

# 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Epiphany

Jan. 23, 2023–  
Jan. 29, 2023  
Pre-K  
Message

**SCRIPTURE:** 1 Corinthians 1:26–31

**THEME:** Trust in God's Strength

**SONG:** CW21 617/ CW93 334 – Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow

**VISUAL:** A big, complex book; a magazine with a celebrity picture on the cover; a paper crown

## OBJECT LESSON

Show the book, and read a difficult passage from it. Ask if the children are wise enough yet to read that book and explain what it means.

Show the magazine. Ask if any of the children are so famous that they have had their picture on a magazine cover selling millions of copies all around the country. Explain that someone that famous would be influential, which means people would listen to that person.

Show the crown. Ask if any of the children are living in a castle because they were born into a family of kings and queens.

## BIBLE TRUTH

Read verse 26. Explain that Paul was telling the people long ago that most of them weren't very wise, or influential, or born into royal families. Read verse 27. Point out that God still chose those people to be in his family. God chose people who were weak and lowly (not rich and famous) to have faith in Jesus.

Read verses 28–31. Ask whether the people could not boast, or brag, that they were in God's family because they deserved it. Point out that they could only boast about how wonderful God is, because he gave them faith in Jesus.

## DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

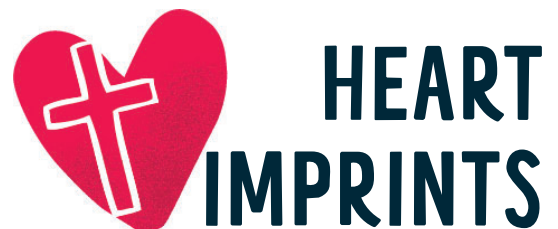
Ask:

- Who gave you faith in Jesus and made you part of God's family?
- Did God (the Holy Spirit) give you faith because you are a wise or famous or part of a king's family?
- Are we telling the truth if we brag to others that we're great?
- Are we telling the truth if we tell everyone that God is great?

Point out that God is so great that we can trust him to take us to heaven because Jesus has saved us. Encourage the children to thank God for giving them faith and trust God's strength to forgive them and help them in time of need and weakness.

## PRAYER

Dear God, thank you for giving me faith in Jesus. I know that it wasn't because I'm great, but because you are great. Help me trust in you. Amen.



# 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Epiphany

Jan. 30, 2023–  
Feb. 5, 2023

Pre-K  
Message

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 5:13–16

**THEME:** You Are . . . So Be

**SONG:** CW21 713 I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light  
(Alternative children’s song: This Little Light of Mine)

**VISUAL:** Two shakers of salt; two small bowls of popcorn, one with salt, and one without; a working flashlight; a dark, solid wastebasket or bucket that will fit over the flashlight

## OBJECT LESSON

Place a salt shaker next to each bowl of popcorn. Have volunteers taste each of the popcorns—which tastes better? Point out that one of them doesn’t taste as good because it has no salt. If this salt for that popcorn got so old that it didn’t work, we should throw it away.

Now ask the children to pretend that it is night, and there is a power outage. Everything is dark, so you are going to turn on a flashlight to help them see. Turn on the flashlight, show it to the children, and then set it down and cover it with the wastebasket or bucket. Listen to their reactions, and ask why that was a silly thing to do.

## BIBLE TRUTH

Point out that in today’s Bible lesson, Jesus compares his followers to salt and light.

Read verse 13. Ask how salt changes food—does it usually make food taste better or worse? If it doesn’t make food taste better, what should we do with it? Jesus has made us his followers. He says that his followers are like salt. Jesus’ followers are like salt because they can make things better. They can be kind and helpful to other people. This is a way Jesus’ followers share his love in the world.

Read verses 14–15. Ask what people do with lights—do they cover them up, or let them shine and make things brighter? Jesus has made us light by bringing us to faith. He encourages us to be like light. Jesus’ followers are like light because they can make things brighter in this world. They can be kind and helpful to other people. Then people will see how God is loving, and they will praise God the Father in heaven.

## DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

Ask the children to listen to the following examples. They should put their thumbs up in front of them if they are hearing an example of a way to be good salt and to let their lights shine. They should hide their thumbs behind their backs when they hear an example of being bad salt and covering up their lights:

- You see someone fall down on the playground and help them get back up.
- You grab a ball away from someone and throw it at them.
- You tell someone that the shirt they are wearing looks bad.
- You ask a child on the playground who is all alone to play with you.
- You help your mom or dad clean up the living room.
- You yell at your mom and dad because they won’t let you stay up late.
- You tell someone who is crying that Jesus loves them.

Encourage the children to show how much they love Jesus by being good salt and bright lights for him in everything they do.

## PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank you for loving me and saving me. I want to be good salt and a bright light for you. Help me be kind and loving to everyone around me. Amen.



# HEART IMPRINTS

# 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Epiphany

Feb. 6, 2023–  
Feb. 12, 2023  
Pre-K  
Message

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 5:21–24

**THEME:** Live a Holy Life

**SONG:** CW21 696/ CW93 469 – Take My Life and Let It Be, st. 1

**VISUAL:** Offering basket full of money and empty offering basket; two children who can pretend they are angry at each other and then act as good friends

## OBJECT LESSON

Show the two offering baskets. Ask which one would be more helpful for doing God's work. Pick two volunteers who would be good at role-playing to come to the front. Ask them to look at each other in a mean, angry way. Then ask them to show how they would look together if they are good friends. Ask which way God likes better—us being angry at each other, or being good, kind friends?

Now have one of the children hold the full offering basket while making an angry face. Ask the other child to hold the empty offering basket while making a happy face. Tell the children that as they listen to the Bible today, they should think about what is most important to God: a big offering in church, even if his followers are angry at each other; or no offering, but his followers are kind and forgiving toward one another. (Have the volunteers remain up front.)

## BIBLE TRUTH

Read verses 21–22. Explain that in these verses, a “brother or sister” doesn't mean your parents' other child, but another person who believes in Jesus—another Christian. Does it make God happy when Christians stay angry with each other and call each other names?

Read verses 23–24. Have the volunteers make their angry and happy faces again while holding their offering baskets. Ask which is more important to God: the big offering (point to the angry child with the full basket) or his Christians being kind and forgiving (point to the happy child with the empty basket). Explain that God wants his people, first of all, to be kind and forgiving to each other. (Have the angry child look happy again.) Then they can show their love for God by giving him offerings. (Have the happy child with

the full plate bring that plate over by the other child. Afterward, they can return to their seats.)

## DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

Explain that Jesus tells us to live a holy life. Living a holy life means doing what God says. Ask the children to name some ways that they can live a holy life. Encourage them to always be kind and caring toward each other, because that is important to God.

## PRAYER

Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to lead a holy life on earth for me. Help me live a holy life too. When I am angry with someone, lead me to forgive them, just as you have forgiven me, and to be kind to them, as you are kind to me. Amen.



# HEART IMPRINTS

# 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Epiphany

Feb. 13, 2023–  
Feb. 19, 2023  
Pre-K  
Message

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 5:43–45  
**THEME:** Love Your Enemies

**SONG:** CW21 726/ CW93 490 – Love in Christ Is Strong and Living, st. 1 (Optional children’s song: Love, Love, Love, Love)

**VISUAL:** A sheet of paper for each child with a smiley face drawn on one side and an angry face on the other; two toys

## OBJECT LESSON

Ask the questions that follow. Have the children hold up their papers with the picture for their answer facing you each time.

- If one of the other children here shares with you, how will you feel?
- (Show a toy.) What if they grab your toy out of your hands without asking?
- What if they kick you or hit you?
- Have the children set their papers down. Have them answer these questions aloud:
- If someone grabs your toy, what might you want to do because you’re angry?
- What might you want to do to someone who kicks or hits you?

Explain that when someone is mean to us, we might think of that person as our enemy. In today’s Bible reading, Jesus tells us how to treat our enemies.

## BIBLE TRUTH

Read the passage. Ask whom the people of the world say we should love: our neighbors, or our enemies? Point out that people in the world will tell us to hate people who are unkind to us—to stop talking to them or get even with them. But Jesus says just the opposite. Instead of hating our enemies, what are we to do? He wants us to love our enemies and even pray for them! We are to love everyone, just as God loves everyone and sends sun and rain for everyone.

## DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

Jesus tells us to do things differently than what most people expect. Let’s go back to the example of someone grabbing your toy away from you. (Show the toy again.) You said that if that happened, you would be tempted to (fill in what the children said). Do you know what Jesus would say to do? (Pull out a second toy.) He would say to let that person have the toy, and even offer them another toy to play with as well!

This sounds really hard, doesn’t it? If it’s hard to imagine being nice to someone who is mean to you, try thinking about Jesus. Do we sometimes act like his enemies by doing bad things? Does he get even with us, or does he love us and pray for us? We want to show love to our enemies because Jesus has shown so much love to us!

Pick up your papers again. Show me how we normally feel when our enemies hurt us (the angry face). Now show me the face that best matches how God wants us to treat our enemies. Let’s pray for Jesus to help us love our enemies!

## PRAYER

Dear Jesus, sometimes it’s so hard to be nice to people who aren’t nice to me! Help me love my enemies and pray for them, just as you have always loved me and prayed for me. Amen.

