
Children's Message: Dying to Live

Jesus Explains His Purpose (John 12:20-33)

Children's Message: Dying to Live

Jesus Explains His Purpose on Earth

Main Objective: This message demonstrates how Jesus died in order to give us life. Children will consider plants and seeds as an analogy of Christ's sacrifice. Plants die in a sense and enter the earth, in order to grow up out of the ground and provide new life and vegetation. In the same way, Christ gave up His life, but rose again and gives life to all.

Law/Gospel Theme: Jesus came to live a different sort of life, and of course came to give His life. He draws us to Himself by dying to cover our sins. Although the Christian life does involve an element of sacrifice, we are not saved by our works but through God-given faith. We might have to give up some things, but in doing so we gain greater blessings, including eternal life!

Optional Materials: Plants (flowers, vegetables, etc.), grain or flour, cross

Bible Passage: John 12:20-33

Message: Note: A variety of seeds or plants could be used for this illustration. Flowers work fine, as do things like grain, acorns, or other seeds and growing items.

More Teaching Ideas:

- Watch the [video demonstration of this message](#) and related [craft ideas](#)
- Compare our [Sunday School Lesson on John 12:20-33](#)
- Compare the [children's sermons from rfour.org](#) and [sermons4kids](#) on this passage
- See all our latest [children's sermons](#), [Sunday School Lessons](#), and [Sunday School curriculum](#)



Children's Sermon (John 12:20-33) Dying to Live

Greet the children, holding flowers, flour, grain, or other plants of some sort

Hello, children of God!

What do I have here? These are some plants. Have you ever planted something? Do you know how plants work? Well, with most plants like this, you have to bury the seeds in the ground, and of course water them and provide a spot with sunlight, in order for them to grow up. After they've gone underground, they sprout and flower and they come up and bloom! Then they provide food, or flowers, or even trees. This applies to things like fruits and vegetables, as well as grain. Grain (*hold up the grain, if using*) has these little kernels that sort of have to die in a sense before they go into the ground. But once they die, they come back up and produce big fields of wheat that can feed people!

Why are we talking about plants? Well, because they remind me of something else—*someone* else, in fact. Can you think of someone who died and was buried, and then came back to life? Jesus, of course! In fact, before He died, He used this plant analogy. Some people were asking about who He was and what His purpose was. They wanted to see and know more about Jesus. Jesus explained that in order to be glorified and lifted up, He was going to first have to suffer and die. He described how grain has to fall to the earth and die in order to bear fruit, and how He would have to be “lifted from the earth” (on the cross) in order to draw us to Him.

Jesus gave up His life and died, and because of that we can have life forever with Him. We know that He gave Himself over to be killed, and He did that for us. Because of His death, everyone in the whole world has access to eternal life! People were sometimes confused or uncertain about who Jesus was or why He came. They certainly didn't think that death could bring life, but we know the wonderful truth of what His death means for us! He didn't stay dead. He rose again and lives forever. And so will we, if only we believe!

Now, there are sometimes that being a Christian might mean that we have to make sacrifices. We may live a little differently than others, and might have to do things that are hard. But we give up those little things to get something much greater. Jesus gave His life, and we benefit in great ways. If we have to go through tough things, we know Jesus is with us. And we know that in the end, God will help us and bless us, as He already has in Christ! We can pray for help and ask God to remind us of the wonderful life that awaits us in Jesus. Why don't we say a prayer right now?

Prayer:

(Have kids repeat each line)

Dear God,

Thank you for giving us Jesus

He gave His life to give us life

Help us to be willing to make sacrifices for you

And thank you that we have new life in Christ

Thank you for your love

We love you, God!

In Jesus's name, Amen!

Bible Verses/story to Reference: John 12:20-33

Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. ²¹So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." ²²Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. ²³And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. ²⁵Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

²⁷"Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. ²⁸Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." ²⁹The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." ³⁰Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not mine. ³¹Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. ³²And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." ³³He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die.

-John 12:20-33 ESV