

Show Us Your King

LOWER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: 5th Sunday in Lent

Scripture: John 12:20-33

Memory Verse: John 12:24 - 'Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.'

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.

Bible Memory Verse

John 12:24 - 'Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.'

You Will Need:

- Colored construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- Markers or crayons
- Small pots or cups
- Soil
- Wheat seeds or any fast-germinating seeds

Get Ready:

- Cut out paper seed shapes and paper flower shapes from the construction paper.
- Prepare small pots or cups with soil.

Do This:

1. Have the children write the memory verse on the paper seeds with markers or crayons.

2. Let each child plant a real seed in their pot or cup and water it.
3. While the real seeds begin to germinate over the coming days, have the children glue their paper seed with the memory verse onto one side of their pot and decorate the other side with paper flowers. Explain that just like the paper seed turns into a beautiful decoration, the real seed they planted will grow into a beautiful plant, showing how something wonderful can come from something small when it's given a chance to change.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- Small flower pots (one for each child) from prior activity
- Bible or printed scripture passage (John 12:20-33)

Get Ready:

- Set up a table with the flower pots and decorating supplies.
- Print out or have the scripture passage ready to read aloud.

Do this:

1. Start by reading John 12:20-33 to the children, focusing on the part where Jesus talks about a grain of wheat falling into the earth and dying to produce much fruit. Explain that during Lent, we remember how Jesus gave up His life for us, and from His sacrifice, much good came into the world.
2. Give each child a flower pot and let them decorate it with markers and stickers. While they're decorating, talk about how each of us can grow and bring beauty into the world, just like seeds grow into beautiful plants.

Snack Activity: Seeds of Life Snack Mix

You'll Need:

- A variety of seeds (sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, etc.)
- Dried fruits (raisins, cranberries)
- Small pretzel sticks or twists
- Small paper cups or snack bags

Get Ready: Gather all your ingredients on a clean table. Make sure you have enough for each child to make their own mix.

Do this:

1. Explain to the children that in John 12:20-33, Jesus talks about a grain of wheat falling to the ground and dying to produce many seeds. This is like Jesus giving His life for us, so we can have new life with Him. Seeds remind us of new life and growth.
2. Let each child take a paper cup or snack bag. Encourage them to create their own 'Seeds of Life' mix by adding a little of each seed and dried fruit into their cup or bag. The seeds represent the new life Jesus gives us, and the dried fruits can remind us of the sweetness of living with Jesus.
3. As they make their snack mix, remind them that Lent is a time to prepare our hearts for Easter, when we celebrate Jesus' resurrection and the new life He offers us. Eating the snack mix can remind them of the growth and sweetness in following Jesus.

Game Activity: Seed Sprout Tag

You'll Need:

- A large open space (preferably outdoors)
- Small bean bags or soft balls (seeds)

- Cones or markers to define the play area

Get Ready: Mark a large play area with cones or markers. This represents the garden. Designate one child as the 'Gardener' and give them a bean bag (seed).

Do this:

1. The Gardener starts by holding the seed. The rest of the children (Sprouts) spread out within the play area.
2. When the game starts, the Gardener tries to tag the Sprouts by gently tossing the bean bag (seed) to touch them. If a Sprout is tagged, they sit down and start to 'grow' by stretching their arms up high.
3. The last Sprout standing becomes the new Gardener. The game restarts with everyone standing up again.

This game is a fun way to illustrate John 12:20-33, where Jesus talks about the grain of wheat that must die to produce many seeds. It's a playful representation of growth and transformation during Lent.

Craft Activity: Lenten Wheat Stalks

You'll Need:

- 1. Construction paper (brown, green, yellow, and any other preferred colors)
- Glue
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons
- Cotton balls or popcorn kernels (optional)

Do this:

1. Create Wheat Stalks:

- Take a piece of brown construction paper and cut it into strips about 1 inch wide and 6 inches long. These will represent the stalks of wheat.
- Fold each strip accordion-style to create the texture of wheat.
- Glue the ends of the strip together to form a loop, ensuring that the folds are facing outward to resemble wheat kernels.

2. Make Wheat Kernels:

- Cut small circles out of yellow construction paper to represent wheat kernels. You can also use cotton balls or popcorn kernels for a tactile element.
- Glue the wheat kernels onto the tops of the wheat stalks.

3. Create a Scene:

- Take a piece of green construction paper and cut it into a rectangular shape to represent the ground.
- Glue the wheat stalks onto the green paper, arranging them in a way that looks like they are growing from the ground.

4. Add a Sun:

- Cut out a large yellow circle from construction paper to represent the sun.
- Glue the sun onto the top corner of the green paper to symbolize Jesus being lifted up for all to see.

5. Optional: Decorate and Personalize:

Encourage the children to decorate their scene with markers or crayons. They can draw additional elements such as clouds, birds, or flowers to make the scene more vibrant and personalized.

Prayer Activity: Growing Like Seeds in Lent

Do this:

1. Take a moment to reflect on the Scripture. Ask the children what they think it means for Jesus to be "lifted up" and how His sacrifice brings life to all who believe in Him.
2. Finish with a short prayer, asking God to help us grow in love and kindness during Lent, just like the seeds you planted earlier in the lesson will grow into beautiful plants.