

Jesus' Authority

OBJECTIVE: *To learn about Jesus' authority and what it means to make him Lord.*



WORSHIP

Sing praise and worship songs as well as songs about Jesus that are familiar and meaningful to your group. Here are some suggestions.

"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name"

"Father, I Adore You"

"God With Us"

"Greater Is He That Is in Me"

"His Name Is Wonderful"

"Jesus, Mighty God"

"Jesus, Name Above All Names"

"Praise the Name of Jesus"

"We Believe"

"We Bow Down"

STORY

Peter Confesses That Jesus Is God's Son, Matthew 16:13-20

- Jesus asks his disciples who people say he is.
- His disciples tell Jesus that many people say he's one of the prophets.
- Peter says that Jesus is the Son of God, and Jesus is pleased.

As you tell the story, ask three children or adults to stand together in the middle of the room. Let the other children bind this group together with streamers or toilet paper. Talk about why you would bind someone physically. Talk about spiritual binding. (See an explanation at the end of this session.) Why would you do it? How? Now unbind the people. Talk about what it means to loose something physically and spiritually (Matthew 16:13-20).

Note: Children do not usually begin to understand symbolism until they are around seven years old. If you talk with younger children about *keys to the kingdom*, remind them that a kingdom is where the king lives, where he's boss. Try to link the symbolic to something concrete.

MEMORY VERSE

"The one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

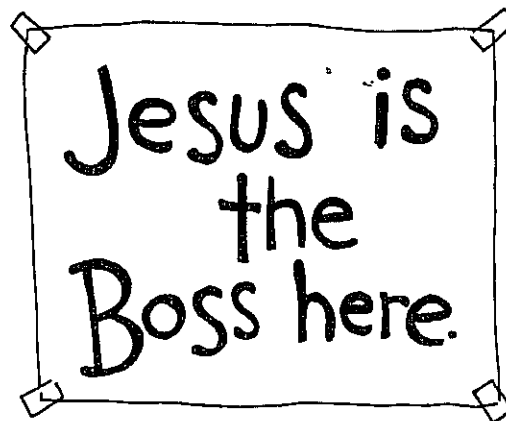
To help the children remember the verse, sing it to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell."

The one who is in you, the one who is in you is
 great - er than, oh great - er than, the one who's in the world.

ACTIVITIES

Choose one or more of the following activities to support the story and to provide a springboard for discussion.

DOOR POSTERS. Ask the children to make door posters for their rooms out of paper or poster board. Help them write *Jesus Is the Boss Here* or *Jesus Is in Charge Here* (explain *being in charge*). The children can color their posters. Discuss authority, the authority Jesus has, and the authority we have when Jesus is our Lord.



KEYS. Place keys under plain white paper and rub over the paper with the side of a crayon to reveal the keys. Discuss what a key does, what the *keys of the kingdom* are (Matthew 16:13-20), and who can use the keys.

WHO HAS THE KEY? Everyone sits in a circle, hands cupped and held in front of them. Two players stand in the middle. One is IT. The other holds a key and passes by each player, pretending to drop the key into each person's hands. Everyone closes their hands as if receiving a key, but the key is dropped into only one person's hands. Then everyone chants, "Key, key, who has the key?" IT has three guesses to find the key. Then the player with the key becomes IT, and IT becomes the key giver. Talk about the *keys of the kingdom*.

FREEZE TAG. Play this outdoors. When a person is tagged by IT, he must stand still and remain frozen until another person who has not been tagged touches him and releases him. Discuss *binding* and *loosing* (Matthew 16:13-20).

BADGES. Make a badge like that used to identify FBI or police agents. Ask each person to fold an index card in half. On the inside, each person draws a badge shape or a heart. In the badge or heart, he writes *Jesus*. Practice flipping it open and saying, "I'm with Jesus, ma'am." Discuss the authority that Jesus gives his followers.

QUESTIONS

1. What is authority? Who do you know who has authority? How does he show authority?
2. What are you in charge of?
3. Who did Peter say Jesus was? Who do you say Jesus is?

KIDS' COUNCIL

BRING IT HOME

- When you follow Jesus, what kind of authority does that give you? Read 1 John 4:4. What do you have authority over?
- How does someone become a follower of Jesus? How does Jesus become your Lord?
- Have you asked Jesus to be your Lord? If not, do you want to ask him now?

SHARE AND PRAY

- Ask the children to share their concerns and pray for each other.
- Give the children an opportunity to ask Jesus to be their Lord if they want to.
- Thank God for sending Jesus and for being the strongest and wisest of all.

ADULT STUDY QUESTIONS

- Read Matthew 16:13. Why do you think Jesus referred to himself as the Son of Man?
- Who do you say Jesus is?
- Read Matthew 16:18. Notice that Jesus, in turn, told Peter who Peter was. Is there a sense in which when we confess Jesus as Lord, he then lets us know who we really are and who we are meant to become in his kingdom? Read and discuss Psalm 138:8.
- What did Jesus mean when he said *keys of the kingdom*? What does he mean by *what you bind* and *what you loose*?

SNACK AND FELLOWSHIP

Following a Recipe. Measure out these ingredients, keep them separate, and set them aside: 1 cup shortening, 1½ cups sugar, 2 eggs, 2¾ cups flour, 2 teaspoons cream of tartar, 1 teaspoon soda, ½ teaspoon salt, 2 tablespoons sugar, and 2 teaspoons cinnamon. Now set out an unmeasured amount of the above ingredients. Tell the children to mix these ingredients any way they want to make cookies. Bake at 400 degrees 8 to 10 minutes. Set out the measured ingredients and recipe. Ask the children to follow the recipe: mix the shortening, sugar, and eggs. In another bowl, mix the flour, cream of tartar, soda, and salt. Stir the flour mixture into the egg mixture. Spoon it onto a cookie sheet. Mix 2 tablespoons sugar and 2 teaspoons cinnamon. Sprinkle it on the cookies. Bake them at 400 degrees 8 to 10 minutes. Try both batches of cookies. Ask: "Which is best—the one made however you wanted, or the one made following the recipe? Life is best if we follow God's plan and not our own."

SPIRITUAL BINDING: The literal translation of Matthew 16:19b is "whatever you bind on earth shall be, having been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loose on earth shall be, having been loosed in the heavens." The Greek word for *bind*, used in this context, means *forbid*. The Greek word for *loose* means *permit*. Forbidding and permitting are the privilege of whoever is in authority. Peter has just confirmed his belief in Jesus' position of authority as God's Son. Jesus then confers authority on those who believe he is God's Son. But Jesus has said that he "can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does" (John 5:19). So this privilege of authority comes with the responsibility of seeking God and "being about our Father's business." Simply put, when we are under Jesus' authority, we forbid what God forbids and permit what God permits. Therefore, we *bind* or forbid evil to have authority over us and we *loose*, release, or permit Jesus' authority to be in control. Because of Jesus living in us, we say no to Satan and his plans. The memory verse for this lesson indicates the basis for our authority in Jesus.