

YOU'RE INVITED

WEEK 1: FEB 29 & MAR 1

BIG IDEA

We can worship God through prayer.

BIBLE

Jesus Clears the Temple: John 2:12-22 (Matthew 21:12-13; Isaiah 56:7; Psalm 100:2)

LARGE GROUP TIME

WHAT?

COUNTDOWN

Once it is time for class to start, begin the intro video. Instruct kids to clean up and then sit in their designated group spot. As kids sit down, Small Groups Leaders should sit with the kids in their group.

RULES

1. Listen to your small group leader.
 - Respect your leader and obey what they tell you.
2. Treat others the way you want to be treated.
 - Be a good friend.
3. Have fun!

ACTIVITY: Party Decorating

- **We're starting a new series, and it's all about partying! Who's ready to party today?**
- Before we get this party started, I need your help with decorating.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Let the kids help you decorate your space for a party. Give them balloons, streamers, a big blank paper banner that they can decorate, and any other party decorations. You can make your own tissue paper pom-poms to hang. Leave the decorations up until the end of the month.*
- **FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** *Pair them with another kid to promote peer interaction and encourage acceptance through social support and motivation.*
- **FOR PRETEENS:** *Give your preteens more challenging decorations to make, such as tissue paper pom-poms or paper bunting.*

- **What are some of your favorite things to do at parties?** In this series, we're going to learn about a few different ways we can celebrate and worship God, because worshiping God is a party — and we're invited!
- Today's Bible story tells us about one of the few times in Scripture that Jesus got angry, but He had a good reason. It's because people had come to the temple (which was like a church) but instead of worshiping God and joining His party, they turned the party into an opportunity to make money — and to keep other people from coming to the party.

QUESTION: What is your favorite thing to do at a party? ▲

- **What is your favorite party game or activity?**
- **What's your favorite holiday to celebrate?**
- **How do you think church is like a party?**
- **What are some reasons we have parties?** We sometimes have parties to celebrate holidays, like Christmas, birthdays, or the end of school. We have going away parties for people when they move, parties when there's a big game we all want to watch, and wedding parties. Parties are for a group of people to come together and have fun, celebrate, or remember something.
- We can celebrate and have fun with others at church too! Most parties have a specific reason for people to come together, so we're going to learn today about two things we can do to celebrate when we're at church.

THE BIG IDEA: We can worship God through prayer. ▲

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Each week, do a big reveal (and make it fun) when you announce the Big Idea, like:*
 - *Ask the kids to give you a drum-roll by stomping their feet or patting their laps.*
 - *Shout the Big Idea, then point to the kids and have them shout it back. (Change it up by using funny voices, different volumes, or inflections.)*
 - *Have a character (either recurring or rotating) come out every week to reveal the Big Idea.*
 - *Write it on a piece of paper and hide it somewhere in the room. Have the kids go on a "hunt" for it. When it's found, ask someone to come up and read it.*
- This week's Big Idea: **We can worship God through prayer.**

SO WHAT?

BIBLE STORY: John 2:12-22 ▲

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Look up the story in your Bible and encourage kids to do the same. Read it!*

- In this Bible story, we see one of the few times in Scripture where Jesus shows anger. **Why was He angry?**
- Imagine this with me. What if you came to church today to worship God, but before you were allowed to go inside, I stood at the door and said, "That will be \$10 please." Or what if I told you, "The only way God will be pleased with you is if you buy this special t-shirt from me and wear it while you worship."
- **Do you think God wants people to have to spend money to worship Him?** No!
- **What if you didn't have \$10? Do you think God only wants rich people with lots of money to be able to worship Him?** No! God invites everyone to His party, no matter how much money we have!
- **Do you think God would want me to ask you for \$10 to come to church so I could go buy myself nice things later?** Of course not!
- That's why Jesus was so angry when He saw that people were selling sheep, cattle, and doves, and exchanging money in the temple. He was angry and it was righteous anger. That means it was for a good purpose.
- **How do we know He was angry?** He yelled, turned over tables, and ran everyone out of the temple with a whip!
- Jesus was so upset because the house of God was supposed to be a safe place where people could come to worship, pray, and meet with God. But instead of being able to freely come and worship, people were being taken advantage of so other people could get rich.
- **So what *should* the people have been doing in the Temple? What does God want us to do at church?**
- The people in the Bible story were preparing for Passover, which was a very sacred and special time for the Jewish people. People were supposed to spend time worshiping, praying, learning, and celebrating God together. It was supposed to be a time where everyone was welcome to come and be with God together! That's what church is supposed to be like today too.
- That's why Jesus was so angry. The money changers and sellers weren't trying to spend time with God or with others — they were just trying to get rich.

OBJECT LESSON: Money Changers ▲

- **Do you know what happens when you go to another country and you don't have the kind of money they use in that country?** It has to get changed somewhere. If you've ever been to another country, you've probably seen money that looks different from the money you're used to seeing.
- These days, people can go to banks or bank machines to change the money, but back in the Bible times, they needed people called money changers to give them the right kind of money.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Show the kids the different currencies of money or the image of different currencies of money.*
- In the Bible times, people came from all over to go to the Temple for Passover. But the money changers decided to make a profit from all the people. They were buying and selling animals, and the money changers

would charge people a big fee to change their money. They were ripping people off and they were doing it all in the name of God! Isn't that terrible?

- Jesus was angry because the money changers were doing something that was wrong and cheating in a place that supposed to be holy and special for God.

- **What are some things that might make Jesus unhappy?**

- When people hurt other people.
- When people tell lies.
- When people are selfish.
- When people cheat others.

It makes Jesus unhappy anytime people do those things, but especially when people do all of those things in God's name. That's why Jesus was angry in the Bible story today.

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 21:13; Isaiah 56:7 ▲

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Open your Bible and encourage the kids to open their Bibles too. Read Matthew 21:13.*

- **FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** *Show them a picture of the temple where the money changers were selling animals and put a sad face on this picture (or let them put a sad face on it). Then show a picture of people worshiping, listening to a Bible story, and praying. Put a happy face on this picture (or let them put a happy face on it).*

- As Jesus was chasing the people out of the Temple, He said "My house will be called a house of prayer, but you are making it a den of robbers."

Why was Jesus upset?

- Jesus was upset because He wanted people to be free to worship and pray to Him.
- Maybe prayer doesn't make you think of parties, but think about it this way: we throw parties when we're happy or grateful for something, right? That's one of the reasons we pray too!
- We can talk to God when we're thankful or excited about something He has done or given to us.

What attitude do you have when you come to church or when you talk to God at home? Do you come to Him with a thankful heart or a selfish heart?

- Jesus said that when we come to worship, pray, and meet with God, we should come with the right heart — not with a selfish one.

- **That's true at church and at home too.** We don't have to wait until we come to church to meet with God. The party He invites us to can happen anytime, anywhere.

- *Isaiah 56:7* says, "These I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer . . . **for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.**"

- This is the verse Jesus was talking about when He was in the Temple. He was saying that the house of God will be called a house of prayer. He didn't say "the house of God will be a place for you to make money," or "a place to think only about yourself." He said it would be a place for people to meet with God.

- **Other than a church, what else can become a house of prayer?**

NOW WHAT?

IMAGE: The Temple ▲

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Show the Temple image from your Week 1 folder.*
- In the Old Testament, before Jesus came to earth, people couldn't just meet with God whenever and wherever they wanted. They couldn't just go to church anywhere. They had to meet with God in His house, the Temple.
- The Temple was special because it was holy. Holy means perfect. That means no sin was allowed in the Temple, but since all people are born sinful, they had to do special things before they could meet with God. Before they met with God, they had to wash themselves and offer sacrifices to take the punishment for their sins.
- That's why the people in the temple were selling animals. They were animals people could sacrifice to God before coming to pray to Him.
- After many years of people making sacrifices to God with animals and food, the Savior, Jesus, finally came to be our one true Sacrifice. When Jesus decided to sacrifice Himself for us, He was saying, "You don't have to make anymore sacrifices! It's finished! Now you can meet with God anytime and anywhere."
- **We don't have to go to the Temple to wash and offer sacrifices anymore, but we do still have a special place where we can come to worship with other believers: our church.**
- People used to come to the tent or the building to meet with God because they couldn't just meet with Him at any time like we can now. Even though we can talk to God anywhere and anytime, we still come to church to be together, learn together, and worship together.
- **What is your favorite part about coming to church?**

ACTIVITY: Prayers of Praise ▲

- We have been learning today that we can worship God through prayer.
- So like people in the Bible we are going to write prayers of praise and put them up around the classroom as decorations for our party at the end of the month.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Have paper, pencils, markers, and crayons set out for the activity. Have kids sit in a circle and then pass around a container with pieces of paper that have different words written on them. Each child chooses one piece of paper. Then have kids go and write a prayer of praise to God that has to do with the word they chose. Younger kids can draw pictures if needed. Encourage them to be creative with their prayers and to decorate their prayer paper. Tape each prayer of praise up around the room.*
 - *Possible words: sunshine, flowers, parents, grandparents, siblings, Jesus Christ, church, teachers, water, nature, food, toys, holidays, friends, trees, animals, snow, sports, etc.*

- The Bible is filled with prayers of praise. There are many examples of prayers of praise in the Bible in the book of Psalms.

MUSIC: WORSHIP ▲

INSTRUCTIONS: Use *the worship videos to lead the kids in singing/dancing through 2 songs.*

MEMORY VERSES: John 4:24; Psalm 66:4 ▲

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Practice the memory verse together as a group.*

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION ▲

- **What were the two things we learned that we can do at church?**
(Worship God and pray.)
- **Why was Jesus upset in our Bible story today?** *(Because people were being selfish and taking advantage of each other by selling things.)*
- **What did Jesus do to show them He was upset?** *(He yelled, turned the tables over, and chased people out with whips.)*
- **Why is it important to worship and pray?**
- **Are worship and prayer things that we can *only* do at church?**
- **What does it mean to worship God? Why do we worship?**
- **What do you want to pray about today?**

PRAYER: Prayer Stations ▲

- Jesus said He wanted His people to be able to pray freely to Him.
- Prayer is one of the most important ways we can connect with God, and there are lots of different ways we can pray. We're going to take some time and do some prayer experiences around the room. Take your time and focus on each experience as you go through the stations.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Print out the Prayer Station printables and tape them up around the room. Split the kids up and assign them each a station to start at. Explain each station to them ahead of time and let them know they can go through the prayer stations at their own pace.*
- **FOR PRETEENS:** *You can encourage preteens to be leaders and station one or two students at each prayer station to help lead the other kids through that experience. You can also give them notebooks and tell them to take them home and use them as prayer journals.*
- **ROCKS:** *Kids will write one thing on the rock that they thank God for.*
- **STREAMERS, MARKERS, AND TAPE:** *Kids will write or draw a reason they can praise God, that has to do with God (not something He has given*

them). For example: He is powerful; He is creator; He is holy; He is loving. They can wave their streamers in the air and sing a song of praise, then tape them to the wall.

- **PAPER AND CRAYONS:** Kids will draw a picture of something they want to tell God from their heart or something they feel that God is telling them.
- **A BOWL OF WATER AND TOWELS:** Kids will wash their hands in the water as a reminder washes away our sin and forgives us. They will confess their sins and ask God for forgiveness.
- **POSTER BOARD WITH A CROSS DRAWN ON IT:** Kids will write the name of a person they want to pray for on the sticky note and put it on the cross. It can be someone they are praying will come to know Jesus or someone who is sick or hurt.

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 100:2 ▲

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Look up the verse in your Bible and encourage kids to do the same. Read it!
- **Why do you think this verse says to worship with gladness and joyful songs?**
- **Is it easy or hard for you to worship God?**
- **What is one reason you can worship God right now?**

MEMORY VERSES: John 4:24; Psalm 66:4 ▲

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Practice the memory verse as a small group.

Points: Kids get points for things listed below. Add weekly points and insert that number next to their name for the given week. ▲

- Dot Stickers 10 Points
- Bring your Bible to class 50 Points
- Memorize monthly verses 50 points/verse
- Attend Redeemer's Kids Class 100 Points
- Bring a friend who doesn't attend Redeemer's 100 Points
- **Weekly Postcard Points:** (Put check mark next to each you've given them points for)
 - Memorized Weekly Big Idea 50 Points
 - Read Bible Daily 100 Points