

X-MEN: HOW TO BE A CHRISTIAN

Unit 5: Church Life

Welcome to Unit 5 of X-MEN: How To Be A Christian. This curriculum is geared for upper elementary children to teach them the basic tenets and disciplines of Christianity. Think of it as Christianity 101 for children. The lessons are a mix of theory and practice best done in small groups or class settings where children can ask questions and participate in discussions.



Fun Fact: The Greek word for Christ is "**ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ**" and the Chi Rho is an early Christian symbol (like today's fish symbol) taken from the first two letters, X and P. If we take that first letter, X, that stood for the C in Christ, you can say we really are X-Men!

There is a Workbook for the children that goes along with this curriculum. I recommend printing one for each child and keeping it in a safe place at church so the children don't have to worry about losing it or remembering to bring it every Sunday. I also recommend having a Bible for each child, or encouraging or giving them incentives to bring their own every week.

It is my prayer that children will have a basic understanding of Christian beliefs and disciplines that will become a foundation for their spiritual journey. This unit is about church life. Specifically, the children will learn about communion, water baptism, tithes and offering, and fellowship. These are things they most likely see happen in church, but may not be aware why we do them.

I encourage you, leader, not to discount the ability of your children to understand any concepts that seem too big, too hard, or only for adults and big church. Children are more than capable of serving others to glorify God.

-Angela of Kidmin Together

kidmin
TOGETHER

UNIT 5: CHURCH LIFE

This is the last unit of X-Men: How To Be A Christian. Part of being a Christian is participating in church life. In this unit, the children will specifically learn about communion, water baptism, tithes and offering, and fellowship. Why do we do these things? How did they start? What does the Bible say about them?

Some children, especially those who grew up in the church, may already know what these four things are, or at least be able to describe them. This unit will dive a little deeper.

Is there something you do because it's always been done? Is there something you do even when you don't fully understand it? This may be the case with some traditions or holiday celebrations or routines in life. Sometimes, even adults do things in church without fully comprehending the reason or the history behind it.

It is when we understand the reason behind the things we do that those things become significant to our lives. This unit will help the children understand the reason behind some of the things we do in church, and hopefully, help make those things significant in their lives.

Overview

Lesson 1: What is Communion?

Lesson 2: What is Water Baptism?

Lesson 3: What are Tithes and Offering?

Lesson 4: What is Fellowship?

Lesson 1: What Is Communion

Icebreaker

Go around and describe what you would want to be your last meal on Earth.

Say: Today we're starting the last unit of our X-Men series and in today's lesson, we're going to talk about communion. Communion is something we do at church. Can you tell me what happens during communion? (Allow for answers).

Say: When we take communion at church, we eat the communion bread, which is like a wafer, and we drink the communion cup, which is grape juice. But why do we take communion? (Allow for short answers). Let's open our Bibles and find out.

Bible Story

Read Matthew 26:17-30 (read individually or taking turns as a class)
(Workbook answer: The Last Supper was the meal of the Passover)

Say: This is the account of The Last Supper, the meal Jesus had with his disciples before he was crucified on the cross. We take communion to remember this moment. Let's read Luke 22:19-20.

And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."

Say: This is the same account of The Last Supper, but from the perspective of Luke. Here, Jesus told us to "do this in remembered of me." That's why we take communion, to remember that moment but not because it was The Last Supper, but because of what Jesus said about the bread and the cup.

Ask: What did Jesus say about the bread and the cup? What does that mean? (Allow for answers and discussion)

Say: Those are great answers! Let's fill out your workbook. Jesus said the bread was his body, given for us, and the cup is the new covenant in his blood, poured out for us. What Jesus was talking about here was his death on the cross. Shortly after The Last Supper, Jesus was arrested, put on trial, and crucified. He knew all that was coming and that his followers may not understand why he didn't stop it.

Ask: Why do you think Jesus didn't stop them from putting him on the cross? (Allow for discussion).

Say: Jesus had to die on the cross. It was the only way to save us. He knew that! When we take communion, we're not doing it to remember The Last Supper, who was there and what they ate and who sat where. We're doing it to remember what Jesus said about his body and his blood, and about what he did on the cross.

Sa: We're going to read another Bible passage about communion. This one is from Paul. Let's read 1 Corinthians 11:17-28

Read: 1 Corinthians 11:17-28

Say: Paul wrote this letter to the church in Corinth, and he's got something to say about how they take their communion. What was it? (Allow for answers).

Say: Some people in the church in Corinth were being disrespectful when they take communion. They were kind of treating it like a party. They thought it was a time to just eat and be merry. Paul reminded them what the communion is about. What did he say? (Allow for answers)

Say: Let's look at verse 26. Paul said that when we take communion, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes again. What does that mean? (Allow for answers)

Say: Yes, when we take communion, we're not just remember what Jesus said about his death on the cross, but it's our way of showing other people that we believe Jesus died on the cross, became alive again, and will come here again. It's like one of the ways we show other people that we believe in Jesus and follow him, that we are Christians, X-Men for Jesus.

Review

Say: In your workbooks, write down some words that describe how we should take communion. (Some examples: respectfully, thoughtfully, prayerfully, reverently)

Activity

Say: We take communion to remember what Jesus did on the cross and show other people we follow him because, often, actions speak louder than words. What are other ways you can show other people you follow Jesus? Fill out your workbooks.

Lesson 2: What Is Water Baptism?

Icebreaker

Go around and share your X-Men name. Do you have a nickname you're known for in real life? Share it! (For example: Dora the Explorer, Bob the Builder, Elizabeth Queen of England, Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, YouTubers known as their usernames)

Say: Some people are known by a nickname or a title. We're going to read a Bible story about a man known as The Baptist. Can anyone tell me his actual name? (Answer: John)

Bible Story

Read Matthew 3 (read individually or take turns as a class)

Say: John The Baptist was the son of Zechariah and Elizabeth. Does anyone know who they were? (Allow for answers). Elizabeth was the cousin of Mary. That makes John The Baptist and Jesus second cousins! Turn to your workbooks and draw John The Baptist as the Bible describes him in Matthew 3:4. You have 5 minutes! Go!

Activity: 5 Minute Speed Sketch of John The Baptist

Don't take too much time here. Give the kids 5 minutes to sketch John The Baptist.

Discuss

Ask: Why was John known as The Baptist? (Allow for answers. Answer: Because he went around baptizing people).

Ask: What does it mean to baptize people? (Allow for answers)

Say: Today's lesson is about water baptism. Has anyone one of you been to a water baptism? (If anyone has, allow them to describe what happened). During a water baptism, the pastor lowers a person under the water and back up again. He may say a few words, the person may say a few words, people may sing and pray. Water baptism is part of our church life for a very important reason. Can you tell me what that reason is? (Allow for discussion)

Say: John the Baptist baptized people in the Jordan River. He said that he baptized people with water for repentance, but one is coming (he meant Jesus) that baptizes people with the Holy Spirit and fire. (Underlined words are answers in the workbook).

Bible Verse: Read Acts 2:38

Say: Let's read Acts 2:38, "Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'"

Say: According to John The Baptist, Peter, and other verses in the Bible, water baptism comes with two things. They are repentance and the Holy Spirit. Repentance is a big word that means asking God to forgive you for your sins (the bad things you've done), and doing your best not to sin again. (Underlined words are the answers in the workbook)

Say: The only one who was water baptized that did not have to repent was Jesus! We read in Matthew 3, that John The Baptist told Jesus He didn't need to be water baptized, but Jesus said it was the right thing to do. Then what happened? (Allow for answers. Look at Matthew 3:16-17. Answer: The Holy Spirit came to Jesus and God spoke from heaven).

Ask: Why was it the right thing for Jesus to be water baptized? (Allow for discussion)
Possible answer: For the Holy Spirit to come to Him, to show us it's right to repent and be baptized, for God to reveal to people who Jesus is, etc.

Say: Water baptism is part of our church life. Like communion, which we learned about last week, water baptism is a way for us to show the world that we have repented and now follow Jesus. That we are now Christians, X-Men for Jesus. (Underlined words are answers in the workbook).

Say: There were a lot of mutants in the X-Men world, but not all of them were X-Men. To become X-Men, they had to decided to fight for what is right and put on the uniform that shows the world they are X-Men.

Say: There are a lot of people who say they are Christians, but the word "Christian" means Christ-follower. To really be a Christian, we have to decided to repent and follow Jesus. Water baptism is one of the ways we put on the uniform and show the world we are Christians.

Activity: Your Christian Logo

Say: The X-Men had a logo on their uniforms. If you were to have a logo to show the world you're a Christian, what would it be? Draw it in your workbook.

Lesson 3: What Are Tithes and Offerings?

Icebreaker

Give the children 3 minutes to fill out the Icebreaker activity in their workbooks. If their X-men identity will need to go to battle and they can only have 10 things with them, what will those 10 things be? (This includes uniform, shoes, weapons, transportation, etc.)

Say: You wrote down 10 things you would bring to battle with you. Today's lesson has something to do with the number 10. We're going to learn about Tithes and Offerings.

Bible Verse

Read Mark 12:41-44 (read individually or together as a class)

Ask: Why did Jesus say the poor widow gave more than the rich people? (Allow for answers)

Say: Jesus said the rich people gave from their wealth. That means, they gave what they could spare. The extra stuff. The poor widow gave everything she had to live on. That means, no more spare. No extra stuff.

Ask: What point was Jesus making here? (Allow for discussion)

Say: Jesus was making a point about giving. There's nothing wrong with being rich and giving a lot of money. But when the poor widow gave all the money she had left, she was putting her trust in God. Her actions spoke louder than her words. Money is needed to live: to buy food, clothes, and shelter. When the poor widow gave all her money, she gave up her ability to provide for herself. But she gave the money to God. Her actions showed us that she trusted God to provide for her.

Ask: Why do you think she did that? Why did she give all her money to God? Will God not provide for her if she didn't? (Allow for discussion).

Say: God would have still provided for her. We know because Jesus said in Matthew 6:25-34, that we shouldn't worry because God will provide for us. What other reason could the poor widow have for giving all her money to God? She loved God! She wanted to obey God's command. Let's read God's command. (Underlined words are answers to the workbook)

Bible Verse

Read Malachi 3:8-10 (read individually or together)

Say: God commanded his people to give their tithes and offerings. The poor widow knew this and was following this command. (Underlined words are answers in the workbook)

Ask: What did God say we're doing if we don't give our tithes and offering? (Answer: robbing Him) (write answer in the workbook)

Ask: What did God say will happen if we give our tithes and offerings? (Answer: He will bless us so much) (write answer in the workbook)

Discuss

Say: Now, the poor widow gave every money she had. But God's not actually asking for all of our money. He's asking for our tithes and offerings.

Ask: You know what offerings are. We give our offerings every week. But what are tithes? (Allow for answers)

Say: Tithes mean one-tenth. This is one-tenth of what you earn. One-tenth is what you get when you divide something into ten. Let's do a little math. If you have \$10 and divide it into 10, 10 divided by 10 is what? One. One-tenth of \$10 is \$1. The tithe of \$10 is \$1. So if you sold lemonade and made \$10. The tithe you will give back to God is \$1.

Say: When God asks for our tithes and offerings, he's asking for one-tenth of what we earn plus offerings. Think of offerings as something on top of the one-tenth, and it depends on your heart. 2 Corinthians 9:7 says that God loves a cheerful giver. How much your offerings are depends on you! (Underlined words are answers in the workbook)

Ask: Now you know what tithes and offerings are. When we give our tithes and offerings, where does the money go? (Allow for discussion)

Say: The money goes to the our church and the things we do as a church. It helps pay our church bills (rent, electricity, water, office supplies, wifi), pay our ministry bills (materials for events like VBS, materials for class like construction paper, prizes), and some go to people to help them (pastors, speakers, missionaries, sponsored children).

Activity: Special Offering

Say: One of the things our tithes and offerings go to is our ministry bills. That includes the things we use as a class. But, you may not know this, many times, the church doesn't pay for the things we use. We do! The teachers and leaders pay for them ourselves because we love God and we love you. But I'm going to challenge you today.

Challenge: Look around the room. Have the children think of something they want or need or can use together as a class. Pick something they can pay for. Examples are: better markers/crayons/pens, notebooks, construction paper, tissue boxes, sanitary wipes, etc. If you have an idea of how much that item/s will cost, tell the children the amount. Collect a special offering next week to use that money to buy whatever the children picked to pay for.

Lesson 4: What Is Fellowship

Icebreaker

Go around and describe the best party you've ever been to.

Say: We've probably all been to a party, and every party has something in common. People! In parties, people come together to hang out with each other and celebrate. Today is the last lesson in our X-Men series, and it's all about fellowship. Let's read what the Bible tells us about it.

Bible Verse

Read Hebrews 10:24-25 (ICB)

"Let us think about each other and help each other to show love and do good deeds. You should not stay away from the church meetings, as some are doing. But you should meet together and encourage each other. Do this even more as you see the Day coming."

Say: What are the things this Bible passage tells us to do? List them in your workbooks.

Say: Today, we're learning about fellowship. Hebrews 10:24-25 talks about fellowship. Fellowship is a big word. What does it mean? (Allow for answers)

Discussion

Say: Fellowship means meeting together. Hanging out with each other. But it's also more than that. What does the Bible tell us we should do when we hang out with each other? Here's a hint. Look at Hebrews 10:24-25. Let's break them down.

Workbook Fill In the Blanks with answers. Refer below to dive into a discussion about what each part means. Underlined words are answers in the workbook.

1. Think about each other

Say: When we think of other people, we remember them. We remember them on special occasions like birthdays or holidays, or when we're bored and we want to hang out with our friend, or when they need our help (like if they're sick). But thinking about each other also means considering each other. Thinking about how they would feel if we do or say something.

2. Help each other to show love and do good deeds .

Say: This sounds easy, doesn't it? Because we should show love and do good deeds, but how do we help each other do that? (Allow for answers).

Say: There are many ways to help each other show love and do good deeds, but it's harder to do that if you or your friend has an enemy, like a bully. We may want to fight for them or help them get even. But the Bible tells us to help each other show love. Help each other do good deeds. That means helping each other forgive and let go of anger.

Say: This is also hard to do if it's our own friends that forget to show love and do good deeds. If one of you is hating on someone else or doing something you're not supposed to be doing. It's easier to not say anything or to just join in. Like, if you're running around or playing in the church where you're not supposed to be in. Or if you decide you don't want to participate in a group activity because you think it's boring. It's easier to join in, isn't it? But it's not showing love or doing good deeds.

Say: Fellowship isn't just hanging out. When we fellowship, we still need to let our actions speak louder than words. If people who don't know Jesus saw us hanging out and being rude or mean, what would they think about Christians? (Allow for answers).

Say: Remember, it's hard to stand up to our enemies, but it's harder to stand up to our friends. If we're doing something Jesus wouldn't like, we need to help each other do the right thing.

3. should not stay away from the church meetings .

Ask: What kinds of church meetings do we have? (Allow for short answers, which may include Bible studies, prayer meetings, church-wide events, and ministry events alongside Sunday services).

Ask: We have all kinds of church meetings. What are some reasons we may have stayed away from them? (Allow for answers. Reasons may include family vacations, sports competitions, parties to attend, mom or dad don't want to go, etc.)

Say: We can come up with many reasons not to go to church meetings. After all, they happen all the time, don't they? Why do you think the Bible tells us not to stay away? (Allow for answers)

Say: God wants us to attend church meetings because of fellowship! Remember, fellowship isn't just hanging out. It's more than that. It helps us become better Christians when we hang out with other people who love God and love each other. It's a positive influence in our lives.

4. Meet together

Ask: The Bible tells us to meet together. We just talked about church meetings. What are other ways we meet together? (Allow for answers, which may include hanging out outside of church like going to the movies, shopping, going to birthday parties, going on vacation together)

Say: Some friends are school friends only. We only see them in school. When you're an adult, you may have work friends you only see at work. Do you know what the X-Men are doing when they're not fighting enemies? Fighting bad guys is like their work, but they also go to school together (some are teachers and some are students), and they live together (the school is a boarding school), and they hang out together (when they're not in school or working).

Say: As X-Men for Jesus, as Christians, God wants us to meet together in different ways. Not just in church meetings. Those are important, but God also wants us to meet outside of church. Hang out. Have fun! The followers of Jesus were always with each other, and when they go somewhere, they bring the message of Jesus with them. If they face troubles, they face it together. If they have good news, they celebrate together. They're more than just friends.

Say: Do you know why Christians call each other brother or sister? It's because we're part of God's family, and when we share our lives with each other (hanging out in and out of church), we become close like family.

5. Encourage each other

Ask: How do we encourage each other? (Allow for answers)

Say: We can encourage each other when we're sick or sad because something bad happened. But that's not the only time we can encourage each other. If you see someone doing something good (like showing love or doing good deeds), what can you say to encourage that person? (Allow for answers)

Say: We can encourage them to keep doing the great work. We can also encourage each other by our actions. What can you **do** to encourage each other? (Allow for answers)

Say: Our actions speak louder than words. We can encourage each other by what we say, but we should also remember to encourage each other by what we do.

6. *do [all of the above] even more as you see the Day coming*

Ask: The Bible tells us to do all of the above about fellowship even more as we see the Day coming. What is this Day the Bible is talking about? (Allow for answers)

Say: The Bible tells us that Jesus will come again to Earth. The “Day” the Bible is talking about is the day that Jesus will come back, here on Earth. We call this the Second Coming.

Ask: When was the First Coming of Jesus? (Allow for short answers).

Say: Yes, Jesus first came as a baby and we celebrate His first coming to Earth during Christmas. The Second Coming hasn’t happened yet, but we know what the Bible tells us about it. The Bible tells us that when Jesus comes again, He’s going to come like a mighty King. Not like a baby and not born quietly in a manger. The Bible tells us Jesus will come in the clouds with power and glory, and everyone will see Him coming (Revelation 1:7, Matthew 24:30). But nobody knows when that will happen (Matthew 24:36).

Say: Because nobody knows when the “Day” is, the Bible tells us to fellowship even more. Remember, fellowship is more than just hanging out. It is helping each other follow God, helping each other show love, and helping each other do good deeds.

End of the Series Party

Say: One of the most common ways we fellowship at church is by meeting together with food. Next week, we’re going to have a party! We finished all of our X-Men lessons and you all did awesome! When the church meet together with food, everyone chips in. We’re going to do that. Next week, everyone will bring food to share. Let’s make a list to see who will bring what.

Make a sign-up list on who will bring what, and follow up with their parents. You can make this party as big or small as you want.