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Jesus Is Betrayed and Arrested

Scripture: Matthew 26:47-68, John 18:1-14

Theme: Jesus was betrayed but He went willingly

PreK-K (Ages 3-5)

Free curriculum for small and rural churches

Lesson Overview

Lesson Overview: "Jesus' Kind Love" Introduction (Wonder & Connection): "Today, we're going to learn about Jesus, who always loved us, even when he was sad. Let's sit down and see how kind He was!" The Betrayal (Gentle Explanation): "One day, someone named Judas told Jesus, 'I'll help you,' but they meant the opposite. Even when people were upset, Jesus stayed kind. Just like you, Jesus always did what was right, even when it felt hard." Jesus' Love Shines Bright (Repetition & Hope): "Jesus knew it would hurt, but He said, 'No, it's okay!' Just like how you might feel sad sometimes, but God loves you always. Let's pray: 'Thank You, Jesus, for always being kind, even when we're not!'" Closing (Encouragement & Reflection): "Remember, Jesus trusted God, even when it was hard. Today, we can be brave like Him, trusting God's love too! Let's hug each other and say, 'Jesus loves you!'" (Short, repetitive, and full of wonder, great for little hearts!) 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, lowprep option for extending the discussion.

Bible Story

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One night, Jesus sat with his friends, Peter, James, and John. He was so kind, he even washed their feet like a servant. "Follow me," he said, "and love one another like I love you." The friends were happy and close.

Then, one of them, Judas, took a kiss. "Jesus, you're the one!" Judas whispered with a kiss. Jesus knew what Judas meant to do, but he still loved him. The soldiers grabbed Jesus and put him in prison. Peter, who had said he would never deny Jesus, ran away in fear.

Jesus was arrested like a thief, but he had done no wrong. He was strong and brave, even when afraid. "Why do you look at me?" he asked. The soldiers laughed and struck him, but Jesus only said, "Father, forgive them." The story

ends with Jesus in chains, waiting for help.

Why This Matters This story shows us how Jesus is still kind and brave, even when he is hurt. He trusted his friends, even Judas, and loved everyone. Even now, Jesus is with us, watching over us. Let's always love like Jesus does! "Follow me!" he says to us, too.

Key Verse

John 18:11 , 'Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given Me?'

Jesus and the Cup of Love Once, Jesus was walking with His friends, and He looked happy. He knew He had a special job from His Father. He said to His friends, "Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?" What does that mean? It means Jesus wanted to take care of everyone, just like you and me care for our friends and family. Jesus loved us so much that He chose to help others. He didn't mind sharing His cup of kindness, just like you share your crayons or your toys with a friend. His Father gave Him a special job to do, and Jesus said, "I'll do it because I love you!" Can you imagine how kind that is? Jesus knew what would happen later, but He still trusted His Father. He trusted that His love would help all of us, even when things were hard. Just like you trust your parents to take care of you, Jesus trusted His Father to help Him with His big job. And guess what? Even though Jesus had to drink that cup later, He did it because He loved us. That's why we can trust Him too! He's always there to help and take care of us, just like our parents do. Isn't that wonderful?

Activities

Activity 1:

1. Read & Wonder Together (5 min)
2. Sit in a circle and read the story slowly, letting children ask questions. Pause at key moments: "Who came to Jesus? Why?" and "What did they do?" End by asking, "How did Jesus love even when someone betrayed him?"
3. Repeat the key phrase: "Jesus loved us so much, even when things were scary."
4. Act It Out with a Garden (5 min)
5. Gather kids in a circle like a garden. Have one "friend" (e.g., a stuffed animal or child) approach Jesus (you or another helper). Use toy swords or sticks to "arrest" them, say, "The friends wanted to protect Jesus, but it hurt."
6. Have kids whisper, "Jesus forgave them. He loved them anyway."
7. Create a "Friendship Garden" (5 min)
8. Give each child a paper plate with a drawn garden. Let them glue flowers, draw vines with pipe cleaners, and add stickers. Write on the plate: "Jesus loved us, always!"
9. Hang up the garden to remind everyone of God's love.

Activity 2:

1. Share the Story with Emotion (5 min)
2. Use a Bible with the story open (Matthew 26:47-68). Act out Jesus and the disciples hugging/praying, then suddenly, say, "Suddenly, a friend (point to someone) came and kissed Jesus. 'Betrayed!'"
3. Ask: "Did Jesus get angry? Why not?" (Point to their stones: "Jesus forgave. He always loves!")
4. The "Betrayal Game" (5 min)
5. Give each child a small bag with 3 Bible stones. Say, "Today, we'll play a game of kindness!" Let them "betray" a friend by giving them a paper "bet" (folded paper with a sad face) and saying, "I'm sorry I betrayed you!"
6. They must give back the bet and find a Bible stone to say, "Jesus forgives us!"
7. Draw a "Forgiveness Tree" (5 min)
8. On a big paper, draw a tree trunk and branches. Have kids glue their stones (or draw them) as "leaves." Write on the trunk: "Jesus forgives our 'betrayals.'" End with a hug: "Today, we choose to love like Jesus!"

9. Why These Work:

10. Short & Repeatable: Both activities use the same core idea ("Jesus forgives") in fresh ways.

11. Hands-On: Preschoolers learn by touching, acting, and creating.

12. Wonder: The craft/activity feels like magic, like God's love is tangible!

Discussion Questions

- Here are four open-ended discussion questions for preschool and kindergarten children about Jesus being betrayed and arrested, designed to spark wonder and simple reflection:
- What if you had a friend who helped someone else do something wrong, but you didn't know it?
- What would you feel inside? What would you do? Jesus loved everyone, even when some people did not love him back. How can we show love even when someone hurts us?
- Jesus asked Peter, "Will you deny me?" What do you think Peter might have felt before Jesus said that?
- How do you think Peter felt later? Sometimes, our hearts can make mistakes, just like Peter's. What do you think helps us forgive others and start again?
- Jesus was arrested in a garden, just like a big nighttime garden you might see outside. What do you think would have happened if Jesus had run away instead of staying?
- What would have been different if he had stayed quiet, even when someone tried to take him away? Jesus trusted God, even when it felt scary.
- The Bible says Jesus gave his life for us. Why do you think he did that?
- If you were kind to someone who was hurt, what would make you do it? Jesus wanted to help everyone, even when no one else wanted to help him. How can we love others the way Jesus loved us?
- These questions encourage children to explore feelings, trust, and love while keeping it simple and engaging! Would you like any adjustments to match a specific theme?

Prayer Focus

Prayer for Little Hearts (Ages 3-5) "Dear Jesus, we are so glad you loved us and walked with us. Today we wonder how you felt when someone didn't love you like you wanted. Help us to be kind, just like you always was, full of love and trust." "We pray that your gentle heart never gets lost in fear or sadness. Teach us to follow you, even when things feel confusing. Help us remember that you always stays with us, just like the wind in our hair!" "Dear Jesus, we thank you for being brave, even when it's hard. Help us to be brave too, to trust you, to love others, and to stay strong, just like you did for us." "God, we are your little children. Watch over us today, full of wonder and kindness. Amen!"

>> Missions Spotlight

In many cultures, betrayal by a friend is the deepest wound. Missionaries working in tribal areas of Papua New Guinea, where tribal betrayal has been common, share that Jesus understands betrayal, and forgave even His betrayer.

-> To the Cross

Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss. Peter drew a sword to fight. But Jesus said, 'Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and He will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?' Jesus went to the cross willingly. No one took His life , He laid it down.