

Fun Family Activities to reinforce the story of The End of the Age: Mark 13:1-8, 24-37

Key Verse:

“And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”
Mark 13:37

The Point:

Trusting in Jesus, we can do God's work.

Making Connections:

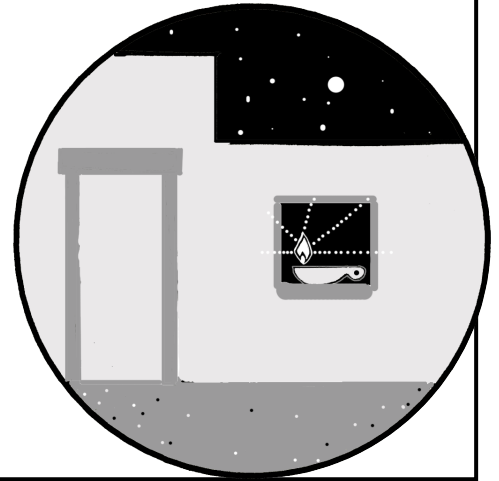
God's Triumph

Bible Nuts & Bolts:

What Is the World to Come?

Spiritual Practice:

Worship



Making Connections

In our last lesson we read Jesus' teaching about the widow's offering and his greatest commandment, from Mark 12:28-44. Today's lesson picks up as Jesus and his disciples are leaving the temple and begins a brief unit focusing on God's Triumph.

Story Summary:

The End of the Age

Jesus' teachings take a different turn here, as he tries to open the disciples' eyes to what lies ahead. He uses two illustrations to engage the disciples' imagination: the destruction of the temple and the flowering of the fig tree.

These stories do two things. First, they prepare the disciples for what is coming in the immediate future. In particular, the violence of the overthrowing of the temple can be seen to foreshadow Jesus' death. Secondly, they encourage the disciples to look beyond what is immediately obvious, to seek God's action beyond what seems to be ordinary. This seeing will be particularly important when Jesus is no longer with them.

The Point

Trusting in Jesus, we can do God's work.

Churches spend a lot of time remembering stories from the past, but we sometimes forget that those stories are still playing out all around us right now! God is always inviting us into new adventure, into greater compassion, into new creative activity. There is a special kind of power when we work together to hear God's voice, or to follow God's call. Our culture often emphasizes individual effort, but the Bible is clear: where two or more are gathered something really special happens.

Sing Together!

Start each morning with a song! Get the kids out of bed with this lively song!
Sing “I’m Alive, Awake, Alert, Enthusiastic!”

I’m Alive, Awake, Alert, Enthusiastic! (Hands on head, shoulders, waist, bend down and jump up with hands in the air)

I’m Alive, Awake, Alert, Enthusiastic! (Same actions as above)

I’m Alive, Awake, Alert, (Hands on head, shoulders and waist)

I’m Alert, Awake, Alive! (Hands on waist, shoulders and head)

I’m Alive, Awake, Alert, Enthusiastic!” (Same actions as above)

Story Centers Ages: Preschool and early elementary

Story Centers are mini-activities designed specifically for preschool and kindergarten students. Depending on the size of your class, you can set these up as centers for in-class rotations or do them as a whole class one after another. In most preschool and kindergarten classes, these centers along with a snack, the “Learning the Story” activity, and the “Living the Story” activity will fill the education time, but feel free to choose any activity you think would be fun and appropriate for your class.

What Lies Beneath

Provide a sand table or sand box with buried items in it, and give the students beach shovels and rakes to dig for the "buried" treasure.

This Little Light of Mine

Provide each student a small glass (inexpensive ones can be found in thrift stores or a dollar store), glue and a paintbrush, and different colored tissue paper. Students can paint glue on the outside of the glass, and then paste on bits of tissue paper. When they are done they can complete the project by adding a flameless tea candle.

Be Ready Ages: Pre-K and older

How do you get ready for something BIG?

No supplies needed

Activity Details:

1. **Say: Do you like to wait? What is it like to wait for something that you really want?** [*Boring, exciting, frustrating, etc.*] **Waiting is not always a fun thing to do. Sometimes it almost seems like we are just wasting time. We would rather just get on with something, particularly if it is something we are really excited about.**

2. But sometimes waiting is actually really important work. For example, let's say I told that in two days someone special was coming for a visit. Who do you think that might be? *[Grandparents, best friend, someone famous, etc.]* But let's say that person would not be able to come if you were not ready for them. What are some things you might need to do to get ready for a special visitor? *[Clean the guest room, go to the grocery store, buy flowers, get homework done early so you can hang out with them, etc.]* So even though you are waiting, you are not just sitting around doing nothing. You are getting ready so the visit will be a great one.

3. In our lesson today, Jesus tells us how we can get ready too. Although in this case we are not getting ready for a human visitor—we are getting ready to meet with God! What do you think we would need to do to get ready to meet with God?

Our Be Alert Owl Age: Pre-K and Older

Make a craft celebrating the alert and watchful owl.

You will need:

- † Activity Sheet Owl picture
- † Scissors
- † Glue
- † Construction paper
- † Crayons or markers
- † Other decorative supplies

Before class:

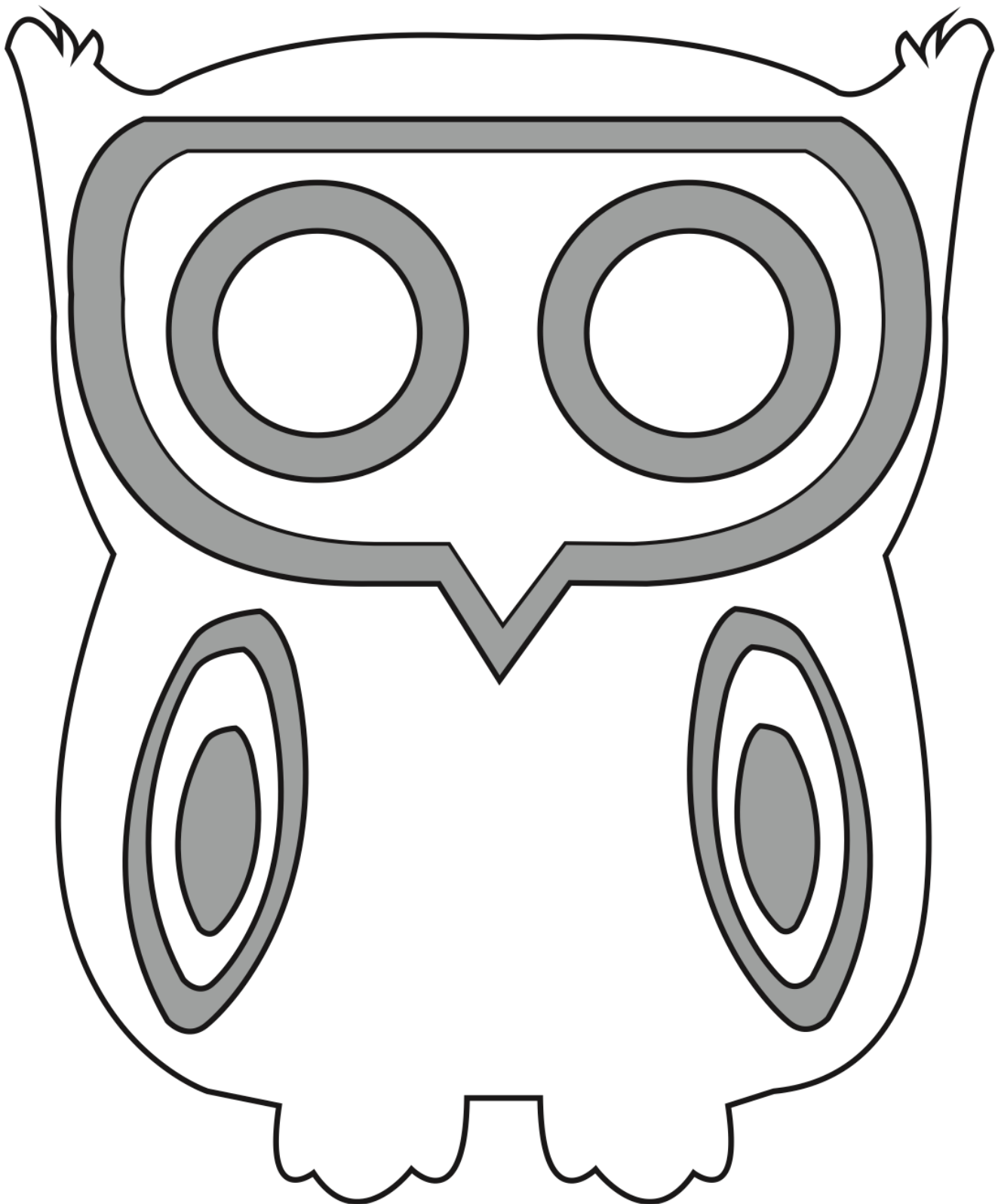
Make a copy of the Owl picture for each child. You may wish to cut out the shapes in advance if you have younger kids. You might also make a sample in advance so the kids can what they will be creating. You can also just have your child color the Owl, or draw an owl of their own.

1. **Say: Jesus uses the image of night to remind us that we should always be alert, even when the rest of the world is sleeping.**
2. **I thought we would make an animal that stays up all night, which has great big alert eyes, and is even known to be particularly wise. Any guesses? *[Owls.]* Yes, we are going to make an owl.**
3. Pass out materials and allow students to color the owl parts, then cut them out and paste them on the construction paper to re-form an owl.
4. Write on the top of their Owl picture: God is always with me even in the night!
5. **Now, of course, we cannot really stay up all night and never sleep. Our bodies need rest. But our hearts *can* always stay awake to God's signs, even when our bodies are resting. Maybe you would like to hang your owl in your room somewhere to remind you that God is always present, and your heart is always aware of that.**

Key:

REMOVE

Shaded Shapes



Hunting for Clues Age: Pre-K and older

Work together to reveal God's Word.

You will need:

- † Clues printed on paper
- † Plastic eggs

Before class:

1. Print out the Clues and cut these verses apart in strips. Place the strips in plastic eggs and hide them throughout the house.

Activity details:

1. **Say: In our lesson today, Jesus tells us we need to look for signs for how God is working in our world. That means we sometimes have to be like detectives who are looking for clues. Today there are clues all over our house hidden inside plastic eggs. We will need to work together to find all the clues.** Give kids a chance to search for the eggs and bring them all together.
2. **Now we need to piece all the clues together to find out the message waiting for us.** Help the students line all the words up in the right order, to reveal the verse: "If I go to the heavens/you are there./ If I go to the depths of the earth/you are there./If I fly on the dawn/ if I settle on the far side of the sea/your hand will guide me/ you hand will hold me safe./ The night will shine like the day/ For darkness is the same as light to you." Read this verse aloud to the family.
3. **What do you think this verse is telling us?** [*God is with us no matter where we go that nothing is too dark for God to see us, God's hand is always there to protect and guide us.*] **That means that God is always with us. So, we can keep our eyes open for the signs God sends to let us know we are not alone. And the really great thing about it is we do not have to look alone. We have each other and we can help each other look for God together.**

Hunting for Clues

Work together to reveal God's Word.

If I go to the heavens

You are there.

If I go to the depths of the earth

You are there.

If I fly on the dawn

If I settle on the far side of the sea

Your hand will guide me

Your hand will hold me safe.

The night will shine like the day

For darkness is the same as light to you.