

Taking Care Of God's House

UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: Taking care of God's house

Scripture: Haggai 2:9

Memory Verse: 'The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,' says the LORD Almighty. 'And in this place I will grant peace,' declares the LORD Almighty. - Haggai 2:9

The Children's Sermon

Taking care of our homes is something we all do with our families. We clean up, fix things that break, and replace stuff when it gets old. We like our home to look nice, especially when friends come over. But did you know there's another very special house we should take care of? That's right, it's the House of God, or the church.

Just like our own homes, the House of God needs to be taken care of in two ways. First, we need to look after the building. We want it to be clean and welcoming for anyone who visits. That means we might help pick up things left on the floor, dust, or even help set up chairs. It's like when we tidy up our room before a friend comes over.

Second, we need to take care of the people in the House of God. Imagine if you went to a big party at a famous person's house. You'd expect people to say hi, offer you snacks, and show you around, right? We should do the same in the House of God. Everyone who comes in should feel loved and welcomed.

But caring for the House of God isn't just about the building and the people inside. It's also about the people outside. We should invite as many people as we can to join us. If we run out of space, we'll just have to make more room! Imagine if we could welcome as many visitors as a big, famous castle!

Now, let's think about how we can do all this. One way is by being friendly to everyone who comes to the House of God. We can smile, say hello, and ask if they need help finding something. It's like being a good friend at school.

We can also help keep the House of God clean. Maybe we can join a group that helps tidy up before or after services. Or we could help decorate for special holidays. It's like when we help at home by doing chores.

Another important thing we can do is share. We can share our toys, our snacks, and even our time with others in the House of God. Sharing shows we care and makes the House of God a happy place.

We should also listen and learn. When we go to the House of God, we hear stories from the Bible and learn about Jesus. We can share these stories with our friends and family, inviting them to come with us next time.

Remember, taking care of the House of God means being kind and helpful. It's about making sure everyone feels welcome and loved. It's like being part of a big family where everyone looks out for each other.

But why is the House of God so special? It's a place where we come together to learn about God's love for us. It's where we pray, sing, and celebrate together. By taking care of it, we show God that we love Him and are thankful for all He does for us.

So, next time you're at the House of God, look around. See if there's anything you can do to help. Maybe there's a piece of trash you can pick up or someone new you can say hello to. Every little bit helps make the House of God a better place.

And don't forget, taking care of the House of God isn't just a job for grown-ups. Kids can do a lot to help, too. Whether it's being kind to others, helping to clean up, or sharing what we learn, we all have a part to play.

Dear Lord, thank you for the House of God. Help us to take good care of it, just like we do with our own homes. Help us to be kind and welcoming to everyone, both inside and outside the House of God. Amen.

Taking care of the House of God is a big job, but it's also a fun and rewarding one. It's a way to show our love for God and for each other. So let's all do our part to make the House of God the best place it can be!

Bible Memory Verse

'The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,' says the LORD Almighty. 'And in this place I will grant peace,' declares the LORD Almighty. - Haggai 2:9

You Will Need:

-Construction paper

- Markers or crayons
- Glue sticks
- Stickers (optional)
- Safety scissors

Get Ready:

- Gather all materials and set up a work area for each child with enough space to create.
- Pre-cut construction paper into shapes of houses or temples to make it easier for the children.

Do This:

1. Have each child pick a piece of pre-cut construction paper in the shape of a house or temple.
2. Encourage them to decorate their house/temple using markers, crayons, stickers, and any other materials provided. While they work, discuss the meaning of Haggai 2:9, focusing on how the glory of God's house and the peace He promises is greater than anything we can imagine.
3. Once everyone has finished decorating, gather the children in a circle. Ask them to share their artwork and what they learned about God's promise of peace and glory. Conclude by praying together, asking God to fill their lives and homes with His peace and glory.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- Building blocks or LEGO sets
- Printable images of temples or churches (for reference)

- Art supplies (colored pencils, markers, glue, glitter, etc.)
- Index cards
- Pens or pencils
- A Bible or printout of Haggai 2:9

Get Ready:

- Print out several images of temples or churches and have them displayed around the room.
- Write Haggai 2:9 on a large poster board and place it where everyone can see.
- Set up stations with building blocks or LEGO, art supplies, and index cards with pens or pencils.

Do this:

1. ****Read and Reflect:**** Start by reading Haggai 2:9 aloud with the group. Discuss what it means to take care of God's house and how this verse can apply to our lives today. Encourage the kids to think about how they can make the "glory of the latter house greater than the former."

2. ****Build and Beautify:**** Divide the children into small groups and challenge them to use the building blocks or LEGO to construct their version of a temple or church. Encourage them to think creatively about how to make it beautiful and a place where God's glory can dwell. As they build, have them discuss ways we can take care of and honor God's house today, whether that means our church buildings, our bodies, or the world around us.

3. ****Create and Commit:**** After the building activity, provide the kids with art supplies and ask them to create a decoration for their model temple/church or a separate piece

of artwork inspired by Haggai 2:9. On the index cards, have each student write a personal commitment about how they will take care of God's house. This could be a promise to keep their room clean, help out more at church, or even work on being kinder to siblings and friends, reflecting God's love and glory in their daily lives. Encourage them to place these commitments somewhere they will see them every day as a reminder.

Snack Activity: Building God's House Snack Craft

You'll Need:

- Graham crackers
- Frosting or cream cheese
- Assorted candies and snacks (e.g., pretzel sticks, fruit snacks, mini marshmallows)
- Plastic knives or spreaders
- Paper plates

Get Ready: Gather all your materials on a clean table. Make sure each child has a paper plate to build on and a plastic knife or spreader for the frosting or cream cheese.

Do this:

1. Explain Haggai 2:9 - 'The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,' says the Lord Almighty. 'And in this place I will grant peace,' declares the Lord Almighty. Discuss how we can make God's house glorious by taking care of it and each other.
2. Use a graham cracker as the base for 'God's house'. Spread frosting or cream cheese on the graham cracker to act as 'cement'.
3. Decorate the 'house' using the assorted candies and snacks to represent different parts of the temple or things that make God's house glorious. Encourage creativity and

discussion about what each item might represent (e.g., pretzel sticks for the beams of the temple, fruit snacks for the people in the church, etc.).

4. As they build, encourage the children to think about how they can contribute to making God's house a place of peace and glory in their own lives.

Game Activity: Temple Builders

You'll Need:

- Chalk or tape for marking the ground
- Small stones or beanbags
- Index cards with different tasks related to taking care of God's house written on them

Get Ready: Draw a large outline of a temple on the ground with rooms and sections.

Each section should be labeled with aspects of taking care of God's house (e.g., 'Prayer Room', 'Community Service', 'Worship', 'Bible Study'). Write tasks on the index cards that correspond to each section of the temple drawn on the ground.

Do this:

1. Divide the children into teams. Each team gets a set of stones or beanbags.
2. Teams take turns throwing their stones or beanbags into different sections of the temple.
3. When a stone or beanbag lands in a section, a team member must pick an index card corresponding to that section and complete the task or answer a question related to taking care of God's house. For example, if a beanbag lands in 'Prayer Room', the task might be to lead a short prayer for the church.
4. After completing the task, the team earns points. The aim is to fill all sections of the temple with their stones or beanbags, symbolizing their contribution to taking care of God's house, inspired by Haggai 2:9.

5. The game ends when all sections are filled, or after a set time. Celebrate with a short discussion on how each action contributes to making God's house more glorious.

Prayer Activity: Building the Future: A Prayer for God's House

You'll Need:

- A Bible or printed copy of Haggai 2:9
- Construction paper
- Markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- Scissors
- Glue stick

Get Ready: Gather all materials on a large table where all the children can sit around. Make sure each child has access to a Bible or a printed copy of Haggai 2:9. Prepare a sample of a finished project to show as an example.

Do this:

1. Begin with a group reading of Haggai 2:9. Discuss what it means to have a 'greater glory' in God's house and how we can contribute to taking care of God's house today.
2. Ask each child to draw and cut out shapes from the construction paper that represent elements they think are important for taking care of God's house. This could be anything from a heart (for love), a cross (for faith), to a broom (for cleanliness).
3. Once they have their shapes, have them glue these onto a larger piece of construction paper, creating a collage. While they work, encourage them to think about a prayer for God's house that relates to their chosen symbols. After everyone is done, gather the children in a circle and give them the opportunity to share their artwork and

the prayer they've thought of. Conclude the activity with a group prayer, incorporating elements from the children's prayers.