

Watch Your Attitude

Lesson Scripture: Nehemiah 2:11-18

Bible Truth: I will serve the Lord with a good attitude.

Bible Story: Nehemiah 2:11-18

Bible Verse: “And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men.” (Colossians 3:23, NKJV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: “How Will You Serve the Lord?”

Preparation

On a piece of paper, write a task for each child to complete. Several children can receive the same task. Some suggested tasks include:

Write a get-well note to someone who is sick.

Write Colossians 3:23 on a piece of paper three times.

Draw a picture of one way you can serve the Lord.

Take out the trash and clean the room.

Materials
paper
pencil
supplies children will need to
complete each task you
assign

Gather the supplies children will need to complete their tasks. (paper, pencils, crayons, trash bags, etc.)

Presentation

As the children come into the classroom, hand each one of them a task. Listen to comments and notice the attitude of each child as she completes her task. When most of the children are finished, discuss the following questions:

How did you feel about the task I gave you? Why?

Did anyone have a task you liked more than yours? Which one was it? Why did you like it more than yours?

Did any task seem more important than others? Which one? Why?

Do you think you completed the task with a good attitude or not?

Would you say that you did your best with your task, or did you just rush through to get done?

Say: Today, we will learn about a man named Nehemiah, to whom God assigned a very difficult task to accomplish. During the Bible story, listen to see if Nehemiah obeyed the memorization verse that we have for today: " And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men." (Colossians 3:23, NKJV)

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Colossians 3:23

Preparation

Write Colossians 3:23 on a poster board.

Explanation

Read Colossians 3:23 with the children. Say: **What does it mean to do something "heartily"?** Allow children to answer. **It means to do something "with your whole heart" and in a "cheerful" manner. When you do something "with your whole heart," you do your best with the task and don't just rush through to get it done. Sometimes it can be hard to do things we don't like with our whole heart and cheerfully. Do you obey this verse when you are doing chores or homework? Allow children to answer. Can you mention some other attitudes we might have when we do chores assigned to us? Allow children to answer. Yes, at times we complain.** Write "complaining" on a sheet of paper. Place it over the word "heartily" and ask the children to read the verse. Repeat this exercise by following other suggestions offered by the children, such as "sloppy," "in anger," and "quickly"

Is God pleased with these attitudes? No. How does He want us to do our work? Allow children to say "heartily or cheerfully."

Memorization Activity

Divide the children into two teams. Place five blocks opposite each team (ten total) on the other side of the classroom. When the signal is given, the first person on each team needs to run over to the blocks, place them one on top of the other, say the memorization verse, knock down the blocks, and return to his/her team. Each person in line will do the same thing when it is his turn. If the blocks fall down before the five of them have been placed satisfactorily, the child will have to place them again. The first team to finish the relay wins.

Materials
poster board
marker
paper
10 blocks

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Rebuilding the Walls," Nehemiah 2:11-18

Preparation

Read and study Nehemiah 2:11-18.

Chose one child to pretend to be Nehemiah. Divide the rest of the children into two groups, the Israelites and the enemies of the Israelites.

Materials
Bible

Presentation

Say: **Today we are going to act out our Bible story. Listen carefully as I read the story. You can go ahead and act out anything you hear, or you can wait for me to give you instructions.**

The city of Jerusalem was very important to God. He wanted His people to be able to live there safely. In Bible times, in order for a city to be safe, it needed to have strong walls built around it. God asked Nehemiah to be in charge of rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem because it was a mess. Let's travel with Nehemiah around Jerusalem. Encourage the Israelite children to imagine being on horses, rapidly galloping. **As he traveled around the city, Nehemiah examined the broken walls and the burned gates. "Something must be done," Nehemiah told himself.** Ask the child playing Nehemiah to examine the pretend walls.

The following day, Nehemiah gathered the people. Everyone wanted to help in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. Both men and women helped. Every family repaired the walls facing their houses. Have the Israelite children "build" the walls as you continue the story. **Some of the family members would take out huge stone parts. Strong men would gather the stones to shape the walls.**

The enemies living around Jerusalem couldn't believe what was happening. They didn't want the walls to be rebuilt because they wouldn't be able to enter the city and give its people a hard time, so they started to make fun of the walls. Have the enemies of the Israelites start making fun of those building the walls. **"The walls are so weak that they will fall down when a little fox climbs up on them."**

Nehemiah and the people in Jerusalem didn't pay attention to these insults. They were determined to rebuild the walls.

Then the enemies made plans to attack Jerusalem. Have the enemies huddle around like they are making a plan. **When Nehemiah heard about their plans, he positioned his men with swords. He also put guards to watch the walls during the day and at nighttime.**

Ask some of the Israelite children to stop working and to act as guards. **But the enemy continued with threats of attack. Nehemiah told his people to work with one hand and hold their weapon with the other.** Ask the Israelite children to pretend they are holding a weapon while they continue to build the wall.

The walls were completed after only fifty-two days. When the enemies heard that the walls had been completely rebuilt, they were afraid because they knew that God had helped Nehemiah and the people finish the work. Have the enemies shake with fear.

After the children finish building the pretend walls, ask them to sit inside the city while discussing the following questions:

Did Nehemiah obey today's memorization verse when he rebuilt the walls?

Did the people work with all their heart in rebuilding the walls?

How did God bless the people for their willingness to rebuild the walls?

How does God bless you when you do something with all your heart?

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Art, "Building the Walls"

Preparation

Using construction paper, cut out three paper stones for each child in your class.

On a sheet of paper, write the following phrase: "We will serve the Lord with all of our hearts!" Attach the paper to a wall in the classroom.

Materials
construction paper
markers
scissors
pencils, pens, or crayons

Presentation

Say: **Let's read our Bible verse again.** Read Colossians 3:23. **Did Nehemiah and the people in Jerusalem obey this command when they were working on the walls?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, they worked heartily! Remember that heartily means with all of their heart and with a good attitude. They knew God wanted them to rebuilt the walls, so they worked very hard even when others tried to stop them. They never gave up or complained.**

There are many things God wants us to do for Him. Can you think of some? Allow children to answer. Help them list things such as be kind to others, obey my parents, give an offering in church, do my homework, etc. **Let's write some of these things on the stones I am going to give you.**

Give each of the children three small stones cut out of paper. Ask them to write one thing on each stone that they know God wants them to do, even if it is hard. When children have finished, attach the stones to the classroom wall in the shape of a "wall."

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Presentation

Gather children around the stones they have placed on the wall.

Say: **Just like the people in Jerusalem had enemies, we also**

have an enemy. Our enemy is Satan. He would like to keep you from doing the things God wants you to do. He wants you to be lazy and have a bad attitude, the opposite of working "heartily." Let's pray together and ask God to give us the strength and courage we need to do these things for Him with a good attitude. Say a pray with the children and encourage them to ask God to help them do everything He asks with a cheerful attitude.

Materials

the paper "wall" made during
the learning activity