

Hospitality

LOWER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: A children's message on hospitality

Scripture: 1 Peter 4:9

Memory Verse: Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. - 1 Peter 4:9

The Children's Sermon

Once upon a time, in 1493, a man named Christopher Columbus and his crew landed on a beautiful island known as Guadeloupe. It was their second big trip across the sea to discover new places. Imagine their big wooden ships coming to stop near sandy beaches and green forests. They were far from home and didn't know what to expect.

The people living on the island had a special way to say "hello" and "you're welcome here" without using words. They didn't have welcome mats like we do today, and even if they did, Columbus and his crew wouldn't have understood their language. So, what did they do? They used a fruit, a very special fruit called the pineapple. If the visitors saw a pineapple at the entrance of the village, it meant they were welcome. Isn't that interesting? The pineapple was their symbol of hospitality.

This idea of using the pineapple as a sign of welcome spread far and wide. People started to carve pineapples into their doors or put pineapple decorations in their homes to show that guests were welcome. That's how the pineapple became known as a symbol of hospitality.

Now, Christopher Columbus brought the pineapple back with him from his voyage. People in England called it "pineapple" because it looked like a pine cone on the outside but was sweet and juicy like an apple on the inside. This fruit was new and exciting to them, just like discovering a new toy or game is for us.

Hospitality in Christianity is a big deal too. The Bible, which is God's special book, tells us that we should welcome others and share what we have without being grumpy about it. That means when you have friends over to play, you should let them play with your toys too. Or, if you see someone new at church or school, you can help them feel welcome by showing them around or playing with them.

Imagine if you were new somewhere and didn't know anyone. How would you feel if someone came up to you with a big smile, like they were giving you a pineapple, and made you feel welcome? That's what we're supposed to do for others. It's like being a living, breathing pineapple, showing hospitality in Christianity.

Now, let's think about our homes. Can we make them like the villages that put out a pineapple? We might not put a real pineapple by the door, but we can do things that make people feel just as welcome. Maybe we can make a nice drawing for them, share our favorite snacks, or simply tell them we're happy they're visiting.

And what about our church? Church should be a place where everyone feels like they belong, just like a family. We can be like little pineapples in church, helping new kids find where the crayons are or showing them our favorite books. We can even pray with them if they're feeling a bit lost or scared. That's showing hospitality in Christianity.

You know, Jesus was the best at showing hospitality. He welcomed everyone, even people who were very different from Him or who others didn't pay much attention to. Jesus showed us that being kind and welcoming is really important. He wants us to do the same, to be like pineapples for other people, showing them love and making them feel welcome.

So, next time you see a pineapple, remember how it's not just a tasty fruit. It's a reminder to be welcoming and kind, to share what we have, and to make others feel at home. Whether it's at your own home, at school, or in church, you can be a little pineapple, spreading hospitality in Christianity.

Let's talk to God now. Dear God, thank You for teaching us about hospitality through the story of the pineapple. Help us to be welcoming to everyone, just like Jesus was. Let us share our toys, our time, and our love with others, making them feel at home wherever we are. Amen.

So, boys and girls, let's be pineapples in our world, showing everyone the sweet, welcoming love of Jesus. Remember, hospitality in Christianity isn't just about being nice; it's about making others feel loved and included, just like Jesus does for us.

Bible Memory Verse

Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. - 1 Peter 4:9

You Will Need:

- Colored paper
- Markers or crayons
- Stickers or glitter

Get Ready:

- Cut the colored paper into heart shapes, one for each child.
- Set up a table with markers, crayons, and stickers/glitter.

Do This:

1. Give each child a heart-shaped paper and ask them to think of someone they can show hospitality to this week (a friend, a neighbor, a family member).
2. Have them decorate their heart with markers, crayons, and stickers as a gift for the person they chose. Encourage creativity!
3. On the back of the heart, help them write 'Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. - 1 Peter 4:9' and their name. Explain that giving this heart is a way to show love and hospitality, just like the Bible teaches us.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A large cardboard box (to make a pretend "home")
- Markers or paint
- Paper and pencils
- Small snacks (like cookies or fruit slices)
- A Bible

Get Ready:

1. Ahead of time, turn the large cardboard box into a simple "house" by cutting out a door and windows. Let the kids decorate it with markers or paint to make it welcoming.
2. Write out 1 Peter 4:9 on a large piece of paper and hang it where all the kids can see it.

Do this:

1. Start by gathering the kids around the cardboard "house" and read 1 Peter 4:9 together: "Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling." Explain that hospitality means making others feel welcome and cared for.
2. Give each child a piece of paper and a pencil. Ask them to draw or write about a time when someone made them feel very welcome or a way they can make others feel welcome in their "home" (the cardboard house).
3. Invite the children to enter the "home" one at a time, where they can share their drawing or story. As they share, offer them a small snack as a sign of hospitality.
4. To conclude, discuss how it felt to be welcomed and to welcome others. Emphasize that being hospitable is an important way we can show God's love to everyone around us.

Snack Activity: Friendly Fruit Faces

You'll Need:

- Sliced fruits (apples, strawberries, bananas, grapes)
- Small plates
- Cream cheese or peanut butter (for allergy-friendly option, use sunflower seed butter)

Get Ready: Prepare a clean table with plates for each child and place sliced fruits in bowls in the middle of the table.

Do this:

1. Share 1 Peter 4:9 with the children: 'Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.' Explain that being hospitable means welcoming others with a happy heart.

2. Tell the children they will create Friendly Fruit Faces on their plates to share a smile with someone today. First, spread a base layer of cream cheese or peanut butter on the plate.
3. Use the fruit slices to create faces. Apples can be smiles, strawberries can be noses, bananas can be eyes, and grapes can be hair. Encourage creativity!
4. Once everyone is done, have them share their plates with a friend in the class, showing hospitality by giving their snack art to someone else with a big smile.

Game Activity: Hospitality Hopscotch

You'll Need:

- Sidewalk chalk
- A small stone or beanbag for each child
- A list of hospitality actions (e.g., smile, say hello, help carry something)

Get Ready: Draw a large hopscotch grid on the sidewalk or pavement. Number each square from 1 to 10. Next to each number, write a hospitality action from your list.

Do this:

1. Have the children line up behind the start of the hopscotch grid. Explain that 1 Peter 4:9 teaches us to 'Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.' Tell them that as they play hopscotch, they'll learn ways to show hospitality.
2. The first child tosses their stone or beanbag onto square 1. They hop through the hopscotch grid, skipping the square with their stone or beanbag. When they reach the square with the hospitality action, they read it out loud and perform the action (e.g., if the square says 'smile,' they smile). If they complete the course without stepping on a line or missing a square, they move on to the next number on their next turn.

3. Play continues with each child taking turns. Encourage the children to cheer each other on, showing hospitality even in the game. The game goes on until everyone has had a chance to show all the hospitality actions on the hopscotch grid.

Craft Activity: Welcome Mats for Jesus

You'll Need:

- A sheet of construction paper (preferably a large one)
- Markers or crayons
- Stickers or glitter glue (optional)

Get Ready: Think about what makes you feel welcome when you visit someone's house. Is it a warm smile, a nice greeting, or maybe a welcome mat?

Do this:

1. On the construction paper, draw a big rectangle to make your 'Welcome Mat.' Make sure it's big enough to write a message inside.
2. Inside the rectangle, write 'Welcome!' in big, friendly letters. Underneath, write '1 Peter 4:9' to remind us of our Bible verse about showing hospitality.
3. Decorate your welcome mat with markers, stickers, or glitter glue. You can draw hearts, smiles, or anything that you think makes it look welcoming.
4. Once you're done, place your welcome mat in a special place in your room or house where it can remind you to be hospitable and welcoming to everyone, just like Jesus wants us to be.