

Jesus Welcomes Children

GREATNESS • LECTIONARY 25 • YEAR B

MARK 9:30-37

PreK-
K



25

What's happening in this story?

Jesus turns the world upside down with a new idea of what God's world looks like. The last will be first, and it's all about serving others. As Jesus explains it, the power of the kingdom of God is completely opposite of how the world understands power and why he uses the example of a child. Children are among the most vulnerable and powerless members in society, but those who welcome and serve people without power here on earth exhibit the power that is commended in the kingdom of God.

What does this mean for kids?

Little kids will love this story because Jesus is using *them* to teach that when we welcome someone vulnerable among us, we welcome Jesus himself. Kids will hear they are welcomed into the life of Jesus and that they really matter to him. They can also recognize "Whoever wants to be first must be last" as a radical teaching. Kids are tuned in to who is more skilled, who is older, who is stronger, who has more power. Jesus' turning this idea on its head will make an impression on them.

What is the lectionary connection?

While still early in the academic year, talk with kids about what servanthood looks like in a school setting. Ask kids how teachers serve them throughout the day and how they in turn can practice servanthood toward their peers, teachers, custodians, food service workers, and others—especially those in positions society ranks "last."

AGE LEVEL TIP

Arguing over who is the best and the greatest will be familiar to kids this age. The idea that the last will be first and the first will be last will be challenging and interesting to kids.



GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Construction paper (scraps)
- Scissors
- Crayons
- Markers
- Glue sticks

LESSON SUPPLIES

- Building blocks
- Handheld mirror
- Rhythm sticks (2 per kid)

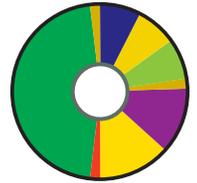
WHIRL SUPPLIES • WHIRL STORY BIBLES • DVD • FLOOR MAT • LEAFLETS

Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Invite kids to build with blocks. Encourage them to see who can build the greatest tower. **What makes a tower the greatest? Is it the tallest or the longest? Is it the prettiest or the most complicated? Maybe it's the one that is hardest to knock down?**

Invite kids to sit around the Floor Mat.

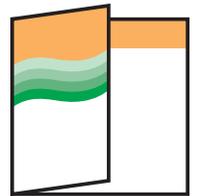
Point out the season (Season after Pentecost), color (green), and icon (footprints). Give each kid a piece of scrap paper. **Let's each put a piece of scrap paper over the footprints and words in the big green section of the Floor Mat. Even if we each only have one small piece of paper, together we can cover up a pretty big part of the Season after Pentecost section. A little bit can make a big difference.** Give kids time to see how much of the section they can cover.



Pass the handheld mirror around the circle. **The Bible tells us that Jesus thinks kids are great. When the mirror gets to you, look at your reflection and say, "I am GREAT!"**

Pass out leaflets and crayons.

In the Bible story we will hear today, Jesus and the disciples are on their way to a city. Look at the roads in front of them on the leaflet. Help them choose the road that goes to the city, Capernaum. Draw their path with your crayon. I wonder how they knew which way to go. Collect their leaflets until Respond.



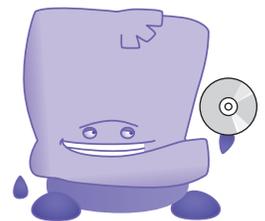
Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

The kids in the video are excited to be part of a play. Have you ever been in a play? Let's watch together to see what happens when everyone wants the same part.

View Episode 2, "Odditions," on the Whirl Year B Fall PreK–Grade 2 DVD.

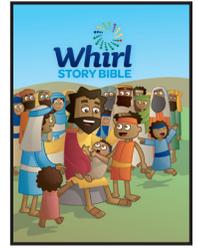
Ask kids these questions about the video:

- **Which part in the play do most of the kids want?**
- **Why do you think most of the kids want to be Jesus?**
- **Who would you want to be if you were trying out for the play?**
- **What words would you use to describe Jesus?**
- **Why did Chet choose Jax?**



Pass out Whirl Story Bibles to kids.

Let's find our story today! Help kids find "Last and Least" on page 282. Start by pointing out the graphic that shows the footprints in the green circle for the Season after Pentecost. Before you read, invite kids to look for the little child whom Jesus welcomes.



Read the story and Ada and Otto's questions and comments on each page.

Ask these questions after you read the story:

- What were the disciples arguing about?
- How do you think the disciples felt when Jesus asked them about their argument?
- If you want to be first, what does Jesus say you have to do?
- What does Jesus say happens when you welcome a child?
- I wonder what the little child thought when Jesus was talking about him.

Play together!

Pass out two rhythm sticks to each kid to tap, or use hands to clap. Demonstrate a simple rhythm pattern with sticks or hands. **Tap your sticks (Clap your hands) the way I tap the sticks (clap my hands). Make your sticks (hands) sound the same way.** Do it a couple more times. **Now, someone else can be the leader.** Invite the kids to take turns being the leader and tapping or clapping a rhythm for others to follow. **Sometimes we are leaders, and sometimes we are followers. Who do we all want to follow? Jesus!**

BIBLE BIT

- Jesus uses everyday moments to teach how to live, showing patience and creativity when gently leading the disciples. We can follow this example when working with kids.

WATCH IT AGAIN

- Let's watch the video again. This time, see what each kid thinks is most important about being Jesus in the play. What does the director think is most important?

OUR CHURCH

- Find a small job kids can do to help, such as sorting Sunday school supplies or testing and discarding markers or glue bottles that no longer work.

TODAY'S READINGS

Proverbs 31:10-31 📖 • Jeremiah 11:18-20 📖 • James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a
Mark 9:30-37

RESPOND 10

Pass out leaflets, scissors, and glue sticks.

Unfold and tear off leaflet square.

1. Talk about the three habitats (sky, land, and ocean) and the great animals that live in each place. **The bald eagle is one of the largest birds. Its wings can reach wider than most adult humans are tall. Lions are called “king of the beasts.” Why do you think they are called that? Great white sharks can be more than 20 feet long and weigh more than 7,000 pounds. All of these animals may seem to be the “greatest” in the places where they live.**
2. Have kids cut out the three small animals on the back of the leaflet panel.
3. **Let’s attach the three small animals to the place where they live. Where does the hummingbird go? A tiny hummingbird is very important to the flowers. It spreads pollen to help the flowers bloom and grow.** Help kids glue the hummingbird in the sky.
4. **What is greater: a lion or an ant? An ant is one of the strongest animals on earth. For their size, ants are stronger than a lion!** Glue the ants on the land.
5. **Do you think the small fish feels great? Small fish are very important to the ocean. They provide food for bigger fish. Sometimes they eat the weeds too.** Glue the fish on the ocean.
6. **Big things can be great *and* small things can be great! Jesus loves everyone—small and tall!**
7. **What is your favorite animal? Where does it live? Why is it great?**

LAUNCH 10

Circle up with kids for a quick review.

Jesus said the greatest follower is someone who serves and takes care of others. When we help someone, it is like we are helping Jesus! How can we help people this week? Take time to hear kids’ responses.

Pass out leaflet panels and markers.

Invite kids to use the markers to make small dots to decorate the “W” on the banner. **Jesus tells us that when we welcome anyone, we welcome him.** Hang the banners in your room to welcome others.

Send kids out.

Pass the mirror around the circle. **This time when it’s your turn, say, “Jesus cares for me!”**

Pray together: **Dear God, help us welcome everyone. Remind us that there are lots of ways to be great. Amen.**

Thank kids for being good helpers and followers today. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.