized and accessible.

Do this:



1. Begin with a discussion about the story in John 9, focusing on how Jesus saw the man born blind and chose to heal him, showing us that everyone is valuable in God's eyes. Ask the children how they can see beauty in others, just like Jesus did.
2. Give each child a piece of construction paper and ask them to draw a large pair of glasses in the center. Inside the glasses, they will create a collage or drawing that represents seeing the beauty in others through God's eyes. They can use the magazines to cut out images, draw with markers, or write words that remind them of God's love and how we should see others.
3. Once everyone has finished their artwork, allow each child to share their creation with the group, explaining the images or words they chose and how it relates to the story of John 9 and seeing beauty in others as Jesus does. Encourage positive feedback and discussion among the children about what they learned through this activity.

## Prayer Activity: Seeing Beauty in Others Through God's Eyes

You'll Need:

- A Bible or a printed copy of John 9
- Small mirrors (one per child)
- Sticky notes and pens

Get Ready: Read through John 9 to familiarize yourself with the story of Jesus healing the man born blind. Consider how Jesus saw the man differently than everyone else did.

Do this:

1. Begin by reading John 9 together as a class. Discuss how people in the story viewed the blind man and how Jesus saw him differently.
2. Give each child a mirror and ask them to look at themselves. Ask them to think about how God sees them, beyond their physical appearance.
3. Hand out sticky notes and pens. Instruct the children to write down positive qualities or gifts they see in each other, focusing on inner beauty and character traits rather than physical attributes. They should then stick these notes on the corresponding child's mirror.
4. Conclude with a group prayer, asking God to help everyone see others as He does, recognizing the beauty in everyone.