



Age level: 3-12 This is a fun hands on Bible lesson for children as young as 3 but as old as 9 or 10 or maybe older if your knowledge can challenge them.

(This works well for a mixed age group allowing the older children to help the younger children)

Focus Topics: Many topics are lightly covered in this lesson.

Baptism in Jesus Name... Growing takes time.... By 'Applying the Oil and Heat of the Fire' we turn into a new creature in Christ... Being moved to praise the Lord...Salt of the Earth

Supplies Needed: Fresh popcorn kernels for popping

A Round Popcorn Popper that you put the oil and popcorn kernels in the bottom and a metal stirrer stirs them while a plastic top keeps them in the Popper.

You can do this with any Popper that pops with oil (not microwave popcorn), but the one above is best for maximum attention for littler children.

A twin flat sheet

White glue

Paper (any type.. card stock works best but construction paper or plain white paper is just fine too)

3 Jars (old pickle jars or canning jars)

Clear carbonated soda such as sprite or 7-up (enough to fill one jar)

Very upbeat "bouncy" music

Large container of salt

Paper plates and stapler

Paper towel

'Ziploc' sandwich bags (one for each child)

Small rectangle container for placing a 'folded in 1/2' paper towel complete flat in. (A cake pan works well)

Masking tape and pen or Permanent Marker (for writing on the sandwich bags)

Optional:

Potting soil cups to place potting soil in (one for each child)

More plain paper, tape and popcorn kernels for more activities...

(When working with small children an assistant is most helpful to keep the projects moving smoothly)

Preparation: Fill one of the Jars with Water and another with the Sprite (**don't** let the children see you do this)

Sprout some corn 7-10 days in advance.

(To sprout "popcorn": wet a paper towel, fold in half, placing the kernels inside the fold, put the towel in a "Ziploc" bag or airtight container and leave for 7-10 days, check periodically to keep the towel moist)

{For the preschool aged children you will need to move from one activity to another rather quickly as to keep their attention; There is a lot of detail that can be skipped for the younger child at your discretion.}



As the children enter the class give them about 5 kernels to hang on too! Don't worry if they eat it or loose it. (This is a way to build excitement, draw curiosity and just to give little hands something to do!)

Begin every class with prayer remember to ask for prayer requests if there are any.

Discussion Time:

Ask the children: "Does anybody know what these are?" (Referring to the kernels)

Explain that they are corn, but they are a very special type of corn that "POPS" when heated, called Popcorn. (Could go into further detail @ popcorn for older children here) Corn is mentioned 102 times in the bible.

Perfect website to find Popcorn info (www.popcorn.org)

Samples from the website:

*Popcorn is a type of maize (or corn), a member of the grass family, and is scientifically known as *Zea mays everta*.*

Of the 6 types of maize/corn—pod, sweet, flour, dent, flint, and popcorn—only popcorn pops.

Popcorn is a whole grain. It is made up of three components: the germ, endosperm, and pericarp (also know as the hull).

Americans today consume 17 billion quarts of popped popcorn each year. The average American eats about 54 quarts.

Does any body know how people are like popcorn? { Allow the children to answer }

When people first come to the church they can be hard and dormant like these "seeds".

But Jesus can germinate these seeds and make them into something new.

{ As you are talking have the children stand up and clear the center of the room. Lay the twin flat sheet out and place the popcorn popper in the center. For very young children, make them touch the wall to prevent them from getting "hit" with the popcorn as it pops. Tell the child to stay off of the sheet; this will prevent them from getting hurt. }

Add the oil to the popper and explain that when Jesus wanted to consecrate something for His work He anointed it with oil. Sometimes, when Jesus wants to make a change in us He heats up our situation to help us change. (Use some age appropriate examples here) Now watch as the oil and the heat "changes" pops these kernels.

Allow the popcorn to pop (**without the plastic cover**)! Popcorn will go everywhere!! That's the fun of it!!!

(The twin sheet is the perfect perimeter for the popper I use, a trial run may be needed on the popper of your choice)

Caution the children that the "old maids", unpopped kernels, are extremely hot!!!

Encourage the children NOT to eat this popcorn... Tell them later for snack we can eat some.

Give each child a piece of paper (card stock works great). Have your helper and you write the child's name in glue on their paper, then allow them to go pick up the popcorn and put it in the glue (writing their name in popcorn.) Explain to the children that when we enter into covenant with Jesus by getting baptized, Jesus writes HIS name on us!!! That is why getting baptized in JESUS name is SOOOOOO important!!

When you leave the class today we will know what paper is yours because we have written it in "popcorn" and when we get baptized in JESUS name He writes his name on us. See ACTS 2:38

(If your class is very large, extra popped popcorn may be helpful to have on hand)

Clean up and gather the children around the two jars full of "liquid". Explain to the children that all churches may look the same on the outside, like these two jars I have here. Even "Christians" can look the same on the outside. You can go to church {drop some kernels into the water jar} and just sit there you may or may not get anything out of it. BUT {drop some kernels into the other jar} {it takes about 30seconds to a minute for this to work so carry your discussion out the best you can} when you go to a Holy Ghost filled church or get baptized



in Jesus name, ACTS 2:38 promises to fill you with the Holy Ghost and just like these kernels you can't just sit there you gotta "pop". {As the kernels start to move up and down in the "sprite" mixture, build the excitement in the room with your voice and turn on the music} Like these kernels, you just got to move around. {Start moving and popping like the kernels in the jar. Up and Down we just have to keep praising the Lord. When you get the Holy Ghost it just makes you feel ALIVE, like these kernels in the "Holy Ghost filled jar".

Give each child a paper plate. Have them fold it in half, filling it with popcorn kernels and stapling it shut to make a "shaker" out of it. {Write their names on them} Let them Shake and "Pop" till the music stops. Have fun and continue as long as the class deems necessary.

Draw the class's attention to the third jar. Remember the "dormant" kernels we started with in class. {Fill the jar about 1/3 full of kernels} Sometimes church can seem dormant like these seeds. However, in Matthew 5:13 the Bible tells us we are the salt of the earth. {Fill the jar about 1/3 full of salt} {Put the lid on the jar and start tapping the jar on the table} As a person gets the Holy Ghost and starts to share the love of Jesus {keep tapping the jar on the table} The dormant kernels just can't help themselves and they move upwards closer to Jesus. {As you tap the jar on the table the natural sorting process of salt to kernels will push all the kernels to the top of the jar, leaving the salt together at the bottom} Don't be afraid to share with others what the Holy Ghost has done for you. Just as the kernels moved to the top as I "popped the jar up and down", People will be drawn closer to Jesus as you share what God has done for you. If time allows: share some testimonies at this time.

Ask the class how many have been baptized in Jesus Name.

Tell them that when they are baptized in Jesus name than can enter into a covenant with Him and "start growing"...

Show the class your sprouted "popcorn".

Explain that sometimes we are like the kernels, hard and unchangeable, but when we get baptized Jesus helps us grow into something beautiful. Ask the class if they would like to start growing their kernels like you have done. Give each student a paper towel and a Ziploc bag. Write their name on their bag. Have them fold their paper towel in half and in half again (so it will fit in the sandwich bag). Have the children place 5-7 kernels inside the folded paper towel. Each child can then "baptize" their kernels in a pan of water and place them in their sandwich bags. Explain to them that it takes about 7 days for their kernels to sprout like yours. That's the same amount of time until our next Sunday school class. They need to be very careful to make sure the paper towel stays wet and does not dry out. Just like their hearts need to stay soft and understanding to what Jesus is teaching them.

This next activity is optional if time allows:

Divide the class into two groups. Give each group a plain sheet of paper. (Make sure the class sees that the papers are identical) Have one group roll the paper horizontally to form a tube (tape in place). Have the other group roll their paper vertically to make a tube. (Tape in place) Ask the class, what tube will hold more kernels? {The taller one or the wider one.} For older kids they could figure out the math with the formula for volume of a cylinder. ($V=Bh$ {volume =Base x Height} {Base=area of the circle (πr^2)} {use 3.14 for π }) After they have guessed, pour kernels into a tube. (Start with the taller tube) Then take the same kernels and see if you can fill the other tube. Even though the papers were identical to start with one tube can hold more than the other. Like the paper we want to be used in the best way possible. We need to remain teachable so God can show us which way to go so we can be the most effective for His kingdom.

Have snack when convenient (Popcorn works great!)

End class by giving each child a plastic bag filled with potting soil and a cup to "plant" their seed in when it germinates!!