

Share God's Love

Lesson At-A-Glance

Scripture Reference
Mark 9:38-50

Lectionary Sunday/
Church Season
Pentecost 17

Lesson Focus
Young and old can be part of God's work.

Bible Memory Verse
Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer. Psalm 19:14



Gather (10 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Arrival Activity Kids begin to think about how to encourage all people to part of God's work as they jump into a game of masked identity.	Activity Pages 	Pencils, masking tape or sticky notes, permanent marker
Opening Conversation Kids check in and review lesson content from the previous week.	Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers	Pencils
Opening Prayer Kids use Psalm 19:14 to chant a prayer.	Spark Bibles	None

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Share God's Love Story Kids read, act out, and discuss the gross factor of today's story.	Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers	Bible time costumes, pencils
Same God, Different Hat Kids explore different ways to believe in God.	Leaflets	None
Spot the Seal Kids recognize many types of Christian churches as they match seals to names of denominations.	Leaflets	Pencils

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
<p>Fun Facts Kids learn about the Bible as they play a quiz game based on the Fun Facts.</p>	Leaflets	Clock or watch with second hand
<p>Share God's Love—by Mail! Kids think of new ways to share God's love as they create an envelope to send a message to someone.</p>	Leaflets	Paper, scissors, pens or pencils, clear tape, other decorating supplies (optional)

Send (5 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
<p>Closing Conversation Kids review the Bible Memory Verse (BMV) and learn about the Faith on the Go! options.</p>	Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers, Leaflets	None
<p>Closing Prayer Kids are reminded that being young is not an excuse.</p>	Family Pages 	None

 Visit www.sparksundayschool.org for more Spark content! Watch a short Lesson Prep video that will prepare you and give you confidence to explore this Bible story with the kids you are leading. You will also find four downloadable resources for this lesson: a Coloring Page, a Family Page, and two additional in-class activities.

Gather (10 minutes)

Arrival Activity

If some kids arrive earlier than others and you need a lesson-based activity, make copies of the downloadable Activity Page and set them out for kids to try.

As kids enter the room and are ready to play, write a church character (someone or something in a church) on masking tape or a sticky note and place on their forehead without kids seeing which character they are. Explain the rules: **You're going to be someone or something in a church, but you won't know who or what. Talk to others who will know to figure it out. At the end, you can guess who or what you are!**

Create characters or use organist, pastor, elderly member, teacher, toddler, parent of newborn twins, homebound person, secretary, custodian, communion bread, cross, organ, pew, or bulletin.

When everyone has played, gather the group and invite them to guess who or what they are before removing their masking tape or sticky note.

Spark Resources
Activity Pages

Supplies
Pencils
Masking tape or sticky notes
Permanent marker

Opening Conversation

Welcome back! Let's take a minute to find out how your week went. Pretend you're judging your week like the Olympics on a 1-10 scale. One is not good. Ten is best. What's your score and why? Go first to model.

Thanks for sharing. Now what's your score for trying last week's Faith on the Go! suggestions? Were you able to do all four as we challenged ourselves? Allow time for sharing.

Pass out Spark Bibles and pencils. **Who can remember last week's Bible Memory Verse (BMV)? If you know it, jump up and recite it while doing jumping jacks! Let's all say it together—doing jumping jacks!**

Nice job! Have a seat and make sure you have a sticker next to that BMV. Write, "Goes well with jumping jacks!" in the margins!

Our BMV for this week is from the Psalms. Who can tell me which testament that's in? (Old Testament) Here's a tip on how to find Psalms: Open your Bible about in the middle; you might open right to it. Let's try. Open Bibles in the middle. **Now find Psalm 19:14.** Read the BMV several times together from page 594. **Can anyone say it without looking?**

Let's remember that verse when we hear about what Jesus told his disciples in this week's story!

Spark Resources
Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies
Pencils

Opening Prayer

Put your finger by Psalm 19:14. We're going to say this verse in a monotone voice (like someone chanting) and hold the last sound we make as everyone says it once. Don't worry, you don't have to hit a note, and you can breathe!

I'll start and hold my last sound, then point to the next person, and so on. Ready? Pray!

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer. Amen.

Spark Resources

Spark Bibles

Supplies

None

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

Share God's Love Story

Today we're going to continue from the story when the disciples were arguing about who was the greatest. Does anyone remember what makes someone great? (*Greatness is found in serving others.*) Let's read today's Bible story and see if you think the disciples understood what Jesus said! Open your Bibles to Mark 9:38. Invite someone to read Mark 9:38-41 on page 1112. Did the disciples get the point about greatness? (*No!*) They seemed jealous that someone was healing people in Jesus' name. Kids can write "jealous" in their margins.

Let's act this out! I need one kid to pretend to be healing another. I need two kids to play disciples reacting to this then asking what's going on. Invite kids to an impromptu staging of this scene. Provide simple Bible time costumes if available, such as head coverings, robes, and wraps.

Read Mark 9:42-50 using a dramatic voice.

Gross! What do you think of those verses? Accept all responses. **Have you ever said you "could eat a horse"? Would you really eat a horse because you were that hungry? (*No!*) What other extreme examples do you use to make a point?**

Jesus used extreme words here to make a point: Don't let anything get in the way of faith! It is for everyone. Young. Old. Third graders. Fourth graders. We all have a role to play for Jesus, and it should never get in the way of someone else's faith. Kids can place a sticker near this verse, write about these extreme examples, and sketch one of the images mentioned. They can also read the Did You Know? fact about salt on the bottom of page 1112.

Spark Resources

Spark Bibles

Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies

Bible time costumes

Pencils

Same God, Different Hat

Let's read a modern story that relates to faith in God.

Read Same God, Different Hat from the first page of the leaflet. **How do you react when you see someone who looks very different from you? How can being nice to someone who is different encourage his or her faith? Have you ever gotten to know someone who seemed very different and it ended up you weren't so different at all?** (*Accept all answers.*)

Discuss the I Wonder statements. Find out what kids know about different religions. **Do you have friends or relatives who worship God a different way? Who do you think is better at accepting people who are different: kids or adults? Why?**

Spark Resources
Leaflets

Supplies
None

Spot the Seal

Take a look at all the seals on the second page of your leaflet. A seal is a symbol that a group may use to represent itself. These seals are for many different Christian denominations. You may have heard of some, and others may seem unfamiliar. Let's see how many you can match. Kids can work alone or in pairs to go through the answers together.

Answer Key

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America — 4th down in left column

The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod — 3rd down in right column

United Methodist — 1st down in left column

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) — 3rd down in left column

United Church of Christ — 4th down in right column

Reformed Church in America — 5th down in left column

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada — 1st down in right column

Moravian Church — 2nd down in left column

Anglican Church of Canada — 2nd down in right column

Spark Resources
Leaflets

Supplies
Pencils

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

Fun Facts

Divide kids into two or more teams, depending on class size. Create a “buzzer” noise that kids have to use for the quiz show.

Set a clock and give kids twenty seconds to read and reread the Fun Facts on the third page of the leaflet. **You have twenty seconds to read the Fun Facts. When I say, “Go!” read and study them. When I say, “Stop!” put your leaflet down and get with your team.** Begin when all are ready.

I’ll ask a quiz show question, and your team has to decide the answer, “buzz” in, and give the correct answer. If you are wrong, the other team has ten seconds to answer. Begin the questions:

- 1. What is the name of a stone used for grinding grain?** (*a millstone*)
- 2. Giving a cold cup of water to a stranger is a sign of what?** (*hospitality*)
- 3. A Jewish religious teacher is called what?** (*a rabbi*)
- 4. What happens when a human body doesn’t have salt?** (*It dies.*)
- 5. When there is no refrigeration, how is food preserved?** (*with salt*)
- 6. How many times does the word *pepper* appear in your Bible?** (*zero times*)

Share God's Love—by Mail!

Ask kids to find Share God’s Love-by Mail! on the third page of the leaflet. **Is there something you’ve always wanted to say to someone? Is there a kid without a church home whom you could invite to ours, who could come to this class? Do you owe someone a note of thanks? Use this envelope to create a personalized message that shares God’s love.**

Help kids bend, cut, and follow directions as needed. As they are working on the envelopes, brainstorm ideas to whom their notes or invitations could be mailed. Talk about how getting something in the mail is still a cool thing, even better than emails or text messages. Help kids see the possibilities in one piece of paper for sharing God’s love. Emphasize that people of all ages—kids and grown-ups—can help share God’s love.

Spark Resources

Leaflets

Supplies

Clock or watch with second hand

Spark Resources

Leaflets

Supplies

Paper
Scissors
Pens or pencils
Clear tape
Other decorating supplies
(optional)

Send (5 minutes)

Closing Conversation

Gather the kids in a circle. **We've had a lot of fun today hearing some gross stuff that got our attention so that we would remember not to get in the way of someone else's faith. All of us have an important role in Jesus' work.**

Let's review the BMV. Open Bibles to Psalm 19:14 on page 594. Invite kids to read it silently then all together. Then ask who would like to recite it by memory.

If they haven't done so already, encourage kids to place a sticker next to the BMV, and write any notes in the margin that they'd like to remember about it and how it relates to the focus story.

Point kids to the Faith on the Go! section on the back page of the leaflet. **These are good ideas for living out Jesus' instructions.** Invite a kid to read the ideas aloud. Encourage kids to choose at least one activity to try this week and a runner up, too. Remind the kids to report back next time.

Spark Resources

Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers
Leaflets

Supplies

None

Closing Prayer

Pray this prayer together.

Dear God, we are never too young to share your love with others. You give us all gifts, and you expect great things from us. Help us to help the faith of others and never get in their way. Help us to be at peace with one another. Amen.

Be sure to send leaflets home with kids, and give each of them a Family Page to take home.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None