Preschool–Grade 6

King Manasseh

Sunday School Lesson for 3rd to 5th Grade, 45–60 minutes

Main point: God hears a humble prayer. When we turn back to Him, He hears us, and we show it by doing right.
Bible passage: 2 Chronicles 33:1–20. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "And prayed unto him: and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God." *2 Chronicles 33:13 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each child (or one for every two children), a small paper heart, a whiteboard or large paper, a marker, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the board.

1. Opening game: Turn Back! (5–10 minutes)

Send one child out of the room (or have them cover their eyes) while another child hides the paper heart. The searcher comes back and walks around. When the searcher heads the wrong way, the class calls, "Turn back!" When the searcher heads the right way, the class says, "Keep going!" Play a few rounds with new players. Ask: *What did the searcher have to do when they were going the wrong way?* Say: "Today we will meet a king who went the wrong way for a long time, and how God heard him when he turned back."

2. Bible story: He Humbled Himself Greatly (15 minutes)

Kids open their Bibles to 2 Chronicles 33. When you reach a **Look up** line, a child finds the verse and reads it out loud. Tell the rest in your own words.

A young king. Look up 2 Chronicles 33:1. Manasseh began to **reign** (rule as king) at twelve years old and reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. His father was Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 32:33), a king who "did that which was right in the sight of the LORD" (2 Kings 18:3).

The wrong way. Look up 2 Chronicles 33:2–3. Manasseh "did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD." He built again the **high places** (places for worshipping idols) that his father had broken down, and built altars for **Baalim**, false gods. **Look up 33:7.** He set a carved image, an **idol** he had made, in the house of God. **Look up 33:9.** He made Judah **err**, go the wrong way, too.

They would not hearken. Look up 33:10. "The LORD spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not **hearken**" (listen and obey). **Look up 33:11.** So the LORD brought the captains of the army of the king of Assyria. They took Manasseh "among the thorns," bound him with **fetters** (chains) and carried him to **Babylon**.

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He humbled himself. Look up 33:12. "When he was in **affliction**" (great trouble), he **besought** (begged) the LORD his God, and "humbled himself greatly." **Humbled himself** means he stopped being proud and admitted he needed God.

God heard him. Look up 33:13. He prayed, and God "was **intreated** of him" (God let Manasseh's asking move Him) and "heard his **supplication**" (his prayer for help), and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. "Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God."

He turned around. Look up 33:15–16. He took away the strange gods and the idol out of the house of the LORD and cast them out of the city. He **repaired** (fixed) the altar of the LORD, gave peace offerings and thank offerings, and commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel. Say: "His turning back to God showed in what he did."

3. Questions to ask (10 minutes)

Thinking questions (no single right answer; let kids talk)

1. Manasseh had a father who did right (2 Kings 18:3), but he chose evil (33:2). Can someone else make your choices for you?
2. God spoke to Manasseh before the trouble came, but he would not hearken (33:10). Why is it better to listen to God early?
3. What does it mean to humble yourself before God (33:12)?
4. Manasseh had done very wrong things, and God still heard him (33:13). What does that show about God?
5. After he prayed, Manasseh took the idol out and repaired the altar (33:15–16). How can we show we have turned back to God?

Recall questions

1. How long did Manasseh reign? *(Fifty-five years, 2 Chronicles 33:1)*
2. Where was Manasseh carried in fetters? *(To Babylon, 33:11)*
3. What did Manasseh know when God brought him back? *("That the LORD he was God," 33:13)*

4. Memory verse: Erase a Word (5 minutes)

Explain the old words: **intreated of him** means God listened to his asking, **supplication** means a prayer asking for help, **brought him again** means brought him back, and **the LORD he was God** means the LORD is the true God. Read the verse on the board together. Erase two words and read it again. Keep erasing two words at a time until the board is empty and the class can say it alone. Then kids say it to a partner.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "Manasseh humbled himself and turned back to God, and God heard him. God loves you. The Bible says: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means all of us have done wrong, and none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, which means God came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3–4). How do we obey the gospel? 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means to turn away from sin, the way Manasseh turned back; our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are **buried with Jesus in baptism**, all the way under the water, in Jesus' name. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we come up to live a new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives the words (Acts 2:4). The Bible calls this being born again (John 3:5)."

Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

This week: when you know you've done wrong, humble yourself: tell God, say sorry to anyone you hurt, and do one thing to make it right.

6. Activity: Bible Look-Up Race (10–15 minutes)

Kids work in pairs with one Bible. Read a reference and a question. The first pair to find the verse and read the answer out loud wins the point.

1. 2 Chronicles 33:1: How old was Manasseh when he began to reign? *(Twelve)*
2. 2 Chronicles 33:3: Who had broken down the high places? *(Hezekiah his father)*
3. 2 Chronicles 33:7: Where did Manasseh set the idol? *(In the house of God)*
4. 2 Chronicles 33:10: What would the people not do? *(Hearken)*
5. 2 Chronicles 33:11: What did the captains bind him with? *(Fetters)*
6. 2 Chronicles 33:12: How did Manasseh humble himself? *(Greatly)*
7. 2 Chronicles 33:15: Where did he cast the idol and the strange gods? *(Out of the city)*
8. 2 Chronicles 33:16: What did he repair? *(The altar of the LORD)*

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that You hear a humble prayer. Help us listen to You early, say sorry when we are wrong, and show it by doing right. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

Teacher note: this lesson names Manasseh's sins briefly in the Bible's words and leaves out the darker details of 2 Chronicles 33:6. If a child asks, say simply that he did many very bad things that God hates.

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