

Without Him

LOWER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: Depending on God

Scripture: John 15:5

Memory Verse: I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. - John 15:5

The Children's Sermon

Dear God, help us remember that without you, we can do nothing, but if we put our faith and trust in you, all things are possible.

Now, let's talk about how we need God in our lives, just like we need certain things to make other things work. Imagine you have a kite. You want to fly it high in the sky. But without wind, your kite won't fly. It's just like that with us too. We need God's help, like the kite needs the wind, to lift us up and help us do great things. This is what we call Christian empowerment. It means God gives us the power to do things we can't do on our own.

Think about a little seed. It's so small, right? But when you plant it in the soil, give it water, and the sun shines on it, it starts to grow. It can even turn into a big tree! The seed can't grow without soil, water, and sun. We are like that seed. We need God's love, His teachings, and our faith in Him to grow strong and do amazing things. That's Christian empowerment too. God's love and our faith in Him help us grow and do things we never thought possible.

Sometimes, we might feel small or scared, like when you're standing at the edge of a high diving board, looking down into the pool. You think, "I can't jump. It's too high!" But then, you remember your mom or dad is in the pool, waiting to catch you. You trust them, so you jump, and you're okay! That's a bit like trusting in God. When we're scared or not sure, we can remember that God is always with us, ready to catch us. This trust in God gives us the power to jump into new things, to try, even when we're scared. That's Christian empowerment - trusting God to help us and catch us when we jump.

Now, let's imagine you have a big, heavy box you need to move. You push and push, but it won't budge. Then, along comes a friend, and together, you move the box easily. God is like that friend who comes to help us. When we have God on our side, things that seemed too hard before become possible. We can share our worries with God, pray for strength, and suddenly, we're not alone with our big, heavy box anymore. God is helping us move it. That's Christian empowerment - knowing that with God's help, we can tackle big challenges.

Remember the story of David and Goliath? David was just a young boy, not a big, strong soldier. But he had something more powerful than strength. He had faith in God. He knew that with God on his side, he could do anything, even defeat a giant! And he did. That's a perfect example of Christian empowerment. David's trust in God gave him the courage and power to do something amazing.

So, what can we learn from all these examples? We learn that with God, we're never alone, and we're never without help. Just like you need wind to fly a kite, or water and sun to grow a seed, we need God to help us do big things. And just like trusting someone to catch you when you jump or having a friend help you move a heavy box, God's support and love make the impossible possible.

Dear God, thank you for being our strength and our helper. Help us to remember that with you, we can do anything. Help us to trust in you, to grow in your love, and to know that with your empowerment, we are never alone. Amen.

So, kids, next time you feel like you can't do something, remember the kite, the seed, the diving board, and the heavy box. Remember David and Goliath. And most importantly, remember that with God's help, you can do anything. That's the power of Christian empowerment.

Bible Memory Verse

I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

- John 15:5

You Will Need:

- Construction paper (green, brown, and various fruit colors)
- Scissors
- Glue
- Markers or crayons

Get Ready:

- Cut out a large vine shape from the green construction paper.
- Cut out several branch shapes from the brown construction paper and various fruit shapes (like grapes, apples, or oranges) from the colored construction paper.

Do This:

1. Have each child write the memory verse on the vine with markers or crayons.
2. Let the children select a branch and write their name on it, then glue their branch onto the vine.
3. Discuss what it means to 'remain in Jesus' and how we can bear fruit in our lives. As they share, let them pick a fruit shape, write a way they can depend on God or show love to others on it, and then attach it to their branch.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A large branch or a small tree (artificial or real) that can stand or be propped up
- Several large paper leaves (green construction paper works well)
- Markers or crayons
- Tape or string
- A basket or container

Get Ready:

1. Write John 15:5 on a large paper leaf and attach it prominently to the branch or tree.
2. Prepare the other leaves by cutting them out. Make sure there are enough for each child to have one.
3. Set up the branch or tree in a place where all the children can gather around it.

Do this:

1. Start by reading John 15:5 together: "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." Explain that just like the branches need the vine to live and grow, we need God to help us grow and do good things.

2. Give each child a paper leaf and markers or crayons. Ask them to think about one way they can depend on God this week (e.g., asking for help when they're scared, praying for a friend, thanking God for their food, etc.). Have them write or draw it on their leaf.
3. Once everyone is done, allow each child to come up and tape or tie their leaf to the branch or tree. As they do, encourage them to say a short prayer or share what they wrote/drew with the group.
4. Conclude by gathering around the tree and saying a prayer together, asking God to help everyone remember to depend on Him just like the branches depend on the vine.

Snack Activity: Vine and Branches Fruit Snack

You'll Need:

- Green grapes
- Pretzel sticks
- A plate
- Cream cheese or peanut butter (optional)

Get Ready: Wash the grapes and dry them. If using cream cheese or peanut butter, have it ready in a small bowl with a spreader.

Do this:

1. Explain to the kids that in John 15:5, Jesus says He is the vine and we are the branches. Without Him, we can do nothing. We're going to make a snack that helps us remember to depend on God just like branches depend on the vine.
2. Place a bunch of green grapes in the center of a plate to represent the vine. Use the pretzel sticks to create 'branches' extending from the vine. If you're using cream

cheese or peanut butter, let the kids spread a little on the ends of their pretzel sticks before attaching their 'grape branches' to help them stick.

3. As the kids eat their snack, discuss how staying connected to Jesus, the vine, helps us grow and do great things because of Him. Remind them that just like the branches need the vine to live and grow, we need Jesus every day.

Game Activity: Vineyard Vines

You'll Need:

- A long rope or string to represent the vine
- Paper leaves (green construction paper cut into leaf shapes)
- Markers
- Tape

Get Ready: Write 'John 15:5' and different ways we can depend on God (e.g., praying, reading the Bible, trusting God during hard times) on the paper leaves. Then, tape these leaves along the length of the rope or string, spreading them out evenly. Lay the rope in a winding path on the ground, creating a 'vineyard'.

Do this:

1. Gather the children at the start of the 'vineyard vine'. Explain that in John 15:5, Jesus says He is the vine and we are the branches. To bear fruit, we must stay connected to Him, depending on God just like branches depend on the vine.
2. The children will hop from leaf to leaf along the vine, reading aloud the ways we can depend on God written on each leaf. If they miss a leaf, they go back to the start, reminding them that staying connected to God is a continuous journey.
3. Once they reach the end of the vine, they can share one way they will depend on God this week. This reinforces the theme of depending on God and applying it to their lives.

Craft Activity: Vine and Branches Friendship

Bracelets

You'll Need:

- Green yarn or string
- Beads (preferably in fruit shapes or colors)
- Scissors
- Safety pins or tape

Get Ready: Cut a piece of green yarn about 24 inches long for each child. This will represent the vine. Choose beads that will represent the fruits, showing the results of depending on God.

Do this:

1. Tie a knot at one end of the yarn, leaving about a 3-inch tail. This will prevent the beads from falling off. Secure the non-knotted end to a table or a shirt with a safety pin or tape to keep it steady while working.
2. Thread the beads onto the yarn, one at a time, to represent the fruits that come from depending on God, like love, joy, peace, etc. Discuss with the children how each bead (or fruit) can represent a way we can show we depend on God in our lives.
3. Once they have added enough beads to go around their wrist, help them tie the ends together to make a bracelet. Remind them that just like the bracelet, we are all connected to Jesus, the vine, and we need to stay close to Him to grow and bear fruit.

Prayer Activity: Branches of Prayer

You'll Need:

- A large branch with several smaller branches attached
- Strips of paper
- Markers or crayons
- Tape

Get Ready: Place the large branch securely in a vase or pot to ensure it stands upright, like a tree.

Do this:

1. Read John 15:5 together: 'I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.' Explain that just like branches depend on the vine to grow, we depend on God for everything.
2. Ask the children to think of things they need God's help with or things they want to thank God for. Have them write or draw these on the strips of paper.
3. Attach the strips of paper to the branch with tape, turning your 'tree' into a visual prayer of dependence on God. Encourage the children to pray together, thanking God for His care and asking for His help where needed.