

The Monarch Butterfly

LOWER ELEMENTARY 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
- Markers or crayons
- Stickers (optional)
- Glue sticks

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into large flower shapes, one for each child.
- Write 'Wisdom', 'Stature', 'Favor with God', and 'Favor with man' on separate petals of the flower.

Do This:

1. Give each child a flower shape and ask them to decorate the center with their name using markers or crayons.
2. Discuss what each of the words on the petals means: 'Wisdom' is about learning and making good choices, 'Stature' is about growing physically, 'Favor with God' is about loving and obeying God, and 'Favor with man' is about being kind and good to others.
3. Have the children decorate each petal according to what they think each aspect looks like in their life. They can draw or write how they can grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man. Encourage them to use stickers or draw pictures that represent each concept.

4. Once they have finished, discuss as a group how Jesus grew in all these areas and how they can follow His example. Encourage them to hang their flower in their room as a reminder to grow like Jesus in every way.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A small potted plant for each child
- Growth chart posters
- Markers, crayons, and stickers for decorating
- Bible verse cards with Luke 2:52 written on them
- A large paper or poster with a tree drawn on it, branches labeled: "Wisdom," "Stature," "Favor with God," "Favor with Man"

Get Ready:

- Prepare the potted plants by ensuring they are small enough for each child to take home.
- Create or purchase growth chart posters, one for each child.
- Write or print out Luke 2:52 on small cards.
- Draw or print a large tree on a poster, with branches that have labels correlating to the areas Jesus grew in as mentioned in Luke 2:52.

Do this:

1. ****Introduction to Luke 2:52**** - Start by explaining Luke 2:52 in simple terms: "Jesus grew up just like you. He became stronger and smarter. He was loved by God and people. Today, we're going to learn how we can grow like Jesus."

2. **Decorate Your Growth Chart** - Hand out the growth chart posters and decorating supplies. Encourage the children to decorate their charts as they like. As they work, talk to them about growing in different ways - not just getting taller but also learning, becoming kinder, and helping others. Explain that these are ways we can grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and people, just like Jesus did.

3. **Planting Activity** - Give each child a small potted plant. Explain that just like plants need water, sunlight, and care to grow, we need to read the Bible, pray, and do good things to grow into what God wants us to be. As they plant, discuss the importance of taking care of their plant and relate it to taking care of their own growth.

4. **Bible Verse Memory** - Hand out the Bible verse cards with Luke 2:52. Encourage the kids to decorate their card and then take turns trying to memorize the verse. Explain how remembering Bible verses can help us grow in wisdom.

5. **The Growth Tree Activity** - Bring the children to the large tree poster. Have pre-written actions or characteristics on the branches that relate to growing in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man (e.g., "sharing with friends," "learning something new," "helping at home"). Let each child place a sticker or a mark next to the branches/actions they have done recently, discussing how each action helps us grow in different ways.

6. **Closing** - Gather the children and their plants. Remind them that just like they will take care of their plants to help them grow, God takes care of us and helps us grow in every way. Encourage them to place their growth chart in their room and to mark their growth over time, remembering that they are growing just like Jesus did. Close

with a short prayer, asking God to help each child grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and people.

Snack Activity: Growing Garden Plates

You'll Need:

- A variety of fruits and vegetables (carrots, celery, cucumbers, grapes, apples, etc.)
- Peanut butter (or any nut-free spread for allergies)
- Small paper plates
- Plastic knives

Get Ready: Wash all the fruits and vegetables. Cut them into slices or shapes that can be easily handled by children.

Do this:

1. Explain Luke 2:52, 'And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.' Discuss how just like plants need water, sunlight, and soil to grow, we need to grow in different ways too - in wisdom by learning, physically by eating healthy and exercising, and spiritually by getting to know God more.
2. Give each child a paper plate and let them use the fruits and vegetables to create their own 'growing garden'. They can use peanut butter or a nut-free spread as 'soil' to stick their 'plants' to the plate.
3. As they build their gardens, encourage them to think about how they can grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and others. For example, reading good books or the Bible for wisdom, playing outside for stature, and being kind and helpful for favor with God and people.

Game Activity: Grow and Go

You'll Need:

- Sidewalk chalk
- Beanbags
- A large open space (like a driveway or a sidewalk)

Get Ready: Draw a large hopscotch grid on the ground with the sidewalk chalk. Each square should have one of the following labels: 'Wisdom', 'Stature', 'Favor with God', 'Favor with People'. Make sure there are multiple squares for each category, mixed throughout the grid.

Do this:

1. Explain Luke 2:52 to the children: 'And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.' Discuss briefly how they can grow in each of these areas.
2. Players take turns tossing their beanbag onto the grid. They must hop through the grid, skipping the square their beanbag landed on, to reach the end. When they pick up their beanbag, they must say one way they can grow in the area they landed on (e.g., 'Wisdom' - by reading the Bible; 'Stature' - by eating healthy; 'Favor with God' - by praying; 'Favor with People' - by being kind).
3. After collecting their beanbag, the player hops back to the start. The next player then takes their turn. Encourage children to think of different ways they can grow each time they play.

Craft Activity: Growing Tree of Virtues

You'll Need:

- A large sheet of construction paper (preferably green or brown)

- Markers or crayons
- Stickers or cut-outs of fruits and leaves

Get Ready: Draw a large tree with branches but no leaves on the construction paper.
Write Luke 2:52 at the bottom of the tree.

Do this:

1. Read Luke 2:52 together: 'And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.' Discuss what it means to grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and people.
2. Have each child think of virtues or good qualities they want to grow in (like kindness, patience, love, etc.). For each virtue, they choose a fruit or leaf sticker and write the virtue on it.
3. Stick the fruits or leaves onto the tree branches, filling the tree with the virtues they want to grow in. As they do, encourage them to think about how they can practice these virtues in their daily lives.

Prayer Activity: Growing Like Jesus Prayer Garden

You'll Need:

- A small pot for each child
- Soil
- Seeds (flowers or herbs work well)
- Water
- Markers and stickers for decorating pots

Get Ready: Gather all materials on a large table, making sure there's enough for each child to have their own pot, soil, seeds, and decorating supplies. Print out Luke 2:52 on cardstock for each child.

Do this:

1. Start by reading Luke 2:52 together: 'And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.' Discuss what it means to grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and others. Explain that just like plants need water, soil, and sunlight to grow, we need to learn, pray, and do good things to grow into what God wants us to be.
2. Have the children decorate their pots with markers and stickers. As they do, encourage them to think about the ways they can grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man. They can write or draw these ideas on their pots.
3. Fill the pots with soil, plant the seeds, and water them. Place the Luke 2:52 cardstock in the soil like a plant marker. Close with a prayer, asking God to help each child grow in wisdom, stature, and favor, just like Jesus did. Remind them to take care of their plant as a reminder of how they're growing in God's love.