
Thank God *and* Thank a Pastor!

Sunday School Lesson on Jesus and the
Importance of Ministry Calling



A calling into ministry is not to be taken lightly, and is one of the most significant things that can be responded to. God gives all of us special tasks to carry out His work. He appoints church leaders to guide and guard His people and teach them to understand His word. In the Bible, priests are described as being specially selected to serve God’s people. That is no less true today! Yet our pastors have a tremendously challenging job. It is important to appreciate what they do and give them support, encouragement, and thanks. It’s also essential to recognize that our greatest example of pastoral leadership comes from the “great high priest”, Jesus, who will always lead us perfectly, no matter how our earthly pastors are.

Lesson focus: Pastors are special people who do essential work for God’s kingdom. We should support and appreciate them, and recognize how important it is that Jesus was a pastor, too! This lesson reminds children how we should appreciate those in ministry. Plus, it is never too early to consider being called into church work, too!

Passage: Hebrews 5:1-10

Target Audience: Kindergarten-6th grade

Materials Needed: Construction paper; glue; markers or crayons; tape; scissors; decorative supplies; Bibles.

More Children’s Ministry Ideas:

- Watch the video of this [children’s sermon](#) and related [Bible craft ideas](#)
- Download our free [pastor appreciation coloring pages](#)
- Compare another [children’s sermon lesson on Pastor Appreciation](#)

Activities to Introduce the Lesson

Lesson Opening: This lesson is somewhat different. It contains an important element of Scripture, but also focuses on the hard work our pastors do for us in their ministry. To start the lesson, invite kids to think about pastors, and about the roles that they have in the church, or might one day have. Some possible ideas include:

- Take a tour of the church building, if possible. Go by the offices and parts of the building that are run by different people. Discuss the jobs of different staff members and how they help keep things going smoothly. Encourage kids to think about all the work that goes into being able to come to church.
- Interview the pastor! If the pastor is unable to visit the Sunday School class, have students brainstorm a list of questions that they would like to ask, and find a time to ask the pastor and post questions and responses.
- What does it mean to be a pastor? Depending on your church structure, talk about the service and what a lead minister does to conduct others in worship.
- The “high Priest”: Review the qualifications of a priest in ancient times. Compare these with how we pick modern pastors. Discuss with students why it is important to be careful in selecting a pastor, and how they might determine the best way to respond to God’s calling.
- Is God calling you? For a fun side component to this essential question, play a simple game of “telephone” with students, or create an old “phone” out of cups and yarn. Discuss the importance of God calling people specifically to be part of ministry.
- What did Jesus do? With older students, examine Bible passages of prophecy and fulfillment to discuss the importance of Jesus as “high priest” and savior.

Explain to students that today’s lesson is about pastors. God calls people to serve in ministry and support those in a church congregation. That might be one of you (as students)! Discussion will include what it means to be called, and how Jesus serves as the best example of a pastor.

Pastor Appreciation Sunday School Lesson

Bible Lesson: There are a number of great Bible passages that address the role of pastor. It is clear that serving a church congregation is an essential and critical job, and not one to be taken lightly. The specific focus of this lesson centers on Hebrews 5, which discusses priests and how Jesus was the greatest of priests. This is a pericope that could be read by a teacher, together as a group, or in turns. Choose the preferred reading method for your group ages and size.

Every high priest is selected from among the people and is appointed to represent the people in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. 2 He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness. 3 This is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people. 4 And no one takes this honor on himself, but he receives it when called by God, just as Aaron was. -Hebrews 5:1-4

These verses remind us of how important it is to be called into ministry. Specifically, this passage addresses priests in Bible times, who offered sins on behalf of people. But today it is not too much different with our ministry leaders. Our pastors can be respected as those called by God and devoted to serve Him. Anyone in the ministry is called in a special way, chosen by the Lord. Of course, these people are still human and have struggles, but they are in a position specially appointed.

Ask: What do you like about your pastor?

How might we be called to serve God, no matter what we do in life?

In the same way, Christ did not take on himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father." 6 And he says in another place, "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek." -Hebrews 5:5-6

Explain that in Bible times, priests were usually appointed based on family. However, this Melchizedek referenced is one who was chosen specifically by God, not because of who his parents were. In the same way, Jesus was sent by God, and sent to reconcile all people to Him. He didn't care what background or family anyone had, but loved (and loves!) all unconditionally. Jesus was our great priest.

During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. 8 Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered 9 and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him 10 and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek. -Hebrews 5:7-10

Jesus is God. Yet He gave up that Godhood for temporary humanity, and because of that, He knows what we go through. He can have the best sympathy because He knows exactly how we feel! Jesus is the greatest example of a pastor we have. Our pastors are wonderful, but they're human. They make mistakes and are far from perfect. Jesus lived a perfect life for our sake. He wants us to trust in and believe in His power, no matter what. Maybe we are called to be pastors. Maybe we are called to support pastors. Whatever the case, we recognize what a blessing it is that God gives us ministry leaders, and most importantly, how wonderful it is that He has given Jesus!

Ask: How can we support pastors?

Encourage kids to pray for and give thanks to pastors. Also, discuss how important it is that we are all called to minister, in a sense. Even if we are not full time pastors, we can all reach out to help others by caring for people and supporting them in the things we say and do. Take time to do that this week!

Close with prayer, thanking God for pastors and asking Him to guide and encourage them in all that they do.

Sunday School Craft Ideas

Craft: This is a great opportunity to make a fun craft that doubles as a special thank you to your pastor! There are a lot of creative ways to show them love with a card or craft...

- Make a large poster to hang in a social hall or on a bulletin board. Have all of the Sunday School students sign the poster and write special notes to the pastor.
- Have each student make a card with a traced or painted hand print and special notes.
- Make a tree-themed card to thank pastors for helping the congregation “grow”: cut leaves or use foam leaves with notes and names, and attach them to a drawn or cut out tree shape.
- Decorate a special basket or container and have families contribute items and gift cards to put inside as a special present.

Pastors do so much for us, and we hardly know the challenges and stresses they face daily. Those in ministry guide us in understanding God’s Word and in a sense speak for Him in they spiritually lead their congregations. It is important to support our pastors with prayer, encouragement, and words of appreciation. If you are looking for a creative way to express gratitude to pastors, try a variation on one of these simple but heart felt card options.

Bible Verses or Craft Captions to Consider... (Hebrews 5:1-10)

So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him,

“You are my Son,

today I have begotten you” -Hebrews 5:5

Thank you for helping us grow in Christ!

You “shepherd” our flock, Pastor!

Thank you for touching our hearts!

You “root us” in God’s word!

Pastors guide and lead in God’s ways. Thank you!

Craft one: "Hands and Hearts Card"

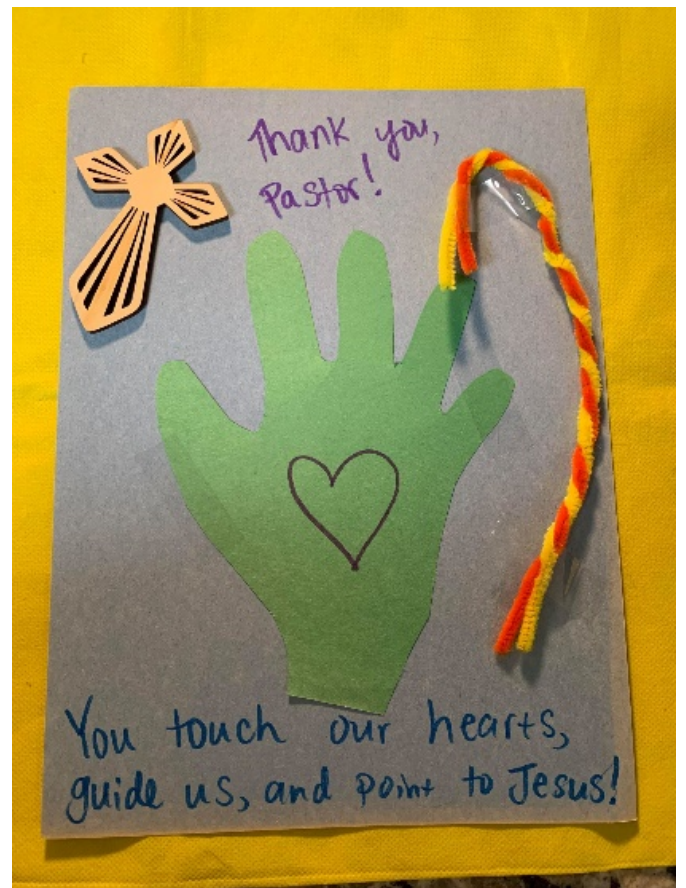
You will need:

- Yarn, pipe cleaner, or ribbon
- Cross or popsicle sticks (optional)
- Scissors
- Glue or tape
- Markers and/or crayons
- Construction paper or cardstock



Procedure:

1. Choose one or several pastor "themes" to create your card: a shepherd's staff, cross, handprint, heart, or all of the above could work!
2. Trace a hand onto the paper, cut one out of paper, or paint a hand print stamp onto paper.
3. Add a cross shape or popsicle sticks in the shape of a cross.
4. Place a heart in or near the hand. Twist pipe cleaners or string into the shape of a shepherd's staff, if desired.
5. Add captions and verses. Attach string if you wish to hang the card later.



Craft Two: "Growing in Christ Card"

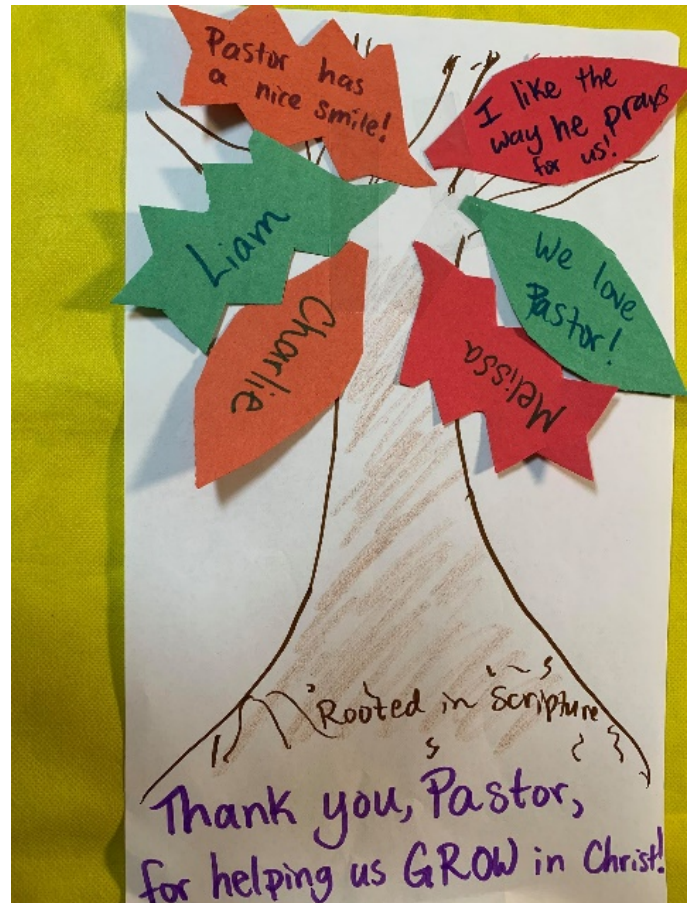
You will need:

- Markers/crayons
- Cardstock/paper
- Glue or tape
- Scissors
- Additional decorations (glitter, sequins, etc.)
- Captions/verses



Procedure:

1. Draw a tree as the base of your card, using cut paper or drawn lines.
 2. Cut leaf shapes out of several pieces of foam or paper. Have students and teachers sign notes and words of encouragement on each leaf.
 3. Attach extra decorations and stickers as preferred.
 4. Add verses and captions, and present the card to your pastor.
- * Alternate option: make a large poster or bulletin board with this same theme.





Thank you for downloading these free materials. Our team is grateful for your trust and pray that God will bless your ministry.

This resource was prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#) (pictured right). She serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO. She has shared her teaching gifts through *Ministry-To-Children* since 2014 and now serves as our lead curriculum writer.



Every week she writes new [Sunday School lessons](#), [Bible crafts](#), and [children's sermons](#).

Kristin has a professional background in elementary and pre-school education. A graduate of Biola University, she holds a Master of Education and will receive the Master of Theology degree from Concordia University, Irvine, California, in May 2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader.

My name is Tony Kummer (pictured below). I started Ministry-To-Children.com in 2007 as a free resource for anyone sharing Jesus with kids. It is my personal honor to share these resources with churches around the world.



[Reader donations](#) and your support at [The Sunday School Store](#) fund these free materials. Please keep us in mind when you are choosing your next children's ministry curriculum.

If you enjoy our material, be sure to [sign-up for my free email newsletter](#) called "Sunday School Works!" Every Tuesday, I send the latest new lessons, crafts, and coloring pages in print-friendly format to make your lesson planning easy.

May God continue to bless your ministry!

Tony Kummer