

A Different Kind Of Freedom

UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: We are called to be free, but not free to do whatever we want.

Scripture: Galatians 5:13

Memory Verse: For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. - Galatians 5:13

The Children's Sermon

Have you ever seen a bird fly out of its cage for the first time? Or maybe you've watched a dog run around in the park, off its leash, happy and free. That feeling of freedom is something very special. But did you know, as Christians, we have something called Christian freedom? It's a bit like when the bird flies out of the cage or the dog runs freely in the park, but even better.

Christians believe that a long time ago, we were all like pets stuck in a cage. This cage wasn't made of metal or wood, but it was made of something called sin. Sin are the things we do that are not good, like telling lies or being mean to others. Jesus, who is very special because He is God's Son, opened the cage door for us. He did this by dying on a cross, which might sound sad, but He did it because He loves us so much. He wanted to give us Christian freedom.

But wait, there's more to Christian freedom than just getting out of the cage. Imagine if the bird flew out and didn't know where to go, or the dog ran in the park but forgot how to play nicely with other dogs. It wouldn't be very good, right? That's why Christian

freedom isn't just about being free to do anything we want. It's about learning to live the best way.

The Bible tells us something important in Galatians 5:13. It says, "You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love." This means that with Christian freedom, we should help and love each other, not just think about ourselves.

So, how do we do this? How do we use our Christian freedom the right way? Well, it's like learning to ride a bike. At first, you might need training wheels and someone to help guide you. In the same way, God helps guide us. He gave us the Bible to be our training wheels, and Jesus is like the friend who holds onto the back of the seat until we find our balance.

One way we can use our Christian freedom is by being kind. Have you ever helped a friend who fell down? Or shared your favorite toy with someone else? That's using your freedom to love others.

Another way is by saying kind words. Words are very powerful. They can make someone's day brighter or hurt their feelings. When we choose to say nice things, encourage others, and not tell lies, we are using our Christian freedom in a good way.

We can also use our Christian freedom by being patient and forgiving. Sometimes, friends or siblings might make us upset. Instead of staying mad or seeking revenge, we can forgive them. Remember, Jesus forgave us, so we can forgive others too.

But here's something very important: we can't do all of this on our own. Just like a plant needs water and sunlight to grow, we need God's help to use our Christian freedom the right way. We can talk to Him through prayer, asking for His help to be kind, patient, and forgiving. We can also read the Bible to learn more about how Jesus lived and how we can be like Him.

Christian freedom is a wonderful gift. It's not just about being free from sin; it's about living a life full of love, kindness, and goodness. It's about making the world a better place, one act of love at a time.

So, the next time you see a bird flying or a dog running freely, remember the Christian freedom you have. Think about how you can use it to help others and show love. Remember, with God's help, you can make a big difference in the world.

Let's pray together: Dear Jesus, thank you for giving us Christian freedom. Help us to use it to love and serve others, just like You did. Teach us to be kind, patient, and forgiving. We want to live like You and make You happy. Amen.

Remember, kids, Christian freedom is a special gift. Let's use it the right way and make the world a brighter place, filled with love and happiness.

Bible Memory Verse

For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. - Galatians 5:13

You Will Need:

- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons
- Stickers with themes of love and service

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into heart shapes, one for each child.
- Write 'Serve One Another in Love' at the top of each heart.

Do This:

1. Give each child a heart-shaped piece of construction paper and access to markers, crayons, and stickers.
2. Ask the children to think of ways they can serve others in love, as described in Galatians 5:13. They can draw or write these actions on their hearts.
3. Encourage the children to share their hearts with the group, discussing the different ways they can show love through service. Conclude by praying together, asking God to help them live out Galatians 5:13 in their daily lives.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- Large sheets of paper or poster board
- Markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- String or yarn
- Scissors
- Tape or glue
- Bible or printed copy of Galatians 5:13

Get Ready:

- Write Galatians 5:13 on a large sheet of paper or chalkboard where everyone can see.
- Cut the string or yarn into pieces, long enough to tie around a wrist as a bracelet.
- Set up stations with markers, crayons, or colored pencils and the cut string or yarn.

Do this:

1. ****Introduction to Freedom in Christ****: Start by reading Galatians 5:13 together.

Discuss what it means to be called to freedom and how that freedom isn't an excuse to indulge in selfish desires but an opportunity to serve one another in love.

2. ****Freedom Bracelets****: Give each child a piece of string or yarn and markers, crayons, or colored pencils. Ask them to create a "Freedom Bracelet" by coloring the string with colors or designs that represent freedom to them. As they work, encourage them to think about ways they can use their freedom to serve others in love.

3. ****Service Ideas Poster****: Using the large sheets of paper or poster board, have the children brainstorm and draw ways they can serve others at home, in school, and in their community. Encourage them to think of specific actions, like helping a sibling with homework, doing chores without being asked, or writing thank you notes to community helpers. Each child can draw or write their ideas on the poster.

4. ****Sharing Circle****: Once everyone has finished their bracelets and contributed to the Service Ideas Poster, gather in a circle. Have each child share one way they plan to use their freedom to serve others this week, inspired by their bracelet or the group poster.

5. **Closing Prayer**: Close with a prayer, asking God to help each child remember to use their freedom to love and serve others, just as Christ loves and serves us. Ask for guidance in seeing opportunities to serve and the courage to act on them.

6. **Take-Home Reminder**: Encourage the children to wear their Freedom Bracelets throughout the week as a reminder of their commitment to use their freedom to serve in love, and to try at least one of the service ideas from the poster.

Snack Activity: Freedom Fruit Cups

You'll Need:

- Fresh fruits (grapes, strawberries, blueberries, apples)
- Clear plastic cups
- Toothpicks
- Paper and markers for labels

Get Ready: Wash all the fruits and prepare a clean workspace.

Do this:

1. Discuss Galatians 5:13 with the children, emphasizing 'You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.' Explain how freedom is not about doing whatever we want, but about choosing to do good for others.
2. Have each child pick their favorite fruits and fill their cup with them, layering them to create a colorful pattern. As they work, encourage them to think of ways they can use their freedom to serve and love others.
3. While the children are filling their cups, have them create a label for their cup using paper and markers. On one side, they should write 'Freedom Fruit Cup' and on the other

side, they can write a personal commitment on how they plan to use their freedom to serve others this week.

4. Once everyone has finished, gather the children to share their commitments and enjoy their Freedom Fruit Cups together. Use this time to reinforce the lesson that true freedom is found in loving and serving others, just as Christ loves and serves us.

Game Activity: Freedom Tag

You'll Need:

- A large, open space (preferably outdoors)
- Bandanas or small flags (one per child)
- A timer or stopwatch

Get Ready: Before the game, have a short discussion about Galatians 5:13, explaining that we are called to use our freedom to serve others in love, not to indulge in selfish desires. Explain how the game will represent using our freedom wisely by helping others.

Do this:

1. Designate one child as 'It'. This child is tasked with tagging others, but with a twist: when they tag someone, they must say a way they can serve or help others (e.g., 'I can help by sharing my toys').
2. The other children will try to evade 'It' while moving around the play area. If they are tagged, they must stand still, holding their bandana or flag above their head to signal they need help.
3. To be 'freed', another player must come to a frozen player, take the bandana (representing taking on a burden to serve), and tell them a way they can serve others. Both players are then free to continue playing.

4. The game continues until everyone has been frozen and freed at least once, emphasizing the importance of serving and helping one another in love. Use the timer to limit the game to 10-15 minutes, then gather to discuss how it felt to serve and be served.

Craft Activity: Freedom Chains

You'll Need:

- Colored paper strips
- Markers or crayons
- Stapler or tape

Get Ready: Write Galatians 5:13 on a whiteboard or large piece of paper for all the children to see. Discuss what it means to have freedom in Christ and how we can use our freedom to serve others in love.

Do this:

1. Give each child several strips of colored paper. Ask them to write or draw examples of ways they can serve others on each strip. Encourage them to think of specific actions, like helping at home, being kind to a sibling, or sharing with friends.
2. Once they have filled out several strips, show them how to loop the first strip and secure it with a stapler or tape, creating the first link of a chain. Then, they can loop the next strip through the first, creating a second link. They continue this process until they have a chain.
3. Hang the completed chains around the classroom as a visual reminder that our freedom in Christ links us to others through love and service. Conclude by praying together, asking God to help us use our freedom to love and serve those around us.