

JESUS SPEAKS ABOUT A GOOD HEART'S DISPOSITION

Objective

The children learn that we should have a fundamental attitude that pleases the Lord.

Contents

- The Pharisee and the publican (Luke 18:9-14).
- We should do good with a pure heart (Matthew 6:1-4; 5:16).
- We must learn to know ourselves and not judge others (Matthew 7:1-5).





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Lesson Plan

Lead-In

Theme Picture

Examine the theme picture of the lesson with the children.

Discussion

The children describe the picture and try to guess which parable it describes.

Elaborate on the following with the children:

- Proud and self-righteous, the Pharisee goes into the temple to pray.
- The publican also prays, but humbly and with bowed head, because he knew that he had not done everything right.

Implementation

Workbook, Text

A child reads aloud “The Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican”, from the workbook.

Discussion

The Pharisee

- thought he was pious,
- led a good life,
- offered the tenth of all he had,
- was arrogant, haughty and self-righteous, and
- confessed no mistakes, although he was a sinner.

The publican

- realized that he was a sinner, and
- regretted what he had done, humbled himself before God, and pleaded for mercy.

Jesus concludes the parable with the admonition, “... for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted” (Luke 18:14).

Question Prompt

What does the Lord Jesus want to tell us with this?

■ We should guard against being conceited about our good works. Conceited people make themselves appear to be more than they really are. Before God, however, they are very small.

Board

A good heart's disposition excludes
– conceit

■ We should not elevate ourselves above others or look down on others contemptuously.

Board

A good heart's disposition excludes
– conceit,
– arrogance

■ The humble recognize that they have made mistakes. Those who seek grace, will find it. They will be exalted by God.

Statement Prompt

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus gave his listeners advice about God-pleasing conduct arising from a compassionate and humble heart.

Workbook, Exercise

The children work on the exercise individually.

Discussion

The answers are discussed.

Question Prompt

What are alms?

Alms are gifts or charitable donations to benefit the needy.

Stress that Jesus called upon the people to give alms in secret and without boasting.

Board

A good heart's disposition excludes
– conceit,
– arrogance,
– boasting



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Question Prompt

Also today we can improve other people's lot, for example,

- by means of special donations,
- through direct help for the poor, and
- by donating clothing or toys.

When we help others in need, let us do so unostentatious and without boasting about it. The people who are helped by what we do should honour our heavenly Father rather than us.

People do not only suffer material need. What other difficulties of your fellow-man do you know about?

- Illness,
- loneliness,
- being dealt with unjustly,
- unemployment,
- etc.

We can help to improve the lot of such by

- visiting the sick,
- helping elderly brethren and visiting them,
- being kind to one another,
- etc.

Question Prompt

The exercise acquainted us with additional advice from Jesus. What is meant by the metaphor of the "mote" and the "beam" in the eye?

Elaborate on the following with the children:

- With this metaphor Jesus expresses his disapproval of our tendency to emphasize small mistakes and weaknesses of others (motes), while not even recognizing our own big mistakes and weaknesses (beams).

Question Prompt

- We would gladly change what we dislike about our neighbour.
- The Lord, however, appeals to us to look upon and better ourselves. This demands self-recognition and great effort.

How often does it not happen that someone else's faults annoy us and yet they are even more strongly pronounced in us. The children report and the teacher supplements, if necessary.

I get annoyed because

- a girl returns a game or book I lent him or her one day late. And yet, I myself lend a borrowed game or book to someone else and am only able to return it damaged and after considerable delay.
- someone said something bad about me. I myself often say bad things about others and readily talk about their faults.
- etc.

Why did Jesus advise people not to judge?

- The Lord Jesus knew that we as human beings tend to quickly judge others. Only the Lord is entitled to judge. We should respect our neighbour and treat him or her with love.
- If we were to judge, we would be judged in like manner.

Board

A good heart's disposition excludes

- conceit,
- arrogance,
- boasting, and
- judgment.

Question Prompt

What should we do when we notice the faults of others?

Let us

- pray for these people,
- forgive them if they have done us an injustice,

