

Adventures with GOD!

PEOPLE IN GOD'S KINGDOM ARE BLESSED (B.2.WINTER.2)

Biblical Reference	Matthew 5:1-6
Key Verse	Matthew 5:6
Key Concept	If I belong to the kingdom of God I am blessed.
Educational Objectives	At the end of the class today, the children will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define the word "blessed" 2. Name situations in which it's hard to feel blessed without God's help 3. Say the Bible verse by memory

Life Application

In today's age, many children have to face very difficult situations: war, sickness, abuse, hunger, deception, etc. In the middle of sadness and difficulties we can be thankful and feel blessed because we have a king who is our Heavenly Father who loves us, cares for us, and encourages us. During the week the children will remember the world "blessed" and give thanks to God for God's presence in their lives.

Possible Activities and Class Plan

Activity	Materials	Time
My GROW Adventure	GROW Adventure w/God materials	5 minutes
Opening Prayer	Candle	1 minute
Bible Reading	Bible	5 minutes
Introduction	Illustrations	5 minutes
Game	See instructions	10 minutes
Bible Exploration	See instructions	15 minutes
Bible Verse	See instructions	5 minutes
Activities	Crayons, worksheets	10 minutes
GROW adventure	Review	5 minutes
Closing Prayer	Candle	1 minute

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INSTRUCTIONS

Decoration: When the children arrive, welcome them with a greeting similar to: “Welcome to the Kingdom of God. Put on some joyful background music to create a joyful environment.

My GROW Adventure with God Weekly Review: As children enter take time to have them reflect on their adventure with God booklets and either discuss or use art materials to express their journey during the past week. You may wish to add any art work, written poems, prayers or songs to a GROW wall in the room. You can find my GROW Adventure with God materials on the Covchurch.org website in the same place as the Adventures with God sessions.

Opening Prayer: Gather children around a candle. Light the candle and explain that we are entering into a special time with God. Encourage the children to hold their hands out in front of them palms up as a sign they are ready to receive what God has for them today.

Prayer Example: Lord God, thank you for making us, for loving us, for forgiving us, and guiding us. We know you are here with us right now. As we enter into your word, the Bible, help us draw close to you, to understand and to listen to what you have to say to us. Amen

(For safety sake, you may wish to extinguish the candle after the prayer.)

Bible Reading: Explain that as we read the Bible we do so first to spend time with God. Children can remain with hands out-stretched, palms up to receive the word as it’s being read. Alternatively they can be invited to draw what they hear. Read the biblical reference for the day (Matthew 5:1-6) two times and ask children to respond.

Question examples: What did you notice in this passage? How does it make you feel? Was there anything you would ask God about that you didn’t understand or was confusing? Is God saying anything to you through the story?

Introduction and Game: “Live in the castle.” On one of the walls hang the shape of a big castle. Put up a sign that says, “Kingdom of God.”

This is a time to review of the material they learned last week. Come up with questions ahead of time. Divide the groups in teams. For each question the team should choose a representative. The focus of the class for today is “in the castle” of the kingdom of God. The children will understand that being a part of God’s kingdom is very special and as a part of God’s kingdom we want to follow God. We are a part of God’s kingdom when we put our faith in Jesus Christ. As part of the kingdom of God we live lives that reflect the values and attitudes

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of our king. The children should be reminded that there is nothing they can do to “earn” their way into God’s kingdom. It is a gift, as special gift that comes with special responsibility.

Bible Exploration: Before class, make some happy faces and glue them to popsicle or craft sticks. Open your Bible to Matthew 5:1-6 and say that Jesus talked about God’s kingdom and he taught many interesting things. He said that the people of the Kingdom of God are blessed. Who are the people in the Kingdom of God? What does the word “blessed” mean? The word blessed means something similar to joyful. Jesus said that the people in the kingdom of God are blessed; they are joyful. Give each child a happy face and explain that they should lift of the happy face every time they hear the word “blessed.”

In the Bible we find nine phrases that begin with the word, “blessed.” They include nine things that Jesus said about God’s kingdom. Let’s look at some of those phrases now. Jesus said, for example, that people of God’s kingdom are blessed when they are sad because God comforts them. I wonder, how is it possible to be blessed or joyful when you are sad? (If it’s possible share with them a story from your own life of a time when you were taken care of, even in a difficult moment.) Do you kids think that people who are part of the kingdom of God will never fall down, or get hurt or feel sad? Of course we will. We all experience pain sometimes. Many children around the world who are followers of Jesus experience very difficult situations from hunger to war. But, Jesus says that people in God’s kingdom are blessed. Because God, just like a loving mother, takes care of her children when they are hurt or sick or sad.

Jesus also said that people who are part of the Kingdom of God are blessed (lift up the happy faces) when we have humble hearts. These are difficult words to understand. (Have a big heart cut out of red paper on hand.) Show the heart to the kids and ask: what is a humble heart? Maybe Jesus was referring to himself. He lived a life of humility. How? Jesus always demonstrated love for others, even his enemies. Jesus did God’s will in all circumstances. Jesus thought of others, in their well being. Jesus had a humble heart. What would Jesus’ humble heart look like today? How would it be demonstrated in real actions?

Jesus also said that blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for doing what God asks. What does it mean to be hungry and thirsty? Have you ever been really hungry or really thirsty? Sometimes when we’re outside playing we get home with an incredible thirst and we are really hungry. What do we do when we’re thirst? We drink something, right. Well, being hungry and thirsty for the things of God is when it comes from deep, down within us. Jesus said that the people in God’s kingdom are blessed because they desire to do what God asks.

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Continue reading the other verses, asking questions as you go. Remember: we're blessed because we're part of God's kingdom.

Activity/Craft: You will find instructions for making a crown in the following pages. Or together, based on Matthew 5:1-6, start a graph that shows the responsibilities, privileges and the limitations that exist for people in God's kingdom.

Bible Verse: While the children are working on their crafts, together memorize the Bible verse: Matthew 5:6. Use some symbols that represent some of the words.

Today's GROW Adventure with God Review:

G: God's Word: What is the story? (Give children an opportunity to express their understanding of the story).

R: Relationships: Is there anything in today's Bible story that shows us how we should or shouldn't share God's love with others? (Remind children that sometimes God uses the stories of the Bible to show us how we shouldn't act toward God or others and give them a chance to consider how we might show God's love instead).

O: Outward Action: Is there anything in the Bible story that shows us how we should help or serve God or others? (Explore concrete ways the children could live this out in the coming week).

W: Worship: Is there anything in the Bible story that shows us how we should accept God's love for us and others? Ask: How do you feel about God? How would you like to respond to God? What would you like to say to God?

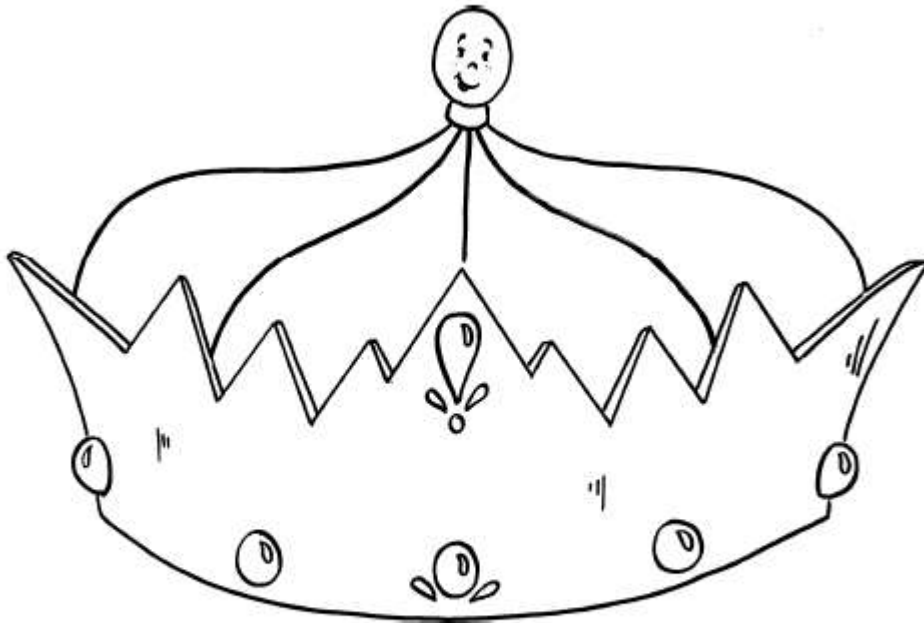
Closing Prayer: Gather children around the candle again. As you light the candle explain that the flame is something that is present in the light and the darkness. In the same way, it reminds us that God is always with us. Is there anything anyone wishes to say to God? After children have responded, close the prayer time.

Prayer Example: Lord God, we thank you that you are always with us, and always love us. It's good to be with you. Thank you for what we have learned today. Thank you for being with us and for teaching us through the Bible. Help us to remember what you have taught us today and to live it out when we leave. Amen.

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CRAFT

Color and decorate the crown.



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ILLUSTRATION

Jesus teaching about the Kingdom of God

