

# Hospitality

## UPPER 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:

- Construction paper
- Markers or crayons
- Stickers with hospitality themes (hearts, homes, smiley faces)

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into postcard-size pieces.
- Write '1 Peter 4:9' on the back of each postcard.

Do This:

1. Ask each child to think of someone they can show hospitality to this week (a neighbor, a friend, a family member).
2. Have them use the markers, crayons, and stickers to decorate one side of the postcard with a welcoming message or drawing.
3. Encourage them to write a message on the other side, explaining how they plan to show hospitality, inspired by 1 Peter 4:9. Remind them to include why it's important to do this without grumbling.

## Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A Bible or printed copies of 1 Peter 4:9
- A large piece of poster board and markers
- Various household items for a "hospitality kit" (e.g., a blanket, a pair of socks, a toothbrush, a small toy, a snack)
- Small bags or boxes
- Decorative supplies (stickers, ribbons, etc.)

Get Ready:

- Read 1 Peter 4:9 and familiarize yourself with its message about hospitality.
- Prepare the poster board by writing "Hospitality Challenge" at the top.
- Gather all the materials and set them up on a table.

Do this:

1. Start by reading 1 Peter 4:9 together: "Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling." Discuss what hospitality means and why it's important to offer it without grumbling.
2. Challenge the children to think of ways they can show hospitality at home, in school, and in their community. Have them write or draw these ideas on the poster board.
3. Create "Hospitality Kits": Let each child pick a few items from the household items you've gathered to put into their bag or box. Encourage them to decorate their bags or boxes with the supplies provided.
4. Conclude by encouraging the kids to give their "Hospitality Kits" to someone in need, explaining that this act of kindness is a form of hospitality. Remind them that small acts of kindness, done without grumbling, reflect the love and hospitality that God wants us to show to others.

## Snack Activity: Hearty Hospitality Sandwiches

You'll Need:

- Bread (whole grain or white)
- Various sandwich fillings (ham, cheese, peanut butter, jelly, etc.)
- Cookie cutters in fun shapes
- Plates and napkins
- A Bible

Get Ready: Before the activity, set up a sandwich-making station with all the ingredients laid out. Make sure there are enough ingredients for each child to make at least one sandwich. Open your Bible to 1 Peter 4:9 and have it displayed prominently at the station.

Do this:

1. Start by gathering the children and reading 1 Peter 4:9 together: 'Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.' Discuss what hospitality means and how we can show it in our everyday lives.
2. Invite each child to make a sandwich not for themselves, but for another person in the group. Encourage them to ask each other what kind of sandwich they would like, emphasizing the importance of serving and listening to others.
3. Once the sandwiches are made, use the cookie cutters to turn them into fun shapes. This adds an element of joy and creativity to the act of service.
4. Before eating, lead the children in a prayer, thanking God for the food and asking for a heart that is always ready to serve and welcome others.
5. Encourage the children to share their sandwiches with each other, enjoying the fruits of their labor and the warmth of hospitality. Discuss how it felt to make something for someone else and how small acts of kindness can reflect God's love.

## Game Activity: Hospitality Hopscotch

You'll Need:

- Sidewalk chalk
- A large, open concrete area
- Small stones or beanbags for markers

Get Ready: Draw a large hopscotch grid on the concrete. Instead of numbers in each square, write words that relate to hospitality, such as 'Welcome', 'Share', 'Listen', 'Care', 'Help', 'Thank', and 'Invite'. Make sure to include a start and finish line.

Do this:

1. Gather the children and explain the importance of hospitality by referencing 1 Peter 4:9, 'Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.' Discuss what hospitality means and how we can show it in our daily lives.
2. Each child takes a turn tossing their marker onto the hopscotch grid. Before they can hop through the squares, they must share a way they can show hospitality related to the word their marker landed on. For example, if their marker lands on 'Share', they might say, 'I can share my lunch with someone who forgot theirs.'
3. After sharing, the child hops through the grid, skipping the square their marker is in, and returns. The game continues until all children have had multiple turns and have discussed multiple ways to show hospitality.
4. Conclude the activity with a group prayer, asking God to help them show hospitality to others as described in 1 Peter 4:9.

## Craft Activity: Welcome Mats for the Heart

You'll Need:

- Plain doormats or large paper sheets
- Paints and brushes
- Stencils of welcoming symbols (hearts, smiley faces, open hands)
- Bible verse printouts of 1 Peter 4:9

Get Ready: Prepare a workspace with all materials laid out. Cut out the Bible verse printouts to fit the doormats or paper sheets.

Do this:

1. Discuss 1 Peter 4:9 with the children, emphasizing the importance of showing love and hospitality without grumbling. Explain how a welcoming home starts with a welcoming heart.

2. Have each child select a doormat or a large paper sheet. Encourage them to think about what symbols of hospitality mean to them and how they can show hospitality in their lives.

3. Children will then paint their doormats or paper sheets using the paints, brushes, and stencils. They can incorporate the symbols of hospitality they discussed and glue the Bible verse onto their mat as a reminder to always welcome others with love and kindness.

## Prayer Activity: Hospitality Hearts

You'll Need:

- Paper and markers or crayons
- A Bible
- A large bowl or basket

Get Ready: Read 1 Peter 4:9 together as a class. Discuss what hospitality means and how we can show it to others.

Do this:

1. Have each child draw and cut out a heart from their paper. On one side, they should write '1 Peter 4:9' and on the other side, write a way they can show hospitality to others (e.g., sharing toys, inviting someone to play, helping a neighbor).

2. Once everyone has finished, gather the hearts and place them in the bowl or basket. Mix them up.

3. Pass the bowl around and have each child draw a heart (other than their own). Encourage them to pray silently or aloud for the strength and opportunity to show the act of hospitality written on the heart they selected during the coming week.