

Lesson B3.2 - Listen to Jesus



Teacher's Pages with Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

For Lower Elementary Students and Classes

Recommended for students in Preschool, Kindergarten, and Grades 1-2.

Quick Facts for the Teacher

Lesson Summary: Luke 10:38-42

► Bible Characters: Jesus, Mary, Martha

When Jesus visited Mary, Martha, and brother Lazarus in Bethany, he was met with siblings who disagreed with one another over hospitality. While Martha worked, Mary was focused on listening to Jesus. Work is a good thing, but in this case, paying attention was the best choice of all.

Brief Bible Background

► Today's Lesson is from the New Testament

► Scripture Section: Discipleship

Mary, Martha, and Lazarus were friends of Jesus who appeared not only in this story, but again when Jesus raises Lazarus. While Jesus chastises Martha in this story, he comforts her later when she mourns the loss of her brother. Not only that, but he truly listens to her and answers her prayer.

For More Information

The primary role of a Sunday School teacher for Preschool, Kindergarten (pre-readers), and Early Elementary (new readers) is to simply tell children the stories of Scripture and introduce them to the major characters of the Bible.

Teachers who want to know more about the lessons for their own familiarity with the story are encouraged to read the information in the SEED Upper Elementary and Youth Teacher's Pages.

a. Classroom Greeting

Teachers should arrive 10 to 15 minutes before class and greet students and parents by name. Write the day's Bible Message on the white board or poster board for all the kids to see. Have kids gather on a rug or in a dedicated meeting space. Encourage the children to learn each other's names.

b. Opening Prayer Song

The words to this song are sung to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know it, Clap Your Hands." No accompaniment is needed.

Lord, we praise you and we thank you for this day!
(Clap clap)

Lord, we praise you and we thank you for this day!
(Clap clap)

Lord, we praise you and we thank you and we're here to learn about you!

Lord, we praise you and we thank you for this day!
(Clap, clap)

c. Introduction to Today's Message

*Teacher's Script (student responses are in **bold**).*

Listen to Jesus. Say it with me! **Listen to Jesus.** That sounds pretty easy, but how do we do it? To "listen" is to *pay attention*. It means not scrolling on a phone, not interrupting, not rushing. To **listen to Jesus** means quieting our hearts and minds so we can truly focus.

- When is it hardest for you to listen or pay attention?

In today's story, we will hear about two sisters. One of them was too busy to sit down. The other was sitting quietly so she could **listen to Jesus**. What happened? Let's find out!

d. SEED Bible Story Video

The teacher may introduce the lesson by playing the video clip from the SEED website. This may be displayed simply on a laptop computer or tablet. If the classroom is equipped with a computer video monitor or video projector, the video can be displayed in a larger size.

e. Read the Story with Poster Pictures

The Bible Story has been divided into four parts, each with an accompanying Poster Picture. The teacher should hold up or point to the relevant Poster Picture while reading the individual part of the story, asking questions while reading. Posters may be printed on letter-sized paper, or enlarged and printed on ledger-sized paper if a bigger printer is available. Poster pictures may also be opened as a PDF on a computer screen, scrolling through each of the four pages.



Picture 1

Tell the children: Jesus and the disciples traveled to many different towns, healing people and teaching them about God. One day, they went to a place called Bethany, where his friends Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived.

Read the caption: Jesus and his friends visited Mary and her sister Martha. Mary sat down with them. Martha did not. She had too much to do.

- *What is Martha doing in this picture? [She's getting food ready for a meal.]*
- *Look at Mary's face. What is she doing? [She seems glad to see Jesus and is listening carefully to what he is saying.]*



Picture 2

Tell the children: While Mary talked to Jesus, Martha bustled about the room, cooking, getting water, setting the table, and straightening things.

Read the caption: Martha was mad at her sister. Why wouldn't Mary help with the chores? Martha was doing it all! That didn't seem fair!

- *Look at Martha's face now. How can you tell what she is feeling? [She is frowning and looks angry while she works.]*
- *Have you ever felt angry because someone else wasn't doing their share? Without naming any names, what happened? [Call on volunteers.]*



Picture 3

Tell the children: Finally, Martha got so angry that she went to Jesus to complain. She expected Jesus to scold Mary for being lazy.

Read the caption: "Lord," Martha said, "aren't you upset that Mary is just sitting there? She has left me to do all the work! Tell her to help me."

- *Look at Jesus in this picture. What is he doing? [He's trying to help Martha calm down. He can see that she's very upset]*
- *Do you think Martha was surprised that Jesus wasn't scolding Mary? Why or why not? [Call on volunteers.]*



Picture 4

Tell the children: Jesus knew that Martha was bothered by many things, and he said so. But he didn't tell Mary to get to work. In fact, what he said next might have surprised everyone.

Read the caption: "Mary is here listening to my Word," Jesus said. "She has chosen what is best. This won't be taken away from her."

- *Why do you think listening is so important to Jesus? [Call on volunteers]*
- *What are some ways we can listen to Jesus, ourselves? [Call on volunteers]*

f. Bible Story Rhyme (optional)

The Bible Story Rhyme below is the same one found on the Upper Elementary Student sheet. The teacher can read the beginning of the line and see if the children can finish the last rhyming word of the phrase.

*Jesus moved from town to town,
teaching all who gathered 'round.
One day he visited the house of
Mary and her sister Martha.*

*Martha always kept so busy,
working hard 'til she was dizzy.
Mary sat before the Lord
and listened to his every word.*

*When Martha started to complain,
Jesus told her to refrain.
"Mary's chosen what is best —
the one thing that's above the rest."*

g. Young Children's Activity (optional)

Simple in-class crafts or activities may be completed by the children if there is time left at the end of class. (Note: For the youngest children, simply providing crayons and letting them complete the Coloring Page may serve as the "craft" for the day.)

Game: Sweeping Obstacle Course**Materials Needed:**

- Classroom chairs or other objects, ball, broom, timer

Instructions:

Martha was working very hard in today's story and felt a lot of pressure to complete her tasks. Yet her focus on work alone became an obstacle that stood in the way of listening to Jesus.

Make an obstacle course, using classroom chairs or other objects. Have kids line up at the beginning of the course. Show them how you want them to do the course, using the broom and sweeping the ball around the chairs or other objects. Explain that they will be playing this game as a group against the timer. Set the timer, guessing the time it will take for the entire group to complete the course. As kids do the course, add an extra element of humor by distracting them — waving your hands around them, standing in front of the broom, etc. If they can all finish before the timer sounds, they will win the game. If the timer sounds before everyone has finished, you or "the timer" will win.

**h. Song (optional)**

This African American spiritual is often a favorite with kids. Teach them the motions below or find different ones on Youtube, Vimeo or other websites.

Standin' in the Need of Prayer

Refrain:

It's me, it's me, O Lord, (Point to self in rhythm)
standin' in the need of prayer; (Fold hands)
It's me, it's me, O Lord, (Point to self in rhythm)
standin' in the need of prayer. (Fold hands)

Not my brother, nor my sister, but it's me,
O Lord, (Shake head, "No")
standin' in the need of prayer; (Fold hands)
not my brother, nor my sister, but it's me,
O Lord, (Shake head, "No")
standin' in the need of prayer. [Refrain]

i. Story Review: Then What Happened?

Then What Happened is a learning game that helps kids retell the story and remember the flow of events. The teacher reads the starting sentence and then chooses a student to continue the story. There are two rules: each student may only add one sentence or say one new thing, and events in the story need to be in the right order.

- **Start: Jesus traveled to Bethany to see his friends, Mary, Martha and Lazarus. What happened next?**

If the younger kids have trouble, cut a Take-Home Page into four pieces (with no words) and let the kids put the illustrations in order while they tell the story.

j. Closing Prayer

Send the children home with the Take-Home Page, and tell them to ask their parents to read the story to them again (or, perhaps, they can read it to their parents).

End class with this closing prayer, repeated each week for memorization.

We thank you, Lord, for all you give,

For family, friends, the lives we live.

Please bless our church, and pastors too,

And help us all to trust in you.

For those who face hard times and pain,

We pray your peace might fall like rain. Amen.