

# Springtime And Lent

## PRESCHOOL LESSON PLAN

**Theme:** The season of Lent; Planting seeds of love in the hearts of others.

**Scripture:** Ephesians 1:3

**Memory Verse:** God loved us and chose us. - Ephesians 1:4

## The Children's Sermon

This week was the beginning of a very important season in our church year- the season of Lent. Do you remember how long Lent lasts? That's right, Lent is the 40 days before Palm Sunday which leads right into Holy Week and Easter Sunday. The word "Lent" comes from another word "Lente" which means springtime. That makes sense...since Lent and Easter always happen during springtime.

Lent is a special time for us to get our hearts ready for Easter, when we celebrate Jesus coming back to life. It's like getting our gardens ready in spring. We do some special things during Lent to help us grow closer to Jesus. These special things are called Lenten spiritual practices. Let's talk about some ways we can do this.

For Lent, it is good to OPEN UP our Bibles. Just like opening windows to let in fresh air, opening our Bibles lets God's words freshen up our hearts. We can read stories about Jesus, learn how much He loves us, and find out how we can love others. This Lenten spiritual practice helps us know Jesus better.

Another thing we can do is to CLEAR OUT the things in our lives that we don't really need—things that get in the way of following Jesus. Maybe we spend too much time watching TV or playing video games. We can put those away for a while and use that extra time to pray or help others. This Lenten spiritual practice helps us make more room for Jesus in our lives.

For Lent, it is also good to SWEEP UP. Just like we clean up our rooms, we can clean up our hearts. We can think about times we haven't been very nice or haven't listened well. We can say sorry to God and to anyone we've hurt. This Lenten spiritual practice helps us have cleaner, happier hearts.

In the springtime, I love to PLANT. I plant seeds in my garden pots and water them as I wait and watch them grow into something beautiful. For Lent, we can PLANT different kinds of seeds. We can plant seeds of love in the hearts of others when we are kind, helpful, or when we tell someone about Jesus. This Lenten spiritual practice helps us spread love and kindness, just like Jesus did.

Sometimes, we can SHARE what we have with others. If we have toys or clothes we don't use, we can give them to someone who needs them. We can also share our time by helping our family with chores or being a good friend. Sharing is a Lenten spiritual practice that teaches us to be generous, like Jesus.

Another idea is to LISTEN more. We can listen to our friends when they're sad or need to talk. We can listen to our parents or teachers when they're trying to teach us something important. And we can listen to God by being quiet and thinking about His love for us. Listening is a Lenten spiritual practice that helps us understand and care for others better.

We can also SAY THANK YOU more often. Saying thank you to our parents for taking care of us, to our friends for being there for us, and to God for all the good things in our lives is important. This Lenten spiritual practice helps us remember all the blessings we have and makes us happier.

Lastly, we can INVITE Jesus into our day. Every morning, we can say a little prayer, asking Jesus to be with us all day, to help us make good choices, and to show His love through us. This Lenten spiritual practice helps us remember that Jesus is our friend and is always with us.

Dear Jesus, We love you. Help us to OPEN UP our Bibles, CLEAR OUT our clutter, SWEEP UP our messes, PLANT seeds of Love, SHARE what we have, LISTEN more, SAY THANK YOU often, and INVITE you into our days. These Lenten spiritual practices can help us grow closer to you. Amen.

## Bible Memory Verse

### **God loved us and chose us. - Ephesians 1:4**

You Will Need:

- Heart-shaped paper cutouts
- Markers or crayons
- Stickers

Get Ready:

- Cut out heart shapes from construction paper, one for each child.
- Set out markers, crayons, and stickers on a table.

Do This:

1. Give each child a heart-shaped paper cutout and ask them to decorate it with markers, crayons, and stickers.
2. While they are decorating, talk to them about how God loves and chooses each one of us, just like they chose how to decorate their hearts.
3. Encourage them to give their decorated heart to someone they love to show that love, planting seeds of love in others' hearts.

## Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- Small flower pots or paper cups
- Potting soil
- Seeds (flowers or herbs)
- Watering can or cup for water
- Stickers or markers to decorate pots
- Ephesians 1:3 printed on paper

Get Ready:

- Set up a table with all materials spread out for easy access.
- Write or print Ephesians 1:3 on paper and have it displayed on the table.
- Prepare a short, simple explanation of Lent and how planting seeds relates to planting seeds of love in others.

Do this:

1. Start by explaining Lent as a time we prepare our hearts and show love to others, like planting seeds of kindness. Show them the verse Ephesians 1:3 and explain that God loves us and wants us to share that love.
2. Have each child pick a flower pot or paper cup and decorate it with stickers or markers. As they decorate, encourage them to think of someone they love or want to show kindness to.
3. Help the children fill their pots with soil, plant a few seeds in each, and water them gently. Explain that just like these seeds need water and sunlight to grow, our love and kindness need actions to grow and reach others.
4. As they plant, remind them that every time they water their plant, it's like showing love and kindness to the people around them, helping God's love to grow in their hearts and in the world.

## Snack Activity: Seeds of Love Pudding Cups

You'll Need:

- Chocolate pudding cups
- Oreo cookies
- Gummy worms
- Plastic spoons
- Small paper hearts

Get Ready: Write a simple message about love or a Bible verse (like Ephesians 1:3) on the small paper hearts. Crush the Oreo cookies into small pieces to resemble dirt.

Do this:

1. Open the chocolate pudding cups - these are your 'planting pots'.
2. Sprinkle the crushed Oreo cookies on top of the pudding to cover - this is your 'dirt'.

3. Push a gummy worm halfway into the 'dirt' to look like it's coming out of the soil.
4. Tape a small paper heart with the message about love or the Bible verse onto the handle of a plastic spoon.
5. Stick the spoon into the pudding cup. Explain to the children that just like we plant seeds in the earth, we can plant seeds of love in the hearts of others during Lent and always.

## Game Activity: Planting Seeds of Love Hopscotch

You'll Need:

- Sidewalk chalk
- Small stones or bean bags
- Pictures of hearts or flowers (optional)

Get Ready: Use the sidewalk chalk to draw a traditional hopscotch grid on the ground. Instead of numbers in each square, draw simple symbols or write words like 'Love', 'Joy', 'Peace', etc., to represent the seeds of love we plant in others. If you're using pictures of hearts or flowers, place one in each square as an added visual.

Do this:

1. Have each child stand at the start of the hopscotch grid. Explain that each square represents a seed of love (like kindness, patience, or sharing) that we can plant in the hearts of others during Lent and beyond.
2. Children take turns tossing their stone or bean bag onto the grid to land on a square. Before they hop through the grid to retrieve their stone, they must say a way they can show the seed of love they landed on to someone else (e.g., 'I can show kindness by sharing my toys').

3. After retrieving their stone, the child hops back, touching each square with either foot, symbolizing the spreading of love with every step. If they wish, they can pick up the heart or flower picture from the square as a reminder to spread love that day.

## Craft Activity: Planting Seeds of Love

You'll Need:

- Small clay pots
- Potting soil
- Flower seeds (easy to grow, such as marigolds or sunflowers)
- Stickers or markers to decorate pots
- Small watering can or cup for water

Get Ready: Cover the crafting area with newspaper for easy cleanup. Pre-fill each pot with a small amount of potting soil.

Do this:

1. Read Ephesians 1:3 together, emphasizing how God has blessed us so we can bless others. Explain that planting seeds is like planting love in the hearts of others during Lent.
2. Let each child decorate their pot with stickers or markers. Encourage them to think of someone they love or want to show love to as they decorate.
3. Help each child plant a few seeds in their pot, covering lightly with soil. Explain that just like the seeds need water and light to grow, our love needs kindness and care to grow in others' hearts.
4. Finish by watering the seeds lightly. Encourage children to take their pots home, care for their plant, and remember to show love to others as their plant grows.

# Prayer Activity: Planting Seeds of Love Prayer

You'll Need:

- The flower pots from the prior activity

Do this:

1. Start by explaining to the children that during Lent, we prepare our hearts to show more love to others, just like planting seeds that will grow into beautiful flowers. Mention that Ephesians 1:3 talks about how God has blessed us, and we can share those blessings with others.
2. Lead the children in a simple prayer, asking God to help the seeds of love grow in their hearts and in the hearts of those around them this Lenten season. Encourage them to think of one person they want to show extra love to during Lent.