

Does Jesus Care?



Theme: Jesus loves and cares for us. Proper 5(10) Yr. C

Object: If possible, bring a hymnal containing "Does Jesus Care?"

Scripture: As he approached the town gate, a dead person was being carried out—the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the town was with her. When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her and he said, "Don't cry."
Luke 7:12-13 (NIV)

Does Jesus care about the things that we are facing in our daily life? Does he care when we are sick? Does he care when we are hurting? Does he care when we are sad? These are questions we may ask when we are experiencing difficult times in our life.

Frank Graeff was a Methodist minister who had a reputation for being a cheerful person. In fact, among his friends and fellow ministers, he was known as "the sunshine minister." One of his friends, Austin C. Miles, described Rev. Graeff this way:

He is a spiritual optimist, a great friend of children; his bright sun-shining disposition attracts him not only to children but to all with whom he comes in contact.

In spite of this cheerful attitude, Rev. Graeff sometimes faced some difficult times in his life. It was during such a time that he asked himself the question, "Does Jesus care?" As he struggled with that question, he wrote the hymn "Does Jesus Care?" The refrain of the hymn answers that question like this:

Oh yes, He cares, I know He cares,
His heart is touched with my grief;
When the days are weary, the long nights dreary,
I know my Savior cares.

Our Bible lesson today gives a very real example of just how much Jesus cares. Soon after he had healed the servant of the Roman centurion, Jesus and his disciples traveled toward a town called Nain. As they approached the town gate, they met a funeral procession with a young man was being carried out. He was the only son of his mother, who was a widow. She was very sad because she was left with no one to care for her. When Jesus saw her, his heart was touched and he said to her, "Don't cry."

Then he walked over to the coffin and touched it. "Young man, get up!" The young man sat up and began to talk. Jesus gave him back to his mother and the young man and his mother turned

around and went back home. Now, that is a great example of just how much Jesus cares about people!

Jesus cares for you and me too. The prophet Ezekiel said, "The soul that sins will surely die." Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die." Jesus cared so much for you and me that he died on a cross so that we might have eternal life.

Father, we thank you for our loving Savior, Jesus Christ. We are thankful that no matter what difficulties we may face in life, we can say with confidence, "Oh yes, He cares, I know He cares!" In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Citation: Osbeck, Kenneth W. 101 More Hymn Stories. Grand Rapids, MI; Kregel Publications, 1985. Print.

SANDWICH SIGN: Have the children or teacher cut a sheet of poster board in half (or in quarters for small children). Tie strings to both halves to hang over the shoulders to form a SANDWICH SIGN that children will write the message JESUS CARES - I KNOW HE CARES FOR ME!

DEAD MAN SKIT: After the Bible lesson today, have the children act out the skit as the teacher tells the story once again. At the end of the story, have all the children say TOGETHER.... "Does Jesus Care? - Oh yes! He cares!" This could also be a mini skit for the morning church service - children LOVE to serve Jesus in this way!

BOOKMARK: Have a bookmark and a ribbon available for child to put together. Have the child write the following words on the bookmark, "HE WHO BELIEVES IN JESUS WILL LIVE FOREVER"! (The teacher may prefer to have this typed out for each child to glue onto the bookmark and then decorate the bookmark with stickers.)

HE CARES FOR ME MIRROR: If possible, the teacher can have a small mirror for each child. The teacher will ask the children to LOOK INTO THIS MIRROR TO SEE WHO JESUS CARES FOR. On the back side of the mirror, have the children glue a slip of paper on which the teacher has typed, "JESUS CARES FOR ME!"

BIBLE VERSE FIND: "Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you." (1 Peter 5:7) Have the children take turns finding a Bible verse written on a slip of paper that is taped around the room and bring it back to the table to tape onto a poster board that is labeled DOES JESUS CARE? (Other suggested Bible verses: Ps. 121:3; Ps. 8:4; Lk 12:30; Mt. 10:30-31; Ps. 55:22; Mt. 11:28; Is. 41:10; Phil. 4:6-7; Jn. 15:27; Ps. 62:8)

HE CARES CIRCLE CHAT: Have the children sit in a circle and play the game "Does Jesus Care?" Select a child to begin the game who will tap the child to his right and ask, "Does Jesus Care for you?" The child who is tapped will give an answer of how he/she knows that Jesus cares for them. After the child has answered, he/she will tap the next child and ask the question. Continue around the circle until each child has had a chance to answer.

MIRACLE CHALK ART: Give each child a piece of light colored construction paper, a sponge paint brush, and some buttermilk to spread on the entire sheet of paper. Then the children can use colored CHALK to draw a picture of today's Bible lesson and let the art work dry! The buttermilk will keep the chalk from smearing or smudging!

MIRACLE PANTOMIME: Divide the children into teams and pick a miracle from the Bible to "pantomime" to the other teams and when someone guesses what the story is - all the children will shout -- ITS A MIRACLE! (Examples: heal the blind, heal the deaf, raise the dead, etc.)

A Miraculous Turn Around



Theme: Jesus came to give us life. Proper 5 (10) - Yr. C

Object: A surfboard, if possible, or perhaps you could find a "Hang Ten" T shirt.

Scripture: Then he went up and touched the coffin, and those carrying it stood still. He said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!" The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother. Luke 7:14-15 (NIV)

This morning I brought a surfboard. Do you have a surfboard? Have you ever been surfing? Today I am going to tell you the amazing story of Bethany Hamilton. Bethany began surfing at a very early age. In fact, she entered her very first surf competition when she was only eight years old. Unbelievably, she won both the short and long board divisions in her very first competition. There was no doubt that she had a very bright future in the sport of surfing.

When Bethany was thirteen, she was surfing off of the island of Kauai in Hawaii when she was attacked by a 14-foot tiger shark. The attack left Bethany with only one arm. She lost 60% of her blood and went through several surgeries. Most people assumed that her dream of becoming a professional surfer was over, but it wasn't. Bethany had a positive attitude and a deep faith in God. Miraculously, just one month after the attack, Bethany returned to the water and continued pursuing her goal of becoming a professional surfer. In 2007, Bethany turned professional and two years later she placed second in the World Junior Championships. Now that is a miraculous turnaround!

Our Bible lesson today is about an even more miraculous turnaround. One day, Jesus and his disciples were walking toward a town called Nain. As they approached the town gate, a dead man was being carried out. He was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. She was very sad because she was left with no one to care for her. When Jesus saw her, his heart was touched and he said to her, "Don't cry."

Then he went up and touched the coffin. "Young man, I say to you, get up!" The dead man sat up and began to talk. Jesus gave him back to his mother and the young man and his mother turned around and went back home. Now, that is what I call a miraculous turnaround!

Jesus wants you and me to experience a miraculous turnaround in our lives too. The prophet Ezekiel said, "The soul that sins will surely die." Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die." That's the miraculous turnaround that Jesus wants for us.

Father, thank you for sending your only Son to give us the victory. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Note: Bethany has written an autobiography entitled "Soul Surfer" which has been made into a major motion picture. Learn more about this amazing young woman at <http://bethanyhamilton.com/>.