

THE CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY
CHILDREN'S MEETING LESSON

DATE: January 20, 2019

SUBJECT: HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS: GOD FEARERS (1 of 2)—A Proper Attitude and Conduct Toward God Himself

SCRIPTURES: Isaiah 14:12-14; 1 Peter 2:17m; Psalms 34:11; 112:1; Jeremiah 32:39; 1 Peter 1:17; Exodus 1:15-22; Proverbs 16:6b; 1 Samuel 24; Daniel 1:1-20; Daniel 3; Daniel 6:1-28; Acts 5:17-32

AIM: To lead the children to know God and to fear Him in everything they do. If they behave in a God-fearing way, they can be a good testimony for God.

SUGGESTED MEMORY VERSES: 1 Peter 2:17m (...Fear God...); Proverbs 23:17 (Do not let your heart envy sinners, But live in the fear of Jehovah all day long;); Proverbs 1:7 (The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction.); Proverbs 16:6b (And by the fear of Jehovah men depart from evil); Psalms 112:1 (Hallelujah! Blessed is the man who fears Jehovah, Who delights greatly in His commandments.); Psalms 147:11 (Jehovah takes pleasure in those who fear Him, In those who hope in His lovingkindness.)

SUGGESTED SONGS: 6715 (The Midwives Feared Jehovah); 9303 BSS Daniel #3 (Daniel, Hananiah, Azariah, Mishael); 9308 BSS Daniel #8 (Behind the Scenes, the Heavens Rule); 9313 BSS Daniel #13 (Our God is Living); 9314 BSS Daniel #14 (We Will Not, Not, Not); 2829 (Honor and Respect for Authority); 9204 BSS David #4 (Honor Honor); 4 (Be Careful What You Do); 11 (Oh, be Careful!); 65 (God's Word); 69 (Thy Word Have I Hid in my Heart)

CRAFT IDEA: Each child can write a Bible verse on a paper plate, and decorate it with markers, stickers, etc. Make a paddle by taping the plate to the end of a paper towel roll or paint stir stick. Blow up large balloons, and using permanent marker, write things that God tells us to do on them. We can help the children come up with ideas and write them on the board. The children can hit the balloons with the paddles to keep the "Word" balloons from hitting the ground. Craft idea adapted from: <http://www.daniellesplace.com/html/bible-crafts-samuel.html> "Don't Let God's Word Fall To the Ground Balloon Game"

APPROACH: Ask the children what the word "fear" means; discuss its meaning. Ask them why it is good sometimes to be afraid or fearful of something or someone. For example, children should be afraid of: fire, deep water, a hot stove, a hot iron, taking candy or toys from a stranger, communicating with a stranger on the Internet, going someplace without telling our parents, crossing the street alone (for younger children) or crossing against the red light. Choose two examples and ask them what the consequences would be if they were not afraid.

REVIEW: Last week, we had a lesson on being subject to the government that God has put into place. David feared God and the authority God had put into place at the time, which was King Saul. Saul had turned away from God and disobeyed God; he knew he was going to lose his kingship. David, on the other hand, had been anointed to be the next king. Yet David dared not lay hands on Saul and kill him. He had the opportunity to kill Saul more than once, but he did not. David's heart was bothered even by cutting off only the skirt of Saul's robe secretly (1 Samuel 24:5). He told his men, "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord" (v. 6). We can see from David's word how he revered God and God's sovereign arrangement by honoring whom God had anointed, even when his own safety was in jeopardy.

CONTENT: This week, we are going to talk about the highest authority. Though the government has been put into place by God, that is not the highest authority. The highest authority is God Himself, and ultimately He is the One whom we should obey. When we come to the matter of fearing God, we must first know who God is. The kind of fear we are referring to is that of utmost respect, being in awe of someone because of who they are (not merely being afraid). We fear someone who is higher in authority than we are, someone who is greater and mightier than we are, or someone more powerful and honorable than anyone else. Such is our God and so much more. We fear God because:

1. Above all, He is God—there is no other god before Him (Exo. 20:2-3). He is above all and over all. There is none greater than He. He is the first and the last, the eternal One (Deut. 33:27).
2. He is the Creator of the universe (Gen. 1-2), and the Ruler of heaven and earth (Jer. 5:22, 24).
3. He is our Creator (Gen. 1:26-27), thus having full rights over us. He is the potter, we are the clay (Isa. 64:8; Jer. 18:6; Rom. 9:21).
4. He is the righteous judge who will judge both the heavens and the earth and the ungodly (1 Pet. 1:17; 2 Pet. 3:12; Jude 15).
5. His Word commands us to fear Him (1 Pet. 2:17m).
6. It pleases Him (Psa. 147:11).
7. It is wise to fear God (Prov. 1:7).

Some examples in the Bible of fearing God include:

Note to serving ones: Please consider the age group of the children you are serving, and select one or two examples to give.

Shiphrah and Puah (Exodus 1:15-22). In the Old Testament, we see the example of two Hebrew midwives who feared God so much that they risked their lives by defying the king's command. The king of Egypt warned the two midwives, Shiphrah and Puah, that while they were delivering babies, "if it is a son, then you shall put him to death; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live." The king of Egypt wanted to weaken the people of God by getting rid of all the male babies, who could grow up to fight him. Even though this was the law of the land--the command from the king--this was against God. Shiphrah and Puah feared God, so they dared not kill the male babies and sin against God. They saved all the male babies. As a result, God rewarded them and dealt well with them. Not only did God bless them with families of their own, but their actions caused God's people to multiply and grow very strong.

Daniel and his three companions refusing to eat the king's meat (Daniel 1:1-20). Daniel and his three companions, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, are also an excellent example of being proper in attitude toward the government and those in authority, while ultimately obeying God. When they were captured and brought into Babylon as children, they were brought into the palace to be trained to serve the king. The king appointed all the children a daily portion from the king's choice provision and from the wine that he drank.

But Daniel set his heart not to defile himself with the king's choice food and the king's wine. Probably Daniel knew that this food had been offered to idols, and Daniel did not want to participate in that. Daniel refused in a very respectful way. He asked permission from the leader of the eunuchs (who was put in charge of the children) to not take the king's food and wine. The leader of the eunuchs did not want to agree at first, because the king had ordered this food and drink, and if Daniel and his friends looked worse than the others, then the leader would get into trouble with the king. Daniel responded in a very proper way towards authority. Daniel asked for a ten-day test. He said to the steward whom the leader had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, "Please test your servants for ten days, and let vegetables be given to us to eat and water to drink." At the end of ten days, they looked much better physically than the other children. Even in their intelligence, they exceeded the others. When they stood before the king, there were none found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. The Bible even tells us that they were "ten times better" in wisdom and understanding than all the magicians and conjurers in the kingdom.

Peter and the apostles (Acts 5:17-32). In the New Testament, we see that the apostles also obeyed and feared God. After the Lord Jesus' death and resurrection, the apostles began preaching the gospel and witnessing what they had seen and heard. Some were stirred up against them. The high priest and all those with him, including the local group of Sadducees, rose up and were filled with jealousy. The high priest charged them, "We strictly charged you not to teach based upon this name (Jesus); and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching..." (Acts 5:28). But Peter and the apostles, who feared God, answered and said, "It is necessary to obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29) They refused to stop talking about the Lord Jesus.

SUGGESTED APPLICATIONS TO CHOOSE FROM: *Please pray and fellowship over which applications to cover. Please do not try to cover all the applications. It is sufficient to cover just **one or two applications** which are appropriate for the age group of the children you are serving.*

1. **We should be those who fear God.** God is the highest authority in the universe. We should fear God by being subject to the authorities He put over us. Our attitude should be one of respect. In the rare situation that we are asked to do something against God's Word, we should stand firmly for God. We should not fear what man can do, but fear the almighty God.
2. **We need to know God through His Word.** We need to spend time with the Lord by praying to Him often and reading His Word so that we may know God's heart. By knowing God's heart (what He loves and what He hates) we can be helped not to sin against Him. We should have a strong fear of sinning against God. If we obey God's Word, we will have peace in our conscience before God and man.
3. **We should not be self-centered but God-centered.** For example, the midwives obeyed God and saved the lives of many Hebrew baby boys. Peter and the apostles continued speaking about the Lord Jesus for the sake of other people, so that they could also know the Lord Jesus. If they had stopped speaking, others would have suffered.
4. **We should pray to ask God to strengthen us daily to make the right decisions in all aspects of our lives.** Even when no one is looking, God is looking. Practically speaking, if we see something that does not belong to us, due to our fear of God, we must not take it. If someone has lost something, we should try to find the owner and return it. If we borrow a book or a pen or pencil, or money from someone, we should always remember to return it. For example, we might borrow a pencil or pen from the box next to the telephone on the service counter in the meeting hall; we should make sure to return it right away. If we keep what does not belong to us, it is just like stealing. We should not touch other people's belongings, including food items, without their permission. We should not take anything unless it has been offered to us by the owner. We should always keep in mind that God is watching over us and we want to please Him.

Adapted from Church in New York City Children's Meeting lessons, 1/11/98; 1/13/02; 1/20/08