

Unit 2. Children of the Bible - NT

Lesson 2.6: Ignatius the Humble

Teacher Preparation and Materials Needed:

Bible Story:

Biblical reference: Matthew 18:1-4, Mark 10:13-16, and inspired by the example of early church father Ignatius of Antioch

*The story is adapted from Hyde, Katherine Bolger. Brave, Faithful, and True: Children of the Bible. Ancient Faith Publishing, 2023. (Please note that, although this is a biblical story, the name of character in this story does not appear in the Bible.)

Activities:

*Implement based on available time. Detailed instructions and materials list are provided in the lesson.

Activity 1: "The Humble Garden" Planting Activity

Activity 2: "St. Ignatius the Humble" Coloring Page

Words of the Week:

խոնարհ - kho-narh - humble

մեծ - medz - great

մանուկ - ma-noog - child

Objective

Children will understand that humility means putting others first and serving with love, and that God honors those who have humble hearts like children.

Moral Character Focus:

Knowledge: Children will learn that Ignatius followed Jesus' teaching about becoming humble like children and served others with a gentle heart.

Understanding: Children will recognize that humility means not thinking we are better than others and being willing to serve and learn.

Application: Children will identify ways they can practice humility by helping others, listening well, sharing, and not boasting.

Values: Children will develop a heart that values humility, gentleness, and service to others, following Jesus' example.

Memory Verse:

**"Whoever humbles himself like this child
is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."**

- Matthew 18:4

Lesson

Open with prayer:

Wisdom of the Father, O Jesus, grant to me the wisdom to think, speak, and do that which is good in Your sight. Save me from all evil and distracting thoughts, words, and deeds. Have mercy upon your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.

Lesson Body: Ignatius the Humble

In the busy city of Antioch, there lived a man named Ignatius. He was a leader in the church, teaching many people about Jesus. But according to the tradition, Ignatius' story didn't begin there. When Ignatius was a very young boy, something very meaningful happened to him, where he learned an important truth: that the greatest people in God's kingdom are those who are humble, just like children. This truth changed his life forever.

Jesus was teaching His disciples, and the disciples argued about who was the greatest among them. They wanted to know who would be most important in heaven.

Hearing this, Jesus did something surprising. He called a little child to come and stand among them. Then Jesus said, "Unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

According to tradition, that little boy was Ignatius. He never forgot what Jesus said. He realized that being humble means not thinking you are better than others. It means serving others with love. It means being teachable and gentle, just like a child.

As Ignatius grew older and became a church teacher, he always remembered to stay humble. When people praised him, he would say, "I am only a servant. Jesus is the one who is truly great."

When younger believers came to him with questions, Ignatius would kneel and listen carefully, just as you would listen to a friend. He never acted like he was too important to help someone.

"Remember," Ignatius would often say, "in God's kingdom, the last shall be first, and the first shall be last. If you want to be great, learn to serve."

Ignatius loved children. He would welcome them warmly and remind everyone that Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Even when Ignatius faced hard times, he stayed humble and faithful. He trusted God completely. He knew that pride makes our hearts hard, but humility makes our hearts soft and ready to love.

With love and gently smile he often said, "Look to Jesus. He is the King of all kings, yet He washed His disciples' feet. He came not to be served, but to serve. When we follow His example, our hearts become humble and beautiful."

Ignatius lived his whole life with a humble heart, and God used him to touch many lives. He showed everyone that the path to greatness in God's kingdom is the path of humility.

Ignatius taught that being humble means:

- Putting others first
- Listening more than talking
- Admitting when you are wrong
- Serving without expecting praise
- Trusting God instead of trusting only yourself



Words of the Week:

խոնարհ - kho-narh - humble

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Memory Verse:

“Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

- Matthew 18:4

Bible Verse Game to Remember

“Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 18:4)

Motions:

“Whoever humbles himself”
(bow head gently)

“like this child”
(point to self)

“is the greatest”
(stretch arms up high)

“in the kingdom of heaven”
(point upward)

Connection: *Jesus teaches us that humble hearts are the greatest hearts in God’s kingdom. When we are humble like children, God is pleased.*



Activity 1: "The Humble Garden" Planting Activity

Materials: Small cups or pots, soil, fast-growing seeds (beans or sunflowers), markers.

Instructions:

1. Give each child a cup, soil, and seeds.
2. As they plant, explain: "A seed must be buried low in the ground before it can grow tall and beautiful. That's like humility! We must humble ourselves before God can help us grow."
3. Have children write their name and "I will grow in humility" on their cup.
4. Send plants home with instructions to water them and watch them grow.

Learning Point: Just like seeds must go down before they grow up, we must humble ourselves before God will lift us up. Humility is the soil where faith grows strong.

Activity 2: "St. Ignatius the Humble" Coloring Page



Review

Memory Verse Review:

“Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 18:4)

Lesson Review:

1. What did Jesus say we must become like to enter the kingdom of heaven? (*Like little children*)
2. What does it mean to be humble? (*Not thinking we are better than others; serving others with love; being gentle and teachable*)
3. How did Ignatius show humility? (*He served others, listened to people, gave praise to Jesus instead of himself, and welcomed everyone*)
4. Did Ignatius think he was too important to help others? (*No. He always made time to listen and serve*)
5. How can we practice humility like Ignatius? (*By helping others, sharing, listening, admitting when we are wrong, and putting others first*)

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Life Application:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

Ignatius shows us that true greatness in God’s eyes comes from having a humble heart. When we help someone without being asked, when we let others go first, when we say “I’m sorry” when we are wrong, we are practicing humility. Jesus loves humble hearts, and He promises that those who humble themselves will be lifted up. We can practice humility every single day, in big ways and small ways.

Close with prayer:

O Christ, guardian of all, let Your right hand guard and shelter me, by day and by night, at home and abroad, in sleeping and in waking, that I may never stumble. Have mercy upon Your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.