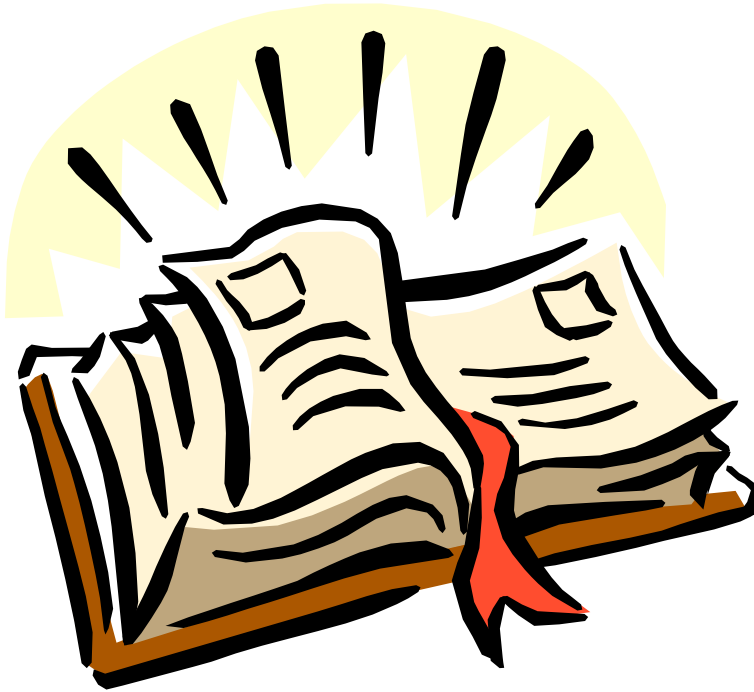


Bible Time for Kids!



CHILDREN'S DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF:

**LESSON TITLE: Parable of the Workers in
the Vineyard**

**THEME: God is more concerned with our
heart's attitude than our service.**

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 20:1-16



Dear Parents...

Welcome to Bible Time for Kids! Bible Time for Kids is a series of daily devotions for children and their families. Our purpose is to supplement our Sunday morning curriculum and give you an opportunity to encourage your children to develop a daily devotional life. We hope you and your family will be blessed as you study God's Word together.

This week we learned about **The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard**. The theme was "**God is more concerned with our heart's attitude than our service.**" This story is very interesting because it reveals attitudes about why we serve the Lord. Some of us might serve the Lord because we think it will get us something. Or maybe we serve Him because we feel like we have to or because mom and dad said we should.

The right attitude in our heart should be to serve the Lord and obey Him because we love Him with all of our heart. Rewards don't matter. When we realize that Jesus died for us and that it is such an awesome thing, it makes us want to give our lives completely to the Lord and to His kingdom. We want to be used by Him any way that we can be.

The section of scripture that we studied was **Matthew 20:1-16**. The following five devotions are based on either the scripture and/or the theme for Sunday's lesson. As a starting point it would be good for you to review these verses with your children.

These devotions are designed to help you reinforce Sunday's lesson throughout the week with your children, provide some more ideas for the application of God's Word in your children's lives and provide a tool to help in family devotions.

Obviously children at various age levels will respond to the devotional in different ways. You may want to add your own ideas to these to make them more age appropriate. May the Lord bless you as you study His Word together!

Day One

The Contest

Text: 1 Corinthians 3:9 – “For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building.”

Also read Matthew 20:1-4

It was the first day of school for Emily and she was entering the fourth grade. She was so excited about meeting her new teacher and making new friends. Emily had spent all summer going to church on Sundays with her family and in summer Bible Camp she had learned about having a servant's heart. She knew that it pleased God to help others and not have any expectations of receiving anything in return. Emily wanted to be a help to her teacher. She wanted to study and learn and she wanted to tell her friends all about Jesus and how wonderful He is.

It was also the first day of school for Michael. He was going into the fourth grade also and he would be going to the same school as Emily. Michael was new to this school because his family had moved to a new house over the summer so he had to leave his friends and neighborhood when they had moved. Michael hated having to go to this new school and he was afraid of not having any friends.

Emily and Michael were both in the same class. Emily was joyous, and Michael was mad and scared. As all the children were heading into the classroom Emily was just about ready to enter the door when Michael accidentally pushed her and she dropped her backpack. Instead of apologizing to her, Michael just looked at Emily and said, “Get out of my way!” Emily just smiled at Michael and picked up her things. Once inside the classroom, their teacher Mrs. Andrews told them about a contest. She said whichever student was the most well behaved, helped out in class and tried their hardest, at the end of the school year that student would get to go to lunch with her and have fifty dollars to spend at the local toy store. Well, you can imagine the excitement in class and everyone wanted to win, especially Michael. He was going to do anything to win.

This week we are going to learn that God is more concerned with our heart's attitude than with our service and the story of Emily and Michael is going to show us that as we continue tomorrow. **(Continued on Day Two)**

- What were the differences in Michael and Emily's attitudes?
- How did Emily react to Michael pushing her?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Attitude: Our reaction to situations; attitudes can be good or bad.

Michael's Motive

Text: 1 Samuel 16:7 - "...For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Also read Matthew 20:5-7

(Continued from Day One) Well, the contest was underway and it was already several months into school. Some of the kids had forgotten about it and some of them had lost interest in wanting to win. The teacher, Mrs. Andrews, did not remind the class of the contest because she wanted the children to behave because it was the right thing to do and she didn't want them to have the wrong reason in doing right.

Even though there was this really cool game and art set she would like to have from the toy store, Emily really didn't care about winning. She knew in her heart that God wanted her to be kind, obey her teacher and help others. Michael on the other hand, always wanted Mrs. Andrews to notice him when he helped someone or when he did his homework on time. He was determined to win!

As we read in our Bible verse, God looks at our heart. He wants us to have pure hearts and that means whatever we do, we do it to please the Lord. Emily would like to have the fifty dollars to spend but she is not going to be nice just to get it. Michael is concerned with one thing - winning. And even though he is behaving nicely, he hates every minute of it. Michael's motives in being kind are selfish; he is only concerned about himself. He can't wait until school is over so he can be rude once again. What happens when our motives are wrong? How does God deal with us? We will learn more about that tomorrow when our story continues. **(Continued on Day Three)**

- Have you ever done something nice just to get something in return?
- When was the last time you offered help for free?
- Who do you think best shows Jesus' heart - Emily or Michael? Why?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Motive: Something that causes a person to act (like a need or desire).

Holy or Hypocrite?

Text: John 12:6 - "This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it."

Also read Matthew 20:8-11

(Continued from Day Two) As we are learning in our story of Emily and Michael, God was working in Emily's heart to be holy. But Michael's heart was hardened and even though he was being nice in class, he would be mean to kids on the playground and those that lived in his neighborhood. Michael was being what is called a hypocrite. That is a person who acts one way around a certain group of people and then differently in another group. Just like Judas Iscariot, the disciple who betrayed Jesus. He said he loved the Lord, Jesus but was a hypocrite when he betrayed Jesus by having Him arrested. It is important that we learn God is more concerned with our heart's attitude than with our service. But we will see as our story unfolds how God's grace changes everything.

Well it was a few weeks before school was over and Emily had tried to make friends with Michael. When they walked home from school Emily would speak to Michael. He was always mean and said things like, "Just because I'm nice to you in the classroom don't think I like you, I'm just doing it because I am going to win the contest." Emily felt bad for Michael and she would always tell him "Jesus loves you Michael and if you would ever like to come to church with me I'd love to take you." Michael would just laugh and say, "I don't want to go to church - you're weird!" But Emily kept praying for Michael. She told her parents about him and they all kept praying for Michael that he would come to know Jesus as his savior.

During this time their teacher, Mrs. Andrews knew who the winner would be. Michael thought he would be the one. Who do you think will win? Only God knows our hearts, He knows us even better than we know ourselves and we must be willing to let Him work in us to make us holy. "We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). As we continue tomorrow, we will see how God's grace unfolds. **(Continued on Day Four)**

- Do you act the same at school as you do at home?
- How have you treated someone who has been unkind to you?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Hypocrite: A false behavior of what one truly thinks or believes. Saying one thing and doing another.

"And the Winner Is..."

Text: Romans 5:8 - "But God demonstrates His own love towards us in that while we were sinners, Christ died for us."

Also read Matthew 20:12-14

(Continued from Day Three) The last day of school had finally come. Mrs. Andrews had not spoken of the contest all year long. She announced that she was going to tell them who had won the contest she told them about on the first day. Some of the kids were mad they had not remembered and some were excited thinking they would be the winner. Michael just knew he deserved it, but Emily had prayed just that morning, "Jesus, whoever you want to have this prize I will accept. Your will, not mine be done. Amen."

Everyone was sitting on the edge of their seat in anticipation. Mrs. Andrews said, "This prize is going to the person that helped others in and out of the classroom, tried their very best with their homework and was the most behaved all year - a big congratulations to Emily Sullivan." Some of the kids cheered, while others were really mad they didn't get it. And Michael? Well, he was furious. He thought to himself, "How could the teacher ignore all the good things I've done this year?" He was angry that he had helped anyone at all. Emily was happy and in her heart she was thanking God for giving her the prize. Emily knew it was nothing she had done at all but it was by the grace of God. That is what God did for us when He sent Jesus to die on the cross, we were all sinners but we are saved by His grace.

Just like the first workers hired in the parable, they were envious that the last workers hired received the same as them. God blesses whomever He chooses to bless. It does not matter how much service we've done. The important thing is what's in our heart. That is what He looks at. But that is not the end of the story, just as God gives us grace we are to give others grace just like we have received and we only do it through the power of His Holy Spirit. We will see this grace when our story ends tomorrow. **(Continued on Day Five)**

- What would your reaction have been if you wouldn't have won?"
- Did Emily deserve the prize or was it God's grace?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Grace: Unearned favor given to people by God.

Many are Called, Few are Chosen

Text: 1 Corinthians 13:4-5 - "Love...does not envy...does not seek its' own."
Also read Matthew 20:15-16

(Continued from Day Five) You could imagine how Michael must have felt walking home that last day of school. He thought he had fooled the teacher and would win. But what Michael didn't know was that Emily's prayers were going to be answered, Michael was about to learn about Jesus and the great love he has for us.

As Emily was going home she saw Michael walking alone in front of her with his head hanging down. He was sad and Emily felt so bad. She prayed and asked God what Jesus would do. Suddenly Emily knew what she must do; she ran up to Michael and asked if she could walk with him. Emily noticed that Michael had been crying, he said to her, "Go away and just leave me alone." But Emily kept right on talking. "Michael, Jesus wants me to give you the prize, I prayed about it and it's OK if you don't like me, but I want you to take the prize because God wants me to give it to you." Michael could not believe what he was hearing; it was too good to be true. He said, "I've been so mean to you, why are you doing this?" Emily answered, "Because I want you to know who Jesus is and how I won this contest with His help."

At this point Michael realized that he had never met anyone like Emily before and he really did want to learn about Jesus. All the way home Emily shared about Jesus and the cross and asked Michael once again, "Would you like to come to church with me?" Michael really felt bad about how he had been all year and told Emily how he only wanted to win. Emily told him that all he had to do was believe in Jesus, ask for forgiveness and repent from those ways and God would forgive him for everything. Right there, Michael prayed with Emily and received Jesus Christ as His Savior. Emily was so joyful and Michael was happier than he had ever been. When they had finished Michael said, "You keep the prize, I don't deserve it." Emily just smiled and said, "Neither of us deserves it so why don't we split it."

- What made Emily want to give the prize to Michael?
- How can you show grace to someone today?

Kid's Prayer Time



This week as you pray think about the motives or reasons why you serve the Lord. Pray and ask the Lord to show you anything in your heart that needs to be confessed and forgiven. Ask Him to help you to do everything with a pure heart and for the right reasons.

Memory Verse...

First and Second Grade

“So the last will be first, and the first last.”

Third Grade and Above

“So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen.”

Matthew 20:16