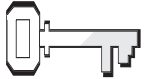


The Boy Who Did His Best



References

Luke 2:40, 52;
Matthew 13:55;
Mark 6:3; John 7:15;
The Desire of Ages,
pp. 68-74, 84-92



Memory Verse

"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might" (Ecclesiastes 9:10, NIV).



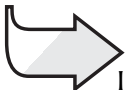
Objectives

The children will:

Know that they serve when they are learning to do their best

Feel a desire to serve cheerfully at school.

Respond by doing their best to serve at school.



The Message

I serve when I do my best.

Monthly Theme

We can serve God wherever we are.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Jesus is a home-schooled child. He faithfully and diligently works with Joseph in the carpenter's shop and becomes an able carpenter. His mother teaches Him to read and understand the Scriptures. He studies nature and is often in communion with His heavenly Father. Jesus learns so much that in later years people wonder how He became such a learned person without going to the rabbinical schools. (See John 7:15.)

This is a lesson about service.

Doing our best in whatever our hand finds to do and trying to learn as much as possible is to do service Jesus-style. We, like Him, must go beyond merely going through the motions, and learn and do whatever we do with all our might. Then our service will rightly represent the One who gives us the strength to do our best, and we will be an example to the children in our care.

Teacher Enrichment

"The child Jesus did not receive instruction in the synagogue schools. His mother was His first human teacher. From her lips and from the scrolls of the prophets, He learned of heavenly things. The very words which He Himself had spoken to Moses for Israel He was now taught at His mother's knee" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 70).

"[Jesus] was not willing to be defective, even in the handling of tools. He was perfect as a workman, as He was perfect in character" (*ibid.*, p. 72).

Jesus learned from 4 schools: 1—from the family, at mother's knee (*ibid.*, p. 70); 2—in the carpenter shop (p. 72); 3—from His daily prayer time with God (pp. 70, 71); and 4—from nature and the outdoors (p. 70).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 5.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	<i>A. Carpenter Shop</i> <i>B. Mother's Knee</i> <i>C. Nature School</i> <i>D. Prayer School</i>	piece of wood for each child, tools such as hammers, nails, sandpaper, screws, a drill, screwdrivers, etc. "scroll" with memory verse pinecone for each child, peanut butter, birdseed; or empty plastic jug, birdseed; or specimens from nature none
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	<i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> wooden bowl book-shaped cutouts
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	adult assistant, earliten boy, Bible-times costumes, carpenter hand tools, wooden bench or stool, table or workbench none Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>My Best in Everything</i>	paper and pencil for each child
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Say It With a Flower</i>	colored-paper muffin cups, crepe paper, wire, colorful cloth, scissors, fabric glue, other art supplies, index cards, Bible

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Ask them to begin a Readiness Activity.

1

Readiness Activities

This week, present readiness activities in four stations. These stations represent the various schools in which the boy Jesus learned. Students who finish the work at one station may move on to the next. (Small church or crowded church: Do the activities up front. The children can take turns coming up front to do an activity.)

You Need:

- a piece of wood for each child
- hammers
- nails
- sandpaper
- screws
- a drill
- screwdrivers, etc.

A. Carpenter Shop

Give each child a piece of planed wood and invite them to use the tools at the station. Give them time to pound nails, sand wood, etc. Ask a teacher or another adult to supervise, encouraging the children to do a good job.

Debriefing

Ask: **What would you learn if your father was a carpenter?** (how to work with wood) **What can you learn by working with wood?** (to make useful things, to work hard, to be patient, to finish the job, etc.) **The carpenter shop was one of the schools where Jesus learned. What do you think He might have learned there?** (to do a good job; keep working, even if you don't feel like it) **What can you learn from this?** (to do my best) **How do you feel when you have done your best?** (happy, proud of my work, etc.) **Who are you serving when you do your best?** (God, people) **Our message for today tells us:**



I SERVE WHEN I DO MY BEST.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- scroll with today's memory verse

B. Mother's Knee

Gather the children around your knee; help them imagine Jesus at His mother's knee. There He learned reading, writing, math, and Bible stories. Show the scroll and use it to teach the memory verse.

Debriefing

What would you like to have asked Mary? What else might Jesus have learned from Mary? (to obey, to share, to serve, memorize Bible verses, to do His best) **How do you feel when you are at your mother's knee?** (safe, close to her, closer to Jesus because she teaches me about Him) **What do you learn at your mother's knee?** (about Jesus; to do what's right; to do my best, etc.) **Do you want to do your best like Jesus did? Let's say our message together:**



I SERVE WHEN I DO MY BEST.

Say that with me.

C. Nature School

Provide supplies for the children to make simple bird feeders. This can be done by spreading peanut butter on a pinecone and rolling the pinecone in birdseed, or by cutting a large hole out of a plastic jug and filling the bottom with birdseed. Or, bring in specimens from nature for the children to examine.

Debriefing

How did Jesus treat God's creatures? (kindly) **What does nature teach us about God?** (God takes good care of us; God loves us so much that He created extra special things for us.)

Nature was another school where Jesus learned that God creates the very best. Jesus studied nature and learned many things that He later used to teach others about God. Are you a good nature student? Let's say our message:



I SERVE WHEN I DO MY BEST.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- pinecone for each child
 - peanut butter
 - birdseed
- or
- empty plastic jug
 - birdseed
- or
- specimens from nature

D. Prayer School

What do you think Mary told Jesus about prayer? (God always hears and answers. You have to listen to what God tells you deep inside. God sometimes uses people to answer prayers, etc.) Have a teacher at this station to pray with the children who visit there.

Debriefing

What did Jesus learn by talking with His heavenly Father? (God would help Him to know what to do that day, and how to do it well, etc.) **What can you learn when you pray?** (God will help you to know what to do each day; how to do it well; He will impress you how to be like Him, etc.) **How do you feel about prayer? Prayer is one way of serving God and others. We learn to do our best when we pray. Our message says:**



I SERVE WHEN I DO MY BEST.

Say that with me.

Note: Prayer and Praise appears on page 66.

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- adult
- earliten boy
- Bible-times costumes
- carpenter tools (hammer, wood plane, saw, etc.)
- wooden bench or stool
- workbench or table

Experiencing the Story

Involve the children in an interactive story.

When you say:

work, working

learn, learning

They do:

Pound fists together.

Tap forehead.

Characters: Joseph, Jesus dressed in a Bible-times costume

Props: carpenter tools (hammer, wood plane, saw, etc.), wooden bench or stool, table

Have an adult “Joseph” and an earliten “Jesus” silently act out the story as the teacher reads or tells it.

Read or tell the story.

Joseph laid the tools on his workbench in the carpenter shop and stretched his arms. (*Prompt your Joseph to do the same.*) The smell of wood shavings perfumed the air. Tiny dust particles danced in the sunlight that streamed through the windows. (*Prompt your Jesus to “work” with His tools.*) Joseph glanced over to where Jesus was **working**. (*Pound fists together.*) Even though He was still a boy, Jesus was becoming a fine carpenter. (*Continue to prompt “Joseph” and “Jesus” as the story unfolds.*)

Jesus looked up from His **work** [*Pound fists together.*] and caught Joseph watching Him. “I think it’s done,” Jesus said proudly, rubbing His fingers over the wood of the stool Joseph had given Him to smooth and sand. “Do you think our neighbor will be pleased with it?”

Joseph joined Jesus at the work-

bench. He looked at the smooth, clean lines. He ran his fingers over the wood, feeling for any rough or uneven spots. It was perfect. “You’ve done fine **work** [*Pound fists together.*],” Joseph said. “I know our neighbor will be very pleased.”

“I did my best,” Jesus humbly replied. Joseph nodded proudly. Jesus always did His best.

“God can use us, Jesus, when we do our best for Him,” Joseph whispered.

Jesus did not answer. His thoughts were miles away at the temple in Jerusalem. At age 12 Jesus had visited there, and since then He kept thinking about the Passover lamb that He saw. He knew that He Himself would someday be the real Passover Lamb. But, for now, Jesus was serving God by doing His best in the carpenter shop and by **learning**. [*Tap forehead.*]

“**Learn** [*Tap forehead.*] everything you can,” Joseph told Jesus. “That way You will be ready to serve the world when God shows You His plan.”

Joseph’s words were interrupted by scuffling sounds and giggles from the doorway. “Can Jesus come out to play?”

Joseph turned and smiled at the neighborhood boys. But Jesus answered before Joseph could. “I still have some **work** [*Pound fists together.*] to do,” He said. “And then I have to study reading with My mother. But maybe later.”

Joseph’s heart swelled with love as he watched Jesus. “Why don’t we quit for today,” Joseph said, lifting the stool down from the bench.

“Thank you, sir,” Jesus answered as He put away His tools. “Thanks for being such a good teacher.”

Joseph and Jesus walked home together. Jesus enjoyed spending time with His father. He liked **learning** [*Tap forehead.*] to be a good carpenter.

Jesus' mother was also His teacher. She taught Him to read. He studied the Scriptures at her knee. He also studied about plants and animals, and how to pray to His Father in heaven. What a good student He was! When He grew up, people were amazed at His knowledge. (John 7:15).

Like Jesus, we serve when we are **learning** [Tap forehead.] to do our best.

Debriefing

Say: **Our lesson story mentioned four places where Jesus learned. What are they?** (in the carpenter's shop; at His mother's knee; in nature; in prayer with His heavenly Father) **Imagine that Jesus lives in your neighborhood. Would you want to be His friend? Why?**

What do you think you could learn from playing with Jesus? (to play fair, act kindly, to play the best you can) **If Jesus was in your classroom at school, what difference might it make in the way you work?** (I would try harder to do my best.) **Let's remember:**



I SERVE WHEN I DO MY BEST.

Memory Verse

Use the following motions to teach the memory verse. Repeat until the children know the verse.

Whatever your hand ... finds to do, do it ... Wave hand. Move hands as if doing something.

with all your might. Flex arm muscles.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 Hold up Bible, then nine fingers, then ten fingers.

Bible Study

Say: **Let's look at some verses that tell us something about Jesus when He was a child. I will ask some questions about Jesus, followed by a Bible text. When you find the text, stand up and read it.** (Teachers help the nonreaders.)

1. What does the Bible say about Jesus when He was a child? Luke 2:40, 52

2. What two Bible verses say that Jesus' father was a carpenter? Let's find them one at a time: Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3

3. What shows that Jesus was a very good student at His mother's knee? John 7:15

Debriefing

Say: **What helped Jesus to become strong?** (He worked hard at home and in the carpenter shop. He spent time outdoors, etc.) **What helped Jesus to be filled with wisdom and to be in favor with God and man?** (studying the Scriptures and nature, doing His best, working hard, praying, obeying His parents and God)

Would you like to have a friend like Jesus? (Yes.) You do! How can you be like Jesus? (Read the Bible; accept Him as your Saviour; pray to Him; serve others; let Him help you to do your best in all you do; etc.) **Let's say our message together:**



I SERVE WHEN I DO MY BEST.

You Need:

- Bibles

(Adapted from *Children—Ideas for Ministry*, compiled by Barbara Manspeaker, Lincoln, NE: AdventSource, 1999, p. 4.)

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Review the memory verse and allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

"Smile, Smile, Smile" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 107)

"Teach Me, Lord" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 110)

"Be Like Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 115)

"I Want to Be" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 124)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Collect the offering in a wooden bowl to remind the children of Jesus' work in His father's carpenter shop.

You Need:

- a wooden bowl



Prayer

Give a book-shaped cutout to each child. Have the children write or draw one school subject in which they want to do better. Have a silent prayer where each child asks Jesus to help him/her. Close by asking God (out loud) to help the children do their best.

You Need:

- book-shaped cutouts

3

Applying the Lesson

My Best in Everything

Ask: **What kind of school things are easy for you to do? I am going to name some; if they are easy for you, raise your hand. If they are hard, shake your head.** Pause after each to allow the children to respond. **Singing, math, reading, memorizing, writing a letter, making up a poem, science, art, computer.**

Distribute paper and pencils.

Ask the children to write or draw on their paper the one school thing from the list that is easiest for them. After a few minutes ask the children to share their response with a partner and then share with the whole group. Repeat the process, this time writing/drawing the one thing

from the list that is hardest for them.

Debriefing

Ask: **How do you feel when you do something that is easy for you?** (glad; bored; like it; etc.) **Does Jesus want you to do your best on easy things?** (Yes.)

How do you feel when you must do something that is hard for you? (scared; don't like it; like a failure; don't even want to try; try to do my best anyway; etc.) **Who will help you to do your best in all that you do?** (Jesus) **Have you asked Him to help you to do your best today? Let's say our message together:**



I SERVE WHEN I DO MY BEST.

You Need:

- paper
- pencils

4

Sharing the Lesson

Say It With a Flower

Have the children make their own original flower, using any of the provided materials. Or, provide a sample that they can copy. Make the stems from twigs or wire.

Help the children write on an index card: "I will do my best." Attach the card to the flower.

Debriefing

Read aloud Luke 2:52. Ask: **In what ways did Jesus grow?** (He grew more wise, tall, godly, friendly.) **In what ways**

are you growing? (Accept answers.)

What do you like about growing up? (I get taller, learn new things, can do more things, etc.)

Encourage the children to give the flower to their teacher, parent, or other appropriate person while sharing the message with them. **Let's say our message again:**



I SERVE WHEN I DO MY BEST.

You Need:

- colored-paper
- muffin cups
- crepe paper
- wire
- colorful cloth
- scissors
- glue
- index cards
- Bible

Closing

Close with a prayer that we will always do our very best.

The Boy Who Did His Best

References

Luke 2:40, 52;
Matthew 13:55;
Mark 6:3; John 7:15;
The Desire of Ages,
pp. 68-74, 84-92

Have you just learned how to make something new? You were so proud of your work because you did your best. You put it where everyone could enjoy it. How happy you were that you did your best!

The Boy Jesus was learning every day to do His best. Let's visit Him in His father's carpenter shop. . . .

Memory Verse

"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might" (Ecclesiastes 9:10, NIV).

Joseph put his tools on the workbench in the carpenter shop. He stretched his arms. The smell of wood shavings perfumed the air. Tiny dust particles danced in the sunlight that streamed through the windows. Joseph glanced over to where Jesus was working with His tools. Even though He was still a boy, Jesus was becoming a good carpenter.

Jesus looked up from his work and caught Joseph watching Him. "I think it's done," Jesus said with a smile. He rubbed His fingers over the wood of the stool Joseph had given Him to smooth and sand.

Joseph joined Jesus at the workbench. He looked at the smooth, clean lines. He ran his fingers over the wood, feeling for any rough or uneven spots. It was perfect. "You've done well," Joseph replied. "Anyone would be proud to own this."

"I did my best," Jesus humbly replied. Joseph nodded proudly. Jesus always did His best.

"God can use us, Son, when we do our best for Him," Joseph whispered.

Jesus did not answer. His thoughts were miles away at the temple in Jerusalem. At age 12 Jesus had visited there. Since then, He kept thinking about the Passover lamb He saw. He knew that He Himself would someday be the real Passover Lamb. But, for now, Jesus was



serv-
ing God
by doing His best in the carpenter shop
and by learning.

"Learn everything you can," Joseph often told Jesus. "That way You will be ready to serve the world when God shows You His plan."

Scuffling sounds and giggles from the doorway interrupted Joseph's words. "Can Jesus come out to play?"

Joseph turned and smiled at the neighborhood boys. But Jesus answered before Joseph could. "I still have some work to do," He said. "And then I have to study reading with my mother. But maybe later."

Joseph smiled at Jesus and at the waiting boys. "I think we should quit for today," he announced with a smile. Carefully, he lifted the stool down from the bench and leaned it against the wall.

"Thank you, sir," Jesus answered and began putting His tools away. Quickly, He gathered the wood chips and put them in a basket. He would take them home to be used in the cooking fire.

Joseph and Jesus walked home together. Jesus enjoyed spending time with His father. He liked learning to be a good carpenter. Jesus' mother was also His teacher. He learned to read and studied the Scriptures at her knee. He also learned about plants and animals. Jesus

and His mother often prayed to His Father in heaven. What a good student He was! When He grew up, people were amazed at His knowledge. (John 7:15).

Like Jesus, we serve when we are learning to do our best.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- With your family, go for a nature walk. Imagine that the Boy Jesus is with you. What can you learn together about God's creation? Stop to rest and read your lesson story with your family.
- Read Ecclesiastes 9:10 together.
- Sing "All Things Bright and Beautiful" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 51). Then pray a thank-You prayer to God for making "all things well."

Sunday

- For family worship, read Ephesians 6:7 together. Tell what it means in your own words.
- Sing "I Want to Be" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 124).
- Read or say your memory verse together.
- Make Strong-Hand Cookies* to help you remember your memory verse. Roll out cookie dough. Trace around your hand several times with a toothpick. Bake the handprints and enjoy! Pray that God will help you use your hands for Him.

Monday

- For family worship, tape some paper to a door. On it, have everyone list some things they can do. Then look at the list, pick one thing, and show, tell, or sing about it. To the tune of "Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush" sing a song such as:
This is the way I brush my teeth, brush my teeth, brush my teeth,
This is the way I brush my teeth. I learn things as I grow. (Crouch, then stretch tall and reach toward ceiling.)†

Tuesday

- During family worship, ask your parents to tell you about something they were good at when they were a child. Read Luke 2:40, 52 together.

Where did Jesus go to school? What did He learn?

- Name five things that you think Jesus did well. Tell about a new thing you want to learn.
- Say your memory verse together. Then ask God to help you learn new things every day.

Wednesday

- During worship today ask an adult to tell about something that God helped them learn.
- Write your memory verse on a big piece of paper. Ask your family to draw pictures of some things that they want to learn to do better.
- Read Philippians 4:13. Make up a tune for that verse and sing it. Then ask God to help you do hard things.

Thursday

- With your family, read Matthew 11:29. Check two things God wants you to learn from Jesus: ___ To do math ___ To be gentle ___ To be humble
- Make a bookmark to keep in your Bible. Draw some flowers on it and add a favorite Bible verse. Try to learn a new Bible verse every day.
- Ask God to help you learn more about Him.

Friday

- Before worship today, make a memory verse scroll from paper and plastic straws or small sticks.
- During worship, act out this week's Bible story with your family. When you get to the part about Jesus learning at His mother's knee, have "Jesus" read the scroll. Say the memory verse together.
- Read Deuteronomy 10:12 together. How will you serve in Sabbath School tomorrow? Remember to do your best.
- Sing "More About Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 38). Then thank God for the Sabbath.

*Adapted from Kathie Reimer, *1001 Ways to Help Your Child Walk With God*, Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1994, pp. 53, 54.

†Adapted from *Fun to Learn Bible Lessons: K-3*, volume 2, Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 1995, p. 17.