

# Not Me, Lord

## LOWER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

**Theme:** Betraying Christ

**Scripture:** Matthew 26

**Memory Verse:** Matthew 26:41 - 'Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.'

## The Children's Sermon

In Matthew 26:21 (during the Passover meal) Jesus said to the twelve, 'I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me.' In v:22 'They were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, "Surely not I, Lord?"' (also Mark 14:18-19) Judas said in Matthew 26:25, "Surely not I, Rabbi?" (also Mark 14:19) The Bible tells us in v:35: 'Peter declared, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the other disciples said the same.' (also Mark 14:31)

With the exception of Judas, Peter and the other disciples didn't betray Jesus on purpose. They had no deliberate intention to, but they were afraid there was the possibility.

Some of you are probably thinking, "Not me. I would never do that." The truth is we betray Jesus all of the time. I'm sure we don't set out to. It's not intentional. Yet we betray Jesus when we say we are devoted to Him but don't live like it; when we 'talk the talk' but don't 'walk the walk'; when we gossip, tell 'little white lies'... whenever we don't stand up for Jesus.

Let's talk more about the Betrayal of Jesus. Imagine you have a best friend, someone you trust and spend lots of time with. Now, imagine if that friend promised to always be there for you but then, when you needed them the most, they weren't there. That's a bit like what happened to Jesus. He was always there for his friends, teaching them and showing them how to love others. But when a tough time came, they didn't stand by Him.

The Betrayal of Jesus teaches us a big lesson about friendship and being true to our word. When we say we are going to do something, especially when we promise to be a good friend, it's important to keep that promise. Just like in a game of tag, if you say you're "it," you don't suddenly say you're not just because the game gets hard. You stick with it until the game changes.

Now, let's think about how we can sometimes be like those friends of Jesus. Maybe we tell our parents we'll clean our room but then we don't. Or we tell a friend we'll share our snack but then decide to keep it all for ourselves. Those moments are like small betrayals, aren't they? We're not keeping our word, just like the disciples didn't keep theirs.

Prayer is one way to help us stay true. Talking to Jesus, just like we would talk to a friend, helps us remember to be better friends ourselves. We can say, "Dear Jesus, help me to be a good friend today and to keep my promises, just like I want my friends to do for me."

Another way to avoid betraying Jesus is by learning more about Him. The more we know about Jesus and how He lived, the better we can follow His example. It's like if you're learning to play soccer. The more you practice and learn from someone who's

really good, the better you'll play the game. Jesus is the best example of how to live and love others, so learning from Him helps us do the same.

Let's also remember to say sorry when we mess up. Everyone makes mistakes, even grown-ups. When we do something wrong, like betraying a promise or not being a good friend, saying sorry is important. It's like if you accidentally break your friend's toy. Saying sorry doesn't fix the toy, but it helps fix the friendship. When we say sorry to Jesus, it helps fix our friendship with Him, too.

And finally, let's try to be brave. Sometimes, we might not want to do the right thing because we're afraid of what others will think. Maybe standing up for someone who's being picked on or choosing not to laugh at a mean joke. Being brave means doing the right thing, even when it's hard. Jesus was brave all the time, and He helps us to be brave, too.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, we all know we betray you in some way every day and we are ashamed of our weakness. Help us to be strong and to live our lives each day so that we can say, "Not me, Lord. Not today." Amen.

So, kids, let's remember the story of the Betrayal of Jesus not just as something sad, but as a lesson on how to be better friends, to keep our promises, and to always try to do the right thing. Let's be the kind of friends to Jesus and to others that we want to have for ourselves. And when we mess up, because sometimes we will, let's remember to talk to Jesus about it, learn from it, and keep trying to do better.

**Bible Memory Verse**

## **Matthew 26:41 - 'Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.'**

You Will Need:

- Construction paper
- Markers or crayons
- Glue sticks
- Stickers related to watching or praying (optional)

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into large watch shapes beforehand.
- Write the memory verse on a sample watch to show the children.

Do This:

1. Give each child a watch-shaped piece of construction paper and markers or crayons. Explain that this will be their 'prayer watch.'
2. Ask them to decorate their watch with markers, crayons, and stickers. While they work, talk to them about the importance of watching and praying to avoid temptation, just like Jesus taught his disciples.
3. Once they are done decorating, help them write the memory verse on their watch. Encourage them to hang their prayer watch somewhere they will see it every day to remind them to pray and watch out for temptations.

## **Bible Interactive Experience**

You'll Need:

- Small pieces of bread
- Grape juice in small cups

- 30 pieces of silver-colored coins (can be chocolate coins or plastic coins)
- A small bowl
- Printouts of simple, key scenes from Matthew 26 (such as the Last Supper, Jesus praying in Gethsemane, Judas betraying Jesus with a kiss, Peter denying Jesus)
- Crayons or markers
- A large piece of poster board and tape

#### Get Ready:

- Arrange the small pieces of bread and grape juice cups on a table to represent the Last Supper.
- Place the 30 silver coins in the small bowl.
- Prepare the printouts of key scenes from Matthew 26 on another table with crayons or markers for coloring.
- Set up a "storyboard" area where the completed scenes can be displayed on the poster board with tape.

#### Do this:

1. **The Last Supper Sharing**: Begin by explaining the Last Supper. Let each child take a piece of bread and a cup of grape juice. As they eat and drink, explain that Jesus did this to show His love for us and to give us a way to remember Him.
  
2. **The 30 Silver Coins**: Show the children the bowl of silver coins. Explain that Judas agreed to betray Jesus for 30 silver coins. Let each child hold a coin and think about how sometimes people make bad choices for things that don't really matter. Emphasize that Jesus forgives us when we are sorry for our wrong choices.

3. **Coloring the Story**: Give each child a printout of the key scenes from Matthew 26 to color. As they color, go around and tell the story that each picture represents, focusing on the theme of betrayal but also on Jesus' love and forgiveness.
4. **Creating a Storyboard**: Once the children have finished coloring, help them tape their pictures onto the large poster board in the order of the events. This will create a storyboard of Matthew 26 that they can share with the rest of the Sunday School class or their families. Explain that even when friends let us down, Jesus never will, and He is always ready to forgive us.
5. **Closing Prayer**: Finish with a simple prayer, asking for help to be good friends and followers of Jesus, who love and forgive others just as He does.

## Snack Activity: 30 Pieces of Silver Trail Mix

You'll Need:

- Pretzel sticks (representing the wooden cross)
- Chocolate coins (symbolizing the 30 pieces of silver Judas received)
- Small crackers in the shape of fish or animals (representing the Passover meal)
- Raisins or dried cranberries (symbolizing the blood of Christ)
- Small paper bags or cups

Get Ready: Gather all your snack ingredients and have the small paper bags or cups ready for each child to make their own mix.

Do this:

1. Start by telling the children about how Judas agreed to betray Jesus for 30 pieces of silver, as mentioned in Matthew 26. Explain the significance of betrayal and how it led to Jesus being crucified.
2. Have each child take a small paper bag or cup and start making their trail mix. Begin with the pretzel sticks, explaining that these represent the wooden cross on which Jesus was crucified.
3. Next, add the chocolate coins to symbolize the 30 pieces of silver Judas received for betraying Jesus. Explain how sometimes people make wrong choices for money or other gains.
4. Then, add the fish or animal crackers to represent the Passover meal Jesus shared with His disciples, including Judas, before He was betrayed.
5. Lastly, add the raisins or dried cranberries to represent the blood of Christ, which was shed for the forgiveness of sins.
6. As the children enjoy their snack, remind them of the importance of making good choices and being loyal to their friends and family, just as Jesus wants us to be.

## Game Activity: Garden of Trust

You'll Need:

- A large open space (either indoors or outdoors)
- Music player (for playing and pausing music)
- Pictures or tokens of silver coins

**Get Ready:** Before the game, hide the silver coin tokens around the play area. These represent the 30 silver coins Judas received. Prepare a music playlist with lively songs the children enjoy.

**Do this:**

1. Explain to the children that we are going to play a game that helps us understand the story of when Judas betrayed Jesus. Tell them that Judas was given 30 silver coins to betray Jesus, which was not a good choice.
2. Start the music and have the children walk or dance around the area. When the music stops, they must find a silver coin as quickly as they can. Each child who finds a coin can bring it back to a designated 'trust basket.'
3. After all coins are collected, gather the children and discuss the importance of making good choices and being a trustworthy friend, unlike Judas. Emphasize that Jesus teaches us to love and trust each other.

## Craft Activity: Friendship Bracelets: Remembering Jesus

You'll Need:

- Embroidery thread or yarn in different colors
- Scissors
- Beads with letters to spell 'JESUS'

Get Ready: Cut 3 strands of embroidery thread or yarn, each about 24 inches long. Choose colors that you like or that remind you of Jesus' love and friendship.

Do this:

1. Tie the strands together at one end, leaving about an inch of slack to eventually tie the bracelet around your wrist. Start braiding the strands together. As you braid, think about the story of Jesus in Matthew 26 and how even his friends made big mistakes.



2. Halfway through your braid, string the beads onto one of the strands to spell 'JESUS'. Continue braiding the rest of the strands. This reminds us that Jesus is always with us, even when we make mistakes or feel alone.
3. Once you've finished braiding, tie off the end. Now you have a friendship bracelet to wear or give to a friend! This bracelet can help us remember Jesus' love and how we should strive to be loyal and loving friends, just like Jesus teaches us.

## Prayer Activity: Heartfelt Prayers from Little Hearts

You'll Need:

- Paper
- Crayons or markers
- A small box or basket

Get Ready: Before the activity, draw a large heart on each piece of paper and write 'Jesus, I'm sorry for...' at the top of each heart.

Do this:

1. Talk to the children about the story of when Judas betrayed Jesus in Matthew 26. Explain that betraying Jesus made Him very sad, but He forgives us when we are sorry.
2. Ask the children to think of times they might have done something wrong or hurt someone's feelings and how they can say sorry to Jesus. Let them know it's okay to make mistakes because Jesus always forgives us.
3. Give each child a heart paper and crayons or markers. Ask them to draw or write inside the heart something they want to say sorry to Jesus for. Encourage them to be honest because Jesus loves us no matter what.
4. Once they are done, have them fold their heart papers and place them in the box or basket. Gather the children around the box and lead them in a simple prayer, asking

Jesus to forgive the things they've written down and to help them be better friends to Him and to others.