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Jesus in the Temple , God With Us

Scripture: Luke 2:21-52

Theme: Jesus grew up knowing He was God's Son

PreK-K (Ages 3-5)

Free curriculum for small and rural churches

Lesson Overview

Lesson Overview: "Jesus in the Temple"

Dear helpers, today's lesson is all about how Jesus grew up with God's love, just like we do! When Jesus was just a little boy, He walked with Mary and Joseph, learning all about God's big love for Him. In the temple, Jesus listened to God's wisdom, and we can imagine His heart filled with wonder as He saw His Father's work, just like we wonder when we look at stars or flowers!

Even though Jesus was God's Son, He didn't act like He was too big to learn or love like His friends. His parents thought He was playing, but really, He was praying and learning from God all the time. This teaches us that God wants us to grow up knowing He's always with us, just like Jesus did!

When Jesus was older, His parents were sad to take Him home, but He said, "I must be about My Father's business." This reminds us that God has big plans for us too, He wants us to love and serve Him every day, just like Jesus did. No matter how small we feel, we can trust that God is always watching over us, like a loving father!

End with a simple prayer or song, like "God is with us, God is with us!" to reinforce the theme. You're wonderful helpers, let's share God's love with these little ones today!

Optional reflection: children can draw a picture of Jesus helping their friends, then share one way they can help someone else this week. This extra activity supports the lesson's theme and gives teachers a simple, low-prep option for extending the discussion.

Bible Story

When Jesus was twelve years old, His parents Mary and Joseph took Him to Jerusalem for a special trip. It was a happy time when families traveled together to worship God at the temple. But on the way home, Jesus stayed behind

in Jerusalem. Mary and Joseph did not know He had stayed. They thought He was with friends or family in the group traveling home.

When Mary and Joseph realized Jesus was missing, they were very worried. They went back to Jerusalem and looked for Him for three days. Finally, they found Him at the temple. He was sitting with the teachers, listening to them and asking them good questions. Everyone was surprised at how wise Jesus was!

Mary and Joseph were so happy to find Jesus, but they were also confused. Mary asked, "Why did you stay behind? We were so worried!" Jesus said, "I needed to be in my Father's house." Jesus knew He was God's Son, and He wanted to learn more about God. Then Jesus went home with Mary and Joseph, and He was a good and obedient son.

This story teaches us that God is always with us, even when we are young. Just like Jesus loved learning about God, we can love learning about God too. We can ask questions, listen to Bible stories, and talk to God in prayer. God loves us so much, just like He loved Jesus!

This story teaches us that God is always with us, even when we're young or far away. Just like Jesus listened in the Temple, we can ask God questions and trust Him to answer. He loves us so much! And when we learn and pray, we grow like Jesus did, strong in faith and full of wonder. What a beautiful gift from God!

Key Verse

Luke 2:49 , 'Why were you searching for me? Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?'

Jesus and His Little Friend

Once, Jesus was playing with His friends in a garden. His mom and dad asked, "Where is He?" and they looked for Him. Then Jesus said, "Why are you looking for me? I had to be with my Daddy in heaven!" His mom was so surprised, Jesus knew the biggest secret!

Jesus is so wise and kind. He loved His parents, but He also loved being near God, just like you love being with your favorite person. Jesus wanted to do what God planned for Him, even if it was different from what we do!

What's amazing? Jesus understood big things even when He was little. He knew He had to follow God's plan, even if it felt new. Maybe you can wonder: "Who knows the most amazing secrets?" God knows them all!

God loves us so much that He sent Jesus to be our friend. Just like Jesus knew to be with God, you can trust God in big and small things. He always has your back!

Activities

Activity 1:

1. Start with Wonder (3 min):
2. Say, "Let's imagine we're little like Jesus! Today we'll walk to the Temple together. What do you wonder about God's love?" Hold up a toy and ask, "Who would you bring to the Temple with you?" Write their answers on paper to collect later.
3. Story Walk (5 min):
4. Place each child's toy on a "Temple Steps" sheet (e.g., "Jesus asked big questions like 'Why are you here?'" or "God is with us, even in the Temple!"). Walk around the room, reading aloud and pausing to whisper, "What do you think Jesus saw?" Let them act it out with gestures.
5. Act It Out (4 min):
6. Gather at a spot. Pretend to be Mary, Joseph, and Jesus. Ask, "How would you feel walking to the Temple?" Then, act out Jesus' questions: "Why is this place special?" Use silly voices for fun. End with a group prayer: "God, thank You for loving us like Jesus!"

Activity 2:

1. Talk About Wonder (2 min):
2. Open the Bible to Luke 2:46, 49. Ask, "What do you think Jesus was wondering about in the Temple? How did he feel?" Hold up a crown and say, "Let's make a crown to imagine Jesus wearing!"
3. Make the Crown (6 min):
4. Cut a circle from paper (or glue a plate). Draw a "headband" line with a crayon.
5. Decorate: Let kids glue googly eyes, add stickers, or draw details. Say, "Jesus' crown was made of love, like God's love for you!"
6. Add a ribbon to hang (optional) or let them wear it for the next part.
7. Wonder Sharing Circle (5 min):
8. Place the decorated crowns on a table. Ask each child, "What question would you ask God like Jesus?" Let them share aloud or write it on a sheet. End with a prayer: "Thank You, God, for loving us like Jesus!" Hang the crowns on a "Temple Wall" (a poster board) with the title "God's Wondering Heart."
9. Both activities use repetition ("What do you wonder?"), simple materials, and focus on wonder to connect Jesus' story to children's hearts.

Discussion Questions

- Where did Jesus go with His parents when He was twelve years old?
- What did Jesus do when He stayed behind in Jerusalem?
- How do you think Mary and Joseph felt when they could not find Jesus?
- What did Jesus say when His parents found Him?
- How can we be like Jesus and learn more about God?
- What is one thing you want to ask God today?

Prayer Focus

Prayer for Wonder and Kindness (For Jesus in the Temple , God With Us)

--- *First Paragraph (Wonder and Thankfulness)* Dear God, Thank You for sending Jesus, our little Friend, into the world! He came to be with us, just like You promised. When He grew up, He walked in Your house, the Temple, where all the wise people talked about You. Help us wonder how He listened and learned! Give us big hearts like His, to love and listen too!

--- *Second Paragraph (Asking for Connection)* God, You love us so much! You made Jesus, and He loved learning about You. Help us ask big questions, like little children, just like Simeon and Anna did in the Temple. Teach us to wonder: "Who is God? How does He talk to us?" Let us find Him in our homes, in our play, and in our hearts!

--- *Third Paragraph (Praising and Trusting)* Thank You for being with us always, like Jesus was in the Temple, listening and learning. Help us trust You, just like Jesus trusted You. When we're afraid or confused, remind us: God is near! He knows our names, and He loves us even more than we love our best toys. Amen!

--- *Closing (Repeat Together)* God, we love You! We love Jesus, too! Let us listen, love, and wonder, just like You wanted us to!

>> Missions Spotlight

Among the Jewish people today, the bar/bat mitzvah (coming of age) is a central tradition. Jesus' visit to the temple at age 12 resonates with Jewish families. Many Jewish people are discovering that Jesus is the fulfillment of everything the temple represented.

-> To the Cross

At age 12, Jesus said, 'I must be in my Father's house.' He knew who He was and why He had come. Every step of His life was moving toward the cross. Jesus didn't accidentally end up on Calvary , He was born for it, lived for it, and chose it.