

The Monarch Butterfly

PRESCHOOL LESSON PLAN

Theme: Growing into what God wants you to be.

Scripture: Luke 2:52

Memory Verse: And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

- Luke 2:52

The Children's Sermon

I have a picture to show you today. Who can tell me what you see in this picture? Yes, it's a butterfly and a worm. But this isn't just any butterfly or just any worm. The butterfly is called a Monarch butterfly. It is one of God's most beautiful creations. The worm is actually a caterpillar. It is a monarch butterfly in its first stage, before it grows up. The caterpillar looks like a nasty worm, doesn't it? But it will change into a butterfly. First, it spins a cocoon around itself. Then it rests in the cocoon while its body changes from that of a caterpillar to a butterfly. God knows that the caterpillar will become a butterfly, and even though the caterpillar looks totally unlike the beautiful monarch, God knows its potential for beauty.

Just like the caterpillar, we might not always see what we can become. But God knows. He sees us not just as we are, but as what we can become. This reminds me of Jesus' growth. When Jesus was a little boy, He grew up just like us. He learned to walk, to talk, and to help His family. Even though He was always God's Son, He grew in wisdom and favor with God and people.

Jesus' growth was special because it shows us how we can grow too. We can learn new things, help others, and become closer to God. Just like the caterpillar needs time to change into a butterfly, we need time to grow and become who God wants us to be.

Now, let's think about a tiny seed. When you plant it in the ground, it doesn't look like much, does it? But inside that seed is a big, beautiful plant waiting to grow. It needs soil, water, and sunshine. With time, the little seed grows roots, then a stem, and finally, it blooms into a lovely flower or a big, strong tree. That's a bit like us too. We need love, kindness, and learning to grow. And just like the plant needs time to grow, we also need time to become the best we can be.

Sometimes, when we make mistakes or when things are hard, we might feel like we're not growing at all. But remember the caterpillar? When it's in the cocoon, it might look like nothing is happening. But inside, it's changing into a beautiful butterfly. Even when we can't see it, Jesus' growth in us is happening. Every day, with every kind thing we do, every new thing we learn, and every time we talk to God, we're growing a little bit more.

And guess what? Just like the caterpillar has a special job to become a butterfly, we have special jobs too. God has given each of us unique talents and gifts. Maybe you're really good at drawing, or you can run fast, or you're kind at sharing. These talents are like little seeds that God has planted in us. Our job is to help them grow. We do that by practicing, learning, and asking God to help us use our gifts to make the world a better place.

Now, let's talk about friends. Friends can help us grow too. Just like a butterfly might flutter from flower to flower, we can share our joy and love with the people around us.

When we're kind, when we listen, and when we help our friends, we're spreading God's love, just like the butterfly spreads the pollen that helps flowers grow.

But what if we see someone who is sad or needs help? What would Jesus do? He would show love and kindness. He would help. When we do the same, we're following Jesus' example. We're showing Jesus' growth in our hearts. And every time we choose to be kind, we're like that caterpillar, getting ready to spread our wings and show the beautiful butterfly God is helping us become.

Remember, it doesn't matter if you're small or if sometimes you feel like you're not important. God has big plans for you, just like He did for Jesus. Jesus started as a little baby, grew up just like you, and did amazing things. You can do amazing things too, with God's help.

So, let's be patient with ourselves and with others. Let's remember that growing takes time. Let's be kind, let's learn, and let's help each other. And let's talk to God, asking Him to help us grow in the best way possible.

In the end, just like the caterpillar becomes a butterfly, and the seed becomes a flower or a tree, we can become exactly what God has planned for us. And along the way, we can enjoy every moment of Jesus' growth in our lives, knowing that He is with us, helping us grow into beautiful creations, ready to share His love with the world.

So, next time you see a butterfly, or a little seed, remember how much you are like them. Remember that you are growing, changing, and becoming more beautiful every day, in God's eyes and in the eyes of the people around you. And always remember, Jesus' growth in you is the most beautiful growth of all.

Bible Memory Verse

And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man. - Luke 2:52

You Will Need:

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

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into large flower shapes beforehand.
- Write 'wisdom', 'stature', 'favor with God', and 'favor with man' on separate petals of another flower shape as an example for the children.

Do This:

1. Show the children the example flower and explain that just like a flower grows in the sun, Jesus grew in wisdom, stature, and in favor with God and man. Each petal represents a way Jesus grew.
2. Give each child a flower shape and help them write or draw (for the younger ones) 'wisdom', 'stature', 'favor with God', and 'favor with man' on each of the petals. They can also decorate their flowers with markers, crayons, and stickers.
3. Discuss with the children how they can grow in these areas too, like learning new things for wisdom, eating healthy and exercising for stature, praying and being kind for favor with God and man.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A small plant or flower in a pot
- Growth chart poster with pictures (wisdom, stature, favor with God, favor with people)
- Stickers

Get Ready:

- Create a simple growth chart poster with four sections: wisdom, stature, favor with God, favor with people. Add pictures or symbols for each (e.g., a book for wisdom, a ruler for stature, a heart for favor with God, and smiling faces for favor with people).

Do this:

1. Show the children the small plant and explain that just like the plant needs water, sunlight, and care to grow, we also need different things to grow into what God wants us to be.
2. Introduce the growth chart poster and explain each section briefly: wisdom is learning and understanding, stature is growing big and strong, favor with God is loving and obeying God, and favor with people is being kind and friendly to others.
3. Give each child a sticker and let them place it on the growth chart in the area they want to grow in most. Encourage them to think about how they can grow in that area this week.

Snack Activity: Growing in Wisdom and Stature Snack

You'll Need:

- Whole grain bread

- Banana
- Raisins
- Peanut butter (or any nut/seed butter for allergies)
- Small cookie cutter (optional)

Get Ready: Make sure the table is clean and have all your ingredients ready. If using a cookie cutter, choose a shape that reminds the children of growing, like a tree or a star.

Do this:

1. Spread peanut butter on the whole grain bread. This represents the foundation of being grounded in God's love and teachings.
2. Use the cookie cutter to cut out a shape from the bread. Explain that just like each shape is unique, God has a unique plan for each of us to grow.
3. Slice the banana into rounds and place them on the bread as 'fruits' of growing in wisdom and stature, just like Jesus did. Add raisins to decorate and talk about the importance of growing not just in physical stature but also in wisdom, favor with God, and favor with man.

Game Activity: Growing Together

You'll Need:

- Large sheets of paper or cardboard
- Markers or crayons
- Stickers or stamps

Get Ready: Draw a simple outline of a tree with branches on the large sheets of paper or cardboard. Make sure there is enough room on the branches to place stickers or stamps.

Do this:

1. Explain to the children that just like a tree grows strong and tall, God wants us to grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and people, just like Jesus did in Luke 2:52.
2. Have each child choose a marker or crayon and draw themselves as a fruit or leaf on the tree's branches. As they do this, encourage them to think about one way they can grow to be more like Jesus (e.g., being kind, sharing, listening).
3. After everyone has added their fruit or leaf to the tree, give them stickers or stamps to decorate their drawing. While they decorate, talk to them about how each unique decoration represents their unique growth and how God loves to see us grow and flourish.

Craft Activity: Growing Like Jesus

You'll Need:

- Construction paper (various colors)
- Child-safe scissors
- Glue sticks
- Markers or crayons
- Stickers (optional)

Get Ready: Cut out simple flower shapes from different colors of construction paper. Each child will need one flower shape. Also, cut out green stem and leaf shapes.

Do this:

1. Give each child a flower shape and let them decorate it with markers, crayons, and stickers. Explain that just like they are decorating the flowers to be beautiful, God helps us grow to be beautiful inside by teaching us kindness, love, and wisdom.
2. Help the children glue the stem and leaf to their flower, turning it into a complete plant. Discuss how plants need sunlight, water, and care to grow, just like we need love, learning, and God's guidance to grow.
3. On the leaf, help the children write or draw something they can do to grow in a way that pleases God, such as sharing, praying, or being kind. Remind them of Luke 2:52, 'And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.' This will help them understand that growing up isn't just about getting taller, but also about growing in character and faith.

Prayer Activity: Growing Like Jesus Prayer Garden

You'll Need:

- A small pot for each child
- Soil
- Seeds (such as flowers or beans)
- Watering can or cup

Get Ready: Fill each pot halfway with soil before the activity begins.

Do this:

1. Read Luke 2:52 to the children, explaining that just like plants grow, Jesus wants us to grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and people.
2. Give each child a pot and let them fill it up with more soil, then plant a few seeds in their pot. Explain that the seeds need soil, water, and sunlight to grow.

3. As they water their seeds for the first time, lead the children in a simple prayer: 'Dear God, help us to grow strong and wise, and to be kind and loving to everyone, just like Jesus. Amen.'

4. Encourage them to take their prayer garden home and care for it, reminding them that as their plant grows, it's a reminder of how they can grow in God's love.