

1. Jesus Teaches (Matthew 5:1-9)

“If I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you too must wash each other’s feet.” (John 13:14)



PLAN

Session Outline

1. Gather

Greeting
Puzzlers
Ways to Promote Peace
Transition to Explore

2. Explore

Sacred Conversations
Hear and See the Bible Story
Interact with the Bible Story
Say the Bible Verse
Transition to Respond

3. Respond

Teaching
Backpack Tag
Loving God,
Loving Neighbor
Transition to Bless

4. Bless

Inviting
Praising
Blessing
At Home with God

Supplies

Basic Supplies: Offering basket |
Markers | Large sheet of paper | Scissors
| Ribbon | Paper punch | Crayons |
Napkins

Gather: TV/DVD player

Explore: TV/DVD player

Respond: Contact paper | Craft cord |
Pretzels | Tablecloth | LED candle

Bless: Tablecloth | LED candle

Before You Teach

Matthew 5:1-9 is part of a passage of Scripture that is commonly known as the Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon on the Mount is a series of teachings by Jesus to help us know how God wants us to live. It contains familiar passages such as the Lord’s Prayer and the Golden Rule. As word of Jesus’ ministry spread, large crowds began to follow him around and seek his healing power. Jesus went up a mountain as this was happening and sat down and taught his disciples. The part of the Sermon on the Mount that today’s lesson covers is the Beatitudes.

The Beatitudes are presented in a series of statements that, in the Common English Bible, begin with the words “Happy are people.” Some of these statements can be confusing for children (and adults) because many of the people Jesus names as “happy” are not people that we typically think of as experiencing happiness. For example, “Happy are people who are hopeless” (verse 3) and “Happy are people who grieve” (verse 4). So what does it mean that people who would normally be thought of as unfortunate, are described as happy in Jesus’ teachings?

These statements remind us that the people who experience happiness under God’s rule are not the people who typically know happiness based on society’s standards, in biblical times or today. These teachings remind us that there is hope for all circumstances through God. We see such statements in other passages of the Gospel, such as Mary’s song of praise to God when she first learned that she would be Jesus’ mother in Luke 1.

The Beatitudes can take time to grasp fully, as children grow. For this session, we will focus on being a peacemaker (verse 9), which is something most children can comprehend. It’s also a tangible life connection for them, as they are in situations each day in which they must learn to interact with and get along with people in their communities who may be different from them in a variety of ways.

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GATHER

Greeting

Before class: Display either attendance chart (Class Kit—pp. 16–17 or 15 & 18) at eye level.

- Play “A Whole New Level of Love” (Adventure DVD), as you welcome each child.
- Show the children where to place their offerings on the worship table.
- Have the children mark the “Attendance Chart” by signing their first names on week #1.

SAY: Today, our Bible story is about how Jesus taught his disciples on a mountain.

A—Puzzlers (Activity Sheets)

Before class: Tear out the Session 1 Activity Sheets for each child.

- Give each child a copy of “Jesus Taught” (Activity Sheets—p. 3). Let them complete the puzzle.
- Allow them to work on the “Jesus’ Lessons” activity (Activity Sheets—p. 4).

SAY: Our Bible story for today reminds us that Jesus taught us to be peacemakers.

OR

B—Ways to Promote Peace (Discussion)

Before class: Gather a large sheet of paper and markers.

SAY: One of the things that Jesus taught his disciples was to be peacemakers.

ASK: What are some ways that we can promote peace in our world today?

- Let the children call out ideas. Write them down on the large piece of paper.
- After the children have come up with as many ideas as they can, have a group discussion.

ASK: How can we implement some of these ideas?

- If possible, let the children select an idea or two that they can implement within the Sunday school class or within the church.
 - Write these ideas down on a large sheet of paper, and display it in your classroom.
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Transition to Explore

- Encourage children to bring a chair or to sit on the floor in a carpeted area.
- Invite children to form a circle on the floor.

TIP: *Transitions are a helpful way for children to move easily from one activity to the next.*



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EXPLORE

Sacred Conversations

- Encourage children to join and sit in the circle.
- Demonstrate a listening position for the children.
- Ask wondering questions.

ASK: I wonder:

- When have you been on or close to a mountain?
 - What unusual places have you been where you learned something?
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Hear and See the Bible Story

- Read the Bible story together (*CEB Deep Blue Kids Bible*—Matthew 5:1-9).
- Watch the Adventure DVD Session 1.

SAY: Today, we’re exploring a story in which Jesus taught the disciples about being a peacemaker.

ASK: How can you be a peacemaker?

Interact with the Bible Story

- Assign parts and act out “Jesus Teaches” (Bible Story Sheets—Session 1).
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Say the Bible Verse

Before class: Display the “Unit 1 Bible Verse” poster (Class Kit—pp. 5 & 28).

- Tell the children the Bible verse: “If I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you too must wash each other’s feet” (John 13:14).
 - Have the children repeat the verse after you.
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Transition to Respond

- Encourage children to put away their chairs and/or get back to their places.

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RESPOND

Teaching (Storytelling/Drama)

Before class: Coordinate with another Sunday school class to have your class teach his or her class the Scripture.

SAY: In our Bible story, Jesus taught his disciples. Today, we’re going to come up with a way to teach what Jesus taught the disciples to another class.

- Let the children brainstorm ideas and use supplies or teaching tools in the classroom.
- Have a brief practice run-through in which the children teach you the lesson.
- Have the children teach the other class the Scripture.

TIPS: *Remind the children that it’s OK if their teaching is not perfect. Let them read from notes, Bibles, and so forth if they would like since time for practice is limited. If children struggle with coming up with their own teaching method, let them act out the skit from Bible Story Sheets—Session 1 instead.*

OR

Backpack Tag (Craft)

Before class: Photocopy “Backpack Tag Template” (Leader Guide—p. 12) for each child. Have scissors, a paper punch, clear contact paper, crayons or makers, and ribbon or craft cord on hand. Cut two pieces of contact paper per child that are just slightly bigger than the tags.

- Give each child a copy of “Backpack Tag Template” (Leader Guide—p. 12) and the other supplies. Have the children write, “Happy are people who make peace” on the tag, and decorate the tag as they would like, using the crayons and markers. Then cut out the tag.
- Have the children lay their tags face down on a piece of contact paper. Then have them place another sheet of contact paper over the back side of the tag.
- Have the children cut out their tags and punch a hole at the tapered end, using the paper punch. Then each child thread a ribbon or craft cord through the hole and tie it to form a loop for hanging.

Loving God, Loving Neighbor

Before class: Gather pretzels, napkins, cups, and water.

- Serve the pretzels and water to the children as a snack. Discuss Lent with the children and how people traditionally give up extravagant things or at least one thing during this time.

SAY: Today, we are having a simple snack to remind us of the tradition of living simply during Lent.

Transition to Bless

- Ring a bell to announce the transition.
- Create a worship center on a small table with a tablecloth and an LED candle.

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BLESS

Inviting

Before class: Display “Unit 1 Bible Verse Signs” poster (Class Kit—p. 29) on a wall or bulletin board.

SAY: Today, we learned about Jesus and the disciples. Let’s learn to sign a verse about something Jesus did with his disciples and that some churches today do during Lent.

- Gather the children around the Bible Verse Signs poster. Have the children read the Bible verse.
 - Teach the children to sign the verse.
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Praising

SAY: One of the things that Jesus taught the disciples in our Bible story was how to be peacemakers. Let’s practice peacefully engaging with others by passing the peace. Passing the peace is an act that we do to show friendship to one another. This time, we will pass the peace by shaking hands.

- Have the children go around the room and greet the other children by shaking hands with them.
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Blessing

SAY: One way that people show that they are at peace with one another is by joining hands. Let’s join hands with one another as we pray.

- Have the children form a circle around the worship center and join hands.
- Light the candle.

PRAY: Dear God, thank you for teaching us how to be peacemakers in our community. Amen.

At Home with God

SAY: What was one thing that you learned about what Jesus taught the disciples? Can you share what you learned with your family?

- Send Bible Story Sheets—Session 1, and the Unit 1 Song Sheet home with each child.

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Backpack Tag Template

