

Year 3, NT PreK Lesson 3: Kingdom People

Lesson Highlights:

- ✓ **Scripture References:** Matthew 4:17-5:16
- ✓ **Teaching Point:** Jesus begins His first teaching by describing the kind of people God approves of.
- ✓ **Unit Memory Verse:** *Matthew 6:9-13* – Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
- ✓ **Alternate Verse:** *Matthew 5:3* – Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- ✓ **ABC Verse:** *Philippians 4:4* – Rejoice in the Lord always.

Lesson

Overview

The King of kings is gathering a people for His kingdom. They are not filled however with the kind of people an earthly king might look for. Instead of finding those who can add to His wealth and glory, Jesus is seeking those who are desperate for His. What that means for us is that we have to die to self-sufficiency...die to self-esteem... die to pursuing the pleasures and riches of this world. But in return we will receive all that we hoped for. Fortunes will be reversed; the dead will rise; hopes will be realized; tears wiped away. Short-term loss will mean eternal gain if we believe our King. Pray with us that our kids can begin to have faith to believe that only by following Christ's humiliation will we ever join in His exaltation.

Story

In our story last week, we heard about the time when Satan came to Jesus to try and make Him do some bad things. Do you remember that? He wanted Jesus to do things like turn stones to bread and a jump off of a high building...which doesn't sound like bad things. But Jesus knew that Satan was really trying to get Him to think that He couldn't trust God the Father. Satan even tried to get Jesus to bow down and worship him, but Jesus said no! He knew that God is the only true God, and He told Satan he had to leave. Jesus told him that He would always trust God. Jesus is the real King of kings. He is the One true Son of God. And you know what? It's time to start building that kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. For that He's going to need some people, isn't He? Who are they? What do we have to be like to make it into the kingdom? That would be good to know, wouldn't it? Because I don't know about what you want, but I want in.

Well, the first thing Jesus wanted them to know is that the kind of people He's looking for are people who repent. Do any of you know what that means? (*see what they say*) To repent means to stop doing bad things and to start doing what God wants us to. God

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wants those in His kingdom to look like their King. And Jesus loves to do what God wants. But who would Jesus pick to be in His kingdom? Well, Jesus found some people. They were called His disciples. You may know some of their names...like Peter and John and Matthew, the one who wrote the book we're talking about this time.

What do you think they were like? We might think that they are strong or had a lot of money or could do a lot of really awesome things. But that's not what they were like. They were just poor fishermen and people who collected money from people. They weren't really smart or really strong or really...anything. They were just men. But in God's kingdom, they could become the leaders of God's people. What would they need to be like to do that? Well, Jesus sat them down one day and told them. Let me see if I can help you to understand what He wants from them...and from us.

If I showed you a picture of someone and they didn't have any food or water at all, what would they look like? Happy? Or sad and tired? (*sad and tired*) Yep. What about if I showed you a picture of someone whose dad just died. Would they look really excited? (*no*) No, they would look...what? (*sad*) That's right. Now, this might find funny, but these are just the sort of people Jesus wants for His kingdom, except He doesn't want them to be hungry for food or water. He wants them to be like that about Him. People in God's kingdom really, really want to be with God. And if they can't find Him? Then they are so, so sad...like if your mom or dad died.

God doesn't want us to walk around sad and hungry though. He wants us to come to Him so that we can be happy forever! And you know what He says we get if we really want Him like that? EVERYTHING! We get to be a part of the kingdom. We get to be full and happy. We get everything we could ever want. Isn't that great? If you want God more than anything else, He'll give you everything else!

Then Jesus told them some more things. He told them that if they were really God's people and really a part of God's kingdom then they would be people who acted like Jesus. Jesus told them that they would be really nice to people...even when other people were mean to them. Is that easy? When your brother or sister pushes you or takes away your toy, do you want to be nice to them? I usually don't. I want to get them back. But Jesus isn't like that. He is nice to all of us even though we don't obey Him. We have to be like Jesus and forgive them and do good things to them. And you know what else Jesus wants us to be like? He wants us to help others to be nice to each other. He wants us to help people not to be angry with each other anymore.

And when we do good to other people, do you know what Jesus says He will do? He will be good to us. He will forgive us and give us good things and take care of us. We can trust our Father and His Son, Jesus, to give us everything we want. All we have to do is to love them and trust them and do what they say. We will be His sons and daughters and like a good Father, He will take care of everything we need. Jesus did it. He trusted God...and we can, too. That's what God's people look like who get God's kingdom. I want that...and I want that for you. Let's pray together that God would change our hearts so that we can love Him as He deserves to be loved.

Prayer Time

Before you pray, allow the kids time to share with you things that are happening in their lives. Be sure you write these down with their names for you to pray for as the week goes along. Ask individuals about how things went with the things they mentioned the previous week. As the leader, begin by opening and thanking God for this lesson:

- Thank Jesus for helping us to see the kind of people God is looking for.
- Ask Him to give us hearts that are able to desire Him above all things so that we would truly be the kind of people that can be a part of the kingdom of heaven.

Pray for any specific requests named either by praying yourself or by opening it up to those who said they would pray.

Suggested Follow-up Activities

Teachers are free to choose the activities that they feel are best for their group. The idea is that as the children work and play, remind them of the truths they just learned.

Scripture Memory: Figure out your reward system for memorizing the Scriptures provided in this section. Give the children several opportunities to tell it to you either when they first arrive or at the end of class. **If using the ABC verses, a color page is provided as a take home page.**

Craft: Buzzing Bees – Remind the kids that today we learned about the kind of people Jesus said God approves of. He is looking for those who want Him more than anything else...and promises them that when they find Him, they find everything they were looking for.

Give each of the kids a copy of the blank page copied onto light blue paper. Also, give them a copy of the cloud and bees. Provide string and sharp pencils. Have them cut out the cloud and use the pencil to punch small holes in the cloud at the asterisks. Next, have them color their bees and cut them out. They can then cut eight different lengths of string and tape one end of them to the backs of their bees. Have them take the other ends and thread them through the front of the clouds and tape them to the back. They'll then glue the cloud to their blue paper just under the words. As they work, go over the Beatitudes with them or consider taking a few of them away at a time to play the matching game while the others work. Those left working will benefit from hearing the phrases being called out around them.

Younger Child Option: Copy the template of the cloud onto the page with the words prior to class. You can use White Out to remove as many of the asterisks as you'd like to make the craft manageable for your kids. Enlarge the bee templates until they are a manageable size. Cut out as many bees as you've decided to give each child and provide the same number of pieces of different sized string or yarn. Show them how to use tape to adhere the string to the back of their bees. They can then use glue or tape to hold them onto their clouds.

Materials: craft pages; scissors; stick glue; crayons or markers; string; clear tape

Craft/Activity: Bee-Attitudes Matching Game – Remind the kids that today we learned about the kind of people Jesus said God approves of. He is looking for those who want Him more than anything else...and promises them that when they find Him, they find everything they were looking for.

You can do this one of two ways. You can give each child a set of the cards and have them color and then cut them out around the shape of the bees and the hives. They can then mix them up and practice to see if they can remember which reward goes with which trait Jesus said we are blessed to have.

Materials: craft pages; crayons or markers; scissors; other items to make the cards work as a game

Craft: Worker Bees – Remind the kids that today we learned about the kind of people Jesus said God approves of. He is looking for those who want Him more than anything else...and promises them that when they find Him, they find everything they were looking for.

Give each child a large piece of yellow construction paper and a sheet of bubble wrap just slightly smaller than the paper. Provide bowls of black paint and sponge brushes. Show them how to brush their bubble wrap all over with paint. You want the paint to go into the creases more than on top of the bubbles which it should do easily. They do not want the paper soaked with paint, just covered nicely. It should not drip when they pick it up. Have them then turn their bubble wrap over and press it lightly onto their piece of construction paper. When they remove it, they should see a honeycomb pattern. Allow time for this to dry before moving to the next step.

Give the kids the rest of their craft pages. Have them cut out the words to glue to the top of their page. Next, have them color and cut out their eight bees and the word bubbles. Help them as a class to match up their bees with the correct words from that verse and then glue them together around their honeycomb.

Younger Child Option: Press the pattern onto the construction paper prior to class and pre-cut all of the bees together with their words. Allow the kids simply to glue the pieces onto the page.

Materials: craft pages; large sheets of yellow construction paper; bubble wrap for each child; scissors; stick glue; crayons or markers; black paint (you can water it down to spread more easily, practice before class); bowls; sponge brushes