

1

Be Finite

LUKE 12:13–21



GOAL

After hearing Jesus' parable of the rich fool, children explore the meaning of humility as an appreciation for the gifts that God gives.

- A** Art
- AM** Active/Movement
- C** Conversation
- D** Drama
- F** Food
- G** Game
- M** Music
- NS** Nature/Science
- QC** Quiet/Contemplative
- S** Service
- T** Technology
- X** Extra Prep

Note: [bit.ly](#) addresses are case-sensitive.



PRAYER

Holy One, give me humility and strength. Although the world may perceive those as paradoxical, I know that they are one and the same in my service to you and your children. Amen.

THIS SESSION

Being human means we are fragile and finite, dependent on God and one another. God created the world that way. As much as we feel we have control, it is fleeting and limited. We are grounded to the probable, practical, and tangible within our world. It is easy to get distracted with wants and desires, bigger and better, but in the end—and really throughout it all—we are no more and no less than we were created to be. Walking humbly with God acknowledges this relationship and understands that gratitude is our appropriate response to God's grace.

THE BIBLE STORY

In Luke 12:13–21 when someone wants Jesus to intervene in a family inheritance matter, he tells a story about a wealthy man and his worldly riches. This parable is an anti-story, pointing out the reality of our finite life and lack of control over it as opposed to lifting up what it means to be grateful for what one has been given. Jesus ends the parable by comparing the man's preoccupation with his riches versus being rich toward God.

CONNECTIONS WITH CHILDREN

Most children at this age don't have a reason to be considering their finite life, nor are many in the position to have control over their own lives. They can, however, understand gratitude and what it means to be thankful for all that is a gift from God. This is a good age to help children understand that humility comes from recognizing that gift rather than living life as an expectation of entitlement or privilege. To walk humbly with God is to be grateful to God.

The sessions in this unit use the metaphor of *walking* with God. The physical act of walking may be difficult or not possible for some people. It is not the act of walking itself, but being in a close relationship with God.

SESSION PREPARATION

- “Micah 6:8” (p. 8): Obtain the *Walk Humbly* infographic poster ([bit.ly/FMInfographicPosters](#), Year 3 Set).

Depending on the options you choose:

- “An Experiment” (p. 10): Obtain a small glass or plastic jar with lid for each child, cooking oil, and liquid dish soap. Add food coloring to enough water to fill each child's jar about two-thirds full during the experiment.
- “The Biggest House in the World” (p. 11): Obtain *The Biggest House in the World* by Leo Lionni (Dragonfly Books, 1973) or use the YouTube video “The Biggest House in the World” ([bit.ly/FMTheBiggestHouse](#), 4:49).



GETTING STARTED

- Copies of Resource Page 1
- Walk Humbly* infographic poster



MICAH 6:8



Greet the children as they arrive and give each child a copy of Resource Page 1. Invite them to complete the word search on their own or with a partner. When everyone has arrived and had a chance to work on the word search, ask the children what question was asked with the leftover letters. (*What does the Lord require of you?*) Display the *Walk Humbly* infographic poster and draw the children’s attention to it. Invite the children to answer that question posed long, long ago by the prophet Micah by finding the words on the poster: do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God. Wonder together what each of those actions might look like lived out in daily life. Tell the children that, over the next four sessions, they are going to explore what it means to walk humbly with God.

- Copies of Resource Page 2

WALK HUMBLY LITANY

Distribute copies of Resource Page 2. Have the children read aloud the first two lines of the litany for session 1 together and follow the motions. Then invite one or more volunteers to read aloud the other lines, leading the motions for the children to follow. Keep copies for sessions 2, 3, and 4.



INTRODUCING THE PRACTICE

- Newsprint
- Marker

BEING GROUNDED



Tell the children that, to learn what it means to walk humbly with God, they need to unpack some of the words. On the top half of a sheet of newsprint write the word *walk*. Ask the children to name words or descriptions for that word, thinking about what it means to *walk with* someone since the verse says to “walk . . . with God.” If it has not been mentioned, wonder what might be other ways of expressing *walk*, especially when everyone cannot physically walk. Some ideas might be to move with, to accompany, to go together, and to go alongside. Write all suggestions on the newsprint.

Then on the bottom half of the newsprint write the word *humbly*. Ask the children to name words or descriptions of what *humbly* or *humble* means and write their suggestions on the newsprint.

Tell the children that, in the Bible story in Genesis of God creating the world and all that is in it, when it comes time for God to create humanity, God fashions us out of “the dust of the ground” or as the CEB puts it, “from the topsoil of the fertile land” (Genesis 2:7a). Explain that, in Hebrew, the language this story was written in, there is a play on words: the human (*adam*—ah-DAHM) is created from the ground (*adamah*—AH-dah-mah). Point out that there is a play on words in English too with the word *humble*. Explain that the root word, or the original word it came from, is *humus*, which means “from the ground or earth.” Wonder what it might mean that humans are created from the ground and being humble is also connected to

being from the ground. Suggest, if necessary, that being humble may have something to do with being grounded, connected with the earth, creation, and our Creator; understanding our relationship to others and to God as not being better than others.

Invite the children to practice being grounded, or connected to the earth, by planting their feet on the ground or their seat in a chair, close to one another but not touching. Explain that they cannot move their feet or seat from that position while they do the following tasks together, dependent on one another:

- Pass around a toy so that everyone touches it only once.
- Create a dance move together and do it as a group.
- Take turns saying aloud your birthday in order from January to December. (*This means that they need to discuss the order and then do the task.*)
- Pass a high five around so that everyone receives it once.



FINDING THE PRACTICE IN THE BIBLE

THE RICH FOOL



Display Resource Page 3 and draw the children's attention to it. Have them pass around the picture if they need a closer look. Ask them to describe the picture and its details. Tell the children that this is a modern-day illustration by an artist of a parable Jesus told. Ask the children the following questions:

- What do you think the story Jesus told might be about, based on this picture?
- How do you see the idea of being humble, or not being humble, expressed in this picture?

Read aloud Luke 12:13–21. Then engage the children in conversation again with the following questions:

- Now that you have heard Jesus' story, what do you see reflected in the picture?
- Jesus talks about a rich man thinking that he controls his own life because of his wealth and the ability to build bigger and better things, but what happens to the man that he has no control over?
- How do you think each of the families in the picture are blessed by God?
- What do you think the artist might be trying to say by including the picture of the household on the right?
- What story would you tell or picture would you make about walking humbly with God?

Comment that having money as a family or individual is not a bad thing. What affects a relationship with God, or prevents someone from walking humbly with God, is how one thinks about and uses their riches. If money is more important than actions and attitudes of loving God and loving others, then money is a problem.

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- Resource Page 3
 - Bible



FINDING THE PRACTICE ALL AROUND US

Choose one or both options.

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- Internet-connected device
 - Newsprint
 - Marker

HAVE IT ALL



Tell the children that they will watch a video called “Have It All.” Explain that it has lots of words, but encourage them to listen carefully, imagining that God is singing this song to them. Show the YouTube video “Jason Mraz—Have It All (Official Video)” (bit.ly/FMHaveItAll, 4:19).

After the video, ask the children, imagining that it was God singing to them, what they heard that God would want for them. Write down their suggestions in a column on the left-hand side of a sheet of newsprint. Wonder what they might add to that list that wasn’t in the song. Then ask the children what they heard in the song that God doesn’t think we need and write their suggestions in a column on the right-hand side of the newsprint. Again, wonder what they might add that wasn’t in the song. Talk together about what God wants and hopes for us and what isn’t important to God that might preoccupy our time and thoughts. Wonder how understanding these things might help us walk humbly with God.

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- Small glass or plastic jar with lid for each child
 - Colored water
 - Cooking oil
 - Liquid dish soap

AN EXPERIMENT



Tell the children that to walk humbly with God recognizes who God is and who we are. God is God and we are part of God’s creation, part of the dust and dirt. Invite the children to do an experiment that reflects what it means to walk humbly *with* God, not on our own, thinking we don’t need God. Use the following directions to lead the experiment:

- Give each child a small glass or plastic jar with a lid.
- Pour colored water into each child’s jar, filling it about two-thirds full. Tell the children that the colored water represents God.
- Pour cooking oil into each child’s jar, enough so the separation between water and oil can be seen, but not filling the jar. Tell the children that the oil represents them.
- Ask the following questions:
 - ✦ What is the relationship between you and God, or the oil and the colored water?
 - ✦ What happens at first when you put the lid on tightly and shake the jar?
 - ✦ Then what happens after a few moments to let the oil and colored water settle?
 - ✦ How might that describe our relationship with God?
- Have the children take the lids off their jars. Pour liquid dish soap into each child’s jar, not quite filling it. Tell the children that the liquid dish soap represents our humbleness, knowing that God is God, we are not, and everything comes from God.
- Ask the following questions:
 - ✦ What happens when you put the lid on tightly and shake the jar this time?
 - ✦ What does the liquid dish soap, or our humbleness, do?
 - ✦ How might that describe our relationship with God?



PRACTICING THE PRACTICE

Choose one or both options.

THE BIGGEST HOUSE IN THE WORLD



Ask the children what might be some items or activities they want or others have that distract them from what they have. Some suggestions might be wanting a new bike rather than a hand-me-down one.

Read aloud *The Biggest House in the World* by Leo Lionni or show the YouTube video “The Biggest House in the World” ([bit.ly /FMTheBiggestHouse](https://bit.ly/FMTheBiggestHouse), 4:49). Ask the children these questions:

- Why does the little snail think he needs such a big house?
- Why does he change his mind?
- When we are feeling like we do not have a lot, how can we still serve God?

Invite the children to take turns naming something in their lives that they are thankful for. After each person has a turn, have the group respond, “Thank you, God, for (*Name’s answer*).” After everyone has had a turn, encourage the children to practice this gratitude each day as a way to walk humbly with God. Suggest that they name something each morning and each evening that they are thankful for and give thanks to God. Mention that, when they feel particularly preoccupied with something they want, to change their focus and think of something they have that is a gift from God, name it, and give thanks.

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- The Biggest House in the World* by Leo Lionni (Dragonfly Books, 1973) or an internet-connected device

LESS OF ME, MORE OF GOD GUIDED MEDITATION



Tell the children that you are going to lead them in a meditation in which they can imagine they are walking or moving alongside God or they can physically move in the room, slowly and carefully, so they don’t move into other people’s space. Invite children to find their place to imagine or to begin. Comment that, if they are using their imaginations and staying in one place, they can close their eyes during the meditation; if they are moving around the room, they need to keep their eyes open. Use Resource Page 4 to lead the guided meditation.

When you are finished with the meditation, gather the children and reflect together on the experience. Wonder what they liked about it. Ask them how either imagining or physically walking or moving alongside God could be done during their week. Have the children identify the steps that were part of the meditation: take three deep breaths, feel grounded and feel God’s presence, remember what it means to be humble, give thanks, and take three deep breaths. Distribute copies of Resource Page 5 and encourage the children to try this practice in the coming week.

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- Resource Page 4
 - Copies of Resource Page 5



FOLLOWING JESUS

WHAT DOES THE LORD REQUIRE



Tell the children that, in each session of this unit, they will close by repeating the following words based on Micah 6:8 as they walk or move throughout the room. Invite the children to move on each word, repeating after you as you say it aloud one phrase at a time:

What does the Lord require of you? /

To do justice, /

and to love kindness, /

and to walk humbly with your God. /

Micah 6:8 Word Search

Find the words in the list below. They may be horizontal, vertical, diagonal, backward, or forward. Some of the words that may be unfamiliar are Hebrew words written in English letters.



Y	D	H	U	M	B	L	Y	K
L	O	V	E	I	W	H	T	L
A	T	U	D	C	O	E	A	A
L	S	A	R	A	T	H	P	W
E	E	L	E	H	H	O	H	R
K	I	N	D	N	E	S	S	D
E	R	E	Q	U	S	I	I	W
T	R	E	O	F	E	A	M	I
G	O	D	Y	O	D	U	H	T
E	C	I	T	S	U	J	?	H



- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| DO | LEKET (walk) |
| GOD | LOVE |
| HASNEA (humbly) | MICAH |
| HESED (mercy, kindness) | MISHPAT (justice) |
| HUMBLY | WALK |
| JUSTICE | WITH |
| KINDNESS | YOUR |



Use the leftover letters to fill in the blanks below to find out the question that the prophet Micah asked long ago.



Session 1

What does the Lord require of us? (*shrug shoulders and put hands out, palms up*)

To walk humbly with our God. (*walk in place*)

We, like all creation, are fragile (*wiggle fingers and move hands in a downward motion*), dependent (*grasp hands together*).

May we be grateful for each day we are given. (*tap right fingertips to lips and raise hand upward*)

Amen.

Session 2

What does the Lord require of us? (*shrug shoulders and put hands out, palms up*)

To walk humbly with our God. (*walk in place*)

Rather than wanting only for ourselves, (*with palms up in front of you, pretend to grab and pull hands toward you*)

may we remember and protect those in need. (*open arms wide*)

Amen.

Session 3

What does the Lord require of us? (*shrug shoulders and put hands out, palms up*)

To walk humbly with our God. (*walk in place*)

Rather than judging others for being different, (*cross arms out in front of you*)

may we thank God for the gifts they bring. (*open your arms out to others*)

Amen.

Session 4

What does the Lord require of us? (*shrug shoulders and put hands out, palms up*)

To walk humbly with our God. (*walk in place*)

Rather than telling others how humble we are, (*on both hands move fingers and thumbs together and apart as if talking with your hands*)

may we listen and learn from others and God. (*cup hands around ears*)

Amen.

Less of Me, More of God

Guided Meditation

Use the following directions to lead the children in a guided meditation.

Wherever you are, take a deep breath in (*pause*) and then let it out.

In your imagination or physically, move forward and pause. Take another deep breath in (*pause*) and then let it out.

And, do that one more time. Move forward, pause, and take in a deep breath (*pause*) and let it out.

Now, imagine your feet are on the ground, in soft soil. If you can, wiggle your toes. Feel your body connected to the earth.

Silently, give thanks to God for God's good creation, this earth, this dirt, and you.

In your imagination or physically, slowly move forward. You are walking or moving alongside God.

Yes! God is with you and you are with God. Right now, right here.

You are comfortable. You are feeling happy and loved.

You are feeling blessed.

You are walking humbly with God.

Pause for a moment. Think about that: you are humbly with God. That means you are thinking less of you and your wants and more of God, thankful for all God has given you.

Slowly move forward again, and with each step or movement give thanks to God:

- Give thanks to God for being with you right now and right here.
- Give thanks to God for something good that happened to you today or this week.
- Give thanks to God for someone you love.
- Give thanks to God for someone who loves you.
- Give thanks to God for you.

Now pause again. You are humbly with God. There is less of your wants and more of being thankful to God.

You are comfortable. You are feeling happy and loved.

You are feeling blessed.

Take a deep breath in (*pause*) and then let it out.

Tell God you will do this again soon.

Take another deep breath in (*pause*) and then let it out.

And one more time, take a deep breath in (*pause*) and then let it out.

Open your eyes if they were closed, and let's gather together.

Walking or Moving Alongside God



