

God's Great Gifts

God's Great Boat, God's Great House, God's Great Book & God's Great Son

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With each of these lessons there will be the opportunity to use material to which you likely already have access. The lesson of Noah and the Ark is familiar to the children and will be a good starting place for Monday night. The lesson on the Temple will provide an opportunity to teach the Old Testament story of the building of the Temple; some things concerning the tabernacle which preceded the Temple, and the fact that today the church is God's family today. We will cover this Tuesday night. God also has a book, the Bible. We will have a general lesson on the Bible, its components, and what this Book means to us today on Wednesday night. The last lesson, given on Thursday night will be on the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

LESSON ONE: God's Great Boat – The Ark

Introduction:

- A. There was a time when God had a boat. It was called "Noah's Ark". This was because it was a box-like boat, and the word "ark" means "a box or chest." And it was called "Noah's Ark" because a man named Noah built it.
- B. There are many lessons to be learned from a study of God's Boat, Noah's Ark. Our class will cover some of them.

Discussion:

- I. Man's sin made God sorry that He had made man, so sorry the he decided to destroy mankind.
 - A. Sin always makes God sorry. "Sin is the transgression (going beyond) of the law" (I John 3:4). God want the best for us, and has provided the proper directions for our lives. When we break His laws, it always makes Him sorry.
 - B. When we sin, and do wrong things, it makes God sorry also. We ought to try to please God, so that he will be happy with us.
 - C. This time, God decided to destroy rebellious mankind. But, as the Bible says, "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Genesis 6:8).
- II. Noah was to build an ark.
 - A. Notice that the ark had to be made "Just So". God told Noah exactly how the ark was to be made. He told him the dimension of it, the materials to use, and what he was to do with it.
 - 1. It would be good to have a physical representation to the ark, either a model, a picture, a flannel graph, etc., to show that Noah did just as God had said in building the ark. A primary lesson we want to "get across" is that when God tells us how to do something, even today we are bound to do as He has directed. This has obvious implications in our moral and spiritual lives as Christians.
 - 2. Remember that a cubit is approximately 18 inches.
 - 3. A good lesson from the specificity with which God instructed Noah to build the ark is in the fact that one type of wood was designated: gopherwood. The principle here is that by requiring the use of one wood, God excluded the use of other types of wood. Thus, when God tells us in the New Covenant that we should, for example, sing in our worship to Him, He is excluding playing an instrument, such as a piano, etc.)

- III. Not only did God save the animals that were in the ark, He also saved Noah and his family.
 - A. This flood covered all of the earth.
 - B. Since every creature that depended on dry land to live would die, God saved some of all the kinds that were here then.
 - C. We know that children are fascinated by this part of the account. It is a good place to show the relationship between God and the created world.
 - D. By looking at 1 Peter 3:20-21, we can see how that Noah, by being obedient to God, was able to save himself and his family.
 - E. If we wish to be saved one day, we will need to have the same attitude that Noah did. When God told him what to do, he did it!
- IV. Additional lessons from the account of God's Boat, Noah's Ark.
 - A. When Noah and his family reached dry ground, the first thing they did was worship God (Genesis 6:20-22). When good things happen to us, we need to remember that God is the source of all our blessings and to be sure to thank Him for helping us.
 - B. Consider the lesson of the rainbow (Genesis 9:13). God has promised never again to destroy the entire earth with a flood. When he does decide to end the world, it will be destroyed altogether and suddenly (see 2 Peter 3). But all of God's children who are living faithfully have nothing to fear of that great day.
- V. In Conclusion, some questions:
 - A. Noah lived 950 years, but he died a long, long time ago. Yet we still remember him. Can we think of any reasons we remember Noah?
 - B. Why were 7 of some animals take and 2 of the other animals taken?
 - C. How big was the ark on the inside?
 - D. What does the rainbow mean?
 - E. How did Noah know that the floodwaters were receding?
 - F. What were the names of Noah's sons?
 - G. What was the name of the place where the ark came to rest?

LESSON TWO: God's Great House – The Temple

Introduction:

- A. This lesson will deal with the places that God has "lived" as described in the Bible. We know that God is omnipresent, but this is sometimes difficult for children to understand. Indeed, it was difficult for God's ancient people to grasp also, given that they build a golden calf at the foot of Sinai, even as Moses was receiving the Law from God in its peaks.
- B. The ultimate direction of the lessons is to move from a description of the Tabernacle and the Temple, places where God resided when dealing with the Israelites, toward helping the children understand that God resides now in the church and in his children.
- C. In addition, we will want to encourage the children to understand that God is everywhere, but the fact that he is especially with His children is a wonderful blessing.

Discussion:

- I. A description of the Tabernacle and the circumstances of it coming into existence.
 - A. Exodus 35-40 has this account. The Tabernacle was in fact a very elaborate tent!
 - B. Again, mention might be made that God laid out specific instructions about what he wanted done. God has always been this way when it comes to how He wishes to be worshipped.
 - C. See Hebrews 8:5
- II. A description of the Temple and the circumstances of the building of it.
 - A. David wanted to build it, but instead Solomon built the Temple (1 Kings 5-8)
 - B. There are available a number of graphic representations of the Tabernacle and the Temple that can be used to good effect here. The children will likely be impressed with the grandeur of Solomon's Temple.
- III. God's physical Temple was attacked many times and ultimately destroyed.
 - A. God's people divided after the death of King Solomon.
 - B. A big portion of them (The Northern Kingdom of Israel) stopped going to the Temple to worship God. The Assyrians took these people away from their homes. This happened to them because they were unfaithful to God.

- C. Even the people who lived close to the Temple in the south (The Southern Kingdom of Judea) did not remain faithful to God. Because of this God allowed a man named Nebuchadnezzar, from Babylon, to come and destroy Solomon's Temple. It was totally destroyed.
 - D. Later the people of God were allowed to return from their Babylonian captivity and rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. They did so against much opposition.
 - E. When Jesus came and taught in Jerusalem He used the grounds of this Temple which had been rebuilt and modified by the Herod family of kings, thus the temple Jesus taught in was known as "Herod's Temple."
 - F. This Temple, the one in which Jesus taught was destroyed by the Roman government in A.D. 70. Only a small portion of it remains today. You may have seen observant Jews worshiping there on television. A Muslim Mosque (A place where follower of the Islamic religion worship God in futility) called "The Dome of the Rock" sits at the location of the old Temple.
- IV. Since the church was established, God is no longer associated with a particular building, much less the old Temple in Jerusalem.
- A. The church of Christ is the Temple of God today (1 Corinthians 3:16). The church was established by the preaching of the Word of God (Mathew 16:18, Mark 9:1, Acts 2).
 - B. The church is now God's people on earth. (Romans 9, Hebrews 8)
 - C. Christians are the "Temple of God" (1 Corinthians 6:19). As we become more and more like Jesus who is our example. God does not live in buildings made with the hands of men, but in the people who are His faithful children. (1 Peter 2:4, 9).
 - D. The church is the house of God today (1 Timothy 3:15). The word "house" is that passage that means family. We are God's people today, a family.
 - E. We know that we are to "walk by faith and not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7). From this we know that we do not expect to know that God is with us by our senses (see, feel, hear, or smell), but by faith. This faith comes from the testimony of the Word of God (Romans 10:17). The faithful promise of God' True Word is worth immeasurably more than the perhaps mistake feelings that some people have.

V. Conclusion

- A. The history of the Tabernacle and the Temple is an intriguing thing. From that history we learn that God expects people to do things the way He wants them done. We can also learn that when people rebel against God, God isn't pleased and will punish them. And then, we can learn that the relationship we have with God today is better than the one the ancient Jews had. We can be God's people today by obeying the Gospel and remaining faithful to Him.
- B. We also would learn that being God's people today, His Temple, so to speak, means that we have responsibilities to Him that we best not shirk. By doing our duty to God as His people, we make it possible to obtain great blessings.

LESSON THREE: God's Great Book – The Bible

Introduction:

- A. This lesson will be simple and familiar. We will be studying about the Bible in this class.
- B. Though we expect that most children in our camp will be from Christian families, there is always the possibility that some of the children will not have the kind of familiarity with the structure and organization of the Bible that will equip them to deal effectively with the Word of God.
- C. Naturally, we know that we have young kids in Mini Camp, so, as with all the lessons, we will need to adapt that we want to do to the individual's level of comprehension.
- D. For this lesson, a graphic representation of the organization of the bible will be helpful.

Discussion:

- I. Show how that the Bible is a Book made up of Books.
 - A. Some of the books are letter, some are miniature biographies, some are collections of poetry, etc.
 - B. Show how that the Bible is made up of an Old Testament and a New Testament
 - C. Show that the OT is made up of
 - 1. Historical Books (Genesis – Esther)
 - 2. Poetry (Job – Song of Solomon)
 - 3. The Prophets (Isaiah – Malachi)
 - D. Show that the NT is made up of
 - 1. The Gospels (Matthew – John)
 - 2. A History of the early Church (Acts)
 - 3. A series of letters (Romans – Jude)
 - 4. A letter with some prophecies in it (Revelation)
- II. About 40 men wrote the Bible over a period of 1600 years. God assured that it would be true with the miracle of inspiration. See 2 Timothy 3:16-17. The Scriptures are God-breathed, and thus sure to be true. God used men to write them so they are different in style and language, but His inspiration makes us sure that they are altogether true in every way.
 - A. See 2 Peter 1:20-21
 - B. See 1 Peter 1:22-25

Conclusion: We might use activities and "hands on" type things to make the kids familiar with their own Bible.

LESSON FOUR: God's Great Son --Jesus

Introduction:

- A. We have learned that God had a great boat, the Ark, and a great house, the Temple. He has a great book, the Bible. And He has a Great Son, Jesus!
- B. The wonderful thing about Jesus is that he did not stay in Heaven, but came to this earth to live, to teach, and to die for us so that we can have the forgiveness of our sins. (John 3:16, Romans 5:6-8, Ephesians 2:1-10, Acts 2:38, Mark 16:16).
- C. There were two times that Jesus was identified clearly as the Son of God. One was at the time that He was baptized by John the Baptist. The other was on the Mount of Transfiguration.

Discussion:

- I. The accounts of Jesus being identified as the Son of God at His baptism are in Matthew 3:17, Mark 1:11, and Luke 3:22.
- II. The accounts of Jesus being identified as God's Son at His transfiguration are in Matthew 17:5, Mark 9:7 and Luke 9:35. Note also 2 Peter 1:17.
- III. We know that Jesus is the Son of God because the Bible says that he is. See John 20:30-31. The following help us know this truth.
 - A. There are the prophecies about Jesus that help us see that He is God's Son. See Isaiah 53, and Micah 5:2-4.
 - B. Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:18-23 is but one example of prophecy and fulfillment concerning the birth of Jesus.
- IV. There is His life, told of in the gospels, that convinces us that He is God's Son.
 - A. He lived a sinless life (1 Peter 2:21-25).
 - B. His teaching was the same as His life's practice. He was not a hypocrite.
- V. There is His teaching that shows Him to be God's Son. Just read the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7).
- VI. His death proved that He was the Son of God, because He did not stay in the Grave!

Conclusion: Because Jesus is the Son of God, we should be thankful to the Father that He came to give Himself for us. As soon as we are old enough to know what to do, how to do it, and why we need to do it, we should obey Him and become part of His family (Hebrews 5:8-9).