

November 7, 2012

Why Should I Give

2 Corinthians 8:1-17

A Heart That Pleases God

Luke 18:9-17

Jesus and the Children

Mark 10:13-16

LESSON FOCUS

"All who make themselves great will be made humble." (Luke 18:14)

"All who make themselves great will be made humble, but all who make themselves humble will be made great." (Luke 18:14)

Sermon Focus:

When we give with the right attitude we reap great blessings from God. The blessings are not financial in nature, but spiritual. When we trust God with finances and give back to him first we begin to see how He cares for us.

Lesson focus:

In Jesus' day the Pharisees were the strict Jews. They believed. They were disciplined. They took the Law seriously - so seriously, in fact, that they created a "hedge" around the law, the Oral Law, with the idea that if they kept the rules of the Oral Law (the tradition of the elders), then they wouldn't break the Mosaic Law.

We too, have our "hedge" around the law. At various times and in various churches there have been rules against many things. None of these is stipulated clearly in the scripture, but each comes from a desire to please God and avoid godless ways.

And there's nothing wrong with rules. Each family has to have family rules. Each church needs to have family rules, too. It's a requirement of any human organization. We just need to keep our rules in perspective, and realize that they are not necessarily God's rules, but derivatives of God's rules.

A problem arises, however, when we are "confident in our own righteousness" or "trust in" our own righteousness to save us and justify us before God. When we move from righteous living -- which is right -- to trusting in that righteous living to give us a standing before God, then we commit a fatal error. In that case it becomes self-righteousness.

Pharisees were members of an exacting party of the Jews who believed in strictly observing God's law. The tax collectors, on the other hand, followed another law entirely -- the law of the Roman oppressors. It was their job to collect taxes for the Romans. They worked on a tax farming system. Chief tax collectors bid on the contract for collecting taxes for a certain district. If they won the contract they would be responsible for delivering to the Romans the amount of money agreed upon. Then these chief tax collectors would employ others who resided in the various villages and sections of town to collect the tolls, taxes, and tariffs.

Tax collectors weren't just hated because they were considered turncoats and traitors. They were also considered cheaters. They would sometimes assess more taxes than was legal. If a farmer or businessman or caravaner couldn't or wouldn't pay, they would turn him over to the soldiers. Extortion and threats were part of this system. Tax collectors were considered the scum of the earth.

It isn't hard to see the contrast between them -- the righteous Pharisee and the morally bankrupt, turncoat tax collector.

This parable teaches the importance of humility before God, and the story of Jesus and the children that follows this (18:15-17) underscores this point. Faith and humility are marks of the men and women who follow Jesus. May they be earmarks of your character and mine, as well!

WELCOME ACTIVITY

Jesus Loves You Mirror

Supplies:

Paper Plates

Aluminum Foil

Circle or Oval pattern to cut foil

Black Sharpie

Print the words ***Who does Jesus love?*** around the outside edge of the paper plate.

In the center of the plate help children glue a circle or oval of aluminum foil.

As children look into their mirrors say: **Jesus loves you!**

OPENING

Song to Introduce Lesson

Sung to "Are You Sleeping?"

(Child's name) is special

(Child's name) is special

Jesus says, Jesus says

He says so in the Bible

He says so in the Bible

Yes He does, Yes He does

Then move on to the next child's name, until you have included all of the children in your song.

Let's hear about today's Bible lesson.

BIBLE STORY

Jesus and the Children

Mark 10:13-16

Open your Bible so children can see you "reading" God's Word. Show them your Bible and the words to they know what you're saying is coming from God's Word. Use Tell the Story idea below. Use The Beginners Bible page 432-437to help children see the story.

Today our story is about little children just like you! Let's see what happened.

It was a normal day for the children in the village. They would be at home spending time with their family and friends. The children had been playing together when their mother came rushing into the house.

“Hurry children, hurry! Jesus is here!” Mother said.

The children jumped to their feet when they heard this. They had heard other people talk about Jesus.

He sounded like a very special and important person. “I want Jesus to touch you and bless you. He has done many amazing things for the other children that have been sick.” She said.

They rushed out the door. They saw many other children with their mothers rushing in the same direction.

As they turned the corner they saw Him. Many people were all around Him. They started to make their way up to Jesus.

Suddenly some of the men around Jesus started to turn people away. “Go away, Jesus is too busy to see the children. Go away!” They said.

Jesus looked at those men and said, “Let the little children come to me and DO NOT stop them!” Then as if a door had been opened, all the children made their way up to Jesus. He wrapped His arms around them and prayed for them. It was a very exciting day for the children. They were able to see how much Jesus loved them. They got to see that Jesus wanted to spend time with them.

Jesus loves you boys and girls, too. He loves everyone so much that He died and came back to life so that you could spend forever with Him. He really wants to be able to spend time with us. One way to spend time with Him is to talk to Him. Another is reading the Bible. And another way we are doing right now, going to Grace Place.

Let’s sing about our story:

Sing, “Jesus loves the little children.”

**Jesus loves the little children
All the children of the world
Red and yellow, black and white
All are precious in His sight
Jesus loves the little children of the world.**

GOD’S WORD IN MY HEART

***“Let the little children come to me. Don’t keep them away.”* (Mark 10:14)**

Read this passage from your Bible. Help children learn this verse.

GAME

Go and Stop

Supplies:

Red Construction Paper

Green Construction Paper

Play a form of “Red Light, Green Light” to help the children understand the story. Bring a green piece of paper (for the green light) and a red piece of paper or a stop sign (for the red light).

Explain to the kids that they will tiptoe forward when they see the green sheet and tiptoe backwards when they see the red sheet.

Share that the children were going to Jesus (hold up a green light) when Jesus’ friends told them to go away (red light). Jesus saw this and asked them to come (green light). Play several times or take turns in letting kids hold up the sheets of paper.

Give all children a hug at the end of the game, telling them “**Jesus loves you, _____.**”

Say: **Jesus loves us very much and wants us to talk to Him anytime in prayer.**

CRAFT

Jesus Always Has Time for Me

Make a clock with day and night shapes.

Supplies:

Blue and black construction paper

Black construction paper clock hands

Red heart stickers or paper cut into hearts for ends of clock hands

Yellow paper cut into circles

Brads

Celestial shapes or star, moon, clouds and sun stickers

You can also cut these shapes from fun foam.



Write “*Jesus Always Has Time for Me!*” on each clock. Mark hours on each clock. Cut the black construction paper in half and glue the half sheets onto the blue construction.

Punch holes through the middle of the clock and the background paper, and the clock hands. Stick a brad through the hands, the clock, and the background paper, and spread it out on the back of the paper.

Children can glue or stick celestial shapes onto paper. They should glue the stars and moons to the black side representing night, and the sun and clouds to the blue side that represents day. Remind your children that **Jesus always has time for us any time of the day or night.**

SONG

Jesus is My Friend Today

To the tune London

Jesus is my friend today,
Clap your hands,
Shout hurray
Jesus is my friend today,
We love Jesus.

Jesus is my friend today,
Stomp your Feet,
Shout hurray
Jesus is my friend today,
We love Jesus.

Jesus is my friend today,
Turn around,
Shout hurray
Jesus is my friend today,
We love Jesus.

Do the motions with each verse! Have fun with it!

CLOSING ACTIVITY

Finger Play

Jesus said "come to me"
The children ran to Jesus
The people around Jesus said stop
But Jesus said "Come to Me"
And the children ran to Jesus
And Jesus loved them.

*beckon with both arms
two fingers run across palm
hold hand palm out "stop"
beckon with both arms
two fingers run across palm
arms crossed on chest*

Say: **Jesus loves each of us very much!**

Let's sing Jesus Loves Me.

Sing: Jesus Loves Me

*Jesus loves me, this I know
For the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to Him belong,
They are weak, but He is strong.*

Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
The Bible tells me so.

Pray: Dear God, thank you for loving me and taking care of me. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.