

"My Soul Is Troubled"



Theme: Glorifying God in time of trouble - Fifth Sunday in Lent

Object: A worry stone. (A small, flat, smooth stone.)

Scripture: "Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!" Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again." 29 The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him. John 12:27-29 (NIV)

I don't know where I got this stone. Perhaps I found it on the ground or maybe someone gave it to me. I have had it for a long time, but had forgotten about it until I found it a few days ago in a desk drawer in my office. As you can see, it is small and flat and fits into my hand in such a way that I can rub it with my thumb. Many people carry a stone like this in their pocket. They call it a "worry stone." Whenever they are troubled about something, they just reach into their pocket and rub the worry stone. They believe that rubbing the smooth surface of the stone gives them a peaceful feeling and helps them to quit worrying about their troubles.

I don't carry this worry stone in my pocket. That doesn't mean that I never have any trouble in my life, it is just that I don't find that rubbing on a stone helps keep me from worrying about the troubles in my life. If we really want to know what we should do when we face trouble in our life, we should look at what Jesus did.

Just a few days before he was to be crucified, Jesus said, "Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!" Jesus knew that he was going to die on the cross. He could have asked God to save him. Instead, he only asked that his Father's name would be glorified.

Why do troubles come into our life? I believe that troubles come for the very reason that Jesus said -- so that God's name will be glorified. I have known people who followed the example of Jesus when they faced trouble in their life. I have even known people who faced death with such courage and faith that God's name was glorified. Wouldn't it be pleasing to God if all of us faced trouble in such a way that His name is glorified?

Dear Father, we all face trouble in our daily life. Instead of asking you to take them away, let us ask that you help us to face those troubles in such a way that your name will be glorified. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Activities

STONE TOSSING: Let children draw HOPSCOTCH lines on a parking lot or sidewalk. Children can play hopscotch and tossing little stones to the squares that they will be hopping to. If there are many children, they could have several hopscotch games going. The teacher can write words from today's lesson in each square and tell children which square to toss the stone and then hop

to that square. Continue as time allows and then encourage children to listen to the Bible story today about a worry stone, just as they might have worried about hopping to the right square and tossing their stone to the right place.

STONE STICKING: Divide the children into teams. Give each team a stick to run a relay, pushing their stone to the finish line. pick up the stone and run it quickly back to their next team member to do the same until everyone on the team has pushed the stone to the finish line and back.

STONE SOCCER: The children can be divided into several teams and everyone start out at the starting line to carefully move a stone with their feet to the finish line. Make sure children understand that no stone can be kicked hard and move off the ground, but to only move the stone along the ground.

HAPPY AND SAD HEARTS: Give children supplies to draw and cut out 2 large hearts. Children can use markers to write TROUBLED heart on one and HAPPY heart on the other. Give children small cut out pieces of colored construction paper to form the eyes, nose and sad or happy mouth! Children can then glue hearts on another piece of construction paper and write words from today's Bible verse.

TROUBLE ACROSTIC: The class can work on this acrostic together, as the teacher writes the letters for T-R-O-U-B-L-E along the left side of a poster board. Tell the children to think of POSITIVE words for each letter that will keep a heart from being troubled. After each letter and idea, let a child come to the board and draw a colorful happy face beside the positive word.

STONE WORK: Provide each child with a small stone and some paints and brush to colour their stone and draw a heart or other picture or words from today's Bible lesson. Encourage children to write JESUS in bright coloured paint on one side of the rock.

GLORIFY YOUR NAME HAND: Children can be given supplies to trace their hand and cut it out and glue onto a piece of construction paper. In the "palm" of the hand, they can write, "Father, glorify your name".. and on each finger, the children can write ways to glorify GOD so their heart will not be troubled - such as PRAY< FAITH< TRUST, etc.

TORN CROSS: Give each child a piece of paper and tell them to TEAR out a cross - not tracing and not using scissors. Children can write, "GLORIFY GOD'S NAME", or other words from today's lesson.

VERSE CROSSES: Before class time, the teacher can cut out enough crosses to be able to put one word each of our Bible verse today (either the long version or a shorter version). Tape the crosses along the wall and let each child go to the crosses and add one word "in order" of our verse today. Then children can read each cross and RECITE the Bible verse together!

The Power of His Love



Theme: Jesus draws people to himself. 5th Sunday in Lent, Year B

Object: Several metal objects and a strong magnet

Scripture: "But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." John 12:32 (NIV)

As you see, we have several small metal objects today. Here's are some paper clips, a washer, a nail, some staples, and a lid from a jar. What else do we have? (Hold up the magnet.) We also have a magnet. What do you think will happen if we hold the magnet over the different objects? Let's try it and see. Oh my! Look how those paper clips are drawn to the magnet! The entire stack is clinging to the magnet. Let's try some of these other items. Do you think the magnet will draw the washer? You are right. How about the staples? Right again. You can probably guess what will happen with the lid from the jar, can't you? Well, you are right. The lid is attracted to the magnet too. The magnet has great power and will draw many objects to itself.

The drawing power of this magnet reminds me of something that Jesus taught about himself. The people who were following Jesus didn't understand why Jesus had come to earth. They thought that he had come to set up an earthly kingdom. But Jesus didn't come to build up an earthly kingdom. His kingdom is in heaven. He came to earth to die for our sins so that we could join him in his heavenly kingdom. Jesus knew that the day of his crucifixion and return to heaven was near, so he spoke to his followers, "I am very troubled," Jesus said. "What should I do? Should I pray to the Father and ask him to save me? No, this is the very reason that I came, and when I am lifted up, I will draw everyone to myself." The Bible tells us that he told them that so that they would know how he was going to die.

The drawing power of this magnet is very strong, but it is nothing compared to the drawing power of Jesus. He willingly died on the cross to pay the price for our sin. When we see his great love, we are drawn to him and when we trust in him, we receive the right to become the children of God.

Even after we become God's children, there may be times when we stray from his teaching and do things that we know are not pleasing to him. Does Jesus stop loving us? No. His love for us is so strong that he draws us back into what he wants us to do.

There is no power stronger than the love of Jesus. He was lifted up on the cross so that everyone would be drawn to him -- and everyone includes you and me.

Father, we thank you that Jesus was willing to be lifted up on the cross of Calvary so that we might have eternal life. In his name we pray. Amen.

TUG OF WAR: Divide the children into two teams and play tug of war. Ask them which team was stronger. Tell the children that today's lesson teaches us that God's love is strong enough to draw all men to him.

STRENGTH TRAINING RELAY: Divide the children into teams. Let the children run relays having to carry a heavy item to the finish line and back to their team for the next team member to

carry the heavy item. The teacher will choose what the heavy item will be such as a bowling ball, a box with bricks in it, boxes of paper, etc. Tell children to listen to the lesson about GOD's power and strength today!

MAGNET MOMENTS: Give the children some small magnets of their own with several items that they can try to pick up and carry from one side of the room to the other. You may wish to divide the children into teams and see which team can carry all of their metal objects to the other side of the room first!

MAGNET CROSS: Give the children supplies to draw and cut out a cross. Provide glitter glue and stickers for decoration. Let children put a strip of magnetic tape on the back to stick to their refrigerator at home. Encourage children to write something such as POWER IN GOD'S LOVE on their cross.

CROSS ROPE: Give the children a piece of heavy card stock paper and 2 sections of heavy rope to glue or tape on to the card stock paper in the shape of a CROSS. Write, NO POWER GREATER THAN GOD'S LOVE and encourage children to write today's Bible verse around the edge of their paper.

PEOPLE ART: Let the children make finger print people using an ink finger print for the body and then add face, hair, arms, and legs, using a fine point marker or pen. Write the word JESUS vertically down the left side of the paper. Let children glue a small piece of "magnet" or draw a picture of a horseshoe magnet between the word JESUS and the people finger prints. Write at the bottom of the page, "People Art" - "JESUS DRAWS PEOPLE TO HIMSELF", John 12: 32!

POWER OF LOVE CARD: Give the children a half sheet of heavy card stock or construction paper. FOLD the paper in half so it will stand up. Let them write POWER OF LOVE on the front of the card. Write our our memory verse (John 12:32) on the inside of the card and let children it them home to place it on their dresser or on a table!

MAGNET TREATS: Hook small bags of M & M's or small treats to a paper clip and let children pull their treats across the table to themselves with a big magnet!