Preschool–Grade 6

King Manasseh

Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

Main point: No one is too far gone for God to hear a humble prayer, but real turning shows in what we do next.
Bible passage: 2 Chronicles 33:1–20. Students read it out loud themselves.
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)* and "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." *2 Chronicles 7:14 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each student, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, and one take-home sheet for each student.
Before class: read 2 Chronicles 33 (all 25 verses) and 2 Chronicles 7:14. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses. Students read 33:1–2 and 33:7–20 out loud; you summarize verses 3–6 yourself (see the note on page 3).

1. Opening game: Too Far Gone? (5–10 minutes)

Read each statement and let students vote with a thumb up (agree), thumb down (disagree) or sideways (not sure): 1) Some people have done too much wrong for God to hear them. 2) Saying sorry is enough, even if nothing changes. 3) It's easier to turn back to God early than late. 4) Growing up in a godly family makes you godly. After each, ask: *Why do you think that?* Say: "Today we read about a king who would have made most people's 'too far gone' list."

2. Bible story: Students Read It (15 minutes)

Read out loud: 2 Chronicles 33:1–2, then 33:7–20. Students take turns, a verse or two each. Before 33:7, summarize 33:3–6 yourself: "He rebuilt the high places his father Hezekiah had broken down, built altars for Baalim, and did many other evil things God hates." Old words in this passage:

- **reign** (33:1): rule as king; **abominations of the heathen** (33:2): the disgusting things the nations who didn't know God did
- **carved image, the idol** (33:7): a statue made to be worshipped; **err** (33:9): go the wrong way
- **hearken** (33:10): listen and obey; **captains of the host** (33:11): army officers; **fetters**: chains
- **affliction** (33:12): great trouble; **besought**: begged; **humbled himself**: stopped being proud
- **intreated of him** (33:13): God let Manasseh's asking move Him; **supplication**: a prayer asking for help
- **strange gods** (33:15): false gods from other nations; **repaired** (33:16): fixed
- **peace offerings and thank offerings** (33:16): gifts given to God to give thanks and to be at peace with Him
- **seers** (33:18): prophets God sent to speak to him; **slept with his fathers** (33:20): died

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Look closer. Point out these details with the class:

- **A good father, a bad choice.** Hezekiah "did that which was right in the sight of the LORD" (2 Kings 18:3), and his son did evil (33:2). A godly home is a gift, but each of us chooses.
- **God spoke first.** Before the fetters, "the LORD spake to Manasseh," and God sent seers (33:10, 33:18). The trouble came after he would not hearken.
- **God's own promise.** Years before, God said, "If my people … shall humble themselves, and pray … then will I hear from heaven" (2 Chronicles 7:14). Manasseh "humbled himself greatly" and prayed, and God heard (33:12–13).
- **Fruit, and lasting damage.** He threw out the idol and repaired the altar (33:15–16), but "the people did sacrifice still in the high places" (33:17). Sin can leave marks on others even after we turn back.
- **Two kings, two choices.** His son Amon copied his sins but "humbled not himself before the LORD, as Manasseh his father had humbled himself" (33:22–23).

3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. Manasseh grew up with a father who did right, yet chose evil (33:2). What does that tell you about your own faith?
2. God spoke to Manasseh before he sent trouble (33:10). How does God speak to people today before they "hit bottom"?
3. What is the difference between being sorry you got caught and humbling yourself before God (33:12)?
4. If God heard Manasseh's prayer, is there anyone God won't hear when they humble themselves? Why does that matter?
5. Manasseh's turning showed in what he did (33:15–16). What would that look like in your life?
6. The people kept going to the high places (33:17), and Amon followed his father's old ways (33:22). Who is watching your example?

4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

Old words: **intreated of him** means God let his asking move Him; **supplication** means a prayer for help; **brought him again** means brought him back. In 2 Chronicles 7:14, **seek my face** means look for God and want to be near Him, and **turn from their wicked ways** means stop doing evil.
Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say 2 Chronicles 33:13 this week; keep working on 2 Chronicles 7:14 next week too.

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5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "Manasseh humbled himself and God heard him. God hears us too. God loves you, and 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). We obey the gospel the way Peter preached it: '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) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we rise to walk in newness of life, a brand-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 utterance, which means as He gives the words (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5)."
Pray with the students, 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.

6. Activity: Journal (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share. Write these three prompts on the board:

1. Is there anything I keep doing even though I know God has spoken to me about it?
2. What would humbling myself before God look like this week?
3. Write a short prayer, like Manasseh's, asking God to help you turn back to Him in that area.
   If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence.

This week: pray 2 Chronicles 7:14 every day this week, and do one thing that shows you have turned back to God, like Manasseh taking the idol out.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that You hear a humble prayer, and that no one is too far gone for You. Help us humble ourselves, turn from what is wrong, and show it by what we do. In Jesus' name, amen."

Teacher note: 2 Chronicles 33:3–6 lists sins that are too dark for this age to read aloud in class (33:6 especially), so you summarize those verses yourself. If a student asks, say that Manasseh did many very evil things God hates, and that God still heard him when he humbled himself. Never present his sins in detail.

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