



Pre-K / K

FUN + FRIENDS + FAITH



UNDERSTANDING YOUR LESSON

Imagine this for a moment: It's late Saturday night, and you've been out of the house all day. You've gone from place to place, striving to complete more than seemed possible from your calendar to-do list. You've just returned home and sat down for dinner. Suddenly you remember that tomorrow is Sunday. You quickly recall that you are scheduled to serve with preschoolers tomorrow morning, your small group is having lunch together after church, and you have yet to plan out this upcoming week—which is just as packed as your weekend has been. The thought crosses your mind: What if I just sat this one out tomorrow?

Does this scenario hit close to home?

In Ezra 3, as the work had begun to rebuild the temple, there was an eager desire among God's people, leading them to anticipate what that place would afford them upon its completion. As the people worked and waited, even in the midst of their exhaustion, they made time to worship.

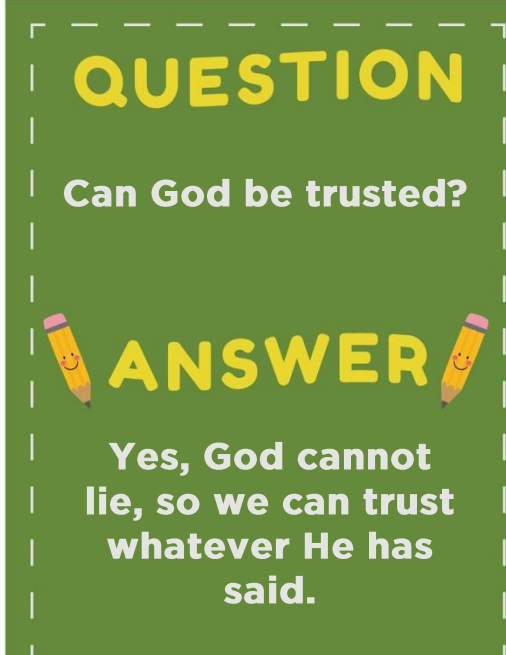
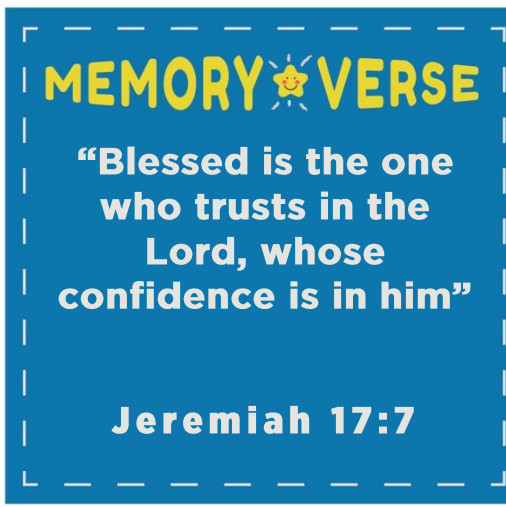
Read Ezra 3:6. Not only was the temple incomplete, but the first stage of the build was not yet done. Still, the laborers did not forget or fail to keep the purpose at the forefront of their minds. The goal was not the temple; it was the Lord.

We often find ourselves in scenarios like the one above, ready to make excuses to not do the things that matter most because we've misplaced our priorities—or at least lost sight of them in the whirlwind of life. Our decisions reflect what has the seat of greatest importance in our lives.

Hebrews 10:24-25 says, "And let us consider one another in order to provoke love and good works, not neglecting to gather together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day approaching."

Understanding Christ to be our greatest purpose and prize ought to direct our paths toward prioritizing our lives around Christ and His church. Not only will this be good for us, but it will be good for the rest of God's children as well. When we are eager to be with the Lord and His people, not only will we be productive, but we will be truly fulfilled.

PEOPLE TO KNOW Zerubbabel: grandson of King Jehoiachin. Zerubbabel returned from exile as a leader and helped rebuild the altar and lay the foundation of the temple.





BUSY HANDS

ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES

When the children arrive for first service, introduce yourself, ask them their name, welcome them to the class and invite them to play with the other children. When most kids have arrived, ask them to clean up the toys and find a seat at one of the tables to begin the class.

ACTIVITY PAGE // “Which is Bigger?” for the pre-k class, crayons, / “Keep Building” for the kindergarten classes, pencils

Pre-K Class: Give each child the “Which is Bigger?” activity page and place the crayons on the tables. Instruct the children to use a crayon and to circle the bigger tool in each pair. After a few minutes, review the answers with the children. ASK: What are these tools and what could they be used for? Discuss.

SAY: Yes, these tools could be used for building things. In today’s lesson we will learn that God’s people rebuilt the temple so they would have a place to worship God. Years later, God sent His Son, Jesus, to be with His people on earth.

Kindergarten Class: Give each child an activity page and a pencil. Lead the children to complete “Keep Building” on the activity page. Instruct the children to use the pictures to learn the code then fill in the blanks with the matching letter. After a few minutes, review the answer with the kids.

SAY: In today’s activity page you tried to figure out the message God sent to His people. God wanted His people to remember that He was with them. Where are some places that you go? [Allow responses.] God is also with you wherever you go!

BUILD WITH PLAY-DOH // Play-Doh for each child

Encourage the children to use the Play-Doh to build a structure. They could work together to build a palace, a house, or a church. Each child could also build one of the suggestions then place them together in the middle of their table to create a little town. Once children are finished with their creation, invite volunteers to tell the class what they built with their Play-Doh.

SAY: You did a great job using your hands to build with the play dough. In today’s Bible story, God’s people were continuing to work with their hands to rebuild God’s temple. Do you think they finished the temple?

INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY // A real or toy hammer

Show the hammer to the children. SAY: What is this? [Allow responses.] Yes, that’s right, it’s a hammer! And what do we use a hammer for? [Allow responses.] We can use a hammer to nail, fix, or even to build things. In today’s story we will read about God’s people and how they rebuilt the temple.



ACTIVE MINDS

FOCUS ON GOD'S WORD

THE PEOPLE REBUILT THE TEMPLE // Bookmark, Bible, small group timeline, Bible story picture poster, story video: The People Rebuilt the Temple

Place a bookmark at Ezra 2-6 in your Bible. Invite a child to open it. Reverently display the open Bible. SAY: The Bible is God's Word and shares with us the history of God's people and how He sent Jesus to save humans from sin. God has shared His Word with us because He loves us and wants us to know Him. God's Word is true. Today's Bible story comes from the Book of Ezra. Point to the third Bible story picture on the small group timeline and show the Bible story picture poster. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Tell the following Bible story or show the story video. You may use the underlined version of the Bible story for younger preschoolers. For active listening, tell the children to pretend to hammer as if they are helping to build the temple whenever the word "temple" is said.

THE PEOPLE REBUILT THE TEMPLE

A man named Zerubbabel (zuh RUHB uh buhl) led God's people back home to start rebuilding God's temple. First, the priests made the altar and gave offerings to God. Then workers made the foundation, or the bottom, of the temple. When the foundation was complete, the people shouted and sang songs to God. "God is good! He is loving and always will be!" they said.

Not everyone was happy though. Some of the older people remembered what the first temple had looked like long ago, before it had been knocked down. The people were sad, and they cried loudly.

The people kept working, but after a while, their neighbors said, "Stop building the temple!" So God's people stopped. Building the temple was hard. Maybe God doesn't want us to build it, they thought. But God did want His people to finish the temple. God sent prophets to talk to the people. The prophets said, "Keep building. God is with you." So God's people started to work on the temple again.

At this time, King Darius (duh RIGH uhs) ruled over the land where God's people lived. Darius put a helper in charge of the land where God's people lived.

The king's helper saw God's people working. He asked their leader Zerubbabel, "Do you have permission to rebuild this temple?"

Continue



ACTIVE MINDS

FOCUS ON GOD'S WORD

“Yes,” said Zerubbabel. The helper sent a letter to King Darius to find out if Zerubbabel was telling the truth. The letter to the king said this: “Dear King Darius, the people here are working hard to build the *temple* to their God. They said King Cyrus said they could build. Is that true?”

King Cyrus had been king before Darius. When a king made an important decision, someone wrote it down on a scroll. So Darius looked for the old scroll. His servants found it! The scroll said, “Let God’s people rebuild the *temple*.” God’s people had told the truth!

So King Darius wrote a letter back to his helper. He said, “Do not bother the workers at the *temple* or try to stop them. Give them anything they need.” The king’s helper obeyed King Darius’s order. God’s people kept building, and soon the *temple* was finished! The people celebrated the Passover and thanked God.

REVIEW AND PRAY // Tool cards for each child (several kinds of tools), small plastic clear bin

Show children the small clear bin with the various tool cards. Give each child a card. Ask preschoolers to tell you something they remember from the Bible story *and/or* answer questions to review the Bible story. Instruct each child to place his tool card back in the bin as he answers a question or says something he remembers from the Bible story.

Possible questions: Who led God’s people to start rebuilding the temple? What did the people do when the foundation was complete? Who did God send to talk to the people? Who told the people to stop building? What did the prophets tell the people to do? Who was the king of Persia? Did the people have permission to rebuild the temple? When the temple was finished, what did the people do?

SAY: Zerubbabel led God’s people to start rebuilding God’s temple. God’s people rebuilt the temple so that they would have a place to worship God. Years later, God sent His Son, Jesus, to be with His people on earth.

PRAY: Invite preschoolers to close their eyes and think about God as they talk with Him. You may also pray for the missionary families at this time. SAY: Father, thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to save us. Because of Jesus we don’t need a temple to worship You. Thank You for being with us wherever we go. Amen.

KEY PASSAGE AND BIG PICTURE QUESTION // Pre-K: key passage phrase marker, Bible, construction hats, disinfecting wipes Kindergarten: key passage phrase marker, key passage poster, Bible, All: key passage song: “The Person Who Trusts in the Lord” on the USB, big picture question poster

Continue



OPEN HEARTS

LIFE APPLICATION & SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Pre-K Class: Place the key passage phrase marker in the Bible at Jeremiah 17:7. (The person who trusts in the Lord is blessed.) Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage, remove the marker, and hand it to you. Place a construction hat on your head as you say the verse. Give each child a chance to wear a hat as he says the phrase. If there are several children who want to say the verse together, use all the hats at the same time. (Note: Clean the inside of hat with disinfecting wipes in between preschoolers.)

SAY: Our key passage phrase says, *'The person who trusts in the Lord is blessed.'* God's sent prophets to talk to His people and to tell them to start building the temple. God's people trusted that He was with them as they rebuilt the temple. We can trust God too.

Kindergarten Classes: Place the key passage marker at Jeremiah 17:7. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage aloud. Use the poster if it is helpful for the children. Invite children to take turns repeating key passage phrase while standing on one foot.

SAY: God's people had to trust God and His message from the prophets as they set out to rebuild the temple. It took time and they faced challenges, but God never failed. God blessed His people for putting their confidence in Him.

All Classes: Sing the key passage song, "The Person Who Trusts in the Lord (Jeremiah 17:7)." You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

LEARN THE BIG PICTURE QUESTION **SAY:** Can God be trusted? Yes, God cannot lie, so we can trust whatever He has said. God's people had to learn to trust the Lord after 70 years away from their home and waiting years to rebuild the temple. God proved to them He can be trusted, and they completed building the temple. (You may use the big picture question poster if it is helpful to the children.)

FIND THE SCROLL // Small scroll with "Let God's people rebuild the temple" written on it

Gather the children in a group on the floor. Ask a child to come forward and turn his back to the class. Tell all of the children to put their hands behind their backs. Give the scroll to one of the children. Tell the child at the front to face the class and guess who is holding the scroll behind their back. When guessed correctly, lead the child who was holding the scroll to become the guesser. Continue play, allowing each child to have a turn to guess who is holding the scroll.

SAY: Was it hard figuring out who had the scroll? King Darius' servants found the scroll that King Cyrus made that declared that God's people could rebuild the temple. Let's open this scroll and see what it says! [Open the scroll and read it.] Continue



EXTRA IDEAS

When King Darius read this message, he told his servants to let the people build the temple and to give them anything they needed. God's people rebuilt the temple to have a place to worship God. God sent Jesus to be with His people on earth. Jesus gave us something way better than a temple, He gave us Himself!

SING A SONG // None

Sing the song below to the familiar tune of "Bingo." Clap on each syllable of morning, noon, and night:

"I can trust the Lord, my God, each and every day.
Morning, noon, and night. Morning, noon, and night.
Morning, noon, and night.
Yes, I can trust the Lord."

REMINDERS: The VIP meeting will be 8:30-8:40 in the Puddle Room. Attend for: Vision/Information/Prayer. Pick up your supply bin before going to class.

REVIEW the items in your bin, place the chairs around the tables, and be ready to greet the parents and children at the door.

FOLLOW protocol for sanitizing hands and cleaning large surfaces.