



THE QUEST FOR HOLINESS

Children's Lessons

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BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Be sure to check out www.questforholiness.org for **FREE** downloadable resources!

HELPING KIDS PURSUE A SANCTIFIED LIFE
A Note To Children's Leaders

Biblical Foundation

Sanctification is not a list of rules children should follow. It is the amazing moment when God sets the believer apart for His purposes, but is also a process that lasts a lifetime. Sanctification gives children the power to say "Yes" to God and "No" to sin. It sets children apart for God's holy use. As ministers to children, we can help every child become fully engaged in this process so they have victory over sin, become mature, and are equipped for the good works God purposed them to do. When we teach foundational truths related to sanctification, we are teaching children more than simply doing good or acting properly. They will learn to think and act based upon the truths of God's Word and their lives will grow in holiness and godliness.

"Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

—1 Thessalonians 5:23, NKJV

Here are some Biblical foundations you can teach children about sanctification:

Sin is choosing to go my way rather than God's way.

"We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6, NIV).

Temptation is an invitation to sin and comes from wrong desires.

"But each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed" (James 1:14, 15, NIV).

God expects me to live a holy and useful life.

"But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, 'Be holy, for I am holy'" (1 Peter 1:15, 16, NKJV).

"In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble. If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work" (2 Timothy 2:20, NIV).

I can yield to God's cleansing work in me.

"Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20, NKJV).

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will" (Romans 12:1, 2, NIV).

God continually works in me to change me so I can become more and more like Christ.

"And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:18, NIV).

"Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose" (Philippians 2:12, 13, NIV).



Children's Lesson 1

MY WAY, GOD'S WAY

BIBLE TRUTH

Sin is going my way instead of God's way.

BIBLE LESSON

Story of Jonah, Jonah 1, 2, 3:1-12

BIBLE VERSE

"We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6).

Materials needed:

- Poster of Bible Truth: Sin is going my way instead of God's way.
- Rules visualized
- Balloons
- Isaiah 53:6 written on slide, poster, or chalkboard
- Words of Isaiah 53:6 written on flashcards. Make two sets of flashcards in two different colors i.e., a blue set and a yellow set.
- Video clip of the story of Jonah, slides, or character dressed as Jonah who tells his story using props such as direction sign, boat, blow up fish, etc.
- Sticky notes
- Costume for person representing Jesus, optional
- Posters of Admit, Believe, Choose

WELCOME

ACTIVITY FOR EARLY ARRIVERS

Create an activity that children can play together or individually as they arrive. Have two large signs labeled, “My Way” and “God’s Way” placed on the walls of the room. Write phrases on sheets of paper that reflect doing things our way or God’s way. Here are some suggestions:

- Give to people who are in need
- Use my money to buy stuff I want
- Complain when mom asks me to do something
- Do my chores without complaining
- Pick on a younger kid at school
- Share my school supplies with someone who forgot his
- Share my snack with a friend
- Brag about my new game
- Offer to let someone play my new game
- Say “thank you” when someone does something for me

As children come in, they can begin going through the sheets and placing them under the correct sign. After all the children arrive, you can talk about the signs and discuss if each phrase was placed under the correct sign. When a phrase is read that has been labeled “My Way” let the children respond with “That’s sin.”

COMMENT

Why did you say the phrase “That’s sin” when we talked about doing things our own way? Our Bible truth today is, “Sin is going my way instead of going God’s way. (Let the children repeat the Bible truth several times in a variety of creative ways so they will remember it.) So when we do what we want to do instead of what God wants us to do that is sin.

When all the children arrive, **review rules** in a creative way. Suggested rules are:

- Listen closely
- Keep hands and feet to self
- Stay in seat
- Participate

PRAYER

Pray with the children asking God to help them understand and apply today’s Bible truth in their everyday lives.

SECTION 1: WHAT IS THE TRUTH?

ACTIVITY TIME

Choose two players. Each player must move a balloon from starting point to ending point by blowing up and releasing the balloon. Each player must pick the balloon up wherever it lands, blow it up, and release it again until the balloon reaches the ending point.

Discuss this question: **“Did the balloon always go the way you wanted it to go?”**

COMMENT

Sometimes we act like the balloon. God has plans for us but we don't always follow His plans. We go our own way. Today's Bible verse says exactly that. (Let the children read Isaiah 53:6 with you.) “We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way” (Isaiah 53:6).

The balloon didn't always go the way you wanted it to go, did it? God has a wonderful plan for our lives. But sometimes, instead of following His plan, we go our own way. In this verse there is a word for that. Can you find the word?

Yes, the word is *iniquity*. What has God done with all of our sins? He has laid all of our sins upon Jesus. Jesus was punished for all of our sins; for each time we choose to go our own ways instead of obeying God's ways.

BIBLE VERSE FOCUS

MEMORIZATION ACTIVITY

Have children hold posters of the words from Isaiah 53:6. Have the group repeat the entire verse and then choose a word to leave out. That child turns the poster over. The verse is repeated leaving out words one by one until the verse is memorized.

SCRIPTURE REVIEW

Divide the group into two teams. Two sets of memory verse cards are mixed up and taped around the room. On the signal, the teams must go around the room gathering the words of their memory verse. (One team will collect blue word cards; the other team will collect yellow word cards.) Each team must arrange their cards in proper order as quickly as possible.

SECTION 2: WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY ABOUT THE TRUTH?

BIBLE LESSON: Story of Jonah found in Jonah 1, 2, 3:1-12.

CREATIVE WAYS TO SHARE THE STORY

video clip; slides of Bible story pictures, character dressed as Jonah who tells his story using props such as direction sign, boat, blow up fish, etc.

COMMENT

Use the balloon illustration to review how we want to go our own way and how this is sin.

What are some things we do when we choose to go our own way? Jonah disobeyed. We might tell lies, steal, be unkind, act selfishly, or disobey. These are all sins.

What happened to Jonah when he did wrong things? God punished him. He sent a storm. The sailors threw Jonah into the sea.

When we choose to go our own way we are separated from God, the one who loves us. But God does not want this for us. He wants us to be with Him forever.

ILLUSTRATION (*Laid on Jesus*)

God did not want Jonah to die because of his disobedience, so he prepared a BIG fish to swallow him. And God has made a way so you do not have to be punished for your sins. Isaiah 53:6 tells us, "The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all." Yes, God laid all of our sins on His Son, Jesus. Jesus did not ever go his own way. He always obeyed God, His father. But God laid our sins on Him. And because of our sins, He died on the cross.

(Let each child write a sin on a sticky note and place it on the person representing Jesus.)

Because Jesus took the punishment for your sins, you can be forgiven. You can choose to go God's way.

SECTION 3:

WHAT WILL THE CHILD DO ABOUT THE TRUTH?

OBJECT LESSON: Admit, Believe, Choose

Sin is going your own way instead of God's way. Each of us makes choices every day that are about going our own way or God's way. Here's how you can make the choice to go God's way.

(Show poster, "Admit.")

First, admit that you have sinned; that you have chosen to go your own way. Admit this to God. Don't try to hide your sinfulness or make excuses for it. Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

(Show poster, "Believe.")

Then, believe that all of your sins have been laid on Jesus. He took the punishment for your sins when He died on the cross. John 3:16 reminds us, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

(Show poster, "Confess.")

Confess that Jesus is the Lord of your life and that you choose to go His way. "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9).

MINISTRY TIME

Invite the children to come and pray with you if they want to Admit, Believe, and Confess. Pray with each child individually, briefly reviewing these three steps.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

“Father, thank you that you have made it possible for us to be forgiven of our sins, of going our own way. We admit our sins. We believe that You laid our sins on Jesus. We believe that He took our punishment and now we are forgiven. We confess and choose to go Your way. Amen.”



Children's Lesson 2

AN INVITATION TO SIN

BIBLE TRUTH

Temptation is an invitation to sin. I choose to say “No.”

BIBLE LESSON

Jesus Says “No” to Temptation, Matthew 4:1-11.

BIBLE VERSE

“But each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed”
(James 1:14).

Materials needed:

- Bible Truth written on poster, chalk board, or slide
- Colored Paper
- Markers
- Stickers
- Magnet
- Metal items such as a penny, nail, key, pin
- Index card for each child
- Nail for each child
- Rope
- Video clip, slides, or pictures and props to illustrate Bible lesson, Matthew 4:1-11
- Letter “S” for members of Team #1
- Cross for person representing Jesus

WELCOME

ACTIVITY FOR EARLY ARRIVERS

As children arrive, have them create invitations to an event that will be going on in the near future in children's ministry or in the local church. Provide colored paper, stickers, and markers.

When all the children arrive, **review rules** in a creative way. Suggested rules are:

- Listen closely
- Keep hands and feet to self
- Stay in seat
- Participate

PRAYER

Pray with the children asking God to help them understand and apply today's Bible Truth in their everyday lives.

SECTION 1: WHAT IS THE TRUTH?

ACTIVITY TIME

Let the children share the invitations they have created. You might also share a variety of invitations such as to a birthday party, a baby shower, a wedding, or a graduation. Talk with the children about the event(s) and why they might attend or not attend. Ask if they have ever received an invitation that they refused. Let each child (as time permits) share why he or she said "No."

With the children's help, make a list of reasons why you might say "No" to an invitation (i.e. had something else to do, was sick, didn't know anyone else who was going to the party, mom and dad would not let me go.)

COMMENT

Today we are going to learn about an invitation that comes to us every day in many different situations. That invitation is the temptation to sin. Yes, every day Satan invites us to sin by tempting us. Our Bible Truth reminds us, "Temptation is an invitation to sin." But when we receive an invitation to a birthday party, or wedding, or just to go over to a friend's house to play, we can choose. We can say, "Yes, I accept your invitation." Or, we can say, "No, I refuse your invitation." We can refuse Satan's invitation to sin. Jesus will help us say "No."

Now let's say the entire Bible Truth, "Temptation is an invitation to sin. I choose to say 'No.'" (Let the children partner up. One child can say the first phrase. The other child can say the second phrase.)

OBJECT LESSON: The Magnet

Have you ever been tempted (invited by Satan) to do something you knew was wrong? *(Let children share if they are willing.)* **Yes, Satan invites each of us to sin. He tempts us to do wrong things. But what causes us to be tempted?**

(Show the children a large magnet and several metal items. Let the children share what items they think will be drawn by the magnet. Then choose children to come up and try to lift an item using the magnet.)

Why was the magnet able to pick up some items and not others? *(Let the children share their thoughts.)* **Yes, items that have iron in them are drawn to the metal.**

BIBLE VERSE FOCUS

Let's listen to our Scripture verse and see if we can find out what causes us to say "Yes" to Satan's temptation or invitation to sin. *(Read James 1:14. Ask a child to come up and circle "his own evil desire.")*

When we want something that is wrong we will say "Yes" to temptation. But God wants us to learn to say "No" to things that are wrong.

MEMORIZATION ACTIVITY

Give each child a card and a nail. Have the children write James 1:14 on the card and tape the nail to the card as a reminder of how they are tempted to sin. Ask the children to keep this card with them this week as a reminder to say "No" to temptation and to memorize the verse.

SECTION 2:

WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY ABOUT THE TRUTH?

GAME: The Tug of War

Ask the children if they know how to play the game, "Tug of War." Quickly let them tell you the rules and clarify any misunderstandings about the rules. Then choose team #1. Select at least five boys and girls to be on the team. Then select team #2. Select only one child, preferably a small child.

After a brief reminder of the rules, let the game begin. The child will struggle to win but fail. Discuss the following questions with the child:

- **How did you feel when you saw who was on the opposing team?**
- **Did you try to win?**
- **How did it feel to lose even though you were trying as hard as you could?**
- **What did you need so that you could win?**

BIBLE LESSON: Jesus Says "No" to Temptation, Matthew 4:1-11

Did you know that Jesus was in a tug of war, too? Yes, he was in a tug of war against evil. His opponent, Satan, wanted Jesus to give in to temptation. If Jesus gave in to temptation, then no one would have the strength to say "No".

Jesus had gone into the desert to get ready for the work God wanted Him to do. He had gone without food and water for 40 days. He was hungry, thirsty, and tired. Then Satan came to Him. "Jesus, if you really are who you say you are, command these stones to become bread."

Jesus was hungry, but he did not give Satan any slack. He held on tight and pulled against Satan. He just used God's Word. "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

But Satan didn't give up. He kept tugging at the rope. This time he took Jesus to the highest point of the temple church. "Prove to me that you are the Son of God by jumping off this building. God's Word says that His angels will protect you."

Jesus knew He was the Son of God. He knew God would send His angels, but He refused to give in to Satan's temptations. He held the rope tight and said, "Satan, God's Word also says, 'Do not put the Lord Your God to the test.'"

Satan wasn't defeated yet. He tugged at the rope even harder. He showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world. "Jesus, if you will serve me, you can rule over all of this."

Jesus knew His Father had already promised that He would rule over all the earth, but it wasn't time just yet. So He said "No," and "Go away, Satan!"

Right then, Satan stopped tugging on the rope. He let go and ran away.

Jesus had refused Satan's invitation to sin. Jesus had said "No" to temptation. Now He is able to help us when we are tempted.

SECTION 3:

WHAT WILL THE CHILD DO ABOUT THE TRUTH?

COMMENT

Sometimes it seems that you are always in a tug of war with Satan. He tempts you to sin and to be selfish, to do what you want to do. *(Bring up Team #1 from the tug of war again. Place the letter "S" on each of them.)* Even though you try very hard to be good, to do the right things, sometimes you give in to temptation.

God wants you to win this game of tug of war. He wants you to win over temptation. When Jesus died on the cross and rose again, he once again won the tug of war against Satan.

God's Word, the Bible, tells us that when we are in a tug of war with Satan and he is tempting us to sin, we can come to Jesus. Hebrews 4: 15, 16 says, "Jesus, our high priest, is able to understand our weaknesses. When Jesus lived on earth, he was tempted in every way. He was tempted in the same ways we are tempted, but he never sinned. With Jesus as our high priest, we can feel free to come before God's throne where there is grace. There we receive mercy and kindness to help us when we need it."

Jesus was tempted by Satan just like we are but he said "No." Now we can come to Him boldly and ask Him to help us win our tug of war, too.

MINISTRY TIME

(Bring a large adult with the cross on his shirt up to help the child on Team #2. Let him win the game over Team #1.)

What tug of war are you in? Are you struggling with a bad habit or a wrong attitude or feeling? Are you struggling with a circumstance at home, school, in your neighborhood? Jesus wants to help you. Instead of trying to handle temptation on your own, come to Jesus. He will help you win.

(Give each child a piece of rope. Ask them to think of something that tempts them to sin i.e. habit, attitude, action, circumstance.) This rope represents Satan's temptations, or invitations, to sin. You can say "No" with Jesus' help. If you want us to pray with you and ask Jesus to help you, bring your rope to the circle where we will pray for one another.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

"Dear Jesus, thank you that you were tempted just like I am and said "No". Thank you for being willing and able to help me say "No." Right now I admit that I am tempted to/by _____. *(Invite the children to fill in the blank.)* **I need your help to win this tug of war with Satan. Get rid of the wrong desires in me and give me strength to say "No" to Satan's invitation. Amen."**



Children's Lesson 3

SET APART AND HOLY, GOD'S PART

BIBLE TRUTH

God sets me apart to be holy and useful.

BIBLE LESSON

Moses Is Set Apart, Exodus chapters 1–3.

BIBLE VERSE

“From the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth” (2 Thessalonians 2:13).

Materials needed:

- Poster or slide of Bible Truth
- Rules visualized
- Bible Verse written on slide, poster, or marker board.
- Bible Verse written on seven pieces of construction paper. (Start with largest print possible and then get smaller with each one. By the time it is written on the seventh piece, it is so small it can barely be read.)
- Video clip of the story of Moses, or have children reenact the story. For younger children, tell the story found in Exodus 1, 2:1–11. Emphasize that God chose Moses even as a baby and set him apart so he could be prepared to do what God had purposed for him. For older children, tell the story found in Exodus 1–3. Emphasize how God called Moses to be holy and useful.
- A large assortment of containers used for a variety of purposes, some for very good purposes and others that are used for lesser purposes. For example: a pitcher, a candle holder, a perfume bottle, a trash can, a pet's food dish, etc.
- Deep bowl filled with water, bottles of food coloring, a clear glass, piece of a paper towel with cross drawn on it for each child.

WELCOME

ACTIVITY FOR EARLY ARRIVERS

Have a large number of items such as buttons. As children arrive, ask them to sort through the items and separate ones that have a certain characteristic. For example, have the children separate out all the buttons that have only two holes or are a certain size. .

When all the children arrive, **review rules** in a creative way. Suggested rules are:

- Listen closely
- Keep hands and feet to self
- Stay in seat
- Participate

PRAYER

Pray with the children asking God to help them understand and apply today's Bible Truth in their everyday lives.

SECTION 1: WHAT IS THE TRUTH?

ACTIVITY TIME

Use this game to help children understand that sanctification is being set apart for God's purposes.

(Have children stand on a line. Stand on the opposite side of the room.)

I'm going to call out categories such as "wearing red" or "10 years old". Every time I call out a category that describes you, you will be set apart. If you fit the category, run to me as fast as you can, tag me, and shout, "SET APART!" If you don't fit the category, stay where you are and crouch down on the floor.

(Play several times with these categories: clothing colors, clothing styles [such as jeans, shorts, or dresses], ages, birthday months, school grade, number of siblings, letter in name. After the game, gather children for discussion.)

What happened in the game when I called out a characteristic that fit you? Yes, you were set apart. Today we are going to learn more about a very important truth, "God sets me apart to be holy and useful." (Have the children repeat this Bible truth several times in creative ways i.e. girls, boys, whisper, shout, standing on one leg.) During the next few weeks, we are going to learn how God sets each of us apart for His special purposes. He does this through the work of sanctification. Let's listen to today's Memory Verse to find out more about sanctification.

BIBLE VERSE FOCUS

Read the verse to the children. **“From the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth” (2 Thessalonians 2:13).**
(Have the children read the verse with you.)

DISCUSS

When did God choose you? (*from the beginning, even before you were born*)

What did God choose you to do? (*to be saved from sin, to live holy lives*)

How does God do this? (*He sanctifies or cleanses us through the work of His Spirit.*)

What must we do? (*believe in truth, do what God says and does*)

God’s part was to choose us from the very beginning and then to save us. Our part is to believe the truth that Jesus died and rose from the dead in order to save us from sin. When we believe that truth, God sets us apart and cleanses us.

MEMORIZATION ACTIVITY

Take out the words of 2 Thessalonians 2:13 written on seven pieces of construction paper in decreasing size.

Begin with largest print and have children read it together, and then go through pages 2–7, reading it together each time. By the time you get to the seventh page, the lettering will be so small the children will have to say it from memory. Repeat as needed.

SECTION 2:

WHAT DOES GOD’S WORD SAY ABOUT THE TRUTH?

OBJECT LESSON: *What Kind of Container Are You?*

Show each container you’ve gathered and discuss its use.

DISCUSS

- **If you could be any one of the containers, which container would you be? Why?**
- **Is there a container that you definitely would not want to be? Which one? Why not?**
- **Would you fill this pitcher with clean drinking water if it were dirty?** (*No, the water would become dirty, no one could drink it.*)
- **Would you want to eat your food from this pet’s food dish?** (*No. It has been used for the wrong purpose.*)

COMMENT

When Paul, one of the writers of the New Testament, wrote to a young Christian named Timothy, he said, "In a large house there are dishes made of gold and silver as well as some made from wood and clay. The dishes of gold and silver are used to serve the finest foods to the most important guests. The other dishes are used in the kitchen or to hold garbage. If you will cleanse your life from everything that is sinful, you will be like these fine dishes. You will be set apart and ready to be used by God for the very greatest purposes" (2 Timothy 2:20, 21, paraphrased).

God wants each one of you to be like the beautiful containers in a wealthy home. They are kept spotlessly clean and are always ready to be used when an important guest visits or when there is a celebration. He wants your lives to be cleansed from every evil and set apart to be used only for His purposes. If you are willing, God wants to do this for you.

BIBLE LESSON: Moses is Set Apart, Exodus 1-3

For the younger children, review Exodus 1 and 2. Emphasize how Moses was chosen and set apart while still a baby and protected from the wicked king's plans.

For older children, review the highlights of Moses' life from Exodus 1-3. Emphasize his mother's recognition of his potential, being put in the basket and saved from death, living in Pharaoh's house where he learned writing and warfare, killing an Egyptian in an attempt to do things his way, fleeing to the desert, and being called and set apart by God at the burning bush.

CREATIVE WAYS TO SHARE THE STORY

Use video clips; interview of the Bible character, Moses; form groups of older children and have them act out their portion of the story.

COMMENT

Even when Moses was a tiny baby, God set him apart. He planned every detail of Moses' life in order to place him where He wanted him to be. He knew the plans He had for Moses. He knew what would be required to prepare him and he knew when Moses would be ready. Even when Moses acted wrongly and had to flee into the desert, God was preparing Moses to be holy and useful. *(Review with the children the ways Moses' life equipped him to fulfill God's purposes.)*

SECTION 3:

WHAT WILL THE CHILD DO ABOUT THE TRUTH?

OBJECT LESSON: Set Apart to Be Useful

Materials needed:

- Deep bowl filled with water (represents the world and sin that surrounds us)
- Bottles of food coloring (represents the sinful world we live in and the sins that tempt us)
- Clear drinking glass (represents God setting us apart through Jesus' death and resurrection)
- Paper towel section for each child (represents each one of us). On each section draw a cross.

PREPARATION

(Practice before doing this activity with the children.) Crumple a paper towel section and stuff it in the drinking glass. It needs to be secure enough that it will not fall out when the glass is turned upside down. Hold the glass in the water upside down for a count of 10 and carefully lift the glass. You need to keep the glass straight throughout this experiment. Using a dry hand, pull the paper towel out of the glass and examine it. It will be completely dry. Why? Stuffed into the bottom of the glass with the paper towel is a layer of air. The air is lighter than water and cannot escape when the glass is submerged in the bowl. Water cannot enter the glass to soak the paper towel because of the layer of air.

PRESENTATION

When you ask forgiveness for the wrong things you have done and believe that Jesus died on the cross for you, you become a Christian. God sets you apart as His child and gives you a strong desire to be holy as He is and useful to Him. He sanctifies you!

(Pass out paper towel sections with a cross drawn on each one to every child in your group. Allow them to write their names inside the cross with markers.)

Our world is full of many things that are displeasing to God. Anything that is displeasing to God is sin. Can you think of some of the wrong and sinful things you see or hear about each day?

(Each time a child makes an appropriate suggestion, let him add a drop of food coloring to the bowl of water. Suggestions might include: pornography, war, poverty, prejudice, selfishness, abortion, stealing, mistreating others, being disrespectful to parents or teachers, anger, drugs, etc. . . .)

Even though God has set us apart to be holy and useful, we live in a very sinful world. Sometimes it seems very hard to be holy when we see and hear so many sinful things. Sometimes it seems very hard to be useful because there are so many bad things happening to people and we wonder how we can make a difference in their lives. But our Bible Truth reminds us that "God sets me (you) apart to be holy and useful." And our Bible Verse tells us that "God chose us and sanctified us or set us apart."

Look at this sheet of paper towel. If I drop it into this container of dirty water, what will happen? Yes, it will become very wet and dirty. And it will no longer be useful because it is wet and dirty.

That's why God has set you and me apart through sanctification. *(Have the children crumple up their paper towel sections and hold them in their hands.)* **Even though you have to live in this world filled with wrong, God has set you apart to be holy and useful. Do you believe this?**

What would you say if I told you that I can plunge my crumpled paper towel into this bowl of water and it will not get wet? Do you think that it's possible? *(Let children respond.)*

(Stuff the paper towel in the glass. Remember it needs to be secure enough that it will not fall out when the glass is turned upside down. Hold the glass upside down in the water while the children count down from 10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1, and then carefully lift the glass out of the bowl. Remember you need to keep the glass straight throughout the experiment. Pull the paper towel out of the glass and examine it. The paper towel should be completely dry. Explain that the paper towel is protected from the water by a layer of air. Because the water is heavier than the air, it cannot get past the air to soak the paper.)

Just as the layer of air set the paper towel apart from the water, God's Spirit and His Word set you apart. Even in the most difficult circumstances, you can still be holy and useful.

MINISTRY TIME

Let the children share circumstances in their lives when it is difficult to be holy and useful. Pray with each child as he shares asking God to set him apart to be holy and useful. Then let each child put his paper towel in the glass and put it in the water. When the paper towel is taken out, remind the child that God has set him apart to be holy and useful. (Let the children repeat the Bible Truth.)

CONCLUDING PRAYER

"Heavenly Father, thank you for taking away my sins. Thank you for setting me apart to be holy and useful. Continue to cleanse me and prepare me to do the good things you have planned for me to do. Amen."



Children's
Lesson 4

YIELDED, MY PART

BIBLE TRUTH

I say "Yes" to God's cleansing work in me.

BIBLE LESSON

Zacchaeus says "Yes" to Jesus, Luke 19:1-9.

BIBLE VERSE

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10).

Materials needed:

- Poster of Bible Truth: I say "Yes" to God's cleansing work in me.
- Rules visualized
- Multiples of five small pieces of green paper (to represent money) for each child in your class.
- Small prize (stickers, pencils, erasers, etc.) for each child.
- A piece of red construction paper cut in the shape of a heart, a larger piece of cardboard
- Tape or glue
- Two magnets
- Piece of paper that reads "goodness"
- White vinegar
- Iodized salt
- Baby jars or small clear drinking glasses
- Dirty old pennies for each child
- One shiny new penny for explanation
- Paper towels
- Latex gloves to keep the vinegar off your fingers
- Yield sign

WELCOME

ACTIVITY FOR EARLY ARRIVERS: The Tax Collector

Appoint the first child who arrives as the banker. He is to pass out an equal amount of green paper pieces (representing money) to each child in your class. Appoint the next child who arrives to be the tax collector and have him levy a tax of one “dollar” (one piece of green paper) for every letter in the child’s name. This will create inequity among the children.

Appoint another child as the prize vendor. Once all the children have arrived, have the prize vendor distribute a small prize to each child who has enough money to pay for one. The children with long names in your class will not have enough to pay for their prize.

COMMENT

Today we will learn about a tax collector who collected taxes unfairly and made life very difficult for the people of Jericho. *(After making your point, distribute prizes to the children who were excluded earlier.)*

Before beginning the next activity, **Review Rules** in a creative way. Suggested rules are:

- Listen closely
- Keep hands and feet to self
- Stay in seat
- Participate

PRAYER

Pray with the children asking God to help them understand and apply today’s Bible Truth in their everyday lives.

SECTION 1: WHAT IS THE TRUTH?

ACTIVITY TIME: Yield

(Show your yield sign. Ask the children what a yield sign means.)

When a car comes to a yield sign, the driver must yield or give the right of way to the oncoming car(s). When we yield to God, we give Him the right of way. We say “Yes” to what He wants to do in our lives. Our Bible Truth today reminds us of this.

(Have the children repeat the Bible Truth as you hold up the YIELD sign, “I say ‘YES’ to God’s cleansing work in me.”)

Give specific commands that the child must yield to and obey and then have him repeat the Bible truth. Suggested commands might be:

- Take ten steps forward then repeat the Bible Truth.
- Hop on one leg for 30 seconds then repeat the Bible Truth.
- Spell your name out loud then repeat the Bible Truth.
- Count to 20 then repeat the Bible Truth.
- Touch your toes five times then repeat the Bible Truth.

BIBLE VERSE FOCUS

Read today's Bible Verse to the children: **"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10).**

EXPLAIN

This Bible verse was written by David. Can you tell me something about David? (*Help the children remember stories about David: fighting Goliath, writing songs of praise, playing for Saul, hiding from Saul, being a mighty warrior.*) **Even though David was set apart by God to be holy and useful, he did wrong things. He sinned. But when David sinned, he prayed this prayer to God saying "Yes" to God's cleansing work. David asked God to cleanse him of his sin and also give him a right spirit or attitude.**

MEMORIZATION ACTIVITY

This verse is divided into two phrases. Write the first phrase, "Create in me a clean heart, O God," on a heart-shaped poster. Write the second phrase on a yellow circle with a big smiley face, "and renew a right spirit within me."

Divide the children into two groups. Have one group read the first phrase and the second group read the second phrase. Repeat until the groups know these phrases by heart then switch phrases. Repeat until both groups can recite the verse without the words.

SECTION 2:

WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY ABOUT THE TRUTH?

OBJECT LESSON: Change My Heart

Tape a large red heart to a piece of cardboard. Leave enough of the edge loose so you can reach behind it. Place a magnet between the heart and the piece of cardboard so it will repel another magnet. On another magnet, tape a piece of paper that reads "goodness."

Have the children try to stick "goodness" to the heart. If the magnets are positioned correctly, "goodness" will not stick. Take the magnet behind the heart and turn it over. Now have some children try to stick the "goodness" to the heart. It should stick.

EXPLAIN

The only way to have “goodness” in our hearts is to have Jesus change our hearts from the inside. Today, in our Bible Lesson, we are going to learn about a man whose heart was filled with greed, selfishness, and unkindness. But then he met Jesus, and his heart was changed.

BIBLE LESSON: Zacchaeus says “Yes” to Jesus, Luke 19:1-10

The following Bible lesson activity is appropriate for preschool and early elementary age children. For upper elementary age children you might want to show a video clip of the Bible story or interview the Bible character, Zacchaeus.

PREPARATION

Have the children stand an arm’s length from each other, if possible. Explain they are to move about in their own personal space and make any motions that fit the action of the story as they listen to it being told.

COMMENT

Zacchaeus was sitting at his tax collector’s table counting money when he heard people around him say, “Jesus is coming. Jesus is coming here to Jericho.”

Zacchaeus pushed back his chair and jumped up! He wanted to see Jesus.

He started running in the direction the people were pointing. He ran and ran and ran until he came to a crowd of people. Zacchaeus was a short man and he could not see over the heads of the people in front of him.

So he stood on his tiptoes. But he still could not see.

He stretched his neck up as high as he could while standing on his tiptoes. But he still could not see Jesus.

Zacchaeus shrugged his shoulders and thought to himself: “What am I going to do? The people in front of me are bigger and taller than I am and I REALLY, REALLY want to see Jesus!”

Then, over the heads of the people, he saw a sycamore-fig tree. He didn’t take his eyes off that tree as he made his way around the crowd. He climbed up on a branch, sat down, and waited for Jesus to come by. Now he could see.

When Jesus arrived at the tree, he looked up and said, “Zacchaeus, come down. I want to be a guest in your home today.”

Zacchaeus’ eyes got big! Jesus was talking to HIM!

Zacchaeus scrambled out of the tree. He skinned his knee getting down but he didn’t care. He was so happy Jesus wanted to come to his house! Zacchaeus could not stop smiling.

Zacchaeus’ life changed that day. Before he met Jesus, Zacchaeus was one of the most wicked people in town. He took more money from the people than he should have. He ended up being rich because he cheated others.

Zacchaeus looked at Jesus and said: “I will give half of my wealth to the poor. I will also give back four times as much to those I have cheated.”

Jesus smiled at Zacchaeus and said, “I see your heart Zacchaeus and I know you have been saved today!”

Zacchaeus told Jesus in front of everyone that he would become a giver instead of a taker, and he would restore what he had taken in the past. Not only would he give back to the people what he had cheated out of them, but he would give them much more! Zacchaeus trusted Jesus, yielded to, and obeyed him! Jesus cleansed Zacchaeus’ heart and gave him a right attitude. God will do the same for you as you say “Yes” to His cleansing work in your life!

SECTION 3:

WHAT WILL THE CHILD DO ABOUT THE TRUTH?

OBJECT LESSON: God’s Cleansing Work

This object lesson will work for almost any age group. Older children may appreciate the symbolism more, but younger kids will certainly understand.

Materials needed:

- 4 tablespoons of white vinegar
- 1 teaspoons of iodized salt
- several small mason jars or clear drinking glasses
- enough dirty old pennies for each child, one shiny new penny for explanation
- paper towels
- latex gloves to keep the vinegar off your fingers

PRESENTATION

After the Bible lesson, give each child a dirty old penny—the more discolored the better. Then display the shiny new penny. You can talk about how hard it would be to make those old coins as clean as the new penny.

These old pennies are like Zacchaeus was before he said “Yes” to Jesus. These pennies are also like our lives when we fail to yield to God and allow Him to cleanse our hearts and give us right attitudes.

Display the vinegar and salt solution. Have the children gently drop their coins into the liquid. Allow about a minute for the solution to work. Carefully remove the pennies and dry them with paper towels. Then, restate the meaning of the object lesson.

Hints: If kids are worried about getting the same penny back, just have them remember the date that was on each coin. If possible, do this activity in a vented room to minimize the stinky vinegar smell.

MINISTRY TIME

As each child holds his clean penny talk about these truths:

- **God set us apart to be holy and useful. Just as the penny has an important job to do, we do too. The penny is useful no matter how dirty it is, but to do God's work, we must be holy and clean.**
- **God has the power to make us clean and useful, but we must say "Yes" to His work in our lives just as Zacchaeus did.**
- **Be still before God. Tell Him about those things that keep you from having a clean heart and right attitudes. Say "Yes" to Him. "Yes, Lord, I yield to your will. Give me a clean heart and right attitudes."**

As the Holy Spirit leads, let each child come up and ask God to bring cleansing to their lives. Then, pray for all the children to be able to say "Yes" to God's continual cleansing in their lives.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

"Father, I want to say 'Yes' to your work in my life. Cleanse my heart and give right attitudes."



Children's Lesson 5

CHANGING FROM THE INSIDE OUT

BIBLE TRUTH

I am changed as I choose God's way.

BIBLE LESSON

Saul Is Changed, Acts 9:1-30.

BIBLE VERSE

"And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image" (2 Corinthians 3:18, NLT).

Materials needed:

- Animal capsule for each child, available at a party supply store or through amazon.com
- Bowl of water for each child
- Rules visualized
- Poster of Bible Truth: I am changed as I choose God's way.
- 2 Corinthians 3:18 written on chalkboard or dry erase board, and eraser
- Video clip, pictures, or actual objects of the life cycle of the butterfly
- Make 4 sets of the words of 2 Corinthians 3:18 on each of the following shapes: egg, caterpillar, cocoon, butterfly.
- Chalkboard, chalk, and eraser or whiteboard, marker, and eraser
- A bag
- An over-ripe, bruised banana
- Yellow poster paint or yellow spray paint
- Paintbrush

WELCOME

ACTIVITY FOR EARLY ARRIVERS

Give each child a foam animal capsule as he arrives. Provide a bowl of water for him to place the pellet in. Encourage him to watch as the pellet changes. Talk with the children about how the change didn't happen suddenly but gradually.

When all the children arrive, **review rules** in a creative way. Suggested rules are:

- Listen closely
- Keep hands and feet to self
- Stay in seat
- Participate

PRAYER

Pray with the children asking God to help them understand and apply today's Bible Truth in their everyday lives.

SECTION 1: WHAT IS THE TRUTH?

ACTIVITY TIME: Life Cycle of a Butterfly

Show the video clip of the life cycle of the butterfly, pictures of the four stages of the butterfly's life, or actual objects—egg, caterpillar, cocoon, and butterfly. Share how the butterfly changes gradually through each stage. Talk with the children about how these cycles were determined by God who created the butterfly.

COMMENT

God has a plan for us to change, as well. When we are saved and become God's children, we begin growing to be like Him. Our Bible Truth today reminds us of this: "I am changed as I choose God's way." (Have the children repeat the Bible truth in creative ways, i.e. whisper, shout, stand on one leg, shaking hands with a friend.) As we obey God we become more like Him. This change doesn't happen instantly, but little by little. This process is called sanctification.

BIBLE VERSE FOCUS

Our Bible Verse today also reminds us of this change: "And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image" (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Just as the butterfly changes from one form to another, God's children also change as God makes us more and more like Him. Look at the verse and see if you can answer this question, "Who makes us more and more like Jesus?"

Yes, the Lord does this. But just as the caterpillar weaves a cocoon and then the butterfly eats away at it so he can be free to fly, we must work with God as He changes us. We help Him by obeying His Word and following the Spirit's leading.

MEMORIZATION ACTIVITY

Divide the children into four groups. Give each group one of the following labels: egg, caterpillar, cocoon, or butterfly. Ask each group to develop motions for the words of the memory verse. Then invite each group to act out the verse with their motions as all the children repeat it.

SCRIPTURE REVIEW

Give each group a set of memory verse flashcards that have been mixed up. Ask each team to put the cards in order when the signal is given. When all the teams have completed the task, have each team say the verse without looking at the words.

SECTION 2: WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY ABOUT THE TRUTH?

OBJECT LESSON: From the Inside Out

Pull out your bag which should hold the following items:

- An over-ripe, bruised banana
- Yellow poster paint or yellow spray paint
- Paintbrush

COMMENT

I have my favorite fruit in this bag. What is your favorite fruit? (Interact with the responses.) Well, here is my favorite fruit: a banana. (*Hold an old, bruised banana up for them to see.*) That sure looks good doesn't it? Would you like to have some of this? (*The kids shake their heads "no."*) What! Why don't you want it? (*They will say it's because it looks so rotten.*)

Hmmm. Well, I've got an idea. Here is some yellow paint. I'll paint it over so it's nice and yellow again. (*Hold up banana and quickly paint it while the children watch.*) Great! Now it's painted nice and yellow. Who would like to eat the banana now? You still don't want to eat it. Why? (*Let the children explain that it is still old and rotten on the inside.*)

Hmmm. I guess you are right. It looks good on the outside but it is really the same on the inside. Before we were saved and became God's children we were like this banana, YUCKY! But when we became God's children, God began changing us from the inside out. This process is called "sanctification" and it lasts our whole lives. Every day God is working in our hearts to make us more like Jesus.

BIBLE LESSON: Saul is Changed, Acts 9

(As you share the story of Saul below, you will be asked to draw specific things at specific moments. Draw the objects on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board or have someone else draw as you tell the story.)

Saul was a young man who worked very hard to obey God’s laws. Saul thought he was very good. But on the inside, Saul’s heart was filled with pride and hatred. He hated Christians—anyone who followed the teachings of Jesus. He traveled around looking for them. When he found them, he would have them thrown into jail.

(Draw jail bars.)

One day, Saul was on his way to Damascus to find Christians and put them in jail. Suddenly, a bright light flashed down from heaven. The light was brighter than the sun.

(Draw a sun.)

Saul and his men covered their eyes and fell to the ground. From heaven, a voice spoke that only Saul could hear.

(Draw a mouth.)

“Saul, Saul, why do You persecute me? Why are you fighting against me?”

Saul asked, “Who are You, Lord?”

“I am Jesus, the One you are fighting against. Get up and go into the city.

(Draw skyline.)

There you will find out what you must do.”

Now Saul knew that Jesus was truly God’s Son. He knew that what he had heard about Jesus dying on the cross and rising again was true.

(Draw cross.)

At that moment, Saul believed in Jesus and was saved.

In the city of Damascus lived a man named Ananias. Ananias loved Jesus.

(Draw a heart.)

Jesus spoke to Ananias and said, “Get up Ananias and go see a man named Saul.” Ananias was very afraid.

(Draw scared face.)

Ananias said, “Lord, I have heard lots of bad news about Saul and about how mean he has been to everyone who loves Jesus.” But Jesus told Ananias that he must go because Saul was going to change. Saul would soon travel all over the world telling others about Jesus.

Ananias went to visit Saul. “Saul, I am going to pray that you will be filled with God’s Spirit.”

(Draw hands praying.)

God’s Spirit was at work in Saul, changing him so he would become like Christ, holy and useful to do the work God had planned for him to do.

As God changed Saul, he learned to pray, preach about Jesus, and listen to God’s Spirit to know where he should go. Saul’s name was changed to Paul.

(Write the name Saul then erase the S and replace with P.)

Paul traveled all over the world preaching about Jesus. He had many adventures and suffered many things—beatings, imprisonment, shipwrecks, hunger, and sickness.

God changed Paul from the inside out.

(Draw heart.)

We know this is true because he wrote the words of our Bible Verse, “And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image” (2 Corinthians 3:18).

SECTION 3: WHAT WILL THE CHILD DO ABOUT THE TRUTH?

OBJECT LESSON

Show pictures of a child growing from baby to adult.

COMMENT

Just like you are changing every day on the outside, God wants you to be changed on the inside. He wants you to become more and more like Him every day. This process of changing to be like Jesus is called sanctification. Our Scripture verse tells us that the Lord does this. *(Read the Bible Verse, 2 Corinthians 3:18, with the children.)* But you and I can work with Him. What are some things we can do? *(Let the children contribute ways we can work with God to become more and more like Jesus i.e. obey, read God’s Word, pray, worship, etc.)* Are you willing to let God work in your heart to make you more like Jesus? Will you help him?

MINISTRY TIME

Invite those who are willing to let God work in their hearts to make them more like Jesus to come forward. Pray for each child, asking God to sanctify them, to seal this work in their hearts, and to help them make good choices in the future.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

“Lord, thank you for helping us learn about holiness and sanctification. Thank you for dying for our sins. Thank you for forgiving us of all our wrong actions. Help us to serve You with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength every day for the rest of our lives as we trust only in You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”