

Lesson 7

Fear God

Lesson Overview

BIBLE LESSON: Acts 4:1-22

MEMORY VERSE: And he answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” Luke 10:27

CHALLENGE MEMORY VERSE: Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the earth stand in awe of Him. Psalm 33:8

CATECHISM: The First Commandment: Thou shalt have no other gods before me. What does this mean? We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: The student will:

- know God loves us.
- trust that God will help us have childlike fear.
- understand God wants us to obey Him out of love for Him.

MATERIALS: Bibles, lessons, activity sheets

LESSON OVERVIEW: The meaning of the First Commandment says, “We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.” But every meaning of every Commandment begins with “we should fear and love God...” The Fear of the Lord is reverence and respect. This lesson is about the first of the three words: fear. The Bible story focuses on Peter and John as they were brought before the religious leaders and instructed not to teach about Jesus. The lesson helps to understand the difference between slavish fear and childlike fear.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS: 1) Who were Peter and John teaching the people about? 2) How were Peter and John able to heal a man who could not walk? 3) Why did the leaders have Peter and John put into jail? 4) Why did Peter and John choose to obey God? What is slavish fear? What is childlike fear?

ACTIVITY 1: Sentence completion giving two options to choose from.

ACTIVITY 2: Two-part activity. First identify examples of childlike or slavish fear, secondly fill in the words that are found in the meaning of the First Commandment.

TEACHER PREPARATION

Prepare to Teach

Pray that God will help you be a person who fears God.

Pray for the Holy Spirit to help you and your students to fear, respect, and honor God, who is holy and just.

Prayer Preparation

- Ask God to help you meet the children's needs with His insights and grace.
- Thank the Lord for each of the children He has placed in your class this year, and ask Him to help you fear Him as a Father.
- Spend some time in heart-to-heart conversation with the Lord.

Bible Background

Acts 4:1-22 The Fear of the Lord

We think of the fear of the Lord as reverential trust, a reverence and trust that lead us to obey Him. Even more, the fear of the Lord is an awareness that God, just, holy and almighty, sees us and knows everything we think, say, and do. We will stand before God one day to give account of our lives and be judged. This should not make us afraid, but cause us to fear him like a child fears their father who loves them very much, but has a standard of behavior for them.

Just like children who know how their father expects them to behave, the fear of our Father is a restraining force. Without the fear of God, evil is not restrained. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Psalm 111:10, Proverbs 9:10 NIV). The fear of God restrains us as Christians too (Hebrews 10:26-29, 10:31, 12:28-29).

God's Law tells us how we should live. The Law shows us our sin and the wrath of God toward sin. The Law drives us to Christ, who atoned for our sin. The fear of the Lord keeps us from evil (Proverbs 16:6).

The ungodly can fear God, but their fear is different from the fear of a child of God. Unbelievers can only fear God's wrath and judgment. This fear is slavish fear, fear of punishment. Children of God, living in the covenant of grace, will obey and fear God because they love Him. They don't want to hurt their Father, or sin against His love. They have child-like fear.

Peter and John demonstrate in this passage childlike fear of God. The disciples had been commanded to preach Christ, the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8). Jesus had also promised that He would be with them as they went out preaching Christ.

The authorities demanded that Peter and John not speak or teach in the name of Jesus contrary to what Jesus had commanded them. God also has commanded that we are to obey the government, for all authority is from God (Romans 13:1), but all human authority must yield to divine authority. The disciples were not being disrespectful. There are times that we must fear God rather than men. This was one of those times. Their answer (Acts 4:19,20) is designed to focus on this issue, that they knew they had to fear God first. Their fear of God led them to remain faithful to God's command to preach Christ.

The result of their obedience is recorded in Acts 4:23-35. “And with great power the apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all” (v. 33). God provided for them and blessed them.

A child of God understands what it means to fear God. It is to trust Him, respect Him and therefore live in obedience to Him. Fear of God means living in daily repentance and enjoying the love of God. When we are aware of sin we flee for refuge to the infinite mercy of God in Christ. We know that the love of God in Jesus which has taken away sin and we find grace and forgiveness there. We also see God at work renewing and conforming us to Christ. As children of God, we fear and love Him as a Father.

Learn the New Words

childlike fear: showing love like for their father by honoring and obeying him.

slavish fear: fear of being punished or getting in trouble, like a slave fears a harsh master

master: a person who has authority and control over another person

slaves: unpaid workers, controlled by a master

commanded: ordered to do something

disciples: followers

released: let go, set free

BEGINNING YOUR CLASS HOUR

Welcome and Opening Prayer

Greet the children as they arrive. Let’s begin with prayer to thank the Lord for this special day!

SHARING: Encourage the students to share an example of how they know their parents love them.

Read the Memory Verse

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

“And he answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all

your mind; and your neighbor as yourself” (Luke 10:27).

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

Review the Recent Lessons

How did the Ten Commandments come to be written? Who wrote them? Who were they given to? How are they divided? (love to God and love to our neighbor. Remind students that they are still valuable for us today as we love and serve God

TEACHING TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

Introduce the Lesson

Today we are learning about the First Commandment, "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me." We'll talk about the First Commandment for the next two weeks as well.

Read the Lesson

Read the first paragraph, allowing students to read if they volunteer. **Ask the students how they show love and respect for their parents.**

Read the second paragraph. Some of the students may have questions about slaves. Possible explanation: In the history of the world there have been times and places where people were bought by another person, this person owned them like land or livestock but they did not as Peter and John stood before the rulers who did not want them to talk about Jesus Peter and John said to them love the slave. The slave did what their master ordered because they feared being punished, sometimes the punishments were very bad or they were even killed. If you have older children in a class human trafficking could come up, think about how you might respond to this.

Say: Today our lesson will help us understand childlike fear in our relationship with God which is more important than anything, remember the words we read, we should fear, love and trust in God above all things. We will meet Peter and John who were two of Jesus' disciples. This story comes after Jesus was crucified and risen from the dead, Help the students open their Bibles to Acts 4. Use the storytelling method to tell the story of Peter and John teaching about Jesus. The story is an exciting one and, if possible, would be better told than read from the book. After telling or reading the story talk about the story Discussion questions: **Who were Peter and John teaching the people about?** *They were teaching about Jesus and the message of salvation.* **How were they able to heal a man**

who couldn't walk? *They could heal by the power of Jesus' Name.* **Why did the leaders have Peter and John put in jail?** *They did not want people to hear the message of salvation.*

NOTE: The children may share other ideas. Accept those that correspond with the lesson.

Have one of the students read verses 19-20. Peter and John showed everyone that heard them that they feared, loved and trusted in God above everyone else. They would even risk punishment to share about Jesus. NOTE: Children may not be consistent in the reasons they obey their parents. At times, they want to please their parents, while at other times they will obey because they are afraid of being punished.

Even though the leaders threatened to punish the disciples, they obeyed God because they knew it was better to please God than to please people.

God can help us have childlike fear. When we have childlike fear, we love God so much that we want to do what is right. But because we are sinners, we sometimes disobey Him. We can tell God when we have done something wrong. We can pray to Him and ask for forgiveness. God our heavenly Father loves us and will forgive us. He will help us to fear and love Him.

Read the Catechism: The First Commandment

This can be found in Luther's Small catechism on pg 36. Questions 28, 29 and 30 on page 38 may be helpful as well.

Repeat the Memory Verse

And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself."
Luke 10:27

APPLYING THE BIBLE LESSON

Do the Activities Together

Take Time to Think

Activity 1

Sentence completion, giving two options to choose from.

Activity 1

TAKE TIME TO THINK

Read the first part of each sentence. Draw a line to the correct way to finish each sentence.

1. Peter and John were _____ followers of Jesus.
_____ following the crowd.

2. Peter and John _____ went to the store.
_____ were teaching about Jesus.

3. Peter and John healed a man _____ who could not see.
_____ who could not walk.

4. Leaders were angry and _____ put Peter and John in jail.
_____ put Peter and John in a boat.

5. The leaders commanded Peter and John _____ not to go to the temple to pray.
_____ not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus

6. Peter and John _____ kept on speaking and teaching about Jesus.
_____ quit speaking and teaching about Jesus.

7. Peter and John knew Jesus wanted them _____ to quit speaking and teaching, to tell others about Him.

8. Peter and John had _____ slavish fear of God.
_____ childlike fear of God.

R Read the story with the correct answers. Then retell the story in your own words.



Slavish Fear or Childlike Fear?

Activity 2

Two-part activity. First, identify examples of childlike or slavish fear. Secondly, fill in the words that are found in the meaning of the First Commandment.

Activity 2

SLAVISH FEAR OR CHILDLIKE FEAR

What kind of fear fits with each sentence? Label each one correctly.

1. Afraid of getting into trouble. slavish fear

2. Respecting my parents. childlike fear


3. Afraid of being punished. slavish fear

4. Wanting to honor someone I love. childlike fear

5. Wanting to obey leaders. childlike fear

God can help us have childlike fear. When we have childlike fear, we love God so much that we want to do what is right. But because we are sinners, we sometimes disobey Him. We can tell God when we have done something wrong. We can pray to Him and ask forgiveness. God our heavenly Father loves us and will forgive us. He will help us to fear and love Him.

What three words are found in the meaning of the First Commandment? Fill in the blanks below.



We should fear _____, love _____, and trust _____ in God above all things.

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: