

Stained Glass Windows

LOWER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: Our lives can be compared to stained glass windows

Scripture: Psalms 34:18

Memory Verse: The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. - Psalms 34:18

The Children's Sermon

Imagine you have a favorite toy, but one day, it breaks. You might feel sad, right? But what if I told you that sometimes, when things break, they can still be beautiful, or even become more special? This is a little like our lives. Sometimes, we feel broken inside because of things that happen to us or mistakes we make. But there is beauty in that brokenness, just like there is beauty in a toy that's been fixed with care.

Each one of us has parts of our lives that feel broken. Maybe you had a fight with a friend, or you didn't do well on a test even though you studied really hard. When we look at these broken pieces, we might feel sad or upset. But guess what? We can learn from them and become stronger, kinder people. It's like putting the pieces back together in a new way that makes us even more special.

We can take the brokenness of our lives and try to see the beauty in it that God sees. Sometimes, we might wish for everything to be perfect and for all the bad things to just go away. But even in tough times, there's something good that can come out of it. It's like finding a rainbow after a storm. God helps us see the rainbow in our brokenness.

In our troubles, we can fail to see how this problem can be meant for us. We might even ask God, "Why is this happening to me?" But every challenge we face is a chance to grow and learn. It's like when you're learning to ride a bike. Falling off is part of learning how to stay on. Our problems can teach us how to be stronger and more loving.

There are times we feel like we are scattered, broken, and anything but a beautiful piece of art for God. But remember, even the most beautiful mosaics are made of broken pieces. Each one of us is like a piece of a big, beautiful picture that God is making. Even when we feel lost or broken, we're still a part of something wonderful.

All of us are both beautiful and broken. It's okay to have both happy and sad feelings. It's okay to make mistakes because that's how we learn. Just like a puzzle, every piece is important, even if it's a little bent or chipped. We're called to live lives where the Creator can work through us, yet where we try to make sense of our brokenness.

Now, let's talk about how we can see the beauty in our brokenness. First, we can talk to God about our feelings. Just like you talk to your mom or dad when you're upset, you can talk to God too. He listens to us all the time.

Second, we can help others who might feel broken inside. Maybe you have a friend who's sad or someone at school who sits alone at lunch. By being kind to them, you're showing them the beauty in their brokenness, just like someone might do for you.

Third, remember to be thankful for the good things in your life. Even when things seem tough, there's always something to be thankful for, like your family, friends, or even your favorite ice cream. Being thankful helps us see the beauty in our lives.

Heavenly Father, help us to trust you and know that you love us and want only the best for our lives. Help us to live our lives in a way that helps others want to know you better. When we feel broken, remind us that there's beauty in our brokenness, and you're always there to help us put the pieces back together.

Bible Memory Verse

The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. - Psalms 34:18

You Will Need:

- Colored tissue paper
- Clear contact paper
- Black construction paper
- Scissors

Get Ready:

- Cut the black construction paper into frames, resembling a stained glass window outline.
- Cut the colored tissue paper into small pieces.

Do This:

1. Peel the backing off one side of the clear contact paper and lay it sticky side up on a table.
2. Place the black construction paper frame on the sticky side of the contact paper.
3. Invite the children to stick the pieces of colored tissue paper inside the frame on the contact paper, filling it with color like a stained glass window.

4. Once the design is complete, cover it with another piece of clear contact paper to seal the 'stained glass'. Trim any excess.
5. Discuss how our lives are like stained glass windows - made beautiful by God, especially when we go through tough times, and how He is close to us when we are sad or hurt.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- Tissue paper in various colors
- Clear contact paper (2 sheets per child)
- Black construction paper
- Scissors
- Printable outline of a simple stained glass window design
- Psalms 34:18 printed on a small piece of paper

Get Ready:

- Print out enough stained glass window outlines for each child.
- Cut the black construction paper into strips to outline the "lead" parts of the stained glass design.
- Cut the tissue paper into small squares (1-inch x 1-inch should work well).

Do this:

1. Give each child a printed stained glass window outline and have them place it under one sheet of clear contact paper (sticky side up) as a guide. This will help them see where to place their tissue paper pieces.

2. Encourage the children to fill in the design with the colored tissue paper squares, placing them directly on the sticky side of the contact paper. They can mix and match colors as they like, just like the unique experiences and feelings in our lives.
3. Once the design is completely filled, help them outline the shapes with the black construction paper strips, sticking them on top to mimic the lead in stained glass windows. This represents how God's presence outlines and holds together our lives, especially when we're sad or broken, just like Psalms 34:18 says, "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."
4. After the design and outlines are in place, cover it with the second sheet of clear contact paper (sticky side down) to seal in their artwork. Trim any excess contact paper from the edges.
5. Lastly, tape the small printed Psalms 34:18 onto the corner of their stained glass creation as a reminder that God is always with us, especially during tough times, making our lives beautiful and colorful, just like a stained glass window.

Snack Activity: Stained Glass Cookies of Comfort

You'll Need:

- Clear hard candies (various colors)
- Sugar cookie dough (store-bought or homemade)
- Parchment paper
- Rolling pin
- Cookie cutters (circle and small shapes like hearts or stars)
- Ziplock bags
- Hammer or rolling pin (for crushing candies)
- Baking sheets

Get Ready: Preheat your oven to the temperature specified for your sugar cookie dough. Line your baking sheets with parchment paper.

Do this:

1. Roll out your cookie dough on a floured surface to about 1/4 inch thick. Use the circle cookie cutter to cut out the cookies. Then, use the smaller shapes to cut out centers from each circle, creating a 'window.'
2. Place the cookies on your prepared baking sheets. Crush the hard candies by color in separate Ziplock bags using a hammer or rolling pin. Carefully fill the 'window' holes in each cookie with the crushed candy, mixing colors if you like to make them look like stained glass.
3. Bake according to the cookie dough package instructions, or until the cookies are lightly golden and the candy has melted to fill the 'window.' Let them cool completely on the baking sheet.

As you enjoy your Stained Glass Cookies of Comfort, remember Psalms 34:18, 'The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.' Just like these cookies, our lives can be beautiful and filled with light, even when we have tough times. Each color in our 'stained glass' represents the different experiences we go through, and together, they make something beautiful, showing us that God is always with us, helping us through.

Game Activity: Stained Glass Hopscotch

You'll Need:

- Sidewalk chalk
- Beanbags
- A smooth, flat surface like a driveway or sidewalk

Get Ready: Draw a large hopscotch grid on the ground, but instead of numbers in each square, draw different shapes (circle, square, triangle, etc.). Each shape represents a 'piece' of stained glass. Make sure to include a 'heart' shape in one of the squares to represent Psalms 34:18.

Do this:

1. Players take turns tossing their beanbag onto one of the shapes in the hopscotch grid. If the beanbag lands on a shape, they must hop through the hopscotch grid to retrieve their beanbag, but they must skip the square their beanbag is in. Before they start hopping, they say, 'God is close to the brokenhearted' to remind them of Psalms 34:18.
2. When a player reaches the square with the heart, they must stop and share a time they felt sad or brokenhearted and how they found comfort. This teaches them that, like a stained glass window, our lives are made up of different 'pieces' - some happy, some sad, but all important.
3. After sharing, they pick up their beanbag, hop back (skipping the heart square), and the next player takes their turn. The game continues, allowing each child a chance to share and listen, understanding that God helps us through the tough times, making our lives beautiful like stained glass windows.

Craft Activity: Stained Glass Hearts of Hope

You'll Need:

- Tissue paper in various colors
- Clear contact paper
- Black construction paper
- Scissors

- Printable heart template
- Psalms 34:18 printed on paper

Get Ready: Print out the heart template and cut out a heart shape from the black construction paper to use as the frame. Cut the tissue paper into small squares.

Do this:

1. Cut two pieces of clear contact paper large enough to cover the heart template. Peel the backing off one piece and place it sticky side up on the table. Place the black construction paper heart frame on the sticky contact paper.
2. Invite the children to stick the tissue paper squares inside the heart frame on the sticky contact paper, encouraging them to mix the colors to create a stained glass effect.
3. Once the heart is filled with tissue paper, peel the backing off the second piece of contact paper and place it sticky side down on top of the heart, sealing the tissue paper in place.
4. Trim any excess contact paper around the heart. Share Psalms 34:18 with the children, explaining how God is close to the brokenhearted, just as the different pieces of tissue paper come together to create a beautiful stained glass window. Our lives, with God's help, can be beautiful and full of hope, even when we face tough times.

Prayer Activity: Stained Glass Prayers

You'll Need:

- Tissue paper in various colors
- Clear contact paper
- Black construction paper

Get Ready: Cut the black construction paper into frames and the tissue paper into small pieces. Cut two pieces of contact paper for each child that are slightly larger than the black frames.

Do this:

1. Begin by reading Psalms 34:18 to the children: 'The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.' Explain that just like a stained glass window, our lives are made up of different pieces - happy times, sad times, and everything in between. But when God's light shines through us, it creates something beautiful.
2. Have each child lay one piece of contact paper sticky side up. They will then create their 'stained glass' by sticking pieces of tissue paper onto the contact paper in any design they like.
3. Once they are happy with their design, help them place the second piece of contact paper on top, sticky side down, to seal in their artwork. Then, frame their creation with the black construction paper. As they work, encourage them to think about the different 'pieces' of their lives and how God is with them through it all, making their lives beautiful like the stained glass.
4. Finally, lead the children in a prayer, asking God to help them see the beauty in their lives, even in the tough times, and to remember that He is always close to the brokenhearted, just like the verse says.