

Lesson #3-24

Jesus Preaches Repentance

Luke 13:1-9, 31-35



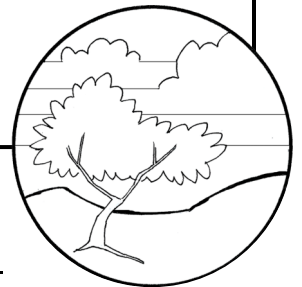
Key Verse:

“How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!”

Luke 13:34

The Point:

Suffering is not always caused by our sin, but everyone should repent.



Introduction

People told Jesus of the murder of some Galileans. Jesus taught that when people died, it was not a punishment for sin. However, he called everyone to repentance anyway. Jesus then tells a parable of a fig tree that does not bear fruit. When the owner of the tree wants to cut it down, the gardener convinces him to leave it for one final year.

Following this, some Pharisees warn Jesus that King Herod is trying to kill him. Jesus rejects this warning, stating that he will not die here, but in Jerusalem. Jesus mourns over Jerusalem's lack of openness and willingness to hear and live out his teachings.

The Point

Suffering is not always caused by our sin, but everyone should repent. Today's story includes two examples of people dying, one group was murdered and the second died in an accident. We can want the world to be easy to understand; those who suffer evil deserve it, and those who escape punishment do not need to repent. But instead, Jesus says, we have to practice radical love for everyone. Suffering should be a cause for compassion and self-reflection, not pride that we somehow escaped judgment.

Activities a la Carte

Activities

Supplies

Introduction

The Meaning of Repentance

Learn about repentance.

10 min.

- † Clear glass
- † Can of cola
- † Buttons

Learning the Story

Jesus Preaches Repentance

Engage in the story through art.

15 min.

- † Bibles
- † Paper
- † Markers or crayons
- † Tape

Activities

Repent and Return

Consider how we might repent.

10 min.

- † Bowls
- † Sand
- † Optional: Soft instrumental music, music player

Activities a la Carte

Activities

Supplies

Activities

PrayerWall

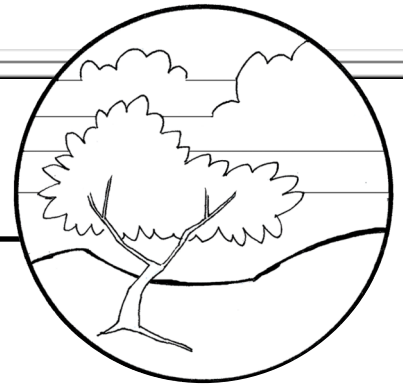
Create a picture wall.

15 min.

- † Newspapers
- † Magazines
- † Scissors
- † Glue or tape
- † Markers
- † Mural paper or poster board
- † Optional: Internet-connected devices and printer

Prayer

God's Story @ Home



Introduction (10 minutes)

The Meaning of Repentance

Learn about repentance.

Supplies:

- † Clear glass
- † Can of cola
- † Buttons

Preparation:

1. You may want to try this experiment beforehand so you are familiar with the process and timing

Instructions:

1. Place a clear glass in a location where everyone can see it. Fill the glass with cola.
2. Hold up a couple of buttons. **Do you think you will be able to see these buttons if I drop them in my glass of cola?**
3. Drop the buttons into the glass of cola. Tell everyone to continue watching the glass until you see the buttons rise to the top, which may take some time.
4. **Did the buttons stay hidden for very long?** [No.] **What happened to them?** [They floated to the top and you could see them.]
5. **Has there ever been a time in your life when you have done something wrong and tried to hide it, maybe by blaming another person? What happened?**
6. **We are not perfect. Sometimes we do things that are wrong, and we try to blame others for our wrong actions. However, we cannot keep these things hidden for very long. Like the buttons, these actions float to the surface for everyone to see. To repent means to admit and apologize for these wrongdoings. When we repent, we tell God (or others) about the wrong things we have done and instead begin to follow God's ways.**

Learning the Story (15 minutes)

Jesus Preaches Repentance

Engage in the story through art.

Supplies:

- † Bibles
- † Paper
- † Markers or crayons
- † Tape

Instructions:

1. **We are going to make special reminders of today's story. First, we are going to read through the story together. Then everyone is going to create a symbol that reminds them of the story. We will hang up these symbols so that we can remember what we learned today.**
2. Make sure each person has a Bible. Invite someone to read Luke 13:1-5.
 - a. **What does Jesus tell the people who come to him that they need to do?** *[He tells them that they need to repent.]*
 - b. **Why do you think Jesus wants people to repent?** *[He wants us to live God's way.]*
3. Ask someone else to read verses 6-9.
 - a. **What is wrong with the fig tree?** *[It is unable to produce fruit.]*
 - b. **How does the gardener react when the tree's owner wants to cut it down?** *[The gardener asks the man to let the tree go for one year, and only cut it down after one year if it does not produce any fruit.]*
 - c. **Why do you think Jesus gives the fig tree another year to bear fruit?** *[He is showing love and grace.]*
 - d. **Why do you think Jesus told this parable?** *[It reminds us that we should repent.]*
 - e. **What do you think the fig tree represents?** *[The tree represents us, humans.]*
4. Ask another person to read verses 31-35.
 - a. **What is a lament?** *[When a person talks about grief or sorrow.]*
 - b. **Why does Jesus lament?** *[The people of Jerusalem have rejected him and his teachings.]*
 - c. **What does Jesus say happens to prophets in Jerusalem?** *[They are killed.]*



5. Give each person a sheet of paper and some markers or crayons. **In a moment, we are each going to create a symbol that reminds us of this story and what it means. You can draw a scene from the story or a picture of a person or object that stands out to you, or something else that reminds you about the story. Be creative!**
6. Give everyone time to create. After they have finished their symbols, invite each person to share what they have drawn and how it relates to the story.
7. Hang the symbols in a place where everyone can see them.



Activity (10 minutes)

Repent and Return

Consider how we might repent.

Supplies:

- † Bowls
- † Sand
- † Optional: Soft instrumental music, music player

Preparation:

1. Find bowls (or shallow dishes) and fill them with sand.

Instructions:

1. If you are using music, begin playing it softly.
2. **Right now we are in a season of the church year called Lent. Traditionally, Lent is a time for us to think about how we relate to God and to other people and to practice repentance. Let's take a moment to practice our own repentance.**
3. Invite each person to take a bowl or dish of sand.
4. Ask everyone to think about a time that they may have placed blame on another person, or a time when they have not loved others.
5. Instruct them to either write or draw a symbol of this time in the sand.
6. **Today we are repenting by writing in the sand. We are recognizing our wrongdoings, and admitting them to ourselves and to God.**
7. Give everyone an opportunity to write. After they have written in the sand, pray a prayer of confession. Use the following or pray your own prayer: **God, we know that we are not perfect. We also know that you always love us. We thank you for giving us the courage to admit these wrongs, and we ask for your forgiveness. Amen.**
8. **Do you think that we should leave these wrongdoings in the sand?**
9. **Let's wipe away our writing in the sand as a symbol of us admitting our wrongdoings and giving them to God.**
10. Invite everyone to wipe away their writing in the sand.
11. **God loves you, and will always forgive you. Amen.**



Activity (15 minutes)

Prayer Wall

Create a picture wall.

Supplies:

- † Newspapers
- † Magazines
- † Scissors
- † Glue or tape
- † Markers
- † Mural paper or poster board
- † Optional: Internet-connected devices and printer

Instructions:

1. **In coming to earth as Jesus, God wanted to show the world that suffering is not terrifying. We do not have to run away from it. In fact, God is with us in suffering—and we, as followers of Jesus, are called to enter into it with those who suffer, too.**
2. **Search this newspaper for articles about suffering and carefully cut them out.**
3. Lay the mural paper or poster board on a large table or on the floor so that people can get to it. Ask for a volunteer: **Who can write “WE PRAY FOR...” in big letters across the top?**
4. **Bring your articles to the poster, and arrange them together. For articles found online, print or write a bit about them. Glue or tape your articles to the poster, making sure everyone has room.**
5. **Now, let's add some color and hope to our prayer poster. You can add magazine photos, drawings, words, lyrics, or whatever else inspires you.**
6. Afterward, say: **The youngest member of the family can, if they want, have their hand traced onto the poster.** Help them put their hand down and have someone trace the outline. You may have the outline go over images, articles, or words.
7. **This prayer poster visually “puts our hands to work” for the care of the world. When you see it, remember the strangers we do not know who still very much need our love and compassion.**



Prayer

Reflect together on the following:

- **What do you think Jesus was trying to tell everyone in the stories today?**
- **What are things we can do when we see people hurting?**
- **Can you think of a time when you have made the wrong decision and hurt someone? Would you like to ask for forgiveness? Let's all ask for forgiveness together.**

Invite everyone to stand and mirror your actions:

Holy God, (stretching left hand up)

You give the growth. (stretching right hand up)

You see the world (extending both hands to the side)

And long for us to live in love. (wrap arms around self)

Forgive us when we stumble (bow head, with hands in prayer position at chest)

And help us walk in the way of Jesus. (head up, step forward, hands out)

Amen.

If you have the “Living the Word: Sharing God’s Story @ Home” sheet, remember to use it throughout the week as a part of your family devotions!