

No Substitute

LOWER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: There is no substitute for God.

Scripture: Exodus 20:2-3

Memory Verse: Exodus 20:3 'You shall have no other gods before me.'

The Children's Sermon

It is that way with God. There is only one God and nothing can take his place. Nothing comes close. God comforts us and makes our lives sweet.

People try to substitute a lot of stuff for God. It may be new cars, new toys, new clothes, or new games. And all that stuff can make us feel good for a while, but only God can satisfy us and make our lives sweet. He is the real thing, don't settle for anything less.

Imagine you have a big, beautiful puzzle. This puzzle is your life. There's one piece that fits perfectly in the middle. That piece is God. You can try to put other things in that spot - like video games, TV shows, or even friends and family. But remember, there's only one God, and He's the piece that fits just right. Without Him, the puzzle isn't complete.

Now, think about when you're really thirsty. You might dream of a cold, sweet drink to make you feel better. God is like that drink, but even better. He quenches our thirst in a way nothing else can. Just like there's only one God, there's only one thing that can truly satisfy our hearts and souls, and that's God's love.

Sometimes, we might feel lonely or sad. We might think that if we have the newest toy or the latest game, we'll feel better. And it might work for a little bit. But those feelings come back. That's because there's a special place in our hearts that only God can fill. Because there's only one God, He's the only one who can make us feel whole and truly happy.

God's love is like a superpower. It can make us feel strong when we're weak, and it can make us feel loved when we're lonely. Remember, there's only one God, and His love is the biggest and the best. No superhero or TV character can match up to how amazing God is. He's the ultimate friend and hero.

And here's something really cool about God: He's always there for us. No matter what. Even when we mess up or forget to talk to Him, He's still there. Because there's only one God, He's able to be everywhere, for everyone, all at once. That's something no one else can do.

God also has a plan for each of us. He made us all special and unique. Sometimes, we might not understand His plan, but we can trust Him. He knows what's best for us because He loves us more than anyone else could. Remember, there's only one God, and He's got the whole world in His hands, including you and me.

Praying to God is like talking to your best friend. You can tell Him anything - your secrets, your wishes, and even the things that make you sad. God listens because He cares. And because there's only one God, He has the power to help us in ways we can't even imagine.

Now, let's think about sharing. We share our toys, our snacks, and our stories. God wants us to share something very special, too: His love. Because there's only one God, sharing His love is like sharing the most precious gift we have. When we show kindness, help others, and speak gently, we're sharing a piece of God's love.

Remember, even though we have fun toys and games, and we love our families and friends very much, there's only one God who can make our hearts truly happy. He's the best friend we could ever ask for. So, let's make sure to keep Him in the center of our lives, just like the centerpiece of a puzzle. That way, our lives will be as sweet and complete as can be.

Let's pray and thank God for being the one true God who loves us, listens to us, and is always there for us. And let's ask Him to help us remember that He's the most important part of our lives. Amen.

So, kids, always remember: there's only one God, and He's the best part of everything. Keep Him close, and your life will be filled with joy and love.

Bible Memory Verse

Exodus 20:3 'You shall have no other gods before me.'

You Will Need:

- Colored paper
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons
- Glue
- Stickers (optional)

Get Ready:

- Cut the colored paper into large heart shapes, one for each child.
- Write 'Exodus 20:3' on the top of each heart.

Do This:

1. Give each child a heart and ask them to decorate it with markers, crayons, and stickers. Encourage them to think about things they love and care about as they decorate.
2. Once they are done decorating, gather the children and discuss how sometimes we can put other things or people in the place of God, but God wants to be the most important in our hearts.
3. Ask the children to write or draw on the back of their heart something they can do this week to show that God is the most important in their lives. Remind them to keep their heart somewhere they can see it every day as a reminder of Exodus 20:3.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- Construction paper (various colors)
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Printed pictures of various "idols" (like toys, TV, celebrities, money, etc.)
- A large poster board with "Exodus 20:2-3" written at the top

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into heart shapes, one for each child.

- Print out and cut the pictures of various modern "idols."
- Write "Exodus 20:2-3" at the top of the poster board and draw a big heart in the center.

Do this:

1. ****Introduction****: Begin by reading Exodus 20:2-3 to the class, explaining that God tells us He should be the most important, and there's no substitute for Him. Describe how sometimes we might put other things in place of God in our hearts.
2. ****Activity - Filling Our Hearts****: Give each child a heart-shaped piece of construction paper. Spread out the pictures of modern "idols" on a table. Ask the children to think about what things they sometimes put before God in their lives. They can then choose pictures that represent these things and glue them onto their heart.
3. ****Discussion and Poster Creation****: After everyone has their heart filled with different "idols," discuss how these things can distract us from God. Then, have each child glue their heart onto the large poster board around the big heart. Explain that even though we sometimes fill our hearts with other things, God's love is bigger, and He should be the most important in our hearts. Finish by encouraging the children to think of ways they can make God the most important in their lives every day.

Snack Activity: Mount Sinai Treats

You'll Need:

- Graham crackers
- Cream cheese or frosting
- Pretzel sticks
- Blue food coloring (optional)

- Plastic knives or spreaders

Get Ready: Mix a little blue food coloring into the cream cheese or frosting to make it look like the sky. This represents God's presence at Mount Sinai.

Do this:

1. Spread the blue cream cheese or frosting on a graham cracker using a plastic knife or spreader. This blue layer represents the sky, reminding us of how God descended on Mount Sinai to give the Ten Commandments.
2. Break pretzel sticks in half and arrange them on the graham cracker to form the shape of two tablets. These represent the Ten Commandments, highlighting the first commandment from Exodus 20:2-3, which teaches us that there is no substitute for God.
3. Share your Mount Sinai Treat with a friend while discussing why it's important to have no other gods before the one true God. This activity helps children understand the significance of God's commandments and the importance of putting God first in our lives.

Game Activity: God's Path Hopscotch

You'll Need:

- Sidewalk chalk
- A small stone or beanbag
- A list of things that people sometimes put before God (money, toys, video games, etc.)

Get Ready: Draw a large hopscotch grid on the sidewalk or any safe outdoor area. Instead of numbers, write the things from your list in each square, leaving the last square empty for now.

Do this:

1. Explain to the children that Exodus 20:2-3 teaches us to have no other gods before the one true God. Discuss briefly what things can become 'gods' to us if we're not careful.
2. Have each child take turns tossing the stone or beanbag to land on a square. Before they hop through the grid, they must say, 'There is no substitute for God,' and then skip the square their stone landed on as a reminder to keep God first, above all the things written on the ground.
3. When they reach the empty square at the end, have them shout, 'God is number one!' This square represents putting God first in our lives, above all else. After everyone has had a turn, gather the children and pray together, asking God to help them always remember He is the most important and there is no substitute for Him.

Craft Activity: God is Number One Medallions

You'll Need:

- Cardstock or heavy paper
- Markers or crayons
- Yarn or ribbon
- Hole punch
- Stickers (optional)

Get Ready: Cut the cardstock into circles to create medallion shapes. Each child will need one circle.

Do this:

1. On one side of the circle, help the children write 'God is Number One' and encourage them to decorate around the words with markers, crayons, or stickers. Remind them that just like the medallion says, God should always be the most important in our lives, as we learn from Exodus 20:2-3.
2. On the other side of the circle, ask the children to draw something that is important to them. Then, discuss how even though we have many things we love and consider important, God's place in our lives is unique and irreplaceable.
3. Punch a hole at the top of the medallion and thread a piece of yarn or ribbon through it, so the children can wear their medallions. As they wear them, it will remind them that there is no substitute for God.

Prayer Activity: God is Number One!

You'll Need:

- Colorful construction paper
- Markers or crayons
- Glue sticks

Get Ready: Before the activity, cut out large number '1' shapes from the construction paper. Each child will need one '1'.

Do this:

1. Start by telling the children about Exodus 20:2-3, explaining that God tells us He is the only God and we should have no other gods before Him. This means God wants to be the most important, number one in our lives.
2. Give each child a large number '1' and markers or crayons. Ask them to decorate their number '1' while thinking about ways they can make God number one in their lives. They can draw things they love about God or ways they can show God is important to them.

3. After decorating, gather the children in a circle with their number '1's. Lead them in a prayer, asking God to help them remember He is the only God and to help them keep Him as number one in their lives. Encourage the children to place their decorated number '1' somewhere they will see it every day as a reminder.