

## **Lesson 3**

### **God's House is Holy**

#### **Lesson Overview**

BIBLE LESSON: Luke 19:45 [and as a reference for the teacher: John 2:12-17]

MEMORY VERSE: I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord."  
Psalm 122:1

CHALLENGE MEMORY VERSE: "Blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it."  
Luke 11:28b

CATECHISM: The Third Commandment: Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.  
What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not despise His Word and the preaching of the same, but regard it as holy and gladly hear and learn it.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: The student will:

- know that God's house is for worship, prayer, and listening to God's Word, the Bible
- honor the altar as a special place in God's house
- be glad to go to God's house

MATERIALS: Lessons, activity sheets, picture or diagram of the temple

LESSON OVERVIEW: The temple in Jerusalem was a special place where God met with His people. One day Jesus went to the temple to worship and hear God's Word. Jesus found the courtyard was like a busy marketplace. Priests exchanged money and sold animals to people who came a long way to make sacrifices since they could not bring their animals with them. But in Jesus day it had become much more than this, it was a busy noisy place. It was a place to make money in ways beyond selling animals for sacrifice. It was as noisy as a stockyard.

Jesus was angry that the people didn't respect God's House. He made a whip and drove the people and cattle out. He knocked over tables and dumped money on the ground. Jesus said, "Stop making my Father's house a house of merchandise" (John 2:16). Jesus cleansed the temple.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS: What did Jesus see when He came to the temple? What did Jesus do when He saw what was going on in the temple? What happens when you come to your church to worship God? What does God promise us when we come to worship? What happens during worship at the altar of the church? How do we respect (honor) God's house?

ACTIVITY 1: Connect the dots activity. Fill in the blank activity: I was GLAD when they said to ME, "Let us GO to the HOUSE of the LORD." PSALM 122:1

ACTIVITY 2: Fill in the blank activity: 1- temple, 2- cheating, 3- greedy, 4- prayer, 5- respected.  
Line match activity: church – worship, pray..., altar – a place at the front..., communion – receive the Lord's Supper, baptism font – receive God's promise..., offering – give our money to God.

# TEACHER PREPARATION

## Prepare to Teach

Thank God for the privilege of coming to His house every Sunday to worship Him.

Pray for God to enable you to teach this lesson in such a way that the children will understand how to respect God's House.

Pray that you may help each child know there is forgiveness for sin in Jesus.

## Prayer Preparation

- Thank the Lord for each of the children He has placed in your class this year and ask Him to bless these children.
- Spend some time in heart-to-heart conversation with the Lord.

## Prepare Materials

- Activity Sheets
- Have memory verse(s) written on the board

## Bible Background

John 2:12-17

“The God who made the world and everything that is in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made by hands” (Act 1:24). But God said to Moses: “Let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them” (Ex 25:8). This was the tabernacle (tent) which was a precursor to Solomon's temple in Jerusalem.

The design of the tabernacle and its furnishings—and later the temple—were a shadow of God's redeeming work in Christ (see Ex 25-27). In that place a sinful people were shown how to worship a holy God through the priests who represented the people before God. First was the altar of sacrifice where the priests offered the blood of bulls and goats to atone for themselves and the people. The first room of the tent was called the “holy place.” In this room were the lampstand (Jesus the Light), the table of showbread (Jesus the bread of life), and the table with incense (prayer rising to God).

Behind this first room and separated by a heavy woven veil was the “holy of holies” or holiest place. Here stood the Ark of the Covenant containing the two tablets of stone on which God wrote His Law on Mt Sinai. The cover of the ark was called the mercy seat (or atonement cover), and was made with two golden cherubim facing each other with wings outspread. Only the high priest was allowed to enter the most holy place once a year, on the Day of Atonement, to sprinkle the sacrificial blood on the mercy seat (Lev 16:14).

Solomon's temple in Jerusalem was a magnificent creation with stunning gold, silver, bronze, jewels, marble, engraving and woodwork adorning its every feature. At its dedication the glory of the Lord "filled the house of the Lord" (1 Kings 8:11). "As a cloud had covered the tabernacle and God's glory had filled it when it was inaugurated (Exodus 40:34), so now a cloud filled the temple. This visible presence of God's dwelling with His people—sometimes called the 'shekinah

[indwelling] glory'—gave the people assurance and incentive for obedient and holy living" (*Nelson Study Bible*, note on 1 Kings 8:10-11).

The temple showed the way of Jesus on the cross as the lamb of God who shed His own blood as a sacrifice to made full atonement for all sin. After that “work” was finished He ascended to the Father, to the “mercy seat” in the most Holy Place at the right hand of God, where He continues to be an advocate for sinners. Knowing what the temple represented, is it any wonder that Jesus was so greatly offended at seeing His house defiled?

All of the temple area was to be honored and treated with respect, but the outer court had become a place of business to exchange money for Jewish currency and to sell animals for sacrifices. This was done for people who used different kinds of money or who had to travel a great distance to worship and couldn't bring animals with them. But now that temple court had become a marketplace filled with animal noises and people making deals. It was also the place the Jews paid their yearly temple tax. These practices were being abused.

Our church buildings today, from the vaulted cathedrals to the humble country church are not temples. They are called “churches” but they are really only structures in which the Holy Christian Church assembles as a congregation to worship the triune God. The building and all it contains is still respected as a house of God. As children we were strictly warned to “not run around the altar,”

God no longer dwells in buildings. After Pentecost each Christian is now a “temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19-20), and Christ dwells in our hearts by faith (Eph 3:17, Col 2:9).

Gentiles entering the outer court of the temple (Court of the Gentiles) seeking some spiritual truth, would have been confused and misled by what they saw. So, too, congregations today must evaluate every activity that goes on in their churches, so it does not turn people away from worship and ministry of the Word.

As temples of God (Holy Spirit) cleansing needs to begin in our own hearts which are deceitful and desperately sick (Jer 17:9). We should (must) approach God with a sincere confession of sin and seek refuge in His mercies. A merciful God forgives our sins for Jesus' sake for He has made full atonement for sin, and his blood cleanses us from all unrighteousness” (1 Jn 1:9). He welcomes us to the mercy seat, the throne of grace where we find mercy and grace to help in time of need.

## Learn the New Words

*It is okay to explain the new words in the beginning or as you encounter them.*

**oxen:** more than one ox, a cowlike (bovine) working animal

**communion:** Also called the Lord's Supper. After confessing their sins, people receive the bread and wine. When they do this, they receive assurance that Jesus has forgiven them.

**altar:** The part of the church in front of where the people sit. There is usually a cross there. People pray and take communion there.

**Robber's den:** A place, like a hideout, where thieves and crooks live.

**doves:** a kind of bird

**psalmist:** a person who writes and/or sings songs to God

**fear:** having great respect and awe toward God

## BEGINNING YOUR CLASS HOUR

### Welcome and Opening Prayer

Greet the children. Tell them how glad you are that they came to God's house today.

Open the class with prayer, praying for each child by name, if you like.

### Read the Memory Verse

Remember the appendix of ways to teach memorization of the verse. Read the verse clearly,

"I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord.'" Psalm 122:1.

Be sure to read it together aloud. Remind the children you'll repeat the verse again at the end.

### Review the Recent Lessons

Remember we have been learning about the Third Commandment. See if the students can recall and briefly retell the story of Josiah. Review the truths about God's word and how you should treat it. We should go to church each week, hear and learn God's word. We should remember it, love it, believe it and obey it. Recite the Third Commandment and its meaning as a class.

## TEACHING TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

### Introduce the Lesson

**ASK:** Do you like to have a clean house? Sometimes it's fun to make your room and the whole house clean to get ready for company. Today's lesson is about a time when Jesus had to clean out God's house, the temple. We'll find out what was wrong in God's house and how Jesus made it right. **ASK:** When you think of God's special day and God's holy word, what place do you think of? **ANSWER:** (Yes, the place we go on Sunday to hear and learn God's word, God's house, the church).

### Read the Lesson

Read the title again, then **ASK:** What is this lesson about? (respecting God's house because it is holy)

What does it mean to respect someone or something? We have learned that God's name is holy and we should honor it. Remember how King Josiah had the people clean and fix up the temple? They had not taken good care of the temple, so it was very dirty and needed repairs. Today we will learn about the time when Jesus cleanses the temple. This time it wasn't only dirty. Something else was wrong!

Read the first paragraph. Remind the children that the temple was like a church. It was wrong to have buying and selling in the temple itself. The temple was for prayer and worship. Jesus was right to be angry that people were not treating the temple with honor and respect. Jesus also said the people were like robbers and thieves and were cheating the people.

Read the second and third paragraphs.

If you are visiting the sanctuary, this is a good time. **SAY:** When we go into the sanctuary, we must show respect for this special place in God's house. How can we do this?

Back in the classroom, finish reading the lesson. Discuss ways they could disrespect God by the way they act in the sanctuary. If they ever disrespect God's house, they can ask Jesus to forgive them and He will forgive them.

Discuss the catechism meaning of the Third Commandment. Discuss the unfamiliar words.

### Summarize

Even though God doesn't dwell in temples made with hands, our churches are buildings set apart and sanctified for the special work of worship.

The lesson shows Jesus in the temple, which was still used for sacrifices and worship. It was the house of God—He dwelt there. God now dwells in the hearts of His people who are temples of His Holy Spirit. What Jesus did in the temple in Jerusalem gives us insight into how to show respect for God’s house today.

## Repeat the Memory Verse

## APPLYING THE BIBLE LESSON

### Do the Activities Together

What is this place?

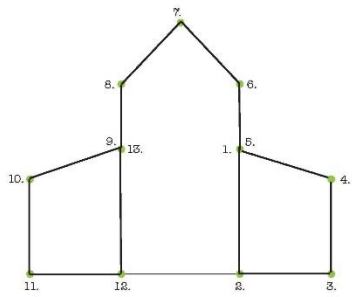
#### Activity 1

Connect the dots, and fill in the blanks.

**Activity 1**

**WHAT IS THIS PLACE?**

Connect the dots starting with number 1 to discover an important place. What do you think it might be? Finish the picture by drawing a cross at the top, a door, windows, and anything else you think is missing.



Fill in the missing words from our memory verse.

I was GLAD when they said to ME, "Let us GO to the \_\_\_\_\_ of the LORD."

PSALM 122:1

### Respecting God’s House

#### Activity 2

Fill in the missing words, and draw lines to match words with their descriptions

**Activity 2**

**RESPECTING GOD'S HOUSE**

Fill in the blanks with the missing words to complete each sentence.

prayer • respected • greedy • temple • cheating

- Jesus went to Jerusalem to the TEMPLE.
- People in the temple were CHEATING.
- Jesus chased out the GREEDY people.
- Jesus said His house shall be a house of PRAYER.
- Jesus RESPECTED God's house.

When we gather together in God's house, He promises to be there with us as we hear God's Word, worship, pray, and sing praises to Him.

Draw a line to match the phrase that best describes each word.

church	receive the Lord's Supper
altar	worship, pray, hear God's Word, sing praises to God
communion	give our money to God
baptismal font	a place at the front of the church where we receive from God and give to God
offering	receive God's promise of redemption

## CLOSING YOUR CLASS HOUR

### Closing Prayer

Ask about prayer requests. Allow students to pray if they choose. Allow time for silent prayer. Encourage students to bow their heads and close their eyes.

## **Additional Teaching Options**

**Hymns and Songs:**

**Additional activities for a multi-age class:**