

Show Us Your King

PRESCHOOL LESSON PLAN

Theme: 5th Sunday in Lent

Scripture: John 12:20-33

Memory Verse: And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.

- John 12:32

The Children's Sermon

It's been a long time in America since we have lived under the rule and power of a king. It's been more than 200 years! That's a long time before you were born. In fact, it is a long time before anyone here was born. It is hard for us to understand what life with a King or a Queen is like.

What do you think of when you think of a KING. (Let the children answer you.)

Jesus is sometimes called a King, yet he didn't look like one. He didn't wear a crown. He wore the same kind of clothes everyone else was wearing. He didn't live in a palace or a castle. He lived in an ordinary house and often slept on the road as he traveled with his disciples. He didn't sit on a throne with lots of guards and servants watching out for his safety and well being. He wasn't married to a Queen. He didn't seem to come from a Royal Family.

When Jesus and his followers talked about Jesus and the Kingdom of heaven, they were puzzled. If Jesus is a king, why doesn't he look like a king? they wondered.

In today's Bible story, a group of people who were interested in Jesus but weren't quite sure about him came to the disciples and asked questions about this new KING. They wanted to see Jesus in all his kingly splendor.

Jesus answered them in a way which would not make sense to them at the time, but would become clearer in the very near future. His words were hard to understand.

(Show the children a picture of Jesus either in ordinary attire or perhaps wearing a crown of thorns) Jesus told them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." He said some other things, too. We just read the story from the Bible. But not much of it made sense to the people who asked the question. They must have been thinking, "Why doesn't he answer our question? What's the big secret?"

His words can still puzzle us. What Jesus is saying to these curious people is "Wait and see." Jesus knew that something important was about to happen. If he told them exactly what was to happen, it wouldn't have made it any easier for his listeners. They might have been even more curious and confused... and maybe a bit scared.

Now, let's talk more about when Jesus predicts his death. It sounds very sad, doesn't it? But Jesus was trying to tell everyone something very important. He was trying to tell them that even though things might look really bad, there's always hope and something good can come out of it.

Jesus predicting his death was his way of telling us that he was going to do something very brave. He was going to sacrifice himself because he loves us so much. He wanted to make sure we could be with God forever. That's a really big kind of love, isn't it?

Let's keep that in our hearts, especially in the next two weeks as we get ready to celebrate Easter. We'll see that Jesus really is a King, but not the kind of king we might expect. He's a king of love, hope, and new beginnings.

And that's a very special kind of king to have in our lives, isn't it? Let's be excited for what's coming and remember the big love Jesus has for all of us.

Bible Memory Verse

And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself. - John 12:32

You Will Need:

- Craft paper
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- String
- Glue
- Stickers (optional)

Get Ready:

- Cut the craft paper into large heart shapes, one for each child.
- Cut out smaller cross shapes from the craft paper.

Do This:

1. Give each child a large heart shape and several markers or crayons. Explain that the heart represents all the people in the world.

2. Have the children color and decorate their hearts. They can also use stickers if available.
3. Help the children glue the small cross shape onto the center of their heart. Then, attach a piece of string to the top of the heart.
4. Explain that the cross on the heart shows how Jesus loves everyone in the world and draws all people to Himself, just like the verse says. Hang the hearts around the room or on a special display to remind the children of Jesus' love.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- Small flower pots (one for each child)
- Soil
- Wheat seeds or any fast-germinating seeds
- Watering cans or cups
- Stickers or markers to decorate the pots
- A picture of a wheat plant

Get Ready:

- Fill each pot halfway with soil before class.
- Have the picture of a wheat plant visible for all the children to see.
- Set up a table with the pots, soil, seeds, and watering cans or cups.

Do this:

1. Show the children the picture of the wheat plant and explain that just like a seed needs to be buried in the soil to grow, Jesus talked about dying like a seed to produce many seeds. This is a way to show how important it is to help others and share love.
2. Let each child decorate their pot with stickers or markers to make it special.

3. Help the children to fill the rest of their pots with soil, plant a few seeds in each, and water them gently. Explain that the seeds will grow into plants, just like love and kindness can grow in our hearts and spread to others.

4. Encourage the children to take their pots home, care for their seeds, and watch them grow as a reminder of how we can grow in love and kindness during Lent and beyond.

Snack Activity: Wheat Seed Pudding Cups

You'll Need:

- Instant vanilla pudding mix (and ingredients to make it as per box instructions)
- Chocolate cookie crumbs
- Gummy worms
- Small plastic cups

Get Ready: Prepare the vanilla pudding according to the box instructions and let it set. This represents the ground that Jesus talks about in John 12:24, where He says unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

Do this:

1. Fill each small plastic cup about three-quarters full with the prepared vanilla pudding. This is the 'earth' that the seed (Jesus) must be planted in to produce fruit.
2. Sprinkle a layer of chocolate cookie crumbs on top of the pudding. These crumbs represent the soil covering the seed.
3. Place a gummy worm on top of the 'soil'. This reminds us of the life that comes from the earth and the importance of Jesus' sacrifice, bringing new life and hope.

Game Activity: Seed Planting Hop

You'll Need:

- Large paper leaves (green construction paper)
- Small bean bags or similar objects to represent seeds
- Basket or container

Get Ready: Place the paper leaves in a scattered pattern on the floor, creating a path from a starting line to a finish line where the basket is placed.

Do this:

1. Explain to the children that in John 12:20-33, Jesus talks about a seed needing to die to produce many seeds, symbolizing Jesus' own sacrifice and the growth of God's kingdom.
2. Each child takes a turn being a 'little seed.' They start at the beginning of the leaf path and hop from leaf to leaf, holding their seed (bean bag).
3. When they reach the end of the path, they 'plant' their seed by placing it in the basket, then run back to the start for the next child's turn. Discuss how planting seeds in the ground is like doing good things that grow into something beautiful.

Craft Activity: Wheat Seed Planting

You'll Need:

- A small pot for each child
- Potting soil
- Wheat seeds or any fast-germinating seeds
- Water
- Stickers or markers to decorate the pots

Get Ready: Fill each pot halfway with potting soil before the class.

Do this:

1. Start by explaining that in John 12:20-33, Jesus talks about a grain of wheat falling into the earth and dying to produce much fruit. This teaches us about growth and new life.
2. Let each child decorate their pot with stickers or markers to make it special.
3. Have the children fill the rest of their pot with soil and then plant a few seeds in the soil. Teach them to gently water their seed.
4. Encourage them to take their pot home and watch the seed grow, reminding them of Jesus's message of new life and hope.

Prayer Activity: Little Seeds Prayer Garden

You'll Need:

- Your potted plants from the prior activities

Do this:

1. Talk to the children about the story from John 12:20-33, where Jesus talks about a seed dying to produce many seeds. Explain in very simple terms that Jesus is like the seed, and because of His love, we can all be happy and loving like the flowers that grow from seeds.
2. Take the kids on a walk to view each other's plants, like you're walking through a garden.
3. Pray with the kids and ask Jesus to help us have hearts that will help His love grow.