

FAITHweaver

Weaving faith into today's families **NOW**®

**SPRING 2016
SUNDAY SCHOOL**

PRE-K&K AGES
5&6
TEACHER GUIDE



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ONE-TIME ACTIVATION CODE:

Group resources really work!

This Group resource incorporates our R.E.A.L. approach to ministry. It reinforces a growing friendship with Jesus, encourages long-term learning, and results in life transformation, because it's



Relational

Learner-to-learner interaction enhances learning and builds Christian friendships.

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What learners experience through discussion and action sticks with them up to 9 times longer than what they simply hear or read.

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Learners understand and retain more when the learning process takes into consideration how they learn best.

Group

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We know you care about kids...

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FaithWeaver NOW® Bible Curriculum, Pre-K & K/Ages 5 & 6, Spring 2016

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ISBN 978-1-4707-2837-3

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 18 17 16

Printed in the United States of America.



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The future of Sunday school + family ministry is NOW.



No doubt about it, the world is changing. Families used to go to church every week. Kids used to have longer attention spans. Teachers used to have more time to prepare. And didn't our budgets used to be bigger?

Even the Sunday school Bible curriculum you used just a couple of years ago is already out of date. But there's one thing that's never changed: the need to grow families closer to Jesus.

That's why we created FaithWeaver NOW®, and it's different from anything you've ever seen before!

It combines Sunday school with family ministry. ■■■■

Sure, you've seen Sunday school aimed at families. But FaithWeaver NOW actually hits the target by having everyone in the family learning about the same Scripture each week.

It's simpler and easier. ■■■■

Sometimes change is a wonderful thing. Gone are the days when you needed to spend hours preparing your lessons and hunting for supplies. FaithWeaver NOW will have you and your team ready to go in a snap.

It's made for NOW. ■■■■

Life is complicated and full of distractions. FaithWeaver NOW keeps faith on track through even the most frenzied lifestyles.

What makes FaithWeaver NOW the perfect curriculum for TODAY's church?

Families learn the same Bible passage in age-appropriate ways.

Kids don't just hear the Word. They experience it.

Simple and easy lessons fit even the busiest lives.

Kids see God in their everyday world.

The Scope & Sequence goes through the Bible every three years.

You can customize it however you like, with both print and digital versions.



Plus, FaithWeaver NOW stays up to date. New content, new tools, new mobile apps, and more every year—all to keep the Bible fresh, relevant, and effective.

Create a vibrant family ministry that's new...that's wow...that's NOW. FaithWeaver NOW gives you a fresh strategy for being more successful than ever in bringing families closer to Jesus.

Thom Schultz Joani Schultz

Thom and Joani Schultz
Chairman and Chief Creative Officer
Group Publishing, Inc.





Jesus Teaches About Good Fruit

Luke 6:43-45

Five- and six-year-olds love to watch things grow and change. However, they think of growth in physical terms and have a hard time understanding the concept of mental or spiritual growth. Let children know that Jesus helps our minds grow mentally and spiritually when we learn new words, find out something new about God, and when we practice being like Jesus. Help children understand that the more we learn about God, the more God helps us grow.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started <i>about 10 min.</i>	Welcoming Song Sing a song welcoming all their classroom friends.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i>	Forgiving God Draw pictures to remind them of the Key Verse.	Bible, paper, crayons	
3 Bible Exploration <i>about 15 min.</i>	Theo's News Find out what fruit has to do with the Bible story.	CD player, Surprise Box, Theo puppet, 1 rotten banana, 1 ripe banana Teacher Pack: CD	Place both bananas in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
	Bible Time Learn how God wants us to grow and bear good fruit.	Bible, clear resealable bags, apples, grapes	Place the grapes in one bag. Cut the apples, and place them in the other bag, leaving it open so they brown.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



►Bible Point

God helps us grow.

.....

Key Verse

"You are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love" (Nehemiah 9:17).

.....

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will ask God to help them grow.

.....





LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
4 Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> <i>(Choose 2 centers.)</i>	Center 1: Growing in God's Garden Use fruit stickers to make a fruit tree.	My Bible Playground, scratch 'n' sniff fruit stickers	Remove the Lesson 1 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.
	Center 2: A Growing Snack Make a snack, and say good things about Jesus.	paper plates, licorice ropes, gummy fruit candies	
	Center 3: This Little Tree of Mine Sing a song, and pretend to be a growing tree.		
	Center 4: Fruit Paintings Use fruit-shaped stamps to make paintings as reminders of today's Bible story.	sponges, scissors, paper, tempera paint	Cut at least one sponge in a basic fruit shape per child.
5 Lasting Impressions <i>about 5 min.</i>	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Playground	
	"Growing" Prayer Pretend to grow as they say a prayer.		
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	My Bible Playground	Tear out the letter to parents from the back of each My Bible Playground book to give to parents when they pick up their children.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.







Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: "It's Good to Have
You" (track 2)

1 GETTING STARTED

Welcoming Song



Tips Don't know the melodies to the songs in this guide? Download the 99-cent Kids Songs app by Alkeo and play the tunes for 200+ common children's songs.

Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

As the children arrive, greet each child and welcome him or her with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle.

Play "It's Good to Have You" (track 2 on the CD) to the tune of "Oh Where, Oh Where Has My Little Dog Gone?" and lead children in doing the motions.



It's good to have you in church today. (*Have the children stand in a circle, hold hands, and swing hands back and forth.*)

Let's sing, let's learn, and let's pray. (*Cup hands around mouth, point to your head, and then make praying hands.*)

We'll make new friends, and we'll have so much fun. (*Shake a friend's hand.*)

We're glad you've joined us today! (*Hold hands in a circle, and swing hands back and forth.*)

(Repeat 2x.)

Say: **It makes God so happy when we come together to praise and worship him. And I'm so happy that all of you are here today.**

2

KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

Forgiving God

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have the children form a circle and sit down. Open your Bible to Nehemiah 9:17, and how children the words.

Forgiving God Supplies

Bible
paper
crayons



Say: **Our Key Verse from the Bible is Nehemiah 9:17, which says, “You are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love.” This means that God forgives us and always loves us. Let’s say it together.** Lead the children in repeating this simplified version of the Key Verse with you: **God forgives us and always loves us.**

Have the children each draw a picture of a heart. Tell kids that the heart drawing can remind them of God’s love and forgiveness.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

How do you feel when you do something wrong and your parents forgive you?

Why do you think God forgives us when we’re sorry for the bad things we do?

Say: **God forgives us because he loves us. He always loves us—that’s what the Bible says! God forgives us and always loves us. Let’s draw pictures to remind us of our Key Verse.**

.....

3

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Theo’s News

What You’ll Do

Say: **Friends, it’s time for Theo’s News!** Have the children sit in a circle. Then begin “Here, Theo” (track 3 on the CD). When the CD segment ends, bring out the Surprise Box, and put the Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet on your hand. Then follow along with the script.

Theo: Hi, everybody!

Teacher: Hello, Theo! Tell us what interesting news you’ve dug up about the Bible today.

Theo: I hid it in the Surprise Box.

Teacher: Let’s look inside to see what Theo dug up for us today.

(Choose a child to open the Surprise Box, and have children pass the bananas around the circle so kids can see, feel, and smell them. Give children time to guess what the Bible story might be about.)

Teacher: Which banana would you like to eat? Why?

(Pause while children respond.)

Teacher: Theo, why did you hide bananas in our Surprise Box today?

Theo: Today in our Bible story, Jesus tells his disciples about good fruit and bad fruit. The story teaches us how ► **GOD HELPS US GROW.**



Theo’s News Supplies

.....

CD player

Surprise Box (any box will do)

Theo puppet

1 rotten banana

1 ripe banana

Teacher Pack

CD: “Here, Theo”
(track 3)

ALLERGY ALERT

Theo’s News Easy Prep

.....

Place both bananas in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it’s easily accessible.





Bible Time Supplies

Bible
clear resealable bags
apples
grapes

ALLERGY ALERT

Bible Time Easy Prep

Place the grapes in one bag. Cut the apples and place them in the other bag, leaving it open so they brown.

Teacher: Let's hear the story! Children, let's say goodbye to Theo.

Have Theo and the children exchange goodbyes, and then put Theo out of sight.

Bible Time

What You'll Do

Open your Bible to Luke 6:43-45, and show the children the words.

Say: **Today's Bible story tells us that ► GOD HELPS US GROW. Jesus walked everywhere with his disciples.** Have children hold hands and walk around the classroom.

Between each town, they traveled past vineyards and farms. Lead the children between tables and chairs. **One day Jesus stood on a big flat area.** Stop and feel the flat ground. **All of the disciples gathered around Jesus along with lots and lots of people from far away towns.** Lead the children back to the Story Time area and have kids sit in a circle. **The people had come to have Jesus heal them, and they wanted to hear what Jesus had to say about God. Jesus began to tell the people about the importance of living for God. He wanted the disciples to know that we can grow like good fruit when we learn more about God.** Bring out the bags of good and bad fruit. Hold up the bag of good fruit.

Jesus reminded his disciples that good fruit only grows on good, healthy trees. Have the children stand up and show you what they think a healthy tree looks like with its branches growing tall. Then hold up the bag of brown fruit.

Jesus said that a sick tree can only produce bad fruit. Have the children show you what a sick tree might look like with its wilting branches.

Say: **Jesus also said that every tree produces only the kind of fruit God made it to produce.**

Ask:

What kind of fruit grows on an apple tree? a pear tree? a lemon tree? a grapevine?
Have you ever seen a banana growing on an apple tree? Why not?

Say: **God made each kind of tree to have its own fruit. Jesus told the disciples that God wanted to help them grow, too, just as plants grow. If they let God help them, they would bear good fruit and grow bigger and bigger.** Hold up the two bags of fruit.

Ask:

Which kind of fruit would you like to be? Why? Let each child point and name the fruit he or she would like to be and tell why.



Say: **When we sin, it's like we start turning rotten on the inside like this fruit.** Hold up the bag of old fruit. **But when we ask Jesus to forgive our sins, ► GOD HELPS US GROW like this good fruit.** Hold up the bag of fresh fruit.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Give kids the fruit. Help them understand that the apples aren't bad, that they've just browned a little. As they eat, lead them in this discussion.

Ask:

What good things do you know about God or Jesus?

Say: **God wants us to learn more about him as we grow up. God promises to help us be kind toward others, just like good fruit is juicy and sweet! ► GOD HELPS US GROW.**

4 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today's Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you're ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they'd like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center's description.

CENTER 1:

Growing in God's Garden

What You'll Do ■■■■

Distribute the Lesson 1 pages from My Bible Playground, and let kids write their names on the pages. Set out a variety of scratch 'n' sniff fruit stickers. Let kids add several stickers to the tree on their student pages. Then encourage them to scratch and sniff the good-smelling fruit. Remind kids that ► **GOD HELPS US GROW.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

What kinds of things does a tree need to grow?

What are some of the good fruits (or good things) that we do for others?

Say: **As we grow, God will make good things happen in our lives if we trust in him.**



Center 1: Growing in God's Garden Supplies

My Bible Playground
scratch 'n' sniff
fruit stickers

Center 1: Growing in God's Garden Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson
1 pages from each
My Bible Playground
student book.



Center 2: A Growing Snack Supplies

.....
paper plates
licorice ropes
gummy fruit candies

**! ALLERGY
■ ALERT**

CENTER 2:

A Growing Snack

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have the children wash their hands before beginning. Hand out paper plates, thin licorice ropes (about a foot long), and fruit-shaped gummy candies. Let kids break their licorice ropes and arrange them on their plates to create trees full of branches. When the branches are in place, let kids put gummy fruits on their trees. Remind kids that

► **GOD HELPS US GROW** and grow and grow! Choose a child to pray and thank God for providing the snacks.

CENTER 3:

This Little Tree of Mine

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Teach kids "This Little Tree of Mine" (not on the CD) to the tune of "This Little Light of Mine." Choose a child to lead the group in pretending to be growing seeds turning into tall, healthy fruit trees. Have kids start bent over and crouched down close to the floor. Every time kids sing "help it grow," they can pretend to grow a little taller until they have shaped their bodies into tall, fruitful trees.



This little tree of mine,
God's gonna help it grow.
This little tree of mine,
God's gonna help it grow.
This little tree of mine,
God's gonna help it grow,
Help it grow, help it grow, help it grow.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

How do you feel when you grow taller?
How does God help us to grow in him?
What's one thing you remember about today's Bible story that has helped you grow taller and stronger in God?

Say: ► **GOD HELPS US GROW** and live for him if we ask him to.



CENTER 4:

Fruit Paintings

What You'll Do

Give each child a large piece of heavy white paper. Allow the children to stamp the fruits onto their papers. Encourage children to sort the fruit and put each kind in its own spot on their papers. Remind kids that the Bible tells us that each tree is recognized by its own fruit.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**What would it be like if lots of different fruit grew on one tree?
How can you show that you're growing good things like kindness and love?**

Say: **Jesus wants us to produce good fruit—not apples and bananas but things like love and joy. When we share God's love with others, it's like sharing a tasty piece of healthy fruit!**

5

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up the centers, sit with kids in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they enjoyed learning from the Bible today. Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge to encourage your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

Talk With Kids

Say: **Today we learned that ► GOD HELPS US GROW. I'd like each of you to choose one of these Daily Challenges to think about how God helps us grow.**

Give kids these three Daily Challenge ideas to choose from:

1. **Plant some seeds in a pot, and then ask God to help the seeds and *you* grow!**
2. **Curl up in a ball on your floor. Then slowly stand up and stretch your arms to the ceiling as you thank God for helping you grow.**
3. **Ask a parent to help you brainstorm things that grow: flowers, pets, people, trees, and more. Put your name at the bottom of the list, and then ask God to help you grow!**



Center 4: Fruit Paintings Supplies

sponges
scissors
paper
tempera paint

Center 4: Fruit Paintings Easy Prep

Cut at least one sponge
in a basic fruit shape
per child.

Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground



Say: **If you want to plant seeds, circle choice number 1. If you want to curl up like a ball, circle choice number 2. If you want to brainstorm with your parents, circle choice number 3.** Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Playground page. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!

“Growing” Prayer

What You’ll Do

Direct the children to stand and lean over and touch their toes. As you lead the children in repeating the prayer together, have kids grow taller by slowly raising their hands up over their heads until they look like tall, healthy, shining trees for Jesus.

Dear God,
Help me to grow and grow and grow and grow.
Help me be the best that I can show.
In Jesus’ name, amen!

Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Playground book pages whether they worked on them or not. Have the children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the “Daily Challenges” activity. Encourage parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment throughout the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.

Weaving Faith at Home Supplies

My Bible Playground

Weaving Faith at Home Easy Prep

Tear out the letter to parents from the back of each My Bible Playground student book to give to parents when they pick up their children.






Jesus Tells the Parable of the Lost Son

Luke 15:11-32

By this age, children have experienced love and forgiveness from others. Children know that when they are sorry for their wrongs, their parents will forgive them and will love them. Children can learn that God loves them, too, and he will forgive them when they're sorry for their sins.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started <i>about 10 min.</i>	Welcoming Song Sing a song welcoming all their classroom friends.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i>	God Always Loves Us Hide and have their partners find them to learn about forgiveness.	Bible, CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
3 Bible Exploration <i>about 20 min.</i>	Theo's News Find out what a bag of coins has to do with the Bible story.	CD player, Surprise Box, Theo puppet, bag Teacher Pack: CD, coins	Place the coins in the bag; then place the bag in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
	Bible Time Listen and interact with the CD story of the lost son.	Bible, CD player, bathrobe, 1 heart-shaped sticker per child Teacher Pack: CD, coins, ring, "The Lost Son Returns" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack) 	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



►Bible Point

God is loving and forgiving.

Key Verse

"You are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love" (Nehemiah 9:17).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will thank God for his love and forgiveness.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
4 Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> <i>(Choose 2 centers.)</i>	Center 1: Family Rings Decorate a ring to remember that the father forgave his son and gave his son a ring.	My Bible Playground, glitter glue, sequins, pencils	Remove the Lesson 2 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.
	Center 2: Mixed-Up Snacks Make snacks from a variety of items to remind them of the leftovers the son fed the pigs.	bowls, spoons, refried beans, salsa, corn, sour cream, cheese, chips, paper towels	
	Center 3: Loving Homes Use blocks to make a home to remember that the lost son went home.	connecting blocks	
	Center 4: Piggy Project Make pigs to give their parents as a gift of thanks for their love and forgiveness.	pink tempera paint, glue sticks, staplers, small sponges, newspaper, smocks, 1 small and 2 large paper plates per child, pink chenille wire, 1 sheet of pink construction paper per 2 children, crayons, scissors	Cut two 2-inch pink pig ears for each child. Cut pink chenille wires into 4-inch lengths. Cover your worktables with extra newspaper, and have kids wear paint smocks.
5 Lasting Impressions <i>about 5 min.</i>	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Playground	
	"Body Formation" Prayer Form a heart shape with their bodies, and thank God for being loving and forgiving.	Teacher Pack: ring	
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



Luke 15:11-32

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

In Jewish law, the oldest son received two-thirds of the inheritance, and the rest was divided among the other children. Since it appears that there were only two sons, the younger would have been entitled to one-third of the father's holdings. However, Jewish law did not allow a person to sell his father's land inheritance because it had been given by God. So in asking his father to give him the land early, the younger son was maneuvering against the law. Any Jew would have seen what the son was doing and would have refused to buy the land. It was also against the law to sell such land to a Gentile. Since that must have been what the younger son did, the Jews listening to this story would have been appalled.

The next part of the story isn't hard to predict. The younger son foolishly spent his inheritance and was left with nothing. At that point, he realized how wrong he had been and decided to return to his father, hoping only that the father would accept him back as a hired hand. He was convinced that he had sacrificed his right to be his father's son. He now decided to do what he knew was right.

Because a family would not normally forgive a son for such a sin, Jesus' listeners would have been extremely surprised and angry to hear that the man ran out to meet his returning son. What Jesus described was a father intent on getting to his son before the neighbors did. Even though the son had turned away, sinned willfully, and disgraced the family name, the father was waiting to forgive his

son and save him from the death he deserved. What a wonderful picture of our God, who watchfully waits, ready to forgive us when we return to him in repentance!

Picture a God anxious to meet you even when you feel ashamed. Know his love for you, and cherish the relationship you have with Jesus.

Who in your life doesn't "deserve" mercy? "They are just out of options." "They've made their bed..." "This change of heart won't last." Reach out to these people in kindness and joy. Pray for them right now. You can write your prayer here.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "It's Good to Have
You" (track 2)

1 GETTING STARTED

Welcoming Song



Tip Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

As the children arrive, greet each child and welcome him or her with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle.

Play "It's Good to Have You" (track 2 on the CD) to the tune of "Oh Where, Oh Where Has My Little Dog Gone?" and lead children in doing the motions.



It's good to have you in church today. (*Have the children stand in a circle, hold hands, and swing hands back and forth.*)

Let's sing, let's learn, and let's pray. (*Cup hands around mouth, point to your head, and then make praying hands.*)

We'll make new friends, and we'll have so much fun. (*Shake a friend's hand.*)

We're glad you've joined us today! (*Hold hands in a circle and swing hands back and forth.*)

(Repeat 2x.)

2

KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

God Always Loves Us

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have the children choose a partner and sit down together in a circle. Open your Bible to Nehemiah 9:17, and show children the words.

Say: **Our Key Verse from the Bible is Nehemiah 9:17, which says, "You are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love." This means that God forgives us and always loves us. Let's say that together.** Lead the children in repeating this simplified version of the Key Verse with you: **God forgives us and always loves us.**

God Always Loves Us Supplies

Bible

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "God Forgives"
(track 5)



Ask:

**Have you ever done something bad and then hidden so no one would find out? What happened?
How did you feel when you were hiding?**

Say: **When we sin, we sometimes don't want God to know about the bad thing we did. But the Bible tells us that when we go to God and ask him to forgive us, God will forgive us and always love us.**

Let's play a singing game. One partner will pretend to have done something wrong and will hide somewhere in the room. The other partner will try to find that person to forgive and love him or her. Have partners decide who will play which part first, and then tell partners to sit on opposite sides of the room.

Have kids sing "God Forgives" to the tune of "Ten Little Indians." Play the track so that the two groups of children can practice singing back and forth to each other. Then have one group of children cover their eyes while their partners hide. When kids are hidden, re-cue the CD and have the other kids search for their partners by listening for their voices as they respond.



Seeking Child: **God forgives**
Hidden Child: **And always loves us.**
Seeking Child: **God forgives**
Hidden Child: **And always loves us.**
Seeking Child: **God forgives**
Hidden Child: **And always loves us.**
All Children: **The Bible tells me so.**

When the children have found their partners, have kids each give their partner a loving hug or high five. Repeat the game once more giving the other partner a chance to hide.

Tell the children that even though we don't always want to tell God when we've done something wrong, God always loves us and will forgive us when we ask him.

Talk With Kids ■■■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

**Were you able to find a place where your partner couldn't find you?
Why or why not?
How did it feel to be found?
Who will always love you and forgive you?**

Say: **Sometimes we want to hide from God because we've done something bad. But we can always go to God and ask him to forgive us and know that God will always love us. God knows right where we are, and he knows what we've done. Let's say the Key Verse one more time: God forgives us and always loves us.**





Theo's News Supplies

CD player
Surprise Box (any box
will do)
Theo puppet
bag
Teacher Pack
CD: "Here, Theo"
(track 3)
coins

Theo's News Easy Prep

Place the coins in the
bag; then place the bag
inside the Surprise Box,
and hide the box where
it's easily accessible.

Bible Time Supplies

Bible
CD player
bathrobe
1 heart-shaped sticker
per child
Teacher Pack
CD: "A Father's Love"
(track 6)
coins
ring
"The Lost Son Returns"
poster (from the Big
Bible Poster Pack)

3

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Theo's News

What You'll Do

Say: **Friends, it's time for Theo's News!** Have children sit in a circle, and then begin "Here, Theo" (track 3 on the CD). When the CD segment ends, bring out the Surprise Box, and put Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet on your hand. Then follow along with the script.

Theo: Hi, everybody!

Teacher: Hello, Theo! Tell us what interesting news you've dug up about our Bible story.

Theo: I found something I think you'll like! I hid it in the Surprise Box.

Teacher: Let's look inside to see what Theo dug up for us today.

(Choose a child to open the Surprise Box, and have the kids pass the bag of coins around the circle so the rest of the class can see it up close. Give the children time to guess what the Bible story might be about.)

Teacher: What can we do with money?

(Pause for children to answer your question.)

Teacher: Theo, why did you hide this money in the Surprise Box?

Theo: Today's Bible story is about a son whose father gave him lots of money. But the son spent all the money until he had no more money left. Let's find out how the father felt about his son when the son tried to come back home.

Teacher: Let's listen to our Bible story about the father and son.

Theo: Have a good time today, boys and girls!

Teacher: Let's say goodbye to Theo.

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week's use.

Bible Time

What You'll Do

Open your Bible to Luke 15:11-32, and show the children the words.

Say: **Today's Bible story tells us that ► GOD IS LOVING AND FORGIVING. We're going to listen to Jesus tell us the story that he told his disciples.** Hand out the coins as directed on the CD. As children listen to the CD, encourage them to follow along and do the various actions. Start "A Father's Love" on the CD.

When the CD ends, bring out the robe and ring. Choose a child to pretend to be the young son, and have him or her wear the robe and put the ring on his or her finger.



Show children the poster and let them identify the father and son, and review what is happening in the picture.

Let's use this poster to remind ourselves how much God loves and forgives each one of us.

Give each child a heart-shaped sticker. Have the children take turns putting their stickers near the picture of the father. As children place their sticker on the poster, have them say, "God, thank you for loving me even when I do wrong things."

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**What were some of the ways the father showed his son that he loved him?
How do you think the younger son felt when his dad forgave him?
How do you feel when someone forgives you?**

Say: **Even though the young son didn't deserve to be forgiven, his father loved him and forgave him. We all do bad things sometimes. And we don't always deserve to be forgiven either. But because God loves us so much, he always forgives us when we come to him. ► GOD IS LOVING AND FORGIVING.**

4

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today's Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you're ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they'd like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center's description.

■ CENTER 1:

Family Rings

What You'll Do ■■■■

Distribute the Lesson 2 My Bible Playground student pages, and have kids write their names on their pages.

Then have the children decorate the rings with the glitter glue and place the sequins in the circle area to create the jeweled stone.



Center 1: Family Rings Supplies

My Bible Playground
glitter glue
sequins
pencils

Center 1: Family Rings Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson
2 pages from each
My Bible Playground
student book.





Center 2: Mixed-Up Snacks

bowls
spoons
refried beans
salsa
corn
sour cream
cheese
chips
paper towels



Center 3: Loving Homes

connecting blocks

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

What did the father give his son to show he forgave his son and still loved him?

Did the young son deserve the family ring? Why or why not?

Say: **God gives us his love and forgiveness not only when we are good but also when we do bad things. We should thank God because God forgives us and always loves us. He makes us a part of his family.**

CENTER 2:

Mixed-Up Snacks

What You'll Do

Have children wash their hands (or use wet wipes). Set up an assembly line of containers with the foods in the supply list. Put a small spoon in each bowl or jar. Give each child a bowl, and direct kids to go through the line to make their snacks.

Say: **The son in our Bible story fed the pigs a mixture of all kinds of food. It may have looked a little like this. Let's thank God for loving us and for providing our snacks today.** Invite one child to pray for the snacks.

Have kids sit down to eat, and set out tortilla chips for children to eat with their mixed-up snacks. As kids enjoy eating the food, remind them that the young son was so hungry that he wanted to eat even the leftovers that were given to the pigs to eat.

CENTER 3:

Loving Homes

What You'll Do

Place connecting blocks where children can easily reach them. Encourage children to use the blocks to build homes like the young son might have gone back to. As children work, remind them that ► **GOD IS LOVING AND FORGIVING.**

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

How do you feel when you see your home after a long trip?

How do you think the young son felt when his father welcomed him home?

How can we show God that we are thankful for his love and forgiveness?



CENTER 4:

Piggy Project

What You'll Do

Say: In today's Bible story, the son who left home ran into some trouble, didn't he? In fact, things got so bad that he ended up feeding pigs for a living. Let's make a piggy project to help us remember this Bible story!



Help each child staple the rims of two large plates together with the curved sides out, so that a pillow-shape is created. Leave an opening along one edge. Staple a chenille wire to one of the plates, and then let the child crumple and stuff newspaper into the opening before closing the edge with more staples. The child may curl the chenille wire as a tail.

Show children how to glue the smaller plate to the edge of the plate opposite the tail as a face for the pig. Let children use crayons to draw eyes, a mouth, and other features on the pigs' faces. Instruct them to staple the ears to the top of the front plate. Then let kids dab pink paint onto their pigs and set them aside to dry.

Say: These pigs can remind you that even though the son in our story messed up, his father still loved and forgave him. Parents are wonderful like that! Take your piggy projects home and give them to your parents with a big hug for always forgiving you!



Center 4: Piggy Project Supplies

pink tempera paint
glue sticks
staplers
small sponges
newspaper
smocks
1 small and 2 large
paper plates per child
pink chenille wire
1 sheet of pink
construction paper per
2 children
crayons
scissors

Center 4: Piggy Project Easy Prep

Cut two 2-inch pink pig ears for each child. Cut pink chenille wires into 4-inch lengths. Cover your worktables with extra newspaper, and have kids wear paint smocks.



Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground

5

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

After the children have cleaned up the centers, sit with kids in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they enjoyed learning from the Bible today.

Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge to encourage your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Say: **Today we learned that ► GOD IS LOVING AND FORGIVING. I'd like each of you to choose one of these Daily Challenges to remember that God is loving and forgiving.**

Give kids these three Daily Challenge ideas to choose from:

1. **Pray and ask God to help you forgive someone who has hurt your feelings. If God is always loving and forgiving, we should be, too!**
2. **The next time your brother or sister says something to hurt your feelings, forgive him or her and explain that God wants us to forgive as he forgives us.**
3. **Have an adult help you write a note to God thanking him for his gifts of love and forgiveness. Then draw a picture underneath your note that shows how it makes you feel when you're forgiven!**

Say: **If you want to pray, circle choice number 1. If you want to forgive your brother or sister, circle choice number 2. If you want to draw a picture with a note, circle choice number 3.** Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Playground page. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!



“Body Formation” Prayer

What You’ll Do

Have kids lie on the floor head to toe, and help them form a giant heart shape with their bodies. Tell the children that their heart is like God’s love for us. Remind kids that God forgives us and always loves us as the father forgave his son in the Bible story. Then lead the children in the following prayer as you have kids pass around the ring (from the Teacher Pack).

Thank you, God, for your love.

Thank you, God, for your forgiveness.

In Jesus’ name, amen.

Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Playground book pages whether they worked on them or not. Have the children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the “Daily Challenges” activity. Encourage parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment throughout the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.



“Body Formation” Prayer Supplies

.....
Teacher Pack
ring





Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

John 13:1-17

Although 5- and 6-year-olds love to help others, it is often very difficult for them to think of others before themselves. They're still in a very self-centered phase as they explore their developing verbal, physical, and academic skills. They still want to be first in line—and first to win. Continually encourage children to be first to help someone else—first to serve. Remind children that God is happy when they help others.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started <i>about 10 min.</i>	Welcoming Song Sing a song welcoming all their classroom friends.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i>	Because He Loves Us Make a picture album showing those that Jesus died for.	Bible, paper, crayons, stapler, marker	Write "Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8) on a sheet of paper. Photocopy this, and make one copy for each child in class.
3 Bible Exploration <i>about 20 min.</i>	Theo's News Find out what a washcloth has to do with the Bible story.	CD player, Surprise Box, Theo puppet, washcloth Teacher Pack: CD	Place the washcloth in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
	Bible Time Help wash a doll's feet like Jesus washed his disciples' feet.	Bible; 13 paper plates and cups; 13 plastic knives, forks, and spoons; 1 dishpan of warm water; 1 towel; 1 washcloth; baby doll	Set up one place setting at the head of a long, low table as an example.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



►Bible Point

God wants us to help others.

Key Verse

"Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will help others by telling them about Jesus.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
4 Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> <i>(Choose 2 centers.)</i>	Center 1: Clean Feet Pretend to wash the disciples' feet by adding paint to a picture of Jesus and the disciples.	My Bible Playground, sponges, blue tempera paint, bowls, smocks, pencils	Remove the Lesson 3 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.
	Center 2: Sweet Feet Enjoy a dipping snack.	blue food coloring, non-dairy whipped topping, spoon, graham crackers, 1 plate per child	
	Center 3: Do You Want to Be First? Sing a song about being first, and pretend to wash one another's feet.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
	Center 4: Service Spinners Create a tool to use in remembering to serve others.	2 paper plates and 1 brad per child, scissors, crayons	
5 Lasting Impressions <i>about 5 min.</i>	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Playground	
	"First and Last" Prayer Line up and ask God to help them serve others.		
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



John 13:1-17

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

It is especially significant that Jesus washed the disciples' feet because none of the disciples was willing to stoop below the others to do this demeaning task. The washing of feet, necessary because people in Jesus' day all wore sandals, was customary before the beginning of any meal and was normally done by a servant as guests entered the house. However, since this was a private meal, there was apparently no servant there. The water, the basin, and the towel were there, and certainly the disciples thought about the fact that no one had washed their feet. But none of them took the initiative to do the washing before the meal. After the food had been set out, Jesus took action. John records all this in detail, likely feeling guilty for not being the one to pick up the towel and basin to serve his brothers and his Lord.

Peter's resistance to allowing Jesus to wash his feet revealed that Peter didn't understand what was really happening, part of which was Jesus illustrating the cleansing power of his death. Peter also exhibited pride in his refusal to let Jesus wash his feet. He didn't yet understand that Jesus came to serve, not to be served. Peter's rejection of Jesus' act was based on an understanding of the Messiah that didn't allow for such a humble, servantlike action.

Through his actions and words, Jesus commands us to serve one another as he served his disciples, but not specifically in the washing of feet. To claim to be exempt from such service would be to claim to be greater than Jesus himself. And it would not be enough for the disciples to recognize that they were to

serve one another; they needed to take action if they were to receive the blessing promised in John 13:17.

Jesus' entire mission was one of humility. Imagine a king leaving his posh palace to live as a homeless man, facing abuse and mistreatment. Ridiculous? Absolutely. Why did Jesus do what he did? All for the love of you and me.

Thank Jesus for making a way for you to someday live where he is. Acknowledge that because of him, you don't have to be afraid or ashamed about meeting God. Jesus bent down low to lift you up high. How can you live out your gratitude? Talk to God about that. You can write your prayer here.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "Welcome to God's House" (track 7)

Because He Loves Us Supplies

Bible
paper
crayons
stapler
marker

Because He Loves Us Easy Prep

Write "Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8) on a sheet of paper. Photocopy this, and make one copy for each child in class.

1 GETTING STARTED

Welcoming Song



Tip Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

As the children arrive, greet each child and welcome him or her with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle.

Play "Welcome to God's House" (track 7 on the CD) to the tune of "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean" and lead children in doing the motions.



With arms open wide, Jesus greets you. (*Spread arms out.*)
He's so glad to see you today. (*Shake a neighbor's hand.*)
Say "hi" to a friend right beside you. (*Continue shaking hands.*)
Let's learn and let's sing and let's pray. (*Turn around once.*)

Come on in. (*Motion to come.*)
Have a seat. (*Sit down.*)
Welcome to God's house today.
Come on in. (*Motion to come.*)
Have a seat. (*Sit down.*)
Welcome to God's house today!

(Repeat.)

2

KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

Because He Loves Us

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have the children form a circle and sit down. Open your Bible to Romans 5:8, and show children the verse.



Say: **Our Key Verse from the Bible is Romans 5:8. This verse says, “Christ died for us.” Let’s say our Key Verse together.** Lead children in saying the Key Verse: **“Christ died for us.”**

Jesus was willing to die on the cross for us because he loves us so much. By dying on the cross, Jesus took the punishment for our sins. All we have to do is believe in Jesus, and we can be forgiven for the bad things we do. And that’s not all—if we believe in Jesus, we can live forever with him in heaven.

That’s such amazing news, let’s make something to remind us of our Key Verse so we’ll never forget it. That way, we can tell other people the good news about Jesus, too!

Explain that kids will be making “picture albums” about everyone Jesus died for. Give each child a cover sheet you prepared before class. Have children write their names on the covers. Give kids several pages of blank paper, also, and help them stack these under the cover and staple them together to make a booklet.

On the first page of their booklets, ask each child to draw a picture of his or her family. Explain that Christ died for all the members of their families. On the next page, ask kids to each draw a picture of their best friend. Explain that Christ died for their best friends, too.

Continue adding drawings as time permits. Other pages might include teachers, kids at school, neighbors, and children from other countries. Be sure to make the point that Christ died for all the people the children draw. Encourage kids to take the booklets home so they can show others whom Christ died for.

Say: **If we had room in our books, we could draw a picture of each person in the world, because Christ died for everyone!**

3 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Theo’s News

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Friends, it’s time for Theo’s News!** Have the children sit in a circle. Then begin “Here, Theo” (track 3 on the CD). When the CD segment ends, bring out the Surprise Box, and put the Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet on your hand. Then follow along with the script.

Theo: Hi, everybody! How are my friends today?

Teacher: Hello, Theo! Tell us what interesting news you’ve dug up about our Bible story.

Theo: I hid it in the Surprise Box.



Theo’s News Supplies

CD player
Surprise Box (any box
will do)
Theo puppet
washcloth
Teacher Pack
CD: “Here, Theo”
(track 3)

Theo’s News Easy Prep

Place the washcloth in
the Surprise Box, and
hide the box where it’s
easily accessible.



Bible Time Supplies

Bible
13 paper plates
and cups
13 plastic knives, forks,
and spoons
1 dishpan of
warm water
1 towel
1 washcloth
baby doll

Bible Time Easy Prep

Set up one place
setting at the head of
a long, low table as an
example.

Teacher: Let's look inside to see what Theo dug up for us today.

(Choose a child to open the Surprise Box, and have kids pass the washcloth around the circle. Give the children time to guess what the Bible story might be about.)

Teacher: Children, what is a washcloth used for?

(Pause while the kids answer your question.)

Teacher: Theo, why did you hide a washcloth in our Surprise Box today?

Theo: Today's story is about how Jesus used a washcloth and showed his disciples that he could serve them even though he was God's Son.

Teacher: Theo knew just what to bring to remind us that ► **GOD WANTS US TO HELP OTHERS.**

Theo: Have fun today, boys and girls!

Teacher: Let's say goodbye to Theo.

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week's use.

Bible Time

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Open your Bible to John 13:1-17, and show children the words.

Say: **Today's Bible story tells us that ► GOD WANTS US TO HELP OTHERS. So I want you to help me while I tell this story.**

One day Jesus was having a special dinner for his good friends. Let's set the table for the 12 disciples. Invite several children to help set the table. **Thank you for helping — ► GOD WANTS US TO HELP OTHERS.**

When Jesus' friends came for the dinner, they took off their shoes. Will you help me take off my shoes? Choose two children to help you remove your shoes.

The disciples' feet had gotten very dirty walking through the streets, because in those days people wore sandals, and the dirt roads could be very dusty. Most houses had servants who would help wash visitors' feet. Washing people's feet was not a fun job, and there were no servants at the place where Jesus and his friends were. But the disciples had to have their feet washed before dinner! Who would do it? Maybe one of the disciples? No way! It was a dirty job. Not one of the disciples wanted to wash the other disciples' feet. Jesus knew this would be a great time to teach his friends, and us too, that ► GOD WANTS US TO HELP OTHERS. Even though Jesus was the leader and teacher, he volunteered to wash the disciples' feet. Hold up the baby doll. Let's wash this doll's feet to remember that we should help others like Jesus did.

Put the dishpan of water in front of you. Allow children who haven't yet helped to take the washcloth and quickly wipe the doll's feet. Then dry its feet with the towel.



Say: **You've all done a very good job of helping me tell the Bible story. The story helps us remember that ► GOD WANTS US TO HELP OTHERS.**

After Jesus washed the disciples' feet, he sat down to eat with them. Point out that the table is prepared because the children helped set it up earlier.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**What did Jesus do that no one else wanted to do?
What are some other ways you can serve others?**

Say: **Even though Jesus was a leader and teacher, he served his friends so that we would learn that ► GOD WANTS US TO HELP OTHERS.**

.....

4 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today's Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you're ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they'd like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center's description.

■ CENTER 1:

Clean Feet

What You'll Do ■■■■

Distribute the Lesson 3 My Bible Playground student pages, and have kids write their names on their pages.

Say: **We're going to use the sponges to add blue paint to the disciples' feet in the picture of Jesus and the disciples. The blue paint shows the water Jesus used to wash his friends' feet.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**Do you think Jesus' friends were surprised when Jesus washed their feet?
Why or why not?**



Center 1: Clean Feet Supplies

.....

My Bible Playground
sponges
blue tempera paint
bowls
smocks
pencils

Center 1: Clean Feet Easy Prep

.....

Remove the Lesson
3 pages from each
My Bible Playground
student book.



Center 2: Sweet Feet Supplies

blue food coloring
non-dairy
whipped topping
spoon
graham crackers
1 plate per child



Center 3: Do You Want to Be First? Supplies

CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: "Do You Want to Be
First?" (track 8)

Were you surprised that Jesus would serve and help his special friends?
Explain.

Who can you surprise by doing something to help them?

Say: **Washing the feet of his friends was a surprising thing for Jesus to do. But it was a good way to show all of us that ► GOD WANTS US TO HELP OTHERS.**

CENTER 2:

Sweet Feet

What You'll Do

Stir a few drops of blue food coloring into a tub of non-dairy whipped topping. Let children pretend this is a basin of water. Give each child a dollop on his plate, and then let children dip graham cracker squares into the whipped topping. Kids can pretend the crackers are dusty feet being cleaned in the blue water.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

Do you think Jesus liked washing the feet of his friends? Why or why not?
When do you think it's hard to help others? When is it easy?

Say: ► **GOD WANTS US TO HELP OTHERS, even if it's hard!**

CENTER 3:

Do You Want to Be First?

What You'll Do

Set up a listening center by placing the CD player away from the main area of the room. Gather the children around, and lead them in singing "Do You Want to Be First?" to the tune of "Do Your Ears Hang Low?" As children learn the words, teach them the motions for each of the lines.



Jesus washed their feet (*pretend to wash feet*)

When he sat them down to eat. (*Pretend to eat.*)

Showed them how to help others (*hold hands out palms up*),

Both their sisters and their brothers. (*Point to a girl and a boy.*)

He wanted them to learn this. (*Hold out one hand then the other.*)

It's a lesson not to miss. (*Shake index finger side to side.*)

Jesus washed their feet. (*Point up, then pretend to wash feet.*)



Do you want to be first? *(Hold up index finger.)*
Do you want to be the best? *(Flex biceps.)*
Then be willing to help others *(hold hands out palms up),*
Both your sisters and your brothers. *(Point to a girl and a boy.)*
Just do it as he showed us *(hold out one hand and then the other),*
And help without a fuss. *(Shake index finger from side to side.)*
Then you can be first. *(Hold index finger above head.)*

(Repeat 2x.)

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

Who did Jesus help and serve?
How do you feel when you help someone else?

Say: God had Jesus show us how we should treat others. Jesus helped and served his good friends to remind us that ► **GOD WANTS US TO HELP OTHERS.**

■ CENTER 4:

Service Spinners

What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: Today we're learning that ► **GOD WANTS US TO HELP OTHERS.** In our Bible story, Jesus washed his disciples' feet to set an example of what it means to serve others. Let's make something to help us remember to serve others. We'll make **Service Spinners**.



Give each child two paper plates of equal size. Help kids each write on one of their plates the names of family members and friends they'd like to serve this week. Write the names near the edge of the plate and at evenly spaced intervals around it.



Center 4: Service Spinners Supplies

2 paper plates and 1
brad per child
scissors
crayons



Demonstrate how to cut a triangle slice out of the other plate, as if cutting out a slice of pizza or pie. Help kids each write “My Service Spinner” on the plate with the wedge removed. Then help kids place that plate over the first one and loosely attach them in the center with a brad. Show kids how to spin the top plate to reveal the names underneath. Explain that during the week, kids can spin their Service Spinners and decide how to serve the person whose name appears.

Have kids form pairs and take turns spinning their spinners and telling their partners ways they’ll serve this week. For example, kids might help their parents set the table, play with younger siblings, or help a neighbor pull weeds. Remind kids that Jesus showed us how to serve by washing his disciples’ feet because ► **GOD WANTS US TO HELP OTHERS.**

5

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

After the children have cleaned up the centers, sit with kids in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they enjoyed learning from the Bible today.

Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today’s lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge to encourage your children’s growing relationships with Jesus.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Say: **Today we learned that ► GOD WANTS US TO HELP OTHERS. I’d like each of you to choose one of these Daily Challenges to help others.**

Give kids these three Daily Challenge ideas to choose from:

1. **Pray for a friend at school who doesn’t know Jesus. God wants us to help others, and that means telling others about Jesus, too!**
2. **Give someone in your family a hug, and tell him or her that God wants us to help others.**
3. **Draw a picture of yourself telling others about Jesus, and then hang it in your room to remind you that we should help others believe in Jesus!**

Say: **If you want to pray, circle choice number 1. If you want to give someone a hug, circle choice number 2. If you want to draw a picture, circle choice number 3.** Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Playground page. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!



“First and Last” Prayer

What You’ll Do

Have the children form a line. Let the last person in line come to the front of the line and say, “Dear God, help me to be first and serve others like Jesus did.” When everyone has had a turn to say the prayer, end the prayer by saying, “In Jesus’ name, amen.”

Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Playground book pages whether they worked on them or not. Have the children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the “Daily Challenges” activity. Encourage parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment throughout the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.





Jesus Is Tried and Crucified

Luke 19:28-40; 23:1-49

Five- and six-year-olds don't understand the finality of death. They see cartoon characters come back to life on television, heroes and villains come and go, and immortal people and animals on computer games. Children who have experienced the loss of loved ones or pets will have a better understanding that they won't see those people or animals again, and they will remember the feeling of missing them. Share the story of Jesus' death with your children, but leave out the "scary" details that kids can learn and understand at a more appropriate age.



►Bible Point

Jesus died for us.

Key Verse

"Christ died for us"
(Romans 5:8).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will thank
Jesus for saving them.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started <i>about 10 min.</i>	Welcoming Song Sing a song welcoming all their classroom friends.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i>	For You and Me Sing a song with motions.	Bible, CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
3 Bible Exploration <i>about 20 min.</i>	Theo's News Find out what vinegar has to do with the Bible story.	CD player, Surprise Box, Theo puppet, plastic cup with lid, cotton balls, vinegar Teacher Pack: CD	Place cotton balls dabbed with vinegar into a plastic drinking cup with a lid. The lid should contain a hole for a drinking straw so kids can smell the vinegar in the cup. Place the plastic cup in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
	Bible Time Pretend to be the people who saw Jesus enter Jerusalem, and learn that Jesus died on the cross.	Bible, dress-up clothes	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
4 Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> <i>(Choose 2 centers.)</i>	Center 1: A Bitter Drink for a King Draw a cross, and dab on vinegar.	My Bible Playground, markers, cotton swabs, bowls, vinegar	Remove the Lesson 4 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.
	Center 2: Donkey Trail Mix Eat make-believe donkey food.	mini-wheat cereal pieces, water, cups, paper towels	
	Center 3: A Picture Parade Draw sidewalk pictures celebrating Jesus.	sidewalk chalk	
	Center 4: Cross Reminders Make a magnetic reminder of Jesus' love.	2 wide craft sticks, 1 wooden pinch clothespin, and 1 strip of magnetic tape per child; note paper; craft glue; markers	
5 Lasting Impressions <i>about 5 min.</i>	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Playground	
	"Cloaks of Praise" Prayer Lay clothes down, and give thanks to Jesus.	dress-up clothes	
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



Luke 19:28-40; 23:1-49

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Jesus entered the city riding a colt in order to fulfill the Messianic prophecy in Zechariah 9:9. This was a sign that Jews had been watching for. In addition, a king riding a horse indicated that the king was going into battle, whereas a king riding a donkey was a symbol of peace.

Pilate Orders Jesus Crucified

Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, had been less than pleasant to the Jews during his rule. He had taken money from the Temple treasury for a city water project and had brought images from the Roman Empire into the city of Jerusalem. But he knew not to go too far in his irritation of the Jews. If too many complaints about him reached Rome, he might lose his position. So he was likely feeling insecure when the Jews came to him with their request to crucify Jesus. Thus, even though it appears that Pilate felt Jesus was innocent, he was unwilling to stand up against the Jews.

It is significant that Jesus was crucified between two criminals. To the Jews, this indicated that he was a criminal. It seems likely that the religious leaders had exerted their influence to arrange for this positioning as one more way to humiliate Jesus.

Darkness Falls When Jesus Is Crucified

When Jesus died, the skies became dark from noon until 3 o'clock in the afternoon when the sun would normally have been at the height of its brilliance. There is no way to explain this darkness as a natural phenomenon. God must have darkened the sun.

The centurion mentioned in Luke 23:47 was a Roman

soldier, loyal to the emperor. Something about what happened as Jesus died made a difference in that man's life. Everyone who witnessed Jesus' death seemed to sense that something very wrong had happened (Luke 23:48).

The Jesus Connection

With all the demands on our time and attention, it's easy to forget that everything in this life is about Jesus. This one truth is woven into the very fabric of creation. What an honor to be in a loving relationship with Jesus!

Pick up a rock. What does it tell you about God? Its mere existence is a testimony to the greatness of a Creator with no beginning or end. Invest five minutes in praising God, who created you and loves you. You can write your prayer of praise here.

[illegible]



Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "Welcome to God's House" (track 7)

1

GETTING STARTED

Welcoming Song



Tip Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

As the children arrive, greet each child and welcome him or her with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle.

Play "Welcome to God's House" (track 7 on the CD) to the tune of "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean" and lead children in doing the motions.



With arms open wide, Jesus greets you. (*Spread arms out.*)
He's so glad to see you today. (*Shake a neighbor's hand.*)
Say "hi" to a friend right beside you. (*Continue shaking hands.*)
Let's learn and let's sing and let's pray. (*Turn around once.*)

Come on in. (*Motion to come.*)
Have a seat. (*Sit down.*)
Welcome to God's house today.
Come on in. (*Motion to come.*)
Have a seat. (*Sit down.*)
Welcome to God's house today!

(Repeat.)

2

KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

For You and Me

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have the children form a circle and sit down. Open your Bible to Romans 5:8, and show the children the words.

For You and Me Supplies

Bible

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "Christ Died for Our Sins" (track 9)



Say: **Our Key Verse from the Bible is Romans 5:8. This verse says, “Christ died for us.” Let’s say it together.** Lead the children in repeating the Key Verse with you. Then group the children in pairs and let kids sing “Christ Died for Our Sins” to the tune of “Do Lord.”



Christ died for our sins; (*pairs stand back to back with arms extended out to sides like a cross.*)

He died for you and me. (*Kids turn and point to partners and then to themselves.*)

Christ died for our sins; (*pairs stand back to back with arms extended out to sides like a cross.*)

He died for you and me. (*Kids turn and point to partners and then to themselves.*)

Christ died for our sins; (*pairs stand back to back with arms extended out to sides like a cross.*)

He died for you and me. (*Kids turn and point to partners and then to themselves.*)

He died for us on the cross. (*Pairs face each other with arms extended out to sides like a cross.*)

(Repeat.)

When the song ends, help the children apply the Key Verse to their own lives. Have each child say, “Jesus died for me. Jesus forgave my sin this week when I [have the child say something that happened this week].”

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

Who did Jesus Christ die for?

How does it make you feel to know that your sins are forgiven?

Who needs to know that Christ died for them? Have the children name a friend or family member.

Say: **Jesus died so that our sins could be forgiven. Even though we might feel sad that Jesus had to die on the cross, we can be happy that ► JESUS DIED FOR US. Christ died for us.**





Theo's News Supplies

CD player
Surprise Box (any box
will do)
Theo puppet
plastic cup with lid
cotton balls
vinegar
Teacher Pack
CD: "Here, Theo"
(track 3)

Theo's News Easy Prep

Place cotton balls
dabbed with vinegar
into a plastic drinking
cup with a lid. The lid
should contain a hole
for a drinking straw
so that kids can smell
the vinegar in the cup.
Place the plastic cup in
the Surprise Box, and
hide the box where it's
easily accessible.

Bible Time Supplies

Bible
dress-up clothes

3

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Theo's News

What You'll Do

Say: **Friends, it's time for Theo's News!** Have the children sit in a circle. Then begin "Here, Theo" (track 3 on the CD). When the CD segment ends, bring out the Surprise Box, and put the Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet on your hand. Then follow along with the script.

Theo: Hi, everybody! I'm glad to see you all!

Teacher: Hello, Theo! Tell us what interesting news you've dug up about our Bible story.

Theo: I hid it in the Surprise Box. I hope you like what I hid there!

Teacher: Let's look inside to see what Theo dug up for us today.

(Choose a child to open the Surprise Box, and have kids pass the cup around the circle so that everyone can smell the vinegar. Give children time to guess what the Bible story might be about.)

Teacher: Does what's in the cup smell like something you would want to drink, even if you were very thirsty? What do you think is in this cup?

(Pause for children to respond.)

Teacher: Those are great answers! Vinegar is inside the cup. We often use vinegar to make salad dressing, but we don't usually drink it. Theo, why did you hide this cup of vinegar in our Surprise Box?

Theo: Today's story tells us why Jesus was given vinegar to drink when he was on the cross.

Teacher: Let's listen to our story and find out more.

Theo: Have fun, boys and girls!

Teacher: Let's say goodbye to Theo.

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week's use.

Bible Time

What You'll Do

Open your Bible to Luke 19:28-40; 23:1-49, and show the children the words.

Say: **Today's Bible story tells us that ► JESUS DIED FOR US.** Our Bible story begins as Jesus and his disciples were going from place to place preaching and teaching. When Jesus and his disciples were about to go into Jerusalem, Jesus sent his disciples ahead to get a young donkey that he could ride. During Bible times, kings and other royal people often rode donkeys to show that they would bring peace to the people. Jesus wanted to show that he was the King of kings,



sent from God to bring peace and forgiveness for people's sins, as a prophet had promised a long time before.

Ask:

How do you think the people felt to be so close to such an important person as Jesus?

Say: **Show me how you think the people might have reacted when they saw Jesus coming.** Pause for the children to react. **The people were so excited to see Jesus that many of them threw their coats on the ground for the young donkey to walk on so he wouldn't get his hooves dirty. They treated Jesus like a king.**

We celebrate in many ways when someone does something extra special. We might cheer, clap, stomp our feet, or whistle. The people in Jesus' day did the same thing, and they celebrated with a procession or a parade. Let's act out a parade like the one the people had for Jesus.

Bring out the coats, jackets, and sweaters, and have each child choose an item to wear. Have children form groups with an even number in each group (four or six children to a group might work best). Let each of the groups choose a child to be the Donkey and another child to be Jesus. Let the Donkey get on all fours, and then have Jesus carefully sit on the Donkey's back. Let the other children each take off the clothing item and lay it on the floor in front of the Donkey. As each child puts his or her coat on the floor, have that child say something he or she likes about Jesus. Have the Donkey carry Jesus across the clothing, and then continue the Bible story.

Say: **Many people were glad to see Jesus entering Jerusalem on a donkey. But some people were not happy to see Jesus. Some of the people were jealous and became angry with Jesus, so they asked the leaders to arrest him.**

Jesus was arrested. The guards were mean, and they hurt Jesus very badly. Then they took Jesus to a man named Pilate who was kind of like the judges we have today. Pilate's job was to decide if Jesus had done anything wrong. The people said that Jesus had told everyone not to pay their taxes and that Jesus told people he was Christ, the King of kings.

Ask:

Do you think Jesus had done anything wrong? Why or why not?

Say: **Pilate said that Jesus hadn't done anything wrong and that he should be set free, but the people were so angry that they wouldn't listen.** Have kids put their hands over their ears, pretend not to listen, and then take their hands away.

Pilate then sent Jesus to a man named Herod to let Herod decide what would happen to Jesus. Herod agreed that Jesus had done nothing to deserve death, but the angry crowd demanded that Jesus die.

Ask:

What would you have said to Herod or Pilate about Jesus?





Say: **The people took Jesus to a hill with two criminals who had done some very bad things. The people hung Jesus on a cross to die alongside the criminals. They continued to call Jesus names and gave him vinegar to drink when he was thirsty. Jesus hung on the cross until he died.**

Ask:

How do you think Jesus' friends felt when Jesus died?

Say: **Even though dying on a cross was a terrible thing that happened to Jesus, Jesus knew God's plan. Just before Jesus died, he prayed and asked God to forgive all the people for their sins because they didn't realize what they were doing. Because ► JESUS DIED FOR US, our sins are forgiven, and we can live with him in heaven. The most exciting part of God's plan for his Son was that Jesus didn't stay dead!**

4

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today's Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you're ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they'd like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center's description.

CENTER 1:

A Bitter Drink for a King

What You'll Do

Distribute the Lesson 4 My Bible Playground student pages, and have kids write their names on their pages. Instruct kids to use markers to draw a cross on the hill. Then have them dip a cotton swab into the vinegar and dab it onto the cross.

Say: **The cross is a symbol that reminds us that Jesus died for our sins. This vinegar smells yucky—just like our sins are yucky to God. When Jesus died for our sins, he forgave us, and he took away our yucky sins.**

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**What is something you've done that might make Jesus sad?
Have you asked Jesus to forgive your sins? Why or why not?
Would you like to?**

Center 1: A Bitter Drink for a King Supplies

My Bible Playground
markers
cotton swabs
bowls
vinegar

Center 1: A Bitter Drink for a King Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson
4 pages from each
My Bible Playground
student book.



Say: **Even though some of the people were mean to Jesus, Jesus still loved the people and wanted God to forgive them. Jesus was willing to die on the cross for us and even for the sins of mean people. ► JESUS DIED FOR US.**

CENTER 2:

Donkey Trail Mix

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have the children wash their hands (or use wet wipes), and then let kids sit down to prepare their snacks. Remind the children that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a young donkey. Tell kids that donkeys like to eat hay and drink lots of water.

Give children each a paper towel with a few frosted-wheat cereal pieces, and let kids pretend that the cereal is the donkey's hay. Then pass out cups of water. Let the children make donkey sounds while they wait for others to be served.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

Do you think the donkey had any idea how special Jesus was? Why or why not?

Say: **The young donkey had a very special job to do for Jesus. Maybe he was rewarded with a special treat to eat. Let's eat our snack and remember that soon after the donkey's special job was over, Jesus would die for our sins. Bow your heads and let's pray.** Have the children repeat the following prayer before they eat their snacks. **Dear God, thank you for sending your Son, Jesus, to die for our sins. Bless this food. In Jesus' name, amen.**

CENTER 3:

A Picture Parade

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

When it's time to begin, lead your children to an area where kids can each use a small portion of a pathway. Call this pathway their Picture Parade. Give children each a piece of sidewalk chalk, show them where they can draw their pictures, and instruct them to draw pictures about today's Bible story. Remind kids that the people celebrated Jesus as the King of kings by giving a parade; tell kids they can create a picture parade and celebrate Jesus by drawing pictures that remind them of the Bible story. Encourage kids to sign their names near their pictures.

When the children have finished the pictures, gather the class together, and let children each tell about their Bible story pictures. At the end of class, invite the parents to view the children's works of art.



Center 2: Donkey Trail Mix Supplies

mini-wheat
cereal pieces
water
cups
paper towels



**ALLERGY
ALERT**

Center 3: A Picture Parade Supplies

sidewalk chalk





Center 4: Cross Reminders Supplies

2 wide craft sticks,
1 wooden pinch
clothespin, and 1 strip
of magnetic tape
per child
note paper
craft glue
markers

**MAGNET
WARNING**
Harmful if swallowed.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

What are some things you remember about the Bible story?
Why do you think the people wanted to celebrate and honor Jesus?
What do you like to celebrate about Jesus?

Say: **Jesus wanted people to know that he was the King of kings, the Son of God. We can celebrate and tell others that ► JESUS DIED FOR US.**

CENTER 4:

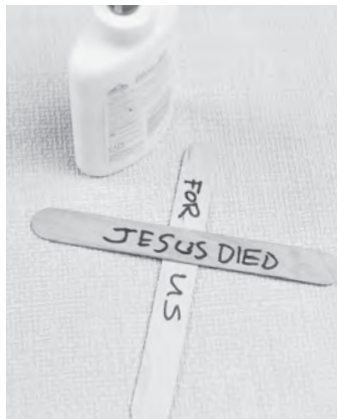
Cross Reminders

What You'll Do

Say: **In today's lesson, we're learning that ► JESUS DIED FOR US. That's such an important thing to remember, let's make a craft that we'll see every day!**

Explain that people often write notes to help them remember important things. Say that kids will be making notepad reminders to help them remember that Jesus died on the cross for us.

Give each child two wide craft sticks. Help kids use craft glue to attach the sticks in the shape of a cross. Help kids use markers to write "Jesus died for us" on their crosses.



Then give each child a wooden pinch clothespin, and use craft glue to attach the clothespin to the cross, pinch-side facing down. Give each child a small stack of square note paper, and help kids clip the paper in the clothespin. Finally, attach a strip of magnetic tape to the back of each cross.

Say: **Take these note holders home, and hang them on your refrigerators. That way, every time someone in your family writes a reminder note or opens the refrigerator, they'll remember that ► JESUS DIED FOR US.**



5

LASTING
IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

After the children have cleaned up the centers, sit with kids in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they enjoyed learning from the Bible today.

Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge to encourage your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Say: Today we learned that ► **JESUS DIED FOR US.** I'd like each of you to choose one of these Daily Challenges to remember that Jesus died for you.

Give kids these three Daily Challenge ideas to choose from:

1. Teach a friend the Key Verse, and tell him or her that Jesus died for our sins.
2. Draw a picture of Jesus, and hang it in your room. Each time you see it, thank God for sending Jesus to save you from your sins.
3. Ask a parent to read Luke 19:28-40 and 23:1-49 with you. Then thank Jesus for dying on the cross so you can live in heaven with him!

Say: If you want to teach a friend, circle choice number 1. If you want to draw a picture, circle choice number 2. If you want to read with a parent, circle choice number 3. Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Playground page. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!

“Cloaks of Praise” Prayer

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have children each choose a coat or other item of dress-up clothing and put on the item. Then instruct kids to take turns removing the items, laying them on the floor, and saying the following prayer.

Dear Jesus,
Thank you for dying for me and forgiving my sins.
In Jesus' name, amen.

Daily Challenges
Supplies

My Bible Playground

“Cloaks of Praise”
Prayer
Supplies

dress-up clothes



Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Playground book pages whether they worked on them or not. Have the children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the “Daily Challenges” activity. Encourage parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment throughout the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.



Jesus Appears to Mary

John 20:1-18

Five- and six-year-olds have the simple faith to believe that Jesus is alive. However, they won't understand the permanence of death unless they've experienced the loss of a pet or loved one. Tell your children that Jesus died and his resurrection was a real miracle. This knowledge will help kids understand more of God's incredible power as they celebrate Easter. Remind kids that Jesus is God's Son and that Jesus is real and alive today.



►Bible Point

Jesus is alive.

Key Verse

"Christ died for us"
(Romans 5:8).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will tell others that Jesus is alive.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started <i>about 10 min.</i>	Welcoming Song Sing a song welcoming all their classroom friends.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i>	Jesus Is Alive! Move a paper stone as they tell others the Key Verse.	Bible, My Bible Playground, 1 craft stick per child, scissors, brown paper, tape, pencils	Remove the Lesson 5 pages from each My Bible Playground student book. Carefully cut a slit in each page where indicated.
3 Bible Exploration <i>about 20 min.</i>	Theo's News Find out what a plastic Easter egg has to do with the Bible story.	CD player, Surprise Box, Theo puppet, plastic Easter egg Teacher Pack: CD	Place the egg in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
	Bible Time Listen to Mary tell the story of Jesus' resurrection.	Bible, CD player, 1 colorful streamer per child, tape Teacher Pack: CD, "Mary Sees Jesus" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)	



Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
4 Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> <i>(Choose 2 centers.)</i>	Center 1: An Empty Cave Play inside a “cave” and re-enact the Bible story.	2 bedsheets, safety pins, several Bible-times costumes	Cover a large table with two bedsheets so that the sheets overlap in the middle of the table. Pin up the corners of the sheets with safety pins to create an opening to the “cave.”
	Center 2: Surprise Snacks Review the Bible story while they make and eat their snacks.	1 piece of canned biscuit dough and 1 large marshmallow per child, cinnamon, sugar, shakers, water, pastry brush, baking pans	
	Center 3: Roll the Stone Away Sing a song and make paintings as they pretend to roll the stone away from the tomb.	CD player, smocks, box lids, 3 squeeze bottles of tempera paint, paper, pencils Teacher Pack: CD, marbles	
	Center 4: Empty Tombs Make toys to use in retelling the Bible story.	1 foam cup, 1 ten-inch length of string, and 1 sheet of brown construction paper per child; tape; markers	
5 Lasting Impressions <i>about 5 min.</i>	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God’s Word.	My Bible Playground	
	“Thank You, Jesus” Prayer Sing a prayer of thanksgiving.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

John 20:1-18

It is obvious from Mary's response and from that of the disciples that no one expected Jesus to rise from the dead.

The “other disciple” mentioned in verse 2 was John himself. Even though he arrived at the tomb first, he didn’t go in immediately. Bold, impetuous Peter arrived after John and burst into the tomb to see what had happened. The body was gone, but the grave clothes were still there. In fact, the wrap that had been on Jesus’ head was folded up, not tossed carelessly as a grave robber might have done. We aren’t told of Peter’s response, but we see that when John followed him in and saw the position of the grave clothes, John believed.

Peter and John left the tomb, but Mary couldn't. For her, the disappearance of Jesus' body was still a mystery. As she stood outside sobbing, she peered into the tomb and saw two angels sitting there. In her grief, it didn't register who or what they were. Her response to the angels' inquiry indicates that she hadn't grasped what had happened. She was sad because she thought Jesus' body had been taken away. She had no comprehension that Jesus had risen.

Why did Mary not recognize the Lord she was looking for when she turned around and saw him? Several factors probably contributed to her lack of recognition: She knew he was dead and was not expecting him to be alive, she may not have raised her eyes to really look at him because she didn't want to show her tears, she may not have seen clearly through her tears anyway, and Jesus was now in his glorified body—he may have looked very different from when she had last seen him.

It is interesting that Jesus repeated the same question the angels had asked Mary. The angels and Jesus were both trying to help Mary understand what had actually happened. But she just couldn't comprehend it until Jesus called her name. She knew the voice of Jesus and recognized him.

The Jesus Connection

The same voice Mary heard calls to us, inviting, assuring, welcoming us into a full life with him—a timeless relationship with Jesus.

It was the resurrection of Jesus that changed everything and gave the disciples the courage they needed to face death unafraid. How is the resurrection of Christ changing the way you live? What questions do you have for God? Ask him right now. You can write your prayer here.

[illegible]



Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "Welcome to God's House" (track 7)

Jesus Is Alive! Supplies

Bible

My Bible Playground

1 craft stick per child

scissors

brown paper

tape

pencils

Jesus Is Alive! Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson

5 pages from each

My Bible Playground

student book. Carefully

cut a slit in each page

where indicated.

1

GETTING STARTED

Welcoming Song



Tip Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

As the children arrive, greet each child and welcome him or her with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle.

Play "Welcome to God's House" (track 7 on the CD) to the tune of "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean" and lead children in doing the motions.



With arms open wide, Jesus greets you. (*Spread arms out.*)
He's so glad to see you today. (*Shake a neighbor's hand.*)
Say "hi" to a friend right beside you. (*Continue shaking hands.*)
Let's learn and let's sing and let's pray. (*Turn around once.*)

Come on in. (*Motion to come.*)

Have a seat. (*Sit down.*)

Welcome to God's house today.

Come on in. (*Motion to come.*)

Have a seat. (*Sit down.*)

Welcome to God's house today!

(*Repeat.*)

2

KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

Jesus Is Alive!

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Gather children together. Open your Bible to Romans 5:8, and show children the words.

Say: **Our Key Verse from the Bible is Romans 5:8. This verse says, "Christ died for us." Let's say our Key Verse together.** Lead children in saying the Key Verse: **"Christ died for us."**



But dying for us isn't all Jesus did. He came back to life for us, too! Jesus died on the cross and came to life again so that if we believe in him, we can live with him forever in heaven. How exciting!

Excited is probably exactly how Mary felt that morning when she got to the tomb where they had placed Jesus' body. She probably was wondering how she could move the big stone they had put to block the doorway to the tomb. But she didn't have to worry about that, because the stone was moved and Jesus was alive! Let's make something to help us tell this important Bible story to others.

Distribute the My Bible Playground student pages, and remind kids to write their names on their papers. Give each child a craft stick and a piece of brown or black paper. Have kids crumple their papers into wads.

Show kids how to insert a craft stick through the slit from behind the page. Then help each child tape a paper wad to the top of the craft stick in front of the page. Demonstrate how they can move the paper "stone" in front of and away from the entrance to the tomb.

Have kids form pairs, and let partners practice telling the Easter story to each other. Encourage kids to use their pages at home to tell families and friends how Christ died and came back to life again for us!

Say: **It's great to know that Christ died for us, but we can be even happier that**
► JESUS IS ALIVE!

3

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Theo's News

What You'll Do

Say: **Friends, it's time for Theo's News!** Have the children sit in a circle. Then begin "Here, Theo" (track 3 on the CD). When the CD segment ends, bring out the Surprise Box, and put the Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet on your hand. Then follow along with the script.

Theo: Hi, boys and girls!

Teacher: Hello, Theo! Tell us what interesting news you've dug up about our Bible story.

Theo: I'm excited about what I found! I hope you like it. I hid it in the Surprise Box.

Teacher: Let's look inside to see what Theo dug up for us today.

(Choose a child to open the Surprise Box. Have kids pass the plastic Easter egg around the circle so everyone can open it and see that there's nothing inside. Give children time to guess what the Bible story might be about.)

Teacher: Why do you think Theo brought us an empty container?

(Pause while children respond.)

Theo's News Supplies

CD player
 Surprise Box (any box will do)
 Theo puppet
 plastic Easter egg
Teacher Pack
 CD: "Here, Theo" (track 3)

Theo's News Easy Prep

Place the egg in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.



Bible Time Supplies

Bible
CD player
1 colorful streamer
per child
tape
Teacher Pack
CD: "The Empty Cave"
(track 10)
"Mary Sees Jesus"
poster (from the Big
Bible Poster Pack)

Teacher: Those are good guesses. Theo, can you tell us why you hid an empty container in our Surprise Box today?

Theo: Our Bible story today is about something important that was found empty, kind of like this container but a lot bigger.

Teacher: Let's listen to our Bible story and find out what happened.

Theo: Have a great day, boys and girls!

Teacher: Let's say goodbye to Theo.

Encourage the children to wave and say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week's use.

Bible Time

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Open your Bible to John 20:1-18, and show the children the words.

Say: **Today's Bible story tells us that Jesus did not remain dead—
► JESUS IS ALIVE.**

Jesus' friend, Mary, is going to tell us about an empty cave. During the story we'll hear a song called "Oh Where, Oh Where Is Jesus?" When you hear that song, you get to stand up, scamper around the room, and quickly pretend to search for Jesus before the song ends and you have to sit back down. We should also listen for the words ► "JESUS IS ALIVE." When you hear those words, I want you to stand up and cheer as loud as you can for Jesus. Let's close our eyes for a moment and pretend we're going back in time. When you hear Mary begin to speak, you can open your eyes.

Begin "The Empty Cave" (track 10 on the CD). Lead the kids in doing the actions at the right times. When the track ends, show kids the poster.

Say: **Let's make this poster look more like a celebration by adding party streamers to it!** Let each child choose a colorful streamer and tape one end of it to the bottom or sides of the poster. Then hang the poster on the wall so all can see this festive display.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

What did Mary see when she looked in the tomb?

How do you think Mary felt when she found the cave empty?

How did you feel when you couldn't find Jesus in our classroom?

How did Mary change after she saw that Jesus was alive?

If you had been Mary, how would you have told someone that Jesus was alive?

Say: **Mary saw that the cave was empty. She wondered where Jesus was. Then, after Jesus spoke to her, Mary knew that ► JESUS IS ALIVE!**



4

WEAVING FAITH
INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today's Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you're ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they'd like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center's description.

CENTER 1:

An Empty Cave

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Direct the children to the table, and encourage kids to play in the empty cave and re-enact the Bible story. Let them choose who will pretend to be Jesus, Mary, the angels, Peter, John, and the disciples.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

What did Mary find when she came to the cave?
What would you say to Jesus if you heard his voice?
How can you tell someone that Jesus is alive?

Say: **We can use words to tell others about Jesus, or we can show others with our actions. Use your actions this week to tell someone that ► JESUS IS ALIVE.**

CENTER 2:

Surprise Snacks

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have children wash their hands (or use wet wipes), and then let children sit down to prepare their snacks. Give each child a large marshmallow and a piece of uncooked canned biscuit dough.

Have kids retell the Bible story using the marshmallow to represent Jesus. Have a few shakers filled with cinnamon and sugar for kids to sprinkle on their biscuit dough. Show kids how to stretch their dough to form the cave, place a large marshmallow in the center, and seal their dough with the marshmallow inside by brushing a small amount of water on

Center 1: An Empty
Cave
Supplies

2 bedsheets
 safety pins
 several Bible-times
 costumes

Center 1: An Empty
Cave
Easy Prep

Cover a large table with two bedsheets so that the sheets overlap in the middle of the table. Pin up the corners of the sheets with safety pins to create an opening to the "cave."

Center 2: Surprise
Snacks
Supplies

1 piece of canned
 biscuit dough and
 1 large marshmallow
 per child
 cinnamon
 sugar
 shakers
 water
 pastry brush
 baking pans

**ALLERGY
ALERT**



Center 3: Roll the Stone Away Supplies

CD player
smocks
box lids
3 squeeze bottles of tempera paint
paper
pencils
Teacher Pack:
CD: "Roll the Stone Away" (track 11)
marbles

the edges. Have kids set their biscuit "caves" on a baking pan for baking, and then follow the instructions on the can of biscuit dough.

When the snacks are finished baking, have kids continue reviewing the Bible story, opening their biscuit caves to reveal the empty space inside. Jesus is no longer there—

► **JESUS IS ALIVE!**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

What did you think when you opened the biscuit and didn't see the marshmallow inside?

How was that like what Mary felt when she looked inside the cave and Jesus wasn't there?

Say: **We can be just as excited as Mary was that ► JESUS IS ALIVE. We can praise God that Jesus is alive.**

■ CENTER 3:

Roll the Stone Away

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Let kids roll a stone and create a picture that will remind them that ► **JESUS IS ALIVE.** Set out painting smocks, sheets of white paper, pencils, three colors of paint (in squeeze bottles), and the marbles (from the Teacher Pack). Also set out box lids with sides about two inches high (one box lid for each child at the center).

Have kids wear smocks to protect their clothes. Let children take the box lids and turn them up to make shallow containers. Instruct kids each to write their name on a paper, turn the paper over, and place the paper inside the box lid. Let kids each drop dots of paint on their paper, place a marble on the paper, and then tip the lid from side to side so that the marble makes paint tracks on the paper. Set the paintings aside to dry. Remind the children that when Mary returned to the cave, she saw that the stone had been rolled away.

As kids are rolling their stones to create their paintings, have the children sing "Roll the Stone Away" (track 11 on the CD) to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat."



Roll, roll, roll the stone.

Roll the stone away.

**The angels rolled the stone away,
'Cause Jesus rose that day.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.



Ask:

Can you show me with your arms how big you think the stone in front of the cave might have been?

Why do you think the angels moved the stone?

Say: **God sent the angels to move the stone away from the tomb for people to see that Jesus was not in the tomb. God wanted everyone to know that ► JESUS IS ALIVE.**

CENTER 4:

Empty Tombs

What You'll Do

Say: **In today's lesson, we learned great news— ► JESUS IS ALIVE! When Jesus' friend Mary got to the cave where they had laid Jesus' body, the cave was empty. Jesus wasn't there, because he's alive. Let's make our own empty caves to remind us of this wonderful news.**

Give each child a foam cup, a 10-inch length of string, and a crumpled brown construction-paper wad large enough to just fit inside the mouth of the cup. Show kids how to tape the end of the string to the outside bottom of the cup.

Next, tie or tape the paper wad to the other end of the string. Let children decorate the outside of the cups with markers.

Show children how to bounce the paper wads in and out of the cups. Explain that the paper wads are like the stone that was rolled away from the cave where they placed Jesus. The cups are like the empty cave that Mary found. Encourage kids to take their crafts home to help them tell their families the good news that ► **JESUS IS ALIVE!**

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5

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up the centers, sit with kids in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they enjoyed learning from the Bible today.

Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge to encourage your children's growing relationships with Jesus.



Center 4: Empty Tombs Supplies

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1 foam cup, 1 ten-inch
length of string, and
1 sheet of brown
construction paper
per child
tape
markers

Daily Challenges Supplies

.....

My Bible Playground





“Thank You, Jesus” Prayer Supplies

CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: “Thank You, Jesus”
(track 12)

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Say: **Today we learned that ► JESUS IS ALIVE. I’d like each of you to choose one of these Daily Challenges to celebrate that ► JESUS IS ALIVE.**

Give kids these three Daily Challenge ideas to choose from:

- 1. Each morning when you wake up, ask Jesus to help you live for him that day!**
- 2. Have a family member read John 20:1-18 with you. Tell your family members that Jesus is alive!**
- 3. Pick some flowers from outside and put them in your room to remind you that Jesus is alive!**

Say: **If you want to talk to Jesus each morning, circle choice number 1. If you want to read the Bible, circle choice number 2. If you want to pick some flowers, circle choice number 3.** Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Playground page. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!

“Thank You, Jesus” Prayer

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Have the children form two groups. Sing “Thank You, Jesus” (track 12 on the CD) to the tune of “Frère Jacques,” with one group saying the line first and the second group echoing the words. Then let the second group start and the first group echo when the lyrics repeat.



First group: **Thank you, Jesus.**
Second group: **Thank you, Jesus.**
First group: **You’re alive!**
Second group: **You’re alive!**
First group: **I believe in you.**
Second group: **I believe in you.**
First group: **Amen.**
Second group: **Amen.**
(Repeat.)

Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Playground book pages whether they worked on them or not. Have the children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the “Daily Challenges” activity. Encourage parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment throughout the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.



Apostles Defend Their Faith

Acts 5:12-42

Your children will easily understand the concept of telling others about Jesus. Five- and six-year-olds are aware of many different ways we communicate. They may have spoken with others; talked on the phone; sent or received a postcard or letter; or, with the help of an adult, emailed or texted a friend or relative. Help your children understand that our actions also tell others about Jesus. The way we act, particularly when things don't go the way we expect them to, shows people how much we care about loving others and being like Jesus.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started <i>about 10 min.</i>	Welcoming Song Sing a song welcoming all their classroom friends.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i>	Powerful Prayer Consider the power of prayer.	Bible	
3 Bible Exploration <i>about 20 min.</i>	Theo's News Find out what a card or letter has to do with the Bible story.	CD player, Surprise Box, Theo puppet, card, envelope Teacher Pack: CD	Put a card in the envelope; then place the envelope in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
	Bible Time Pretend to be the apostles and tell others about Jesus.	Bible, CD player, balloons Teacher Pack: CD	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



►Bible Point


Tell others about Jesus.

Key Verse

"The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" (James 5:16).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will tell others about Jesus.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
4 Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> <i>(Choose 2 centers.)</i>	Center 1: Phone a Friend About Jesus Create a make-believe cell phone, and tell class friends about Jesus.	My Bible Playground, alphabet cereal, plate, scissors, pencils	Remove the Lesson 6 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.
	Center 2: Sweet Angels Make a sweet angel-shaped snack to use in retelling the Bible story.	1 sugar cone and 1 large marshmallow per child	
	Center 3: Communicating for Jesus Use blocks to make communication devices, and tell others about Jesus.	connecting blocks	
	Center 4: Little Disciples Hear a rhyme, and use figures of children to tell a story.	CD player, felt Teacher Pack: CD, Children Figures, hook and loop 	Remove the Children Figures and the self-stick hook and loop from the Teacher Pack. Pull apart the 10 cards, cut the strip of hook and loop into 10 half-inch pieces, and attach a piece of hook and loop to the back of each figure. Set out two large pieces of felt (9x12-inch), and have kids work in two groups of five children each.
5 Lasting Impressions <i>about 5 min.</i>	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Playground	
	"Use Me, God" Prayer Say a prayer with motions about sharing Jesus with others.		
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



Acts 5:12-42

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

As described in Acts 4, Peter and John had been brought before the Sanhedrin for questioning and told to stop teaching in the name of Jesus. Frustrated but finding no reason to punish them, the Sanhedrin had to let them go. Now, after performing more miraculous signs and arousing more excitement among the people, all of the apostles were brought in and locked up overnight. The Sanhedrin likely intended to punish them the next day. However, the next morning, the doors and gates to the cell were still securely locked, but the prisoners were gone. Rather than accept the supernatural release of the apostles, the authorities apparently concluded that someone in the Temple police was a sympathizer and had freed the prisoners.

When the apostles were approached in the Temple court again, no force was used to bring them back to the meeting of the Sanhedrin. Had the apostles wanted to resist, the support of the crowd would have made it difficult for the religious leaders to bring them in. But the apostles didn't resist. Notice that the high priest didn't even want to utter the name of Jesus. Perhaps the high priest was afraid that the apostles would make him and the Sanhedrin look guilty for the death of Jesus. His guilt was haunting him, and he was becoming paranoid about the disciples' motives.

Gamaliel Advises the Sanhedrin to Let the Apostles Go

Peter, responding for all the apostles, was very clear. Members of the Sanhedrin couldn't disagree with the principle; they just disagreed over what it meant to obey God. Mistaken as they were, they thought they were obeying God.

Gamaliel's response to the Sanhedrin was wise. After reminding the Sanhedrin of two people who had commanded followings and later faded away, he

advised the Sanhedrin to leave the apostles alone. He said that if what the apostles were doing was simply self-manufactured it would go nowhere, but if it was of God, even the Sanhedrin wouldn't be able to stop it.

The Jesus Connection

The Holy Spirit is sometimes described as a “deposit” assuring that God will make good on his promises of what is yet to come. The Holy Spirit guides, convicts, and inspires us as we grow in our relationship with Jesus.

God has given his own Spirit to live in you, making you alive, animating your soul, giving you his very essence. Pray that God will help you feel fully alive. You can write your prayer here.

[illegible]



Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "Welcome to God's House" (track 7)

1 GETTING STARTED

Welcoming Song



Tip Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

As the children arrive, greet each child and welcome him or her with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle. Play "Welcome to God's House" (track 7 on the CD) to the tune of "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean" and lead children in doing the motions.



With arms open wide, Jesus greets you. (*Spread arms out.*)
He's so glad to see you today. (*Shake a neighbor's hand.*)
Say "hi" to a friend right beside you. (*Continue shaking hands.*)
Let's learn and let's sing and let's pray. (*Turn around once.*)

Come on in. (*Motion to come.*)
Have a seat. (*Sit down.*)
Welcome to God's house today.
Come on in. (*Motion to come.*)
Have a seat. (*Sit down.*)
Welcome to God's house today!

(Repeat.)

2 KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

Powerful Prayer

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have the children form a circle and sit down. Open your Bible to James 5:16, and show the children the words.

Say: **Our Key Verse from the Bible is found in James 5:16. It says, "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." This means that prayer is powerful.**

Powerful Prayer Supplies

Bible



Lead children in saying the adapted version of the Key Verse together: **Prayer is powerful.** Help children think of powerful people. This might include people who are physically strong, as well as authority figures.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

What do these people have the power to do?
Even though these people have power, what are things they can't do?
Do you have to have strong muscles to pray?
Do you have to be an important person to pray?
Tell about a time when God answered your prayer.

Say: **The Bible tells us that prayer is powerful. This means that when we talk to God, God listens and hears us. Then God decides how to answer our prayers.** Lead children in saying the Key Verse one more time, and then pray together, thanking God for hearing prayers and using them to change lives.

.....

3

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Theo's News

What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: **Friends, it's time for Theo's News!** Have children sit in a circle. Then begin "Here, Theo" (track 3 on the CD). When the CD segment ends, bring out the Surprise Box, and put Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet on your hand. Then follow along with the script.

Theo: Hi, everybody!

Teacher: Hello, Theo! Tell us what interesting news you've dug up about our Bible story.

Theo: I found something very interesting! I hid it in the Surprise Box.

Teacher: Let's look inside to see what Theo dug up for us today.

(Choose a child to open the Surprise Box, and have kids pass the envelope around the circle. Give the children time to guess what the Bible story might be about.)

Teacher: Have any of you ever sent a card or letter to someone? Who did you send it to? What did you tell that person?

(Pause as children respond.)

Teacher: Theo, why did you hide an envelope in our Surprise Box?

Theo: You know how we send letters to people to tell them about things that happen? Well, Jesus' disciples didn't have post offices to send letters, but they were still able to

► **TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS.**

Teacher: Let's find out how they told others about Jesus.

Theo: I have to go now. Have a good time today, boys and girls!



Theo's News Supplies

.....

CD player
 Surprise Box (any box
 will do)
 Theo puppet
 card
 envelope
Teacher Pack
 CD: "Here, Theo"
 (track 3)

Theo's News Easy Prep

.....

Put a card in the envelope; then place the envelope in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.





Bible Time Supplies

Bible
CD player
balloons
Teacher Pack
CD: "Tell About Jesus"
(track 13)

**BALLOON
WARNING**
To avoid choking hazards, be
sure to pick up pieces of any
broken balloons promptly.
Balloons may contain latex.

Teacher: Let's say goodbye to Theo.

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week's use.

Bible Time

What You'll Do

Open your Bible to Acts 5:12-42, and show the children the words.

Say: **Today's Bible story says we can ► TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS.**

Our Bible story today is about Jesus' closest disciples who were called the apostles. The apostles were 12 men who had traveled with Jesus, learned from Jesus, and had known him as their closest friend. We have heard about some of these men, including Peter, James, and John. The apostles told everyone about their friend, Jesus. After Jesus died, came back to life, and went back to heaven, the apostles continued to tell people about Jesus, God's Son.

Let's pretend we're Jesus' best friends, the apostles. Everyone stand up and tell two people something you know about Jesus. Then come back and sit down. The apostles loved to ► TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS. They told people things like "Jesus loves you," "Jesus can help you," "Jesus can change you if you let him," "Jesus died for you," and "Jesus is alive!" People came from far away to hear the apostles tell about Jesus. And when sick people came to hear about Jesus, God healed them.

One day some bad men in Jerusalem had the apostles arrested and put in jail because the apostles told others about Jesus. But that didn't stop the apostles from loving Jesus and telling others about Jesus.

Clear a large area in your classroom for this game. Have children form three groups. Tell one group to be the Apostles and stand in a huddle in the middle of the room. Have the second group of kids pretend to be the Jail Guards and stand in a circle around the Apostles. Tell the Jail Guards not to let the Apostles escape. Have the last group of kids pretend to be the Townspeople who want to know about Jesus.

Give the Apostles three to five inflated balloons, and instruct them to hold the balloons until the music starts. Tell kids that the balloons represent words leaving our mouths to tell others about Jesus. As the class sings the song, have the Apostles bop the balloons to the other kids as if they're telling others about Jesus.

Begin the CD and lead the children in singing "Tell About Jesus" (track 13 on the CD) to the tune of "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands."



**I can tell about Jesus. Yes, I can.
I can tell about Jesus. Yes, I can.
I can tell about Jesus. Yes, I can.
I can tell about him anywhere.**
(Repeat 2x.)

When the song ends, stop the CD. Have kids gather in their groups, and then ask the following questions.

Ask:

**Did the apostles stop telling people about Jesus even after they had been put in jail? Why or why not?
Who caught the messages (or balloons) and heard about Jesus?**

Say: **Even though the bad men thought they could stop the apostles from telling others about Jesus, God had another plan! During the night, God sent an angel to open the jail and set the apostles free without the soldiers seeing them. Let's continue to act out the Bible story.**

Have the Apostles and the Townspeople lie down and pretend to sleep. Turn off your classroom lights. Have the Jail Guards continue to stand with their backs to the Apostles and facing the Townspeople. Choose a child to play the part of the Angel, and tell the Guards to pretend they don't see the Angel. Have the Angel quietly wake up the Apostles and lead them out of the jail without the Guards noticing. Instruct the Guards to look the other direction and pretend not to notice. When all the Apostles are out of jail, bring the children together to conclude the Bible story.

Ask:

Why do you think God wanted the apostles out of jail?

Say: **When the angel brought the apostles safely out of jail, he told them to go to the Temple courts and continue to ► TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS.**

The next day the bad men went to the jail. When they looked inside the jail, they didn't see anyone. The apostles were gone, but the jail was still locked up tight! The men couldn't understand how this had happened! When they heard that the apostles were back in the Temple telling the people about Jesus, they sent the guards after the apostles again. But all the bad men could do was beat the apostles, tell them again to stop talking about Jesus, and then let the apostles go.

Ask:

**Do you think the apostles stopped telling others about Jesus?
Why or why not?**

Say: **The apostles knew that it was more important to obey God and tell others about Jesus than to keep silent. We all know about Jesus today because the apostles chose to obey God and ► TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS.**





Center 1: Phone a Friend About Jesus Supplies

My Bible Playground
alphabet cereal
plate
scissors
pencils

! ALLERGY ALERT

Center 1: Phone a Friend About Jesus Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson 6 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.

Ask:

What are some ways you can tell others about Jesus this week?

Let the children brainstorm ways they've seen or heard others tell about Jesus, such as on TV, on the radio, at church, at a park, or by singing, acting out a Bible story, using a telephone, or sending a card or email message to someone.

4

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today's Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you're ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they'd like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center's description.

CENTER 1:

Phone a Friend About Jesus

What You'll Do

Distribute the Lesson 6 My Bible Playground student pages, and have kids write their names on their pages. Then help each child cut along the sides of the cellular phone cover at the bottom of the page and fold up the flap. Point out the alphabet cereal, let kids search through the cereal to find the letters that spell "Jesus," and have kids place the letters onto the cell phone's LCD screen. Then encourage kids to play in pairs or trios and pretend to call a friend to tell about Jesus. Let kids eat the cereal.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

How did the disciples tell others about Jesus?

What are some things you might tell someone about Jesus?

Say: **The disciples used their mouths to ► TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS. We can use our mouths, use telephones, or tell others about Jesus in many other ways. This week, ask your parents if you can call a friend and tell him or her something you know about Jesus.**



CENTER 2:

Sweet Angels

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Give each child a sugar cone (with a pointed end) and a large marshmallow. Have children press their marshmallows onto the pointed tips of their cones to make angels. Let children retell the story of the apostles being set free from jail by an angel before they eat their snack.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

What do you think the apostles felt like when they saw an angel there to set them free?

The apostles were glad they were free so they could ► TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS. Who is someone you can tell about Jesus?

CENTER 3:

Communicating for Jesus

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Place small connecting blocks in a manipulative center for children to creatively make communication devices. Encourage the children to make telephones, walkie-talkies, radios, or computers out of the blocks and pretend to ► **TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

What are some ways we can tell others about Jesus?

Have you ever used any of those ways to tell someone about Jesus?

Explain.

Say: There are so many ways we can ► TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS. Think of a way this week to share Jesus with others.



Center 2: Sweet Angels Supplies

1 sugar cone and 1
large marshmallow
per child

! ALLERGY ■ ALERT

Center 3: Communicating for Jesus Supplies

connecting blocks





Center 4: Little Disciples Supplies

CD player
felt

Teacher Pack

CD: "Little Disciples"
(track 14)
Children Figures
hook and loop

Center 4: Little Disciples Easy Prep

Remove the Children Figures and the self-stick hook and loop from the Teacher Pack. Pull apart the 10 cards, cut the strip of hook and loop into 10 half-inch pieces, and attach a piece of hook and loop to the back of each figure. Set out two large pieces of felt (9x12-inch), and have kids work in two groups of five children each.

Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground

CENTER 4:

Little Disciples

What You'll Do

Cue the CD to "Little Disciples" (track 14 on the CD), and encourage kids to listen carefully to the rhyme. Have kids place the figures on the felt when the rhyme mentions a particular figure. (Children should start with the figure of the boy with "#1" on his shirt.)

**One little disciple meets a friend at the zoo.
He says, "Jesus loves you," and that makes two.
Two little disciples meet a friend at the sea.
They say, "Jesus saves you," and now there are three.
Three little disciples knock on a friend's door.
They shout, "Jesus helps you," and that makes it four.
Four little disciples take a friend for a drive.
They whisper, "Jesus changes you," and now there are five.
Five little disciples meet lots and lots of friends.
They share the love of Jesus, so the story never ends.**

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**What did the children in the rhyme tell their friends?
How can you be like the children in the rhyme?
How do you feel when you share Jesus with others?**

Say: **We can be disciples, too. We can ► TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS.**

5

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up the centers, sit with kids in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they enjoyed learning from the Bible today.

Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge to encourage your children's growing relationships with Jesus.



Talk With Kids

Say: Today we learned that we can ► **TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS.** I'd like each of you to choose one of these Daily Challenges to tell others about Jesus.

Give kids these three Daily Challenge ideas to choose from:

1. Ask a parent to help you bring your neighbor some cookies, and tell him or her about Jesus.
2. Read Acts 5:12-42 with a parent, and discuss ways you can tell others about Jesus.
3. Tell a friend who doesn't know Jesus why you believe in Jesus.

Say: If you want to bring cookies to your neighbor, circle choice number 1. If you want to read the Bible with a parent, circle choice number 2. If you want to tell a friend about Jesus, circle choice number 3. Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Playground page. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!

“Use Me, God” Prayer

What You'll Do

Lead the children in saying the following prayer with motions.

Dear God,
Help me use my eyes to see *(point to eyes)*,
Someone who needs Jesus, just like me. *(Point to someone and then to self.)*
Help me use my mouth to speak *(point to mouth)*
Words about Jesus; he's so neat! *(Point up to heaven.)*
Help me use my ears to hear *(point to ears)*
People who need Jesus, far and near. *(Point around in a sweeping motion.)*
Help me, God, to use my hands for good *(hold up hands and wiggle fingers)*,
Showing others about Jesus, just as I should. *(Hold hands out with palms up.)*
In Jesus' name, amen.

Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Playground book pages whether they worked on them or not. Have the children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the “Daily Challenges” activity. Encourage parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment throughout the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.





Saul Meets Jesus Near Damascus

Acts 9:1-20

Five- and six-year-olds understand the concept of change. They can comprehend such changes as a baby growing into a young child, the colors yellow and blue mixing to make green, or ice melting. Help children broaden their understanding of change by teaching them that Jesus changes us on the inside. Help children see that Jesus can change bad behavior or the way someone feels, and Jesus can change a bad or broken heart.



►Bible Point


Jesus changes our lives.

Key Verse

“The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective” (James 5:16).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will tell others that Jesus changes our lives.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started <i>about 10 min.</i>	Welcoming Song Sing a song welcoming all their classroom friends.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i>	Prayer Changes Things Match pictures of things that have changed.	Bible, scissors Teacher Pack: Changes Cards	Cut the cards along the lines.
3 Bible Exploration <i>about 20 min.</i>	Theo's News Find out what a flashlight has to do with the Bible story.	CD player, Surprise Box, Theo puppet, flashlight Teacher Pack: CD	Place the flashlight in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
	Bible Time Act out the Bible story.	Bible, 1 flashlight, 1 blindfold per 3 children, 1 heart-shaped sticker per child Teacher Pack: “Saul Meets Jesus” poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack) 	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
4 Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> <i>(Choose 2 centers.)</i>	Center 1: The Many Faces of Saul Make puppets and retell the story of Saul.	My Bible Playground, scissors, glue sticks, 1 craft stick per child	Remove the Lesson 7 pages from each My Bible Playground student book. Cut the slit on each child's paper, and cut off the bottom corner with the Saul puppet.
	Center 2: Flashlight Cupcakes Decorate cupcakes to look like flashlights as reminders of the bright light Saul saw.	boxed cake mix and ingredients to prepare it, flat-bottomed ice cream cones, yellow frosting, plastic knives, muffin tins	Prepare the cake mix batter. Fill flat-bottomed ice cream cones about three-quarters of the way to the top, and then place these in muffin tins to prevent them from tipping over. Bake at the time and temperature suggested in the directions for cupcakes on the cake mix box.
	Center 3: Clean Again Make sand sculptures, and then wash their hands.	newspaper, basins of sand, cups, smocks, water, paper towels	
	Center 4: Changed Colors Paint a picture from today's story, mixing colors to make new colors.	newspaper, washable paints, shallow containers, paintbrushes, white construction paper, smocks	Cover the working area with newspaper.
5 Lasting Impressions <i>about 5 min.</i>	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Playground	
	"Thank You for Changing Me" Prayer Do an action prayer.		
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





Acts 9:1-20

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Saul was traveling to Damascus to arrest Christians when Jesus met him on the road. A light he later described as “brighter than the sun” (Acts 26:13) flashed out of heaven, and he dropped to the ground. When Jesus questioned Saul, Saul’s question in return was genuine. The term *lord* can refer simply to a person of superior standing. It seems that Saul really didn’t know who was addressing him. When Jesus told him who he was, the truth of all that had happened must have swept through Saul like a flood. All that Saul had believed about Jesus was wrong, and in his zeal for God, he had been persecuting those who believed what was true!

It's interesting that Jesus told Saul that he was to go into the city and wait for instructions and that Saul was blinded and remained that way as he waited in Damascus for three days. We can only speculate on what went through Saul's mind during that time, but he must have been going through all the Old Testament Scriptures stored in his memory, sorting out how Jesus could be the Messiah in spite of Saul's earlier belief. God gave him time to think!

Saul's meeting with Ananias introduces another aspect of the story. Imagine the faith it took for Ananias to seek out the man he probably knew was coming to town to arrest him and other Christians. How better could the Christians there and around Judea have found out about the change in Saul? God definitely knows what he is doing!

Why did God choose Saul? God could have used anyone. Perhaps he chose Saul to be a supreme example of how a life can be changed when God enters it. It is often suggested that Saul of Tarsus became Paul after this conversion. The truth is that “Saul” was his Jewish name but “Paul” was the Roman equivalent by which he became better known.

Maybe you haven't experienced that kind of "Road to Damascus" conversion, and that's okay. The road that brought you to a relationship with Jesus doesn't matter. What is important is whether or not you are making the most of your journey with him.

Think of one person you can share your Lord with.
Pray that God will help you show that person the light.
You can write your prayer here.

[illegible]



Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "We Welcome You
to Church Today"
(track 15)

Prayer Changes Things Supplies

Bible

scissors

Teacher Pack

Changes Cards

Prayer Changes Things Easy Prep

Cut the cards along the
lines.

1 GETTING STARTED

Welcoming Song



Tip Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

As the children arrive, greet each child and welcome him or her with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle.

Play "We Welcome You to Church Today" (track 15 on the CD) to the tune of "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." Tell the children to stand up and greet each other as they sing and march around the room. Encourage the children to shake hands with one another when they sing the words "We welcome you to church today."



We welcome you to church today, hurrah, hurrah!
We welcome you to church today, hurrah, hurrah!
We welcome you to church today.
We're here to worship and to pray
As we sing together,
Learning about God's love.
(Repeat 2x.)

2

KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

Prayer Changes Things

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Our Key Verse from the Bible is found in James 5:16. It says, "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." This means that prayer is powerful.** Show children the words in your Bible, and then lead them in saying the adapted version of the Key Verse together: **Prayer is powerful.**

Prayer is powerful because when we talk to God, he listens to us and answers our prayers. Prayer changes things. Let's play a matching game with these cards.



Some of the pictures show things that are old or broken, and some of the pictures show things that have been repaired or are new. Let's match each old or broken item to a new item. When you find the matching card say, "Prayer is powerful."

Place the matching cards face down on the floor, and spread the cards out. Let children take turns trying to match the items. When a child finds the correct match, have him or her repeat the Key Verse.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

How does prayer change things?

How has talking to God changed something for you?

Say: **Prayer is powerful because when we pray, God hears us and can change things.**

.....

3

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Theo's News

What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: **Friends, it's time for Theo's News!** Have the children sit in a circle. Then begin "Here, Theo" (track 3 on the CD). When the CD segment ends, bring out the Surprise Box, and put the Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet on your hand. Then follow along with the script.

Theo: Hi, everybody!

Teacher: Hello, Theo! It's nice to see you today! Tell us what interesting news you've dug up about our Bible story.

Theo: It's something bright and fun! I hid it in the Surprise Box.

Teacher: Let's look inside to see what Theo dug up for us today.

(Choose a child to open the Surprise Box, and have kids pass the flashlight around the circle. Give the children time to guess what the Bible story might be about.)

Teacher: What happens when we turn the flashlight on?

(Pause while children respond.)

Teacher: Theo, why did you put a flashlight in our Surprise Box?

Theo: In today's Bible story, a man named Saul saw a very bright light.

Teacher: Let's pay attention to our story and see what happened.

Theo: It's time for me to go. Have a good time today, boys and girls!

Teacher: Let's say goodbye to Theo.

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week's use.



Theo's News Supplies

.....

CD player

Surprise Box (any box will do)

Theo puppet
flashlight

Teacher Pack

CD: "Here, Theo"
(track 3)

Theo's News Easy Prep

.....

Place the flashlight inside the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.



Bible Time Supplies

Bible
1 flashlight
1 blindfold per
3 children
1 heart-shaped sticker
per child

Teacher Pack

"Saul Meets Jesus"
poster (from the Big
Bible Poster Pack)

Bible Time

What You'll Do

Clear a large area of your room, and then have children form groups of three and line up against a wall. Hang the "Saul Meets Jesus" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack) on the opposite wall at a height the children can easily reach. Open your Bible to Acts 9:1-20, and show the children the words.

Say: **Today's Bible story tells about a man named Saul and shows us that**
► **JESUS CHANGES OUR LIVES.** Choose one person in each group to be Saul, and have the other two be Saul's friends. **Saul was a man who put Christians in jail and hurt Christians because he didn't believe in Jesus.**

Saul and his friends were on the way to a city called Damascus. Point to the opposite side of the room, and tell kids to pretend that the wall is the city of Damascus. Have children start to walk towards the wall. **Suddenly a bright light appeared, and Saul fell to the ground.** Have the children fall to the ground. Turn on the flashlight and point it toward the children's faces. Have the children cover their eyes as if blinded by the bright light. Have the children who are playing Saul kneel.

Saul heard a voice say, "Saul, why are you hurting me? I am Jesus. You are hurting me when you hurt my people." Then Jesus continued, "Saul, go into the city and I will tell you what to do." Saul got up from the ground—but he was blind and confused. Blindfold the children who are pretending to be Saul. Then have the other group members spin each Saul around three or four times.

Jesus wanted Saul to show love instead of hurting others. Jesus changed Saul's life. I want those who are blindfolded to try to put a heart on the picture of Saul. Give each blindfolded child a heart-shaped sticker. Tell the friends in each group not to help Saul but to also make sure the child doesn't run into or trip over anything.

Give other children a chance to play Saul. Have groups go to the middle of the meeting area, switch roles, blindfold the new Saul, and spin him or her around three or four times. If you have time, continue the game until each child has had a chance to play Saul.

Say: **Saul's men had to help him walk to Damascus.** As the last child in each group pretends to be Saul, have the groups each lead that child over to the wall.

Ask:

What was it like to find your way to the poster?
How do you think Saul felt after he was blinded?

Say: **The story doesn't end when Saul reached the city. God sent a man named Ananias to help Saul. Ananias prayed for Saul, and Saul was able to see again! God opened Saul's eyes.**

Have children remove the blindfolds.

**Talk With Kids** ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**How do you think Saul felt when he could see again?
What do you think happened to Saul after that?**

Say: **Saul completely changed! He became a Christian. He stopped hurting Christians and started teaching others about Jesus. Jesus changed Saul's life, and**
► **JESUS CHANGES OUR LIVES.**

.....

4 WEAVING FAITH
INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today's Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you're ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they'd like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center's description.

■ **CENTER 1:****The Many Faces of Saul****What You'll Do** ■■■■

Let the children each fold the puppet from their student pages in half so Saul can be seen on both sides; then have them glue the puppet onto a craft stick. Let the children work in pairs and use their puppets to retell the story.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**What did Saul act like before he heard Jesus' voice?
How did Saul change after he heard Jesus' voice?
How can Jesus change us?**

Say: **Saul was angry and mean at the beginning of our story. Once he let Jesus into his life, he became a changed man. Saul was happy to tell others about Jesus.**
► **JESUS CHANGES OUR LIVES, too. Jesus loves us and wants to help us change.**

**Center 1: The Many
Faces of Saul
Supplies**
.....

My Bible Playground
scissors
glue sticks
1 craft stick per child

**Center 1: The Many
Faces of Saul
Easy Prep**
.....

Remove the Lesson
7 pages from each
My Bible Playground
student book. Cut the
slit on each child's
paper, and cut off the
bottom corner with the
Saul puppet.





Center 2: Flashlight Cupcakes

boxed cake mix and ingredients to prepare it
flat-bottomed ice cream cones
yellow frosting
plastic knives
muffin tins

Center 2: Flashlight Cupcakes Easy Prep

Prepare the cake mix batter. Fill flat-bottomed ice cream cones about three-quarters of the way to the top, and then place these in muffin tins to prevent them from tipping over. Bake at the time and temperature suggested in the directions for cupcakes on the cake mix box.

ALLERGY ALERT

Center 3: Clean Again Supplies

newspaper
basins of sand
cups
smocks
water
paper towels

CENTER 2:

Flashlight Cupcakes

What You'll Do

Have children wash their hands (or use wet wipes). Provide bowls of yellow frosting and plastic knives. Let each child frost a cupcake cone, and then children can pretend these are edible flashlights. Before children eat their snacks, review the Bible story and remind children of the bright light that shone onto Saul.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

What's the brightest light you can think of?
How did Jesus change Saul?
How can Jesus change you?

Say: **When Jesus stopped Saul with that bright light, he changed Saul's life.**

► **JESUS CHANGES OUR LIVES, too.**

CENTER 3:

Clean Again

What You'll Do

Cover the work area with newspaper, and give kids smocks to wear. Set out small plastic cups and several dishpans or similar containers of wet sand. Encourage the children to mold the sand into sand houses, sand animals, or other creative sand sculptures. After a few minutes, compliment children on their sculptures. Then have children remove most of the sand from their hands by rubbing their hands together.

Say: **Even though you've wiped off your hands, they're still a little dirty, aren't they? When we do wrong things, we can't make our hearts new on our own again, but God can make our hearts new.**

Let kids rinse their hands with water and dry their hands with the paper towels.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

How did the water make your hands clean again?
How does Jesus make us clean and new again?



Say: ► **JESUS CHANGES OUR LIVES.** When our hearts are dirty from the wrong things we do, Jesus makes our hearts clean again.

CENTER 4:

Changed Colors

What You'll Do

Have children form pairs. Give each pair two large paintbrushes and a large sheet of white construction paper. Have each child wear a smock or old shirt while painting. Have pairs mix the colors on their papers to paint a picture of today's Bible story. Encourage children to notice how the colors change when they are mixed.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**How did your partner change your picture?
How can we let Jesus change our lives?**

Say: **The colors changed into new colors when we mixed them. If you mix yellow and blue paint together, you'll make green paint. That's kind of like what Jesus does for us. When Jesus comes into our lives, we're changed for the better.**

.....

5

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up the centers, sit with kids in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they enjoyed learning from the Bible today.

Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge to encourage your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

Talk With Kids

Say: **Today we learned that ► JESUS CHANGES OUR LIVES.** I'd like each of you to choose one of these Daily Challenges to trust Jesus to change your life.



Center 4: Changed Colors Supplies

.....

newspaper
washable paints
shallow containers
paintbrushes
white construction paper
smocks

Center 4: Changed Colors Easy Prep

.....

Cover the working area with newspaper.

Daily Challenges Supplies

.....

My Bible Playground



Give kids these three Daily Challenge ideas to choose from:

1. **Each night when you change into your pajamas, thank Jesus for changing your life!**
2. **Draw a picture of something Jesus has changed about you. Then say a prayer, thanking Jesus for changing your life.**
3. **Bring a sick friend some soup, and let your friend know you care about him or her. Tell your friend that Jesus helps us feel better and can change our lives.**

Say: **If you want to pray at night, circle choice number 1. If you want to draw a picture, circle choice number 2. If you want to bring soup to a friend, circle choice number 3.** Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Playground page. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!

“Thank You for Changing Me” Prayer

What You’ll Do

Help the children say the following prayer and do the motions.

Thank you, Jesus, for changing me (*fold hands in prayer, and then turn around*)
And helping me do what I should. (*Nod head.*)
Open my eyes so I can see (*use fingers to hold eyes open wide*)
How to be kind and good. (*Cross arms and smile.*)
In Jesus name, amen.

Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Playground book pages whether they worked on them or not. Have the children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the “Daily Challenges” activity. Encourage parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment throughout the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.





Peter Raises Tabitha From the Dead

Acts 9:36-43

You can help 5- and 6-year-olds become more comfortable praying by modeling simple, short prayers and by giving children opportunities to pray. After each prayer, remind children that God answers our prayers. Sometimes he says yes; other times, no; and sometimes he asks us to wait. However God chooses to answer, he knows what's best for us.




► **Bible Point**
God hears our prayers.

Key Verse

"The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" (James 5:16).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will thank God for hearing their prayers.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started <i>about 10 min.</i>	Welcoming Song Sing a song welcoming all their classroom friends.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i>	Power Shout Experience some of the powerful things they can do with their mouths.	Bible, candle, matches	
3 Bible Exploration <i>about 20 min.</i>	Theo's News Find out what a thermometer has to do with the Bible story.	CD player, Surprise Box, Theo puppet, toy thermometer Teacher Pack: CD	Place the toy thermometer in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
	Bible Time Play a game and learn that God brought Tabitha back to life.	Bible Teacher Pack: "Peter Raises Tabitha From the Dead" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack) 	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
4 Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> <i>(Choose 2 centers.)</i>	Center 1: When Can We Pray? Talk about how they'd pray in different situations.	My Bible Playground, pencils	Remove the Lesson 8 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.
	Center 2: Tabitha Treats Use a snack to retell the Bible story.	1 person-shaped cookie and 1 fruit leather per child, paper plates or napkins	
	Center 3: Prayer Poster Place prayer needs on a poster.	crayons or pencils, sticky notes Teacher Pack: "Peter Raises Tabitha From the Dead" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)	
	Center 4: We Can Pray Sing a song, and take turns saying prayers to God.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
5 Lasting Impressions <i>about 5 min.</i>	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Playground	
	"Super" Prayer Say a prayer when a ball is bounced to them.	Teacher Pack: bouncy ball	
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





Acts 9:36-43

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

It appears from the text that no one thought to send for Peter until after Tabitha had died. Peter was in Lydda, about nine miles away. It would have taken about five or six hours to bring him from there, so it was necessary for him to hurry. If he delayed, the people in Joppa would have to bury Tabitha's body.

When Peter entered the room, he sent away the widows and the mourners, just as Jesus had done when he raised Jairus' daughter in Mark 5. Peter wanted some time to be alone with the Lord. Peter knew what the Christians in Joppa wanted him to do, and he no doubt expressed that to God. But he undoubtedly wanted to find out what the Lord wanted to do. From Peter's actions, it is apparent that the Lord gave Peter the direction he needed. Peter then used the same wording that Jesus had used in raising Jairus' daughter, with the exception of one letter: "Tabitha arise." instead of "Talitha arise."

How did Tabitha hear Peter's command if she was dead? As Peter spoke, the Lord returned her to life. The Lord made Tabitha hear and arise. She was instantaneously and completely restored. The disease was gone, and any decay that had taken place since death was wiped away. Imagine the joyous scene when Peter presented Tabitha alive to the crowd!

The result of this miracle, as with other miracles the apostles performed, was that many believed in the Lord. Miracles testify to God's power and encourage people in their faith.

Thanks to Jesus, who offers life—not just beyond but through death. No amount of bleakness can fade the wonder of this miracle.

Think about Peter's previous goof-ups and how God ultimately used him as a key leader in the startup of the church. God goes beyond forgiveness; he restores. What do you feel ashamed of? Confess your shortcomings to him now, and experience complete healing. You can write your prayer here.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "We Welcome You
to Church Today"
(track 15)

Power Shout Supplies

Bible
candle
matches

1 GETTING STARTED

Welcoming Song



Tip Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

As the children arrive, greet each child and welcome him or her with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle.

Play "We Welcome You to Church Today" (track 15 on the CD) to the tune of "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." Tell the children to stand up and greet each other as they sing and march around the room. Encourage the children to shake hands with one another when they sing the words "We welcome you to church today."



We welcome you to church today, hurrah, hurrah!
We welcome you to church today, hurrah, hurrah!
We welcome you to church today.
We're here to worship and to pray
As we sing together,
Learning about God's love.
(Repeat 2x.)

2

KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

Power Shout

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have the children form a circle and sit down.

Ask:

What is the most powerful thing you've ever seen?

Say: **Those are some pretty powerful things. But did you know that you have a lot of power? In fact, your mouths are really powerful! Let me show you what I mean. Bring out a small candle and light it.**



If I dropped this candle on the carpet, the whole building might burn down. But you can put out this candle by blowing air at the flame with your mouth. Let kids all blow out the candle together. Then put the candle and extra matches away, out of children's reach.

Say: **We can also use our mouths to let out a powerful shout. On the count of three, yell "Praise you, Jesus" as loud as you can. One, two, three.** Give kids a chance to shout.

You can also make people feel good with the words that come out of your mouths—now that's powerful. Have children turn to three different kids and give a compliment to each person. For example, children could say, "You're a child of God" or "I like your new shoes."

You can also use your mouths to help people who are in trouble. Have one child stand up, close his or her eyes, and walk towards an obstacle like the wall. When the child nears the obstacle, have everyone shout "Stop!"

Open your Bible to James 5:16, and show children the words. **Our Key Verse from the Bible is found in James 5:16. It says, "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." This means that prayer is powerful.** Lead children in saying the adapted version of the Key Verse together: **Prayer is powerful.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**Did you know that your mouths were so powerful?
What are some other powerful things you can do with your mouths?**

Say: **The most powerful thing you can do with your mouth is pray. God is more powerful than anyone or anything. When you pray, God listens to you and answers your prayers.**

3 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Theo's News

What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: **Friends, it's time for Theo's News!** Have the children sit in a circle. Then begin "Here, Theo" (track 3 on the CD). When the CD segment ends, bring out the Surprise Box, and put the Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet on your hand. Then follow along with the script.



Theo's News Supplies

CD player
Surprise Box (any box
will do)
Theo puppet
toy thermometer
Teacher Pack
CD: "Here, Theo"
(track 3)

Theo's News Easy Prep

Place the thermometer
in the Surprise Box, and
hide the box where it's
easily accessible.



Bible Time Supplies

Bible

Teacher Pack

“Peter Raises Tabitha
From the Dead” poster
(from the Big Bible
Poster Pack)

Theo: Hi, everybody!

Teacher: Hello, Theo! Tell us what interesting news you’ve dug up about our Bible story.

Theo: I found something I think you’ll like! I hid it in the Surprise Box.

Teacher: Let’s look inside to see what Theo dug up for us today.

(Choose a child to open the Surprise Box, and have kids pass the toy thermometer around the circle. Give the children time to guess what the Bible story might be about.)

Teacher: Have any of you ever had your temperature taken? Why? And how did you get better?

(Pause for the children to respond.)

Teacher: Theo, why did you hide a thermometer in our Surprise Box?

Theo: In today’s Bible story, there’s a woman named Tabitha who was very sick. In fact, she was so sick that she died. But Peter knew that ► **GOD HEARS OUR PRAYERS.**

Teacher: Let’s see what happened to Tabitha.

Theo: Have a good time today, boys and girls!

Teacher: Let’s say goodbye to Theo.

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week’s use.

Bible Time

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Place the “Peter Raises Tabitha From the Dead” poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack) where children can see it. Have children form pairs. Open your Bible to Acts 9:36-43, and show the children the words.

Say: **Today’s Bible story tells us that ► GOD HEARS OUR PRAYERS. There was a woman named Tabitha who loved God and worked hard to help poor people. One day Tabitha became very sick. Her friends tried to help her feel better.**

Even though Tabitha’s friends may have tried to help her, Tabitha died. Tabitha’s friends were very sad and asked Peter to come and help. Peter knew that he couldn’t do anything on his own but that God could help Tabitha. So Peter got on his knees and prayed. Then Peter looked at Tabitha and said, “Tabitha, get up.” Guess what happened? God brought Tabitha back to life! Wow! Prayer is powerful. Show children the poster so they can see what happened because of Peter’s prayer.

Let’s play a fun game to remind us of the power of prayer. Choose one child to be Peter, one child to be the Germ, and let everyone else pretend to be Tabitha. This game is similar to Freeze Tag.

Say: **Everyone playing Tabitha should try to stay away from the Germ, but the Germ should not try to touch Peter. If the Germ touches you, you must freeze right away and kneel down. Then you can’t move until Peter comes to pray for you. Peter can unfreeze anyone who is playing Tabitha by kneeling next to that person and saying, “Tabitha, get up.”**



Answer any questions the children might have about the game. After kids play one round, have children switch roles. Play as many rounds as time allows.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

What was it like to be Tabitha? to be Peter? to be the Germ?
How do you think Peter felt when Tabitha came back to life?
How has God answered your prayers before?

Say: **No one could help Tabitha except God. When Peter prayed, God heard his prayer, and he brought Tabitha back to life. ► GOD HEARS OUR PRAYERS, too. We can pray to God about anything at any time, and God will hear us.**

.....

4 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today's Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you're ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they'd like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center's description.

■ CENTER 1:

When Can We Pray?

What You'll Do ■■■■

Distribute the Lesson 8 My Bible Playground student pages, and have kids write their names on their pages.

Say: **The page I just gave you has different pictures of things that happen in our lives. Look at each picture and decide if it's a time a person can pray. For each picture, if you think a person can pray at that time, circle the picture.** Give children time to circle the pictures.

Go ahead and circle every picture on your paper because you can pray at any time, wherever you are, and you can pray about anything. ► GOD HEARS OUR PRAYERS.

Discuss each picture with the children. Ask kids what is happening in each picture and what a person in each situation might pray about.



Center 1: When Can We Pray? Supplies

.....

My Bible Playground
pencils

Center 1: When Can We Pray? Easy Prep

.....

Remove the Lesson
8 pages from each
My Bible Playground
student book.





Center 2: Tabitha Treats Supplies

1 person-shaped cookie
and 1 fruit leather
per child
paper plates or napkins

ALLERGY ALERT

Center 3: Prayer Poster Supplies

crayons or pencils
sticky notes

Teacher Pack

“Peter Raises Tabitha
From the Dead” poster
(from the Big Bible
Poster Pack)

CENTER 2:

Center 2: Tabitha Treats

What You'll Do

Have children wash their hands or clean them with wet wipes.

Give each child a person-shaped cookie and a piece of fruit leather. Let the children lay the cookies on their plates and cover them with fruit leather “blankets.” Have children retell the story of Tabitha and pretend the cookies are Tabitha in bed. When Peter prays for Tabitha, have them stand their cookies up to show that Tabitha came back to life.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**Who is someone who is sick or hurt that you can pray for?
How do you feel when someone prays for you?**

Say: **It's great to know that ► GOD HEARS OUR PRAYERS and is always listening when we want to talk to him.**

CENTER 3:

Prayer Poster

What You'll Do

Place the “Peter Raises Tabitha From the Dead” poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack) where children can easily reach it. Provide blank sticky notes and pencils or crayons as well.

Say: **It's good to remember the things that we pray for so we can thank God when he answers our prayers. Use the crayons or a pencil to write or draw a picture of your prayer on a sticky note. For example, if you pray to God for your grandma to feel better, you might draw a picture of your grandma sick in bed.** Give children time to write and draw. Then let each child place his or her prayer sticker on the poster of Peter and Tabitha. Encourage children to make a border around the poster with their prayer stickers.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**What kinds of things can you ask God for?
Do you think God hears our prayers? Why or why not?**

Say: **God is happy when we ask him for help. And ► GOD HEARS OUR PRAYERS. This poster can remind us to talk to God about our needs.**

**CENTER 4:****We Can Pray****What You'll Do** ■■■■■■

Cue the CD to "We Can Pray" (track 16 on the CD), and have the children form a circle.

Say: **We're going to sing a song about praying. At the end of the song, we'll take turns saying a prayer to God. When I point to you, say a prayer aloud about anything you want to pray for. You can thank God for something, ask God for help, or just tell God how much you love him.**

Start the CD, and have children sing "We Can Pray" to the tune of "When the Saints Go Marching In." You will have to re-cue the song several times to allow each child the chance to pray.



**Oh, we can pray
To God all day.
Our God is never far away.
In Taiwan, Peru, or Norway,
God will hear just what you say.**

**Oh, we can pray
To God all day.
Our God is never far away.
There's no need for us to delay.
Who will pray right now, today?**

(Repeat.)

5**LASTING
IMPRESSIONS****Daily Challenges****What You'll Do** ■■■■■■

After the children have cleaned up the centers, sit with kids in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they enjoyed learning from the Bible today.

Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge to encourage your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

**Center 4: We Can Pray
Supplies**

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "We Can Pray"
(track 16)

**Daily Challenges
Supplies**

My Bible Playground



“Super” Prayer Supplies

Teacher Pack
bouncy ball

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Say: Today we learned that ► **GOD HEARS OUR PRAYERS**. I’d like each of you to choose one of these Daily Challenges to trust God to listen to you.

Give kids these three Daily Challenge ideas to choose from:

1. **Pray and thank God for always hearing your prayers.**
2. **Tell a friend or parent a time you knew God heard your prayer.**
3. **Practice listening to others this week. If God always hears us, we should hear others, too!**

Say: If you want to pray, circle choice number 1. If you want to talk to a friend or parent, circle choice number 2. If you want to practice listening, circle choice number 3. Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Playground page. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!

“Super” Prayer

What You’ll Do ■■■■

Take out the bouncy ball (from the Teacher Pack) to use for this super prayer. Have children form a circle.

Say: ► **GOD HEARS OUR PRAYERS**. We’re going to have a special prayer time to help us remember that God hears our prayers the instant we pray them. I’m going to pray first. Right when I pray, I’m going to bounce this ball to someone else. God will hear my prayer even before the person gets the ball. When the ball comes to you, catch the ball, pray aloud a short prayer, and bounce the ball to someone who hasn’t had it yet.

Let’s all think about another person we can pray for. Maybe you know someone who is sick or doesn’t know Jesus. You can pray for that person during our prayer game. Play the game, and make sure everyone gets a chance to pray. Then finish by praying: **God you are super, and I thank you for hearing the prayers that we have bounced off of you today. In Jesus’ name, amen.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Playground book pages whether they worked on them or not. Have the children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the “Daily Challenges” activity. Encourage parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment throughout the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.



An Angel Frees Peter From Jail

Acts 12:1-18

It is very likely that the children in your class have some ideas about angels that are not completely biblical. For example, children may think that people become angels when they die or that people should ask angels for help when they're in trouble. When children express misunderstood ideas about angels, gently steer them back to what the Bible says about what angels are and what they do.




► **Bible Point**
God's angels help us.

Key Verse

"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will thank God for sending angels to help them.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started <i>about 10 min.</i>	Welcoming Song Sing a song welcoming all their classroom friends.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i>	Believe Play a game that helps them understand how Jesus saves us.	Bible, 1 inflatable water ring, permanent marker, masking tape	Inflate the water ring and write "Jesus" on it with a permanent marker. Use masking tape to make a line on the floor that divides the room in half.
3 Bible Exploration <i>about 20 min.</i>	Theo's News Find out what a lock and key has to do with the Bible story.	CD player, Surprise Box, Theo puppet Teacher Pack: CD, lock and key	Place the lock and key in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
	Bible Time Learn how God used an angel to free Peter from prison.	Bible, 1 percussion instrument per child, 3 glitter glue pens Teacher Pack: "An Angel Frees Peter" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack) 	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
4 Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i>	Center 1: A Special Appearance Watch an angel appear on their student pages.	My Bible Playground, lemon juice, bowl, cotton swabs, lamp, pencils	Remove the Lesson 9 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.
	Center 2: Angel Food Snacks Make angel shapes out of cake.	angel food cake, food coloring, bowls, paintbrushes, angel-shaped cookie cutter, plastic tablecloth	
	Center 3: Unlocking the Jail Open a lock, and remember the Bible story.	CD player, box, assorted keys Teacher Pack: CD, lock and key	Put the lock and key and the assorted keys in a small box.
	Center 4: Prison Story Puppets Create puppets to use in retelling the Bible story.	2 plastic spoons, two 3-inch felt squares, and 4 chenille wires per child; permanent markers	
5 Lasting Impressions <i>about 5 min.</i>	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Playground	
	"Thank You, God, for Angels" Prayer Sing a song about angels.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





Acts 12:1-18

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Herod wanted to make sure that Christian sympathizers would not be able to release Peter. Herod assigned four groups of four soldiers each to take turns guarding Peter—one soldier on each side of Peter and two at his cell door. These measures were extraordinary for such a prisoner.

Acts 12:5 describes something of a competition: Peter was securely in prison, guarded by 16 of Rome's finest, handcuffed to a guard on each side of him. But on the other hand, God's people were praying earnestly for Peter on the night that Herod intended to be Peter's last night on earth.

From the text, we know that Peter thought he was having a vision as he was released from prison. He had been awakened from sleep and suspected that he was only dreaming. Only after Peter's chains had fallen off, after he and the angel had walked through the gates to the street, and after the angel had led him down the first street, did Peter come to the realization that he was really free and that God had worked a series of miracles to free him.

The scene that unfolded when Peter arrived at Mark's mother's house is somewhat comical. Rhoda, the servant girl, came to see who was knocking at the door in the middle of the night. When she realized it was Peter, she was so excited that she ran back to tell the others without unlocking the door! And then the people who had been earnestly praying for Peter refused to believe that he could really be at the gate. Instead, they may have jumped to the conclusion that

Peter was already dead and that his guardian angel had come to tell them the news. And all the while, Peter was standing outside knocking. When they went to the door to see for themselves, they were astonished by the truth.

Find courage. You're in a relationship with Jesus, a great defender who knows all and cannot be conquered.

Flex your muscle—your prayer muscle. God moves and works miracles for those who pray in accordance with his will. What do you need to pray about right now? You can write your prayer here.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "We Welcome You
to Church Today"
(track 15)

Believe Supplies

Bible

1 inflatable water ring
permanent marker
masking tape

Believe Easy Prep

Inflate the water ring
and write "Jesus" on
it with a permanent
marker. Use masking
tape to make a line on
the floor that divides the
room in half.

1 GETTING STARTED

Welcoming Song



Tip Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

What You'll Do

As the children arrive, greet each child and welcome him or her with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle.

Play "We Welcome You to Church Today" (track 15 on the CD) to the tune of "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." Tell the children to stand up and greet each other as they sing and march around the room. Encourage the children to shake hands with one another when they sing the words "We welcome you to church today."



We welcome you to church today, hurrah, hurrah!
We welcome you to church today, hurrah, hurrah!
We welcome you to church today.
We're here to worship and to pray
As we sing together,
Learning about God's love.
(Repeat 2x.)

2

KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

Believe

What You'll Do

Have all the children stand on one side of the masking tape line.

Say: **When we do something wrong, we're usually punished. And because we all do wrong things, we all need to be saved from being punished by God. The only one who can save us is Jesus.** Open your Bible to Acts 16:31, and show children the words. **Our Key Verse from the Bible is Acts 16:31, which says, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved." This means that when we believe in Jesus, he saves us from that punishment.** Lead the children in saying the Key Verse together.



When someone is swimming and is having trouble, the lifeguard might help the swimmer by tossing him or her a lifesaving ring like this. Show children the inflatable ring. This ring helps the swimmer stay afloat and saves the swimmer. Let's use this ring and play a game to help us remember that when we believe in Jesus, he saves us.

Let the children pretend that one side of the classroom is a lake or the ocean and the other side is the shore. Have them all "swim" around in the "water." After a moment call out, "The water's getting rough!" When you say this, children should call out, "I believe in Jesus!" Respond by saying, "Then you are saved!" and tossing the ring to one of the children. That child may swim to shore and toss the ring back to another child. Play until each child has safely reached shore.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**Have you ever needed someone to save you from a dangerous situation?
If so, what happened?
How does Jesus save us?**

Say: **When we believe in Jesus, we are saved.** Lead children in repeating the Key Verse one more time.

3 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Theo's News

What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: **Friends, it's time for Theo's News!** Have the children sit in a circle. Then begin "Here, Theo" (track 3 on the CD). When the CD segment ends, bring out the Surprise Box, and put the Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet on your hand. Then follow along with the script.

Theo: Hi, everybody!

Teacher: Hello, Theo! Tell us what interesting news you've dug up about our Bible story.

Theo: I found something I think you'll like! I hid it in the Surprise Box.

Teacher: Let's look inside to see what Theo dug up for us today.

(Choose a child to open the Surprise Box, and have kids pass the lock around the circle. Give the children time to guess what the Bible story might be about.)

Teacher: How do you get a lock to open?

(Pause to allow children to answer. Then have the kids attempt to open the lock.)

Teacher: Theo, why did you hide a lock and key in our Surprise Box?

Theo: Our Bible story today is about a very special messenger who came to help unlock a jail for one of God's people.



Theo's News Supplies

CD player
Surprise Box (any box
will do)
Theo puppet
Teacher Pack
CD: "Here, Theo"
(track 3)
lock and key

Theo's News Easy Prep

Place the lock and key
in the Surprise Box, and
hide the box where it's
easily accessible.





Bible Time Supplies

Bible
1 percussion instrument
per child
3 glitter glue pens
Teacher Pack
“An Angel Frees Peter”
poster (from the Big
Bible Poster Pack)

Teacher: Let’s hear our story and find out who unlocked the jail.

Theo: Have a good time today, boys and girls!

Teacher: Let’s say goodbye to Theo.

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week’s use.

Bible Time

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Pass out cymbals, triangles, maracas, and other percussion instruments to the children. When the angel is mentioned in the story, have the children use the percussion instruments to make sounds of praise. Ask an adult or teenage volunteer to wait outside the door of your classroom so the children can’t see him or her. Tell the volunteer to enter the room when the children play the instruments while you’re telling the story. Have your volunteer act out the angel’s part of the story, including touching Peter to wake him, repeating the words spoken by the angel, and disappearing at the end.

Open your Bible to Acts 12:1-18, and show the children the words.

Say: **Today’s Bible story tells us that ► GOD’S ANGELS HELP US. Back when the disciples were telling people the wonderful news about Jesus, King Herod had many Christians arrested and thrown into jail. But Peter wasn’t afraid, and he kept telling people about Jesus. Soon Peter was arrested, locked up in a jail cell, and guarded by soldiers.**

Pick one child to be Peter, and tell the other children that they will pretend to be the Guards. Have the Guards lock arms and stand in a circle with Peter in the center. Have Peter try to get out of the circle without running, jumping, or crawling.

Ask:

How do you think you might escape from a locked room with guards watching you?

How do you think Peter felt when he was locked in jail?

Have the children sit in the circle. Have Peter remain in the center of the circle with the other children as the Guards.

Say: **God’s people prayed for Peter. They believed that God was powerful enough to free Peter from jail.**

The night before he was supposed to go to trial for believing in Jesus, Peter was chained up, sleeping between two soldiers. Have Peter pretend to be asleep.

Suddenly an angel appeared. Have kids play their instruments. The volunteer should enter the room and stand near the door. **And a bright light shone in the cell.**



The angel (have kids play their instruments) **touched Peter on the side, woke him up, and said to him, “Peter, get up, put on your clothes and sandals, and follow me.”** Have the person playing the angel repeat the words and act this out with Peter.

The chains fell away, and Peter followed the angel (have children play their instruments) **right out of the prison!** Have the volunteer bring Peter out from the center of the Guards. **When Peter and the angel got to the end of the street, the angel** (have children play their instruments) **left.** Have the person playing the angel disappear.

Show children the poster, and let them tell you what they see happening in the picture.

Say: **Let’s add some glitter to this angel to make him really shine!** Let children take turns adding a squiggle of the glitter glue to the angel; then set the poster aside to dry. When the glue is dry, hang the poster where children can easily see it.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

How did you feel when the surprise angel came into our room?
How do you think Peter felt when the angel set him free?

Say: **When God’s people pray, he hears them. And ► GOD’S ANGELS HELP US.**

4 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today’s Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you’re ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they’d like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center’s description.

■ CENTER 1:

A Special Appearance

What You’ll Do ■■■■

Distribute the Lesson 9 My Bible Playground student pages and have kids write their names on their pages. Pour lemon juice into a bowl, and give each child a cotton swab. Show children how to dip the cotton swabs into the lemon juice and use the swabs to draw angels on their student pages. When the pictures have dried, show kids what happens when they hold their pictures about a half-inch away from a warm (100 watt) bulb. Move the paper over a bare bulb for about one minute, and then the picture will start to appear.



Center 1: A Special Appearance Supplies

My Bible Playground
lemon juice
bowl
cotton swabs
lamp
pencils

Center 1: A Special Appearance Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson
9 pages from each
My Bible Playground
student book.



Center 2: Angel Food Snacks

angel food cake
food coloring
bowls
paintbrushes
angel-shaped
cookie cutter
plastic tablecloth

! ALLERGY ALERT

Center 3: Unlocking the Jail Supplies

CD player
box
assorted keys

Teacher Pack:

CD: "Got a Reason for Livin' Again" (track 4)
lock and key

Center 3: Unlocking the Jail Easy Prep

Put the lock and key and the assorted keys in a small box.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

How did you feel when the angel appeared on your paper?
How is this like God surprising us with angels to help us?

Say: **God's angels are a little like the pictures you made—you can't always see angels, but they're still there. And ► GOD'S ANGELS HELP US by bringing God's protection and hope.**

CENTER 2:

Angel Food Snacks

What You'll Do

Have children wash their hands. Cover a table with a plastic tablecloth, and place small amounts of food coloring in bowls on the table.

Give each child a piece of angel food cake. Let kids take turns using an angel-shaped cookie cutter to cut out angel shapes from the pieces of cake. Then have kids each use a clean paintbrush and food coloring to paint a face on the angel.

Ask:

Why do you think God sends angels?

Say: **When we're scared, we can remember that God is with us. When we need help, ► GOD'S ANGELS HELP US.** When kids have finished making their snacks, ask a volunteer to pray for the snack.

CENTER 3:

Unlocking the Jail

What You'll Do

Cue the CD to "Got a Reason for Livin' Again" (track 4 on the CD). Show a child how to start and pause the CD player, and have the child periodically pause the music during this activity.

Have everyone sit in a circle, and tell kids to pass the box around while the music is playing. When the music stops, have the child holding the box choose one key and try to open the lock with it. If the child opens the lock with that key, start the game over. If not, continue play until someone is able to open the lock with the correct key. Encourage children to sing along with the CD as they play.



Got a reason for livin' again, oh, oh, oh.
Got a reason for laughin' again, oh, oh, oh.
Got a reason for lovin' again.
I got the love of God in my heart!

No reason to cry anymore, oh, oh, oh.
No reason to sigh anymore, oh, oh, oh.
No reason to die anymore.
I got the love of God in my heart!

Monday, I was all alone.
Tuesday, I had my sins to atone.
Wednesday, I cried and I cried.
Thursday, Lord, I thought I would die.
Friday, I started to pray.
Saturday, I read my Bible today.
Sunday, Lord, the heavens did part.
I got the love of God in my heart!

(Repeat from the beginning.)

Got a reason for livin' again, oh, oh, oh.
Got a reason for laughin' again, oh, oh, oh.
Got a reason for lovin' again.
I got the love of God in my heart!

No reason to cry anymore, oh, oh, oh.
No reason to sigh anymore, oh, oh, oh.
No reason to die anymore.
I got the love of God in my heart!
I got the love of God in my heart!
I got the love of God in my heart!

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

Why was it so amazing that the angel helped Peter escape?
How does it feel to know that God's angels help us?

Say: We had a tough time opening the lock. Peter had guards all around him, and the key to his chains wasn't anywhere nearby. But God sent an angel to help Peter, and ► GOD'S ANGELS HELP US, too.





Center 4: Prison Story Puppets Supplies

2 plastic spoons, two
3-inch felt squares,
and 4 chenille wires
per child
permanent markers

CENTER 4:

Prison Story Puppets

What You'll Do



Give each child two plastic spoons. Show children how to wrap a square of felt around the handle of a spoon and wrap a chenille wire around this to hold the “clothing” on the puppet. Children may use additional wires to make arms or other features. Let them use the markers to draw faces on their puppets. Encourage each child to make a Peter puppet and an angel puppet; then let them retell the story with their puppets.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

Why do you think God used an angel to help Peter?
How do you think God's angels might help you?

Say: **Use your puppets to tell someone at home the story we learned today. Be sure to share that ► GOD'S ANGELS HELP US.**

5 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up the centers, sit with kids in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they enjoyed learning from the Bible today.

Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground



Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge to encourage your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Say: Today we learned that ► **GOD'S ANGELS HELP US.** I'd like each of you to choose one of these Daily Challenges to remember that God's angels help us.

Give kids these three Daily Challenge ideas to choose from:

1. **Ask your mom or dad to take you on a walk to a place you've never been before. Pray together before you go, asking God's angels to protect you on your walk.**
2. **Help your mom or dad set the table for dinner, and then thank God for giving you angels to help you!**
3. **Say a prayer for each of your family members, and then remind them that God's angels are there to help them!**

Say: **If you want to take a walk, circle choice number 1. If you want to help set the table, circle choice number 2. If you want to say a prayer, circle choice number 3.** Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Playground page. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!

"Thank You, God, for Angels" Prayer

What You'll Do ■■■■

Have the kids stand and form a circle, and then lead them in singing "Angels" (track 17 on the CD) to the tune of "Jesus in the Morning."

🎵 **Angels, angels,
Angels up above us.
Angels all around us.
Angels, angels,
God's angels help us all day long.
(Repeat 2x.)**

When the track ends, have kids sit down to close in prayer.

Say: **God, thank you for sending your angels to help us and to keep us safe. In Jesus' name, amen.**



"Thank You, God, for Angels" Prayer Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "Angels" (track 17)



Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Playground pages whether they worked on them or not. Have children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the “Daily Challenges” activity. Encourage parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment during the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.





Lydia Is Converted

Acts 16:9-15

Five- and six-year-olds naturally talk to others about things that are important to them. Encourage kids to talk about what they think is important to know about Jesus. Talk with your children about sharing their love for Jesus and telling their friends that they can know Jesus, too. Remind your children to tell others the exciting news about Jesus that they've learned from the Bible.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started <i>about 10 min.</i>	Welcoming Song Sing a song welcoming all their classroom friends.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i>	One Day Sing a song, and share Bible pictures with others.	Bibles, picture Bibles, CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
3 Bible Exploration <i>about 20 min.</i>	Theo's News Find out what purple fabric has to do with the Bible story.	CD player, Surprise Box, Theo puppet, purple fabric Teacher Pack: CD	Place the purple fabric in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
	Bible Time Discover what happened when Paul told Lydia about Jesus.	Bible, My Bible Playground, cups of water, paintbrushes, washable markers, purple fabric, pencils, newspaper	Remove the Lesson 10 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



►Bible Point

Everyone needs Jesus.

Key Verse

"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will tell others about Jesus.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
4 Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> <i>(Choose 2 centers.)</i>	Center 1: Everyone Needs Jesus Build a make-believe marketplace, and pretend to be Lydia and Paul.	magazine pictures of people; wooden blocks; masking tape; small toys such as miniature animals and food; small pieces of fabric	Cut out pictures from magazines to represent kids and adults from all over the world who need Jesus. Be sure to have a good ethnic and generational mix, and try to include people with special needs.
	Center 2: Purple Pops Snacks Create marshmallow pops and dye them purple.	grape juice, large marshmallows, large pretzel sticks, paper plates, cups	
	Center 3: A Church for Jesus Draw a picture of a church and then decorate it.	white construction paper, pencils, white liquid glue, Pixy Stix, newsprint	
	Center 4: Lydia's Generous Gift Bags Make gift bags to later fill with presents for others.	1 paper lunch sack and 1 sheet of colorful tissue paper per child, ribbon, scissors, markers, stickers, hole punches	
5 Lasting Impressions <i>about 5 min.</i>	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Playground	
	"Good News" Prayer Tell a friend something they know about Jesus.	magazine pictures of people from the "Everyone Needs Jesus" activity	
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



Acts 16:9-15

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Although Paul had other plans, he didn't hesitate to change them when he had clear direction from God in a vision. The text says that they "got ready at once to leave for Macedonia." And looking back on the effect Paul's missionary journeys had on that part of the world, we see that God's strategy in leading Paul where he did only improved Paul's original plan.

Whenever Paul came to a new city, he made it a practice to go to the local Jewish synagogue on the Sabbath to see if an opportunity would arise to share the message of Jesus with the Jews meeting there. However, there must not have been a synagogue in Philippi. It took 10 Jewish males to constitute a synagogue, but Jewish men must have been lacking. Instead, a group of Jewish or God-fearing women met at an informal meeting place outside the city. Paul and his team found this meeting and told the women there about Jesus. Paul didn't hesitate to give them his time and attention. He wanted to reach everyone he could with God's message of grace.

Lydia, the leader of this little group, was a dealer in purple cloth. Purple dye was extremely costly, and anyone able to deal in it had to be wealthy. For a woman to be successful and wealthy on her own was unusual in that culture, and it says a lot about Lydia. This woman was the first person in Europe who Paul led to faith in Christ.

Why were all the members of Lydia's household baptized? Though Luke concentrates on the story of Lydia, that doesn't mean that others in her family weren't present and didn't believe on their own. Her children and any servants in her household likely followed her example and believed in Jesus.

Paul didn't waste time wondering about what God wanted. He knew. As you spend time with Jesus through Bible study and prayer, sense his will for you and make it your own.

Lydia was a standout in her society, impressive by any standard. Do you feel intimidated by others and too timid to share the love of Christ with them? Even the least “needy” need Jesus. Choose one person to share God’s love with in the coming week. Pray for that person. You can write your prayer here.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "We Welcome You
to Church Today"
(track 15)

1

GETTING STARTED

Welcoming Song



Tip Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

What You'll Do

As the children arrive, greet each child and welcome him or her with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle.

Play "We Welcome You to Church Today" (track 15 on the CD) to the tune of "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." Tell the children to stand up and greet each other as they sing and march around the room. Encourage the children to shake hands with one another when they sing the words "We welcome you to church today."



We welcome you to church today, hurrah, hurrah!

We welcome you to church today, hurrah, hurrah!

We welcome you to church today.

We're here to worship and to pray

As we sing together,

Learning about God's love.

(Repeat 2x.)

2

KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

One Day

What You'll Do

Have the children form a circle and sit down. Open your Bible to Acts 16:31, and show children the words.

Say: **Our Key Verse from the Bible is Acts 16:31 which says, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved." This means that when we believe in Jesus, he saves us and we can one day go to heaven.** Lead the children in saying the Key Verse together several times.

One Day Supplies

Bibles

picture Bibles

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "The Good News"
(track 18)



The news that we can be saved by believing in Jesus is good news! Jesus wants us to tell others this good news. Let's do an activity that will help us think about all the good news that we can share with others.



Bring out as many children's picture Bibles as you have. Help children form the same number of groups as there are Bibles. (There should be a minimum of three children in each group.) Then give each group a picture Bible. Instruct the children in each group to stand up and form a straight line. Have the first child in line choose his or her favorite picture; then begin the CD and have kids sing "The Good News" (track 18 on the CD) to the tune of "The B-I-B-L-E" as the first child walks down the line showing the picture to the other kids in line. When the child has reached the end of the line, have kids pass the Bible back down the line. The child who is now the first in line can choose a picture and repeat the process. Re-cue the CD as necessary, and have kids continue singing until all the children in line have had a chance to show their pictures.



Tell about the good news.

Tell about God's Word.

Tell about the good news

So Jesus can be heard.

Jesus came to save us.

Jesus came to die.

Jesus came to save us all;

On him you can rely.

Tell about the good news.

Tell about God's Word.

Tell about the good news

So Jesus can be heard.

(Repeat 3x.)

Ask:

How did you feel showing your friends the picture about the good news of Jesus?

Why do you think God wants people to know the good news that we can believe in Jesus?

How can you show others that you believe in Jesus?

Lead children in saying the Key Verse one more time.





Theo's News Supplies

CD player
Surprise Box (any box
will do)
Theo puppet
purple fabric
Teacher Pack
CD: "Here, Theo"
(track 3)

Theo's News Easy Prep

Place the purple fabric
in the Surprise Box, and
hide the box where it's
easily accessible.

Bible Time Supplies

Bible
My Bible Playground
cups of water
paintbrushes
washable markers
purple fabric
pencils
newspaper

Bible Time Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson
10 pages from each
My Bible Playground
student book.

3

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Theo's News

What You'll Do

Say: **Friends, it's time for Theo's News!** Have the children sit in a circle. Then begin "Here, Theo" (track 3 on the CD). When the CD segment ends, bring out the Surprise Box, and put the Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet on your hand. Then follow along with the script.

Theo: Hi, everybody!

Teacher: Hello, Theo! Tell us what interesting news you've dug up about our Bible story.

Theo: It's something very interesting. I hid it in the Surprise Box.

Teacher: Let's look inside to see what Theo dug up for us today.

(Choose a child to open the Surprise Box, and have kids pass the purple cloth around the circle. Give the children time to guess what the Bible story might be about.)

Teacher: What are some things we might be able to do or make from this purple cloth?
(Pause and allow children to share ideas.)

Teacher: Theo, why did you hide purple cloth in the Surprise Box?

Theo: Our Bible story today tells us about a lady who sold beautiful purple cloth like this. Isn't it pretty, boys and girls?

Teacher: Let's find out who the lady was and who she told about Jesus.

Theo: Have a good time today, boys and girls! I'll see you later!

Teacher: Let's say goodbye to Theo.

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week's use.

Bible Time

What You'll Do

Say: **Today's Bible story tells us that ► EVERYONE NEEDS JESUS.** Open your Bible to Acts 16:9-15, and show the children the words.

In our Bible story today, Paul had a vision (like a dream) about a man from a place called Macedonia. In Paul's vision, a man begged him, "Please come to Macedonia and help us!" Paul knew Macedonia was a big place with lots of towns where the people hadn't heard about Jesus. Paul was so excited! He knew God had given him that dream, so he told his friends to pack right away because they were leaving at once. Have kids stand up and pretend to pack items in a suitcase or backpack.



So Paul and his friends left for Macedonia. They wanted to see how God would use them to tell the Macedonians that God loved the people and that ► EVERYONE NEEDS JESUS. Have kids line up and walk in a circle, dragging their make-believe suitcases behind them.

Paul and his friends got into a boat and sailed across the sea. Have kids pretend to row a boat. **When they got to the region of Macedonia, they got out of their boat and walked to one of the biggest cities, called Philippi.**

There Paul and his friends met a lady named Lydia. She was smart, creative, and made lots of money selling purple cloth to people so they could make fancy clothes. Hold up the purple fabric. **Let's decorate purple fabrics like the ones Lydia might have designed to sell.**

Give kids their My Bible Playground student pages, and let them use pencils to write their names at the top. Cover a table with newspaper, and set out the other supplies. Instruct kids to use the markers to decorate the piece of fabric on their student pages to look like the fabric Lydia might have sold at the marketplace. When kids have finished using the markers, allow the children to lightly brush water over the pages, blending the colors to create shades of purple. Set the student pages aside to dry, and have kids return to the circle to continue the Bible story.

Say: **Unlike many of the people in Macedonia, Lydia worshipped God; but she didn't know that Jesus was God's Son who had come to bring forgiveness for everyone. Paul knew that ► EVERYONE NEEDS JESUS,** so he told Lydia all that Jesus had done and how much Jesus loved her.

Lydia was the first woman in Europe to learn about Jesus. Because Paul listened to God and went to Macedonia, Lydia and her household learned about Jesus and were baptized. Many more people in that area of the world heard about the good news of Jesus because Paul wasn't afraid to tell anyone—even a rich and successful woman like Lydia—that ► EVERYONE NEEDS JESUS. Let's pretend to be Lydia and tell our friends that we all need Jesus, as Lydia may have done.

Bring over the children's student pages, and have kids stand in a circle. Let kids take turns pretending to be Lydia at the marketplace. Have children each walk around the inside of the circle showing their friends the purple fabric they have created to sell. As the children show what they created, have them tell their friends that ► **EVERYONE NEEDS JESUS.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**What do you think is exciting about Jesus?
Who will you talk to this week about Jesus?**

Say: **Lydia was so thankful to Paul and his friends for coming and telling her about Jesus that she invited them to her house to stay with her whenever they were in town. We can all get excited and tell our friends that ► EVERYONE NEEDS JESUS.**





Center 1: Everyone Needs Jesus Supplies

magazine pictures
of people
wooden blocks
masking tape
small toys such as
miniature animals
and food
small pieces of fabric

Center 1: Everyone Needs Jesus Easy Prep

Cut out pictures from
magazines to represent
kids and adults from
all over the world who
need Jesus. Be sure to
have a good ethnic and
generational mix, and
try to include people
with special needs.

4 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today's Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you're ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they'd like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center's description.

CENTER 1:

Everyone Needs Jesus

What You'll Do

Place small pieces of masking tape (about 1½ inches long) on the edge of a table, and show kids how to roll the pieces of tape, sticky side out, to attach the magazine pictures to wooden blocks so the figures stand up.

Have kids use extra blocks or other items in the classroom to build a marketplace where the block people can buy and sell things such as pieces of fabric, miniature toy animals, or food items. As the children re-create a marketplace like the one in which Lydia may have sold her goods, encourage kids to pretend to be Lydia or another merchant. Other children might pretend to be Paul and tell their friends what they know about Jesus and that ► **EVERYONE NEEDS JESUS.**

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**Where are some places that you could tell people about Jesus?
What would you tell someone about Jesus?**

Say: **Jesus wants us to tell people that they need him. Jesus has done so much for us, and he wants to do the same for others. We should tell everyone, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."**

**CENTER 2:**

Purple Pops Snacks

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have the children wash their hands (or use wet wipes) before they begin making the snacks. Give each child a plate with two large marshmallows and a large pretzel stick, plus a small cup of purple grape juice. Ask one of the children to thank God for providing today's snacks.

Show kids how to create Purple Pops by placing a large marshmallow on the end of a pretzel stick. Let kids discover what happens when they dip their marshmallows into the grape juice. Remind kids that Lydia is remembered in the Bible for being the first woman in Macedonia (a part of Europe today) to hear the good news about Jesus.

CENTER 3:

A Church for Jesus

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Cover a table with newsprint. Set out white construction paper, pencils, white liquid glue, and Pixy Stix.

Say: **God sent Paul to Macedonia to tell everyone the good news about Jesus. Because Paul obeyed God, Lydia and the people in Macedonia learned about Jesus. Now Christians meet in buildings called churches all over the world to share how the good news of Jesus has changed their lives.**

First, use the pencils to draw a church building. Then you can rub the glue onto different areas of the church and sprinkle powder over the glue, as you would sprinkle glitter, to decorate your church. Allow time while kids work.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**Why do you think we build churches today?
Who could you invite to come to our church?**

Say: **A church building is a place where people can come together to celebrate the good news of Jesus. We can make a church building from wood or bricks—but we can tell people the good news about Jesus wherever we are, just like Paul and his friends did.**

**Center 2: Purple Pops Snacks Supplies**

grape juice
large marshmallows
large pretzel sticks
paper plates
cups

ALLERGY ALERT**Center 3: A Church for Jesus Supplies**

white construction paper
pencils
white liquid glue
Pixy Stix
newsprint



Center 4: Lydia's Generous Gift Bags Supplies

.....

1 paper lunch sack and
1 sheet of colorful
tissue paper per child

ribbon
scissors
markers
stickers
hole punches

Daily Challenges Supplies

.....

My Bible Playground

CENTER 4:

Lydia's Generous Gift Bags

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Provide a paper lunch bag for each child to use to create a gift bag. Place scissors, hole punches, a variety of ribbon, stickers, and markers where children can reach them. Have one sheet of colorful tissue paper per child nearby.

Say: **Lydia was thankful that Paul and his friends told her about Jesus. She invited them to her home and fed them and gave them a place to sleep. She was generous with them and gave them the gift of hospitality. Let us be generous like Lydia, too. We'll each make a gift bag. When you get home, you can put a small gift inside this bag and give it to a friend or family member.**

Have children use a hole punch to make a series of holes along the top edges of their bags. Kids can lace ribbon through the punched holes and leave excess ribbon as a handle for carrying their gift bags. Let children personalize the bags with stickers and artwork. Show children how to insert one piece of colored tissue paper in the bags so they're ready to use. All that's missing is the gift for the occasion! Ask children to share ideas for inexpensive gifts that could go in the bags.

Say: **Paul knew that ► EVERYONE NEEDS JESUS. He shared about Jesus with Lydia, and she shared what she had with him in return. As you give these gift bags and gifts to others, remember to share about God's love as well!**

.....

5

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

After the children have cleaned up the centers, sit with kids in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they enjoyed learning from the Bible today.

Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge to encourage your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

Talk With Kids ■■■■■■

Say: **Today we learned that ► EVERYONE NEEDS JESUS. I'd like each of you to choose one of these Daily Challenges to tell others about Jesus.**



Give kids these three challenges to choose from:

1. **Bring a friend at school a candy bar, and tell him or her about Jesus' love. Everyone needs Jesus!**
2. **Tell each of your family members about Jesus and his love for them.**
3. **Bring your neighbor some cookies with a note attached, telling him or her that everyone needs Jesus.**

Say: **If you want to bring something to a friend, circle choice number 1. If you want to tell your family about Jesus, circle choice number 2. If you want to bring cookies to a neighbor, circle choice number 3.** Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Playground page. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!

“Good News” Prayer

What You'll Do

Remove the magazine pictures of people (used in the “Everyone Needs Jesus” activity) from the blocks. Have kids sit in a circle, and place the pictures in the center of the circle.

Say: **Close your eyes and think of one good thing you know about Jesus; then open your eyes. We're going to take turns around the circle choosing a magazine picture and handing the picture to a classroom friend in our circle. When you hand the picture to your friend, tell him or her the good thing you know about Jesus, and then sit back down.** Let the child on your left go first, and then have each child choose another child to tell about Jesus. When everyone who wants to has participated, lead kids in saying the following prayer.

**Dear God,
Thank you for helping me tell everyone the good news about Jesus.
In Jesus' name, amen.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Playground pages whether they worked on them or not. Have children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the “Daily Challenges” activity. Encourage parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment during the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.



“Good News” Prayer Supplies

.....
magazine pictures
of people from the
“Everyone Needs
Jesus” activity





Paul's Jailer Believes in Jesus

Acts 16:16-34

Five- and six-year-olds can understand that Jesus loves them, died for them, and forgives them when they've done wrong. "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" is the message of today's Bible story. Keep salvation this simple for your children, and don't try to explain it from an adult's perspective. There's something about having a child's faith that makes it easier for kids to understand and accept the gospel than it is for most adults.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started <i>about 10 min.</i>	Welcoming Song Sing a song welcoming all their classroom friends.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i>	Jesus Saves! Learn what it means to be saved from sin.	Bible, yarn, scissors	
3 Bible Exploration <i>about 20 min.</i>	Theo's News Find out what Life Savers candies have to do with the Bible story.	CD player, Surprise Box, Theo puppet, Gummy Life Savers candies Teacher Pack: CD	Place the Gummy Life Savers candies in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
	Bible Time Act out the Bible story using craft stick puppets.	Bible, CD player, My Bible Playground, 3 craft sticks and 5 drinking straws per child, clay, markers, scissors Teacher Pack: CD	Remove the Lesson 11 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



►Bible Point

Jesus saves us.

Key Verse

"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will thank Jesus for saving them.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
4 Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> <i>(Choose 2 centers.)</i>	Center 1: Lock Them Up Play a singing game to remember that Jesus saves us.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
	Center 2: Jail Snacks Retell the Bible story as they make their snacks.	graham crackers, miniature marshmallows, licorice strips, paper plates	
	Center 3: I'll Save You Use blocks to build a jail, and act out the Bible story.	cardboard blocks, dress-up clothes, streamers, toy dishes	
	Center 4: Friendly First-Aid Kit Create miniature first-aid kits to give away.	1 resealable plastic bag, 1 fun adhesive bandage, 1 wrapped non-alcohol wet wipe, and 1 wrapped candy per child; stickers	
5 Lasting Impressions <i>about 5 min.</i>	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Playground	
	"Life Savers" Prayer Thank Jesus for saving us.	Gummy Life Savers candies from the "Theo's News" activity	
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





Acts 16:16-34

When Paul cast the demon out of the girl, she lost her ability to tell fortunes. Therefore, her owners saw Paul's actions as an attack on their property. They saw Paul and his companions as Jews propagating outlandish beliefs. On the basis of the owners' accusations, Paul and Silas were flogged and put in jail.

This time when God freed his servants from jail, he essentially freed everyone in the jail. Why didn't everyone flee? Perhaps they stayed because of the impression Paul and Silas had on them when they were singing hymns at midnight in spite of their chains!

The Romans dealt severely with jailers who were unable to deliver their prisoners at the appointed time. Assuming that all the prisoners had escaped as a result of the earthquake opening the gates, the jailer thought he would die at the hands of his superiors. Taking his own life seemed a better choice at that point. Only a shout from Paul stopped him. When the jailer realized that all the prisoners were still there, he was ready to accept Paul's message. And Paul's message was clear: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."

It was not against any rule for the jailer to take Paul and Silas to his own home. The jailer was commissioned only to produce the prisoners when they were called for. After what had happened that night, he probably didn't fear that they would try to escape. Instead, he took care of their wounds from the flogging, gave them some good food, and rejoiced in the salvation he had received. Paul and Silas undoubtedly realized that the flogging and imprisonment they had endured were worth the joy that salvation had brought to the Philippian jailer!

The Jesus Connection

Paul and Silas were the real deal. Their actions matched their message. Your genuine relationship with Jesus is capturing the attention of others around you.

Have you believed in Jesus? How committed are you to living out his gift of salvation? Pray about what it means to you that Jesus saved you. You can write your prayer here.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "We Welcome You
to Church Today"
(track 15)

Jesus Saves! Supplies

Bible
yarn
scissors

1 GETTING STARTED

Welcoming Song



Tip Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

As the children arrive, greet each child and welcome him or her with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle.

Play "We Welcome You to Church Today" (track 15 on the CD) to the tune of "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." Tell the children to stand up and greet each other as they sing and march around the room. Encourage the children to shake hands with one another when they sing the words "We welcome you to church today."



We welcome you to church today, hurrah, hurrah!
We welcome you to church today, hurrah, hurrah!
We welcome you to church today.
We're here to worship and to pray
As we sing together,
Learning about God's love.
(Repeat 2x.)

2

KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

Jesus Saves!

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have the children sit in a circle, and set a ball of yarn and scissors nearby. Open your Bible to Acts 16:31, and show children the words.

Say: **Our Key Verse from the Bible says, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved." Let's say it together.** Lead the children in repeating the Key Verse with you. **Let's talk about the word "save."**



Ask:

What does it mean to save someone or something?

Say: **To save something is to keep it from getting hurt, like a firefighter saves someone from a burning house. “Save” also means to keep from being lost. It’s like when your parents tell you to stay close to them so you don’t wander away and get lost in the shopping mall. Jesus wants to keep us from getting hurt, wandering away, and getting lost because of our sinful actions. Our Key Verse says, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.” When we sin and disobey, our sins keep us away from Jesus. Let’s find out how this yarn can show us how sin gets us all tangled up and keeps us away from Jesus.**

Have kids stand up. Hold the end of a ball of yarn, and then toss the ball to the children, encouraging them to tangle themselves up in the yarn. Have kids toss the yarn to their other classroom friends until everyone is “entangled in sin.”

Say: **Jesus is like these scissors. He can save us from all the things that keep us from him.**

As you release the children by cutting the yarn into many pieces, have kids repeat the Key Verse.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

How did you feel when you were all tangled up in the yarn?

What set you free from the tangled yarn?

How were the scissors like what Jesus wants to do for you?

Say: **Jesus wants to save us from all the things that keep us from him. When we believe in Jesus to forgive our sins, ► JESUS SAVES US and sets us free from the sins that tangle us up and keep us from him.**

3 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Theo’s News

What You’ll Do ■■■■

Say: **Friends, it’s time for Theo’s News!** Have the children sit in a circle. Then begin “Here, Theo” (track 3 on the CD). When the CD segment ends, bring out the Surprise Box, and put the Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet on your hand. Then follow along with the script.



Theo’s News Supplies

CD player
Surprise Box (any box will do)
Theo puppet
Gummy Life Savers candies
Teacher Pack
CD: “Here, Theo” (track 3)

Theo’s News Easy Prep

Place the Gummy Life Savers candies in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it’s easily accessible.



Theo: Hi, everybody!

Teacher: Hello, Theo! Tell us what interesting news you've dug up about our Bible story.

Theo: I found something very interesting! I hid it in the Surprise Box.

Teacher: Let's look inside to see what Theo dug up for us today.

(Choose a child to open the Surprise Box, and have kids pass the candies around the circle. Give the children time to guess what the Bible story might be about.)

Teacher: Does anyone know what the word "lifesaver" means? And how is that like what our Key Verse says that Jesus can do?

(Pause and let children share their ideas.)

Teacher: Theo, why are there Life Savers candies in our Surprise Box?

Theo: If a person can't swim and needs help getting out of the water, a lifeguard will jump into the water or throw a life preserver into the water to save the person! And Life Savers candies are shaped like life preservers—they're a good reminder that Jesus can save us from drowning in our sins. Our story today is about how Jesus was a "lifesaver" for a man and his whole family.

Teacher: Let's find out how Jesus saved the people in our story.

Theo: Have a great time today, boys and girls!

Teacher: Let's all say goodbye to Theo.

Encourage the children to wave and say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week's use.

Bible Time

Bible Time Supplies

Bible
CD player
My Bible Playground
3 craft sticks and
5 drinking straws
per child
clay
markers
scissors
Teacher Pack
CD: "Got a Reason for
Livin' Again" (track 4)

Bible Time Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson
11 pages from each
My Bible Playground
student book.

What You'll Do

Open your Bible to Acts 16:16-34, and show the children the words.

Say: **Today's Bible story tells us that ► JESUS SAVES US.**

Direct each of the children to take three craft sticks and to use the markers to make faces on the craft sticks to represent Paul, Silas, and the jailer. Give kids grape-size pieces of clay to help them stand up their craft stick puppets.

Say: **Paul and his friend, Silas, traveled to many places telling people about Jesus' love and how ► JESUS SAVES US.** Encourage kids to walk their Paul and Silas puppets in front of them, pretending to heal people and tell others about Jesus.

One day, while Paul and Silas were telling others about Jesus, they were taken and put in jail, with their feet chained to the walls so they couldn't escape. But Paul and Silas knew that Jesus was with them even in the jail.

Give kids the My Bible Playground student pages, and let them use markers to write their names at the top. Show kids how to fold their papers to create the jail cell background to use in acting out the Bible story. Then show them how to make five 1-inch cuts at the top and bottom edges of the pages and put the straws in the slots to create jail bars. Have the children place the Paul and Silas puppets inside the jail cell. Have kids stand the jailer up at the edge of the student page, as if guarding the jail.



Say: **Instead of whining about where they were, Paul and Silas spent the night praying and singing songs to God. While we finish the jail cell on our student pages, let's sing and praise God as Paul and Silas did.**

Begin playing "Got a Reason for Livin' Again," and encourage kids to use their Paul and Silas puppets to sing.

🎵 **Got a reason for livin' again, oh, oh, oh.
Got a reason for laughin' again, oh, oh, oh.
Got a reason for lovin' again.
I got the love of God in my heart!**

**No reason to cry anymore, oh, oh, oh.
No reason to sigh anymore, oh, oh, oh.
No reason to die anymore.
I got the love of God in my heart!**

**Monday, I was all alone.
Tuesday, I had my sins to atone.
Wednesday, I cried and I cried.
Thursday, Lord, I thought I would die.
Friday, I started to pray.
Saturday, I read my Bible today.
Sunday, Lord, the heavens did part.
I got the love of God in my heart!**

(Repeat from the beginning.)

**Got a reason for livin' again, oh, oh, oh.
Got a reason for laughin' again, oh, oh, oh.
Got a reason for lovin' again.
I got the love of God in my heart!**

**No reason to cry anymore, oh, oh, oh.
No reason to sigh anymore, oh, oh, oh.
No reason to die anymore.
I got the love of God in my heart!
I got the love of God in my heart!
I got the love of God in my heart!**

Say: **Suddenly, there was a big earthquake, and the whole jail shook. The earthquake was so strong that it broke the chains that held the prisoners and opened the doors of the jail.** Have kids shake their student pages so that the bars fall over.

Ask:

**What do you think Paul and Silas did when the chains broke and they were free?
What would you do?**





When the jailer saw what had happened at the jail, he was sure all of the prisoners were gone and that he would be killed for letting the prisoners get away. Paul and Silas didn't want the jailer to die because of them, so they didn't run away. The jailer was so happy and surprised that he asked Paul and Silas what he had to do to be saved. Have kids walk their jailer puppet to where Paul and Silas are and repeat, "What must I do to be saved?"

Paul and Silas told the jailer that God had saved his life and that God wanted to save him from his sins, too. They told the jailer to believe in the Lord Jesus and he would be saved. Let the children use their puppets to have Paul tell the jailer, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."

Paul and Silas told the jailer all about Jesus that night. The jailer was so happy that Jesus had saved him that he took care of their wounds. The jailer took Paul and Silas to his house, and that day, he and his whole family believed in Jesus and were baptized. They all celebrated their belief in Jesus and enjoyed a big meal together. Have kids walk their craft stick puppets to the outside of the jail cell and pretend to have a meal together.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

After the earthquake, what did the jailer ask Paul and Silas?
How do you feel knowing Jesus can save you, too?

Say: Paul and Silas had some bad things happen, but they told the jailer about Jesus anyway. The jailer and his whole family learned that ► JESUS SAVES US.

4 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today's Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you're ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they'd like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center's description.

■ CENTER 1:

Lock Them Up

What You'll Do ■■■■

Have kids form groups of five or six children. In each group, instruct the kids to choose

Center 1: Lock Them Up Supplies

CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: "Lock Them Up"
(track 19)



two children to be the Jailers who will form an arch to represent the jail bars by holding hands above their heads (as in the game of London Bridge). Tell kids in each group that the Jailers will lower the “jail bars” around the child who is passing through at the end of the first verse. During the second verse, the Jailers will gently shake the trapped child back and forth until the last line, when they’ll lift their arms to set the child free.

Lead the children in singing “Lock Them Up” (track 19 on the CD) to the tune of “London Bridge” as they play the game. At the end of the song, have groups choose new Jailers, and re-cue the CD for a new round of play. If you have time, continue playing until each child has had a turn being “locked up.”



Paul and Silas went to town (*Jailers allow children to move through arch*),
Went to town,
Went to town.
Paul and Silas went to town,
Telling about Jesus. (*Jailers lower arms to trap a child.*)

Paul and Silas were locked up (*Jailers rock trapped child back and forth*),
Were locked up,
Were locked up.
Paul and Silas were locked up
But Jesus set them free. (*Jailers release trapped child.*)

Paul and Silas went to town (*Jailers allow children to move through arch*),
Went to town,
Went to town.
Paul and Silas went to town,
Telling about Jesus. (*Jailers lower arms to trap a child.*)

The jailer was afraid he’d die (*Jailers rock trapped child back and forth*),
Afraid he’d die,
Afraid he’d die.
The jailer was afraid he’d die,
But Jesus saved his life. (*Jailers release trapped child.*)

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

How did God save Paul and Silas in our Bible story?
How was the jailer saved?
What did the jailer and his family need to do to be saved?

Say: **Our Key Verse** says, “**Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.**”





Center 2: Jail Snacks Supplies

.....
graham crackers
miniature
marshmallows
licorice strips
paper plates

**ALLERGY
ALERT**

Center 3: I'll Save You Supplies

.....
cardboard blocks
dress-up clothes
streamers
toy dishes

CENTER 2:

Jail Snacks

What You'll Do

Have kids wash their hands (or use wet wipes) before beginning their snacks. Give each child a paper plate, and set out graham crackers, miniature marshmallows, and licorice strips. Encourage kids to retell the Bible story using a graham cracker to represent the jail cell, the marshmallows to represent people, and the strips of licorice to represent jail bars. Kids will delight in laying out the licorice strips and then watching the marshmallows jump around the plate during their make-believe earthquake.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

How do you think Paul and Silas felt when they were in jail?

What happened when the earthquake came?

An earthquake saved Paul and Silas from the jail, but how did God save the jailer and his family?

Say: **Lots of people were saved in our Bible story today. God saved Paul and Silas from jail when the earthquake came. Paul and Silas saved the jailer from being killed by not running away. Jesus saved the jailer and his whole family from sin, and ► JESUS SAVES US, too.**

CENTER 3:

I'll Save You

What You'll Do

Set out large cardboard blocks, streamers, and biblical dress-up clothes. Have kids use the blocks to build the walls of the jail and the jailer's house. Let kids decide who will be each character in the story. Encourage kids to act out the story using streamers as the chains on the feet of Paul and Silas in the jail. And give kids dishes to pretend to have a meal together in the jailer's house after Paul and Silas have been set free.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

Why do you think Paul and Silas sang to God when they were in jail?

How would you feel if you were suddenly set free? What would you do?

How did the jailer feel when he saw that Paul, Silas, and the other prisoners hadn't run away?

What do you think Jesus can do for you and your family?



Say: **Even when Paul and Silas were in jail, they prayed and sang songs. After they were set free, they didn't run away. When the jailer saw this, it made him want to know what he needed to do to be saved. When we tell others what we believe about Jesus and how he saves us from our sins, other people will believe in Jesus and will be saved, too.**

CENTER 4:

Friendly First-Aid Kit

What You'll Do

Set out snack-sized resealable plastic bags, fun adhesive bandages, individually wrapped non-alcohol wet wipes, stickers, and individually wrapped candies.

Ask:

How do you think Paul and Silas felt after the jailer took them home and took care of their wounds?

Say: **Let's make a first-aid kit to give a friend who gets hurt.**

Have each child put together a first-aid kit to take home and later give to someone who's hurt or sick. Let each child put a bandage, a wipe, and a piece of candy into a bag. Then encourage them to decorate the outside of the bag with stickers.

Say: **When you give this to someone who is hurt, you'll be showing the love of Jesus to that person. Jesus showed his love for us by saving us. It's great to know that ► JESUS SAVES US.**

5 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up the centers, sit with kids in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they enjoyed learning from the Bible today.

Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge to encourage your children's growing relationships with Jesus.



Center 4: Friendly First-Aid Kit Supplies

1 resealable plastic bag, 1 fun adhesive bandage, 1 wrapped non-alcohol wet wipe, and 1 wrapped candy per child
stickers

Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground



“Life Savers” Prayer Supplies

Gummy Life Savers
candies from the
“Theo’s News” activity

**! ALLERGY
ALERT**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Say: Today we learned that ► **JESUS SAVES US**. I’d like each of you to choose one of these Daily Challenges to remember that Jesus saves us.

Give kids these three Daily Challenge ideas to choose from:

1. **Make a present for Jesus, and tell Jesus that the present is for him because you’re thankful that he came to save you!**
2. **Say a prayer each night before you go to bed, thanking Jesus for coming to save you!**
3. **Sit in a circle with your family, and tell each other why you are thankful that Jesus came to save us.**

Say: **If you want to make a present for Jesus, circle choice number 1. If you want to pray, circle choice number 2. If you want to sit with your family, circle choice number 3.** Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Playground page. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!

“Life Savers” Prayer

What You’ll Do ■■■■

Give each child one of the Gummy Life Savers candies, and have kids repeat the following prayer before they eat the candy.

**Thank you, Jesus, that you want to save me.
Help me to tell others that they can believe in Jesus and be saved, too.
In Jesus’ name, amen.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Playground book pages whether they worked on them or not. Have the children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the “Daily Challenges” activity. Encourage parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment throughout the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.



Paul Describes Living by God's Spirit

Romans 8:9-17

Five- and six-year-old children think in concrete ways. A mental understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity is beyond them at this age. Although children have been taught about God as Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit, few will notice the seeming conflict with the truth that there is only one God. Answer any questions that do arise by telling children that because God is awesome and mighty, there are things about him that are hard for us to understand. Children are often more comfortable than adults in accepting things beyond our understanding. Kids can learn that God is greater than our ability to understand.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started <i>about 10 min.</i>	Welcoming Song Sing or listen to praises for God.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i>	Not by Works Work at tossing a ball into two different boxes.	Bible, 1 small box, 1 big box, ball, scrap paper	
3 Bible Exploration <i>about 20 min.</i>	Theo's News Find out what a collar and leash have to do with the Bible story.	CD player, Surprise Box, Theo puppet, small dog collar and leash Teacher Pack: CD	Place the small dog collar and leash in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
	Bible Time Learn that the Holy Spirit helps us live for God.	Bible, crepe paper streamers, scissors, electric fan	Cut crepe paper streamers into 24-inch sections, one for each child. Position a portable electric fan so it will blow on the children as you tell the story. You'll need to be able to reach the on/off switch as you teach.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



►Bible Point

We can live for God.

Key Verse

"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will discover new ways of living for God.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
4 Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> <i>(Choose 2 centers.)</i>	Center 1: Good News From Me Create letters to tell others about Jesus.	My Bible Playground, pencils, markers	Remove the Lesson 12 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.
	Center 2: Letter Snacks “Write” a letter and eat it!	graham crackers, pretzel sticks, chocolate syrup, small dishes, napkins	
	Center 3: Living for God Play a game, and learn to live for God.	newsprint, masking tape	Use masking tape to make a line on the floor down the center of the room. On one sheet of newsprint write “Living for Ourselves,” and draw a picture of a sad face. On another sheet write “Living for God,” and draw a picture of a cross and a happy face. Hang each on walls on opposite sides of the dividing line.
	Center 4: God’s Living World Make a craft about living things.	white and green construction paper, scissors, markers, glue sticks	
5 Lasting Impressions <i>about 5 min.</i>	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God’s Word.	My Bible Playground	
	“Live Lively” Prayers Use actions to show God how they want to live for him.		
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

The Holy Spirit Helps Us Resist Sin

Our Response to the Holy Spirit

The Jesus Connection

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "Hurrah!"

(track 21);

"Love Is..."

(track 20)

1

GETTING STARTED

Welcoming Song



Tip Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

What You'll Do

As the children arrive, greet each child and welcome him or her with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle.

Play "Hurrah!" (track 21 on the CD) to the tune of "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." Lead children in singing.



Let's come and sing at church today. Hurrah! Hurrah!

Let's come and pray at church today. Hurrah! Hurrah!

The girls will cheer, the boys will shout;

We'll learn what love is all about.

And we'll sing and pray

With our friends at church.

(Repeat 2x.)

Say: **Today we'll learn that ► WE CAN LIVE FOR GOD. Let's sing another song together about how we can show God's love in our lives.**

Lead kids in singing "Love Is..." (track 20 on the CD) to the tune of "Do Your Ears Hang Low?"



Love is patient, love is kind.

Love's not jealous, doesn't brag.

Love's not proud or rude or selfish,

Doesn't ever hold a grudge.

Love is good; love is trust.

Love is hope; love never fails.

Love goes on and on.

(Repeat 2x.)



2

KEY VERSE
ACTIVITY

Not by Works

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have the children form a circle and sit down. Open your Bible to Acts 16:31, and show children the words.

Say: **Our Key Verse from the Bible says, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.” That means all we have to do is believe in Jesus and our sins will be forgiven. Then we can go to heaven someday and live with him forever. We can’t do anything to earn our way to heaven; we just have to believe.** Lead the children in repeating the Key Verse with you.

Give each child a small piece of scrap paper.

Ask:

Have you ever gotten in trouble for doing a bad thing? Just tell me “yes” or “no.”

Say: **The bad things we do are called sins. A sin is when you disobey, hurt someone, or take something that isn’t yours. Let’s pretend that the papers are your sins. If you’ve ever done a bad thing and sinned, put your paper in the large box.** Have the children put their papers in the big box; then set the large box aside, and bring out the small box.

Now let’s play a game and pretend that our sins will be forgiven if we can make the ball go into the boxes. Let’s find out how much work it will take. Place the small box in the playing area, and have the children line up about three feet away from the box. Let the kids try to toss the ball into the small box. Since the box is too small, they won’t be able to do it.

Ask:

Were you able to get the ball into the box? Why or why not?

Say: **Just like the ball wouldn’t fit inside the box, the Bible says that our sins would keep us forever away from God.** Bring out the big box.

Let’s trade the small box for this big box and pretend that this box is God’s power. Today we’ll learn that ► WE CAN LIVE FOR GOD. Only God has the power to save us from our sins, and all we have to do is believe in Jesus. God loved us enough to send Jesus to take away our sins. God forgives our sins and saves us from having to be away from him forever.

Not by Works
Supplies

Bible
1 small box
1 big box
ball
scrap paper



Theo's News Supplies

CD player
Surprise Box (any box
will do)
Theo puppet
small dog collar
leash

Teacher Pack
CD: "Here, Theo"
(track 3)

Theo's News Easy Prep

Place the small dog
collar and leash in the
Surprise Box, and hide
the box where it's easily
accessible.

Let kids repeat the game, but this time let each child toss the ball so the ball lands inside the big box of God's power of forgiveness.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

How did you feel when you tossed the ball inside the box?
How do you feel knowing God loves you and forgives your sins?

Say: **God has the power to save us from our sins. We can't do anything to earn his forgiveness. All you have to do is "believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved!"**

3 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Theo's News

What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: **Friends, it's time for Theo's News!** Have the children sit in a circle. Then begin "Here, Theo" (track 3 on the CD). When the CD segment ends, bring out the Surprise Box, and put the Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet on your hand. Then follow along with the script.

Teacher: Hi, Theo! How are you today?

Theo: I'm terrific! I have a new surprise today!

Teacher: Does your new surprise have something to do with our Bible Story?

Theo: Yep! Look inside the Surprise Box.

Teacher: Let's look inside and see what Theo's new surprise is.

(Choose a child to open the Surprise Box, and have the kids pass around the collar and leash so the rest of the class can see it up close. Give the children time to guess what the Bible story might be about.)

Teacher: Theo, why did you hid this new collar and leash in our Surprise Box?

Theo: I need these so my owner can guide me.

Teacher: Friends, who are the people that guide you and help you know what to do?
(Pause for kids to answer the question.)

Teacher: Why is it important to have someone to guide us?
(Pause for kids to answer the question.)

Theo: In our Bible story today, a man named Paul listened to the Holy Spirit and learned how he could live for God.

Teacher: Let's find out how ► **WE CAN LIVE FOR GOD**, too!

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week's use.



Bible Time

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Distribute one streamer to each child. As you tell the story, turn the fan on and off as indicated. Tell children that when the fan is turned on, they should hold their streamers up so the air can blow on them.

Say: **We can learn how to let the Holy Spirit lead us by reading a letter from a Christian named Paul. This letter is in the Bible. Listen as I tell you about Paul's letter. When I talk about the Holy Spirit, I will turn on the fan. Feel the air on your face, and hold your streamer up so the air can blow it. Let's try it now.** Turn on the fan, and let it run for a few seconds so children can feel the air and fly their streamers. Then turn the fan off.

Paul had good friends in the city of Rome. His friends believed in Jesus and wanted to know how to follow him. So Paul wrote them a letter. God helped Paul know what to write so his letter became part of the Bible. It is God's message for us, too! Open your Bible to Romans 8:9-17, and show children the words.

Paul's letter tells us that when we believe in Jesus, God sends his Holy Spirit to be in charge of us. Turn the fan on for a few seconds and then off.

The Holy Spirit lives inside of us because we belong to Jesus. We can't see him, just like we can't see the air from the fan. But we can see what the air does—it flies our streamers! And we can see what the Holy Spirit does, too. When we do good things like help others, we know it is because the Holy Spirit is leading us. Turn the fan on and then off.

We can't live the way God wants us to by ourselves. When we try to be in charge, we make a lot of mistakes. We make wrong choices. We need help. God tells us to let him be in charge. When God's Spirit leads us, ► WE CAN LIVE FOR GOD. Turn the fan on and then off.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**How could you tell the air was moving, even though you couldn't see it?
How can you tell the Holy Spirit is in you, even if you can't see him?**

Say: **When the Holy Spirit lives in us, he helps us believe in Jesus. He reminds us that we are God's children, and he helps us live for God. Let's feel the fan and fly the streamers once more to praise God for sending the Holy Spirit to guide us.** Turn on the fan, and allow children to enjoy the breeze and exuberantly praise God with their streamers.



Bible Time Supplies

Bible
crepe paper streamers
scissors
electric fan

Bible Time Easy Prep

Cut crepe paper streamers into 24-inch sections, one for each child. Position a portable electric fan so it will blow on the children as you tell the story. You'll need to be able to reach the on/off switch as you teach.



Center 1: Good News From Me Supplies

My Bible Playground
pencils
markers

Center 1: Good News From Me Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson
12 pages from each
My Bible Playground
student book.

4

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today's Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you're ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they'd like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center's description.

CENTER 1:

Good News From Me

What You'll Do

Distribute the Lesson 12 My Bible Playground student pages, and have kids write their names on their pages.

Say: **Paul wrote letters to his friends to help them learn how to live for God. We, too, can write letters or draw pictures for others to help them learn about Jesus.**

Encourage children to create a message on the stationery. They may write simple words about God, such as "love," "Jesus," or "cross," or they may draw pictures about Jesus. Help children think of others who might like to learn more about Jesus.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**Why did Paul write letters to his friends?
What can you tell others about following Jesus?**

Say: **Paul's letters tell us how to follow Jesus. We can tell others about following Jesus, just as Paul did, and encourage them to live for God.**

**CENTER 2:****Letter Snacks****What You'll Do** ■■■■■■

Have children wash their hands (or use wet wipes). Set out a small dish of chocolate syrup for every two or three children, and provide each child with a graham cracker, several pretzel sticks, and a napkin. Tell children to pretend to write a letter on the graham cracker by dipping the pretzel stick in the chocolate syrup.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

Have you ever received a letter? How did you feel?
How do you think Paul's friends felt when they received his letter?
To whom could you send a letter about Jesus?

Say: **It's exciting to get a letter. Paul wrote many letters to his friends about Jesus. Some of those letters became part of the Bible, so they are letters to us, too! Paul's letters tell us how ► WE CAN LIVE FOR GOD.**

CENTER 3:**Living for God****What You'll Do** ■■■■■■

Say: **Living for God means doing what God wants us to do. Living for ourselves means doing what we want to do, without thinking about whether or not it hurts others. Let's play a game to learn more about this. I will describe an activity. If you think it shows living for ourselves, stand on this side of the room. Indicate where you want children to stand. If you think it shows living for God, move to the other side of the room.** Read each of the following phrases, allowing time for kids to choose where they will stand.

Singing praises to God
Taking a toy away from someone else
Inviting a friend to church
Pushing your brother or sister when you are mad
Picking up toys when asked
Calling someone mean names
Giving a hug to someone who is sad
Complaining when I don't get my way
Sharing toys with a new friend

Add other scenarios that pertain to your class as time permits.

**Center 2: Letter Snacks Supplies**

.....
 graham crackers
 pretzel sticks
 chocolate syrup
 small dishes
 napkins

! ALLERGY ALERT**Center 3: Living for God Supplies**

.....
 newsprint
 masking tape

Center 3: Living for God Easy Prep

.....
 Use masking tape to make a line on the floor down the center of the room. On one sheet of newsprint write "Living for Ourselves," and draw a picture of a sad face. On another sheet write "Living for God," and draw a picture of a cross and a happy face. Hang each on walls on opposite sides of the dividing line.





Center 4: God's Living World Supplies

white and green
construction paper
scissors
markers
glue sticks

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Gather children together, and lead them in this discussion.

Ask:

**What can go wrong when we live for ourselves?
How can you tell if you are living for God?
How do you feel when you live for God?**

Say: **We often live for ourselves, not for God. But even then, he loves us and promises to forgive us. Let's remember that God gives us his Holy Spirit to guide us and help us live for God!**

■ CENTER 4:

God's Living World

What You'll Do ■■■■

Help kids make a craft that shows living things in God's world.

Provide each child with a background sheet of white construction paper and a strip of green construction paper. Set out scissors, glue sticks, and markers. Show children how to use scissors to snip along one long edge of the green strip of paper. Then show them how to use their fingers to curl the snipped edge forward to create a three-dimensional effect for the grass. Kids can then glue the grass to the background and draw pictures of other living things such as plants, animals, or people.

Say: **I like the pictures of living things that you have created! We know grass is a living thing because it grows. God created many different plants and animals that are alive.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**What are other examples of living things?
What's your favorite living thing God created?
How do you feel about God when you think of all the wonderful living things he created?**

Say: **God's amazing creation shows us that he is powerful and loving. When we see living things such as grass, flowers, or animals, let's remember that ► WE CAN LIVE FOR GOD.**

**5****LASTING
IMPRESSIONS**

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

After the children have cleaned up the centers, sit with kids in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they enjoyed learning from the Bible today.

Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge to encourage your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Say: **Today we learned that ► WE CAN LIVE FOR GOD. I'd like each of you to choose one of these Daily Challenges to live for God.**

Give kids these three Daily Challenge ideas to choose from:

- 1. Share your lunch with a friend at school, and tell him or her that we can live for God.**
- 2. Hug each of your family members, and tell them that God wants us to live for him!**
- 3. Help your mom or dad clean the kitchen one evening—and do it with a smile! Serving others is one way to live for God!**

Say: **If you want to share your lunch, circle choice number 1. If you want to hug your family, circle choice number 2. If you want to help your parents, circle choice number 3.** Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Playground page. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!

“Live Lively” Prayers

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Close with the following prayer. Allow time for each child to act out an activity that would be “living for God” and to tell what they are doing.

Say: **Dear God, we want to live for you. Help us do this by...**

Give each child a turn to act out an activity that demonstrates living for God.

Say: **Thank you for sending us your Holy Spirit. In Jesus' name, amen.**

**Daily Challenges
Supplies**

.....
My Bible Playground



Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Playground book pages whether they worked on them or not. Have the children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the “Daily Challenges” activity. Encourage parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment throughout the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.



Paul Describes Genuine Love

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Most children have experienced love from parents, as well as from grandparents, teachers, siblings, and friends. Young children know the meaning of the word “love” and enjoy the benefits of being loved. Some of the children in your group, however, may not come from loving homes. Be mindful of that possibility, and try to ensure that all of the children in your class experience the feeling of giving and receiving love.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started <i>about 10 min.</i>	Welcoming Song Sing a song welcoming all their classroom friends.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i>	Believe in the Lord Jesus Bounce a ball, and encourage each other to believe in Jesus.	Bible Teacher Pack: bouncy ball	
3 Bible Exploration <i>about 15 min.</i>	Theo's News Find out what a flashlight and batteries have to do with the Bible story.	CD player, Surprise Box, Theo puppet, flashlight, batteries Teacher Pack: CD	Place the flashlight and batteries in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
	Bible Time Learn about the characteristics of love, and color pictures that show love in action.	Bible, roll of butcher paper, markers, tape, flashlight and batteries from Theo's News	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



►Bible Point

God's love is kind.

Key Verse

“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved” (Acts 16:31).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will show God's love and be kind.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
4 Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> <i>(Choose 2 centers.)</i>	Center 1: Kind Hands Make handprints, and remember that they can use their hands to show love.	My Bible Playground, red tempera paint, shallow bowl, smocks, newspapers, pencils	Remove the Lesson 13 pages from each My Bible Playground student book. Spread newspapers over the area where the kids will be painting.
	Center 2: Kindness Cupcakes Decorate cupcakes with frosting and candy hearts as they talk about kindness.	1 unfrosted cupcake per child, frosting, plastic knives, paper plates, napkins, 5 candy hearts per child	
	Center 3: Pass the Heart Listen to a song, and pass a heart around in a circle.	red construction paper, CD player, scissors Teacher Pack: CD	Cut a large heart from red construction paper.
	Center 4: Devoted Dusters Make cloth dusters.	3x8-inch pieces of fabric, tacky craft glue, rubber bands, scissors, newspaper	Cut enough 3x8-inch pieces of cloth so every child has several pieces. Follow the directions in “Devoted Dusters” to make a sample duster.
5 Lasting Impressions <i>about 5 min.</i>	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God’s Word.	My Bible Playground	
	“Shining” Prayer Say a prayer, and shine flashlights.	flashlights	
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





1 Corinthians 13:1-13

The “love” we see in movies, on TV, and in our culture is not the kind of love described in this passage. What we most often see is a selfish “love,” which is more like lust. That kind of love seeks its own pleasure and gratification, sometimes at the expense of others. The love Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 is precisely the opposite. It’s directed at seeking the pleasure and good of others. It means turning aside from seeking what’s pleasurable for ourselves and seeking instead what’s best for others—as Jesus did. As we become more loving, we’re becoming more like Jesus.

Paul then turns to an analogy of childhood versus adulthood. The things we did and thought as children were pretty important to us then, and we thought we were doing pretty well. But when we become adults, we see how insignificant some of the things that had been important to us were and how poorly we sometimes did them, and we don't think of things or do things in the same way anymore.

In understanding Paul's mirror metaphor, it's important to note that the mirrors of Paul's day didn't reflect perfect images. Most likely the mirror he spoke of was of polished metal and would have reflected at best an unclear image. The connection, then, was that now we see the things of God but not very clearly and accurately. When we meet God face to face, our vision will be perfectly clear!

In 1 Corinthians 13:8, Paul departs from talking about the importance of love and emphasizes its permanence. Other things such as prophecies, tongues, and knowledge will one day be gone. To wrap up this passage, Paul returns to the prominence

of love. He points out that faith and hope are important and will endure. But he echoes the principle of love being over all.

It's so hard for people who have been corrupted by sin to be loving. Gratefully, we can learn from Jesus' example of how he lived on this earth.

Read 1 Corinthians 13 again, and make a list of the ways Paul described pristine love. Circle the words you think describe your quality of love. Place a star next to any attributes that you want Jesus' help to develop in your life. Pray and ask Jesus to improve the quality of your love. You can write your prayer here.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "It's Good to Have
You" (track 2)

Believe in the Lord Jesus Supplies

Bible

Teacher Pack

bouncy ball

1

GETTING STARTED

Welcoming Song



Tip Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

As the children arrive, greet each child and welcome him or her with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle.

Play "It's Good to Have You" (track 2 on the CD) to the tune of "Oh Where, Oh Where Has My Little Dog Gone?" and lead children in doing the motions.



It's good to have you in church today. (*Have the children stand in a circle, hold hands, and swing hands back and forth.*)

Let's sing, let's learn, and let's pray. (*Cup hands around mouth, point to your head, and then make praying hands.*)

We'll make new friends, and we'll have so much fun. (*Shake a friend's hand.*)

We're glad you've joined us today! (*Hold hands in a circle and swing hands back and forth.*) (*Repeat 2x.*)

2

KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

Believe in the Lord Jesus

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have the children form a circle and sit down. Open your Bible to Acts 16:31, and show children the words.

Say: **Our Key Verse from the Bible is from Acts 16:31, and it says, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."** Have the children repeat the Key Verse with you.

Use the bouncy ball from the Teacher Pack to personalize this verse. Tell children that they'll each get a chance to bounce the ball and call out someone's name, saying "[Child's name], believe in the Lord Jesus, and you'll be saved!" The person whose name was called gets to catch the ball and repeat the activity with someone else's name. Take turns until each child has had a chance to say and hear the verse.



Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

**What do we believe Jesus has done for us?
How do you feel to know you are saved?**

Say: **When we do bad things, the Bible says that those bad things are called sins. Those sins keep us from God. Just as we caught the bouncy ball, God's love catches us and saves us.**

God sent Jesus to be our Savior. Because he died for us and came back to life again, we know our sins are forgiven and we are God's children. That's what it means to be saved. Let's shout our Key Verse one more time so everyone can hear how to be saved. Lead the children in repeating the Key Verse with you one more time: **"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."**

3

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Theo's News

What You'll Do

Say: **Friends, it's time for Theo's News!** Have the children sit in a circle. Then begin "Here, Theo" (track 3 on the CD). When the CD segment ends, bring out the Surprise Box, and put the Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet on your hand. Then follow along with the script.

Theo: Hi, everybody!

Teacher: Hello, Theo! Tell us what interesting news you've dug up about the Bible today.

Theo: I hid it in the Surprise Box.

Teacher: Friends, let's look inside to see what Theo dug up for us today.

(Choose a child to open the Surprise Box, and have the kids pass the batteries and flashlight around the circle so the rest of the class can see them up close. Give the children time to guess what the Bible story might be about.)

Teacher: Theo, why did you hide this flashlight and these batteries in the Surprise Box?

Theo: Well, because the batteries help the flashlight.

Teacher: Friends, why does a flashlight need batteries?

(Pause for kids to answer your question.)

Theo: This flashlight won't work without batteries. Without batteries inside, my flashlight is empty—it's nothing.

Teacher: Let's listen to our Bible story today to see what might cause our lives to be empty, like the flashlight is empty without batteries.

Theo: Have fun, boys and girls!

Teacher: Say goodbye to Theo.



Theo's News Supplies

CD player
Surprise Box (any box
will do)
Theo puppet
flashlight
batteries
Teacher Pack
CD: "Here, Theo"
(track 3)

Theo's News Easy Prep

Place the flashlight and batteries in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.



Bible Time Supplies

Bible
roll of butcher paper
markers
tape
flashlight and batteries
from Theo's News

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week's use.

Bible Time

What You'll Do ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Open your Bible to 1 Corinthians 13, and show the children the words.

Say: **Today's Bible story tells us that ► GOD'S LOVE IS KIND.** Hold up the flashlight without batteries, and make an exaggerated effort to turn on the flashlight.

Ask:

What do you see when I turn on my flashlight?

Say: **That's right—nothing—no light! The flashlight didn't shine.**

Ask:

What's wrong with my flashlight?

Say: **Oh...that's right! My flashlight doesn't have batteries. My flashlight is empty. It won't light up without batteries. Well, let's see what happens when we put the batteries in.** Put the batteries inside the flashlight and turn it on.

Look! How about that—it does work. Look at the light shining! The flashlight needed batteries inside, didn't it? You know, in our Bible story today, Paul tells us that without love, we have nothing. If we don't have love inside our hearts, we are nothing. Without love, we would be like this flashlight without its batteries—empty. Paul tells us we must have love inside our hearts like the batteries inside the flashlight. In the Bible, Paul also tells us some other things about love.

One of the first things Paul says about love is that love is patient. You know how you take turns when you are playing with toys, and you have to wait patiently for your friends? Well, when we wait patiently for someone, we are showing love.

Ask:

**When is another time you showed patience to someone?
When was someone was patient with you?**

Say: **The Bible also tells us that love is kind. All of you know about being kind, because I've seen you be kind to your friends in our class. Sometimes it's hard to be kind, but God wants us to be kind to others.**



Ask:

**Have you ever been kind to someone who was mean to you?
What happened?
Was someone ever kind to you even when you didn't deserve kindness?**

Say: In the Bible, Paul also says that love is not jealous or boastful or proud. When our hearts are full of love, there's no room for jealousy. We aren't jealous of a friend with a new toy or our sister with a new dress or our brother who has a bigger cookie. And love doesn't allow bragging. When we brag because we won the game, that can be hurtful to others. Paul tells us, too, that love is not rude or selfish. When we share our toys and when we say kind words to others, we are showing love.

Think of a time someone said something mean to you. You don't have to share it aloud, but think about how you felt when that person said mean things to you. It wasn't a happy feeling, was it? Now think of a time you said mean things to another person. When we say mean things to people, it hurts their feelings. We're not showing our love when we say things that hurt others.

Paul reminds us in the Bible that love is slow to anger. We all get mad sometimes, but the Bible tells us that we shouldn't get mad over silly, little things. Close your eyes and think of a time when your mom or dad was mad at you. It makes you feel bad when someone is mad at you, right? Well, we don't want to make others feel bad by being mad at them, either.

The Bible says that love doesn't hold a grudge; when we have love in our hearts, we forgive other people when they do wrong, and we don't stay mad at them. God is happy when we make the right choices. The Bible tells us that when we love someone, we want to take care of that person. Think about the person or people who take care of you. Those people love you! And you love those people.

Ask:

How do you know that someone loves you?

Say: The Bible tells us that love trusts, hopes, and goes on forever. Love never ever ends.

Since the Bible tells us that love never ends, we're going to make a really big picture about love. We're going to pretend that our picture goes on and on and on and never ends!

Unroll enough paper so that the children have plenty of space to draw. Encourage the children to draw pictures of the people they love or situations in which they were patient or kind, such as when they shared toys. Tape the paper up in the room when the children have finished. If time allows, have the children talk about what they've drawn.





Say: **We've talked about some of the qualities of love, and we've drawn some nice pictures about love. One of the greatest examples of love is Jesus; he loved everyone in the world so much that he died on a cross so we could live with him in heaven forever! Jesus loves all of us very much, and he wants us to share his love with the world. When we share Jesus' love with the world, we are showing the world that ► GOD'S LOVE IS KIND.**

4

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today's Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you're ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they'd like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center's description.

CENTER 1:

Kind Hands

Center 1: Kind Hands Supplies

My Bible Playground
red tempera paint
shallow bowl
smocks
newspapers
pencils

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Distribute the Lesson 13 My Bible Playground student pages, and have kids write their names on their papers. Pour red tempera paint into a large, shallow bowl. Have the children put on smocks or old shirts, and encourage the children to dip their hands in the paint and make handprints on their student pages inside the hearts.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**How can we use our hands to show people that we love them?
What other ways can we show our love without using words?
How can you use your hands to be kind to someone this week?**

Say: **We can use our hands to be kind to others by patting people on the back or helping to pick up toys. Being kind to others makes God happy, it makes us happy, and it makes other people happy, too. The Bible tells us that ► GOD'S LOVE IS KIND.**

Center 1: Kind Hands Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson 13 pages from each My Bible Playground student book. Spread newspapers over the area where the kids will be painting.

**CENTER 2:**

Kindness Cupcakes

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Instruct the children to wash their hands and then sit at the table. Pass out plates, plastic knives, and napkins. Give each child a cupcake and a dollop of frosting. Instruct the children to find a partner and practice being kind by frosting the other person's cupcake.

Say: **Very good! We know that ► GOD'S LOVE IS KIND, and you were very kind just now when you frosted your partner's cupcake! Let's keep decorating the cupcakes with more ways to be kind.**

Give each child five candy hearts. Instruct the children to take turns telling their partner one way they can give God's gift of love through being kind at home. Each time a child shares an idea, he or she can add a candy heart to the cupcake.

After everyone's cupcake is decorated, invite one child to pray and thank God for the snacks.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**What are some ways that you can be kind at home this week?
How do you feel after you do something kind?**

Say: **It feels great to do something kind. That's because ► GOD'S LOVE IS KIND. When you do something nice, you get to feel God's wonderful love!**

CENTER 3:

Pass the Heart

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Gather the children in a circle on the floor. Before you begin the activity, play "Love Is..." (track 20 on the CD) to the tune of "Do Your Ears Hang Low?" so the children can become familiar with the words. Then give the heart you cut out before class to one of the children, and re-cue the CD. Have the children pass the heart around the circle. Pause the song periodically, and have the child who is holding the heart say kind words to someone in the circle. Re-cue the CD, and repeat the song so that each child has a chance to say kind words.

**Center 2: Kindness
Cupcakes
Supplies**

1 unfrosted cupcake
per child
frosting
plastic knives
paper plates
napkins
5 candy hearts per child

**! ALLERGY
ALERT****Center 3: Pass the
Heart
Supplies**

red construction paper
CD player
scissors


Teacher Pack

CD: "Love Is..."
(track 20)

**Center 3: Pass the
Heart
Easy Prep**

Cut a large heart from
red construction paper.



 Love is patient, love is kind.
 Love's not jealous, doesn't brag.
 Love's not proud or rude or selfish,
 Doesn't ever hold a grudge.
 Love is good; love is trust.
 Love is hope; love never fails.
 Love goes on and on.
(Repeat 2x.)

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

How did you feel when someone said something kind to you?
 How do you feel when you say kind things?
 Who can you say something kind to this week?

Say: **When we love others, we can show them our love by saying kind words to them. God wants us to remember that his love is kind.**

CENTER 4:

Devoted Dusters

What You'll Do

Lay newspaper over the surface of the table. Have the children sit at the craft table. Set the bottles of tacky glue and the cloth strips in the center of the table.

Say: **Today we learned that ► GOD'S LOVE IS KIND. Let's make dusters that you can use at home. You can show Mom or Dad kindness by dusting the furniture so they don't have to.**

Center 4: Devoted Dusters Supplies

3x8-inch pieces
 of fabric
 tacky craft glue
 rubber bands
 scissors
 newspaper

Center 4: Devoted Dusters Easy Prep

Cut enough 3x8-inch
 pieces of cloth so every
 child has several pieces.
 Follow the directions in
 "Devoted Dusters" to
 make a sample duster.





Have each child choose several pieces of cloth. Show children how to lay one piece of cloth flat across the table and place two small lines of craft glue at the short end of the cloth. Have the child lay a second piece of cloth over the first one. Have the child place two lines of glue on the short end of the second cloth strip. Repeat until all the pieces of cloth are glued together at the top end. Visit each child and secure the glued ends of the strips of cloth together with several rubber bands. While the glue is drying, move the children to a different part of the room. Use your sample duster to demonstrate how to use a duster.

Say: **Today we learned that ► GOD’S LOVE IS KIND. When you use your duster at home, you are showing kindness to your parents.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

**How do you think your parents will feel when they see you dust the house?
How do you think God will feel when he sees you being kind at home?
What are some other ways you can be kind at home this week?**

Say: **When we are kind to our parents, we are showing them love. It’s important to be kind because ► GOD’S LOVE IS KIND.**

5 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You’ll Do ■■■■

After the children have cleaned up the centers, sit with kids in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they enjoyed learning from the Bible today.

Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today’s lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge to encourage your children’s growing relationships with Jesus.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Say: **Today we learned that ► GOD’S LOVE IS KIND. I’d like each of you to choose one of these Daily Challenges to trust that God’s love is kind.**

Give kids these three Daily Challenge ideas to choose from:

1. **Before dinner, give everyone in your family a great big hug.**
2. **Use your “Devoted Duster” to help your mom or dad dust the house.**
3. **Help your brother or sister or a friend pick up his or her room.**



Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground



“Shining” Prayer Supplies

flashlights

Say: **If you want to hug your family, circle choice number 1. If you want to use your duster, circle choice number 2. If you want to help your brother or sister, circle choice number 3.** Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Playground page. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!

“Shining” Prayer

What You’ll Do

Bring in enough flashlights for each child in your group to have one. If you don’t have enough flashlights, say this prayer several times so that each child has a turn with the flashlight. On the word “shine,” have the children turn on the flashlights.

Dear God,

Help me love my friends with a love that will never end.

Help me to be kind with a love that will always shine.

In Jesus’ name, amen.

Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Playground book pages whether they worked on them or not. Have the children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the “Daily Challenges” activity. Encourage parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment throughout the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.