

Growing in Kindness

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 18:21-35

Bible Truth: My kindness can grow.

Bible Story: Matthew 18:21-35

Bible Verse: “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” (Ephesians 4:32, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: “Be Kind to Others”

Preparation

Write the following words on separate pieces of paper and display them at the front of the room: “time,” “actions,” “money,” and “words.”

Materials
paper
crayons

Presentation

As children arrive, ask them to draw a picture of someone being kind. Once everyone is finished, say: **There are many ways we can show kindness to others. Sometimes we are kind by spending time with someone, like a little brother or sister. Sometimes we show kindness with our actions, such as when we help our parents clean the house. Other times we show kindness by giving money to someone or encouraging them with our words. Let’s decide how the people in your pictures showed kindness.** Allow each child to tell you about their picture. Decide if their picture illustrated kindness through time, actions, money, or words and place their picture by the correct sign at the front of the room.

Say: **How did Jesus show us His love and kindness? Yes, He suffered the punishment of our sins when He died on the cross. We want to be kind like Jesus.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Ephesians 4:32

Preparation

Write Ephesians 4:32 on poster board.

Write each word of Ephesians 4:32 on a separate sheet of paper.

Materials
poster board
paper
markers

Explanation

Read Ephesians 4:32 to the children. Say: **How would you put this verse in your own words?**

Write a class paraphrase of Ephesians 4:32 on the back of the poster board.

Memorization Activity

Give each child a word from Ephesians 4:32. Ask them to put themselves in correct verse order based on their words. When children are in the correct order, say the verse together. Mix up the words and have them repeat the activity several times until children have learned Ephesians 4:32.

*If you have a small number of children, give each child more than one word, making sure the words you give them are near each other in the verse. If you have a large group of children, allow them to take turns.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "The Parable of the Unforgiving and Unkind Servant," Matthew 18:21-35

Preparation

Read and study Matthew 18:21-35.

Make two signs that read "first servant" and "second servant."

Make a crown out of paper.

Draw pictures of money on several sheets of paper.

Materials
Bible
paper
markers

Presentation

Ask three children to help you tell today's Bible story. Place the "first servant" sign on one child; the "second servant" sign on another child, and the crown on the third child. Give the child wearing the crown the pictures of money.

Say: **Jesus often told stories to help people learn a lesson. One day his disciple Peter wanted to know how often he had to forgive someone and be kind to them. Jesus used a story to answer Peter's question. Here is the story:**

There once was a servant who had borrowed a lot of money from a king. Have the king give the "first servant" child all of the pictures with the money drawn on them. **There was also a second servant that borrowed a small amount of money from the first servant.** Have the "first servant" give the "second servant" one picture with money drawn on it. **Both of the servants spent all of the money.** Take all of the pictures of the money from the children to use at the end of the story.

Allow the children to continue acting out the story as you tell it. Remember to show the pictures of the money to illustrate the small vs. large amounts borrowed.

Say: **Some time later, the king decided it was time for the first servant to pay back the large amount of money he had borrowed. The first servant begged the king for mercy, explaining that he couldn't pay the money back. Rather than have the man thrown in jail, the king decided to forgive the first servant. He even told the first servant that he never had to pay back the money! The king showed true kindness to this man.**

As the first servant was leaving the king's house, he saw the second servant who owned him a small amount of money. He demanded that the second servant pay him back immediately. The second servant begged for mercy, explaining that he couldn't pay the money back. But rather than show kindness like the king had shown to him, the first servant had the second servant thrown in jail until he could pay back the money.

Someone told the king what had happened, and the king became angry. He couldn't believe that the first servant wouldn't forgive and show kindness to the second servant over a small amount of money. After all, the king had forgiven a debt of a large amount of money for the first servant. In fact, the king was so angry that he also had the first servant thrown in jail until he could repay his debt.

Say: **Jesus told the people that the king was like God, and we are like the servants. God showed us forgiveness and kindness when He sent Jesus to die for our sins. Since He has shown us great kindness by forgiving all of our sins, it is our responsibility to be kind and forgive others.**

Discuss the following questions with the children:

1. How is God like the king?
2. How is the first servant's debt like our sin?
3. How is the second servant's debt like things people do hurt us?
4. What lesson can we learn from this story?

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Skit, "Showing Kindness"

Preparation

Write each of the scenarios listed below on different pieces of paper.

1. You want to go play with your friend, but your dad has been working late all this week. He hasn't had time to work on the yard. Your mom just asked if you could pull out the weeds in the garden.
2. You have been saving money to buy a bicycle, but tomorrow is your mom's birthday. There is something she really wants and your sister doesn't have enough money to buy it. Your sister asked for your help.
3. A new child just came to your school. He dresses differently from the other children, and no one wants to be his friend.
4. It is your turn to do the dishes, but your best friend just called and invited you over to play. You ask your sister if she will do the dishes for you.
5. Your best friend said mean things about you to some children at school. Now, she realizes what she did was wrong and asks you to forgive her.

Materials

paper
pencils

Presentation

Divide children into four groups. Give each group a scenario. Ask them to create a skit showing someone being kind in their scenario. When groups are ready, ask them to present the skits to the class.

Say: **Sometimes kindness involves giving up what we want so that we can help others. Other times, kindness is forgiving someone who has hurt us. In all situations, God wants us to be kind to everyone.**

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Presentation

Talk to the children about simple acts of kindness they can do for others on a daily basis. Ask each child to think about seven easy things they can do to show kindness during the following week. Have them to write those things on a piece of paper. Encourage them to do one of those kind acts each day.

Say: **As you practice being kind, God will help your kindness grow.** Take any fruit-shaped papers with the word "kindness" written on them (located at the bottom of the poster from Lesson 1) and move them from the bottom of the poster into the tree. Pray with the children asking God to help them be kind to others.

Materials

paper

pencils

"Christian" tree poster (from Lesson 1)