



Life of Christ

Jesus visits the church

Matthew 21:12-13

Younger Verse

Guide me in Your Truth and teach me. Psalm 25:5

Older Verse

Guide me in Your Truth and teach me, for You are God my Savior and my hope is in You all day long. Psalm 25:5

Lesson Goals

Explain some things we do in church (pray, sing, read Bible, worship, etc.)
Share why we should pray in church

Welcome Time

*Please note: This portion of the lesson is given to help in teaching the lesson. Please read through the story and read it in the Bible. Do **NOT** read from this piece of paper. Instead, make a note sheet and place it next to the story in the Bible.*

Bible Story

When Jesus came into town, He stopped at the temple church. It was a beautiful place where people came to worship God. It was very different from our church. (TEACHERS: talk about your church building—maybe it is an apartment, or clubhouse, or laundry room, or even 4 trees and a tarp.) The church that Jesus was visiting was very magnificent. It was probably as big as a gigantic football stadium and it took over 40 years to build! It had big columns around the whole building. There were probably lots of gold decorations on the inside too. (There is a picture in the handouts.)

Well, Jesus was probably excited about going to this temple church. He knew that a church was a place where people worship God and tell Him how much they love Him. He wanted to see people with attitudes of worship.

When He arrived, He saw just the opposite! He saw people selling things and cheating people. This made Jesus very upset. He was upset because these traders were robbing people in God's house. They cared more about making money than helping the people. It was dishonoring God.

In His heart, Jesus knew that He must do something. He did something that will never be forgotten. He made a whip out of cords and forced the animal traders to leave. He went over to the tables and said, "This is my Father's house. Don't make it a place to buy and sell things." "It is a place to pray and worship God." Then He turned over all the tables and asked the sales people to leave.

There was lots of noise and confusion. The sales people couldn't believe what Jesus did. He had ruined their business. They were angry, but they did not do anything to Jesus. Jesus simply walked away. No one dared to fight back because they knew that they had done wrong and Jesus was right. They had cheated people and they had wrong attitudes in church. They were not there to worship God. They were there to make some money the wrong way.

Teachers:

Be sure the children hear and understand the whole story. It is important for them to know that Jesus did NOT sin. Also, this lesson cannot be justification for them to be angry with others and shove things around.

Please remember that Jesus did not do this out of hateful anger or rage. He was not taking revenge. He did not sin or do wrong. He was upset about the traders' attitudes and their deception. Remember this: Jesus still loved them. In fact, He made a way for them, and us to get to Heaven. Jesus knew that in a few days, He would die on a cross. Jesus did this because He knew that if He died for all the wrong things we have done, we could be with God in Heaven, if we believe. Jesus did this for us and the traders too.

What can we learn from today's lesson? This lesson helps us see that we must treat God's house with honor and respect. We come to learn about Jesus, sing songs to God, pray, and worship God. In fact, the church building is not the thing that is important. It is the people. That is really what a church is—the people who come together to worship God. Jesus knew that it wasn't the building that was important, it was the attitude of the hearts of the people. When we come to church, we should focus on God. Our attitude, behavior and words should say to God that we are there to meet Him.

Jesus did something very dramatic when He turned the tables over. Please don't decide to turn over someone's desk or table because you think they are wrong. Jesus knew how to respond because He had been talking to God. He knew what to do. AND, He did not sin. Jesus did NOT turn the tables over so that people would notice Him or so that He could feel powerful. In other words, He was NOT making Himself look good. When you are in a tough situation, ask God what you should do. Don't just react to the situation. Respond the way God wants you to. It might mean walking away or being silent. Jesus did that too.

Learning Activities

Help the kids understand the lesson and the goals for the day. Ask them questions to make sure they understand AND that they do not take anything out of context.

Memory Verse Activities

Talk to the kids about the word "Savior." Share situations where someone is rescued (fireman rescues someone, lifeguard saves someone from drowning, etc.) Share how Jesus saved us by taking our punishment on the cross. Share how we can go to Heaven by trusting in Jesus.

Prayer Time

Ask God to help you listen to His voice this week and help you do the right thing. Thank Him for a church where we can pray and worship Him.

Snack Time/CleanUp

You may want to bring chocolate coins or animal crackers to remind the students of the lesson today. There are also lots of treats available.

Planning for July 21st
Why go to church?
What new Christians did
Acts 2:42-47

Preschool Lesson
for
Jesus goes to the church

When Jesus came into town, He stopped at the temple church. It was a beautiful place where people came to worship God. It was very different from our church. (TEACHERS: talk about your church building—maybe it is an apartment, or clubhouse, or laundry room, or even 4 trees and a tarp.) The church that Jesus was visiting was very, very big. It was probably as big as a gigantic football stadium and it took over 40 years to build! It had big columns around the whole building. There were probably lots of gold decorations on the inside too. (There is a picture in the handouts.)

Well, Jesus was probably excited about going to this temple church. He knew that a church was a place where people worship God and tell Him how much they love Him.

When He went inside, He became very sad at what He saw. He saw people selling things and cheating people. This made Jesus very upset. He was upset because these traders were robbing people in God's house. They cared more about making money than helping the people. It was not pleasing God.

He listened to God and did something that will never be forgotten. He asked the sales people to leave.

What can we learn from today's lesson? When we listen to God and do what He says, He is pleased. It makes Him happy when we listen to Him and do right things.

Remember that Jesus still loved the people and the cheaters too. He cared for them and He wanted the church to be a place to pray and talk to God.

Sing, "God is so Good."

Ask the kids to weave their fingers together and close their hands. Show them the little poem:

Here is the church, here is the steeple
Open the door (your thumbs) and see all the people!

(You certainly can modify the poem if you want to leave out the steeple.)

Hands-on Activities for Jesus goes to the church

Talk about the lesson and help the kids learn that Jesus did not do wrong when He was angry and upset. Ask the kids to think of ways that they can NOT do wrong when they are angry.

Let the children make coin rubbings. Place a coin under a piece of paper. Rub with a crayon or pencil to see the indentions. Talk about the importance of loving God more than loving money.

Ask the kids if they think of their church as a place to pray. Ask them how it can be improved. Think about ways to be a church of prayer.

Talk about prayer and how to pray. Take time to ask for requests and needs. Then make a circle and pray!

If you have some, bring coins from other countries. Explain how they have to be traded for the money of the country a person is in. Remind them that the people were doing this in the story—except they were cheating the people.

Challenge the kids to listen to God and do right things this week. It may mean that they do something nice for someone! Think about some good things that they can do together!