

Understanding Worship

UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: Worship is giving ourselves to God

Scripture: Romans 12:1

Memory Verse: Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. - Romans 12:1

The Children's Sermon

We are like ships, and when we come to church to worship, we are offering our ships to God. That's what the Scripture means when it says, "Present your bodies as a living sacrifice ... to God which is your spiritual worship." When we come to worship, we also get fuel in our tanks so that we won't just float with the crowd or drift on the waves of popularity. And when we let Jesus be the pilot of our ship, then we'll go in the right direction and we'll make the right decisions that keep us from shipwreck and disaster.

So, worship is offering our ships (ourselves) to God, and we do this when we come here to pray, sing, and listen to God's Word and to the message. And God fills us up!

Prayer: Dear Father, thank you for making it possible for each child to be in worship today. Thank you for the parents, friends, Sunday school teachers, for whoever made it possible for these children to worship in church today. Help all of us to offer everything we have to you, and we ask that you fill us with strength to live pleasing lives to you this week. In the name of Jesus our pilot, we pray, Amen.

Now, let's think more about what it means to "Present Your Bodies as a Living Sacrifice." Imagine your life is like a ship. Your ship has many parts - your thoughts, your actions, your words, and your heart. When we say "Present Your Bodies as a Living Sacrifice," it's like saying, "Here, God, take my ship and all its parts. Help me sail it the way you want."

Just like a ship needs a captain, our lives need Jesus to guide us. Without Him, we might get lost at sea, caught in big storms, or even crash into things. But with Jesus, we know we're headed in the right direction, towards a beautiful, safe harbor.

When we come to church, it's like coming into a safe harbor for a little while. We get to rest, listen to God's words, and get ready for the next part of our journey. It's a time when we can check our ship, make repairs, and make sure we have enough fuel - which is God's love and teachings - to keep going.

Sometimes, it might feel hard to "Present Your Bodies as a Living Sacrifice." Maybe we want to do things our way, or we're scared, or we just forget. That's okay. God knows we're not perfect. He loves us all the time, even when we make mistakes. The important thing is to keep trying, to keep coming back to God, and to keep asking Jesus to be our captain.

Remember, every part of your ship is important. The way you treat your friends, the things you say, the choices you make - they're all parts of your ship that you can offer to God. When you're kind, when you tell the truth, when you choose to do good things, it's like you're sailing your ship right next to Jesus.

And don't forget, you're not sailing alone. Look around you - see all the other ships here? We're all in this journey together, with Jesus leading the way. We can help each other, learn from each other, and encourage each other to keep going, even when it gets tough.

So, next time you're feeling lost or scared, or you're not sure what to do, remember that Jesus is the best captain you could ever have. He knows exactly where you need to go, and He'll help you get there. Just say, "Here's my ship, Jesus. I trust you to lead the way."

Let's pray again: Dear God, thank you for loving us and for guiding our ships. Help us to always remember to "Present Our Bodies as a Living Sacrifice" to you. When we're scared or unsure, help us to remember that Jesus is our captain, and with Him, we'll always find our way. Thank you for our church, our families, and our friends who sail with us. Help us to be kind and helpful to each other, just like Jesus teaches us. Amen.

So, little sailors, as we get ready to leave our safe harbor today, remember to keep your ship sailing close to Jesus. With Him as your captain, you'll always be on the right course. And don't forget to come back to the harbor - our church - to get more fuel, make repairs, and prepare for your next adventure on the sea of life.

Bible Memory Verse

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and

pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. - Romans 12:1

You Will Need:

- Construction paper
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Magazines for cutting

Get Ready:

- Gather all materials on a large table.
- Cut out various pictures from magazines that represent daily life activities (eating, playing, studying, etc.)

Do This:

1. Discuss the meaning of Romans 12:1, focusing on what it means to offer ourselves to God in our everyday actions.
2. Have each child select a piece of construction paper and write the memory verse at the top with markers or crayons.
3. Let the children cut out pictures from the magazines that they feel represent ways they can offer themselves to God in their daily lives (such as helping others, praying, learning about God, etc.) and glue them onto their construction paper.
4. Encourage the children to share their collages with the group and explain how the pictures they chose represent living sacrifices to God.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A large poster board
- Markers or colored pencils
- Sticky notes
- Bibles or printed copies of Romans 12:1

Get Ready:

- Write "Worship is giving ourselves to God" at the top of the poster board.
- Place the poster board on a wall or easel where all the children can see and reach it.
- Distribute sticky notes and markers/colored pencils to each child.
- Ensure each child has access to Romans 12:1, either in their own Bibles or a printed copy.

Do this:

1. Read Romans 12:1 aloud together as a class. Discuss what it means to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice and how this is our true and proper worship.
2. Ask each child to think of a specific way they can give themselves to God this week. It could be by helping someone, spending time in prayer, reading the Bible, or any act of kindness or worship.
3. Have each child write their commitment on a sticky note and then come up and stick it on the poster board. Encourage them to draw or decorate their note as they wish.
4. Once all the children have placed their sticky notes on the poster board, lead a short prayer asking God to help each child fulfill their commitment to give themselves to Him in the coming week.

Snack Activity: Living Sacrifice Snack Mix

You'll Need:

- A large mixing bowl
- Measuring cups and spoons
- A variety of snack items (pretzels, popcorn, chocolate chips, dried fruits, nuts - please consider allergies)
- Small paper cups or snack bags
- Markers and stickers for decoration

Get Ready: Gather all your snack items and materials in one place. Make sure your hands are clean before you start preparing the snack mix.

Do this:

1. Read Romans 12:1 together. Discuss what it means to offer ourselves as a living sacrifice to God and how we can do that in our daily lives.
2. Have each child choose their favorite snack items from the variety provided and measure out a portion of each to add to the large mixing bowl. As they add their items, encourage them to think of it as adding their unique talents and gifts to serve God.
3. Once everyone has added their ingredients, gently mix the snack mix together. As you mix, pray together, asking God to help you use your gifts to worship Him and serve others.
4. Use the measuring cups to distribute the snack mix into the paper cups or snack bags. Allow the children to decorate their cups or bags with markers and stickers, personalizing them as a reminder that their lives are a unique offering to God.
5. Enjoy the snack together, reflecting on how combining our gifts, like the ingredients, can create something beautiful for God.

Game Activity: Living Sacrifice Relay

You'll Need:

- A large open space (preferably outdoors)
- Two sets of items representing daily activities (e.g., a book for studying, a toy for playing, a small pillow for sleeping, etc.)
- Two baskets or boxes
- A printout of Romans 12:1 for each team

Get Ready: Place the baskets at one end of the play area and spread out the daily activity items at the other end. Divide the children into two teams and have each team line up at the basket end.

Do this:

1. Explain Romans 12:1, emphasizing that worship is not just singing or praying, but giving our whole lives to God, including our daily activities.
2. On 'Go,' the first player from each team runs to the other end, chooses an activity item, and runs back to place it in their team's basket, then tags the next player in line.
3. Before the next player can run, the team must say together, 'I offer my [activity they just picked up] as a living sacrifice to God.'
4. The game continues until all the items are in the baskets. Conclude by discussing how each daily activity can be an act of worship when done for God.

Craft Activity: Living Sacrifices to God

You'll Need:

- A plain white T-shirt for each child
- Fabric markers or fabric paint
- Stencils of hearts, crosses, and other Christian symbols

Get Ready: Gather all materials and set up a workspace for each child with enough room to design their T-shirts.

Do this:

1. Read Romans 12:1 together as a class. Discuss what it means to offer ourselves as living sacrifices and how we can worship God with our lives.
2. Encourage the children to think of ways they can serve and worship God in their daily lives. Have them write or draw these ideas on their T-shirts using the fabric markers or paint. They can use the stencils to add symbols that represent their faith and commitment to God.
3. Once everyone has finished their T-shirt, allow time for the shirts to dry. As they dry, engage the children in a discussion about how wearing their T-shirt can remind them to live for God every day. Conclude with a prayer, dedicating their efforts and their lives to God's service.

Prayer Activity: Living Sacrifices to God

You'll Need:

- A Bible or Bible app
- Blank paper
- Markers or crayons

Get Ready: Read Romans 12:1 together as a class and discuss what it means to offer ourselves as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God. This is our true and proper worship.

Do this:

1. Ask each student to draw a picture of themselves doing something they love or are good at (e.g., playing a sport, helping others, studying, creating art).
2. On the same paper, have them write or draw ways they can use that activity to serve God and others, reflecting on how this act of service can be their spiritual worship.
3. Share the drawings in small groups or with the class, discussing how each activity can be a form of worship and dedication to God. Encourage students to think of their daily activities as opportunities to worship God by serving others and being a good example.