**October 25th, 2020: Elementary Sunday School Lesson
CHRISTIAN LIVING Lesson 4: Ready for Jesus**

**AS KIDS ARRIVE: Jesus Is Here – set up, Object Talk (Materials: one empty chair)**

You will entice the class that there will be a special guest who seems to be late, but at the end of class turns out the guest was Jesus, who was here all the time.

**WHAT YOU WILL DO:** Before class place an empty chair in the middle of the room, and tell the children that a special guest will be joining. If the kids ask who the quest will be, explain that it is someone they know. As time goes on, if the kids begin to inquire more about where the quest is, simply say they will know soon enough. About ten minutes before the end of the class, you will explain that the special guest was Jesus, and he was here all along. You will then ask the children if they have any questions they would like to ask Jesus.

**WHAT YOU WILL SAY:** Today, we will have a very special guest joining our class. When the quest arrives, I want everyone to be on his or her best behavior.

**ACTIVITY: How to be Ready for Jesus (Materials: Word Puzzle printed, pencils)**

**WHAT YOU WILL DO:** Give each child a pencil or a marker and a copy of the crossword puzzle. Have the children read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 from their Bibles. Then, have them refer to their Bibles to complete the crossword puzzle.

**Discussion Questions: (Optional)**
1. Do most people expect Jesus to return at any time? *(No)*
2. How, as Christians, should we wait for the return of Christ? *(Be awake and sober)*
3. What two words does 1 Thessalonians 5:8 compare to a breastplate? *(Faith and Love)*
4. Which words are compared to a helmet? *(Hope of Salvation)*

**OPENING PRAYER AND PRAISE AND MEMORY WORK: "So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him." Matthew 24:44 NIV**
Explain to the children how Jesus often called Himself the Son of Man. No one else in the Bible called Jesus by that title.

**SCRIPTURE READING AND DISCUSSION**

**Introduction:** Everyone loves Christmas right? Well, let’s suppose you knew Christmas was coming, but you didn't know when! Nobody knew when. Each year, it was a secret, and it could be at any time. Everyone knew they would have a lot of fun giving and receiving gifts, singing and eating delicious food, but when would it be? How would you prepare for such a day? What would you do differently compared to how you prepare for Christmas now? (Allow for discussion)

In our story today, Jesus is talking with His disciples about the day He would return from Heaven. The disciples asked when that would be, but Jesus could not tell them. As we read, see if you can tell why Jesus did not tell.

**Read Matthew 24:36-44**

**Discussion Questions:**
1 Who is the only person who knows the day and hour when Jesus will return? *(God)*
2. What were the people during the time of Noah doing, and why was it wrong? *(They were eating, drinking and having a good time instead of paying attention to what was about to happen)*
3. Besides Lord, what title did Jesus use to describe Himself in these verses?*(Son of Man)*
4. Why does Jesus compare His coming to that of a thief? *(Because a thief comes when he is not expected)*
5. How should we prepare for when the Lord returns? *(Keep watch, and be ready)*

**CLASS EXERCISE: Ready, Set, Squeeze (Materials: dice or large coin, stuffed animal)**

**WHAT YOU WILL DO:** Divide the class into two teams. Since holding hands is necessary, you may want to have girls on one team and boys on the other for particular age groups. Teams must have an equal number of players. Have one team sit down in a semi-circle, and the other team opposite them in another semi-circle. See diagram below.

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All the children will keep their eyes closed except the two children nearest to the teacher. They are the leaders and will keep their eyes open to watch as the teacher drops a die or a coin. The players on each team hold hands. The two children at the opposite end from the leaders are the anchors. With their free hand, the anchors will try to be the first to grab the stuffed animal when their other hand is squeezed.

When the dice comes up even, or the coin comes up heads, the leader of each team will quickly squeeze the hand of the one they are holding, then that child will quickly squeeze the hand of the next person, and so on until the hand of the anchor is squeezed. The team that grabs the stuffed animal first receives 1,000 points.

Sometimes, the hand squeezing happens although the dice comes up odd. It is impossible to stop the chain reaction once it starts. This makes the game even more fun. The team that grabs the stuffed animal on a false start looses 1,000 points. After several rounds of play, the team with the most points wins.

**Play option:** Instead of adding up points, the team that grabs the stuffed animal first on each round will rotate their players. The anchor becomes the leader, and everyone else moves down. When the stuffed animal is grabbed on a false start, the players rotate the opposite way, meaning the leader goes back to being the anchor. The winning team is the one where the original leader has rotated all the way through the team and ends up back at the leader spot.

**WHAT YOU WILL SAY:** Jesus promised he would return some day, but when? Jesus says, “Keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.” (Matthew 24: 42) So how do we keep watch? Well, it is a little like the game we just played. The leaders knew that as soon as the dice came up even, they needed to squeeze the hand of their neighbor. Everyone else was ready to squeeze the next hand as soon as they felt a squeeze. We can be ready for Jesus by living according to His will everyday. Also, the leaders needed to make sure the dice was even, so they really needed to pay attention. It is like that with the return of our Lord. We need to pay attention, and be alert, because as the Bible says, “The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.” (1 Thessalonians 5:2)

**ALTERNATE CLASS EXERCISE: Jesus Is Here – conclusion, Object Talk**

(Near the end of the class) Perhaps now is a good time to introduce our special guest. Our guest today is Jesus, and he was actually here all along, from the very beginning. That is right, Jesus is always with us, knowing everything we say and do. Were you on your best behavior? Does anyone have any questions he or she would like to ask Jesus?

**APPLICATION:** So how do you get ready for Jesus? First, pay attention and stay alert. When someone drives a car, they must pay attention and stay alert, or else they will have an accident. So as Christians, we must also pay attention to the teachings of Jesus, and stay alert for opportunities to follow the Will of God. Then, we must know that Jesus is always with us, everywhere, all the time. Whether we are in school, attending church, at the mall, doing homework, doing something wrong, disobeying our parents, getting into trouble, when we are afraid, all the time. When we learn Jesus is always there right beside us, we will do things a little differently. We will do things that will be pleasing to God. Now we are ready.

**NEXT WEEK:** What is the best thing about your home? Come back next week to find out.

**CLOSING PRAYER**

**What we learned:** Today, the children learned that it is important to be ready for the return of Jesus. To be ready means to pay attention and stay alert to the teachings of Jesus. In knowing Jesus is always there right besides us, we should act and behave in a way that is pleasing to God. (Scripture used: Matthew 24:36-44)

**Memory Verse:** "So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.” Matthew 24:44 NIV Practice this verse several times with your child during the week. This will help him or her remember the verse and it will also help to reinforce what he or she learned during class.

**Suggested Parent/Child Activity:** Play a few games of "Let's Get Ready" with your child. Pick an event from below or come up with some of your own. Then with a stop watch, pencil and paper, each of you quickly write down in one minute the most important things to do to prepare for the event. You can write down things to do before leaving, things to bring, etc. Then compare lists to see how well you matched up. What do we need to do to prepare for the return of Jesus? Events: 1. Going on a vacation 3. Having a garage sale 2. Going to the swimming pool 4. Having a Birthday party

**Daily Prayer:** Dear Lord, no one knows when You will return, but I want to be ready for that day. Let me keep Your commands close to my heart, and help me behave in a way that is pleasing to You. Come Lord Jesus. Amen.