

# "First and Last" Sunday School Lesson from Mark 9:30-37

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This free Bible lesson is based on Mark 9:30-37 when Jesus talks about being first and last. It is designed for children's church or Sunday School. Please modify as best fits your ministry.

If your church follows the [Revised Common Lectionary](#), this teaching plan would correspond to Year B – 17th Sunday after Pentecost, Gospel Reading – Mark 9:30-37.

## Lesson – First and Last

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Supplies – building blocks, objects of varying weight (books, supply containers, etc), small prizes

(Keep watch as the children play the following games for some winners – Most Encouraging, Most Joyful, and Best Teamwork.)

Today's lesson is going to be a little bit different. We actually have a few games we are going to play, and we even have some prizes for the winners. Are you ready?

### Game 1: Balance

Stand up, then lift one foot up off the ground, and hook one arm under your knee to keep that foot up. If your foot touches the ground or you lean on or touch something, you're out.

Ready? Go!

Great job! Are you ready for your next test?

### Game 2: Teamwork

I am going to choose a partner for you to work with, and together you will have two minutes to build a tower as tall as you can. Ready? Go!

Awesome work! On to our next test.

### Game 3: Strength

This time we are testing your strength. I need everyone to choose one of these objects, and when I say go, you will hold it high above your head, no bending elbows. Ready? Go!

Amazing! Ok, last test.

### Game 4: Love

For our final test, when I say go, I want you to go around the room and tell each person something you like about them. Ready? Go!

Great job everyone!

Y'all did an amazing job! And I think you deserve some prizes. Are you ready?  
Our first prize is for Most Encouraging, and it goes to \_\_\_\_\_!  
Our next prize is for Most Joyful, and it goes to \_\_\_\_\_!  
Next we have a prize for Best Teamwork, and it goes to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_!  
Great job! Let's give them a round of applause!

Did I miss out on any awards? Raise your hand if you expected the prizes to go to those who won the games. That's normally how it works, isn't it? The person who can run the fastest, jump the highest, and lift the most gets the prize. But there is one man who thought it should be a little bit different. Any guesses? Jesus!

Jesus was talking to His disciples one day and He heard them arguing about which one of the was the best. So Jesus stepped in to end the argument. Jesus said that those who are last on earth, will be first in heaven, and those who are first here, will be last.

That probably sounds a little bit confusing to you, so listen closely.

Usually when we win something everyone knows and celebrates us. If you win an Olympic race you get a gold medal. If you win the Superbowl, you get a ring. If you win an Oscar, you get a trophy. And with all of those wins, you get lots of attention.

And while winning all of those is great, Jesus says you have already gotten your award. All the praise and attention you received on earth is your award, but it won't matter in heaven. Then Jesus told them about the winning that really matters. Do you know what He wants you to win at? Serving others.

When you help those in need. When you do the jobs no one else wants to do. When you encourage others and make them feel special. Jesus wants you to win at serving.

It was a hard lesson to learn for the disciples, so it will be a hard lesson for us too. But just like learning anything else, we have to practice. Look for ways to serve others everyday and everywhere. And even though you won't get a trophy or a round of applause, Jesus will be cheering you on, and that's better than ANY prize you could ever get.

## **Activity A – First and Last – Bible Verse Challenge**

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Supplies – Bibles

Verse – Mark 9:35

Pass out Bibles to students. Bibles should be closed and sitting on the table face up in front of each child. When you say go, have the kids look up this week's Bible verse. As each child finds the verse, have them stick one finger on the verse and quietly raise their other hand.

The first one to find the verse gets to read it to the rest of the class.

Help younger kids and new kids find the verse by following these steps.

Look in the Table of Contents for the book you are looking for. Make an effort to show them if

it is found in the Old Testament or New Testament to help them in the future. Then open the Bible to the page number listed in the Table of Contents.

Show them the large numbers in the text, known as the chapters. Flip through pages until you find the large chapter number you are looking for.

Then scan through the text with them pointing out the smaller verse numbers until the correct number is found.

## **Activity B – First and Last – First Charades**

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Supplies – none

Divide the class into small groups of 2-3. Give them a few minutes to plan out a short silent skit showing a way we can be first in the eyes of Jesus. Then let each group perform and see if the others can figure it out.

### **Closing Prayer – First and Last**

Ask for a volunteer to pray for the class before leaving, and encourage them to ask God to show them ways that they can be first in His eyes.

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## The Least is the Greatest

Bible Craft Ideas on Mark 9:30-37

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Who is the greatest? It all seems upside down...These crafts focus on the interaction between Jesus and His disciples in Mark 9, when He instructed them in humility and explained that to be "greatest", they needed to think less of themselves and depend on God. This idea might seem upside down or "topsy turvy" to what we normally expect. But God's ways are always right on!

These crafts celebrate that "upside down" element as well as the importance of placing God first. A reversible cartoon and two-sided puppet reflect the topsy-turvy component, and a humble heart pocket encourages kids to think less of themselves and have a servant's heart.

### Bible Verses or Craft Project Captions to Consider... (Mark 9:30-37)

- *And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all." -Mark 9:35*
- *The last shall be first!*
- *To be greatest, become least...*
- *Jesus gives unexpected instructions!*
- *Turning things upside down...*
- *Be a humble servant...*

### More Teaching Ideas:

- Watch the video of this [children's sermon lesson](#) and the related [Bible craft ideas](#)
- Compare our full [Mark 9:30-37 Sunday School lesson](#)
- Compare the [children's sermon for rfour.org](#)
- Compare another [Least Shall Be Greatest Bible lesson for kids](#)



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## Craft one: “Humble Heart Pocket”

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### You will need:

- Construction paper or cardstock
- Glue, tape, or staples
- Scissors
- Markers, crayons, etc.
- Paper plates
- Pipe cleaners (optional)
- Other decorations (jewels, stickers, etc.)



### Procedure:

1. Cut the paper plates (two) into heart shapes.
2. Add verses or captions and decorations to the paper plates.
3. Cut additional heart shapes out of construction paper or cardstock.
4. On the hearts, write ways to serve others or live with humility.
5. Add additional decoration as desired. Staple the paper plate hearts together and place a pipe cleaner within to hang the heart and consider ways to demonstrate humility!



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## Craft Two: “Topsy Turvy Cartoon”

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### You will need:

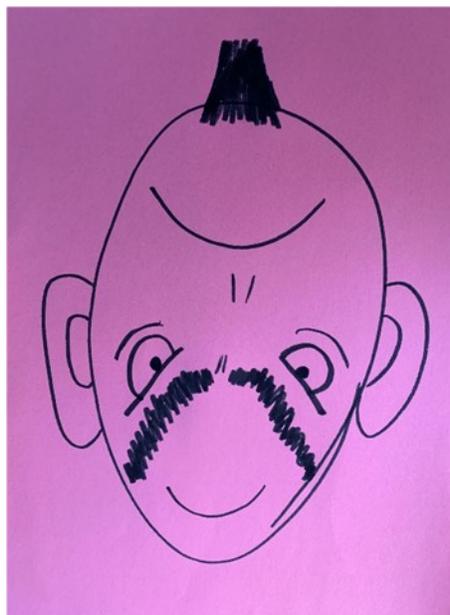
- Pens and pencils
- Markers/crayons
- Cardstock/paper
- Captions/verses



### Procedure: \*Note: these are instructions for the image

**pictured below. There are a variety of other “two-sided” drawings to choose!**

1. Select a face style and color of paper. Trace in pencil before filling in with marker.
  2. Begin with an oval, adding ear shaped half-ovals on either side.
  3. Add bushy eyebrows and an upside down “u” near the top of the oval.
  4. Add eyes with rings underneath. Make two vertical lines for the nose, and a wide “U” for the mouth.
  5. Draw a patch of hair near the bottom.
5. Admire your angry man illustration. Then, flip it upside down and adjust your eyes to see a happier man! Sometimes our expectations get turned around and upside down!



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## Craft Three: “Topsy Turvy Puppet”

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### You will need:

- Paper towel tubes
- Construction paper or card stock
- Markers or crayons
- Glue, tape, or staples
- Additional decorations as desired (googly eyes, jewels, stickers, etc.).



### Procedure:

1. Decide on a “design” for your puppet. Focus on one end of the paper towel tube at a time.
2. Decorate one side of the tube with facial features and “hair” or a “hat.”
3. Turn the tube over and add features to the other side as well.
4. Add to the puppet sides with extra decoration or even “clothing” elements. Add a verse or caption, if desired.
5. Tell a story with your puppet or let it have a conversation with itself. Have fun!





Thank you for downloading these free materials. Our team is grateful for your trust and pray that God will bless your ministry.

This resource was prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#) (pictured right). She serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO. She has shared her teaching gifts through *Ministry-To-Children* since 2014 and now serves as our lead curriculum writer.



Every week she writes new [Sunday School lessons](#), [Bible crafts](#), and [children's sermons](#).

Kristin has a professional background in elementary and pre-school education. A graduate of Biola University, she holds a Master of Education and will receive the Master of Theology degree from Concordia University, Irvine, California, in May 2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader.

My name is Tony Kummer (pictured below). I started Ministry-To-Children.com in 2007 as a free resource for anyone sharing Jesus with kids. It is my personal honor to share these resources with churches around the world.



[Reader donations](#) and your support at [The Sunday School Store](#) fund these free materials. Please keep us in mind when you are choosing your next children's ministry curriculum.

If you enjoy our material, be sure to [sign-up for my free email newsletter](#) called "Sunday School Works!" Every Tuesday, I send the latest new lessons, crafts, and coloring pages in print-friendly format to make your lesson planning easy.

May God continue to bless your ministry!

*Tony Kummer*