

The Candy Cane

UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: The true meaning of Christmas

Scripture: 1 Peter 2:24

Memory Verse: "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed." - 1 Peter 2:24

The Children's Sermon

The candy cane is mostly white. White is a symbol of purity. That should remind us that Jesus was the spotless Lamb of God and that because he came to be the sacrifice for our sin, we can become as white as snow.

As you know, the candy cane has three red stripes. The Bible tells us that before he was crucified, Jesus was beaten with a whip which made blood-red stripes across his back. The Bible says that we are healed by those stripes. The stripes on the candy cane should remind us that Jesus suffered and died, so that we can have everlasting life.

To many people, the candy cane is a meaningless decoration seen at Christmas time or just a piece of candy to be eaten and enjoyed. I hope that this year, every time you see a candy cane, you will be reminded of the true meaning of Christmas.

Now, let's dive a little deeper into the Christmas Candy Cane Symbolism. Did you know that if you turn a candy cane upside down, it looks like a "J"? That "J" stands for Jesus,

who was born on Christmas Day. He's the reason we celebrate Christmas, and the candy cane helps us remember that.

Another cool thing about the candy cane is how it's made. When candy canes are made, they start out as a big, warm, soft piece of candy. Then, they are twisted and bent to make that famous candy cane shape. This process reminds us of how life can sometimes twist and bend us, but with Jesus, we can still come out looking beautiful and sweet, just like a candy cane.

Also, have you ever noticed how the candy cane is hard? This hardness reminds us that Jesus is our rock. He is strong and dependable. When we have troubles or are scared, we can lean on Him, and He will keep us safe, just like a solid rock.

Let's not forget the sweet taste of the candy cane. It's a reminder of how sweet life can be when we know and follow Jesus. He brings joy and sweetness into our lives, even when things seem tough.

Christmas Candy Cane Symbolism is all around us, telling a story of hope, love, and joy. Every time we see a candy cane, let's think about Jesus and the great love He has for us. Let's share that love with others, especially during Christmas time.

Now, imagine if we shared the story of the Christmas Candy Cane Symbolism with our friends and family. We could tell them how the candy cane is not just a candy, but a reminder of Jesus and His love for us. We could share the sweetness of Jesus's love just like we share candy canes.

In the end, the Christmas Candy Cane Symbolism is a beautiful reminder of what Christmas is really about. It's not just about getting gifts or having the best Christmas tree. It's about celebrating the birth of Jesus, our Savior, and spreading His love to everyone we meet.

Lord, we thank you that Jesus is the Good Shepherd who keeps us from harm. We thank you that because of his suffering and death on the cross, we have life everlasting. Help us to remember that we find the true meaning of Christmas in him.

So, next time you hold a candy cane, remember the Christmas Candy Cane Symbolism. Remember Jesus, His love, and the reason we celebrate Christmas. Let's keep the true spirit of Christmas in our hearts, not just during the holiday season but all year round.

Bible Memory Verse

"He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed." - 1 Peter 2:24

You Will Need:

- Plain white T-shirts (one per child)
- Fabric markers or fabric paint
- Stencils of crosses or any other Christian symbols

Get Ready:

- Prepare a workspace with newspapers or plastic sheets to protect the surface.
- Place all materials on the workspace before the class starts.

Do This:

1. Explain the memory verse to the children, emphasizing the meaning of Jesus bearing our sins and the significance of the cross.
2. Ask each child to choose a T-shirt and think about what the verse means to them. Encourage them to express this through their design using the fabric markers and stencils.
3. Once everyone has finished their T-shirt, gather the children in a circle. Have each child share their design and what the verse means to them personally. Conclude with a group prayer, thanking Jesus for his sacrifice and asking for help to live for righteousness.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A large wooden cross or a way to create one (e.g., sticks or cardboard)
- Strips of paper and pens
- A bowl of water
- Red paint and paintbrushes
- Bibles or printed copies of 1 Peter 2:24

Get Ready:

- Set up a quiet, reflective space with the cross placed centrally.
- Prepare the bowl of water and place it near the cross with red paint and brushes on a table.
- Distribute strips of paper and pens to each child.

Do this:

1. **Reflect on the Verse**: Start by reading 1 Peter 2:24 together. Discuss what it means that Jesus bore our sins in His body on the cross, emphasizing the true meaning of Christmas as the beginning of this ultimate sacrifice.
2. **Personal Reflection**: Ask each child to think of things they wish to ask forgiveness for or burdens they wish to let go of, writing them on the strips of paper.
3. **Washing Away Sins**: Children will then fold their papers, dip them in the bowl of water, symbolizing the washing away of sins through Jesus' sacrifice, and leave them at the foot of the cross.
4. **Painting the Cross**: Each child paints a red stroke on the cross, symbolizing Jesus' blood shed for us. This act serves as a personal reflection on the sacrifice Jesus made and its significance to Christmas.
5. **Closing Reflection**: Gather the children around the painted cross, and lead a prayer of thanks for Jesus' gift, asking for help to live in a way that honors His sacrifice. Encourage the children to think of ways they can keep the spirit of this lesson in their hearts during the Christmas season and beyond.

Snack Activity: Healing Cross Cookies

You'll Need:

- 1 package of ready-to-bake sugar cookie dough
- Rolling pin
- Cross-shaped cookie cutter
- White frosting
- Red food coloring
- Small paintbrush (food safe)
- Toothpicks

Get Ready: Preheat your oven according to the cookie dough package instructions. Roll out your cookie dough on a flat, floured surface to about 1/4 inch thickness.

Do this:

1. Use the cross-shaped cookie cutter to cut out cross shapes from your rolled-out dough. Place these on a baking sheet and bake according to the package's instructions. Allow the cookies to cool completely after baking.
2. While the cookies are cooling, mix a small amount of red food coloring with white frosting to create a pinkish hue. This represents the healing and forgiveness that comes through Jesus' sacrifice, as mentioned in 1 Peter 2:24.
3. Once the cookies have cooled, use the paintbrush to apply the colored frosting onto the cookies in a way that highlights the shape of the cross. You can also use a toothpick to add fine details or write words like 'Heal', 'Love', or 'Forgive' on each cookie.

This activity helps children understand the sacrifice Jesus made for us, bringing healing to our sins, as symbolized through the creation and decoration of the cross cookies.

Game Activity: Healing Hopscotch: The Path of Jesus

You'll Need:

- Sidewalk chalk
- A Bible
- Small stones or bean bags for markers

Get Ready: Use the sidewalk chalk to draw a large hopscotch grid on the pavement. Instead of numbers, write the following words in each square in order: Sin, Sickness,

Sorrow, Healing, Cross, Jesus, Freedom, Love, Heaven. Leave a space at the start labeled 'Earth' and at the end labeled 'Eternal Life'.

Do this:

1. Gather the children and explain that each square represents a step in understanding the true meaning of Christmas and Jesus' sacrifice, as mentioned in 1 Peter 2:24. Start by reading the verse together.
2. Each child takes a turn tossing their marker onto the hopscotch path. Before they hop through, they must say a prayer related to the square they landed on. For example, if they land on 'Sickness', they might pray for healing for someone they know.
3. As they hop from 'Earth' towards 'Eternal Life', encourage them to reflect on Jesus' journey and sacrifice for us, emphasizing that through His wounds, we are healed and can have eternal life with Him.

Craft Activity: Healing Hands Christmas Tree

You'll Need:

- Green construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- Markers or crayons
- A printout of 1 Peter 2:24

Get Ready: Cut the green construction paper into strips of varying lengths to represent the branches of a Christmas tree.

Do this:

1. On each strip of green paper, have the children write parts of the verse 1 Peter 2:24, breaking it down so that when the tree is assembled, the entire verse can be read from top to bottom. Encourage them to decorate around the words with markers or crayons, adding stars, hearts, or crosses as symbols of Jesus' healing and sacrifice.
2. Arrange the strips from longest to shortest to form a tree shape on a larger piece of paper or a poster board, with the longest at the bottom and the shortest at the top, symbolizing how Jesus' sacrifice brings us from the broadness of sin to the pinnacle of salvation.
3. Glue the strips in place, then add a star at the top of the tree. On the star, they can write 'Jesus Heals' or 'The True Meaning of Christmas.' This craft not only helps children memorize Scripture but also visually demonstrates the healing and redemptive power of Jesus' sacrifice, connecting it to the true meaning of Christmas.

Prayer Activity: Healing Hands: Understanding 1 Peter 2:24

You'll Need:

- A Bible or printed copy of 1 Peter 2:24
- Red and green construction paper
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons
- Glue sticks

Get Ready: Cut the green construction paper into strips (long enough to write a sentence on) and the red paper into simple cross shapes.

Do this:

1. Begin by reading 1 Peter 2:24 together. Discuss the true meaning of Christmas and how Jesus' sacrifice on the cross brings us healing and allows us to live righteously.
2. Have each child write a prayer or a thank you note to Jesus for His sacrifice and healing on a strip of green paper. Encourage them to think about what it means to live a life that reflects Jesus' sacrifice.
3. Glue the green strip to the red cross, creating a visual representation of the healing and righteousness we receive through Jesus. Allow each child to share their prayer or note with the group if they feel comfortable. Conclude with a group prayer, thanking Jesus for the gift of His sacrifice and asking for help to live in a way that honors Him.