

Pharisees Plot Against Jesus

Theme

We honor God.

Object

Different coins (one per child)

Scripture

Matthew 22:17

Give each child a coin to hold. Explain that they are to hold it tightly in their fist until you give them further instructions.

Has anyone ever asked you a question that there just wasn't any way to answer without getting yourself into trouble? That's what we call a loaded question. A loaded question is one that is worded so that a person cannot answer it without appearing to be guilty.

Here are a couple of examples of loaded questions:

- Have you quit cheating at cards? If you answer, "Yes" you are admitting that you used to cheat. If you answer, "No" you are admitting that you still cheat.
- Do you still pick on your little brother? That is like the other question. You are either going to admit that you used to pick on your brother or that you still pick on him.

Sometimes a loaded question is asked to try to trick a person into saying something that will get them into trouble. Our Bible lesson today is a good example of that.

Jesus was gaining great popularity among the Israelites. This was very upsetting to the religious leaders called Pharisees. They thought He was a threat to their authority. They tried everything they could think of to make Jesus look bad and yet Jesus had more and more followers every day. So a group of Pharisees met and came up with a plot to trick Jesus into saying something that would discredit Him among His followers.

The people in Jesus' day were required to pay taxes to the Roman government. That was not very popular with the people. The plan was to go to Jesus and ask Him his opinion about paying the taxes. So, the Pharisees sent their followers, with a few of Herod's followers mixed in and asked Jesus, "Teacher, we know how honest you are. You teach the way of God truthfully. Now tell us what you think about this: Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" They were actually trying to trick Jesus, because they knew if He said, "Yes," the people would be angry. But if He said, "No," he would get into trouble with the Roman authorities.

Jesus saw right through their plan and He did a very wise thing. He asked them for a coin. Then He said, "Whose picture is on this coin?"

They answered, "It is Caesar." Caesar was the Roman ruler and all taxes had to be paid to him.

Jesus then said to them, "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God."

Look at your coin. Whose picture is on it? (Allow kids to answer/guess.) What does it say right above his picture? It says, "The United States of America." Well, I guess that means that this coin belongs to the person whose picture is on it.

But what about God? Jesus also said "Give to God what belongs to God." The Bible says that we were created by God and that we were created in the image of God. If we are created by God, and we were created in His image, we must belong to Him. That means we must give ourselves to Him!

On the count of three I want you to flip your coin in the air and repeat with me "give yourselves to God" as you try to catch your coin. (Count to 3.)

Dear God, help us give You what is Yours. Help us spend our hours in acts of love and our days in doing acts of kindness. May we always obey You and give You honor. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Interactive Group Activities

by Carol Williams

Sermon Title: "The Pharisees Plot Against Jesus"

scripture Reading: Matthew 22:15-22

QUESTION GAME: Have children form a circle. The teacher can begin the game by asking a children a question. Every child has to ask a question to answer the question. Then go on to the next child. Continue the questions with the "tricky questions" from the Bible lesson!

QUESTION RELAY: Children can form two teams if there are many children, or just one group of children to run to a basket and grab a question out of it and answer quickly and then run back to the team and tap the next team player to do the same, until all children have had a chance to answer a question!

"WHAT IS GOD'S" QUESTION GAME: Have children run to a box or basket, one at a time, and stand on a marked line and SHOUT out something that is GOD's! Run back to their team and the next child will run to the marked line and do the same. This will cause children to think about ALL the things that belong to GOD (the child, our parents, our pastor, house, plants, lakes and oceans, birds, animals, friends, our hearts, our money, our church, etc).

FALL 'QUESTION' SOUP: The teacher can have some warm FALL soup made for the class to enjoy or the teacher can have all the ingredients for the children to place into the pot to make the soup to enjoy at the end of class. Ask the children questions about what is IN the soup. Ex: what is long, thin and orange and is a vegetable (carrots); what is round and white and rhymes with tomato (potato); what is tiny and yellow and is sometimes used to make popcorn (corn kernels); what is something that we drink when we're thirsty (water); , etc for all the ingredients in the soup. This is a fun question game but warm and delicious at the end of class, as well!

QUESTION TRAY: Let children take turns being blindfolded and removing ONE item from a QUESTION tray. Then the teacher will ask -- what is it? When the child has guessed, it will be someone else's turn. If the child can NOT guess, then other children can ask them a QUESTION to help them guess! Ask children WHAT THE QUESTION WAS in our Bible story today. Ask children, "What is Caesar's and What is God's"?

COIN ART: Give each child enough pennies to glue in the shape of a question mark or to form the word - GOD! Children can write today's Bible verse on the paper or the question, What do we owe to God? We owe Him our ALL!

WHAT'S IN THE BOX CRAFT: Children can make a small trinket box made out of craft sticks. Make a single layer of craft sticks for the lid of the trinket box. Let children glue some leaves for FALL on the top if desired. Tell children to take the box home and collect coins that they find or earn and every week, they can say WHAT'S IN THE BOX? HOW MUCH MONEY DID I EARN TO GIVE TO JESUS? Children can write today's Bible verse on the box lid, or WHAT DO WE OWE TO GOD? WE OWE HIM OUR ALL!

AUTUMN PLACEMATS: Let children draw or collect outside leaves to place on their colored placemats. Write their own names and words from our lesson today - WHAT DO WE OWE GOD? WE OWE HIM OUR ALL! Cover the placemats with clear contact paper for children to take home and use to decorate their tables during the Fall season.

WHAT IS GOD'S?: The teacher can have very large question marks drawn in "block" style on colored sheets of construction paper, so that children can trace the question mark and then write INSIDE that question mark the things that belong to GOD! Title the page in bright markers, WHAT IS GOD'S? Tell children to write very small and to see how many things they can fit inside that question mark of things that belong to GOD! Make sure that children write their OWN name, or "ME" in the question mark in bright colors!

SHARING A SNACK: Let each child reach inside a bag of treat candies. Before taking their hand out of the bag, the teacher will say - "What is it", and the child will have to guess what the candy type is. If the child is right, he/she may take the candy and eat it. If the teacher wants to take the time, the child could put the candy back in the bag if their guess wasn't correct and try another time, as time allows.