

Lesson 12: Jesus Loves Us

Key Concepts

1. Jesus welcomed people, especially children, to come to him.
2. God hears our prayers.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Examine the display table.
2. Listen to a story about a Sunday School class on the day of their priest's visit.
3. Hear a Bible passage about Jesus' love for children.
4. Recall that God hears us through our prayers.
5. Listen to and repeat the prayer "Jesus, Wisdom of the Father" by St. Nersess Shnorhali.
6. Listen to the Parable of The Lost Sheep.
7. Create a wall mural of the parable.
8. Retell the Parable of The Lost Sheep using props.
9. Sing, "Tender Shepherd."

Materials Needed

1. On the display table, place a picture of Jesus with the children (you can use the one on the cover of *Jesus*); the figures of a shepherd, a sheep, and a lamb, to be used on the mural later in the lesson (see patterns).
2. Brown wrapping paper 24"x 30" on which you have drawn a few hills. Dark brown construction paper for rocks (to be made and added by the children to the mural). After listening to the Parable of The Lost Sheep, the children will create a mural and use it to retell the story. The mural should be on a wall in the classroom when the children arrive.
3. Copy and precut one sheep, one lamb and one shepherd for each child. You may want to ask for parent help with this project. At the end of the lesson, each child should take home a lamb and a shepherd to share the story with his/her family; cotton; glue; crayons; scissors; masking tape.
4. A Children's Bible.

Procedure

1. Welcome children warmly and direct them to the display table. Encourage them to look carefully at the picture of Jesus and the children. Say: "What do you think Jesus is saying to the children?" Direct their attention to the figures of the shepherd and the lamb. Say: "We will hear a story today about this shepherd."
2. Stand to say the opening prayer. 10 min.
3. Move the children to the story corner and direct their attention to the picture of a priest with children. Read *Our Life Together*.
4. Say: "Look at Jesus with the children. How can you tell that Jesus loves them?" Read *God's Word To Us*.
5. Direct the children's attention to the picture of a child running to his grandfather. Read *We Learn About God*. Ask: "Why did Jesus want the children to come to him? When your grandmother plays a game with you, do you feel loved? When your aunt comes to spend the day just with you, do you feel loved? When you and your dad go out for breakfast on Saturday mornings, do you feel loved?" Say: "Repeat these words after me, 'God loves me and listens to my prayers.'" 5 min.

6. Snack. 10 min.
7. Ask children to find the picture of a priest writing a prayer. Read from *Our Armenian Way*. Say: “St. Nersess was a priest. He wrote prayers, and music and poetry.” Read the prayer, explaining the meaning of the words. Ask the children to repeat the prayer, line by line, after you.
8. Now say: “I am going to read you a story that Jesus told to help us understand how much God loves us. It is called The Parable (which is a story) of the The Lost Sheep.” Read *We Celebrate* . Say: “With this story, Jesus was trying to tell us that God loves us. When we are in trouble and need help, he will help us just like the shepherd who saved his lamb.” 5 min.
9. Go to the mural and say: “On the mural, I have drawn some hills. First, you are going to help me add some things to the mural. Using brown paper, cut out some rocks and glue them on the mural. With your green crayon, draw some grass on the mural.” Give out two lambs to each student and say: “We are going to glue cotton on to their bodies, but before we do that, I want you to take a black or brown crayon and color their faces and ears. Then you can glue some cotton on to the bodies. When you have finished gluing the cotton, place one of your lambs, using masking tape, somewhere on the mural.” Once the lambs are on the mural, say: “Who can tell me how the story began? (Place a shepherd on the mural.) What happened next?” Ask a child to place one of the lambs on the mural near some rocks. Say: “What was the shepherd’s problem? What did he decide to do about it? Did the story have a happy ending? At dismissal, I will give you a shepherd to take home with your lamb so that you can tell your family the story of The Lost Sheep.” 15 min.
10. Teach and sing the song, “Tender Shepherd.” 5 min.
11. Story Time: “Winds and Waves Listen” Conclude story time. “The disciples were wondering, ‘Who is this man who is ruler of all of nature?’ Sometimes we too ask questions like this, and here in Sunday School we learn some very good answers about who Jesus is.”
12. Dismissal. 10 min.

Lesson 13: We Prepare for Christmas

Key Concepts

1. *Heesnag* is the fifty-day period before Christmas.
2. Advent or *Heesnag* is a time of preparation for Christmas.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Examine the display table.
2. Listen to a story and discuss ways their families prepare for Christmas.
3. Retell the story of Mary’s visit to Elizabeth.
4. Discuss ways to prepare for Christmas.
5. Recall, with help, the meaning of Advent or *Heesnag*.
6. Make a *Heesnag* chain.
7. Recite the Advent rhyme.