



THE CHURCH IS PEOPLE

Young Preschool • #NT24 • May 19, 2024

Concept

The church is people.

Goal

Children will learn that the church is made of people who have accepted Jesus' death as forgiveness for their sins. They will learn that as a part of the church, every person has a role to play.

Passage

1 Corinthians 12

Key Verse: "For the body is not one part but many." 1 Corinthians 12:14

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Activity Station:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Strip of Velcro long enough to make large outline of a person on the floor</i>• <i>Ball</i> <p>Introduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flexible, adhesive-backed magnet strip, 10"/class• Paper person, cut into parts, from Activity Station	<p>Activity Station:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Butcher paper, 4'/class• Crayons• Scissors <p>Learning Activity #1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Printed boy & girl figures, 1/child• Markers, crayons• Eye stickers, 2 sets/child• Mouth stickers, 2/child

*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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This lesson teaches the value of the role of each member in the church of Jesus Christ. "All that Jesus Christ is (his fullness) is to be seen in his body which is the church. ...There is the holy mystery of the church—it is the dwelling place of God. He lives in his people. That is the great calling of the church—to make visible the invisible Christ."¹ The church is to act, literally, as Jesus' body on earth! In order for the church to fulfill these functions and Jesus' command to grow the church (Matthew 28:19, Acts 1:8), the members must be spiritually growing and active. There must be qualitative growth as well as quantitative growth.

Ephesians 4:15 and 16 state that "... we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love [*italics mine*]." Taken together, verses 11-16 make an important point: when each member of the body works properly, so does the church.

First Corinthians 12:12-27 teaches that the Spirit gives the gifts "for the common good," for the sake of others, not oneself (see 1 Corinthians 12:7). "As the human body must have diversity to work effectively as a whole, so the members of Christ's body have diverse gifts, the use of which can help bring about the accomplishment of Christ's united purpose. Each must properly exercise his gifts or effectively use his position for the good of the whole."² Therefore, the students will be challenged to consider their contribution to others and the group as a whole as well as the importance of the contribution of all others in the body.

As you meditate on these points and prepare for the lesson, consider how to help the students learn to value other people, as well as how to be excited about what special part God has given each of them to play in God's Incredible Plan. Also, consider how to communicate that there is nothing more significant or fulfilling than playing a part in this plan. Are you aware that God has entrusted you with a role—a stewardship—to use for service to the Lord? What motivates or excites you about this knowledge?

¹Ray Stedman, *Body Life*, Ventura, California: Regal Books, 1972, 1984, pp. 15, 16.

² NIV Study Bible, 1985, Zondervan Publishing Co., footnote on 1 Corinthians 12:14, p. 1751.

Set Up

Incorporation Lg. Group

Introduction Lg. Group

Lesson Lg. Group

- **The week before class:** Pray that the Spirit will help you to communicate clearly to the children so they will be excited that they have a role in the church.

Activity Stations:

- **Craft – Paper Person (also set-up for lesson)**
 - **Instructions:** Have one of the first children to arrive lie on the butcher paper. Make an outline around the child. Cut around the outline. While cutting around the outline, allow the children to work together to color details like a face, hands, feet, etc. Trace the outline of the person on the white board. Then cut the paper "person" apart, making sure there is a piece for each child. Cut the magnetic tape into enough pieces to put on the back of each piece. (For younger children, the teacher may have to add recognizable detail and allow the children to add color.)
- **Gross Motor – Ball**
 - **Instructions:** Use Velcro to trace a big body (like a giant gingerbread man) on the floor. Have the children sit on the Velcro outline. Roll the ball to a child and say your name. Have that child roll the ball to another child and say his/her name (or the teacher can say each child's name as the ball reaches him/her). After each child has had a chance to receive and roll the ball, have the children stand up and look at the outline. Ask them if they can tell what the shape is. Hopefully they will recognize that it is a person. When they sat on the outline they were each a part of the body of that person.

Instructions: Use the white board. Hand each child a part of the paper person from the Activity Station as they come to sit down. One by one collect the various pieces of the person and put each on the white board until the paper person is complete.

Boys and girls, I need some help! My person here is kind of blank. He's missing a lot of things. Can you help me? Does someone have his head? What about his feet?

Look at the parts of the body. Each arm, leg, eye, ear, toe, and finger is a part of <<child's name whose outline this is>> body. The Bible says that we are like the different parts of a body. That sounds silly, doesn't it? Is anyone here an arm or a leg or a toe, or how about a tongue or a tooth? No! But just as God made our arms, hands, legs, feet, ears to do special jobs to make our bodies work, He has given each of us special jobs to do in His church.

Most people think a church is a building, but do you know what the Bible says?! The Bible says that the church is people who love Jesus.

Lesson Continued

Since the church is people, let's think about how each person is important in the church like each part is important to our bodies. What do your eyes do? (Point to the eyes of your white board person.) Right, they see. Can we use them to hear? No, we need our ears to hear. (Again, point to ears.) What do your hands do? (Point to the hands.) Yes, they can hold things and do work. They aren't the best way for us to walk around though, are they? No, we need our feet. (Point to feet.) In the same way that each part of our body is important, so each part of the church is important.

The church is people and Jesus gives each person in the church special jobs to do. Some people are good teachers (kind of like the mouth). Some people are good at helping people (kind of like the hands). Others go to different parts of the world to tell people about Jesus (kind of like the feet). There are lots of jobs we can do. Even children who have asked Jesus to forgive them have their own special job. Maybe your job is to be a good helper in our classroom or at home. You can tell your neighbor that Jesus loves him. Every person who is friends with Jesus is a part of His church. And as a part of His church we get to show others that Jesus loves everyone! Isn't that so exciting?!

Let's pray and thank Jesus that He died on the cross so we can be a part of His church. Let's ask Him to help us learn to follow Him so we can do the job He has for us.

Learning Activity#1 Lg. Group

Craft – Paper People

Instructions: Give each child a printed page, 2 mouth stickers and 2 sets of eye stickers. Put mouth and eye stickers on the faces of the boy and girl. Color the people. Tell the children that when they ask Jesus to forgive their sin and bad choices, they become a part of the church because the church is people. If this girl or boy has asked Jesus to forgive his or her sins, s/he is a part of Jesus' church.

Transition

If you would like to sing with me, you can come over here.

Learning Activity#2 Lg. Group

Music – "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes"

Instructions: Remind the children that Jesus is the head and they can be the other parts of his body if they choose a relationship with Him. You might laugh together about being a big toe for Jesus, but then say how important it is that Christians walk or travel to take the good news about Jesus all around the world.