

Be Careful What You Say

UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: Be careful what you say. Words can hurt or encourage.

Scripture: Psalms 34:13

Memory Verse: Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies. - Psalms 34:13

The Children's Sermon

Hello, little friends! Today, we're going to talk about something very, very important. It's about how we use our words. Words are very powerful. They can make someone's day brighter or they can hurt someone's feelings. That's why we need to choose Kind Words and Encourage each other.

Let's pretend we have two pumpkins here. One is a happy pumpkin and the other is a grumpy pumpkin. The happy pumpkin always uses Kind Words and Encouragement. The grumpy pumpkin uses words that are not so nice.

For example, if someone is trying to do a job and it's a bit hard for them, the grumpy pumpkin might say, "That job you're doing is so easy. You must be a wimp if you can't do it." That's not very nice, is it? But the happy pumpkin would say, "May I help you with that job? It's always easier when two people work together." That's much nicer and helpful!

Sometimes, we all need a little time alone. The grumpy pumpkin might say, "Go away and leave me alone," in a mean way. But the happy pumpkin knows there's a nicer way to say it, like, "May I please be alone for a while? We can talk later."

I think that does a good job of showing how much nicer it is to say a kind word. I'm sure you would agree that having your feelings hurt is not the way you would want to be treated. You need to remember how you would feel when you say something hurtful to someone else.

Now, let's talk about someone very special. Who was the only "Perfect Pumpkin" that God created? That's right, JESUS! Jesus is the only one who was perfect and always used Kind Words and Encouragement. But, since we are not perfect like Jesus, sometimes we might say something we shouldn't.

When that happens, it's important to say sorry. Saying sorry is like giving your words a big, warm hug. It helps heal the hurt we might have caused. And always, we should ask God to forgive us and help us use Kind Words and Encouragement next time.

Now, let's imagine how our world would look if everyone used Kind Words and Encouragement. Maybe, at school, you see someone sitting alone. You can use your kind words to invite them to play with you. Or maybe, your friend is sad because they didn't do well on a test. You can encourage them by saying, "It's okay, you'll do better next time. I believe in you!"

Kind Words and Encouragement are like magic. They can turn a bad day into a good one. They can make someone feel loved and important. And the best part? Kind Words

and Encouragement don't cost anything. We can give them out to everyone we meet, and it will make the world a happier place.

Remember, every time you use Kind Words and Encouragement, you're being a little light in the world, just like Jesus wants us to be. You never know how much your kind words can mean to someone. Maybe, just maybe, your words are the only kind ones they hear that day. So, let's make a promise to use our words to help, not hurt.

Let's practice right now. Turn to the person next to you and give them a compliment or say something encouraging. See? Doesn't that make you feel good too? When we use Kind Words and Encouragement, it's like a boomerang. It comes back to us in the form of happiness and joy.

So, my dear friends, let's fill our days with Kind Words and Encouragement. Let's be like the happy pumpkin, spreading joy and love everywhere we go. And when we make a mistake, let's remember to say sorry and ask for forgiveness.

Pray: Dear God, help us to always remember the power of our words. Guide us to use our words to show Your love to others. Thank you for giving us the ability to speak and to use our words for good. Help us to be like Jesus, using Kind Words and Encouragement to brighten the world around us. Amen.

Bible Memory Verse

Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies. -

Psalms 34:13

You Will Need:

- Colored construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Markers or crayons
- Stickers with positive words or Christian symbols

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into strips long enough to make into bracelets.
- Write 'Psalms 34:13' on each strip with a marker or crayon.

Do This:

1. Give each child a strip of the prepared construction paper and let them decorate it with markers, crayons, and stickers. Encourage them to think about the meaning of the verse as they decorate.
2. Once they are done decorating, help them write 'Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies' on the inside of the bracelet.
3. Assist the children in applying glue to one end of the strip and then forming it into a bracelet by attaching the two ends together. Remind them that wearing the bracelet should help them remember to speak kindly and truthfully, just as the verse teaches.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- Small jars or containers (one per child)
- Cotton balls
- Permanent markers
- Stickers and decorative materials
- Paper and pens

- A large poster board with Psalms 34:13 written on it
- Bibles for reference

Get Ready:

- Set up a craft table with jars, cotton balls, markers, stickers, and decorative materials.
- Prepare the large poster board with Psalms 34:13 written clearly.
- Have paper and pens ready on a separate table.

Do this:

1. ****Introduction to Psalms 34:13****: Start by reading Psalms 34:13 together as a class. Discuss the importance of speaking kindly and the impact words can have on others. Emphasize that words can either hurt or encourage.
2. ****Create a Kindness Jar****: Each child will decorate their jar using markers, stickers, and other materials. Encourage them to personalize their jars creatively. Once decorated, they will fill their jars with cotton balls. Explain that each cotton ball represents kind words or encouragement they will give to someone. They are to take a cotton ball out as a reminder to share kind words that day.
3. ****Kind Words Challenge****: Hand out paper and pens. Ask each child to write down kind words or encouraging phrases they can think of or would like to hear themselves. Share some of these aloud with the class. Challenge the children to use these words or phrases in the coming week, either at home, school, or with friends.
4. ****Reflection Poster****: Have each child write their name and a kind word or phrase on the poster board around Psalms 34:13. This will serve as a class commitment to use

their words for encouragement. Display the poster in the classroom as a reminder of their promise to speak kindly.

5. **Weekly Kindness Follow-up**: At the end of the week, have a session where the children can share how they used their kind words and the reactions they observed. Discuss how it felt to speak kindly and the impact it had on both themselves and others. Encourage them to keep using their Kindness Jars at home.

Snack Activity: Sweet Words Fruit Skewers

You'll Need:

- A variety of fruits (grapes, strawberries, melon, etc.)
- Bamboo skewers
- Small paper tags or stickers
- Edible markers or food-safe pens

Get Ready: Prepare the fruits by washing them and cutting them into bite-sized pieces if necessary. Make sure to have a clean, flat surface to work on.

Do this:

1. Thread the fruits onto the bamboo skewers, creating a colorful pattern with the different types of fruit. Each skewer will represent a kind word or positive phrase.
2. Once the fruit skewers are assembled, use the edible markers or food-safe pens to write positive words or short encouraging phrases on the small paper tags or directly onto the fruit if using stickers. These words should reflect the spirit of Psalms 34:13, such as 'Kindness', 'Love', 'Peace', 'Joy', etc.
3. Share the fruit skewers with classmates or family members, explaining the importance of speaking kindly and encouragingly to others, just as we are taught in

Psalms 34:13. Discuss how just like the fruit nourishes the body, kind words nourish the soul.

Game Activity: Words of Wisdom Hopscotch

You'll Need:

- Sidewalk chalk
- A small stone or beanbag
- A list of encouraging phrases and hurtful words (prepared in advance)

Get Ready: Draw a large hopscotch grid on the pavement. Instead of numbers in each square, leave them blank.

Do this:

1. Before the game starts, discuss Psalms 34:13 with the children, emphasizing the importance of speaking kindly and avoiding hurtful words. Explain how words can either hurt or encourage others.
2. Have each child take a turn throwing the stone or beanbag to land on a square in the hopscotch grid.
3. When a player's stone lands on a square, they must come up with an encouraging phrase or a way to turn a hurtful word into a positive message before they can hop through the grid. If they can't come up with one, they have to skip their turn and think of kind words to say.
4. Players hop on one foot to the end of the grid and back, avoiding the square with their stone. If a player steps on a line, misses a square, or loses balance, they have to start over.
5. After each round, have a brief discussion about how it felt to think of encouraging words and the impact of words on others.

Craft Activity: Speak Life: Crafting Words of Kindness

You'll Need:

- Colored paper (various colors)
- Markers or colored pencils
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- String or yarn
- Hole punch

Get Ready: Cut the colored paper into strips, each about 2 inches wide and 6 inches long.

Do this:

1. Read Psalms 34:13 together as a class. Discuss what it means to keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies in terms of speaking kindly and encouragingly to others.
2. Have each student choose several strips of colored paper. On each strip, they should write a kind or encouraging phrase that they can say to someone else. Encourage creativity and positivity, ensuring the phrases align with the spirit of Psalms 34:13.
3. Once they have written on several strips, instruct them to punch a hole at each end of the strip and use the string or yarn to tie the strips together, creating a chain. The length of the chain can vary depending on how many phrases they write.
4. Encourage the students to hang their 'Kindness Chains' in a place where they will see them daily as a reminder to use their words for good, just as Psalms 34:13 teaches.

Prayer Activity: Speak Life: Crafting Words That Heal

You'll Need:

- Colored paper
- Markers or colored pencils
- Scissors

Get Ready: Cut the colored paper into strips large enough for children to write sentences on.

Do this:

1. Begin with a discussion on Psalms 34:13, explaining how our words have the power to hurt or heal. Emphasize the importance of choosing words that are kind and encouraging.
2. Ask each child to think of a kind or encouraging phrase they can say to someone, inspired by the lesson from Psalms 34:13. Have them write this phrase on a strip of colored paper using the markers or colored pencils.
3. Once everyone has written their phrase, invite the children to form a circle. One by one, let them read their phrase out loud to the group. After reading, they will fold their strip of paper into a link and connect it with another child's, creating a chain of kind words.
4. Conclude the activity by hanging the chain in the classroom as a visual reminder to always speak with kindness and encouragement, reflecting on the power of words as taught in Psalms 34:13.