

JESUS: SHOWS HIS AUTHORITY

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

JUDGE FORGIVE AUTHORITY GLORY GENTILES RADIANCE

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

John 2:12-22; 5:22-29; Romans 8:31-34

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the students understand that both Jesus and God have the same authority towards sin, both to judge and forgive

MEMORY VERSE

“The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being” (Hebrews 1:3a, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

The Jewish people had become accustomed to buying animals for their sacrifice upon arriving at the temple. Religious leaders took advantage of this system, transforming into a business that had begun as a good work. It is important your students understand that the attitude of the people who went there to worship God was changing. Instead of going to the temple, to God’s Holy House, they seemed to be entering an irreligious ceremony or ritual. Jesus acted correctly when he condemned this practice of his time.

This lesson can help students grasp the idea that Christians should oppose sin and injustice. It will provide them with an opportunity to discuss when they should take that attitude and how they can do it.

Sometime during this week take a few minutes to evaluate the development of your group. Let the following questions help you see your ministry from a different perspective: What do your students hear? Is everything that’s said and done focused on God? What is the purpose of your group? Does the same purpose that was proposed in its original mission continue, to teach the students to know and follow Jesus Christ? Think about the methods you use or decide not to use. Are these helping them understand and know God more, declaring his purpose in an obvious way?

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

Today's lesson is about authority. The passages of Scripture that we'll read lead us to an important question: Where did Jesus get his authority?

In the opening chapters of the Gospel of John, we read that Jesus "cleansed" the temple. There were reasons for the animal sellers and the money changers to be in the vicinity of the temple for the time of the holidays. Many of the worshipers came from very distant places and could not bring with them the animals necessary for the sacrifices. They had to buy them there. Likewise, most of the people used Greek and Roman coins daily. But these were not allowed in the temple, since they had images of emperors (human beings). The money changers, then, offered a necessary service, exchanging those coins for others that did not have images of men.

Why, then, did Jesus object if it were a legitimate business that was right?

First, the sellers and money changers did not negotiate in the surrounding area, but in the temple itself. And worse, they did their business in the only courtyard where the Gentiles could worship God. In the place where one should have been in the mood of adoration and offering prayers, a noisy trade was heard.

Second, it is very likely that sellers and money changers had increased the price of their services. People could not give their offering as they wished, because they were exploited and cheated.

Third, Jesus knew what the business in the temple represented. The worship in the temple was so focused on its own practices and traditions that it had strayed from its original purpose. And he had to confront that fact.

"Where did Jesus get that authority?" the Jews asked. He answered them by referring to his resurrection, which would reveal that he is the Son of God. In spite of everything, the Jews misinterpreted his answer. They assumed that he referred to the temple (to their building) that, after 46 years, was still under construction. (The construction of the temple began in the year 20 B.C. and did not finish until A.D. 64. But the incident referred to occurred between the years A.D. 27 and 33)

John 5:24-27 confirms the source of Jesus' authority. Receiving his message is the same as believing in God. Believing in him gives us eternal life, which is given by our Triune God the Father, his Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Jesus had the power to decide who to give eternal life to. This is a source of comfort for Christians. God was so generous that he gave his own Son. The only One with the power to accuse or condemn us--and also to protect us--is God (see Romans 8:31-34). Therefore, if we live according to God's purpose, as Jesus revealed, we have nothing to fear.

This is something that the money changers of the temple were not willing to accept.

As you prepare this lesson, reflect on these questions:

Did you ever think that because you were not good enough to God, he would not save you?

Have you ever thought that salvation was for everyone, except for you?

If so, these verses are special for your life: Romans 8:31-34. If God gave his Son for you, he would not spare the gift of salvation. If Christ gave his life for you, why would he now condemn you? He would not deprive you of anything that would help you live for him. It is Satan who accuses you, not God. However, when the devil accuses us, we have a defense lawyer: Jesus Christ, who is with the Father to present our case.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Who's the boss?

Copy the biblical passages below. Cut each out one separately, fold them and place them in a basket or box.

Biblical passages:

"Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended" (Romans 13:1-3).

"Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you" (Hebrews 13:17).

"Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right" (1 Peter 2:13-14).

“Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord” (Colossians 3:20).

“In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome” (1 John 5:3). In the group, say: “Today we’re going to talk about authority. What does it mean that a person has authority over you?” Allow them to respond. (The one in authority is the one who has the power and the right to tell you what to do and make sure you do it.)

Hand out Student Activity Sheet #378-A (Who is the Boss?). They must identify the five authorities that appear in the illustrations (police, teacher, judge, father, God).

Put the basket or box with the biblical passages on the table. Ask five volunteers to take one verse each, and instruct them not to read them until you tell them to.

Start a discussion with your students about these five authority figures. Start talking about the police, and so on. Ask: “Why should we obey them? Why do they have the right to tell us what we must or must not do?”

Encourage the students to talk about how they feel towards the police officers or to relate some experience they have had with them. Then, ask the one with the first passage to read it aloud. Talk about what these verses mean. Continue in the same way with the other four authorities.

Distribute Student Activity Sheet #378-B and #378-C.

TEACH THE LESSON

Jesus’ authority over sin

Ask some students to help you read John 2:12-22. Before starting, take a moment to review the material. Encourage them to read with expression.

After they do, add to and enrich the topic by commenting on the passage with information in the Biblical Commentary section (above). Allow students to work in small groups, no more than three or four, to answer the following questions. Distribute pencils and paper to the students. When they’re finished, ask them to talk with their group members about what they wrote. Ask:

“How do you describe Jesus’ attitude toward sin?” (He did not tolerate it. Sin made him angry and he punished them.)

“Do you think he had the right to act as he did? Explain your answer.” (Yes. He is the Son of God and feels the same way toward sin as does God the Father, who shares his authority to judge with Jesus.)

“What title would you give to this Bible story? Why?” (allow various responses)

Now have them look at John 5:24-29. Once again, have the students help you read it out loud. Then allow them to form and work in smaller groups to answer the following questions. When they finish, they can present their answers to the whole group.

What did the Father give Jesus? Why? (v.27) (The authority to judge people, their motivations, thoughts, words, and actions. Because Jesus is the Son of Man, the Son of God, and because God wants people to honor and respect Jesus as they do God the Father.)

Who will not be judged? (v. 24) (Anyone who hears the words of Jesus and believes in him as Savior.)

What will Jesus give? (v. 25) (His life)

What will happen to those who have done what is good? (v. 29) (They’ll be resurrected and will live again.)

What will happen to those who have done what is evil? (v.29). (They’ll be resurrected and condemned.)

Compare this passage with John 2:12-22. How are they similar? What are the differences? (Both show the displeasure of Jesus and God toward sin, and the manner in which they’ll judge sin and the sinner. But also, this passage shows that those who accept Jesus as Savior will be victorious on Judgment Day.)

Say: “God gave Jesus the authority to judge and forgive man’s sin, but he deeply desires that we choose his remedy for sin instead of receiving the punishment.”

CONNECT THE LESSON

God is for us!

Use the passage in Romans 8:31-34 to strengthen the student believers' confidence in God's love for them and in the certainty that he defends them. First, ask for a volunteer to read the first verse, tell them to stop, and ask the group to repeat it together. Allow time for the students to write down words or phrases that catch their attention or touch their hearts. Do the same with the second verse and so on. This is a powerful and tremendous passage. Encourage the students to repeat each phrase with energy and conviction, believing what they read. If time permits, repeat it several times.

After finishing, ask: "How do you feel about reading this passage, and what words or phrases touched you or moved you the most?" Allow the students to comment on how these truths changed what they knew about God, about themselves, and about others.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

[Download Suggestions for Bible Memorization PDF](#)

Review the words of the memory verse (Hebrews 1:3) several times. Then organize a competition to see who can write the words of the verse faster. Divide into two groups and form two rows, facing the board. Use a stopwatch or watch with second hand to measure time. When you give the order, the first person of each row should run to the board, write the first word of the verse, and return to the end. As soon as they arrive, the second should go to the board and write the second word, and so on, until they complete the entire verse, including the reference. The team that finishes in the shortest time wins.

You can mix the groups and divide them differently (girls and boys, tallest and shortest, etc.) to compete again. End by repeating the verse together.

Say: "During this month we said that Jesus is the only begotten Son of the Father. He is the only person in history who is fully God and fully man at the same time."

Ask them to repeat the memory verse one more time. To those who said it correctly, give them a small certificate or prize.

Hand out Student Activity Sheet #378-D.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Say: "Today we've talked about Jesus' authority to judge sin. He has the power and the right to punish the one who sins, but he also has the power to FORGIVE us."

Then in your own words, explain what God has done to provide us with a remedy for sin, through Jesus his Son. If you wish, tell your personal testimony.

Guide them to discover (or remember) the basis of salvation. It is as easy as A-B-C.

A: **Admit** that I have sinned and I need God to forgive me and help me change.

B: **Believe** that God loves me and sent his only Son, Jesus, so I can be forgiven.

C: **Confess** and receive Jesus as my Savior and claim my new identity as a child of God.

Be sensitive to the direction of the Holy Spirit in that moment. As it seems appropriate, invite the students to say a prayer of forgiveness and receive salvation.

You can guide them in a prayer like this: "Dear God, thank you for sending your Son Jesus to earth to be a human like us. Since Jesus went through all types of struggles like us, he understands us. He was tempted in everything. We know that if we accept the salvation you offer us, then we too can be free from the guilt and punishment for sin. Thank you for this wonderful gift. We're very happy to be your children! We trust fully in you, in the name of the Son of God, Jesus. Amen."

Encourage

Encourage the group to tell their families and friends the God has forgiven their sins and they are now following Jesus.

Invite

Finish by singing an appropriate chorus. Encourage them to attend the next session by telling them something interesting about it. Tell them that this is a good time to invite new group members.

