



**Mennonite
Church**
Canada

Resource Centre

Fit for a King!

Children's Story

Year B, Proper 17

Title: Fit for a King!
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Church: First Mennonite Church,
Winnipeg, MB
Text: Mark 7: 1-8, 14-15, 21-23
Theme: Having a clean attitude is
the most important thing to
Jesus.

Gathering Activity:

Invite the children forward and welcome them warmly. Encourage them to settle into a comfortable position and remind them that this children's story time is a chance to draw close to God. Once a climate of holy listening has been established, open your Bible to Mark 7 and tell them that in today's Gospel reading Jesus explains how important it is to have a clean attitude. That kind of attitude is also important in today's children's story, which is about a party for a good and kind king. Listen:

Wondering Questions:

- I wonder why Daphne wanted the king to remember her.
- I wonder if Tasia was glad that she tried so hard to give the king a nice gift.
- I wonder what I can do to keep a clean heart and a clean attitude.

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Story:

Once upon a time, two girls were preparing to celebrate the king's birthday. "I don't know what to give the king for his party tonight," Daphne said. "He likes flowers," Tasia suggested. "I'm going to pick some wildflowers for him. Maybe I'll make a card, too." "That's too ordinary," Daphne said. "Why don't you buy him something instead?"

"All I have is the money Mother gave me for bread." "Too bad," Daphne said. "I'm going to buy him a spectacular bouquet so he'll always remember who I am." "But you don't have any money either," Tasia protested, "Except for the coin your grandmother gave you to buy thread." "Grandmother has too much thread anyway."

Daphne marched off to the flower shop. Tasia tried not to think about the pretty roses in the flower shop window. Instead, she bought a loaf of bread and took it home to her mother, just as she was supposed to do. She made a card for the king and tucked it into the pocket of her apron and hoped it would be good enough. On her way to pick flowers, Tasia got caught in a storm. Mud and rain splattered her clothes and the wind tangled her hair. But Tasia didn't notice any of this. She was too busy choosing the prettiest blooms to tuck into the folds of her apron. When her apron was full, she hurried to the palace where a crowd had gathered.

The palace guards frowned at her. "Don't you think you should take a bath before the king's party?" they asked. "A bath? There isn't time!" she protested. "And I want to give him these." She opened her apron to show them her gift, and the flowers tumbled into a puddle, leaving only one wilted stem to offer the king. When Tasia looked down at the fallen flowers, she saw her muddy reflection in the puddle and

cried out in dismay. How could she greet the king when she was such a mess? But before Tasia could escape, she was swept inside the palace by the rest of the crowd.

One by one, people bowed before the king and presented him with gifts. The king was delighted with Daphne's flowers, but when Daphne's grandmother bowed before the king, she had no present to offer. "I'm sorry, sir, I was planning to sew you a new vest, but my granddaughter, Daphne, used my thread money to buy you roses." "Don't worry, kind woman," he said. "You are here to celebrate with me, and that is more important than a gift." He scolded Daphne for using money that wasn't hers and gave the roses to her grandmother.

Finally it was Tasia's turn. She bowed and slowly pulled her home-made card out of her apron, tucking the one remaining flower inside. "Is that for me?" the king asked. "I'm sorry to say it is," Tasia replied sadly. "The flower was beautiful once and the card wasn't too bad either, but the storm made a mess of everything."

The king took Tasia's gift. "This is the most beautiful flower I have ever received and the card is just as special." "How can that be?" Tasia asked. The king smiled. "You went to a lot of trouble to bring these to me. You may be muddy, but your heart is clean and pure. You have the right attitude and that makes your gift fit for a king."

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank you for showing how us to keep our hearts and attitudes clean. Please give us the courage to choose to do the right things. Amen.