

# Stain Removers & Scotch Guards

## UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

**Theme:** Jesus cleanses us from sin and wants us to guard our hearts

**Scripture:** Phillipians 4:7-8

**Memory Verse:** Phillipians 4:8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

## The Children's Sermon

Hey kids! Today we're going to talk about something really important called Guarding Your Heart. Imagine your heart is like a garden. If you've ever seen a garden, you know it's a place where beautiful flowers or yummy vegetables can grow. But, what happens if we don't take care of the garden? Weeds start to grow, and they can choke out the flowers and veggies. Guarding Your Heart is a lot like taking care of a garden. It means keeping the bad stuff out, so only the good stuff can grow.

Now, let's think about getting dirty. Have you ever played outside and gotten really muddy? It's kind of fun, right? But then, you have to go inside and get cleaned up. Jesus is like the soap and water that cleans us up when we get dirty from sin. Sin is when we do things that God doesn't like, like lying, being mean, or not listening to our parents.

But, guess what? Jesus doesn't want us to keep getting dirty. He wants us to try to not get dirty, to try to not sin. He wants us to guard our hearts, so that the dirt can't get in and we can stay clean. When we guard our hearts, we are protecting them from sin.

Can you think of ways that we can guard our hearts, so that dirt can't get it? We could stay away from violent TV shows or music with bad lyrics. We can choose to not read books that might be scary. We could avoid friends who make bad choices. When those things get into our heads, they can be REALLY hard to get out, just like dirt stains on a shirt. That's why the Bible tells us that we should guard our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus and that we should think about things that are right and pure and lovely.

When sin gets into our heads, it can be really hard to get out. Jesus cleanses us of that sin, but He also wants us to guard our hearts and minds against it.

So, how do we start Guarding Your Heart? It's like building a fence around your garden. The fence keeps the rabbits and deer from getting in and eating all the plants. We can build a fence around our hearts by doing a few important things:

1. **Pray every day:** Just like talking to your best friend, talk to Jesus. Tell Him about your day, ask Him to help you make good choices, and thank Him for loving you.
2. **Read the Bible:** The Bible is like a map that shows us the right path to take. It's full of stories and lessons that teach us how to live in a way that makes God happy.
3. **Be careful what you watch and listen to:** If you're watching shows or listening to music that talks about bad things, it's like planting weeds in your garden. Instead, choose things that are happy, kind, and good.
4. **Choose your friends wisely:** Friends are like the water and sunshine for your garden. Good friends help you grow into a better person, but bad friends can lead you down the wrong path.

5. **\*\*Be kind and loving:\*\*** When you're kind and loving to others, it's like planting beautiful flowers in your heart. The more kindness and love you spread, the more beautiful your heart garden becomes.

Remember, Guarding Your Heart is a daily job. Just like a garden needs water and sunlight every day, our hearts need attention every day to keep them safe from sin. But don't worry, you're not alone in this job. Jesus is always with you, helping you to guard your heart. He's like the best gardener ever, and with His help, your heart can be a beautiful garden full of love, kindness, and goodness.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, we thank you that you died so that our sins could be forgiven and we ask that you would help us to guard our minds and to fill them with things that are of you. Help us to choose good friends, to watch and listen to things that are pleasing to you, and to be kind and loving to everyone we meet. Thank you for being our helper and for loving us no matter what. Amen.

Guarding Your Heart is not always easy, but it's so important. Just like a garden, your heart is a special place that needs care and attention. With Jesus' help, you can keep it safe and let only the good things grow. So, let's all try our best to guard our hearts every day.

## Bible Memory Verse

**Philippians 4:8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever**

## **is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.**

You Will Need:

- Construction paper
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Stickers or glitter (optional)

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into large enough pieces for each child to draw or write on.
- Set up a table with markers, crayons, scissors, and optional stickers or glitter.

Do This:

1. Have each child write the memory verse (Philippians 4:8) at the top or bottom of their construction paper.
2. Ask the children to think about and discuss what things are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and admirable. Encourage them to think of examples from their own lives or things they appreciate in the world around them.
3. Instruct the children to draw or write about these things on their construction paper, creating a 'Think About These Things' collage. They can use the markers, crayons, and optional stickers or glitter to decorate.
4. Once everyone is finished, allow time for the children to share their collages with the group, explaining what they chose to include and why. This helps reinforce the memory verse and encourages positive thinking.

# Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- White t-shirts (one per child)
- Fabric markers
- Washable paint
- Large plastic sheets or tarps
- Bowls of water and towels for cleanup
- Bibles or printed copies of Philippians 4:7-8

Get Ready:

- Lay the plastic sheets or tarps on the floor of your activity area.
- Place bowls of water and towels around the edges for easy cleanup.
- Set out the white t-shirts, fabric markers, and washable paint on a table.

Do this:

1. **\*\*Introduction to Philippians 4:7-8\*\***: Start by reading Philippians 4:7-8 together. Discuss what it means to guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, emphasizing how Jesus cleanses us from sin and wants us to focus on what is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, or praiseworthy.
2. **\*\*T-shirt Designing Activity\*\***: Give each child a white t-shirt and fabric markers. Ask them to write or draw things on their t-shirt that they think are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, or praiseworthy. Encourage creativity and sharing ideas with each other.
3. **\*\*"Washing Away Sins" Paint Activity\*\***: After the t-shirts are designed, explain that just as we can create beautiful things, sometimes we make mistakes or sin. Have the

children dip their hands in washable paint and place handprints all over their t-shirts, representing sins or mistakes. Then, guide them to the bowls of water to wash their hands, symbolizing how Jesus cleanses us from our sins. As they clean their hands, remind them that when we ask for forgiveness, Jesus washes our sins away, and we should strive to keep our hearts and minds focused on good things, as Philippians 4:7-8 teaches.

## Snack Activity: Peace and Purity Fruit Parfaits

You'll Need:

- Clear plastic cups
- Vanilla yogurt
- Granola
- Various types of fruit (strawberries, blueberries, grapes, etc.)
- Small pieces of paper and pens
- Bibles

Get Ready: Before the activity, write out Philippians 4:7-8 on small pieces of paper, one for each child. Wash and prepare the fruit by cutting it into small, bite-sized pieces.

Do this:

1. Start by giving each child a piece of paper with Philippians 4:7-8 written on it. Discuss what it means to have the peace of God guarding our hearts and minds, and how focusing on whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, or praiseworthy can help us stay pure and clean in our thoughts and actions, just like Jesus wants.
2. Explain that each layer of the parfait will represent a part of the verse: the fruit represents the different virtues we should think about (true, noble, right, pure, lovely,

admirable, excellent, praiseworthy), the yogurt represents the peace of God cleansing us, and the granola represents the strength and firm foundation God gives us.

3. Have each child build their own parfait by layering yogurt, granola, and fruit in the clear cups. As they add each layer, encourage them to say one thing that is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, or praiseworthy in their lives. End the activity with a prayer, asking God to help guard their hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

## Game Activity: Guardians of Peace

You'll Need:

- Chalk or tape for marking areas
- Small bean bags or similar items to serve as 'worries'
- Printed or written out cards with positive and negative thoughts, based on Philippians 4:7-8

Get Ready: Before the game, prepare an outdoor area or large room by marking a start line and a 'Peace Zone' at the end of a running course. Write or print out several positive (true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable) and negative thoughts on separate cards. Scatter the 'worries' (bean bags) along the course.

Do this:

1. Explain Philippians 4:7-8, emphasizing how Jesus cleanses us from sin and wants us to guard our hearts by focusing on what is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and admirable.
2. Divide the children into two teams. One team will run the course one at a time, trying to reach the 'Peace Zone' without touching the 'worries' (bean bags). Before running, each child picks a card. If it's a positive thought, they get a free pass to avoid a 'worry'

on their way. If it's negative, they must overcome an extra 'worry' placed by the opposing team.

3. The other team's role is to gently toss additional 'worries' in the runner's path (without directly hitting them), representing the distractions and negative thoughts we encounter. The runner's goal is to reach the 'Peace Zone' focusing on their positive thought, symbolizing keeping our minds on what is pure and lovely, as instructed in Philippians 4:7-8.

The game continues until all players have had a turn. Discuss afterward how focusing on positive, godly thoughts helped them overcome obstacles and reach the 'Peace Zone', relating back to guarding our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

## Craft Activity: Guardians of the Heart Shield

You'll Need:

- Cardboard or thick poster board
- Aluminum foil
- Markers or paint
- Glue and scissors
- Ribbon or string
- A printout of Philippians 4:7-8

Get Ready: Cut the cardboard or poster board into a shield shape. Prepare a work area that can get a little messy with paint or markers.

Do this:

1. Cover your shield shape with aluminum foil, using glue to secure it. This will make your shield look metallic and strong, symbolizing the strength we find in God's peace.

2. Once the glue has dried, use markers or paint to decorate one side of the shield. Encourage the children to draw symbols or write words that remind them of peace, goodness, truth, and anything else that is pure, lovely, and commendable, as mentioned in Philippians 4:8.
3. Cut out the printout of Philippians 4:7-8 and glue it to the center of the other side of the shield. This will remind the children that God's peace guards our hearts and minds.
4. Punch two holes at the top of the shield and tie a ribbon or string through them, creating a way to hang the shield on a wall or door. This acts as a daily reminder to guard their hearts and minds with the peace of God.

## Prayer Activity: Guarding Our Hearts with Prayer

You'll Need:

- A Bible or printed copies of Philippians 4:7-8
- Blank paper (one sheet per child)
- Pens, pencils, or crayons

Get Ready: Prepare a comfortable, quiet space for the children to sit and reflect. Have the Bible verses (Philippians 4:7-8) displayed prominently or ensure each child has a copy.

Do this:

1. Start with a brief introduction to Philippians 4:7-8, emphasizing how Jesus cleanses us from sin and wants us to guard our hearts and minds in Him. Explain that guarding our hearts means thinking about things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, or praiseworthy.
2. Ask the children to spend a few minutes quietly reading Philippians 4:7-8 to themselves. Then, invite them to draw or write on the paper things they can think

about or do that fit the descriptions in verse 8 (true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, praiseworthy).

3. After they have had some time to draw or write, gather the children in a circle and invite them to share what they've written or drawn, if they feel comfortable. Lead them in a prayer, asking God to help them guard their hearts by focusing on these good things and to cleanse them from sin, just as Philippians 4:7-8 teaches us.