

Obey Leaders

Quarter 9 • Lesson 6

Focus on Character Development

- 1. Connecting:** Play a game about obeying a leader.
- 2. Teaching:** Listen to a story about obeying leaders (2 Kings 18:3, 5–6; Romans 13:5–7).
- 3. Responding:** Act out how to obey a leader.

SUPPLIES

- Bible
- Twine, yarn, or newspaper

Optional Supplies:

- Memory Verse Poster
- Crayons
- Student Pages

Before class, cut a piece of twine, yarn, or strip of newspaper long enough so it wraps around your head. Tie the material into a circle to make a simple crown.

Teacher Devotion

*All of you must obey those who rule over you.
There are no authorities except the ones God has chosen.
Those who now rule have been chosen by God.*
Romans 13:1

True authority comes from God. Does this mean that God approves of those who are corrupt or do wrong? God is the source of authority. However, that does not mean that all people in authority are following God's will. Nevertheless, it is important for us to follow rules and laws created by those in authority unless they directly go against God's Word. Doing so creates an orderly society and, ideally, helps us to live peacefully with others.

Maybe you have found yourself losing confidence in the leaders of this world. They do not always do what is right. But the Bible makes it clear that you still owe them honour and respect—doing so shows your love and honour for God. Regardless of whether you like your leaders, pray for them. Ask God to guide their decisions. The Bible says to obey authorities, so why not ask God to be part of their authority? Trust God to work through those He has placed in authority.

Family Connection: Encourage families to ask their children to each name a leader from their community. Then say a prayer for these leaders or name a way to obey them.

LESSON TIME

1. Connecting: Play a game about obeying a leader.

Greet the children as they come to class. Ask each child to name a leader in his community.

To play "Obey the King," have the children line up side by side at 1 side of your space. If you have a large number of children, you can have the children create 2 lines at opposite ends of the space. You will then stand between the 2 lines.

Last week, we talked about what it means to obey. There are many people in our communities who we must obey. Today we will play a game called "Obey the King." I will pretend to be a king and will stand across from all of you. I will put on my crown and everyone will stand up.

The king will give a command with specific directions for who must obey. Here are 2 examples of the commands the king might give: If you are 7 years old, take 1 step forward. If your shoes are black, take 2 steps backward. The goal of the game is to reach the king.

Put on your crown.

Stand up and let's play. Spread out in a straight line facing me. You must listen carefully to the king's instructions and obey quickly, because I will only pause briefly between commands. Get ready and listen carefully.

Teacher Tip: Feel free to change these statements to ones that will best fit your children.

- If you have a nose, take 2 steps forward.
- If you have fingernails, take 1 step backward.
- If you have any orange colour in your shirt, take 3 steps forward.
- If you are wearing a skirt, take 2 steps forward.
- If you are wearing pants, take 1 step forward.
- If you have a brother or sister, take 4 steps forward.
- If you have blue anywhere on your clothes, take 1 step backward.
- If your hair is shorter than your ears, take 3 steps forward.

Continue with commands until someone reaches the king. Congratulate the first child to reach the king. Then ask the children to sit at their normal seats.

A king is one type of leader people obey. There are many other people we obey who make our laws and guide our people.

Allow 2–3 students to answer the following questions.

- **Who are some other leaders people obey?**

Answers may include: local authorities, law enforcement, government officials, church leaders, and teachers.

Teacher Tip: Give an example of a leader or authority who is known in your community. Talk about that person's responsibilities and the ways people obey that leader.

Today, we will learn more about obeying leaders in our community.

2. Teaching: Listen to a story about obeying leaders (2 Kings 18:3, 5–6; Romans 13:5–7).

Last week we learned about obeying God. We obey God out of love. When you obey people, you listen to and understand directions and do what is asked of you.

- **Who are some people in your life you should obey?**

Children may answer: parents, teachers, neighbours, community leaders, police, and other authorities.

Sometimes, the people we obey believe in God and sometimes they do not. Today, you will listen to a true story from the Bible about a king who loved and honoured God by obeying Him. The king's name was Hezekiah. He ruled over God's people—the Israelites. Listen to what the Bible tells us about this good king.

*Hezekiah did what was right in the eyes of the LORD,
just as King David had done.
2 Kings 18:3*

Allow 1–2 children to answer each of the following questions.

- **Did Hezekiah obey God? How do you know this?**

Yes, we know this is true because the Bible verse says he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord.

- **Do you think Hezekiah listened to God? Why do you think this?**

Yes, because he would have to listen in order to obey God.

- **Do you think Hezekiah understood what God wanted him to do? Why do you think this?**

Yes, because he would have to understand what God wanted to follow what was right.

Hezekiah was very successful. The Bible tells us that is because Hezekiah obeyed God.

*Hezekiah trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel.
There was no one like Hezekiah among all the kings of Judah.
There was no king like him either before him or after him.
Hezekiah remained faithful to the LORD. He didn't stop serving him.
He obeyed the commands the LORD had given Moses.
2 Kings 18:5–6*

- **How do we know Hezekiah loved God?**

Allow 2–3 children to respond.

The good king obeyed and served God. Hezekiah obeyed God out of love for Him. Hezekiah was the king during a time when the Israelites had refused to obey God's rules. The people were worshipping idols and doing other things that did not honour God.

Like King Hezekiah, you can love and obey God too. Remember the steps to obeying: listen, understand, and then do what is asked. When you obey God, you honour Him and show that you love Him. God tells us to obey those in authority. This means those who are rulers or leaders over us. Listen to what the apostle Paul wrote in the book of Romans in the Bible:

*You must obey the authorities. Then you will not be punished.
You must also obey them because you know it is right.*
Romans 13:5

- **Why does this Bible verse say we should obey authorities or leaders?**

We could be punished if we do not. We should do what we know is the right thing to do.

It is very important to understand that not all leaders are good leaders. God still wants us to obey leaders. It is not always easy to respect them, especially when they make bad decisions or do things that are not right. This was also true during Jesus' time. But whether we agree or disagree with our leaders, we are called to respect them.

God puts rulers in place for our good. They are meant to keep order in our communities and world.

Teacher Tip: Do not communicate that children must do things that go against what the Bible says when they obey leaders. You may need to clarify that we should never do something wrong because a leader tells us to. However, we must also balance this with the safety of the child in telling her to pray about a difficult decision to obey something she knows is not right. But in most cases, we can obey the law and authorities.

As you present these 5 ways children can obey leaders and show respect, have them do the motions with you. Go through the list at least 2 times.

Let's learn 5 ways you can obey and respect leaders. Stand with me.

God says you can ...

1. Pray for leaders and those in authority.

Place hands together in prayer motion.

2. Obey the rules and laws.

Hold up an imaginary paper and pretend to write.

3. Encourage others to obey leaders.

Pat the person next to you on the back.

4. Speak with respect about your leaders.

Touch fingers to lips and extend 1 hand forward.

5. Choose to do what is right while also obeying leaders.

Extend both hands in front of you.

Repeat these ways to obey and motions with the children 3 times.

3. Responding: Act out how to obey a leader.

Have the children form a circle.

Let's practice what you have learned about obeying leaders. I will give you a situation. You will act out how you can obey the leaders. For some situations, you may use the motions you just learned. As you obey the leaders, be sure to stay in your place in the circle.

Pause after each situation to allow children to respond.

Situation 1: A teacher asks you to walk, not run, inside.

Children will walk in place.

Situation 2: Your friend decides to run in the classroom. What can you say to him?

Allow the children to encourage the friend not to run in the classroom.

Situation 3: The adults in your community are choosing new leaders for your community. You are too young to vote, but what can you do to help your community make good decisions?

Encourage the children to pray for the decisions of the community and for the new leaders.

Situation 4: Your friend spends the day with you and your mother. The next day, your friend asks you about some of your mother's very strict rules. How will you answer your friend?

Allow the children to respond. If they are not sure how to answer, encourage them to think about how they can speak with respect about their mothers while speaking to their friends.

Optional: If you are using Student Pages, give the children crayons and allow about 3 minutes for them to complete their pages.

When we obey God, we give Him the honour He deserves. And when we obey our leaders, we show them respect, but we also honour God, who put them in authority over us. The Bible reminds us that we should obey those in authority. Listen to this week's memory verse:

If you are using the Memory Verse Poster, show it to the students.

*You must obey the authorities.
Then you will not be punished.
You must also obey them
because you know it is right.
Romans 13:5*

Repeat the verse in the same way as last time. Divide children into 2 groups. Say the first sentence of the verse together. Then have 1 group ask the question and the other group answer it.

All: **You must obey the authorities.**

Group 1: **Then you will...**

Group 2: **Not be punished.**

Group 1: **You must also obey them...**

Group 2: **Because you know it is right.**

Say the verse together 3–4 times. Then end class by saying this blessing, based on 2 Kings 18:5–6, over the children.

Blessing: May you trust in the Lord and be faithful to Him. May you never stop serving Him and obey all His commands.

Lead the children in singing this quarter's song, if possible.

"Agnus Dei" by Michael W Smith <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVFzxazTQNM>