

LESSON 3 SNAPSHOT

BOTTOM LINE:

Our words show what is in our hearts.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn “God doesn’t want us to act perfectly, He wants a real change in our hearts.”

KEY PASSAGE:

Mark 7:1-20, Ceremonial Acts

MEMORY VERSE:

“My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” Colossians 2:2-3

SUMMARY:

One of the ceremonial acts people did was to wash their hands before they ate. They didn’t know about germs back then so it wasn’t about washing your hands to be clean, it was about washing your hands in a special way. When the Pharisees criticized Jesus for not doing the ceremony, He pointed out that it’s not about the ceremony, or how things go into the body, it’s about the heart, and how things come out that matters.

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Help us to look past the traditions, ceremonies, and doing things for show. Help us to have a true change of heart so that we are filled with your Holy Spirit.

In Jesus’ name,
Amen

MEMORY VERSE

“My goal is that their hearts may be encouraged and strengthened. I want them to be joined together in love. Then their understanding will be rich and complete. They will know the mystery of God. That mystery is Christ. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in him.” Colossians 2:2-3 (NIRV)

“My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” Colossians 2:2-3 (NIV)

“I want them to be encouraged and knit together by strong ties of love. I want them to have complete confidence that they understand God’s mysterious plan, which is Christ himself. In him lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” Colossians 2:2-3 (NLT)

“That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” Colossians 2:2-3 (KJV)

LARGE GROUP:

Put the verse up on the big screen. Ask the kids to read it with you. Ask “How can we be encouraged, strengthened, and united in love with one another in the church? Does criticizing one another for having differences of opinion unite us? Does comparing ourselves to one another help unite us? No! Having a heart like Jesus will unite us.” Invite the kids to hold hands with one another and repeat after you. “I WILL LOOK TO JESUS FOR WISDOM ON HOW TO LOVE MY FRIENDS WELL AND BE UNITED IN THE CHURCH!” Encourage kids to pick someone to give a hug to or pay a compliment to. Remind them that differences in how we look, the traditions we partake in, and the way we talk are okay. What matters is that we are united in our belief in Jesus!

SMALL GROUP:

(Ahead of time, knit together a small piece of a scarf as an example for kids to see.)

Say, “This is the beginning of a knitted scarf. The church is knit together by our common belief in Jesus. We can put aside our preferences and differences and focus on the most important thing, sharing the love of Jesus with one another! What are some things that can sometimes break apart the church and cause division?”

Write down a list of things that cause division. Examples could be differences in culture, race, traditions, preference of pastor, etc. Then write down “Jesus”. Say, “When we put all these things aside and focus on Jesus, instead of criticizing one another, we can be united! It is okay to tell someone that they are sinning as long as we do that in love. What’s not okay is letting trivial differences in opinion get in the way of being a united church!”

SKIT

Okay, That's Funny!

ITEMS NEEDED:

Hand Sanitizer
Hydrogen Peroxide
Bucket of water
Bar of Soap

CHARACTERS:

Scott
Bill

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN:

Wilderness expert – Scott
Wilderness expert – Bill

Begin with Scott and Bill standing center stage. In front of them is a bucket of water and Scott is holding a bar of soap. Off to the side are sanitizer and wipes.

SCOTT: Welcome campers! I'm Scott.

BILL: And I'm Bill. And we are back for another wilderness lesson.

SCOTT: We've really enjoyed teaching you and hope you are learning something helpful for when you go out into nature.

BILL: Today we are focusing on staying clean and sanitized.

SCOTT: But why is that so important? I mean if you are in the great outdoors, why not live a little, and roll in the mud?

BILL: Why not eat with dirty hands and forget about baths for a week?

SCOTT: Forget about baths for a whole week? Okay, that's funny!

BILL: What?

SCOTT: Can you imagine how stinky you would be, Bill?

BILL: Yeah. But if I'm camping out in the fresh air, who would smell me?

SKIT

SCOTT: HA HA! Well, the reason that we need to be clean is actually not because of the smell.

BILL: That's right. As stinky as we are, it's more important to be clean for our health.

SCOTT: When you are far away from civilization, there aren't many hospitals nearby. If you don't practice cleanliness, you could end up with a bacterial infection and that isn't good when you're far away.

BILL: Very true. Washing your hands before you eat, cleaning any scrapes or cuts you get, and just being careful not to get too wet or dirty is key.

SCOTT: If you get too wet, and you can't get dry, you could be at risk of hypothermia on a cold day.

BILL: So here are some tips on how to stay clean. If you have clean water, you can bring a bar of soap and a bucket with you while you're camping. Oftentimes, campsites have clean water spickets and bathrooms.

(Bill bends down and shows the kids how to wash his hands in the bucket with soap.)

SCOTT: But if you're going hiking far out in the wilderness, you may not have access to clean water. In this case, you can use hand sanitizer to clean your hands before you eat.

(Scott picks up the hand sanitizer to show everyone.)

BILL: And for all those scraps and cuts you get, be sure to clean them well.

SCOTT: Yes, you can use hydrogen peroxide and things like Neosporin and Band-Aids.

(Scott holds up the bottle of hydrogen peroxide.)

BILL: And if you just don't feel like taking a bath for a whole week like Scott here...

SCOTT: Hey! I never said I was actually going to do that!

BILL: Mhhmmmm!

SCOTT: Just remember, it's not what's on the outside that is the most important. It's what's on the inside.

SKIT

BILL: Very true, buddy. Very true! We'll see you next time for another wilderness class!
Happy Hiking!

OBJECT LESSON

ITEMS NEEDED:

Play this video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nANhSfCGAs4&ab_channel=TravelChannel

Those were greetings that you would see all around the world. In some places people give handshakes. In other places, it is considered rude. In some places, they kiss on the cheek, and in other places, you bow. If you looked closely, you would have noticed that depending on the location the bow was different, the handshake was different, and the amount of times you kissed on the cheek was different.

Cultures have different traditions. Depending on where you grew up, you are used to a certain way. How is it here where we live? How do we greet each other? We often say “Hey!” or smile at each other. We might say “How are you?” as we pass by. If we are being very formal, we will shake someone’s hand when we meet for a job interview or meet someone for the first time. Is our way better than another country’s? No! It’s just different.

Today we are going to talk about ceremonies and traditions. Jesus had a lot to say about them. We might have a certain tradition, but we should not expect everyone else around us to be the same. It is okay to come from different backgrounds and to behave a little differently from someone else. The important thing is that we treat each other with respect and do not criticize someone just because they dress, act, or speak differently than us.

How about everyone stand up, and try out some of these greetings? Let’s all take a short bow. Now how about a very low bow? Let’s try air kissing. Now let’s try shaking someone’s hand. How about holding onto your one arm and shaking hands with your other arm? There are so many different ways to greet people. Our world is full of unique traditions. They are fun to see and experience!

LARGE GROUP GAME

Pass the Slippery Soap!

ITEMS NEEDED:

Buckets of Water and Soap Bars

INSTRUCTIONS:

Split kids into two large teams. Have them line up with a bucket of water on one end of the line. When you say go, challenge teams to race by sending slippery soap down the line and back again. Have the first kid in line drop the soap in the water for a few seconds. Then when you say to go, they must pull the soap out of the bucket as quickly as they can and pass it down the line. If someone drops the slippery soap, they must pick it up and keep sending it down the line. There is no skipping, everyone must handle the soap on the way down the line. When it reaches the end of the line kids will have to pass it back to the beginning of the line again. The first team to get their soap back in the bucket wins that round. Play a few rounds!

VARIATIONS:

For a very large group split up into several teams. For a small group of kids, have kids spread out in line and run to one another with the soap.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

Okay, that's funny! Hand washing can be pretty funny!

LARGE GROUP LESSON

TAGLINE:

Our words show what is in our hearts.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn “God doesn’t want us to act perfectly, He wants a real change in our hearts.”

KEY PASSAGE:

Mark 7:1-20, Ceremonial Acts

INTRO:

Hey guys! We have been having a lot of laughs today. Especially with that slippery soap. Jesus said something that came off as pretty funny about hand washing. Today we are going to hear what was so funny! But before we talk about what is funny, let’s talk about tradition. Traditions are great. Every culture in the world has them. One of our traditions here is having a Christmas tree. There is nothing in the Bible about a Christmas tree, but our culture celebrates Christmas that way. What are some other traditions that you can think of that humans have added? What about the Easter Bunny? How about giving someone a card and flowers on Valentine’s Day? And each church has its own traditions too. Some churches do communion every week and some do it once a month.

Traditions are good, as long as we don’t mix them up with what is most important. For instance, what if we got a Christmas tree but then we forgot what Christmas was really about? What if we forgot about the birth of Jesus? Traditions and ceremonies are wonderful things as long as they don’t take away from the most important thing, our relationship with Jesus!

Let’s see what traditions you like to do. Stand up if your family goes to the beach in the summer. Stand up if your family goes fishing together. Stand up if your family gets a Christmas tree in December. Stand up if your family gets a Christmas tree right around Thanksgiving! One more. Stand up if your family goes to football games together. There are so many more traditions that I’m missing, but you get the point. We have some similarities and some differences to one another. Let’s read what Jesus has to say!

READ MARK 7:1-20

MAIN POINT:

The Pharisees tried to criticize Jesus and his disciples. They claimed that they were sinning because they did not do the ceremonial tradition of washing hands before they ate. The thing is, they didn’t have soap back then. They weren’t washing because of germs. They were doing it because it was a tradition. The ceremonial act of washing hands was where a little water was poured over their hands in a special way. When the Pharisees saw they did not follow the tradition they were upset with them.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

Jesus answered by pointing out that the Pharisees often let tradition get in the way of following God. The example He gave was that they did not honor their fathers and mothers the way that God had commanded them to. They had let their more recent traditions get in the way of that.

Then Jesus said that what matters is what comes out of the body, not what goes in. This is where it gets a little funny. I mean I don't want to spell it out for you, but when we are talking about eating food, we all know how that comes back out again. Okay, that's funny! But Jesus was actually talking about our words, not what comes out of our rear. Excuse my analogy!

DRIVE IT HOME:

Jesus wasn't really talking about the digestive process. Instead, he was talking about the fact that **OUR WORDS SHOW WHAT'S IN OUR HEARTS!** If we worry about traditions too much, and how things look to other people, we aren't focused on a true heart change. Jesus is all about our hearts. He wants us to see that what matters is how we speak to one another. What matters is how we treat one another. A sinful heart is what truly defiles a person, not forgetting the tradition of pouring water on your hands.

GOD DOESN'T WANT US TO ACT PERFECTLY, HE WANTS A REAL CHANGE IN OUR HEARTS! Traditions are fun. They can be really good. But let's not put traditions and ceremonies above God. Let's remember to focus on what's important. Let's focus on our relationship with Jesus, and then what comes out of us will be evidence that Jesus is in our hearts. **AND NO!** I don't mean what comes out of us after we eat! I mean what comes out of our mouths. **OUR WORDS SHOW WHAT'S IN OUR HEARTS!** So, let's be sure to fill our hearts with the love of Jesus.

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Help us to look past the traditions, ceremonies, and doing things for show. Help us to have a true change of heart so that we are filled with your Holy Spirit.

In Jesus' name,
Amen

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION K-2ND

ICEBREAKER:

What rhymes with Soap? Wash? Hand? Heart? Okay, that's funny!

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Colossians 2:2-3

(Ahead of time, knit together a small piece of a scarf as an example for kids to see.)

Say, "This is the beginning of a knitted scarf. The church is knit together by our common belief in Jesus. We can put aside our preferences and differences and focus on the most important thing, sharing the love of Jesus with one another! What are some things that can sometimes break apart the church and cause division?"

Say, "When we put all these things aside and focus on Jesus, instead of criticizing one another, we can be united! It is okay to tell someone that they are sinning as long as we do that in love. What's not okay is letting trivial differences in opinion get in the way of being a united church!"

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

(Ahead of time get a long piece of yarn.)

Have kids sit in a circle. Pass around a rolled-up piece of yarn and have kids grab on to a piece of it as they pass it down. Once everyone is holding on to the yarn in a circle, ask kids to try their best not to let go. Have them stand up as they hold one. Jump up and down. Lean to the right and lean to the left. Wiggle around. Spin in a circle! Okay, that's funny!

Say, "Even when we have differences in tradition, the church should always hold onto one another because of our unity in Jesus Christ! And yes, sometimes it can be a challenge, just like holding on to this yarn!"

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Mark 7:1-20

What were the Pharisees upset about?

What was more important to Jesus than tradition and ceremony?

What is something different about your friend that you can set aside to remain friends with one another?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for our unique cultures and differences. Help us to put Jesus first in our lives and not allow tradition to get in the way of serving God and loving people well.

In Jesus' name,
Amen

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION 3RD-5TH

ICEBREAKER:

What rhymes with Soap? Wash? Hand? Heart? Okay, that's funny!

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Colossians 2:2-3

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Write down a list of things that cause division. Examples could be differences in culture, race, traditions, preference of pastor, etc. Then write down "Jesus". Say, "When we put all these things aside and focus on Jesus, instead of criticizing one another, we can be united! It is okay to tell someone that they are sinning as long as we do that in love. What's not okay is letting trivial differences in opinion get in the way of being a united church!"

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Mark 7:1-20

What were the Pharisees upset about?

What was more important to Jesus than tradition and ceremony?

Read verses 6 and 7 again. What did Isaiah say was most important to the people? Why are human rules not as important as God's commands?

What is something different about your friend that you can set aside to remain friends with one another?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for our unique cultures and differences. Help us to put Jesus first in our lives and not allow tradition to get in the way of serving God and loving people well.

In Jesus' name, Amen

POWERPOINT REVIEW GAME

Our words show what's in our hearts.

TRUE

The Pharisees were focused on what is in the heart instead of human rules and traditions.

FALSE

Jesus said, "Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them."

TRUE

We should not wash our hands.

FALSE

The church can be united when we set aside our differences and preferences and focus on Jesus.

TRUE

MAKE IT STICK

OKAY, THAT'S FUNNY LESSON 3

5 SIMPLE WAYS
YOU CAN MAKE
THIS LESSON STICK
WITH YOUR KIDS

THIS WEEK'S LESSON

5 Simple Ways to Make This Week's Lesson Stick



IN THE CAR:

What is more important? Human rules and traditions, or a heart changed to be like Jesus? What is inside our hearts is what matters most. Traditions and ceremonies can be good, but we can't let them cause division in the church because of different preferences. The church is to be united in Jesus. Mark 7:1-20, Ceremonial Acts



HANGING OUT:

Make this week's lesson real:

Ask your kid if they have ever witnessed a ceremony, tradition, or way of living that looked strange to them.

Ask your kid what some of their family traditions are like.



AT DINNER:

Here are some great discussion starters:

What did Jesus say about what comes out of us?

What does that reveal about our hearts?

How did the Pharisees seem to spend a lot of their time? In what ways can we be different?



AT BEDTIME:

Quiz your child on this week's memory verse:

"My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Colossians 2:2-3



PARENT TIME:

Jesus gives us hidden wisdom and knowledge when we seek Him! He revealed a lot about what is most important in Mark 7:1-20. How can your family set aside differences of opinion, tradition, and social status to be united with the church in Jesus? What are some challenges that you face? How can you prayerfully invite God into that?

TAKE HOME

Supplies: Finger paint, sanitizer wipes, paper plates, and white craft paper

Pour paint onto plates for kids to dip their hands into to create hand prints. Encourage them to fit as many different colored hand prints as they can on their paper. Remind them to use wipes between colors so they don't mix on the plates. Instruct kids to be creative and design their art any way they want.

Say, "All these colors represent different cultures, ethnicities, races, social standings, ages, traditions, and more. The church is made up of people from all around the world! We are a beautiful mix when we come together to be united in Jesus!"