

Don't Be a Show Off



Theme: Practicing humility. Proper 26 (31)

Object: None needed.

Scripture: Matthew 23:1-12 **Key Verse:** For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted. Matthew 23:12 (NIV)

Do you know anyone at your school that everyone thinks is a show off? How does that person act? Do they act like a "know it all"? Do they act like they are better than everyone else? Do they want everyone to think they are cool? When they talk, is it all about "me, me, me"? Why do they act like that? Maybe they think it will make them popular, but it is usually just the opposite. Nobody likes a show off.

Does that mean you shouldn't try to do your very best? No, there is nothing wrong with working hard to be good at something and we all like to be recognized when we do something well. But, if you show off and act like you are better than everybody else, that may hurt their feelings, and when you hurt others, that is never a good thing.

Did Jesus have anything to say about being a show off? Yes, he did. He didn't use those exact words, but in our Bible lesson today, Jesus was speaking to his disciples and a large crowd of people and he spoke to them about a group of people called Pharisees. The Pharisees were a religious group in Jesus' day who tried to obey all of God's laws. Often, they acted like they were better than everyone else.

"Don't be like the Pharisees," Jesus warned. "Everything they do is done for other people to see. They love to sit in the place of honor at banquets and in the most important seats in the synagogue; they love to be called 'teacher' by others."

What did Jesus say then about how we should act? Listen to what he said. "The greatest among you will be your servant. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

If we expect others to look up to us, we must never look down on them.

Father, help us to avoid the temptation of being a show off, but rather help us to be humble in your sight. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

PROUD/FALL GAME: Have all the children spread out in a large designated area. When the teacher shouts out, "PROUD", the children will stand tall and walk around with their noses in the air but when the teacher shouts, "FALL", the children will fall to the ground. Continue as time allows, to get all the wiggles out of the children and then tell them that today's Bible lesson teaches us that we should not think too highly of ourselves.

USE TALENTS TO GLORIFY GOD: Let the children write some of the talents that they have or would like to have on a poster. Then write in big RED LETTERS - "GLORY TO GOD"! Discuss why our talents should be given to glorify GOD and not to show off to others.

BIBLE VERSE BALLOONS: Have the children or teacher (for younger children) write "SHOW OFF" on a balloon and then blow the balloon up and discuss being SHOW A OFF!

WRAP A GIFT: The teacher will show a wrapped gift to each child and discuss with the children that our abilities are a gift from God. Then let the children wrap a small box with a small mirror inside to remind them that God has given them special gifts (abilities) to give back to Him.

BALLOON DRAWING MEMORY VERSE: Draw balloons on the chalkboard and let the children fill in a word on each balloon from our Bible memory verse. (Matthew 23:12) Then the teacher can erase one word at a time and have children recite the Bible verse filling in the missing words.

BALLOON HEART: Pump up a long balloon and have children twist into the shape of a heart to remind them that GOD "loves" them and has given them special talents to use to show their love for HIM—not to show off for others! (These balloons and a pump are sold at dollar stores and are very inexpensive.) Instructions: [How to make a heart balloon](#).

ABILITY AND GIFTS BALLOONS: The teacher will write abilities or gifts from God small strips of paper and place them inside balloons. As the children leave their classroom at the end of class, the teacher will hand one or two balloons for the child to take home. Let the children know that there is a gift or ability written on a piece of paper inside their balloon that they can find after going home and popping their balloon. (Examples of some of the gifts and abilities you might include are singing, reading, praying, helping, and encouraging others.)

Practice What You Preach



Theme: Practice what you preach. - Proper 26 (31) Year A

Object: Have one of the children dress up like an adult.

Scripture: "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. Matthew 23:2-3 (NIV)

Have you ever played "Dress Up" or "Let's Pretend?" You know, that is when you dress up like your mom and dad and pretend to be a grown-up. We did that when I was a little boy, and when we did, one of my favorite things was when we "played church." One of the children would be the preacher, another would be the song leader, and the others would pretend to play the piano and collect the offering. It was great fun.

I especially liked playing church when it was my turn to be the preacher. Everyone wanted to be the preacher because we thought he was more important than anyone else. When you were the preacher, you could tell everyone else what to do and walk around looking very important.

In our Bible lesson today, Jesus had something to say about "playing church." Oh, he wasn't talking about little children dressing up in their parent's clothes and playing "let's pretend." He was talking about the teachers of the law and the pharisees in the synagogue where people went to worship. Jesus said that everything that they did was done so that others would see them and think how great they were. They loved to have a special seat of honor in the synagogue and they especially liked it when people called them

'Rabbi.' That means 'Master' or 'teacher.'

What did Jesus tell us to do about teachers like these? You might think he would say, "Don't listen to them ! You don't have to do what they say." But he didn't. He said, "Obey them and do everything they say. But do not do what they do, because they do not practice what they preach."

"Practice what you preach!" Has anyone ever said that to you? Well, I must admit I have heard it a few times, and even though it hurts when someone says it to you, it is good advice. When it comes to living the Christian life, we need to make sure that we mean what we say and that we aren't just "playing church."

Here is a little poem that it would be good to remember.

You can know a lot of Scripture
And have the gift to teach,
But what is more important --
Is to practice what you preach!

Dear Father, it is important for us to tell others about Jesus and his love for them, but help us to remember that it is even more important for others to see the love of Jesus in us. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Matthew 23:1-12

DRESS UP RELAY: Give each team a paper bag or little suitcase with dress up clothes (all the similar and the same number of clothes in each bag. Each member of the team has to run to the bag and put on the clothes and run back to another team player and take off the clothes and the next team member will put the clothes ON! Make sure everyone gets to put on the bag of clothes (shirt, pants, hat, shoes, tie, etc). Make sure to take pictures for the children to see at a later time.

PLAYING CHURCH PICTURE: Have many props with ties, hats, high heeled shoes and scarves, etc for children to each put on one thing at least and take a class picture. Tell the Bible Story while the children wear their dress-up props.

POEM CARD: Give children a small card to fold and stand up in front of their seating area. They can color the card and tape a typed copy of today's poem on the card as a reminder of today's lesson!

FELT CHURCH: Give children different sizes and shapes of various colored felt for children to glue onto a piece of paper and make in the shape of a church. Title the paper felt art as DON'T PLAY CHURCH! Have children tell ways to play church.

"SEE" JESUS ART: Give children paper, scissors, felt pieces for eye brows and eye pupils, etc, to make large EYES and cut out and glue onto a piece of construction paper. Add felt pieces and use markers to make BIG EYES. Use various colored markers to write each word in a different color and write LET OTHERS SEE JESUS IN ME.

FALL LEAF HEARTS: Give children some cut out leaves to place in the shape of a heart on a large piece of paper (or altogether for a class project for a bigger heart). Inside the heart shaped by leaves, children can write TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS' LOVE FOR THEM! Cut around the outside of the leaf shaped heart and hang by a piece of yarn!

CHURCH DRAWING: This can be a class project to draw a large church on a poster board on the wall. Let children take turns drawing something INSIDE the church drawing that would be a way to share Jesus' love and to not play church, after discussing how we PLAY CHURCH during the Sunday School lesson today. Children can add grass and flowers or trees and a steeple to their drawing.