



GRACE & HUMILITY

Life & Ministry of Jesus • U9#4 1st-3rd Grade • April 21, 2024

Concept

God gives grace to the humble.

Goal

Students will learn the difference between pride and humility.

Passage

Matthew 26:31-35, 69-75; John 21:15-17

Key Verse: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." 1 Peter 5:5b

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Learning Activity #2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Bible – NLT</i><i>Beard or mustache</i><i>Head covering</i> <p>Learning Activity #3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">"Penny" candy, 1/child	<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Round head non-spring clothespins, 4/studentGreen chenille stems, 3/studentWhite chenille stems, 2/studentString, 18"/studentGRACE strip, 1/studentMarkersScissors

*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

Background Information/Teacher Helps

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In Matthew 16:18-19, right after Peter's great confession that Jesus was actually the Christ, Jesus said, "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven..." Jesus could say these things of the man who would prove to be so faithless because He knew the transformation that would be accomplished in Peter through the work of the Holy Spirit.

After Jesus rose from the dead, Peter seemed to be quite a different man. He displayed the same besetting sins, but his overwhelming self-confidence had been forever tempered by the grace of Christ. The book of Acts is filled with a new Peter, controlled by God's Spirit rather than his own. He was still bold, yet humble. His spiritual insight was clear, powerful and consistent rather than sporadic. Peter demonstrated a willingness to suffer disapproval, bodily harm, and even death for the sake of his belief in Christ. (See Acts 2:14f; 3; 4:1-22; 5:17-42.)

How did this transformation occur?

Turning to Peter, with pointed though most gentle allusion to the danger of self-confidence . . . He asked: 'Simon, son of John'--as it were with fullest reference to what he was naturally--'lovest thou Me more than these?' Peter understood it all. No longer with confidence in self, avoiding the former reference to the others, and even with marked choice of a different word to express his affection from that which the Saviour had used, he replied. . . : 'Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee.'²

"I know of no more poignant contrast between two human destinies than that of Peter and Judas. Both assumed leadership within the group of Jesus' disciples. Both saw and heard wondrous things. Both went through the same dithery cycle of hope, fear, and disillusionment. As the stakes increased, both denied their Master. There, the similarity breaks off. Judas, remorseful but apparently unrepentant, accepted the logical consequences of his deed, took his own life, and went down as the greatest traitor in history. He died unwilling to receive what Jesus had come to offer him. Peter, humiliated but still open to Jesus' message of grace and forgiveness, went on to lead a revival in Jerusalem and did not stop until he had reached Rome."³

Set Up

Incorporation Lg. Group

The day of class: Cut the white chenille stems in half.

Activity Stations:

- **Craft – Grace Mobile [1]**

- **Instructions:** Give each student a key verse strip, 4 clothespins, 4 white chenille stem halves, 3 whole green chenille stems and an 18" length of string. With one long green chenille stem, form a circle and twist ends together to secure. To form the hanger, lay the two remaining green chenille stems in a cross on top of the circle. Secure each of the four ends to the circle equidistant from each other. Tie one end of the 18" string around the cross point of the two chenille stems and knot to secure. Cut around box of key verse strip, tape to the top of the long string and make a loop at the top of the long string to hang the mobile. Make faces on the heads of the clothespins. Twist a short piece of white chenille stem around each clothespin to make arms. Pull ends tightly. Attach the chenille "arms" of the clothespin people evenly around the circle. Hold the mobile up by the string so that the crossed green chenille stems stretch to a peak. Hang from the string.
- As the students work, discuss the many opportunities we have to get to know and serve other people. We'll learn today about Peter who was very proud, but became humble because he accepted God's grace and forgiveness. When he was proud he thought he was better than other people, but when he was humble he served them.

[1] Adapted from "Friends-Around-the-World Mobile," Celebrating Our Families Crafts for Kids, Linda Crisp, 1995, Gospel Light, p. 49.

Introduction Lg. Group

You made a craft today to remind you of a humble and proud person. What does it mean to be humble? (It means to have an attitude that others are equal, not better or worse than you.) If you are humble, you have the right opinion of yourself; you can admit when you are wrong. You can sincerely apologize to another person, and you can be happy for another person when they do well. What does it mean to be proud? (You think you are better or more deserving than another person.) I am going to read something a proud person might say. I would like you to think of a humble way to respond instead. For instance, "Mom, you've got it all wrong!" (Say the phrase in a forceful way.) What might be a better way to say that? ("Is it possible you're making a mistake, Mom?") Let's see how you do on some of these . . .

Introduction Continued

PROUD	HUMBLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You aren't my mom. I don't have to obey you. • Give me a cookie. • You're dumb. You never do a good job in math. • Hey, four eyes! You look funny in those glasses. • Ha! You always strike out. Why don't you switch to the other team? We don't want you on this team. • Do it yourself! I'm too busy to help you. • I didn't either get it wrong. I was just seeing if you were paying attention. • It's not fair. Mom and Dad got you a new bike, but they didn't get me one. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm so sorry I disobeyed. • May I please have a cookie? • May I help you with your math problem? • How come you have to wear glasses? • Nice try! You'll do better next time. • Here! Let me help you. • I was wrong, please forgive me. • I am so happy that you got a new bike.

Transition

Good job. Now we are going to see a skit about a girl named Lucy. She has a hard lesson to learn because she is very proud. Watch carefully to see what happened because she was proud.

Learning Activity #1 Lg. Group

Drama #1

"LUCY LEARNS A LESSON" skit performed by the Drama Team.

Transition

Let's go back to our classroom and learn about one of Jesus' disciples who thought he would always do the right thing.

Lesson Lg. Group

Lucy learned that even she did not always do the right thing. When she was tempted to look at the tests she did not resist the temptation but did exactly what she told Mr. Fox she would not do. How do you think Lucy felt when Mr. Fox caught her looking at the test? (She felt ashamed, guilty, like a failure.) Should she have felt this way? (YES.) She told Mr. Fox that he could count on her and she probably really believed that she wouldn't peek. Why do you think she peeked when she was so sure she wouldn't? She was proud.

Lesson Continued

She thought she was better than the other kids and could keep her promise even though the others couldn't. Because she was proud, Lucy was a bragger. Who knows what bragging means? (Bragging is when you think you're really great & tell everyone.)

Lucy reminds me of Peter, who was a friend of Jesus. Peter was a big bragger. Sometimes he really did say and do great things, but his problem was that he was proud. He thought he would always do the right thing and he trusted himself too much. The night before Jesus died, Jesus told His disciples that they would all turn away from Him. He said they would all deny Him. What do you think Peter said? "Not ME, Lord. I won't leave you, even if I have to die for you!" He bragged about how sure he was that he would stand by Jesus no matter what, even though the others wouldn't. He was kind of like Lucy in the skit. Because he was proud, he believed he could trust himself not to mess up. But Jesus knew better. He said to Peter, "Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, Peter—this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny three times that you even know Me" (Matthew 26:34.) And that is exactly what Peter did.

While Jesus stood there, Peter denied Him 3 times. Peter had told Jesus he would die for Him but he got so scared that he wasn't even willing to say he knew Jesus, let alone die for Him. How do you think Peter felt when he heard that rooster crow? (He probably felt ashamed, guilty, like a failure.) The Bible tells us that he wept bitterly. He believed that he was a terrible failure and felt very guilty that he had denied Jesus. He may have even believed that his sin could never be forgiven, especially because he had been so proud.

Let's see what happened the first time that Peter saw Jesus after Jesus rose from the dead.

Drama#2

Simple re-enactment of John 21:1-13, performed by teachers.

Instructions: Assign a teacher to each of three parts (Jesus, Peter, and narrator). Ask students to volunteer being the disciples: Thomas, Nathanael, James & John (the sons of Zebedee), and two other disciples. Jesus and Peter will wear a beard or mustache and a head covering. Peter's body language should be contrite and a bit downcast, but not alienated. Read the passage from the provided Bible.

Debrief

What did Peter do when he saw Jesus? (He jumped out of the boat into the water to get to Jesus.)

Transition

Learning Activity# 2 Lg. Group

Learning Activity# 2 Continued

Think about that. Back when Peter was asked if he knew Jesus (before Jesus died on the cross), he had run away and sobbed because he had denied Jesus to His face. He thought his life was ruined. He didn't think he'd ever see Jesus again, but there was Jesus on the shore. Would you have guessed that Peter would jump out of the boat so he could get to Jesus faster? What happens the next time you see a person you have been really mean to? Don't you want to run away and hide? I don't usually want to face that person. Why do you think Peter was so anxious to see Jesus instead of running away from Him? (He must have been very happy Jesus was alive, wanted to apologize, believed Jesus had forgiven him.)

When Peter and the disciples got to Jesus He said, "Come and have breakfast." He didn't say, "You guys sure let me down a few days ago," or "Just thought I'd stop by to let you know I've forgiven you." No, Jesus didn't even bring it up. Instead Jesus served them. He made them breakfast and told them to come eat. WOW! Why do you think Jesus forgave Peter and the other disciples?

Good News

Jesus came to earth to die on the cross to pay for our sins. He knew the disciples would all deny Him and run away when He was arrested – even bragger, Peter. Jesus died for everyone's sin against Him. Peter really messed up. He knew he needed Jesus' forgiveness. He also knew that Jesus' death paid for his sins so he received God's forgiveness. You can receive His forgiveness like Peter did when you tell Jesus that you know you make bad choices and want His death on the cross to pay for your sins.

Jesus asked Peter, "Do you love me more than the others?" What would the old, bragging Peter have said? "YES! Of course I do—better than anyone." But now Peter was different. Peter didn't brag. What happened to Peter? He wasn't proud anymore. He was humble. Peter knew he had failed. He had denied Jesus and found out that he was not always able to do what he wanted to do.

Peter wrote the key verse for this week. It is, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5:5). When we're proud we think more highly of ourselves than we ought to. We don't really think we need God. When we're humble, we admit that we can't be good all the time and that we need God to give us grace, the free gift of His forgiveness and acceptance. He loves and accepts us because He chooses too, not because we deserve it.

Let's try an activity in which we have to depend on someone else.

Transition

Learning Activity#3 Lg. Group

Game - "Peek, Peek, Who's Going to Peek"

Goal: Dependence on another is difficult, especially when we can't see where we're supposed to go.

Instructions: Clear a large place in the middle of the room. Create 2 identical obstacle courses by setting 4 chairs in a line, about 3-4 feet apart. Pair students and have them line up behind one or the other set of chairs. One person in each pair will be "blind." That person is to hold onto his partner's arm and keep his eyes closed while the seeing partner guides him slowly through the course (weaving in and out of the 4 chairs). If the blind person keeps his eyes closed the entire time, he will receive a piece of candy. If he opens them even once, he loses. A teacher will be a judge watching at the end of each row. When a pair reaches the end, they must go to the end of a line and switch roles the next time.

NOTE: This is not a race; it is an individual competition—an exercise in trust and dependence.

Debrief

Did you have a hard time trusting your guide? It takes humility to depend on someone other than yourself. You have to be able to admit you can't do everything yourself. In the same way you needed to depend on your partner to get through the obstacle course, you also need to depend on God to live your life. Remember our key verse, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5:5). We are humble when we admit we need Him and then depend on Him. Then God generously gives us everything we need to do what He tells us to do.

Let's get into small groups to talk about the difference between pride and humility in doing the work God has for us.

Discussion Groups

- Isn't it exciting that Jesus wants us to tell others about Him? Jesus gave Peter and all His children the wonderful job of telling others about Him.
- What does it look like if you are proud when you tell other people about Jesus? (Suggestions: might not ask God to help, might think you are better than the other person, might think you could and should make them ask Jesus to forgive them.)
- What would it look like if you were humble? (Suggestions: ask God to help you say the right words, believe that God is working in that other person's heart, know that it's not up to you to convince the person, but willing to listen and to speak as He shows you.)
- Have you ever told someone about Jesus?
- Have you ever heard someone tell another about Jesus? Was that person proud or humble? How do you know?

Transition

Learning Activity#4 Sm. Groups

Learning Activity#4 Continued

Mission Prayer: Talk about and pray for Oasis Giving campaign.

Let's pray. If you have accepted Jesus' death on the cross for your sins, you can ask God to teach you how much you are loved and forgiven. Ask Him to teach you to depend on Him as He gives you opportunities to serve and tell others about Him.