

# The Monarch Butterfly

## UPPER 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:

- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons
- Stickers (optional)
- Glue

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into four large sections, each representing one aspect of growth: Wisdom, Stature, Favor with God, Favor with Man.
- Write each aspect of growth at the top of each paper section.

Do This:

1. Discuss what each aspect of growth means (Wisdom - learning and understanding; Stature - physical growth and taking care of our bodies; Favor with God - growing in our relationship with God; Favor with Man - how we interact and treat others). Ask the children to give examples of how they can grow in each area.
2. Have the children draw or write their examples on the corresponding paper section. They can use markers, crayons, and stickers to decorate their ideas.
3. Once everyone has added their thoughts and illustrations, glue the sections together to create a 'Growth Chart'. Hang the chart in the classroom to remind the children of how they can grow in wisdom, stature, and favor, just like Jesus did.

# Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A Bible or printed copies of Luke 2:52
- Large poster board and markers
- Four different colored sheets of paper (representing wisdom, stature, favor with God, favor with man)
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Magazines for cutting out pictures (optional)

Get Ready:

- Cut the colored sheets of paper into strips.
- Write "Wisdom," "Stature," "Favor with God," and "Favor with Man" on the top of each corresponding colored strip.
- Set up a "Creation Station" with the poster board, colored strips, markers, scissors, glue, and magazines (if using).

Do this:

1. **\*\*Introduction to Luke 2:52\*\***: Start by reading Luke 2:52 together. Discuss what it means to grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man. Explain that today's activity will help them visualize how they can grow in these areas just like Jesus did.
  
2. **\*\*Personal Growth Poster\*\***: Each child gets a section of the poster board. They choose strips from the four categories (wisdom, stature, favor with God, favor with man) and glue them onto their section of the poster board. They can then write or draw specific ways they can grow in each area. For example, under "Wisdom," a child might

write "Read a book every week" or draw a book. Encourage creativity! If using magazines, they can cut out pictures that represent growth in these areas and glue them on their poster section.

3. **Group Discussion and Presentation**: Once everyone has completed their section of the poster, gather the children to present their ideas to the group. This allows them to share how they plan to grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man. It's also an excellent opportunity for kids to inspire each other with their ideas.

4. **Closing Prayer**: Close with a prayer, asking God to help each child grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man, just like Jesus did. Ask for guidance on how they can achieve the goals they've set on their posters.

## Snack Activity: Wisdom and Stature Fruit Trees

You'll Need:

- A variety of sliced fruits (apples, bananas, grapes, strawberries)
- Toothpicks
- A platter or large plate
- Cheese cubes
- Pretzel sticks

Get Ready: Wash all the fruits and slice them into bite-sized pieces. Make sure to supervise the children with the toothpicks.

Do this:

1. Explain Luke 2:52, 'And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.' Discuss how Jesus grew not just physically but also in wisdom, and how we should aim to grow in every aspect of our lives.
2. Start building your 'tree' by using a pretzel stick as the trunk. Attach slices of fruits to the top of the pretzel stick with toothpicks to represent the leaves and branches of the tree. The variety of fruits can represent the different areas we can grow in, such as wisdom, physical strength, and in our relationships with others and with God.
3. Add cheese cubes at the base of your pretzel stick to represent the strong foundation in God that we need in order to grow. As they build, encourage the children to think of specific ways they can grow in wisdom, stature, and favor, just like Jesus did.

## Game Activity: Wisdom, Stature, and Favor Challenge

You'll Need:

- A large open space
- Chalk for outdoor or tape for indoor to create areas and lines
- Index cards with various activities written on them
- A timer

Get Ready: Divide the open space into four large sections using chalk or tape. Each section represents one aspect of growth mentioned in Luke 2:52: Wisdom, Stature, Favor with God, and Favor with Man. Write down activities related to each aspect on separate index cards. For example, 'Solve a puzzle' for Wisdom, 'Jump rope for 1 minute' for Stature, 'Say a prayer' for Favor with God, and 'Compliment or say something kind to another player' for Favor with Man.

Do this:

1. Have the children form teams of 3-5 players. Explain that they will be moving through each section to grow in wisdom, stature, and favor, just like Jesus did.
2. At your signal, the first team goes to the 'Wisdom' section to complete the activity drawn from the index cards. Once completed, they move to the next section, 'Stature,' and so on until they have completed activities in all four sections.
3. Use the timer to give each team a set amount of time (e.g., 5 minutes) to complete as many activities as they can in each section. After time is up, they rotate to the next section.
4. After all teams have completed activities in all four sections, gather the children and discuss how each activity helped them grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man. Encourage them to think about how they can continue to grow in these areas in their daily lives.

## Craft Activity: Growing in Wisdom and Stature

You'll Need:

- Construction paper (various colors)
- Markers or crayons
- Glue sticks
- Scissors
- A printed outline of a tree

Get Ready: Print or draw a large outline of a tree on a piece of construction paper. This will serve as the base for the craft.

Do this:



1. Discuss Luke 2:52, explaining how Jesus grew in wisdom, stature, and in favor with God and man. Emphasize that just like a tree grows strong and tall, we can grow in these areas too.
2. Have each child cut out leaves from different colors of construction paper. On each leaf, they will write or draw one way they can grow in wisdom (learning new things, reading the Bible), stature (eating healthy, exercising), and in favor with God (praying, helping others) and man (being kind, making friends).
3. Glue the leaves onto the tree outline, creating a 'growth tree'. Encourage the children to think of the tree as a representation of their own growth in life and faith.

## Prayer Activity: Growing Like Jesus

You'll Need:

- A Bible or printed copy of Luke 2:52
- Notebook and pens/pencils for each child
- Four large poster boards labeled: 'Wisdom', 'Stature', 'Favor with God', 'Favor with Man'

Get Ready: Write Luke 2:52 at the top of each poster board and spread them out in four corners of your room.

Do this:

1. Start by reading Luke 2:52 together and discuss what it means to grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man. Explain that Jesus grew up just like them, but He made sure to grow in these four important areas.
2. Give each child a notebook and ask them to write down one goal for how they can grow in each area: wisdom (maybe by studying harder in school), stature (by eating healthier and exercising), favor with God (spending time in prayer and reading the Bible), and favor with man (being kind and helpful to others).

3. Have the children go to each poster board and write their goal under the corresponding category. Then, gather everyone to pray together, asking God to help them achieve these goals.