

Stone Soup

UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: Working together is God's plan.

Scripture: Romans 8:28-29

Memory Verse: And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. - Romans 8:28

The Children's Sermon

Today, we're going to talk about a very special story called "Stone Soup." Imagine this: a traveler comes to a village, carrying nothing but an empty pot. The villagers didn't want to share their food with him because they thought they didn't have enough. So, what did the traveler do? He filled his pot with water, dropped a big stone in it, and started to boil it. Curious, the villagers came to see what he was doing. He told them he was making "stone soup," which would be delicious if only it had a little bit of garnish. One by one, the villagers started bringing ingredients from their homes - a carrot here, a potato there, until they had a big, delicious pot of soup made from a stone! Or so it seemed.

This story of "Stone Soup" teaches us something very important. It shows us that when everyone adds a little bit of what they have, they can create something wonderful that everyone can enjoy. It's a bit like our church here. We call it our Stone Soup Church Sermon. Each of us is like an ingredient in the soup. Some of us might be carrots, some might be potatoes, and others might be onions. But when we all come together, we make something special - our church family.

Now, let's think about how we can be good ingredients in our Stone Soup Church. First, we can share. Just like the villagers shared their food for the soup, we can share our things, our time, and our love with each other. Sharing makes our church family stronger and happier.

Second, we can help. There are many ways to help in our church. Maybe you can help by setting up chairs, or maybe you can help by being a friend to someone who is feeling sad. Every little bit of help makes our Stone Soup Church better.

Third, we can listen. Listening is very important. When we listen to each other, we learn new things, and we understand how to be better friends. Listening is like adding salt to the soup - it makes everything better.

Now, let's imagine our church is making its own stone soup. What can you add to the soup? Maybe you're good at drawing and can make beautiful pictures for our church. Or maybe you have a great singing voice and can add sweet music to our services. Or perhaps you're really good at making people laugh and can add joy to our church family. Every single one of you has something special to add to our Stone Soup Church.

But remember, our Stone Soup Church isn't just for us. It's for everyone in our community. Just like the soup in the story was shared with all the villagers, we share the warmth and love of our church with everyone around us. We invite them to join us, to be part of our family, and to add their own special ingredients to our soup.

Let's not forget to say thank you. Thanking each other is like the warmth that comes from eating the soup. It makes us feel good inside. So, let's always remember to thank our friends, our family, and God for all the wonderful things they give us.

In the end, the Stone Soup wasn't just about the soup. It was about bringing people together, sharing what they had, and creating something beautiful that they could all enjoy. And that's exactly what we're doing here in our Stone Soup Church. We're coming together, sharing our talents, our love, and our faith, and creating a beautiful church family that warms our hearts and puts smiles on our faces.

Let's pray together: Dear God, thank you for teaching us about sharing, helping, and listening through the story of Stone Soup. Help us to remember that we are all important ingredients in our Stone Soup Church. Guide us to use our talents and love to make our church family strong and warm. Amen.

So, next time you're at church or even at home, think about what you can add to our Stone Soup. Remember, every little bit helps, and together, we can make something truly amazing. Thank you for being such an important part of our Stone Soup Church.

Bible Memory Verse

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. -

Romans 8:28

You Will Need:

- Colored construction paper
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons
- Glue sticks
- Stickers with positive messages

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into large puzzle piece shapes, one for each child plus a few extra.
- Write one word of Romans 8:28 on each puzzle piece with a marker.

Do This:

1. Mix up the puzzle pieces and give each child a random piece. Have them decorate their piece with markers, crayons, and stickers, emphasizing the 'good' that God works in our lives.
2. Once everyone is done decorating, work together as a class to assemble the puzzle on a large table or the floor, finding the correct order of the verse. This will help them see how each word contributes to the whole message of the verse.
3. Discuss how, like the puzzle pieces, we each have a unique role in God's plan, and together, we can see the full picture of His purpose for us. Encourage the children to share a time when they saw something good come out of a difficult situation, reflecting on the truth of Romans 8:28.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A Bible or printed copies of Romans 8:28-29
- Puzzle pieces (blank or with a simple image that can be drawn on) - enough for each child to have one - or use the pieces from the Bible Memory Verse
- Markers or colored pencils
- A large poster board
- Glue or tape

Get Ready:

- Write or print the verse Romans 8:28-29 on a poster or board where all the children can see it.
- Prepare the puzzle pieces by ensuring they are blank or have a simple image that can be connected to the theme of working together under God's plan.
- Set up a table with markers or colored pencils and the puzzle pieces.

Do this:

1. Begin with a discussion on Romans 8:28-29, focusing on how God works all things together for good for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose. Emphasize the idea of "working together" and being "conformed to the image of His Son."
2. Hand out a puzzle piece to each child and ask them to draw or write something on their piece that represents how they can work together with others for good or how they can help to bring about God's plan. This could be a gift they have, a way they can help others, or a character trait like kindness or patience.
3. Once everyone has finished their puzzle piece, work together as a group to fit all the pieces onto the large poster board, creating a unique puzzle that represents the collective efforts and gifts of the group. As you assemble the puzzle, discuss how each piece is different but necessary, just like each of us has a unique role in God's plan.
4. Conclude by reflecting on the completed puzzle and reminding the children that, like the puzzle pieces, we are all part of a bigger picture in God's plan, working together for good. Encourage them to think of ways they can work together with their friends, family, and community this week to live out Romans 8:28-29.

Snack Activity: Together We Bake: Romans 8:28–29

Cookies

You'll Need:

- Sugar cookie dough (store-bought or homemade)
- Rolling pin
- Cookie cutters (heart and cross shapes)
- Oven
- Edible markers or icing pens
- Parchment paper

Get Ready: Preheat your oven according to the cookie dough package instructions. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Do this:

1. Divide the cookie dough into equal parts among the children, reminding them that just as we are all parts of God's plan, each piece of dough plays a part in our baking activity.
2. Encourage the children to roll out their dough on a floured surface and use the cookie cutters to cut out heart and cross shapes. Explain that the heart represents love, and the cross represents sacrifice, both central themes in Romans 8:28-29.
3. Place the cookies on the prepared baking sheet and bake according to the package's instructions. While the cookies bake, discuss Romans 8:28-29 and how God works through all things for the good of those who love Him.
4. Once the cookies are cool, have the children use edible markers or icing pens to write 'Romans 8:28-29' or draw symbols that represent the scripture. This is a creative way to help them memorize and internalize the verse.

5. Share the cookies together, reinforcing the idea that sharing and working together is part of God's plan for us, just as we worked together to make these cookies.

Game Activity: God's Plan Puzzle Race

You'll Need:

- Large puzzle pieces (can be made from cardboard) with Romans 8:28-29 written across them
- Two sets of markers or colored pens
- Timer

Get Ready: Write Romans 8:28-29 across the puzzle pieces, making two identical sets. Each set should form the complete verses when assembled. Divide the pieces between the two sets, ensuring no two pieces are the same shape.

Do this:

1. Divide the children into two teams. Give each team a set of puzzle pieces and markers. Explain that they will race to assemble the puzzle, but there's a twist: before starting, they must plan together and decide on a color scheme for their puzzle, symbolizing the unity and purpose in God's plan.
2. Start the timer. Teams race to color their pieces (according to their pre-decided color scheme) and then assemble the puzzle to reveal Romans 8:28-29. Encourage teamwork and communication, reminding them that working together reflects God's plan for us.
3. Once both teams have completed their puzzles, gather everyone and discuss how Romans 8:28-29 applies to their lives and how the activity demonstrated the importance of working together according to God's purpose.

Craft Activity: God's Masterpiece Puzzle

You'll Need:

- A large poster board
- Markers or paint
- Scissors
- A Bible

Get Ready: Read Romans 8:28-29 together as a class. Discuss how God works through all things for the good of those who love Him and how we are being shaped to be like Jesus.

Do this:

1. On the poster board, have each student draw a piece of a puzzle that represents themselves - it could be a hobby, a dream, or how they see God working in their lives. Encourage creativity!

2. Once everyone is done, cut the poster board into puzzle pieces, making sure each student's drawing is on a separate piece.

3. Mix up the pieces and then work together as a class to put the puzzle back together.

As you do, discuss how each of us is a unique part of God's plan, and together, we form a beautiful picture of His love and purpose. Reflect on how, like the puzzle pieces, we are shaped to fit into God's plan, working together for good.

Prayer Activity: Together in God's Plan

You'll Need:

- A Bible or printed copies of Romans 8:28-29
- A large piece of poster paper

- Markers or colored pencils

Get Ready: Read Romans 8:28-29 and think about how God works through us together for good.

Do this:

1. Begin with a group discussion on Romans 8:28-29. Ask the children what they think it means that 'all things work together for good for those who love God.' Discuss how we can be a part of God's plan together.
2. On the poster paper, have each child draw or write how they can contribute to God's plan, based on their understanding of the Scripture. Encourage them to think of ways they can work together with others to fulfill God's purpose.
3. Close with a prayer circle. Have each child pray for the person on their right, asking God to help them work together and fulfill His plan as described in Romans 8:28-29.