

# LESSON 11: JESUS CLEARS THE TEMPLE

Leader Guide for Grades 5 & 6

Classroom: Deeply Rooted

 Matthew 21:12-17

05/17/2020

## Teachers Dig In

### Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Matthew 21:12-17
- In This Passage: Jesus walks into the Temple and sees people selling doves. This is causing a distraction from God in his special place, and Jesus gets mad. He turns over the tables of those selling and speaks out against what they're doing. He stands up for God.
- Bible Point: Jesus stands up for God...
- Application: ...so we stand up for God.
- Summary Verse: "Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves" (Philippians 2:3).

### Dig Deeper

- You'll Be Teaching: *Jesus stands up for God.* One distinction this lesson makes is that standing up for God isn't about judging what everyone is doing; it's about standing up when people do things *in God's name* that don't reflect him. Help kids know how to say something to other Christians when they are doing something in God's name that doesn't reflect God's heart.
- Think About: When have you seen other Christians poorly representing God's heart? When have *you* poorly represented God's heart?

### Dig In to Prayer

- Ask God to give your kids wisdom to know when and how to stand up for him.

### Quick Tip

- Jesus got mad because selling doves in the Temple was a distraction from God. Consider what elements of *your* environment pull kids' attention away from God. For example, if you have games for kids to play as they arrive, are they still in view when you start your lesson? Do you reward kids with candy or other prizes for bringing Bibles or memorizing verses? While these things may seem harmless at first, they direct kids' attention away from God at a time and place that's meant to be all about him.

## This Lesson at a Glance



### OPENING

Kids share about a topic related to the lesson.



### CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Kids experience distraction, knock over index-card furniture, and praise Jesus.

#### Supplies

- Bible
- offering money (or money you can pretend is offering money)
- Legos
- index cards
- pens
- crepe paper streamers, cut into approximately 1-foot lengths

#### Easy Prep

- Build a small, simple Lego structure.



### LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Kids stand up and commit to standing up for God.



### HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Kids play a jump-rope game.

#### Supplies

- jump-ropes (1 for every 3 to 5 kids)
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)



### CRAFT

Kids make eggs that won't fall down.

#### Supplies

- plastic Easter eggs (1 per child)
- clay (ideally the kind that needs to be baked in order to harden)
- Glue Dots
- yarn
- small googly eyes
- felt (different colors)
- permanent markers
- scissors

#### Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.



### LOW-ENERGY GAME

Kids determine which facts they think are true.



### OBJECT LESSON

Kids make hearts stand up.

#### Supplies

- 12-inch wooden skewers (1 per child)
- corrugated cardboard (one 3x3-inch piece for every 2 kids)
- pencils (1 for every 2 kids)
- scissors
- tape
- foam shape stickers (2 per child) (optional)
- modeling dough



## DEEPER BIBLE

**Kids watch a bag explode and consider when anger is okay.**

### Supplies

- Bibles
- resealable plastic sandwich bag
- vinegar
- baking soda
- tissue paper square (approximately 6x6 inches)
- pan with sides
- paper
- pens
- tablespoon
- measuring cup

### Easy Prep

- Put 2 tablespoons of baking soda in the center of the small tissue-paper square. Fold the tissue paper to make a small packet of baking soda.
- Put ½ cup of vinegar in the resealable plastic sandwich bag.

*\*Marked supplies can be reused from Core Bible Discovery*

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



## OPENING

[5 min]

### Welcome

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#### Welcome

- Thank kids for coming.
- Just for fun, have kids give a side hug to two friends.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having kids hop on one foot while they sing “Happy Birthday.”
- Collect the offering.

#### Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we’re going to learn that Jesus stands up for God, so we stand up for God.**

#### Share

- Tell kids about a time *you* had to stand up for a long time.
- Have kids form pairs. Ask kids to share about when *they’ve* had to stand up for a long time.
- After partners have discussed, ask two or three kids to share with the whole group.

#### Summarize

Open a Bible to Matthew 21, and say: **Our feet can get tired when we stand up for a long time. But that’s not the kind of standing up Jesus did. When we say Jesus stands up for God, we mean he defended God when others weren’t representing God well. Let’s look in the Bible to see how Jesus stood up for God. The Bible isn’t like other books; it’s special. The Bible is one way God talks to us. God is holy, and he’s here right now, ready to talk to you. Let’s talk with him now.**

Pray, praising Jesus for standing up for God.



## Supplies

- Bible
- offering money (or money you can pretend is offering money)
- Legos
- index cards
- pens
- crepe paper streamers, cut into approximately 1-foot lengths

## Easy Prep

- Build a small, simple Lego structure.

## Explore the Context

Say: **Today's story might seem a little confusing at first. So before we even start, let me give you some background.**

As you talk, have your adult or teen helper dump out offering money and start counting it loudly. At some point, stop talking and ask what your helper is doing. Explain that while offering money is important, counting it loudly during the lesson is distracting. At that point, your helper can stop counting the money.

Say: **The story takes place in the Temple, which was like a church building. Instead of a lot of churches like we have today, there was only *one* Temple for God. He'd given special directions about how to build it, and it was a very special place.**

**One of the things that people did in the Temple was sacrifice animals so God would forgive their sins. We don't have to do that anymore because *Jesus* died for our sins. Let's thank Jesus for that.**

Start to pray, and as you pray have your helper start counting the money out loud again.

Ask: • **What did you think when [name of helper] started counting the offering money in the middle of the lesson? How about during my prayer?**

Say: **Since there was only one Temple, sometimes people traveled from far away to get there. They didn't have any animals with them to offer as a sacrifice, so they bought them at the Temple. That was fine. But then people started selling animals in the Temple courts. This was supposed to be a special, pure place with nothing in it. It was disrespectful to God and distracting to people trying to worship God—kind of like counting offering money in the middle of a lesson! There's a right time and place to do that, but the Temple courts weren't it.**

## Knock It Over

Say: **It's important to treat God with respect.** Hold up the Lego structure.

Say: **Imagine that I built this when I was a kid, and I've saved it all these years because it's special to me.** Hand it to a child. **Now imagine that I let [name of child] hold it, and he [or she] said "Let's play catch!" and started throwing it around the room.**

Ask: • **What would you do if that happened?**

Say: **You wouldn't want someone to disrespect something important to you or something important to me. Let's think of ways people disrespect God today.**

Give each child a few index cards, and have kids write on each card a way that people show disrespect to God today.

Say: **Let's see how Jesus stood up for God when he saw people disrespecting God by selling animals in the Temple courts.**

Read Matthew 21:12-13.

Have kids fold their index cards to make tables and chairs. (There's no right way to do this; let kids use their imaginations.) Then have them stand up their index-card furniture.

Ask: • **How do you feel when people do the things written on your cards?**

Say: **Seeing people disrespect God's Temple made Jesus mad. He was fed up! On the count of three, we'll knock over our tables and chairs. Ready? One, two, three!**

**We might've found it a little fun to knock things over. But Jesus wasn't knocking tables over to have fun; he was standing up for God. He was trying to make sure that at the Temple, the main focus was on God.**

Ask: • **What are some things besides God that we sometimes focus on at church?** Examples could include games, friends, or toys.

Say: **It's not that those things are bad, but when they distract us from God, we're missing the whole point of church! Jesus stands up for what's right by keeping church about God.**

### **Praise Jesus**

Say: **The leaders of the Temple were mad when Jesus knocked over their tables and chairs. But not everyone was mad at Jesus! Check this out.**

Read Matthew 21:14-16.

Say: **The leaders at the Temple couldn't recognize that Jesus was right to be mad, but children and people with disabilities knew how wonderful Jesus is. And even though the leaders were mad, kids praised Jesus! They stood up for Jesus by praising him. Jesus stands up for God, so we stand up for God. Let's do that, too!**

Give each child a streamer, and then lead kids in jumping as high as they can, waving streamers and shouting, "Praise God for Jesus!"

### **Wrap Up**

Say: **Jesus stands up for God, so we stand up for God. When we see people disrespecting God, we can stand up and say something!**

Ask: • **What are some examples of things people might do that disrespect God?** Kids can share ideas from their index-card tables and chairs.

• **What could you say or do if you saw that happening?**

Say: **Here's something important: I'm not telling you to go around and flip tables anytime anyone does something you don't like. That's not the point of this story. The point is that when people disrespect God, that should bother us! We see the heart of Jesus in this story when we see how important it is to him to respect God. Jesus stood up for God, and we can stand up for God and ask people to stop disrespecting him.**



### We'll Stand Up

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#### Sit and Stand

Say: **Jesus stands up for God, so we stand up for God. Let's commit to that with our prayer. As I read different situations of what others might do, you'll sit. When I finish reading each line, you'll stand and say, "We'll stand up for you, God."**

Read the following situations, pausing after each one for kids to stand and respond.

- **When others are a distraction in church...** (We'll stand up for you, God.)
- **When others say bad things about you...** (We'll stand up for you, God.)
- **When others judge instead of showing love...** (We'll stand up for you, God.)
- **When others don't take care of our church...** (We'll stand up for you, God.)
- **When other Christians act like God loves them more than non-Christians...** (We'll stand up for you, God.)

#### Wrap Up

Pray: **Jesus, thank you for showing us how to stand up for God! We're committed to standing up for you and reflecting your true heart instead of pulling people away from you. In your name, amen.**

Thank kids for coming, and encourage them to come back next week.



## HIGH-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

### Jump and Spin

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#### Supplies

- jump-ropes (1 for every 3 to 5 kids)
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

#### Tips

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the downloadable album [here](#).
- You'll need a large area to play this game.

#### Jump Over the Jump-Rope

Say: **In today's Bible story, Jesus saw that people were distracted by other things going on in the Temple, which took their focus off God. Jesus was upset by the distractions, so Jesus stood up for God.**

**Let's play a game where we'll avoid something that could trip us up, or distract us, like the people were distracted in the Bible story.**

- Form teams of three to five.
- Assign a Spinner in each team.
- Give each team's Spinner a jump-rope, and have the teams stand in circles with the Spinner in the center.
- The Spinner will hold one end of the jump-rope and spin in circles holding the rope low to the ground while everyone else in the team tries to jump over the opposite end of the rope.
- The goal for the other players is to jump over the rope before it can touch or wrap around their legs.
- Once someone is tagged or lassoed by the rope, he or she becomes the new Spinner and moves to the center of the circle.
- Give a quick example of how to spin with a rope low to the ground and at a speed so the rope isn't swinging wildly around.
- If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids play as many rounds as time allows.

#### Talk About It

Ask: • **What strategies did you figure out for not getting tangled in the rope?**

Say: **We can figure out strategies for not getting tangled in distractions that pull our focus away from God.**

Ask: • **What are things in your life that might distract you from God?** Share an example of your own, such as caring too much about pleasing other people or checking Facebook on your phone during a church service.

Say: **Standing up for God in our lives might mean putting away distractions or taking time out from other activities to spend time with God. It might mean *not* sitting with our friends at church if we know they'll distract us. When we stand up for God, we can avoid the things that might tangle and trip us. Jesus stands up for God, so we stand up for God.**



## Supplies

- plastic Easter eggs (1 per child)
- clay (ideally the kind that needs to be baked in order to harden)
- Glue Dots
- yarn
- small googly eyes
- felt (different colors)
- permanent markers
- scissors

## Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.



## Tip

- If you don't have plastic Easter eggs in your supply closet and it's not Easter season, you should be able to find some for purchase online year-round. You could also ask families to donate some from their stashes at home!

## Make Stander-Uppers

Show kids the sample craft you made. Give each child an Easter egg. Set out the remaining supplies to share, and have kids follow these directions to make Stander-Uppers.

- Open your Easter egg, and press a lump of clay into the larger half of the shell.
- Close your egg, and try standing it up to make sure the clay is well balanced. Press it around differently if you need to.
- Decorate your egg to look like a face. You can add googly eyes, yarn hair, or felt facial features, or you can draw on facial features with permanent marker. Just make sure you don't block your ability to open the egg again.
- When you've finished decorating, try standing up your egg again. Depending on the weight of your decorations, you may need to shift the clay a little to make sure your egg balances so it always stands up.

## Stand It Up

- Have kids share things people might do that hurt God.
- As kids name something, all the kids will push their Stander-Uppers so they wobble.

- No matter what, the Stander-Uppers will stay standing upright.

### **Talk About It**

Ask: • **What can you learn from the way your Stander-Upper always stays standing?**

Say: **Jesus stands up for God, so we stand up for God. When other people do things that hurt God's heart, we can say something—especially if the people are putting God's name on their actions! And since we represent God, we can make sure to honor God in what we do, too.**

Have kids take their Stander-Uppers home and show them to their friends and families as they share about how to stand up for God.



## LOW-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

### Stand Up for the Truth

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#### Stand Up for True Statements

Say: **Today we've been learning about how Jesus stands up for God. Jesus stood up for God at the Temple—a place for worshipping God—and Jesus stood up for the truth about God wherever he went. Let's play a game where you'll stand up when you hear something true.**

- Gather everyone around you to sit on the floor.
- Read through the list of animal facts below, pausing after each one to allow kids to cast a vote of “true” or “false” by standing when they think a statement is true and sitting when they think it's false. In between each vote, kids will crouch.
- After you've read each statement and allowed kids to make their vote, say whether it's true or false.
  - A blue whale's heart is the size of a small car. (*False, although it is an urban legend many people think is true!*)
  - Some deep-sea sharks who live in cold water can live for well over 200 years. (*True*)
  - Lions have only three toes on each paw. (*False*)
  - Elephants can't jump. (*True*)
  - Dogs can smell colors. (*False*)
  - Elephants can't swim. (*False*)
  - In addition to their fur, tigers' skin is striped, too. (*True*)
  - Grizzly bears have enough bite power to crush a bowling ball. (*True*)
  - Flamingos are actually gray birds—the food they eat causes their feathers to turn pink. (*True*)
  - It's silly to say “blind as a bat” because most bats can actually see very well. (*True*)
  - One way dogs communicate is by how they position their paws. (*True*)
  - Within a year's time, more people are bitten by other people than are bitten by sharks. (*True*)
  - Panda bears come from Australia. (*False*)
  - A type of Arctic frog can freeze solid and then thaw and get back to life as usual. (*True*)

#### Talk About It

Ask: • **What made it difficult or easy to know what animal facts were true?**

Say: **Sometimes we'll hear or experience things about God that aren't true, and it might be hard to tell. Like with the animal facts, we might be unsure of when to stand up for what we know about God.**

Ask: • **What are ways we can discover truths about God so we know how to stand up for God?**

Share an example of something you do to get to know God better, such as listening to favorite podcasts by wise Bible teachers or going on walks where you talk to God.

Say: **We can get to know God, too, as we spend time with him and learn from God's Word, the Bible. The better we know God, the better we'll know what hurts his heart, so we can stand up for him. And because Jesus stands up for God, we can always talk to Jesus when we're not sure what to do.**



## OBJECT LESSON

### Stand-Up Heart

[10 min]

#### Supplies

- 12-inch wooden skewers (1 per child)
- corrugated cardboard (one 3x3-inch piece for every 2 kids)
- pencils (1 for every 2 kids)
- scissors
- tape
- foam shape stickers (2 per child) (optional)
- modeling dough

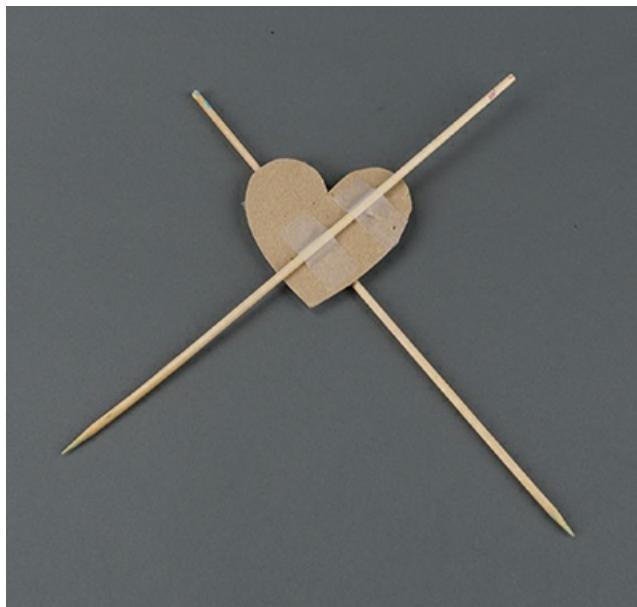
#### Cut Hearts

Say: **It's hard to stand up for God when we feel uncertain and a little wobbly on our own. Let's do an experiment where we'll work together to support and help a heart stand up.**

- Form pairs, and give each pair two skewers, one piece of corrugated cardboard, a pencil, and scissors.
- Have partners work together to draw one heart in the middle of the cardboard.
- Have partners cut out the heart.

#### Tape Skewers to Hearts

- Put tape, foam shape stickers, and modeling dough within reach.
- Have partners each tape a skewer to the front and back of the heart diagonally, making sure the pointed ends are at the bottom of the heart. Use two pieces of tape so the skewers are tightly secured to the heart. It's okay if the skewers aren't perfectly even across both sides of the heart.

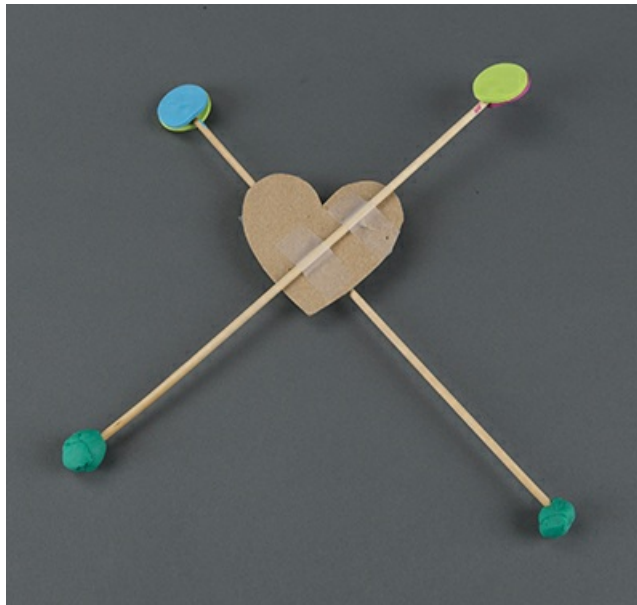


- If you'd like to add some color, attach foam shape stickers to the front and back of the top of each skewer.

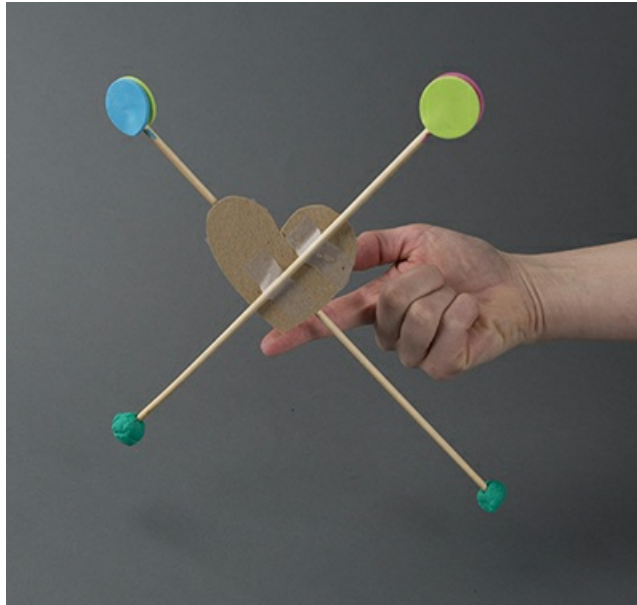


### **Balance with Modeling Dough**

- Show kids how to roll a small piece of modeling dough into a ball.
- Have kids attach one ball of modeling dough to the sharp end of each skewer.



- Have one partner place the bottom of the heart on the tip of a pointer finger and see if it stands up straight.
- If it leans in one direction, have the other partner add more modeling dough to the opposite side. Pairs can keep adding or taking away dough until the heart balances and stands straight on the partner's finger.



**Talk about It**

Ask: • **What was it like balancing the two sides so the heart stands up?**

Say: **You and your partner worked together to help the heart stand up. It took some teamwork and cooperation, but eventually you found the perfect balance. Jesus stands up for God. Usually he did that with love, but in today's Bible story, he did that with anger. It was all about balancing the right amount of anger with the right amount of love.**

Ask: • **When have you been too angry and needed more love?**

• **When have you seen people doing wrong things and not been willing to speak up?**

Say: **Jesus stands up for God, so we stand up for God. We want to be loving, but we can also balance that with speaking up when something hurts God's heart. Or, if we tend to overreact in anger, we can balance that out with more love.**



## Supplies

- Bibles
- resealable plastic sandwich bag
- vinegar
- baking soda
- tissue paper square (approximately 6x6 inches)
- pan with sides
- paper
- pens
- tablespoon
- measuring cup

## Easy Prep

- Put 2 tablespoons of baking soda in the center of the small tissue-paper square. Fold the tissue paper to make a small packet of baking soda.
- Put ½ cup of vinegar in the resealable plastic sandwich bag.

## Bubble Up

Say: **In today's Bible story, Jesus got angry. Let's think about how anger bubbles up in our lives.**

Put the baking soda packet in the plastic sandwich bag, seal the bag, and set it in the pan. As the bag inflates and ultimately pops open, kids can shout things that make them angry.

Ask: • **How did that experiment remind you of the way anger feels?**

• **When can anger be destructive and feel like an explosion?**

Say: **When anger explodes out of us, it's not usually a good thing. In our Bible story today, Jesus was so angry that he started flipping tables and benches over. If we're supposed to live like Jesus, is it okay to show anger that way? Can we explode like our bag just did? Let's dig in to that.**

## Dig Deeper

Distribute paper and pens. Say: **To understand why Jesus was so upset, let's look at the verses Jesus quoted. He quoted two different Bible verses from the Old Testament, so we're going to read those and the *context*, which means the other words around them. Listen for what was special about the Temple as we read the first passage. As I read, write down words you hear that show how special the Temple was. The Temple might also be called "my house."**

Read Isaiah 56:5-8, pausing after each verse for kids to catch up on any words they're writing.

Ask: • **Share some of the words you noticed.**

• **Why was the Temple such a special place?**

Say: **Jesus didn't get angry because of a personal preference; he got angry because the Temple was supposed to be a holy place for God! Jesus also said the sellers in the Temple had made it a den of thieves. The context of that verse came from a time the Israelites used the Temple kind of like a good luck charm. They thought they could do all kinds of bad things and worship other gods, but as long as they lived near the Temple they wouldn't be punished. Let's see what God said about that.**

Have a child read Jeremiah 7:8-11.

Ask: • **What was so bad about how people were using the Temple?**

Say: **The context of both the verses Jesus quoted shows that he was hurt because he knew what he saw hurt God's heart. That's not the same as being angry because you didn't get your way.**

**Standing up for God is about doing what's right and speaking out when other people put God's name on something that's wrong. It's not about getting angry based on our own opinions.**

Think of it this way. If you know your friend Sadie really, *really* loves cats, you wouldn't go up to someone else and say, "Sadie said it's okay to kick that cat." Why? Because you know that's *not* something Sadie would ever think is okay!

Ask: • What's something you'd be very upset about if another person associated your name with it?

Say: It would be really upsetting to find out that someone is associating your name with something you hate. So when Christians say God is okay with them doing something and he's really not, that hurts God's heart. That's when we need to stand up for God.

Have kids give examples of times it might be okay to get mad because something hurts God's heart. For example, a pastor of a big church is caught stealing money from the church.

Say: Even when things like that happen, it doesn't *necessarily* mean we show anger. Jesus *did* show anger in our story today, and that was okay to do. But most of the time, even when he saw things that were wrong, he didn't flip tables. If your usual reaction is to act out of anger, that's not following Jesus' example. Following Jesus' example means showing love as much as possible and only acting out of anger in really extreme situations.

Have a child read Ephesians 4:26-27.

Ask: • When does anger turn into sin?

Say: It's not a sin to feel angry. And as Jesus showed us, it's *sometimes* okay to act angry when it's truly responding to something that misrepresents God. But since we're not Jesus, we sometimes have a harder time telling when acting in anger is right, so it's best to operate out of love. Jesus stood up for God by flipping tables, but that's not the only way to do it. We stand up for God by speaking out when someone is doing something in God's name that God wouldn't like.

Pray: God, help us know your heart more and more so we understand what hurts your heart. Help us stand up for you with love and words as much as possible, with anger only as a last resort. And help us not show anger based on our own opinions. In Jesus' name, amen.