

The Gospel Jack - O - Lantern

Object Lesson

Bible Verses

Ephesians 1:4, Col. 1: 16-17, John 3:16, Romans 5:8, Matt 5:16, Matt 15:19, Rom. 10:13, Ps. 51:5

Lesson Goal

To understand how God changes us from the inside out.

Objectives

- The telling of the salvation message through a traditional pumpkin carving.
- The light reminds us how we should reflect Jesus to those around us.

Materials

Suggested to do when using for a classroom, or group lesson. Pre-carve the pumpkin before the lesson. First, carve out the top and then scrape the seeds and pulp so it culminates in the center. This will help in removing from the pumpkin. Then, pre-carve the smile, but don't poke out the pieces until you come to that part of the lesson. Lastly, start off the lesson with the face side of the pumpkin pointing towards yourself.

- Pre-carved pumpkin
- Plastic bag
- Candle
- Lighter
- Paper towels

Bible Message

Have you visited a pumpkin patch? There are hundreds of pumpkins to choose from. What kind of pumpkin do you like to pick? I picked this pumpkin because I liked it's shape and it's bright orange color.

Chosen

- But that's not how God chooses us. This pumpkin represents us.

- Here's a verse.
 - Ephesians 1:4 "...he hath chosen us before the foundation of the world,..."
- So before the world began God chose to make us. He wanted to make human beings to be with him forever and ever. He doesn't choose us because of how we look, or how smart we are. He chooses us because he loves us. You are His special creation. He created you to glorify Him and chooses to love you.
- Here's another verse.
 - Colossians 1:16-17 " For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are on earth,...all things were created by him, and for him:"

Holy

- On the outside, we may look pretty good. We do a lot to make ourselves look good, just like this pumpkin looks nice on the outside. It's a pretty orange color, nice and round. However, on the inside, we're pretty messy, just like this pumpkin. Let's take a look.

Lift the top of the pumpkin and pull out the pulp.

- Most of you know that inside of a pumpkin is goop - the pulp and seeds, and lots of it. This represents sin. Boys and girls, like the pumpkin, on the inside we have a messy sin problem.
- What is sin?
 - Sin is anything we do, say, or think that breaks God's law. It's disobeying God.
- God says we were all born sinners.
- Here are a couple of verses.
 - Ps. 51:5 Behold, I was sharpen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."
 - Matt 5: 18 "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart;...
- Remember God is holy and without sin. Sin is not in heaven or allowed in heaven, however, he still wants to be with us, and wants us to be like him - holy. To be holy, we need to invite God to come in and clean us up by removing our sin. He removes our sin similarly the way I'm going to remove this goop out of the pumpkin. It would be foolish to think this pumpkin could clean itself out wouldn't it? Nor can we. Only God has the power to change us from this inside. Inviting God to come in, is by believing and accepting Jesus as your Savior.

Begin scraping the seeds and pulp from the insides of the pumpkin while explaining the need of a Savior.

- God took care of our sin problem by sending Jesus Christ to die on the cross. God humbled himself by taking the form of man, took the punishment for our sin upon himself, died, was buried, and rose again. He did all that because He loves us and wants us to be with Him forever. When you believe that you have sinned and believe with all of your heart that Jesus is God, and accept that his shed blood has forgiven you of your sins, you become born again, and as a result the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in you.

He scoops out our sin (begin scooping out the pulp and seeds) of selfishness, evil thoughts, unkind words, hatred, bad behaviors

- Here are some verses
 - Romans 5:8 “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”
 - Romans 10:13 “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” This good news is for everyone in the world. God wants everyone to know him and his love for them.
 - John 3:16 Because he “so loved the world, he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Place candle inside pumpkin to represent His Spirit.

- Just like I’m placing this candle in the pumpkin. God’s Spirit comes to live inside of our hearts, when we become born again, and are now promised the gift of eternal life.

Turn the pumpkin and poke out the pre-carved smiley face a smile on our face.

- Knowing what God has done for us should make us rejoice and happy just like the smile carved on this pumpkin.

Light the candle

- We should now let our light shine and reflect God’s love to others by how we act, what we say, and how we live.
- Here’s a verse
 - Matthew 5:16- “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your

good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

When you become a Christian, your behavior should be different. There should be a desire to do right, to obey, to sin less and less, and love God. Just like this light of the candle stands out in the darkness, so should we as Christians.