



Children's Message

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Working Together to Help Jesus **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12**

Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help. Again, if two lie together, they keep warm; but how can one keep warm alone? And though one might prevail against another, two will withstand one. A threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Bring a handful of bamboo skewers or uncooked spaghetti. Let the children see how easy it is to break one. Try it with three, five, a handful. Together the sticks are stronger. The same is true of Christians.

Ask, "What does it feel like to have to do something new or scary when you are all alone? Does it help to have a friend along?" If possible, give an example from your life. Ask the children for examples.

Ask one child to say "Jesus loves me" ten times. (probably they'll get tongue-tied towards the end) Then have the whole group say it once each in relay. Point out that if we work together, more people can hear about Jesus and it is less work for each of us.

Give each child a coin. Ask them what they could buy to put into the food bank with that coin. (You may want to have a chart with some ideas and prices). Then see what they could buy if they combined their money. After the conversation, let the children put their coins into an offering plate.

Close with a short prayer about working together to tell about Jesus and to help others.



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What is your Mission Statement?

Luke 4: 16-21

When [Jesus] came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Read the scripture. Ask the children to point out what Jesus said he was "anointed" to do. (Define "anointed" as "given the job by God")

Ask the children, "What are you going to be when you grow up?" Most of them will have some idea. Then ask them how that job will be helping God. Try to elicit what good thing they will be doing.

Examples:

- A doctor would be healing people.
- A teacher would be helping others learn.
- A trucker would be driving fresh food to city stores.

Then ask, "Do you need to be grown up before you can be useful? What are you doing now to help God?" Write their answers on a chart paper.

Examples:

- Lisa feeds her dog every day. She is taking care of one of God's creatures.
- Donna is careful to turn off lights when she leaves a room. She is taking care of God's world.
- Alan reads Bible stories to his little brother. He is teaching someone about Jesus.

When you are done, label the chart "Our Mission Statements" and praise the kids for understanding that God has jobs for us to do now and as we grow up.

As you send them back to their families, suggest they ask their parents to share their "mission statement." Or give them a piece of paper on which you have written the mission statement of your congregation. Suggest they talk about it over lunch later with their family.



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Everyone is a Part of God's Plan **Ephesians 3: 7-11**

Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given to me by the working of his power. Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see to bring to light what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Ask the children if they know what a "plan" is. Listen to examples of plans that they use.

Point out that the church's bulletin is a plan of the service and that the pastor and others worked hard to plan so that the word of God would be heard today.

Ask them what they think God's plan is for the world. The Bible tells us some of the things that God planned in the past, but what do you suppose God's plan for the future is? Lead them, if you can, to the consensus that God wants everyone to know about God; to love and obey God and to love and help each other.

After their answers, tell them that each one of them is part of that plan, even the littlest one. Have the group suggest ways that even the youngest there could help with God's plan.

Pray together, "Thank you God, for letting me be a part of your plan. Help me to work hard for you. Amen."