# FAITHVEAVER Weaving faith into today's families Source of the state of

# WINTER SUNDAY SCHOOL

# PRE-K&K AGES 586 TEACHER GUIDE



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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



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

### Experiential

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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The aim of Christian education is to equip learners to be both hearers and doers of God's Word.

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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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That's why we attempt to ensure that all crafts, toys, and gizmos meet or exceed national safety standards—and are produced by manufacturers that don't use child labor or abuse their labor force. You can order Group resources knowing that in addition to caring for your kids, you're also caring for children elsewhere.

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### FaithWeaver NOW® Bible Curriculum, Pre-K & K/Ages 5 & 6, Winter

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2017 edition

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<sup>\*</sup> Due to the way Christmas falls, we recommend moving the lessons as needed to line up Lesson 3 with the week of Christmas.

# The future of Sunday school + family ministry is NOW.



o 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Even the Sunday school Bible curriculum you used just a couple of years ago is already out of date.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.



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 Schulte

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



# John the Baptist Prepares the Way for Jesus Mark 1:1-8

ost 5- and 6-year-olds know what it means to get ready. They've learned to dress themselves, brush their teeth, and maybe fix a simple breakfast. Kids know what it means to get ready for the day, and that can help them understand what it means to get ready for Jesus. They can welcome Jesus into their lives with prayer, praise, worship, reading the Bible, and asking for forgiveness. They can tell others about Jesus so others can have Jesus in their lives, too. Use this lesson to introduce kids to the concept of getting ready for Jesus.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Getting Started about 10 min.	Welcoming Song Sing or listen to praises for God.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
Key Verse Activity about 10 min.	"Good News" Reporter Become a news reporter and announce the coming of Jesus.	Bible	
	Theo's News Find out what a bar of soap has to do with the Bible.	Surprise Box (any box will do), Theo puppet, CD player, bar of soap <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD	Put the soap in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
Bible Exploration about 15 min.	Bible Time: A Surprise Visitor Learn about John the Baptist, and prepare the room for a surprise visitor.	Bible, CD player, bowl of warm water, paper towels or clean rags, poster board, washable markers, tape <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD, "John Preaches About Jesus" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



▶Bible Point We get ready for Jesus. 

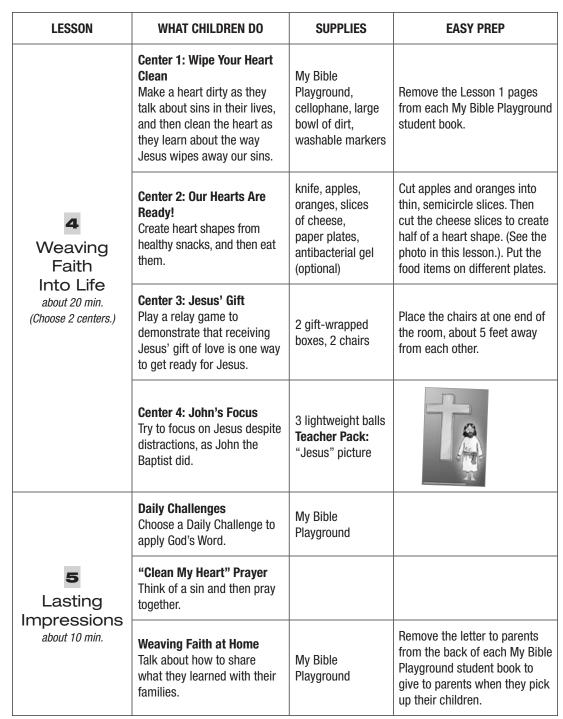
# **Key Verse**

"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11).

### Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will discover ways they can get their hearts ready for Jesus.

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**Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.



# John the Baptist Prepares the Way for Jesus

Mark 1:1-8



### **Jesus Brings Good News**

Mark saw Jesus' life, ministry, death, and resurrection as the beginning of the gospel. The word *gospel*, derived from the Old English *godspel*, means "good news."

### **Prophets Foretold About Jesus**

As Mark began his Gospel, he launched into a quotation from the Old Testament. By connecting what he was saying about Jesus with the words of the prophets, Mark built validity for his own message in the minds of his Jewish readers.

Some question why Mark said the quotation is from Isaiah when in reality the first part is from Malachi 3:1. Mark is mentioning together two quotations on the same topic, and crediting both to Isaiah would have been acceptable for Mark's audience.

By using the quotation from Isaiah in Mark 1:3, Mark emphasized the kingly nature of Jesus. In those days, a servant often traveled ahead of a king to alert people that the king was coming.

### John the Baptist Comes Before Jesus

The last half of this passage shows that John the Baptist did what was prophesied in the Old Testament: He came to prepare the way—more specifically, the people—for Jesus' coming. As people repented in response to John's preaching and confessed their sins, their hearts were prepared to accept their coming King.

John the Baptist's choice of clothing was not accidental: He likely was identifying himself with the prophet Elijah, who dressed the same way (2 Kings 1:8). His was the clothing of the poor, and his food

was also that of the very poor. John was humbling himself, knowing how great the coming Jesus would be. In those days, it was the job of the lowest servant to untie a visitor's sandals and wash his feet. John let people know that as eloquent and persuasive as his preaching might be, he was the lowest of the low in comparison with the glory of the coming Savior, Jesus.

At Christmas, we anticipate the birth of Jesus. His

birth, death, and resurrection make our lives in

### **The Jesus Connection**

Christmas. But Jesus cares more about our hearts than about gifts and decorations. We can prepare our hearts by turning from actions and attitudes that distract us from Jesus. What do you need to turn from? You can write your prayer here.
-
-
-
-

Lesson 1



### Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player **Teacher Pack** CD: "We're Glad You're Here Today" (track 2), "God Is the King" (Psalm 47:7) (track 6)



# **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 them with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle. Begin the CD, and lead the kids in doing the motions and singing "We're Glad You're Here Today" (track 2 on the CD) to the tune of "Looby Loo."

We're glad you're here today. (shake hands with others)
We're glad you're here today. (shake hands with others)
We're glad you're here today. (shake hands with others)
Come learn about Jesus today. (motion friends to come)

We all will pray (fold hands) and sing. (cup hands around mouth) We all will pray (fold hands) and sing. (cup hands around mouth) We all will pray (fold hands) and sing. (cup hands around mouth) We're glad that you're here today. (clap to the beat)

We're glad you're here today. (give high fives to others)
We're glad you're here today. (point to others)
We're glad you're here today. (clap to the beat)
Come learn about Jesus today. (motion friends to come)

Say: Today we'll learn that WE GET READY FOR JESUS and welcome him into our lives. Jesus is the King of the whole world! Listen carefully to the beginning of this song, and tell me what you hear.

Play "God Is the King" (Psalm 47:7) (track 6 on the CD) and encourage the children to call out the animals they hear at the beginning. Then have them join you in singing and marching to the beat in a circle. Change the direction you're marching every few lines.

Let's sing about the Lord, The greatness of our God, God is the King of everything. We're wild about his love And all that he has done, God is the King of everything.

Winter Quarter

Lesson 1



I know God; I talk about him every single day.
I pray to him at all times; he's the only way.
I love him! He loves me no matter where I go,
And everything I do will be for God and God alone.

Let's sing about the Lord, The greatness of our God, God is the King of everything. We're wild about his love And all that he has done, God is the King of everything.

Let's sing about the Lord, The greatness of our God, God is the King of everything. We're wild about his love And all that he has done, God is the King of everything, God is the King of everything, God is the King of everything.

"God Is the King" (Psalm 47:7) by Jay Stocker and Ben Glover. © 2005, 2006 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Say: Jesus is coming! We're celebrating his arrival, and one of the great ways

ME GET READY FOR JESUS is by singing to him. He loves to hear our voices.

Let's welcome him this Christmas season.



# "Good News" Reporter

### What You'll Do

Have the children sit in a circle. Open your Bible to Luke 2:10-11, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Our Key Verse from the Bible, Luke 2:10-11, says, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord." This means that the angel told the shepherds, "I bring great news; Jesus is born!" Let's say that together. Lead children in repeating the simplified version of the Key Verse after you: I bring great news; Jesus is born! (Luke 2:10-11).



"Good News" Reporter Supplies

Bible



### Ask:

Tell about a time someone told you good news.

Say: It's very exciting to hear good news! The angel told the shepherds the good news that Jesus was born, and the shepherds were so excited that they went to see baby Jesus. Let's play a game right now that'll help us share the good news of Jesus' birth.

One way we hear news is by watching television. We're going to pretend that we're TV reporters telling the news that Jesus was born.

Encourage a child to pretend to hold a microphone. Then tell the child to report the news of Jesus' birth by saying the Key Verse: "I bring great news; Jesus is born!" and then saying one great thing about Jesus such as "Jesus loves me" or "Jesus is kind." When the first child is finished, have him or her join the rest of the group, and then encourage the next child to report the good news. Have children clap and cheer after each child's turn. When all children have had a turn, have them sit in a circle again.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

- It was fun to pretend to be a reporter! What are other ways you can share the good news about Jesus?
- What's exciting about babies being born?
- What's exciting about Jesus being born?

Say: Jesus' birth was the best news anyone could ever hear because Jesus came to do many wonderful things for all of us. WE GET READY FOR JESUS because he's so special. We can help others get ready for Jesus, too, when we tell the good news about Jesus. Let's tell each other our Key Verse one more time for practice. Encourage children to turn to a partner and tell each other the Key Verse: I bring great news; Jesus is born! (Luke 2:10-11).

### Theo's News Supplies

Surprise Box (any box will do)
Theo puppet
CD player
bar of soap
Teacher Pack
CD: "Here, Theo"
(track 4)

### Theo's News Easy Prep

Put the soap in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.

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RIRI F

**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 4 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.

Winter Quarter

Lesson 1



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.

(Invite a child to open the Surprise Box, and have kids pass the bar of soap around so everyone can see it up close. Give kids time to guess what they'll learn from the Bible

today.)

**Teacher:** Friends, when do we need soap? (Pause for kids to answer your question.)

**Teacher:** Theo, why did you hide this bar of soap in the Surprise Box?

**Theo:** I thought you could use it.

**Teacher:** Theo, are you trying to tell me I need to take a bath?

**Theo:** No, you smell just great! My dog nose knows! I put the soap in the box because we need it to wash ourselves and to clean our houses to get ready when company is coming to visit.

**Teacher:** You picked a great day for soap, Theo. Today, we'll learn from the Bible that we can clean up as ▶ **WE GET READY FOR JESUS.** Let's find out how we can do that!

**Theo:** Have fun, boys and girls! **Teacher:** 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: A Surprise Visitor

### What You'll Do

Open your Bible to Mark 1, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: In the Bible, a man named John the Baptist worked hard to tell people about ways ▶ WE GET READY FOR JESUS. John the Baptist said that God wanted him to prepare the way for Jesus. John wanted people to stop doing bad things and start doing good things!

### Ask:

- Tell about a time you've had friends or relatives come to visit you.
- What was it like as you waited for them to arrive?
- Tell about what you did to get ready for their visit.

Say: John the Baptist told people to get ready for a special person—Jesus! People said they were sorry for their sins, and John baptized them. That means that John put the people under water for a few seconds to show everyone that they wanted to follow God and that they were allowing God to wash them clean of their sins.

Set out the "John Preaches About Jesus" poster.

Say: John lived in a hot, sandy desert. He wore clothes made of camel's hair, and he ate locusts (locusts are bugs a lot like grasshoppers). John lived a special life



### Bible Time: A Surprise Visitor Supplies

Bible
CD player
bowl of warm water
paper towels or clean
rags
poster board
washable markers
tape

### **Teacher Pack**

CD: "God Is the King" (Psalm 47:7) (track 6) "John Preaches About Jesus" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)



because he knew he had a special message to give people. He wanted people to get ready for Jesus! Let's help these people in the poster get ready for Jesus. Set out the bowl of water and encourage each child to take a paper towel or rag and dip it in the water. Remind kids that John baptized people in the water to get them ready for Jesus. Encourage kids to wipe their wet paper towels or rags on a person in the poster to show that John baptized that person.

Say: Good job getting these people ready for Jesus. Now let's use our rags to prepare our room the way we would for a special guest.

Lead the kids in using their damp paper towels or rags to wipe off tables, chairs, and toys. Then help kids decorate the room. Write "Welcome" on the poster board. Set out the markers and have children decorate the poster. Play "God Is the King" (Psalm 47:7) (track 6 on the CD) while kids work. Have kids tape the finished poster to a wall.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

- What do you like about preparing for a special guest?
- What are other things you'd do to get ready for Jesus?

Say: It was exciting to get ready for a guest! I'm sure John the Baptist must've been excited telling everyone to get ready for Jesus. We can be happy and excited as ▶ WE GET READY FOR JESUS, too! His coming is a time to celebrate!



### **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: Wipe Your Heart Clean Supplies

My Bible Playground cellophane large bowl of dirt washable markers

### Center 1: Wipe Your Heart Clean Easy Prep

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

### CENTER 1:

## Wipe Your Heart Clean

### What You'll Do

Help kids write their names on their My Bible Playground pages and find a partner.

Say: Place your piece of cellophane over the heart side of your page. Pause. Then put dirt on the heart as you tell your partner about sins in your life. Maybe you

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Lesson 1



have trouble getting along with a brother or sister, or you told a lie. Add dirt to your heart for each sin you talk about. Allow time. We all have sin in our lives. It's part of being human. God knows sin is something we all struggle with, so he sent his Son, Jesus, to wipe away our sins. Fold your piece of cellophane so the dirt stays inside and remove the dirt from the heart on your page. Allow time. Now the hearts are clean and new! That's what Jesus does for our hearts—he wipes away the sin. When we allow Jesus to do that,  $\blacktriangleright$  WE GET READY FOR JESUS.

# 144.0

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

- What were you feeling as you put the dirt on your heart?
- What were you feeling when the dirt was removed?
- Why is sin bad for us?

Say: When we say we're sorry, Jesus forgives us and cleans our hearts. Let's tell everyone how much Jesus loves them and forgives them. Let's help others as ▶ WE GET READY FOR JESUS by telling people about him. Jesus' forgiveness is for everyone.

### **CENTER 2:**

# Our Hearts Are Ready!

### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have children clean their hands. Then gather everyone around the supplies.

Demonstrate for kids how they can use the fruit and cheese slices to make heart shapes on their paper plates.

Say: To make hearts with the fruit

slices, take two slices and overlap the bottoms of the slices to form the bottom part of the heart; with the cheese, put two slices side by side.

Once kids get the basic idea, encourage them to form several hearts on their paper plates. Instruct them to call out "My heart is ready!" when they're done. When everyone is done, invite one child to pray and thank God for the snacks.

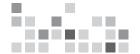


knife apples oranges slices of cheese paper plates antibacterial gel (optional)



Center 2: Our Hearts Are Ready! Easy Prep

Cut apples and oranges into thin, semicircle slices. Then cut the cheese slices to create half of a heart shape; see the photo. Put the food items each on different plates.



Lead children in this discussion.

Talk With Kids

### Ask:

- How did you get your hearts ready in this snack time?
- How can we get our hearts ready for Jesus?

Say: When we tell God we're sorry for things we've done wrong, he forgives us! Asking God for forgiveness helps us as ▶ WE GET READY FOR JESUS.

### Center 3: Jesus' Gift Supplies

2 gift-wrapped boxes 2 chairs

### Center 3: Jesus' Gift Easy Prep

Place the chairs at one end of the room, about 5 feet away from each other.

### CENTER 3:

## Jesus' Gift

### What You'll Do

Have kids form two groups. Then have the groups each form a line on the side of the room opposite the chairs. Give one of the wrapped gifts to the first child in each line.

Say: When I say "go," the first person in your line will run with the gift to the chair, go around it, and run it back to the next person in line. Pause to demonstrate. Then that person can run to the chair, go around it, and then run back to the line to keep passing the gift. Pause to demonstrate. Whenever a new person starts to run, the rest of us will yell "WE GET READY FOR JESUS!" Any questions about the rules? Allow time for questions. When everyone on your team has had a chance to run with the gift, sit down in your line. Allow time.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

- Tell about a time you received a gift.
- How is Jesus like a gift for us?

Say: Jesus wants to give us the gift of forgiveness. ▶ WE GET READY FOR JESUS and receive his gift of forgiveness when we believe in him. Jesus forgives us and loves us no matter what and that cleans us from our sins!

### Center 4: John's Focus Supplies ••••••

3 lightweight balls **Teacher Pack** 

"Jesus" picture

### CENTER 4:

## John's Focus

### What You'll Do

Have kids sit in a circle.

Say: John the Baptist lived a simple life. The Bible doesn't tell us much about what

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Lesson 1



kinds of things he owned—he probably had very little. His clothes weren't fancy and he spent each day telling people about Jesus. That's what he cared most about—helping people get ready for Jesus. ▶ WE GET READY FOR JESUS when we pay attention to Jesus, too. Let's practice doing that.



Place the "Jesus" picture in the center of the circle. Say: Let's try to focus on this picture of Jesus as we try to toss and catch balls in our circle. Start with one ball, and allow kids to toss and catch the ball for 30 seconds. How easy or difficult was it to keep your focus on Jesus while we were tossing the ball? Allow responses. Let's try again. Start with one ball and then add another ball every 15 seconds until all three are in play. Allow one minute and then gather the balls and make sure everyone is sitting in the circle again.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

- Why was it hard for you to think about Jesus during our activity?
- How could we have made it easier to think about Jesus?
- What can you do to think about Jesus at home?

Say: John chose to keep his life simple so he could make Jesus the most important thing in his life. John showed others, and us, that ▶ WE GET READY FOR JESUS by making him most important. Sometimes it's hard to keep from being distracted and it's okay that we have a lot going on in our lives. Even when we're busy and doing other things, we can think about and talk to Jesus so he stays an important part of our lives.



# **Daily Challenges**

### What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up the centers, bring everyone back to sit in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage children to share what they learned 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 for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

### Talk With Kids

Say: Today we learned that ▶ WE GET READY FOR JESUS. Choose one of these Daily Challenges to get your heart ready for Jesus this week.

Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground



Give kids these three challenges to choose from:

- 1. If you do something wrong, ask Jesus for forgiveness.
- 2. Ask a parent to take you on a drive around your neighborhood to look at Christmas lights. Talk about how people decorate their houses to get ready to celebrate Jesus' birth.
- 3. Draw a heart on paper with a pencil or on a chalkboard with chalk. Think about some things you've done wrong, and draw pictures or scribbles in your heart for those wrong things—then erase them to show that Jesus can clean your heart!

Say: If you want to ask Jesus for forgiveness, circle choice number 1. If you want to drive around your neighborhood, circle choice number 2. If you want to draw a heart, circle choice number 3. Check that each child circled a choice. 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!

# "Clean My Heart" Prayer

### What You'll Do

Have children sit in a circle on the floor. Tell kids to think of one thing they've done wrong and then invite them to repeat this prayer after you:

Dear God,
Please forgive me when I do wrong;
Help me get ready today.
Prepare my heart for Jesus,
So he can come to stay.
In Jesus' name, amen.

# Weaving Faith at Home Supplies

My Bible Playground

### Weaving Faith at Home Easy Prep

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

# Weaving Faith at Home

Send the letter to parents home with your kids or give it to parents when they pick up their children. This is a great way to show families they're important to your church and to support their role as spiritual leaders to their children.

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.

Winter Quarter

Lesson 1



# God Dwells With Us

John 1:1-14

any 5- and 6-year olds will have a hard time understanding the Bible Point "Jesus is God." Many *adults* have difficulty understanding it. Giving kids hands-on ways to grapple with the concept can help them understand it better. What kids *can* understand is that Jesus was born, and this lesson will help connect that knowledge with the knowledge that Jesus is God.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Getting Started about 10 min.	Welcoming Song Sing or listen to praises for God.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
Key Verse Activity about 10 min.	"Great News" Hop Hop from one newspaper to another while shouting the good news of Jesus' birth.	Bible, 7 sheets of newspaper, masking tape, red marker	Write one word of the simplified Key Verse on the sheets of newspaper, and tape them in sequence on the floor.
3	Theo's News Find out what a string of Christmas lights has to do with the Bible.	Surprise Box (any box will do), Theo puppet, CD player, short string of Christmas lights Teacher Pack: CD	Put the lights in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it'll be easily accessible.
Bible Exploration about 15 min.	Bible Time: Light in Darkness Hear the Bible passage and use lighted props.	Bible, flashlight, tape, string of Christmas lights <b>Teacher Pack:</b> "Jesus" picture	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



# ►Bible Point Jesus is God.

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### Key Verse

"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11).

# Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will understand and share the news that Jesus is God.

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LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Weaving Faith Into Life about 20 min. (Choose 2 centers.)	Center 1: Jesus Came Down Show Jesus coming from heaven to earth to live with us.	My Bible Playground, child- safe scissors, glue sticks, washable markers Teacher Pack: separated 3-D strips	Remove the Lesson 2 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.
	Center 2: Jesus Is God Make healthy snacks to show that Jesus is God.	crackers, whipped yogurt, plastic knives, napkins, antibacterial gel (optional)	
	Center 3: Make Room for Jesus Arrange items as preparation for a visit from Jesus.	various objects from around the room	
	Center 4: Jesus' Light Shines! Create star ornaments.	one 5-inch yellow star (card stock or paper) per child, hole punch, gold chenille wires, gold glitter glue, washable markers	Punch a hole at the top of each star.
	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Playground	
Lasting Impressions  about 10 min.	"Jesus' Light" Prayer Receive affirmations and say a prayer.	supplies from "Bible Time" activity	
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

**Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.



# God Dwells With Us

John 1:1-14



# In the Beginning the Word Was With God

The first sentence of the book of John recalls Genesis 1:1. In this first section of his Gospel, John outlines the topic he explores throughout the entire book: The Word—Jesus—was human, was divine, and came to provide salvation for all who believe.

Even in the original Greek, the emphasis in the first sentence isn't on the subject, "the Word." Instead it's on "the beginning." John wanted to make it clear that Jesus himself was present in the beginning, before the creation of the world. The fact that John says Jesus was "with God" makes it clear that he is distinct from the Father, but John then says that Jesus "was God," also making it clear that he is fully divine.

"The Word" is a title given to Jesus in the Bible only by John. John sees Jesus as the ultimate revelation of God—the Word of God in human form.

# Jesus Was Active in Creation

In emphasizing that Jesus is God, John points out in verse 3 that Jesus was active in Creation. Thus we have a picture of the Trinity at work in Creation: The Father spoke, and through the acting of the Word, his words were carried out as the Spirit moved upon the waters. Though Jesus, as God incarnate, was physically born at a point in time, the Word exists eternally as God. John leaves no doubt in his readers' minds that Jesus is fully divine.

### In Jesus, God Became Flesh and Blood

In verse 14, John points out that the Word, God himself, didn't come to earth just to teach people or to live among people, but he came as flesh—a human being with all the struggles and temptations we face.

However, in becoming flesh, the Word did not cease to be God. Jesus was fully God and fully human. For the benefit of doubters, John essentially says "We know it's true because we've seen him." Jesus revealed the glory of God himself to people on earth. God has done it all for us. All we need to do is believe.

### The Jesus Connection

Fully God and fully man, Jesus lived with people on this earth 2,000 years ago. He died, he came back to life, and he lives with us today. That's reason to celebrate!

God isn't far off from our concerns and our daily lives. Jesus Christ lives within us. Are you living with the full awareness of Jesus' presence in your life? Thank Jesus for being your friend, and seek ways you can be more fully aware of his companionship and counsel. You can write your prayer here.



### Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: "We're Glad You're
Here Today" (track 2),
"The Power!" (track 7)



# **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 them with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle. Begin the CD, and lead the kids in doing the motions and singing "We're Glad You're Here Today" (track 2 on the CD) to the tune of "Looby Loo."

We're glad you're here today. (shake hands with others)
We're glad you're here today. (shake hands with others)
We're glad you're here today. (shake hands with others)
Come learn about Jesus today. (motion friends to come)

We all will pray (fold hands) and sing. (cup hands around mouth) We all will pray (fold hands) and sing. (cup hands around mouth) We all will pray (fold hands) and sing. (cup hands around mouth) We're glad that you're here today. (clap to the beat)

We're glad you're here today. (give high fives to others)
We're glad you're here today. (point to others)
We're glad you're here today. (clap to the beat)
Come learn about Jesus today. (motion friends to come)

Say: Today we'll learn that > JESUS IS GOD. That means that Jesus has the power to do anything! Let's sing "The Power!" and praise Jesus! Begin the CD, and lead the kids in singing "The Power!" (track 7 on the CD).

He's got the POWER! (flex muscles)

Everybody come with me; (motion toward yourself)

It's time to sing (cup hands around mouth)

About Jesus' power all around me. (extend arms and turn in a circle)

We gotta let the whole world know

That Jesus Christ is on the throne! (point up)

(Chorus)

He's got the POWER! (flex muscles)
Everybody's talkin' 'bout his POWER! (turn to another person as you sing)

Winter Quarter

Lesson 2



**Look up,** (look up) **look down,** (look down) **look all around,** (hold a hand at your brow and look around)

And you will see his POWER! (spread and wiggle fingers)

Everybody come with me; (motion toward yourself)
It's time to sing (cup hands around mouth)
About Jesus' power all around me. (extend arms and turn in a circle)
We gotta let the whole world know
That Jesus Christ is on the throne! (point up)

(Repeat chorus 2x.)

The power to be thankful! (echo)
The power to be brave! (echo)
The power to lend a helping hand! (echo)
To live forever, you know we can! (echo)

**POWER!** (flex muscles)

Everybody's talkin' 'bout his POWER! (turn to another person as you sing)

Look up, (look up) look down, (look down) look all around, (hold a hand at your brow and look around)

And you will see his POWER! (spread and wiggle fingers)

(Repeat chorus.)

**Look up**, (look up) **look down**, (look down) **look all around**, (hold a hand at your brow and look around)

And you will see his POWER! (spread and wiggle fingers)

**Look up,** (look up) **look down,** (look down) **look all around,** (hold a hand at your brow and look around)

And you will see his POWER! (spread and wiggle fingers)

Say: Jesus is powerful because > JESUS IS GOD. No one in the world is as powerful as God! Let's play a game to learn today's Key Verse and learn more about why Jesus is so powerful.



<sup>&</sup>quot;The Power!" by Jay Stocker. © 2008 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.



### "Great News" Hop Supplies

Bible

7 sheets of newspaper masking tape red marker

### "Great News" Hop Easy Prep

Write one word of the simplified Key Verse on the sheets of newspaper, and tape them in sequence on the floor.



# "Great News" Hop

### What You'll Do

Have the children sit in a circle. Open your Bible to Luke 2:10-11, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Our Key Verse from the Bible, Luke 2:10-11, says, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord." This means that the angel told the shepherds, "I bring great news; Jesus is born!" Let's say that together. Lead children in repeating the simplified version of the Key Verse after you: I bring great news; Jesus is born! (Luke 2:10-11).

Show children the newspapers on the floor.

Say: People read the newspaper to find out what's happening in the world. Jesus' birth is great news for everyone, because Jesus came to help everyone in the world. Let's play a game with the newspapers as we tell each other the good news of Jesus' birth. Have kids take turns hopping from one newspaper to the next and shouting the words to the Key Verse.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

- What do you think of the good news about Jesus that we shouted?
- What other good news can you tell others about Jesus?
- Who can you tell about the great news of Jesus?

Say: News of Jesus' birth is exciting because > JESUS IS GOD! Jesus came to earth to show us how much he loves us. We can tell this great news to others. Let's say our Key Verse together one more time. Lead children in saying the simplified Key Verse with you: I bring great news; Jesus is born! (Luke 2:10-11).





### 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 4 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.

(Invite a child to open the Surprise Box, and have the kids pass the string of lights around the circle so everyone can see it up close. Give kids time to guess what they'll learn from the Bible today.)

**Teacher:** Friends, what can we do with Christmas lights?

(Pause for kids to answer your question.)

**Teacher:** Theo, why did you hide these Christmas lights in the Surprise Box? **Theo:** I thought you could use them. We use lights on Christmas trees and on our houses. They show everyone how bright and happy we are because ▶ **JESUS IS** 

**GOD**—and soon we're going to celebrate Jesus' birthday! **Teacher:** Let's see what the Bible says about Jesus and light!

**Theo:** Have fun, boys and girls! **Teacher:** 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: Light in Darkness

### What You'll Do

Open your Bible to John 1, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Today we'll learn from the Bible that ▶ JESUS IS GOD.

Lay out the string of Christmas lights in a straight line on the floor, and place the plug near an outlet. Put a flashlight, the "Jesus" picture, and a roll of tape by the outlet.

Say: Jesus was there at the very beginning of time when there was nothing except darkness—no earth, no stars...nothing! Let's see what it might've looked like.



### Theo's News Supplies

Surprise Box (any box will do)
Theo puppet
CD player
short string of
Christmas lights
Teacher Pack
CD: "Here, Theo"
(track 4)

### Theo's News Easy Prep

Put the lights in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.

# Bible Time: Light in Darkness Supplies

Bible flashlight tape string of Christmas lights

**Teacher Pack** "Jesus" picture



Have the children sit in rows on either side of the Christmas lights, without touching them. Turn off the room lights, and sit near the flashlight.

Say: Imagine that we're at the beginning of time before God made anything. Close your eyes, because it was probably even darker than it is in our room! Wait a moment; and then have the children open their eyes.

Say: The Bible says that Jesus was with God in the beginning and that ▶ JESUS IS GOD. Through Jesus, all things were made! He's so powerful that he made everything from nothing.

Turn on the flashlight.

Say: John the Baptist, an important man in the Bible, said that we can get ready for Jesus. John told the world that Jesus is life and light! The light shines in the darkness.

Help kids tape the flashlight to the back of the picture of Jesus so the light shines through Jesus' face.

Say: It can be a great comfort to have a light in the darkness. John said that Jesus was a light in the darkness.

▶ JESUS IS GOD. He came to earth to live with us so we can know how much he loves us. We can be brave because Jesus is a powerful light in the darkness. When we believe in Jesus, we have his light and life. Plug in the Christmas lights. When we believe in Jesus, we're God's children—we shine his light and we'll live forever. Wow! ▶ JESUS IS GOD, and he wants everyone to live forever with him.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

- Why do we feel braver in the light than in the dark?
- Why do you want Jesus' light in your life?
- What do you want to tell others about Jesus this week?

Say: When we bring our friends to church, tell people about Jesus, and are kind to others, we're letting others know about Jesus. That's called "letting our light shine." With our kind words and actions, we let Jesus' love shine through us so others will know him, too.

Pass around the flashlight with Jesus' picture attached to it. As each child holds it, have everyone else join you in saying "Let your light shine, [name of child]." Then that child can shout out the Bible Point: **JESUS IS GOD.** 

Say: This week, each time you see a light, remember to let your light shine and tell someone about Jesus. Jesus is God, and he wants everyone to live with him forever.





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:

## Jesus Came Down

### What You'll Do

Help kids write their names on their pages. Have the children each cut out the picture of Jesus from the bottom of their pages. Give each child a 3-D strip to glue on his or her page to make a connection between heaven and earth. Have the children form pairs, and let them move the Jesus figure from heaven to earth along the strip.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

What's amazing about God coming to earth and living with us?

Say: Jesus has always been with God from the beginning and a part of all God has made — ▶ JESUS IS GOD! He came from heaven to earth to live with us and show us his incredible love. Let's tell everyone about Jesus!

### CENTER 2:

# Jesus Is God

### What You'll Do

Have children clean their hands. Then gather everyone.

Show kids how to use a plastic knife to spread yogurt on a cracker and place another cracker on top of the yogurt. Have the children each look at the top cracker and say, "Jesus is God." Then have the kids turn over their cracker sandwiches and say, "God is Jesus. They are one!" Invite a child to pray, and then let the kids eat and enjoy the snacks.

### Center 1: Jesus Came Down Supplies

My Bible Playground child-safe scissors glue sticks washable markers **Teacher Pack** separated 3-D strips

### Center 1: Jesus Came Down Easy Prep

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

### Center 2: Jesus Is God Supplies

crackers whipped yogurt plastic knives napkins antibacterial gel (optional)





# Center 3: Make Room

various objects from around the room

for Jesus Supplies

### Center 4: Jesus' Light Shines! Supplies

one 5-inch yellow star (card stock or paper) per child hole punch gold chenille wires gold glitter glue washable markers

### Center 4: Jesus' Light Shines! Easy Prep

Punch a hole at the top of each star.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

- Why did God send Jesus to earth?
- What can we do to thank Jesus for coming from heaven?

Say: ▶ JESUS IS GOD, and God is Jesus. They are one, the way our snack was one, and through Jesus, God lived with us as a human being. God loves us so much he made a way for us to be close to him through Jesus.

### CENTER 3:

## Make Room for Jesus

### What You'll Do

Set out a variety of objects from around your room.

Say: JESUS IS GOD and he came to earth to live with us. Let's pretend Jesus is coming to visit us here today. What can you do with these items to prepare our room to welcome Jesus? Have kids work together to arrange the items according to their ideas.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

- Tell about what you did to make the room look special for Jesus.
- Why do you want to prepare a special welcome for Jesus?
- What are things you can do this week to welcome Jesus?

Say: > JESUS IS GOD. He is the most important and special person ever. We welcome Jesus into our lives because he loves us.

### CENTER 4:

# Jesus' Light Shines!

### What You'll Do

Have kids sit in a circle.

Say: The Bible describes Jesus as the light that shines in the darkness. One type of light in the darkness we can see every night is stars. Stars are lights that God created to shine in the darkness. Let's make stars to represent the light of Jesus.

Winter Quarter

Lesson 2



Help kids write their name on the back of a star. Then encourage kids to use the art supplies to decorate their stars. Once kids finish, help them each string a chenille wire through the hole at the top of their star and twist the ends of the wire together, creating a loop.



Let children know that their stars can now hang on a Christmas tree!

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

- What do you like about stars?
- What do you like about Jesus?
- What can you do with the star you just made to remind you of Jesus' light?

Say: This week, show the light of Jesus' love to others by giving your star to someone in your family.

### Ask:

Tell about who you'll give your star to and why he or she needs Jesus' light.

Say: Your stars shine so beautifully! Because ▶ JESUS IS GOD, his light of love is bright and can shine in our lives. When we allow Jesus' light to shine in us, we show others we believe that ▶ JESUS IS GOD and we share the good news of Jesus' love.



### **IMPRESSIONS**

# **Daily Challenges**

### What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up the centers, bring everyone back to sit in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage children to share what they learned 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 for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

### Talk With Kids

Say: Today we learned that ▶ JESUS IS GOD. Choose one of these Daily Challenges to understand and share the news this week that Jesus is God.

Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground



Give kids these three challenges to choose from:

- 1. Cut out a cross shape from construction paper. Write "Thank You" on it, and keep it in your room as a reminder of God's love.
- 2. Look at the night sky or a picture of the stars, and tell Jesus why you're thankful he's a light in the darkness.
- 3. Have your mom or dad take you up someplace high, like a big hill or even to the top of a slide. Tell your mom or dad how Jesus lived in heaven and then came down to earth to help us.

Say: If you want to make a cross, circle choice number 1. If you want to look at stars, circle choice number 2. If you want to go someplace high, circle choice number 3. Check that each child circled a choice. 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!

# "Jesus' Light" Prayer

### "Jesus' Light" Prayer Supplies

supplies from "Bible Time" activity

### What You'll Do

Have the children sit on the floor in rows on either side of the string of lights, just as they did during the "Bible Time" activity. Plug in the lights. You'll also need the flashlight with Jesus' picture attached to it.

One at a time, have each child hold the flashlight. As each child holds the light, say, "Jesus shines his light for [child's name]."

As a prayer, let each child say, "JESUS IS GOD and his light can live in me." At the end, have everyone close the prayer by saying with you, "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.



# Jesus Is Born

Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-20

ost 5- and 6-year-olds have a keen sense of the uniqueness of Christmas. Some of those feelings, however, are related to the commercial celebrations that take place during this time. It's important to keep children's attention focused on the true meaning of the season. Use this lesson to gently guide conversations away from any external, commercial topics and toward discussions of Jesus' birth. Show your delight and excitement at the gift of Jesus, and kids will find joy in Jesus' birth, too.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Getting Started about 10 min.	Welcoming Song Sing or listen to praises for God.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
Key Verse Activity about 10 min.	Spread the News! Cut out newspaper headlines to remind them of the good news of Jesus' birth.	Bible,1 copy per child of the "Newspaper" handout (at the end of this lesson), tape, child-safe scissors, paper grocery bag, marker	Cut open a paper grocery bag and cut off the bottom. Draw a stable outline on it, and tape it to a wall at a child's eye level.
Bible Exploration	Theo's News Find out what a baby blanket has to do with the Bible.	Surprise Box (any box will do), Theo puppet, CD player, baby blanket <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD	Put the baby blanket in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
about 15 min.	Bible Time: Hark! Blow paper trumpets, and hear that Jesus was born.	Bible, CD player, construction paper <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



# ►Bible Point Jesus was born.

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Key Verse

"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11).

### Weaving Faith Into Life Children will celebrate Jesus' birth.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Weaving Faith Into Life about 20 min. (Choose 2 centers.)	Center 1: Jesus in the Manger Complete the manger scene and tell about what they've learned about Jesus' birth.	My Bible Playground, tape, scissors, tissues, 1 sheet of brown construction paper per 9 kids, washable markers Teacher Pack: baby Jesus dolls	Remove the Lesson 3 pages from each My Bible Playground student book. Cut each sheet of construction paper into 9 rectangles.
	Center 2: Edible News Make yummy "newspapers."	sliced bread, napkins, 1 resealable plastic bag per child, 2 cups of Greek yogurt, scissors, antibacterial gel (optional)	Put a tablespoon of yogurt in each bag.
	Center 3: Announcing! Tell about Jesus' birth.	several dolls, baby supplies, old cell phone, paper, washable markers	
	Center 4: Rock-a-Bye, Jesus Make puppets and sing a song.	1 lunch-size paper bag per child, washable markers, CD player <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD	
Lasting Impressions about 10 min.	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Playground	
	"Great News" Prayer Tell each other about Jesus.		
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

**Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.



# Jesus Is Born

Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-20



### Supernatural Birth

The meaning of the word translated *virgin* in Luke 1:27 has been contested by some scholars. Though it is possible to translate the word simply as *young woman*, it seems clear in the context and from other statements that *virgin* is what Luke intended. He was no doubt seeking to confirm in people's minds that this was a miraculous, supernatural birth.

# An Angel Visits Mary

Zeroing in on this supernatural theme, Luke begins by describing the visit of an angel. The angel's announcement that Mary was favored by God no doubt caused the girl some confusion. She was an obscure person from an obscure family in Israel. In her culture, it was assumed that those in high positions were the ones favored by God.

The angel's description of her child must have confused Mary even more. How could any human—much less a young virgin peasant—give birth to the Son of God? However, Mary's response shows us her heart: As confusing and frightening as the angel's message must have been, Mary wanted to live out God's will for her life.

## The Difficult Circumstances of Jesus' Birth

The census, which involved traveling to the hometown of Joseph's family, created more than just physical difficulties for the couple. In Jewish culture, if a woman was made pregnant by her pledged husband prior to the wedding, both were shamed by the dishonor. If the woman was made pregnant by someone else, she was to be divorced and then rejected by the entire culture. So Mary and Joseph faced possible serious rejection—perhaps even from family—as they traveled to this area where relatives of

each may still have been living. Yet the couple went willingly, following through on God's plan for them.

### Jesus Is Born

Despite the lowly circumstances of the birth, it was boldly announced by a throng of angels. This announcement truly brought a reason to celebrate, for the one who was born would be

- Savior—who would deliver them from bondage,
- Christ—the anointed Messiah promised in the Old Testament, and
- Lord—the Hebrew name for God.

# The Jesus Connection

Jesus was born for *us*. He came to this world as a baby and fully experienced life as a human just so he could be our friend and our Savior.

When we become adults, Christmas can simply be an additional stressor on an already full to-do list. We may lose our sense of wonder. What detracts from your sacred celebration of Jesus' birth? Pray about what Christ's presence on earth and in your heart means to you—and ask God to help you celebrate Jesus' birth with joy and wonder. You can write your prayer here.



# Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player **Teacher Pack**CD: "We're Glad You're
Here Today" (track 2),
"Silent Night" (track 8)



# **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. Begin the CD, and lead the kids in doing the motions and singing "We're Glad You're Here Today" (track 2 on the CD) to the tune of "Looby Loo."

We're glad you're here today. (shake hands with others)
We're glad you're here today. (shake hands with others)
We're glad you're here today. (shake hands with others)
Come learn about Jesus today. (motion friends to come)

We all will pray (fold hands) and sing. (cup hands around mouth) We all will pray (fold hands) and sing. (cup hands around mouth) We all will pray (fold hands) and sing. (cup hands around mouth) We're glad that you're here today. (clap to the beat)

We're glad you're here today. (give high fives to others)
We're glad you're here today. (point to others)
We're glad you're here today. (clap to the beat)
Come learn about Jesus today. (motion friends to come)

Say: Today we'll learn that JESUS WAS BORN! Let's sing a song about the wonderful night that baby Jesus came. Play "Silent Night" (track 8 on the CD) and encourage the kids to sing and do the motions with you.

Silent night, holy night, (motion "shh" with index finger against lips)

All is calm, all is bright (move arms in a big circle, from above your head down to your sides)

'Round yon virgin mother and child. (rock your arms as if you're cradling a baby)
Holy infant, so tender and mild, (keep rocking your arms)
Sleep in heavenly peace, (place hands together like a pillow by your cheek)
Sleep in heavenly peace. (keep sleeping on your pillow)
(Repeat.)

Winter Quarter

Lesson 3

<sup>&</sup>quot;Silent Night" by Josef Mohr.



Say: The night ► JESUS WAS BORN was a very special night—the most special night. That's why we call it "holy." Let's find out more about what happened when ► JESUS WAS BORN.





# Spread the News!

### What You'll Do

Have the children sit in a circle. Open your Bible to Luke 2:10-11, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Our Key Verse from the Bible, Luke 2:10-11, says, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord." This means that the angel told the shepherds, "I bring great news; Jesus is born!" Let's say that together. Lead children in repeating the simplified Key Verse after you: I bring great news; Jesus is born! (Luke 2:10-11).

Motion to the paper stable on the wall. Say: ▶ **JESUS WAS BORN** in a stable, which is like a barn—a place where animals stay.

### Ask:

■ Where were you born?

Say: Your parents may have called people on the phone or sent a letter or an announcement in the mail telling the good news that you were born or adopted into your family. We also might hear important news from radio, TV, websites, magazines, and newspapers. Set out the scissors and copies of the "Newspaper" handout.

Say: Even though there were no newspapers during Jesus' day, let's use these sample newspapers to remind us of that great news— ▶ JESUS WAS BORN! Cut out some of the big words, the headlines, from the papers. Headlines tell us all kinds of important news. When it's your turn, you can say the Key Verse, "I bring great news; Jesus is born!" and then tape your headline to this stable.

One at a time, have kids say the Key Verse and tape their headlines to the paper stable. Encourage everyone to think of one person they can tell the good news to this week. Then, on the count of three, have kids shout out the Key Verse together: I bring great news; Jesus is born! (Luke 2:10-11).

# Spread the News!

Supplies

### Bible

1 copy per child of the "Newspaper" handout (at the end of this lesson) tape child-safe scissors paper grocery bag marker

### Spread the News! Easy Prep

Cut open a paper grocery bag and cut off the bottom. Draw a stable outline on it, and tape it to a wall at a child's eye level.



### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

What can you do this week to share the good news that Jesus was born?

Say: The amazing news that ▶ JESUS WAS BORN is a blessing meant for everyone. When we tell about Jesus, we help others know the good news, too.



### **BIBLE**

### **EXPLORATION**

### Theo's News Supplies

Surprise Box (any box will do)
Theo puppet
CD player
baby blanket **Teacher Pack**CD: "Here, Theo"
(track 4)

### Theo's News Easy Prep

Put the baby blanket in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.

## 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 4 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.

(Invite a willing child to open the Surprise Box, and have the kids pass the baby blanket around the circle so everyone can see it up close. Give kids time to guess what they'll learn from the Bible today.)

**Teacher:** Friends, who uses a blanket like this? (Pause for kids to answer your question.)

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

Theo: Babies use blankets like this.

Teacher: Let's hear the exciting news about a very special baby who was born in a not-

so-special place.

**Theo:** Have fun, boys and girls! **Teacher:** 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: Hark!**

### What You'll Do

Open your Bible to Luke 2, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Today in the Bible we'll hear the good news that ▶ JESUS WAS BORN.

### Ask:

- Tell about good news you've heard at home or school.
- What did you do when you heard the news?

Say: Parents or friends might tell us the good news about an upcoming vacation or a new baby being born. We want to celebrate when we hear good news! We might use trumpets to celebrate at parties, parades, and special times at church. Let's make paper trumpets to celebrate the good news we hear on the CD. Show kids how to roll their paper into a cone or trumpet. I'm going to play the CD and each time you hear a trumpet sound, put the cone up to your mouth, make a sound like a trumpet ("da-da-da-da"), and then shout "Good news!"

Play "Celebrate the Good News" (track 9 on the CD), and encourage the kids to celebrate with their trumpets!

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

- What do you think of the good news we heard on the CD?
- Why do you think we celebrate that Jesus was born?
- What does your family do to celebrate Jesus' birth?

Say: The angel had such good news for Mary and for the whole world. Let's share the good news with everyone, so we all can celebrate that ▶ JESUS WAS BORN!



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.



### Bible Time: Hark! Supplies

Bible
CD player
construction paper
Teacher Pack
CD: "Celebrate the Good
News" (track 9)



# Center 1: Jesus in the Manger Supplies

My Bible Playground tape scissors tissues 1 sheet of brown construction paper per 9 kids washable markers Teacher Pack baby Jesus dolls

### Center 1: Jesus in the Manger Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson 3 pages from each My Bible Playground student book. Cut each sheet of construction paper into 9 rectangles.

# Center 2: Edible News Supplies

sliced bread
napkins
1 resealable plastic bag
per child
2 cups of Greek yogurt
scissors
antibacterial gel
(optional)

# ALLERGYALERT

### Center 2: Edible News Easy Prep

Put a tablespoon of yogurt in each bag.

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### CENTER 1:

# Jesus in the Manger

### What You'll Do

Help kids write their names on their pages. Give each child a construction paper rectangle, a tissue, and a baby Jesus doll. Ask children each to fold up the sides of the construction paper and tape the bottom of the "manger" to the page. Then let each child wrap one of the miniature dolls with a tissue and place it in the manger. Have the children form pairs and take turns telling each other about Jesus' birth.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

- Tell about the things you like most about sharing good news with a friend or family member.
- Who are people you'd like to tell about the good news of Jesus' birth?

Say: We love to give people good news because it makes them happy. We can give others the very best news: ▶ JESUS WAS BORN!

### CENTER 2:

### **Edible News**

### What You'll Do

Have children clean their hands, and gather everyone.

Give each child a slice of bread, a napkin, and a bag of yogurt you prepared beforehand. Snip a small corner from each bag. Show children how to squeeze the yogurt through the corner of the bag so they can "write" on the slice of bread. (Lines and squiggles are fine!) Tell kids to pretend they're writing a news story about Jesus' birth. Encourage children to share their stories with each other. Pray and thank God for sending his Son, Jesus; then encourage kids to eat their "newspapers."

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

- What are some creative ways you can tell people the good news of Jesus' birth?
- What can you tell people about what makes Jesus special?

Say: We can share the good news that ▶ JESUS WAS BORN with everyone we

Lesson 3 P



know! It's fun to think of creative ways to tell others about how God's Son was born in a manger.

**Center 3: Announcing!** 

Supplies

several dolls

baby supplies old cellphone paper

washable markers

### CENTER 3:

### **Announcing!**

■ **Tip** Check with your church nursery director for baby supplies that can be used or borrowed.

### What You'll Do

Set out dolls and baby supplies, an old cellphone, and paper and markers. Encourage children to think of as many ways as possible to tell others about the birth of Jesus, using the items you've set out. Have them take turns using the supplies to share the good news with each other.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What are your favorite ways to tell others about Jesus?
- When you go home today, how will you tell someone about Jesus' birth?

Say: There are lots of ways to tell the good news of Jesus' birth. See if you can use one of the ways we talked about today to tell someone that ▶ JESUS WAS BORN!

### Center 4: Rock-a-Bye, Jesus

### Supplies

1 lunch-size paper bag per child washable markers CD player **Teacher Pack** CD: "Jesus Was Born" (track 10)

### CENTER 4:

### Rock-a-Bye, Jesus

#### What You'll Do

Set out the paper bags and washable markers. Have the children use the markers to add facial features to the bottom of the bags. Then let each child put a hand in the bag and use it like a puppet. Encourage children to cradle the puppet with the other arm.

Tell the kids to cradle and rock "baby Jesus" as they sing "Jesus Was Born" (track 10 on the CD) to the tune of "Jesus Loves Me."

Jesus was born long ago. In a stable, oh so small. Angels told the good news so We would know God loves us all.



Yes, Jesus was born. Yes, Jesus was born. Yes, Jesus was born, Was born to save us all.

(Repeat from the beginning.)

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- Tell about a baby you know.
- What are some of your favorite things about babies?

Say: Babies are always special, but Jesus was the most special of all. Jesus was born to save us from our sins, and everyone who believes in him can live with him forever. Let's tell our family and friends that ▶ JESUS WAS BORN!



LASTING

**IMPRESSIONS** 

### Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground

### Daily Challenges

### What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up the centers, bring everyone back to sit in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage children to share what they learned 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 for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

#### Talk With Kids

Say: Today we learned that > JESUS WAS BORN. Choose one of these Daily Challenges to celebrate Jesus' birth this week.

Give kids these three challenges to choose from:

- 1. Make a present for Jesus such as a craft, picture, or card. Tell Jesus that the present is for his birthday and that you are glad he was born to help us.
- 2. Sing "Silent Night" with your family.
- 3. Sit in a circle with your family and tell each other why you're thankful for Jesus' birth.

Say: If you want to make a present for Jesus, circle choice number 1. If you want to sing "Silent Night," circle choice number 2. If you want to tell why you're thankful

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Lesson 3

Pre-K & K/Ages 5 & 6



for Jesus, circle choice number 3. Check that each child circled a choice. 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!



### "Great News" Prayer

### What You'll Do

Have children think of good news they can share about Jesus. For example, kids might say, "Jesus loves me," "Jesus saves us," "We'll live forever because of Jesus," or "Jesus is God." Go around the circle and have each child tell the good news.

After all children have shared, lead everyone in praying. Pray: Thank you, God, that Jesus was born. There's so much good news to share about Jesus! He came to save us. He loves us. He comforts us and gives us peace. Help us tell others the good news. 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.

## Newspaper

### **Great News!**

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

### Jesus Is Born!

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

# Glory to God in the Highest!

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

### The Messiah Is Here!

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

# Tell Everyone All About It!

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.





## Faithful People Thank God for Jesus Luke 2:22-40

ive- and six-year-olds know what joy feels like, from eating their favorite foods to playing with their friends. But it's easy for kids (and adults) to take it for granted when they receive or enjoy something special. When we teach children the importance of saying thanks to others, we can teach them to be thankful for God's good gifts—especially Jesus! Use this lesson to show kids we can thank God for Jesus and how to do so.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Getting Started about 10 min.	Welcoming Song Sing or listen to praises for God.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
Key Verse Activity about 10 min.	Zigzag Tag Hurry and tell others that Jesus is born.	Bible	
<b>3</b> Bible	Theo's News Find out what a smiling top has to do with the Bible.	Surprise Box (any box will do), Theo puppet, CD player <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD, smiling top	Put the smiling top in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
Exploration about 15 min.	Bible Time: Spin! Take turns repeating the Bible Point, and say what they're thankful for.	Bible, CD player Teacher Pack: CD, smiling top	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





► Bible Point
We thank God for Jesus.

### Key Verse

"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11).

# Weaving Faith Into Life Children will thank God

.....

Children will thank God for sending Jesus.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Weaving Faith Into Life about 20 min. (Choose 2 centers.)	Center 1: Arms of Thankfulness Remember that Simeon and Anna praised God.	My Bible Playground, crayons, child-safe scissors, tape	Remove the Lesson 4 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.
	Center 2: Thankfulness in the Temple Construct a make-believe temple, and act out the Bible passage.	bear-shaped cookies, books, antibacterial gel (optional)	
	Center 3: Thankful Bubbles Blow bubbles and give thanks to God for Jesus.	bottles of bubble solution with wands	
	Center 4: A World of Thanks Create a thank-you card in different languages.	1 copy per child, on various colors of paper, of the "Thanks" handout (at the end of this lesson), 1 sheet of white card stock per child, child-safe scissors, washable markers, glue sticks	Cut the copied pages in fourths so children have a variety of colors. You'll need enough for each child to have every language.
Lasting Impressions about 10 min.	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Playground	
	Thankful Prayer Thank God for Jesus.	Teacher Pack: smiling top	
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

**Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.



## Faithful People Thank God for Jesus

Luke 2:22-40



### Mary, Joseph, and Jesus Journey to Jerusalem

Joseph and Mary's trip to Jerusalem to have Jesus consecrated was in accordance with the Law as given in Exodus 13:2. The sacrifice offered was a symbolic remembrance, looking back to the Exodus, when the firstborn of Israel were spared as all the Egyptian firstborn were slain. The sacrifice symbolized the "buying back" of the firstborn son, who belonged to God.

### Mary and Joseph **Present Jesus at the Temple**

Because this ceremony was required for all firstborn sons in Israel, there must have been many babies brought to the Temple every day. God's shepherding of these events is evident, as God brought Simeon to the Temple on this particular day to see this particular baby and to give his thanks and praise to God for what this child would do.

### Simeon Foretells Jesus' Future

On this happy day, Simeon foretold several uncomfortable things that Jesus would cause:

- Through their choices about Jesus, some would fall and some would rise.
- People would be challenged as Jesus' life would be a sign, or a warning, against evil lifestyles.
- The condition of people's hearts would be revealed.
- Mary's heart would be pierced with anguish.

Despite the happy event, God wanted it known that Jesus would also cause division and pain among the Jews.

### **Anna Thanks God for Jesus**

Anna, a prophetess, had been worshipping devoutly at the Temple for a long, long time. She must have seen thousands of babies being brought for consecration during those years. Yet when Mary and Joseph arrived with Jesus, Anna knew that this was the baby who would save Israel, and she gave thanks to God for him.

God blessed these two faithful followers, Simeon and Anna, by allowing them to see Jesus in their old age, and they responded with grateful praise.

### The Jesus Connection

Simeon and Anna were very thankful to see Jesus. How thankful are you that God gave us Jesus? Being thankful isn't just something we do for God or others—it's good for us. Thankfulness gives us hope. Thankfulness helps us remember everything God has done for us in the past and thus to believe that God will be there for us—and those we care for and pray for—in the future. Make time this week to thank God for who he is and for everything he's done. You can begin your list and write a prayer here.

Lesson 4



# Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: "We're Glad You're
Here Today" (track
2), "Jesus Loves Me
Rock" (track 3)



### **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 everyone and welcome each child with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle. Lead the kids in doing the motions and singing "We're Glad You're Here Today" (track 2 on the CD) to the tune of "Looby Loo."

We're glad you're here today. (shake hands with others)
We're glad you're here today. (shake hands with others)
We're glad you're here today. (shake hands with others)
Come learn about Jesus today. (motion friends to come)

We all will pray (fold hands) and sing. (cup hands around mouth) We all will pray (fold hands) and sing. (cup hands around mouth) We all will pray (fold hands) and sing. (cup hands around mouth) We're glad that you're here today. (clap to the beat)

We're glad you're here today. (give high fives to others)
We're glad you're here today. (point to others)
We're glad you're here today. (clap to the beat)
Come learn about Jesus today. (motion friends to come)

Say: ► WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS and we can do that through worship, praise, prayer, and singing to God. Let's sing "Jesus Loves Me Rock" to celebrate Jesus!

Play "Jesus Loves Me Rock" (track 3 on the CD), and encourage the kids to sing and do the motions with you.

Jesus loves me, (echo) (cross arms over your chest to sign "love")
This I know. (echo) (point to head)
For the Bible (echo) (put hands together as if they're a book)
Tells me so. (echo) (point to self with thumbs)
Little children (echo) (hold hands out, palms down)
To him belong. (echo) (raise arms)

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Lesson 4

Pre-K & K/Ages 5 & 6



They are weak, but (echo) (swing arms from side to side)
He's so strong! (echo) (show muscles)

Jaaayyy! (J) (cup hands around mouth)

**Eeeeee!** (E) (cup hands around mouth)

**Sssssss!** (S) (bend arms at elbows, and swing them back and forth)

**Uuuuuuuu!** (U) (raise arms)

Sssssss! (S) (bend arms at elbows, and swing them back and forth)

And what's that spell? (Jesus!) (cup hands around mouth as you shout "Jesus!")

And who do you love? (Jesus!)

And who loves you? (Jesus!)

Who died for you? (Jesus!)

And who's your guy? (Jesus!)

The apple of your eye! (Jesus!)

And who's your friend? (Jesus!)

He'll love ya to the end!

(Repeat from the beginning.)

Say: These songs show how we're thankful for Jesus. Singing is a great way that WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS. Let's learn about some other ways.



### Zigzag Tag

#### What You'll Do

Have the children sit in a circle. Open your Bible to Luke 2:10-11, and show the children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Our Key Verse from the Bible, Luke 2:10-11, says, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord." This means that the angel told the shepherds, "I bring great news; Jesus is born!" Let's say that together. Lead the children in repeating the simplified Key Verse with you: I bring great news; Jesus is born! (Luke 2:10-11).

Have kids form two lines facing each other. Separate the two lines of children by 15 or more feet to create an area in which they'll be able to take turns running back and forth between the lines.



Zigzag Tag Supplies

Bible

<sup>&</sup>quot;Jesus Loves Me Rock" by Dean-o. © 2003 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.



Say: Let's play a game called Zigzag Tag. Invite a child to be the first runner. Hurry to the other line and tell a person in that line, "I bring great news; Jesus is born!" Allow time. Now you can trade places with the person you chose and then that person will run to the other line and share the "great news" with someone else. You can't choose someone who's already had a turn, unless everyone has already gone. You can tell any good news about Jesus you can think of to the next person in line, such as "Jesus loves you" or "Jesus is God's Son." Ready? Let's start with the person who was told the good news. Motion to the child the first child chose. When both lines have completely switched sides, the game is over. Play again, if time permits.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What made our tag game exciting?
- What's exciting about the news that Jesus was born?
- What can you tell someone about Jesus today?

Say: After the angels announced that Jesus was born, the people who heard the great news ran to tell others. They were thankful for Jesus, and they were excited to tell others about God's Son. Like those people, ▶ WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS and we can share the good news of Jesus' birth with others. Today we'll learn about a lot of ways we can thank God for Jesus.



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 4 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 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.

(Invite a child to open the Surprise Box, and have the kids pass the smiling top around so everyone can see it up close. Give kids time to guess what they'll learn from the Bible today.)

Teacher: Friends, what do you think this smiling top has to do with the Bible?

### Theo's News Supplies

Surprise Box (any box will do) Theo puppet CD player **Teacher Pack** CD: "Here, Theo"

CD: "Here, Theo' (track 4) smiling top

Theo's News Easy Prep

Put the smiling top in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.



(Pause for kids to answer your question.)

**Teacher:** Theo, why did you hide this smiling top in the Surprise Box?

**Theo:** Well, because it's a toy, and playing with it makes me happy! I especially like the smiling face on this toy, because it's smiling all the time—even when it's been spinning a long time. (Spin your puppet hand around several times.) Whew! That makes me tired! Some people in the Bible waited a long time for Jesus, and they were very happy and thankful that Jesus was born.

**Teacher:** Let's hear about them now. Thanks for coming to church today, Theo!

**Theo:** Have fun, boys and girls! **Teacher:** 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: Spin!

### What You'll Do

Open your Bible to Luke 2:22, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Today the Bible tells us that ▶ WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS.

Spin the smiling top. When it stops, have the child sitting closest to the top say the Bible Point, and let that child spin the top. Let several kids have a turn, and then retrieve the top.

Say: The smiling top reminds us to be happy and thankful—especially to be thankful for Jesus! Let's listen to a few children who are thankful. As you listen, think about what the kids are thankful for.

Play "Thankfulness" (track 5 on the CD). There are three short stories on the CD. Pause the CD after each story, and ask the children the following question.

#### Ask:

■ Tell about a time you were thankful.

Say: The kids in those stories had a lot to be thankful for, and so do we. God has blessed us so much! Most of all, WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS!

As you tell what happened in the Bible, have children follow you in the motions indicated in the parentheses.

Say: Today in the Bible we'll learn about some people who were also very happy and thankful. Mary and Joseph took baby Jesus to the Temple, which is like a church.

A man named Simeon went to the Temple on the same day as Mary, Joseph, and Jesus. Simeon worshipped and loved God. When Simeon saw (put your hand above



### Bible Time: Spin! Supplies

Bible CD player **Teacher Pack** CD: "Thankfulness" (track 5) smiling top



your eyes and look around) Mary, Joseph, and Jesus, he went to them and picked up baby Jesus (mimic picking up a baby). Then he thanked God for sending Jesus. Show me how you might thank God for sending Jesus. Pause while the kids do this.

Say: There was also a woman named Anna at the Temple. She was very old (walk around pretending to use a cane), and she loved God very much. When she saw Jesus (peer out with your hand horizontal over your eyes), she gave thanks to God for sending Jesus (put hands together and pray). Let's all thank God for Jesus. Lead kids in saying, "We're thankful for Jesus." Both Simeon and Anna said that Jesus was special and would be the answer to the prayers of many people.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What are some things you're thankful for?
- What do you do to show that you're thankful for those things?
- What can we do to show God we're thankful for Jesus?

Say: Just as Simeon and Anna were thankful for Jesus, ► WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS, too!



### 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: Arms of Thankfulness Supplies

My Bible Playground crayons child-safe scissors tape

### Center 1: Arms of Thankfulness Easy Prep

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

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#### CENTER 1:

### Arms of Thankfulness

### What You'll Do

Help kids write their names on their My Bible Playground pages. Have the children color and then cut out the four rectangles at the bottom of the page. Help them accordion-fold the strips to form springy arms. Tape one end of each "arm" to each of Simeon's and Anna's shoulders. Encourage the children to help Simeon and Anna thank God for sending his son, Jesus, by raising their arms in praise or by placing their hands together in prayer.

Winter Quarter

Lesson 4

Pre-K & K/Ages 5 & 6



### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- When Simeon and Anna thanked God for Jesus, they showed God they knew Jesus was very special. What's special about Jesus?
- What can we do to thank God for Jesus?

Say: Simeon and Anna were thankful that God kept his promise and sent Jesus to save us. We can be like Simeon and Anna, thanking God though prayer, praise, worship, and singing. Let's show that we know Jesus is special as ▶ WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS this week!

#### CENTER 2:

### Thankfulness in the Temple

#### What You'll Do

Have kids sit in pairs, and say: Use the books to build a temple like the one Mary, Joseph, and Jesus visited. Allow time. Have children clean their hands, and then say: Now you can use cookies to pretend they're the people we learned about in the Bible. Take turns telling each other about what happened at the Temple. After pairs finish, let the children eat their cookies.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

- Anna and Simeon thanked God for Jesus. Tell about a time you were thankful for someone else's kindness.
- What other things are you thankful for?
- What can help you remember to thank God for Jesus?

Say: Just like Simeon and Anna in the Bible, WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS. God loves to hear us say thanks through praying and praising.



Center 2: Thankfulness in the Temple Supplies

bear-shaped cookies books antibacterial gel (optional)





### Center 3: Thankful Bubbles Supplies

bottles of bubble solution with wands

### Center 4: A World of Thanks Supplies

- 1 copy per child, on various colors of paper, of the "Thanks" handout (at the end of this lesson)
- 1 sheet of white card stock per child child-safe scissors washable markers glue sticks

### Center 4: A World of Thanks Easy Prep

Cut the copied pages in fourths so children have a variety of colors. You'll need enough for each child to have every language.

#### **CENTER 3:**

### Thankful Bubbles

### What You'll Do

Have kids find new partners.

Say: With your partner, take turns sharing three things you're thankful for. As you share, your partner can blow bubbles as a celebration of what you're thankful for. Allow time. Then have all the kids sit in a circle.

Say: Choose one of the things you told your partner about that you'd like to tell the large group. Pause for kids to decide. Invite a child to share first. After all kids who'd like to share have had a chance, invite everyone to blow bubbles at the same time to celebrate all the things there are to be thankful for. Say: We have a lot to be thankful for and those are a lot of thankful, happy bubbles!

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- Why are you thankful that God gave us bubbles?
- When you're thankful, why do you think that makes you happy?
- Why are you thankful for your family? your friends? our church?

Say: There are so many ways WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS. Showing God how happy we are when we think of Jesus is one great way to do that. You can do that anytime, anywhere. Let's blow one more big round of bubbles and shout "Thanks for Jesus!" to show God how thankful we are.

#### CENTER 4:

### A World of Thanks

#### What You'll Do

Say: We can sing, pray, worship, and just tell God thanks anytime because God always hears us. In fact, people from all over the world in different countries with different languages can say thank you to God. "Thank you" in Spanish is "gracias" (gras-ee-as). Have the children say "gracias" with you. "Thank you" in German is "danke schoen" (don-kuh-shane). Have the children say "danke schoen" with you. "Thank you" in French is "merci" (mare-see). Have the children say "merci" with you.

#### Ask:

- Tell about a time someone thanked you for something.
- What did you like about another person thanking you?
- What are some special ways to say thank you to someone?

Winter Quarter

Lesson 4

 Pre-K & K/Ages 5 & 6



Say: Let's make thank-you cards to show God that people all over the world are thankful for Jesus. Help kids each fold a sheet of card stock in half like a greeting card. Now cut around the speech bubbles and glue the sayings to your cards. Read the sayings for kids so they know what they're gluing to their cards. You can also use markers to draw on the cards. Allow kids time to decorate the cards and then help them sign their names.

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### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- Which was the hardest way to say thank you?
- What makes it hard for you to say thank you to God sometimes?

Say: When ▶ WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS, we add to the wonderful sound of people all over our big world giving thanks to God. What an awesome sound that must be in God's ears! We can thank God every day for Jesus.



#### **IMPRESSIONS**

### Daily Challenges

### What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up the centers, bring everyone back to sit in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage children to share what they learned 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 for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

#### Talk With Kids

Say: Today we learned to be thankful for Jesus. Choose one of these Daily Challenges to show that ▶ WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS this week.

Give kids these three challenges to choose from:

- Teach a friend how to say "thank you" in a different language, and tell your friend that we can thank God for sending Jesus.
- 2. Draw a picture of something you're thankful for. Then tell God why you're thankful
- 3. Show God you're thankful for Jesus by making up a worship song. Sing your song in praise to God.

### Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground



# Thankful Prayer Supplies

**Teacher Pack** smiling top

Say: If you want to say "thank you" in a different language, circle choice number 1. If you want to draw a picture, circle choice number 2. If you want to make up a song, circle choice number 3. Check that each child circled a choice. 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!

### Thankful Prayer

### What You'll Do

Show kids the smiling top, and say: Take turns spinning the top and saying something that you're thankful to God for.

After everyone has had a turn, have kids repeat each line of this prayer after you.

Pray: Thank you, God, for Jesus! We love you so much. In Jesus' name, amen.

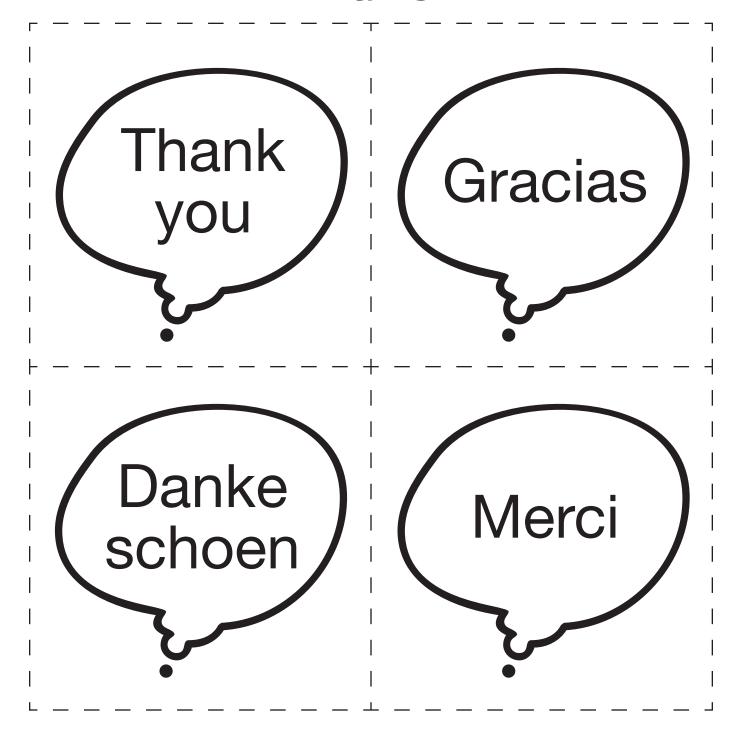
### Weaving Faith at Home

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.



# **Thanks**







### Wise Men Find Jesus

Matthew 2:1-12

ost 5- and 6-year-olds can begin to understand what it means to worship. At church or home, they may've seen people singing, praying, and reading the Bible. They can understand that worship is an act of love and thanks for Jesus. Use this lesson to encourage kids to praise and worship Jesus in ways they enjoy, or to discover for the first time what worship means and what it looks like. Thank you for helping children better understand that worshipping Jesus can be fun and natural!

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Getting Started about 10 min.	Welcoming Song Sing or listen to praises for God.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
Key Verse Activity about 10 min.	Jesus Came for Me Look at old Christmas cards, and talk about why they're glad that God sent Jesus.	Bible, variety of old Christmas cards depicting Jesus' birth	
Bible Exploration about 15 min.	Theo's News Find out what a star has to do with Jesus' birth and the Bible.	Surprise Box (any box will do), Theo puppet, CD player, 1 craft stick per child <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD, glow-in-the-dark star stickers	Put the stickers and craft sticks in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
	Bible Time: Journey With the Wise Listen to a camel tell about the journey of the wise men in the Bible as they follow a star around the room.	Bible, CD player, masking tape, copy of the "Baby Jesus" handout (at the end of this lesson), magazines, scissors, "star sticks" from the "Theo's News" activity <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD, "Magi Worship Jesus" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)	Hide the copy of the "Baby Jesus" handout somewhere in your room. Cut out pictures from magazines of people doing things that could be done in worship.



► Bible Point We worship Jesus.

Key Verse
"For God so loved the
world that he gave his
one and only Son, that
whoever believes in him
shall not perish but have
eternal life" (John 3:16).

Weaving Faith Into Life Children will worship

Jesus in daily life.

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Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Weaving Faith Into Life about 20 min. (Choose 2 centers.)	Center 1: Finding Jesus Hide figures of Jesus and find them.	My Bible Playground, 2x3-inch sticky notes, child-safe scissors, washable markers	Remove the Lesson 5 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.
	Center 2: Sweet, Sparkly Stars Children will make sparkly snacks using cookie cutters and slices of bread.	bread, napkins, star- shaped cookie cutters, gold-colored margarine or butter, plastic knives, colored sugar crystals, antibacterial gel (optional)	
	Center 3: Wiggly Worship Play a game and choose ways to worship Jesus.		
	Center 4: Praise Bells Make bell instruments to worship Jesus.	3 jingle bells per child, one 10-inch length of thin chenille wire per child, CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
Lasting Impressions about 10 min.	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Playground	
	Prancing Prayer Sing a song about worshipping God.	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.



### Wise Men Find Jesus

Matthew 2:1-12



# The Magi Journey to Worship Jesus

The wise men, or Magi, were likely religious leaders from Persia or Babylon. They were likely either astronomers or some type of astrologers. They apparently weren't followers of the Jewish religion and had little or no knowledge of God. Yet God somehow made it clear enough to them that a special king was being born—after all, the men were willing to travel hundreds of miles over dangerous desert wilderness to investigate and worship that new king. All nations had their own objects of worship and usually thought their own gods were better than others' gods. So the Magi's journey to worship Jesus in a lowly colony of the Roman Empire was very significant.

# A Star Leads the Magi to Judea and to King Herod

Some suggest that the "star" was actually the result of the alignment of planets that happened sometime between 7 and 4 B.C. Others say it was a special, localized phenomenon provided by God specifically to guide the Magi to Jesus. Whatever it was, its timing and movement were used by God to let people outside Israel know about the miraculous birth of Jesus.

Herod's suspicious response was typical of this paranoid man who had put to death his own wife and sons. He not only intended to kill the baby Jesus, but also schemed to use the innocent Magi to lead him to the right baby.

### The Magi Find Jesus in Bethlehem and Present Gifts

When the Magi arrived in Bethlehem, they found Jesus in a house. Though Christmas programs often depict the Magi visiting the stable on the night of Jesus' birth, that time frame is quite likely wrong. It's more likely the Magi arrived some months after the birth.

Since the gifts were costly, they indicate the wealth and prominence of the visitors. But the fact that there were three gifts doesn't necessarily mean there were three gift-givers. And the Magi weren't kings as the song says—though they may have been representing a king.

### The Jesus Connection

Jesus is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. He is worthy of our worship and praise. And he's our best friend. How cool is that?

The Magi recognized the importance of Jesus when they saw the signs in the sky. Worshipping this young king was so important that they traveled for many days over many miles to find him. How important is worshipping Jesus to you? You don't need to travel anywhere; you can worship him anywhere and anytime. Tell Jesus why you worship him. You can write your prayer here.



### Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player **Teacher Pack**CD: "We Have Come to Class" (track 11), 
"Silent Night" (track 8)



### **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. Lead the kids in doing the motions and singing "We Have Come to Class" (track 11 on the CD) to the tune of "Do Your Ears Hang Low?"

We have come to class
To learn and to play. (point to head)
We have come to class
To sing and to pray. (fold hands in prayer)
We have come to class
With a happy face today (motion to your smile)
To learn about God's love! (give a group hug)
(Repeat 2x.)

Say: Today we'll learn that ▶ WE WORSHIP JESUS in many ways. One way we can worship Jesus is by singing. Let's sing a song to worship Jesus with our voices.

Play "Silent Night" (track 8 on the CD), and encourage the kids to sing and do the motions with you.

Silent night, holy night, (motion "shh" with index finger against lips)
All is calm, all is bright. (move arms in a big circle, from above your head down to your sides)

'Round yon virgin mother and child. (rock your arms as if you're cradling a baby)

Holy infant, so tender and mild, (keep rocking your arms)

Sleep in heavenly peace, (place hands together like a pillow by your cheek)

Sleep in heavenly peace. (keep sleeping on your pillow)
(Repeat.)

"Silent Night" by Josef Mohr.

Say: That's a wonderful song to help us worship Jesus and remember his birthday.

Winter Quarter

Lesson 5

Pre-K & K/Ages 5 & 6



► WE WORSHIP JESUS because he's the most important and special person—he's the Son of God! Let's find out more about why ► WE WORSHIP JESUS.

.....





### Jesus Came for Me

### What You'll Do

Spread the Christmas cards on the floor, and have the children sit in a circle around them. Open your Bible to John 3:16, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Our Key Verse from the Bible, John 3:16, says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." That means God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus. Let's say our Key Verse together. Lead children in repeating the simplified version of the Key Verse after you: God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus. (John 3:16).

Say: God sent his Son, Jesus, to earth to help us. Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem. Some time later, the wise men came to Bethlehem to worship Jesus because they knew that Jesus was the Son of God. ▶ WE WORSHIP JESUS, too. One way to worship Jesus is to tell each other why we're glad that God sent Jesus to earth. Let's do that right now!

Each of you can choose a favorite card from the center of the circle and then sit down again. Allow time. Take turns telling why you chose that particular card and why you're glad that God sent Jesus to earth.

If you have 10 or more kids, have children form pairs and share as partners. If time permits, allow children to return their cards and repeat the activity using a different card.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- Why do you like getting cards from people?
- Why do we give cards to people?

Say: All these Christmas card can help us invite our friends to celebrate Jesus with us. That's what Christmas is all about. Let's say our Key Verse together one more time. Lead children in saying the Key Verse with you: God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus. (John 3:16).

### Jesus Came for Me Supplies

Bible variety of old Christmas cards depicting Jesus' birth



### Theo's News Supplies

Surprise Box (any box will do)
Theo puppet
CD player
1 craft stick per child
Teacher Pack
CD: "Here, Theo"
(track 4)
glow-in-the-dark star stickers

### Theo's News Easy Prep

Put the stickers and craft sticks in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.



### 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 4 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.

(Pass the Surprise Box around the circle so you and each child can select a craft stick and two glow-in-the-dark star stickers. Show kids how to make a "star stick" by pressing one star sticker to the tip of a craft stick and then pressing a second sticker to the other side so that the adhesive from one star sticks to the other. As children make their star sticks, ask them to guess what they'll learn from the Bible today.)

**Teacher:** Friends, tell about a time you've seen stars.

(Pause for kids to answer your question.)

Teacher: Theo, why did you hide these stars in the Surprise Box?

Theo: We see stars in the night sky when it's dark. Some people follow them to find their

way. Sailors used to look at the stars to navigate the oceans!

**Teacher:** The sky is full of stars—some are bright, and some you can barely see. **Theo:** Boys and girls, have you ever gone outside at night to look at the stars? (Pause for kids to share.)

**Teacher:** Let's learn how a star led some men to Jesus so they could worship him.

**Theo:** Have fun, boys and girls! **Teacher:** Say goodbye to Theo.

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place. Tell the children to keep their star sticks for the "Bible Time" activity.



### Bible Time: Journey With the Wise

### What You'll Do

Open your Bible to Matthew 2:1-12, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Today's Bible passage tells us that ▶ WE WORSHIP JESUS.

The Bible tells us some wise men were looking for Jesus so they could worship him. The wise men were called Magi, and they studied the stars. Hold up your star stick so kids can see it. In fact, they followed a special star during their journey to Jesus. We're going to listen as one of the wise men's camels tells about their trip. Let's follow this star and join them on their travels.

Turn out the lights to darken the room so that the stars glow. Have the children stand. As you start "Camels and Wise Men" (track 12 on the CD), lead the children around the room. Say: I'll hold up my star stick and you can hold up yours as you follow my star. We'll follow the camel's directions when she tells us to follow the star or sit down.

You'll pause the CD twice, once so kids can search for the picture of baby Jesus you've hidden and another time while the kids tell what they'd bring to baby Jesus. At the end of the track, stop the CD and turn on the lights. Have children sit in a circle, and set the "Magi Worship Jesus" poster in the center.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- How was your journey like the one the wise men made?
- Why do we give gifts to people for their birthday?

Say: The wise men brought gifts and bowed down to Jesus. Point to the "Magi Worship Jesus" poster. But there are lots of ways to worship Jesus. Set out the magazine pictures. Here are some pictures of ways that we can worship Jesus. Everyone, choose one picture and then tell us how you could worship Jesus by doing the action in the picture. After each child has chosen a picture and shared, have the child tape the picture to the poster. WE WORSHIP JESUS when we sing, pray, clap, and invite friends to church so that they can worship Jesus, too. Point to the pictures on the poster. No matter how we worship Jesus, our worship is a gift for Jesus, just like the gifts that the Magi brought!



### Bible Time: Journey With the Wise Supplies

Bible
CD player
masking tape
copy of the "Baby
Jesus" handout (at the
end of this lesson)
magazines
scissors
"star sticks" from the
"Theo's News" activity

Teacher Pack
CD: "Camels and Wise
Men" (track 12)
"Magi Worship Jesus"
poster (from the Big

### Bible Time Easy Prep

Bible Poster Pack)

Hide the copy of the "Baby Jesus" handout somewhere in your room. Cut out pictures from magazines of people doing things that could be done in worship.



# Center 1: Finding

Jesus Supplies

My Bible Playground 2x3-inch sticky notes child-safe scissors washable markers

### Center 1: Finding Jesus Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson 5 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.



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:**

### Finding Jesus

### What You'll Do

Help kids write their names on their My Bible Playground pages.

Say: Carefully cut out the young Jesus from the bottom of your pages. Allow time. Now cover each house with a sticky note. Allow time. Find a partner and take turns hiding your Jesus figure under one of the sticky notes. You can take turns hiding and then finding the Jesus figure to remind you of how the wise men searched for Jesus in the town of Bethlehem. When you find your Jesus figure say, " WE WORSHIP JESUS." Any questions about the game? Answer any questions and allow children to play.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What was surprising about finding Jesus during the game?
- How was this game like what the wise men had to do to find Jesus?

Say: The wise men looked for Jesus and found him by following a star. When they found Jesus, they joyfully worshipped him by bowing before him and giving him gifts.

• WE WORSHIP JESUS when we sing, smile, tell others about him, pray, and read the Bible. Let's remember to celebrate Jesus when we give Christmas gifts.



### CENTER 2:

### Sweet, Sparkly Stars

■ **Tip** You can find colored sugar crystals in the baking aisle at most grocery and craft stores.

### What You'll Do

Have children clean their hands. Then have kids form pairs and give each pair two slices of bread, two napkins, and a star cookie cutter.

Say: Help your partner press the star cookie cutter into his or her slice of bread and then pull the remaining edges of the bread away from the cookie cutter until only the star shape is left.

Once children have finished making their star shapes, walk around to each pair and help children spread margarine or butter on their pieces of bread. This will give the stars a gold-colored background and help the colored sugar stick. Say: Now you can decorate your stars by sprinkling them with the colored sugar. They'll sparkle and shine like real stars.

Invite a child to pray and thank God for the snack. Then encourage kids to enjoy their sparkling treats. Encourage them to decorate and eat the bread scraps also.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

- What's good about following and worshipping God?
- What can help you remember to worship Jesus?

Say: The wise men wanted to worship Jesus because they knew how special he is. God used a star to lead the wise men to worship Jesus. When we see stars in the night sky or stars used as decorations, we can remember that God wants us to worship Jesus, too.

#### CENTER 3:

### Wiggly Worship

#### What You'll Do

Say: Let's play a game where we'll think of ways to worship Jesus. We'll all take turns doing an action that shows a way to worship Jesus, and then everyone else will copy the leader's actions and say, ▶ "WE WORSHIP JESUS." I'll start. Do what



### Center 2: Sweet, Sparkly Stars Supplies

bread
napkins
star-shaped cookie
cutters
gold-colored margarine
or butter
plastic knives
colored sugar crystals
antibacterial gel
(optional)





I do and be thinking of other things we can do to worship Jesus. Start the game by pretending to sing a song. Then allow willing kids to take turns as the leader.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What ways did we use to worship Jesus?
- What are ways we can worship Jesus at home?
- What do you like most about worshipping Jesus?

Say: WE WORSHIP JESUS by singing, clapping to a beat, telling others about him, and so much more. When we worship Jesus, we tell him how much we love him. In the Bible, the wise men worshipped Jesus, and we can worship Jesus, too.

### Center 4: Praise Bells Supplies

3 jingle bells per child one 10-inch length of thin chenille wire per child CD player **Teacher Pack** CD: "Worship You" (track 13)

### CENTER 4:

### **Praise Bells**

### What You'll Do

Say: String your three bells onto your piece of wire. Help kids as needed. Move the bells to the center of your wire and then twist the ends of the wire together to make a loop that'll keep your bells on the wire. Help as needed, and make sure no sharp edges of the wire are poking out. You've just made an instrument we can use to make music and worship Jesus!

Have children shake their bells in praise as they sing "Worship You" (track 13 on the CD) to the tune of "When the Saints Go Marching In."

Oh, we have come to worship you; Oh, we have come to worship you. Jesus, you are our Lord and our Savior. Oh, we have come to worship you! (Repeat.)

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What did you like about using your bells to praise Jesus?
- What do you like about worshipping Jesus?

Say: It's fun to use bells and make music to worship Jesus. When you shake your bells, you can make a rhythm and sing along with the beat! We can remember that • WE WORSHIP JESUS in all kinds of ways that show our joy and love for Jesus.





### **Daily Challenges**

### What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up the centers, bring everyone back to sit in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage children to share what they learned 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 for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

### Talk With Kids

Say: Today we learned that ▶ WE WORSHIP JESUS. Choose one of these Daily Challenges to worship Jesus this week.

Give kids these three challenges to choose from:

- Gather your family and tell them why you're thankful for the greatest gift of all—Jesus.
- 2. Ask your mom or dad to tell you about stars or help you find a star chart on the Internet. Think about how the wise men followed the star to find the baby Jesus.
- 3. Make up a new song to sing to Jesus—you can make up actions for your song, too!

Say: If you want to tell why you're thankful for Jesus, circle choice number 1. If you want to find out about stars, circle choice number 2. If you want to make up a song, circle choice number 3. Check that each child circled a choice. 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!

### Prancing Prayer

### What You'll Do

Have kids stand in a circle. Say: **As we sing this last song, you can do any motions you choose. Pick something that makes you feel happy and helps you show your love for Jesus.** 

Lead kids in singing "We Can Worship" (track 14 on the CD) to the tune of "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands."



### Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground

# Prancing Prayer Supplies

CD player **Teacher Pack** CD: "We Can Worship" (track 14)



We can worship God in many ways. We can worship God in many ways. We can worship God in many ways. Worship means, "I love you, God!" (Repeat 2x.)

Go around the circle and have the kids each tell their favorite way to worship Jesus, such as by praying, helping others, or singing.

Pray: **Dear God, Help us worship Jesus every day, in many ways.** Go around and allow children to each say one way they worship 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.



# **Baby Jesus**







# John Baptizes Jesus

Mark 1:4-11

ive- and six-year-olds have experienced love from parents, grandparents, or guardians. Kids know when they've made their parents happy, whether it's through obeying them or by showing love and care to others. Kids can easily understand that Jesus made God happy because of his obedience. They'll want to make God and others happy, too. Use this lesson to introduce kids to the idea of following Jesus' example of doing things that make God happy.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Getting Started about 10 min.	Welcoming Song Sing or listen to praises for God.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
Key Verse Activity about 10 min.	God Loves Me! Show love to each other as they sing a song.	Bible, CD player Teacher Pack: CD, "Jesus" picture	
Bible Exploration about 15 min.	Theo's News Find out what a dove has to do with the event in the Bible.	Surprise Box (any box will do), Theo puppet, CD player Teacher Pack: CD, paper doves	Put one of the paper doves in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
	Bible Time: Jesus Obeys Re-enact Jesus' baptism.	Bible, cake pan of water, 3 clothespins, towel  Teacher Pack: paper doves,  "Jesus Is Baptized" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)	If you like, use permanent markers to color the clothespins to give them different "robes" so kids can tell them apart.

**Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.



►Bible Point
Jesus made God happy.

# Key Verse "For God so loved the

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

### Weaving Faith Into Life

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Children will ask Jesus to help them make God happy, just as he did.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Weaving Faith Into Life about 20 min. (Choose 2 centers.)	Center 1: Jordan River Baptism Paint their My Bible Playground pages and glue on doves as they tell about Jesus' baptism.	My Bible Playground, glue sticks, blue watercolor paint, paintbrushes, washable markers  Teacher Pack: paper doves	Remove the Lesson 6 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.
	Center 2: Obeying Together Prepare snacks to remind them of the Bible passage and experience how they can help each other obey.	flatbread, tomato sauce, shredded cheese, pepperoni, plastic spoons, napkins, antibacterial gel (optional)	
	Center 3: Dove From Heaven Play a game that will remind them of the Bible passage.		
	Center 4: Spreading Happiness Discuss ways they've made others happy and how they can follow Jesus' example to make God happy.		
Lasting Impressions  about 10 min.	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Playground	
	Peaceful Prayer Fly a "dove" and say a prayer.	sheet of white paper	
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

**Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.



## John Baptizes Jesus

Mark 1:4-11



### Although Sinless, Jesus Requested John to Baptize Him

The baptism of Jesus did not represent cleansing from sin, because Jesus was without sin. Instead, it allowed Jesus to identify with the people he had come to save and signaled to everyone that he was different—that he had not sinned but instead had lived a life pleasing to God. This event signaled the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry.

# The Trinity in the Baptism of Jesus

These verses depict the Trinity more clearly than almost any other passage in the Bible. We see all three members of the Trinity in action: Jesus being baptized, the Holy Spirit descending like a dove, and the Father speaking from heaven. As Jesus was beginning his ministry, God made it clear that Jesus was his Son and that Jesus was doing precisely what God wanted him to do.

# The Holy Spirit Descends on Jesus Like a Dove

The symbolism of the Holy Spirit descending on Jesus like a dove is very intentional. A dove represented both purity and gentleness. Instead of coming to harshly preach repentance as the prophets—including John the Baptist—had done, Jesus came in purity and with a message of love. After all, Jesus is God's ultimate demonstration of love, being sent to die for our sins "while we were still sinners" (Romans 5:8).

God didn't speak to the crowd as he announced his pleasure with Jesus. He spoke directly to Jesus, encouraging him to fulfill the difficult task that lay before him.

### **The Jesus Connection**

From the very beginning, God planned to send Jesus to be our friend and to save us from the penalty of our sins. What a loving and gracious God!

Many agree that Jesus was a good man and a moral teacher, but Christians know Jesus to be God's Son, sent by God to redeem a fallen world. Jesus came to the world with all the authority, approval, and power of God. He came for us. He came for you. Praise God today for loving you enough to send his Son for you. You can write your prayer here.

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### Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player **Teacher Pack**CD: "We Have Come to Class" (track 11), "God Is the King" (Psalm 47:7) (track 6)



### **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 and welcome them with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle. Lead the kids in doing the motions and singing "We Have Come to Class" (track 11 on the CD) to the tune of "Do Your Ears Hang Low?"

We have come to class
To learn and to play. (point to head)
We have come to class
To sing and to pray. (fold hands in prayer.)
We have come to class
With a happy face today (motion to your smile)
To learn about God's love! (give a group hug)
(Repeat 2x.)

Say: Today we'll learn that ▶ JESUS MADE GOD HAPPY when he had John the Baptist baptize him. John knew that Jesus was the Savior that everyone was waiting for. Let's sing another song and praise Jesus who loves us and saves us.

Play "God Is the King" (Psalm 47:7) (track 6 on the CD), and encourage the kids to join you in singing and marching to the beat in a circle. Change the direction you're marching every few lines.

Let's sing about the Lord, The greatness of our God, God is the King of everything. We're wild about his love And all that he has done, God is the King of everything.

I know God; I talk about him every single day.
I pray to him at all times; he's the only way.
I love him! He loves me no matter where I go,
And everything I do will be for God and God alone.



Let's sing about the Lord, The greatness of our God, God is the King of everything. We're wild about his love And all that he has done, God is the King of everything.

Let's sing about the Lord,
The greatness of our God,
God is the King of everything.
We're wild about his love
And all that he has done,
God is the King of everything,
God is the King of everything,
God is the King of everything.



Say: God sent Jesus to live with us here on earth and be our Savior. Jesus obeyed God in everything he did and ▶ JESUS MADE GOD HAPPY. We can follow Jesus' example and make God happy, too. Let's learn more about why God sent Jesus.



## God Loves Me!

#### What You'll Do

Have the children sit in a circle. Open your Bible to John 3:16, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Our Key Verse from the Bible, John 3:16, says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." That means God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus. Let's say our Key Verse together. Lead children in repeating the simplified version of the Key Verse after you: God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus (John 3:16).

Say: We love our friends and family, and they love us. We might show our love by giving hugs and kisses and by doing things such as listening to each other and helping each other. Let's give hugs and high fives to our friends here at church. Allow time, and then have kids sit in a circle again. Say: God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus. Everyone who loves Jesus and believes in him will live forever. Let's learn our Key Verse and show our love to Jesus at the same time!



#### God Loves Me! Supplies

Bible CD player **Teacher Pack:** CD: "God Loves Us" (track 15) "Jesus" picture



Play "God Loves Us" (track 15 on the CD) to the tune of "Oh Where, Oh Where Has My Little Dog Gone?" Invite kids to hug, shake hands, give high fives, or hold hands as they sing.

God loves us so much That he sent us his Son. God wants us all to believe. God loves us so much That he sent us his Son. God wants us all to believe. (Repeat 3x.)

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- Tell about some people in your life you love.
- What do you do to show you love those people?
- Tell about some people in your life who love you.
- What do they do to show they love you?

Say: God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus. Today we'll learn from the Bible about one way JESUS MADE GOD HAPPY during his life on earth. Jesus came to earth to be with us and to save us. Have the kids say the simplified Key Verse with you one more time: God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus (John 3:16). Then on the count of three, encourage children to shout, "We love you, too, God!"



Surprise Box (any box will do) Theo puppet CD player **Teacher Pack** CD: "Here, Theo" (track 4) paper doves

#### Theo's News Easy Prep

Put one of the paper doves in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.



**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 4 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.

(Invite a child to open the Surprise Box, and then have kids pass the dove around the circle so everyone can see it up close. Give kids time to guess what they'll learn from the Bible today.)

Winter Quarter

Lesson 6



**Teacher:** Friends, have any of you ever seen a dove? What makes a dove special?

(Pause for kids to answer your question.)

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

Theo: Well, today you're learning from the Bible that ▶ JESUS MADE GOD HAPPY,

and in the Bible you'll read about a dove.

Teacher: I want to learn more about what a dove has to do with Jesus. Let's find out

what happened!

**Theo:** Have fun, boys and girls! **Teacher:** 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: Jesus Obeys

#### What You'll Do

Have children sit in a circle. Place the "Jesus Is Baptized" poster and pan of water in the middle of the circle. Open your Bible to Mark 1, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Today we're learning from the Bible that ▶ JESUS MADE GOD HAPPY.

As Jesus started his ministry, he made his way from his home town, Nazareth, to the Jordan River. In the area near the Jordan River, a man named John the Baptist told people to stop doing bad things and start doing good things. He told people to get ready for Jesus.

Ask:

What do you think it means to get ready for Jesus?

Say: John lived in a hot, sandy desert. He wore clothes made of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist. He ate honey and locusts—which are large grasshoppers! John lived a very simple life. Bring out the John the Baptist clothespin figure and hold it in the pan, so that it's standing in the water.

John knew that he had a special message to give people. He taught people that God wanted them to turn away from the wrong things they did, and then John baptized them in the Jordan River.

Stand another clothespin figure (not Jesus) next to John the Baptist, so it looks as if both figures are standing in the river. Then have them speak as follows:

**John the Baptist:** It's time to stop doing bad things! Get ready for Jesus! **Other figure:** I'm sorry for the bad things I've done. I want to change.

Have the John the Baptist figure dip the other figure under the water. Let children take turns doing this as well.



#### Bible Time: Jesus Obeys Supplies

Bible cake pan of water 3 clothespins towel **Teacher Pack** paper doves

paper doves
"Jesus Is Baptized"
poster (from the Big
Bible Poster Pack)

#### Bible Time: Jesus Obeys Easy Prep

If you like, use permanent markers to color the clothespins to give them different "robes" so kids can tell them apart.



Say: John told people that God would send someone who was much more powerful than John was. Then an amazing thing happened. Jesus came to be baptized by John. Stand the clothespin figure that represents Jesus in the water next to the John the Baptist figure. Jesus was perfect! He never sinned. But Jesus knew that God wanted him to be baptized. So John dipped Jesus into the water (act this out with the clothespin figures as you did earlier), and when Jesus came out of the water, an amazing thing happened! Heaven opened up and God's Spirit came down onto Jesus like a dove. Set aside the John the Baptist figure, hold up a paper dove, and then bring the dove down to land on the Jesus figure. Then a voice from heaven said, "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

▶ JESUS MADE GOD HAPPY. God wanted everyone to know that he loved Jesus.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What do you think about what happened in the Bible today?
- Tell about a time you obeyed God.

Say: Even though Jesus was perfect, God still wanted him to be baptized, and Jesus obeyed. This made God happy. God loves everyone and wants us to live forever with him in heaven. That's why he sent his perfect Son, Jesus. ▶ JESUS MADE GOD HAPPY when he was baptized. We make God happy when we obey him.



#### **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: Jordan River Baptism Supplies

My Bible Playground glue sticks blue watercolor paint paintbrushes washable markers **Teacher Pack** paper doves

#### Center 1: Jordan River Baptism Easy Prep

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

#### CENTER 1:

## Jordan River Baptism

#### What You'll Do

Help kids write their names on their My Bible Playground pages. Have children pair up. Say: Paint the watercolor on the page as you tell your partner about John baptizing Jesus. Allow time. Now you can glue a dove on the paper near Jesus' shoulder as you tell how God's Spirit came to Jesus.

Winter Quarter

Lesson 6



#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What part of Jesus' baptism amazes or surprises you the most?
- Why is it important that we obey God?

Say: We never have to earn God's love—God loves us no matter what. But when we obey God, it makes him happy. ▶ JESUS MADE GOD HAPPY when he was baptized. We make God happy when we tell others about him and when we obey him. Let's tell everyone about God's Son, Jesus!

#### CENTER 2:

## **Obeying Together**

#### What You'll Do

Have children clean their hands. Then gather everyone and distribute napkins and spoons.

Say: Let's help each other use this food to make mini pizzas. Say "please" and "thank you" as you ask friends to pass the food you'd like on your pizza. After kids have made their snacks, invite a child to pray.

#### Talk With Kids

As kids eat their mini pizzas, lead them in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- How did you help each other make pizzas?
- How did John help Jesus obey God?
- What can we do to help each other obey God and please God?

Say: Jesus loved God and wanted to make God happy. One way ▶ JESUS MADE GOD HAPPY was by obeying him and inviting others to obey God, too. When we obey God, we make God happy, too.

#### CENTER 3:

## **Dove From Heaven**

#### What You'll Do

Have kids form pairs and line up along opposite walls, facing their partners across the room.



#### Center 2: Obeying Together Supplies

flatbread tomato sauce shredded cheese pepperoni plastic spoons napkins antibacterial gel (optional)





Say: We're going to play a game that'll remind us of what we've learned from the Bible today. If I point to you, shout out ▶ "JESUS MADE GOD HAPPY." Once you've shouted out the Bible Point, your partner will flap his or her arms like a dove and quickly walk across the room to you. Sit down as soon as your partner reaches you. Let's see how quickly we can do this!

Encourage kids to shout out the Bible Point when you point to them, and then have their partners "fly" to them as quickly as possible, cooing like a dove if they choose. Have one pair do this, then another, and so on until all the kids are sitting down. Play again as time allows, this time pointing to the other partner of each pair so kids get to experience both roles.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- In our game, we remembered that God showed his happiness by sending his Spirit, like a dove from heaven, to Jesus. What do you do when you're happy?
- What are simple things we can do every day to obey and please God?

Say: When ▶ JESUS MADE GOD HAPPY, God sent a dove from heaven. God wanted everyone to know that he loved Jesus. We can make God happy, too—by listening to our parents, being nice to our brothers and sisters, and sharing with others!

#### CENTER 4:

## **Spreading Happiness**

#### What You'll Do

Have kids find a partner, and have pairs spread out in the room and sit down together.

Say: Tell your partner about times you've made someone else happy. Maybe you did something kind for a friend or family member, or maybe you obeyed your teacher at school. You'll have a few minutes to share. Tell about as many examples as you can think of. Allow time.

Gather kids together again, and have them sit in a circle.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What did you discover with your partner about things that make others happy?
- What do you or don't you want to make God happy?

Winter Quarter

Lesson 6



Say: After Jesus was baptized, God told everyone that Jesus was his Son and that he loved him. God loves us so much that he sent us his Son, Jesus! We make God happy when we love him, love others, obey God, obey our parents, and when we tell people about Jesus. We know that 

JESUS MADE GOD HAPPY, and we can, too!





#### ASTING

#### **IMPRESSIONS**

## **Daily Challenges**

#### What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up the centers, bring everyone back to sit in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage children to share what they learned 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 for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

#### Talk With Kids

Say: Today we learned that ▶ JESUS MADE GOD HAPPY. Choose one of these Daily Challenges to ask Jesus to help you make God happy, too.

Give kids these three challenges to choose from:

- In the morning, pray for Jesus to help you obey your parents throughout the day. At the end of the day, thank Jesus for helping you obey your parents.
- 2. Ask Jesus to help you and your brother or sister clean your play area or living room and surprise your parents!
- 3. Have your mom or dad help you make a treat for someone you know who is sick. Ask Jesus to help the person feel better.

Say: If you want to pray to Jesus for help obeying, circle choice number 1. If you want to clean a room at home, circle choice number 2. If you want to make a treat for someone, circle choice number 3. Check that each child circled a choice. 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!



#### Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground



## Peaceful Prayer Supplies

sheet of white paper

## **Peaceful Prayer**

#### What You'll Do

Have children sit in a circle. Fold a sheet of white paper in half and pretend that it's a dove. Give the paper dove to a child.

Say: Hold the fold and move the paper up and down to resemble a dove flying. Allow the child to demonstrate. "Fly" the dove to a person in the circle, while cooing like a dove, and hold the dove on his or her shoulder. Pause.

To the child holding the dove, say: While you hold the dove say, "Thank you, God, for loving [name of child] so much that you sent us your Son, Jesus."

Have the next child take the dove and "fly" it over to another child and repeat the prayer. Continue until all of the children have had a chance to pray. Then give each child a chance to thank God for something he or she is thankful for. Finally, have kids close the prayer by saying together, "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.



## Jesus Surprises Nathanael

John 1:43-51

ive- and six-year-olds may enjoy knowing that their thoughts can be kept secret from their parents and teachers. It's a part of their growing independence. The fact that Jesus knows their thoughts may be new to them. Children might be scared or embarrassed that Jesus knows their unspoken thoughts and everything about them. Children need to know that Jesus loves them—no matter what! It'll reassure kids to know that Jesus became a man, knows what they are going through, and knows everything about them. Use this lesson to help children understand that Jesus knows them and loves them!

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Getting Started about 10 min.	Welcoming Song Sing or listen to praises for God.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
Key Verse Activity about 10 min.	How Do They Love Me? Share how others have shown love to them.	Bible, child-safe scissors, large red construction-paper heart  Teacher Pack:  "Jesus" picture	
3	Theo's News Find out what a driver's license has to do with the Bible.	Surprise Box (any box will do), Theo puppet, CD player, your driver's license <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD	Put the license in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
Bible Exploration about 15 min.	Bible Time: Jesus Knows Nathanael Draw what they think a secret visitor will look like.	Bible, CD player, My Bible Playground, washable markers <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD	Arrange to have a visitor come in during this activity. Remove the Lesson 7 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



## ▶Bible Point

••••••

Jesus knows us.

#### Key Verse

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

## Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will understand that they can get to know Jesus better.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Weaving Faith Into Life about 20 min. (Choose 2 centers.)	Center 1: Will You Come? Practice inviting others to church.		
	Center 2: What's Inside? Guess what's inside various kinds of fruit, and remember that Jesus knows us.	variety of uncommon fruits, plastic knife, napkins	
	Center 3: I Know You! Play a game where children learn more about each other.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
	Center 4: Jesus Knows Me Draw pictures that help others know about them.	paper, washable markers, your driver's license, paper clips	
	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Playground	
Lasting Impressions about 10 min.	"All About Me" Prayer Draw something about themselves, and say a prayer.	drawings from the "Center 4: Jesus Knows Me" activity or paper and washable markers	
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

**Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.



## Jesus Surprises Nathanael

John 1:43-51



## Jesus Prepares to Depart for Galilee

The beginning of this passage finds Jesus ready to depart from Judea for Galilee. It's interesting that a huge portion of Jesus' ministry happened in the region of Galilee. This region was looked down on by most Jews. The Galilean Jews had a distinctive accent, and because of their proximity to other ethnic peoples and traditions, they were often viewed as "contaminated," backward, and inferior. The Judean Jews despised those Jews who couldn't speak correctly—they considered themselves superior and more pure. We don't know why Jesus chose his disciples from this area or why he ministered there so often, but perhaps it was because people there were more authentic and less biased than in Judea.

#### **Jesus Calls Philip to Follow**

Philip, when called to follow Jesus, responded as would anyone who realized he'd found the Son of God—he wanted to tell someone else about it! So he sought out Nathanael and told him the good news. Philip's description of Jesus as "the son of Joseph" didn't deny Jesus' divine origin. Philip simply described Jesus in terms of his earthly, legal family.

#### Philip Tells Doubtful Nathanael About Jesus

Nathanael responded negatively for a couple of reasons. First, Nazareth was considered a less-thandesirable city because a Roman outpost was located there and brought with it all sorts of false gods and evildoing. Second, Nazareth was an obscure city, never mentioned in the Old Testament. Besides, everyone knew from the prophet Micah that the Messiah was to come from Bethlehem.

## Philip Challenges Nathanael to See Jesus for Himself

However, Nathanael's negativism didn't stop Philip. He challenged Nathanael to see for himself. As Nathanael approached Jesus, Jesus knew not only where Nathanael had been and what he had been doing, but also that Nathanael was skeptical. So Jesus began his response by telling Nathanael something no stranger would know about him. After Nathanael's first dumbfounded response, Jesus continued with the facts about where Philip had found Nathanael. With that, Nathanael's doubts disappeared. He realized that Jesus was indeed who Philip had said he was: the Messiah, the Son of God.

## The Jesus Connection

A friend who knows everything about you—the good and the bad—and still loves you passionately? That's the kind of friend Jesus is to us. Much of our lives among our earthly friends and acquaintances are spent "keeping up appearances." We fear that if people knew the real us, they'd abandon us. With Jesus, that won't happen. He already knows it all, and his love is constant. In what ways are you trying to keep up appearances with Jesus? Tell Jesus today without worry or fear. You can write your prayer here.





## Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player **Teacher Pack**CD: "We Have Come to

Class" (track 11), "The

Power!" (track 7)



## **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 and welcome them with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle. Lead the kids in doing the motions and singing "We Have Come to Class" (track 11 on the CD) to the tune of "Do Your Ears Hang Low?"

We have come to class
To learn and to play. (point to head)
We have come to class
To sing and to pray. (fold hands in prayer)
We have come to class
With a happy face today (motion to your smile)
To learn about God's love! (give a group hug)
(Repeat 2x.)

Say: Today we'll learn that ▶ JESUS KNOWS US. Jesus knows us inside and out. Wow! That's amazing! Jesus knows what we'll say even before we say it. Jesus can do anything! Let's sing a song of praise for the awesome power of Jesus.

Plav "The Power!" (track 7 on the CD) and encourage the kids to join you in singing.

He's got the POWER! (flex muscles)

Everybody come with me; (motion toward yourself)

It's time to sing (cup hands around mouth)

About Jesus' power all around me. (extend arms and turn in a circle)

We gotta let the whole world know

That Jesus Christ is on the throne! (point up)

(Chorus)

**He's got the POWER!** (flex muscles)

Everybody's talkin' 'bout his POWER! (turn to another person as you sing)

**Look up,** (look up) **look down,** (look down) **look all around,** (hold a hand at your brow and look around)

And you will see his POWER! (spread and wiggle fingers)

Winter Quarter

Lesson 7



Everybody come with me; (motion toward yourself)
It's time to sing (cup hands around mouth)
About Jesus' power all around me. (extend arms and turn in a circle)
We gotta let the whole world know
That Jesus Christ is on the throne! (point up)

(Repeat chorus 2x.)

The power to be thankful! (echo)
The power to be brave! (echo)
The power to lend a helping hand! (echo)
To live forever, you know we can! (echo)

**POWER!** (flex muscles)

Everybody's talkin' 'bout his POWER! (turn to another person as you sing)

Look up, (look up) look down, (look down) look all around, (hold a hand at your brow and look around)

And you will see his POWER! (spread and wiggle fingers)

(Repeat chorus.)

**Look up,** (look up) **look down,** (look down) **look all around,** (hold a hand at your brow and look around)

And you will see his POWER! (spread and wiggle fingers)

**Look up**, (look up) **look down**, (look down) **look all around**, (hold a hand at your brow and look around)

And you will see his POWER! (spread and wiggle fingers)

"The Power!" by Jay Stocker. © 2008 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Say: Jesus is powerful! So powerful that JESUS KNOWS US better than we know ourselves. He knows our thoughts, whether we're happy or sad—everything! Jesus cares to know us so well because he loves us. Let's find out more about Jesus' love.



## How Do They Love Me?

#### What You'll Do

Have children sit in a circle. Open your Bible to John 3:16, and show children the words. Tell kids that the Bible is God's special book.



How Do They Love Me? Supplies

Bible child-safe scissors large red constructionpaper heart

**Teacher Pack:** "Jesus" picture

Pre-K & K/Ages 5 & 6

Lesson 7

Winter Quarter



Say: Our Key Verse from the Bible, John 3:16, says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." That means that God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus. Let's say our Key Verse together. Lead children in repeating the simplified version of the Key Verse after you: God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus (John 3:16).

#### Ask:

- What ways have you seen people show love to each other?
- What are some ways that you've shown love to someone?

Say: One at a time, each of you can stand, hold the red heart, and say, "I love [name of a person you love] so much that I [name an action you did to show love]." Allow time.

Then invite a child to hold the picture of Jesus and lead the entire group in saying the simplified Key Verse together: **God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus (John 3:16).** 

Say: We use our actions to show that we love others. God showed us his love by sending his Son, Jesus, to know us and help us.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What are your favorite ways for people to show love to you?
- What do you do to show your love for others?

Say: People show love in many different ways. Parents care for children. Friends share and play together. But the best love of all is God's love. God never gets tired of loving us. Even when we do something wrong, God loves us just the same. We can be sure of this because God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus.

► JESUS KNOWS US and loves us always, too.

#### Theo's News Supplies

Surprise Box (any box will do) Theo puppet CD player your driver's license **Teacher Pack** CD: "Here, Theo" (track 4)

#### Theo's News Easy Prep

Put the license in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.



**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 4 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.

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Lesson 7



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.

(Invite a child to open the Surprise Box, and have kids pass the driver's license around the circle so everyone can see it up close. Give kids time to guess what they'll learn from

the Bible today.)

**Teacher:** Friends, what do you know about me by looking at my driver's license?

(Pause for kids to answer your question.)

**Teacher:** Theo, why did you hide my driver's license in the Surprise Box?

**Theo:** Well, your driver's license tells us what you look like, and it tells us where you live.

**Teacher:** Why is that important, Theo?

Theo: Well, Jesus doesn't need a driver's license to know all about someone. ▶ JESUS

**KNOWS US** without any help from anyone or anything else!

Teacher: That's right! Children, we're going to learn all about that today. Let's find out

what Jesus knew about Nathanael, a man in the Bible.

**Theo:** Have fun, boys and girls! **Teacher:** 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: Jesus Knows Nathanael

#### What You'll Do

Help kids write their names on their My Bible Playground pages.

Say: We'll have a special visitor today, but first I want you to draw a picture of what you think the visitor will look like! Draw details like hair color, clothing, how tall you think this person might be, and so on. I know you haven't seen the visitor yet, but go ahead and guess!

As the children draw, play "The Power!" (track 7 on the CD). After kids finish drawing, turn off the CD, and have the visitor join the group. Have the children share their drawings with the visitor. Then the person can leave, or he or she can stay to help during Bible Time.

#### Ask:

- What about your drawings looked the same as our visitor?
- What made it difficult to draw a picture of a person you didn't know?

Open your Bible to John 1, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Today we'll learn from the Bible that ► JESUS KNOWS US.

After a man named John the Baptist baptized Jesus in the Jordan River, Jesus began to choose people to help him tell others about God. Jesus told a man named



#### Bible Time: Jesus Knows Nathanael Supplies

Bible My Bible Playground washable markers CD player **Teacher Pack** CD: "The Power!" (track 7)

#### Bible Time: Jesus Knows Nathanael Easy Prep

Arrange to have a visitor come in during this activity. Remove the Lesson 7 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.



Philip, "Follow me!" Have the kids say, "Follow me" and then get up and follow you as you walk around the room. And Philip obeyed—he followed Jesus! Philip wanted to tell others about Jesus right away. His friend Nathanael was sitting under a fig tree when Philip came to tell him about Jesus. Pretend to sit under a tree with the children. Philip said, "The one the prophets told us about has come! His name is Jesus of Nazareth. The one we've been waiting for is here!" Have the kids say, "The one we've been waiting for is here." Nathanael didn't think Jesus would be anything special, but he decided to go with Philip to see Jesus anyway.

When we ask a friend to come to church with us, it's like when Philip told Nathanael to come and see Jesus.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- Tell about a time you've been really excited about something at church.
- Have you ever invited a friend to come with you to church? What happened?

Say: When Jesus saw Nathanael, he said nice things about Nathanael's honesty and love for God.

#### Ask:

How do you think Jesus knew those things about Nathanael when he had never met him before?

Say: Nathanael asked Jesus, "How do you know me?" Jesus said that he'd seen Nathanael under the fig tree. Have kids pretend to be trees. Nathanael was amazed! Have kids act amazed. Jesus knew him before they'd met. Nathanael realized that Jesus was the Son of God. Jesus told Nathanael that he would see things even more amazing than that. Just as Jesus knew Nathanael, JESUS KNOWS US. We can bring our friends to church so that they can meet Jesus, too!



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:

#### Will You Come?

#### What You'll Do

Have children form pairs. Say: What are some things you can say to a friend you want to bring to church with you? Take turns inviting each other to church. Allow time.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- Philip really wanted Nathanael to go with him to see Jesus. What's exciting about telling others about Jesus?
- What can you do to help others want to come to church and hear about Jesus?

Say: Philip was so excited when he met Jesus that he wanted to spread the word and tell his friends about Jesus, so he brought Nathanael to Jesus. When Nathanael met Jesus, he was so amazed that Jesus knew all about him. ▶ JESUS KNOWS US, too. We can tell our friends about Jesus, just like Philip told Nathanael!

#### CENTER 2:

## What's Inside?

**Tip** Use fresh fruits that have soft skins so you can cut them open with a plastic knife; try fruits such as kumquats, dragon fruit, and dates.

#### What You'll Do

Have children clean their hands. Then gather everyone around the fruit, and let kids guess what the inside of each fruit looks like or contains. What's the color? What's the texture? What's the smell? Are there seeds? After everyone who'd like to has guessed, cut each fruit in half to reveal what's inside.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What was hard about guessing what the inside of the fruit would look like?
- Why can Jesus know what's inside us?

Say: You may have never seen those fruits before, so you had to make some guesses about what they would look like. But ▶ JESUS KNOWS US inside and



# Center 2: What's Inside? Supplies

variety of uncommon fruits plastic knife napkins





out. He knows exactly how we feel and what we're thinking about. We can be amazed by Jesus the way Nathanael was and we can be thankful Jesus knows us so well.

Invite a child to pray; then let children each have pieces of the fruit they'd like to try.

#### Center 3: I Know You! Supplies

CD player Teacher Pack CD: "Jesus Loves Me Rock" (track 3)

#### CENTER 3:

## I Know You!

#### What You'll Do

Have children sit in a circle. Invite one child to walk around the outside of the circle as you play "Jesus Loves Me Rock" (track 3 on the CD). Allow five seconds, and then stop the music and tell the child to stop walking and stand behind the nearest person.

Say to the standing child: Say the name of the person you're standing behind, and then tell one fact you know about that person. You might tell about the friend's family, likes or dislikes, or something you can see right now, such as eye or hair color.

Then lead the entire group in saying, "[Name of sitting child], > JESUS KNOWS US!" Have the two children trade places, and continue the game. Start and stop the music in such a manner that different children have a turn to be chosen and to walk around the circle.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What new things did you learn about people in our group?
- What are other ways we can get to know more about each other?

Say: When we become friends with others, we learn more about them and they learn more about us. Our very best friend is Jesus. ▶ JESUS KNOWS US and loves us just the way we are. We can share Jesus' love with others and tell people that Jesus knows them and loves them, too!

#### Center 4: Jesus Knows Me Supplies

paper washable markers your driver's license paper clips

#### CENTER 4:

## Jesus Knows Me

#### What You'll Do

Gather the kids around the paper and markers. Hold up your driver's license, and say:

My driver's license tells things about me such as what I look like and where I live.

Make something like a big driver's license for yourself. Draw pictures of things you

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like to do, sports or animals you like, and pictures of where you live. In one corner, draw a picture of yourself!

As kids finish, help them write their names on their papers. When everyone's drawing is finished, have kids share what they've drawn with the rest of the group. Then paper-clip the paper to the student book for ease of taking it home.

# 166.0

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- How does your paper help other people know you better?
- How can we get to know Jesus better?

Say: Our papers tell other people a little bit about ourselves. But there's so much more to know! There's a lot to know about Jesus, too. ▶ JESUS KNOWS US well, and he wants us to know him well. We can get to know Jesus better by learning from the Bible, praying, and coming to church each week.



#### **IMPRESSIONS**

## Daily Challenges

#### What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up the centers, bring everyone back to sit in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage children to share what they learned 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 for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

#### Talk With Kids

Say: Today we learned that JESUS KNOWS US. Choose one of these Daily Challenges to get to know Jesus better this week.

Give kids these three challenges to choose from:

- 1. When you're with your friends or brothers and sisters, tell each other your favorite things about Jesus.
- 2. Ask an adult you know at church to tell you something that Jesus has done for him or her.
- 3. Watch a movie about Jesus.

#### Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground



## "All About Me" Prayer Supplies

drawings from the "Center 4: Jesus Knows Me" activity or paper and washable markers Say: If you want to tell people your favorite things about Jesus, circle choice number 1. If you want to ask an adult about Jesus, circle choice number 2. If you want to watch a movie about Jesus, circle choice number 3. Check that each child circled a choice. 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!

## "All About Me" Prayer

#### What You'll Do

If kids did the "Center 4: Jesus Knows Me" activity, have them bring their pictures to prayer time. If not, give children markers and sheets of paper, and have them each quickly draw a picture of something about themselves.

Then have everyone sit in a circle and one at a time share one thing about themselves. After each child shares, have everyone repeat the Bible Point: ▶ JESUS KNOWS US. Then place all of the drawings in a pile, and have the kids join hands around the pictures. At the appropriate time in the prayer, go around the circle and have kids say, "Thank you, Jesus, for knowing me." Allow kids who don't want to say it out loud to repeat it silently.

Pray: **Dear God, I'm so glad that Jesus knows us.** Have willing kids say, "Thank you, Jesus, for knowing me." **Thank you for loving us no matter what. 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.



## Disciples Follow Jesus

Mark 1:14-20

ost 5- and 6-year-olds enjoy playing Follow the Leader. They love the idea of trying to mimic another person's actions. We can use this interest to help them understand the concept of doing what Jesus would do. We learn how to do this by learning from the Bible, praying, and hearing what other Christians teach us. Use this lesson to show kids that they can follow Jesus.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Getting Started about 10 min.	Welcoming Song Sing or listen to praises for God.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
Key Verse Activity about 10 min.	A World of People Place a paper heart inside a large circle, and then line up the hearts to create a long fish.	Bible, 12 feet of yarn, one 5-inch construction-paper heart per child	Use the rope or yarn to make a circle on the floor. Be sure you have enough room for the children to sit around the circle. If desired, place a map of the world inside the circle.
Bible Exploration about 15 min.	Theo's News Find out what fish crackers have to do with the Bible.	Surprise Box (any box will do), Theo puppet, CD player, Goldfish crackers, resealable plastic bag, antibacterial gel (optional) Teacher Pack: CD	Fill a resealable plastic with Goldfish crackers, making sure you have enough for each child to have one. Put the bag inside the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
	Bible Time: In the Nets Use make-believe nets and boats to understand what the disciples did to follow Jesus.	Bible, CD player, washable markers, washable ink pad, paper coffee filters, muffin-tin liners, wet wipes  Teacher Pack: CD, "Disciples Follow Jesus" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



## ► Bible Point Follow Jesus.

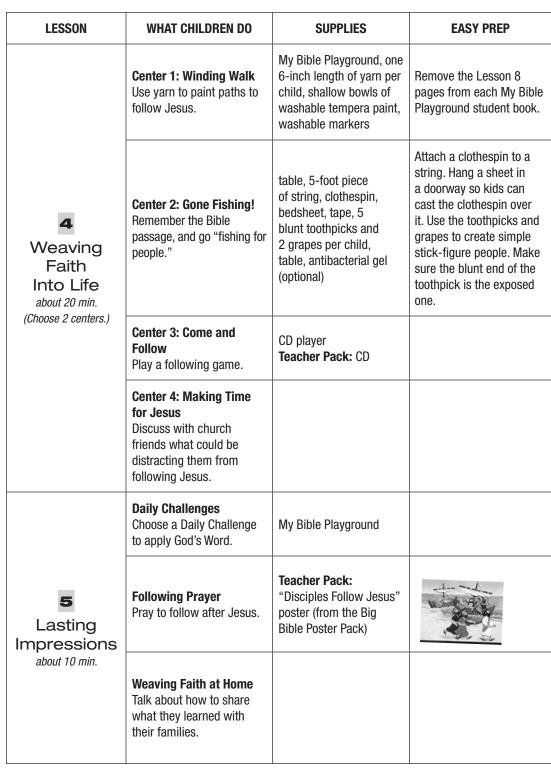
•••••

Key Verse
"For God so loved the
world that he gave his
one and only Son, that
whoever believes in him
shall not perish but have
eternal life" (John 3:16).

#### Weaving Faith Into Life Children will follow

.....

Children will follow Jesus in daily life.



Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



## **Disciples Follow Jesus**

Mark 1:14-20



#### John the Baptist Is Imprisoned and Killed

At the beginning of this passage, we read that John the Baptist was put in prison. Mark doesn't tell us why, but we know from Luke 3:19-20 that Herod put John in prison for rebuking the ruler for various reasons. We also know from Matthew 14:6-11 that Herod eventually—likely in the midst of a drunken party—had John the Baptist beheaded.

## Jesus Begins His Ministry

After John was imprisoned, Jesus began his ministry with focus and intention. Mark relates Jesus' message in a nutshell: "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news." For Jews, this would indeed have been good news. What they heard was that David's earthly kingdom would be restored! They'd be freed from Roman bondage! Though their interpretation was incorrect, Jesus' message certainly caught their attention.

#### Jesus Calls Disciples to Follow Him

At this point, Jesus began gathering around him the band of disciples who would be with him throughout his ministry. The first four were Simon, Andrew, James, and John. We tend to think of these men as simple, ordinary fishermen, and to some degree that perception is correct. They were in a rather lowly occupation and likely had no formal education.

However, John 1:35-42 indicates that two of the men, at least, had been disciples of John the Baptist and thus, to some degree, followers of Jesus already. It's possible that Andrew and James also had been disciples of John the Baptist. All four were spiritual men who were seeking to follow God as closely as

they knew how, so when Jesus asked them to follow him, they did so without hesitation.

## Fishermen Respond to Jesus' Call

We needn't necessarily think that these men abandoned their nets and boats along the seashore. James and John left their fishing business in the care of their father and hired hands. Peter and Andrew's situation was probably much the same.

The decision to follow Jesus didn't mean that these disciples recklessly dropped their responsibilities, but it did mean that they were totally committed to Jesus. They had to make following Jesus the most important aspect of their lives.

#### **The Jesus Connection**

To follow Jesus, we don't just follow his example or his teachings, though that certainly is important. Nor do we tag along behind him unnoticed. When we follow him, we actually walk alongside him in community and in friendship. Are you aware of Christ's presence in your life? Are you intentional in following his guidance? What can you do to grow closer to Jesus and stay there? Your first step can be to ask for Jesus' help in that. You can write your prayer here.



## Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack
CD: "We Have Come
to Class" (track 11),
"Jesus Loves Me
Rock" (track 3)



## **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 and welcome them with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle. Lead the kids in doing the motions and singing "We Have Come to Class" (track 11 on the CD) to the tune of "Do Your Ears Hang Low?"

We have come to class
To learn and to play. (point to head)
We have come to class
To sing and to pray. (fold hands in prayer)
We have come to class
With a happy face today (motion to your smile)
To learn about God's love! (give a group hug)
(Repeat 2x.)

Say: Today we'll learn that we can ► FOLLOW JESUS because he loves us so much. Follow me and let's sing a song to praise Jesus for how much he loves us.

Play "Jesus Loves Me Rock," (track 3 on the CD) and encourage the kids to sing and do the motions with you.

Jesus loves me, (echo) (cross arms over your chest to sign "love")

This I know. (echo) (point to head)

For the Bible (echo) (put hands together as if they're a book)

**Tells me so.** (echo) (point to self with thumbs)

**Little children** (echo) (hold hands out, palms down)

To him belong. (echo) (raise arms)

**They are weak, but** (echo) (swing arms from side to side)

He's so strong! (echo) (show muscles)

**Jaaayyy!** (J) (cup hands around mouth)

**Eeeeee!** (E) (cup hands around mouth)

Sssssss! (S) (bend arms at elbows, and swing them back and forth)

**Uuuuuuuu!** (U) (raise arms)

Sssssss! (S) (bend arms at elbows, and swing them back and forth)

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And what's that spell? (Jesus!) (cup hands around mouth as you shout "Jesus!")
And who do you love? (Jesus!)
And who loves you? (Jesus!)
Who died for you? (Jesus!)
And who's your guy? (Jesus!)
The apple of your eye! (Jesus!)
And who's your friend? (Jesus!)
He'll love ya to the end!

(Repeat from the beginning.)

Say: Because Jesus loves us so much, we can trust him to guide us. We can FOLLOW JESUS every day, no matter where we are or what we're doing. Let's learn more about what Jesus' love means for us and the whole world.



## A World of People

#### What You'll Do

Have children sit in a circle. Open your Bible to John 3:16, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Our Key Verse from the Bible, John 3:16, says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." That means that God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus. Let's say our Key Verse together. Lead children in repeating the simplified Key Verse after you: God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus (John 3:16).

Say: Let's pretend this big circle is the whole world full of people God loves. I'll give you a paper heart to remind you of God's love for each person in the world. We'll take turns saying our Key Verse and putting our paper hearts in the circle, filling it with love.

Have kids each say the Key Verse as they place their hearts inside the circle: God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus (John 3:16). If desired, invite children to insert their name or the names of people they know in the words of the verse.



#### A World of People Supplies

Bible 12 feet of yarn one 5-inch construction-paper heart per child

#### A World of People Easy Prep

Use the rope or yarn to make a circle on the floor. Be sure you have enough room for the children to sit around the circle. If desired, place a map of the world inside the circle.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Jesus Loves Me Rock" by Dean-o. © 2003 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.



#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What are ways God has shown his love for you?
- What can you do to show God's love to others?

Say: Our circle here is filled with many hearts. Each heart can remind us that God's love is for everyone in the world. God's Son, Jesus, came to earth to forgive us from all the wrong things we've done. To show how much God loves us, Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sin. We can believe in Jesus and ▶ FOLLOW JESUS. We can tell others about God's love, too.

Gather the hearts and give one to each child. Then ask a child to place his or her heart on the yarn at forming the circle. Tell the other kids to place their paper hearts behind the one belonging to the first child. Have kids overlap each heart by about half to create the scales of a long fish. If your group is large, you may want to create two or three separate fish.

Say: Our paper hearts look like a long, scaly fish. Jesus once asked some fishermen to come follow him. We'll hear more about that in Bible Time. We can also ▶ FOLLOW JESUS and tell others that God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus. Let's tell each other right now! Lead children in telling a partner the Key Verse: God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus (John 3:16).

#### Theo's News Supplies

Surprise Box (any box will do) Theo puppet CD player Goldfish crackers resealable plastic bag antibacterial gel (optional)

Teacher Pack

CD: "Here, Theo" (track 4)

## ALLERGY ALERT

#### Theo's News Easy Prep

Fill a resealable plastic with Goldfish crackers, making sure you have enough for each child to have one. Put the bag inside the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.



#### 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 4 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.

(Invite a willing child to open the Surprise Box, and have the kids pass the bag of

crackers around the circle so everyone can see it up close.)

**Teacher:** Friends, what do you think fish have to do with the Bible?

(Pause for kids to answer your question.)

**Teacher:** Theo, why did you hide these fish crackers in the Surprise Box?

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Theo: Well, I was following my stomach! Those crackers look tasty!

**Teacher:** Yes they do!

**Theo:** What do you think fish have to do with the Bible?

Teacher: I don't know. Something's fishy here. I think we need to hear from the Bible to

find out what this means! **Theo:** Have fun, boys and girls! **Teacher:** Say goodbye to Theo.

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place. If you like, distribute the crackers to the children.

## Bible Time: In the Nets

#### What You'll Do

Set out the "Disciples Follow Jesus" poster. Open your Bible to Mark 1, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Today we'll learn about how the Bible tells us to ► FOLLOW JESUS. Jesus wanted some help telling others about God's love. So he asked some people for help—and the people Jesus asked to help him are called his disciples.

As Jesus traveled around telling people how much God loved them, he walked by the Sea of Galilee and saw two brothers fishing with nets. We can make little nets that will help us remember Simon and Andrew.

Give each child a coffee filter, and have him or her make fishnets by drawing pictures of fish on the bottom of the filter using markers. Play "Jesus Loves Me Rock" (track 3 on the CD) in the background as the children make their nets.

Say: When Jesus saw Simon and Andrew he said, "Come, follow me." Simon and Andrew left their nets right there and followed Jesus. Ask the children to stack their nets on the poster in Simon and Andrew's boat (the boat on the left). A little while later, Jesus saw James and his brother John in a boat. Let's make some boats to remind us of James and John.

Distribute muffin-tin liners, and play "Jesus Loves Me Rock" (track 3 on the CD) again as the children make boats from the liners. Let the kids use markers to decorate their boats.

Say: Jesus called James and John to follow him, too. They left their boat and followed Jesus. Have the kids place their boats on the poster near the second boat.

Invite kids to use the ink pad to make thumbprints on the poster to show they want to FOLLOW JESUS. As kids make thumbprints, talk with them about ways that they can follow Jesus. Then have them clean their hands with wet wipes.



## Bible Time: In the Nets Supplies

Bible CD player washable markers washable ink pad paper coffee filters muffin-tin liners wet wipes

# Teacher Pack CD: "Jesus Loves Me Rock" (track 3) "Disciples Follow Jesus" poster (from the Big Bible Poster

Pack)



#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What do you think of the way Simon, Andrew, James, and John followed Jesus—leaving everything else behind?
- What can you do to follow Jesus?

Say: The men followed Jesus because they believed the good news that Jesus was teaching about God. They left everything behind, and they followed Jesus. We can FOLLOW JESUS, too.



#### 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: Winding Walk Supplies

My Bible Playground one 6-inch length of yarn per child shallow bowls of washable tempera paint washable markers

#### Center 1: Winding Walk Easy Prep

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

#### CENTER 1:

## Winding Walk

#### What You'll Do

Help kids write their names on their My Bible Playground pages. Then have them dip their yarn into the paint and drag the yarn along the path that Jesus walked, following his footsteps. Have kids continue to dip the yarn into paint and "draw" as needed to complete the path.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What made it hard or easy to follow Jesus' path on the page?
- What can you do to follow Jesus even when it isn't easy?
- What can we do to help our friends follow Jesus?

Say: Following Jesus is fun and exciting! Jesus did so many wonderful things. When we ▶ FOLLOW JESUS, we can do some of the wonderful things he did, like caring for people and teaching others about God. When we follow him, we get to be one of Jesus' friends, too.

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Lesson 8



#### CENTER 2:

## Gone Fishing!

#### What You'll Do

Have children clean their hands. Then put out the grape stick people on the table, and gather everyone.

Say: When the disciples dropped their nets and left their boats to FOLLOW JESUS, they became fishers of people. We say this because instead of catching fish in their nets, they were gathering people to believe in God. Now we'll pretend that these grape stick figures are people. Let's go fishing for people!

Have one child remain near the table and everyone else go behind the sheet. Say: As you cast the fishing line to catch a stick person, say "I follow Jesus. You can follow Jesus, too."

Have kids take turns casting the line over the sheet, and have the child on the other side attach a stick figure to the clothespin after the other child says the words. Children can each reel in their catch for a yummy snack.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What did Jesus really mean when he said they'd be fishing for people?
- What have you told another person about Jesus?
- Tell about some people you'd like to invite to follow Jesus.

Say: Jesus told the disciples, "Come, follow me." Jesus was a great "fisherman," and many people chose to follow him. Jesus told others about God's love, and he wants us to tell others, too! Telling others is an important way to ▶ FOLLOW JESUS.

#### CENTER 3:

## Come and Follow

#### What You'll Do

Have children form two lines and sit down.

Say: Some of the people Jesus called to follow him were fishermen, so they had to leave their boats and nets when they followed Jesus. Point to one of the lines and have the children say "Jesus said..." and then beckon to the kids in that line and say: "Come, follow me." Invite those kids to march with you around the second line of children while you show everyone the actions to "Follow Me" (track 17 on the CD), sung to the tune of "John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt." After the first time through, pause



# Center 2: Gone Fishing! Supplies

table
5-foot piece of string
clothespin
bedsheet
tape
5 blunt toothpicks and 2
grapes per child
antibacterial gel
(optional)

## ALLERGY ALERT

#### Center 2: Gone Fishing! Easy Prep

Attach a clothespin to a string. Hang a sheet halfway up a doorway so that kids can cast the clothespin over it. Use the toothpicks and grapes to create simple stick-figure people. Make sure the blunt end of the toothpick is the exposed one.

# Center 3: Come and Follow Supplies

CD player **Teacher Pack** CD: "Follow Me" (track 17)



the CD, have the first line sit down, and call the second line just as you did the first. Continue the song, which will play four times in total.

Jesus said, (cup hands to mouth)

"Come and follow me." (motion with hand to come)

That's what I'll do.

I'll leave my boat right here, (wave goodbye)

And put my fishnet down. (pretend to put down net)

**Jesus said,** (cup hands to mouth)

"Come and follow me!" (motion to come)

**Na-na-na-na-na-na-naaa.** (wiggle fingers in the air) (Repeat 3x.)

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- During the song, it was easy to follow me because you could see me. What is easy or difficult about following Jesus?
- Who can help you if you're having trouble following Jesus?

Say: You were following me in our game, like the disciples followed Jesus. It probably was a little easier for them since they could see Jesus. There are things and people who can help us ▶ FOLLOW JESUS. We can talk to others we know who follow Jesus, read the Bible with our family, and pray to ask Jesus for his help, too.

#### CENTER 4:

## Making Time for Jesus

#### What You'll Do

Have kids from pairs and sit around the room.

Say: Talk to your partner about the best vacation you've ever had. Tell your partner everything you can remember about it and what made it so great.

While kids are sharing their stories, walk around the room and do distracting things. You could stomp around, or yell, or make funny sounds. After a minute or so, have partners swap who's telling the story. Continue doing distracting things.

#### Talk With Kids

Afterward, lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What made this activity so hard?
- What are some things that distract you from following Jesus?
- How can we keep focused on Jesus?

Winter Quarter

Lesson 8



Say: There will be things in life that try to distract us from following Jesus. But we can ▶ FOLLOW JESUS by doing some of the things that he did. Jesus was kind and loving, and he obeyed God. When we are kind, loving, and obedient, we're following Jesus.





#### LASTING

#### **IMPRESSIONS**

## **Daily Challenges**

#### What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up the centers, bring everyone back to sit in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage children to share what they learned 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 for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

#### Talk With Kids

Say: Today we learned that we can ► FOLLOW JESUS. Choose one of these Daily Challenges to follow Jesus this week.

Give kids these three challenges to choose from:

- Have your mom or dad help you cut footprints out of paper and place them around your room—for each footprint, think of a way that you can follow Jesus.
- 2. Tell your mom or dad what you can do to follow Jesus at home, at school, and on the playground. Then do it this week!
- 3. Jesus liked to tell people that he loved them. Follow Jesus this week by telling your family and friends several times every day that you love them and so does Jesus!

Say: If you want to cut out footprints, circle choice number 1. If you want to follow Jesus at home, at school, and on the playground, circle choice number 2. If you want to tell people you love them, circle choice number 3. Check that each child circled a choice. 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!



Daily Challenges
Supplies

My Bible Playground



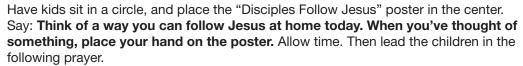
## Following Prayer Supplies

#### **Teacher Pack**

"Disciples Follow Jesus" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)

## **Following Prayer**

#### What You'll Do



Pray: Dear God, Thank you for the disciples who left everything behind and followed you. Please help us follow you when we go home today. One way I can follow you at home is to [have each kid say the thing they thought of to do at home]. 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.



## Jesus Demonstrates His Authority Mark 1:21-28

hildren are quick to believe in Jesus' power and might! Many 5- and 6-year-olds are increasingly aware of unfairness, such as evil, suffering, and injustice. Because of this, they crave reassurance that Jesus will triumph over evil with his strength, that he can do anything, and that nothing can separate them from Jesus' love. Use this lesson to guide kids' understanding of Jesus' strength and the peace they can find in Jesus. Thank you for helping kids better understand Jesus' power and love!

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Getting Started about 10 min.	Welcoming Song Sing or listen to praises for God.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
Key Verse Activity about 10 min.	Peaceful Pillows Make small pillows, and learn the Key Verse.	Bible, pillow, paper clips, 2 index cards and one 18-inch piece of yarn per child, tape, crayons, cotton balls, hole punch	For each child, paper-clip 2 index cards together and punch holes about an inch apart around the outside edges of the cards. Wrap tape around one end of each piece of yarn.
<b>3</b> Bible	Theo's News Find out what a microphone has to do with the Bible.	Surprise Box (any box will do), Theo puppet, CD player, microphone (toy or real)  Teacher Pack: CD	Put the microphone in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
Exploration about 15 min.	Bible Time: Jesus Helps a Man Listen to the Bible passage, and talk about the things Jesus can do.	Bible Teacher Pack: "Jesus Can Do Anything" poster, smiling top	Q

**Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.



## ►Bible Point Jesus is strong.

Key Verse "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

#### Weaving Faith Into Life Children will praise

•••••

Jesus because he is strong and powerful.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Weaving Faith Into Life about 20 min. (Choose 2 centers.)	Center 1: Miraculous Color some pictures, and tell about the things Jesus can do.	My Bible Playground, washable markers, watercolor paint, paintbrushes, pennies	Remove the Lesson 9 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.
	Center 2: Only Jesus Make snacks that remind them how Jesus healed a man.	strawberry jelly, softened cream cheese, 2 spoons, 1 mini bagel per child, plastic knives, napkins, paper plates, antibacterial gel (optional)	
	Center 3: Jesus Made You! Celebrate that Jesus can do anything and that he made each person special.	balls, jump-rope, masking tape, CD player <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD	Place a long strip of wide masking tape on the floor as a balance beam. Also tape squares on the floor to make a hopscotch grid.
	Center 4: Power Play Test their strength and talk about how Jesus helps us with his strength.		
	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Playground	
Lasting Impressions  about 10 min.	Can-Do Prayer Point to pictures and say a prayer together.	Teacher Pack: "Jesus Can Do Anything" poster	
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	_	

**Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.



## Jesus Demonstrates His Authority

Mark 1:21-28



#### **Jesus Preaches With Authority**

Mark begins this passage with a demonstration of Jesus' authority. Jesus was different from those who usually spoke in the synagogue. When Jesus interpreted the passage he read, he did so with authority—so much authority that the people noticed how different he was from the normal teachers of the Law.

#### Demons Take Notice of Jesus' Authority

Jesus apparently was making such an impression that the demon possessing a man felt the need to create a distraction. The demon referred to himself in the plural. Apparently more than one demon—perhaps many of them—were controlling this man.

Demons and demon possession are not often discussed in the church today. In Jesus' day, it seems that demon possession was commonly known. Perhaps it was more apparent because the demons opposed Jesus' ministry.

## Jesus Demonstrates Power Over Demons

The demons in this story clearly knew who Jesus was. "The Holy One of God" is a name for the promised Messiah. So why would a demon make himself known to Jesus? The demons may have been attempting to deceive people listening to Jesus that he was in league with them. However, Jesus cut short the demons' dialogue. Notice that there was no protest when Jesus spoke to the demons. They knew they had to obey and did so immediately.

#### People Spread the Word About Jesus

The people present were amazed at Jesus' authority just from hearing him teach. But when demons obeyed his commands, those watching saw that Jesus had the power to back up his authority. He was the all-powerful Son of God. And when people left the synagogue that day, they began telling everyone in the whole region who Jesus was. After this event, Jesus could no longer go anywhere in the region of Galilee without being recognized and surrounded by people wanting to be healed by his miraculous power.

#### **The Jesus Connection**

Jesus' power goes far beyond what we can comprehend. Yet we can begin to understand the worth of Jesus' love for us.

We may not understand the demon possession that's described in this passage, but we can stand amazed at Jesus' power. Do you comprehend the magnitude of Jesus' power? What do you believe Jesus' power can do in your life? Go to Jesus with your needs, your hopes, your fears, and let his power comfort and guide you. You can write your prayer here.

-	
-	

Lesson 9



#### Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player **Teacher Pack**CD: "Found a Friend"
(track 18), "The
Power!" (track 7)



## **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 and welcome them with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle.

Say: Today we're going to sing a song about our friends and about Jesus—who wants to be your best friend!

Lead the kids in doing the motions and singing "Found a Friend" (track 18 on the CD) to the tune of "Found a Peanut." After the first verse, have the kids say "Hello" to the friends on their right and left. After the second verse, have the kids say "Jesus loves you, [child's name]" to another child. There's enough time for kids to do this so that you won't have to pause the CD.

Found some friends, found some friends, (clasp hands together in the air) Found some friends right here in church. (point to the ground) Found some friends, found some friends, (clasp hands together in the air) Found some friends right here in church. (point to the ground)

Jesus loves you, Jesus loves you, (cross your arms in front of your chest)
Jesus loves you every day. (cross your arms in front of your chest)
Tell your friends, tell your friends: (put your hands on either side of your mouth)
Jesus loves you every day. (cross your arms in front of your chest)

(Repeat from the beginning.)

Say: Today we'll learn that JESUS IS STRONG, powerful, and that he can do anything! Have children show their muscles. Let's sing "The Power!" loud and strong! Show your muscles every time you sing "Power!" Ready? Let's sing! Play "The Power!" (track 7 on the CD), and encourage the kids to sing and do the motions with you.

He's got the POWER!
Everybody come with me;
It's time to sing
About Jesus' power all around me.

Winter Quarter

Lesson 9



We gotta let the whole world know That Jesus Christ is on the throne!

(Chorus)

He's got the POWER! Everybody's talkin' 'bout his POWER! Look up, look down, look all around, And you will see his POWER!

Everybody come with me; It's time to sing About Jesus' power all around me. We gotta let the whole world know That Jesus Christ is on the throne!

(Repeat chorus 2x.)

The power to be thankful! (echo)
The power to be brave! (echo)
The power to lend a helping hand! (echo)
To live forever, you know we can! (echo)

#### POWER!

Everybody's talkin' 'bout his POWER! Look up, look down, look all around, And you will see his POWER!

(Repeat chorus.)

Look up, look down, look all around, And you will see his POWER!

Look up, look down, look all around, And you will see his POWER!

"The Power!" by Jay Stocker. © 2008 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Say: Just as the song said, ▶ JESUS IS STRONG! We can trust Jesus' strength and know that he can do anything. When we know ▶ JESUS IS STRONG, we can stop worrying because we know that he'll take care of us. Today's Key Verse will help us understand the rest and comfort we can have with Jesus. Let's look at it now.





#### Peaceful Pillows Supplies

Bible
pillow
paper clips
2 index cards and one
18-inch piece of yarn
per child
tape
crayons
cotton balls
hole punch

#### Peaceful Pillows Easy Prep

For each child, paperclip two index cards together and punch holes about an inch apart around the outside edges of the cards. Wrap tape around one end of each piece of yarn.



## **Peaceful Pillows**

#### What You'll Do

Have the children sit in a circle. Open your Bible to Matthew 11:28, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Our Key Verse from the Bible, Matthew 11:28, says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." That means that Jesus wants us to come to him and rest. Let's say our Key Verse together. Lead children in saying the simplified version of the Key Verse with you: Come to me and rest (Matthew 11:28).

Show kids the pillow, and say: Sometimes we like to put our head on a pillow and rest when we're tired. Jesus wants us to come to him and rest when we're tired. ▶ JESUS IS STRONG and he'll always be able to help us with any problem. Let's make tiny pillows as reminders that Jesus told us to come to him and rest.

Give each child two of the prepared index cards and a piece of yarn, and set out the cravons.

Say: You can draw on or color one side of each index card. Allow time; then say: Place the index cards together—with the decorated sides facing out. Tape one end of the yarn to the side of the cards to hold it in place. Show kids how to leave about 2 inches of yarn hanging free. Then sew the two cards together with the yarn. Demonstrate sewing with the yarn for kids. Before finishing your sewing and tying the two ends of yarn together, stuff the pillow with cotton balls. Help children as needed.









Have kids sit in a circle again and take turns saying the simplified Key Verse as they pass around one of the pillows: **Come to me and rest (Matthew 11:28)**.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

■ Tell about times you've been worried and needed Jesus to help you feel better

Say: When we're worried or sick or need Jesus' help, we can pray and he promises to help us. When we talk to Jesus about our needs or our troubles, he helps us feel calm inside. JESUS IS STRONG, and when we rest in him, he'll help us. Let's say our Key Verse together one more time. Lead children in saying the simplified Key Verse together: Come to me and rest (Matthew 11:28).

Pray while kids pretend to rest on their pillows.

Pray: Thank you, Jesus, for being so strong and letting us rest in you without worries. In your name, amen.



## 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 4 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.

(Invite a child to open the Surprise Box, and have the kids pass the microphone around the circle so everyone can see it up close. Give kids time to guess what they'll learn from the Bible today.)

To all the Elizabeth land and the second

**Teacher:** Friends, what do people use microphones for?

(Pause for kids to answer your question.)

**Teacher:** Theo, why did you hide a microphone in the Surprise Box? **Theo:** Friends, why do you think I hid a microphone in the Surprise Box?

(Pause for kids to answer the question.)

Theo: Well, a microphone helps a person's voice sound louder so that lots of people can

hear.



#### Theo's News Supplies

Surprise Box (any box will do)
Theo puppet
CD player
microphone (toy or real)
Teacher Pack
CD: "Here, Theo"
(track 4)

#### Theo's News Easy Prep

Put the microphone in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.

Lesson 9

Winter Quarter



(Have Theo talk quietly, and then louder when the microphone is in front of him.)

**Theo:** Friends, where have you seen someone using a microphone?

(Pause for kids to answer the question.)

Teacher: In the Bible today we'll hear about a man who didn't need a microphone. He

had a yelling problem.

**Theo:** A yelling problem? What happened?

**Teacher:** Let's find out how Jesus helped him. ▶ **JESUS IS STRONG** and can do

anything!

**Theo:** Have fun, boys and girls! **Teacher:** Say goodbye to Theo.

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place.

#### Bible Time: Jesus Helps a Man Supplies

# Bible Teacher Pack "Jesus Can Do Anything" poster smiling top

# Bible Time: Jesus Helps a Man

#### What You'll Do

Open your Bible to Mark 1, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: The Bible tells us that JESUS IS STRONG. Invite kids to flex their muscles.

After Jesus chose his disciples to follow him, he went to the synagogue and began to teach people about God. A synagogue is like a church—a place where the people gathered to worship God. The people were amazed when they listened to Jesus teach because he was so wise. He was not like the other teachers. That's because JESUS IS STRONG!

#### Ask:

- What do you think made Jesus so good at teaching about God?
- What are some ways we can learn about God?

Say: We learn about God from reading the Bible and from hearing other people tell about him. Jesus told people things from Scripture, and he told people how much God loved them. One day, something happened while Jesus was teaching. There was a man who had an evil spirit in him that made him do crazy things. Let's act as crazy as we can for 20 seconds. Allow time.

Okay, you can stop. The evil spirit made the man say and do bad things. As Jesus was teaching, the man kept yelling—he was so loud that he didn't even need a microphone! Invite kids to yell as loud as they can.

Even though the man said and did bad things, Jesus loved him just the same. Jesus turned to the man and said to the evil spirit that was controlling the man, "Be quiet! Come out of him!" Have kids repeat the words. And the evil spirit left the man. The people were amazed. Have kids act amazed. They said, "Not only does Jesus teach well, but even evil spirits obey him!" JESUS IS STRONG—he can do anything!



Have kids flex their muscles again. **News spread about Jesus and his power.**Put the "Jesus Can Do Anything" poster on the floor, and bring out the smiling top.

Say: This poster shows us all kinds of things that Jesus can do. Let's take turns spinning the top. When it stops on a picture, tell everyone what Jesus can do.

Allow kids to play the game, and then all together say: ▶ **JESUS IS STRONG!** 

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What amazes you about what Jesus did for the man in the Bible?
- What other amazing things can Jesus do?

.....

Say: Jesus did so many amazing things during his ministry. He always wanted to help people and love people—and Jesus still does that for us today. ▶ JESUS IS STRONG and we can count on him to help us.



#### **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:

## **Miraculous**

#### What You'll Do

Help kids write their names on their My Bible Playground pages.

Say: Use the art supplies to paint or color the pictures on your pages. Allow time. When you've finished painting or coloring, find a partner. Pause. Take turns tossing a penny onto the pictures on the page. When a penny lands on a picture you haven't talked about, tell how that picture shows how Jesus is strong. If the penny lands on a picture you've talked about, toss the penny again.



# Center 1: Miraculous Supplies

My Bible Playground washable markers watercolor paint paintbrushes pennies

#### Center 1: Miraculous Easy Prep

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



Ask:

Talk With Kids

Tell about the strongest person you know.

Say: Jesus can do anything! We can thank Jesus for the wonderful things he does and we can tell others about Jesus, too! ► JESUS IS STRONG and gives strength to those who believe in him!

▶ JESUS IS STRONG. How do you need Jesus to be strong for you?

#### Center 2: Only Jesus Supplies

strawberry jelly softened cream cheese 2 spoons 1 mini bagel per child plastic knives napkins paper plates antibacterial gel (optional)

# ALLERGY ALERT

#### CENTER 2:

## Only Jesus

#### What You'll Do

Have children clean their hands. Say: **Only Jesus could separate the evil spirit from the man we learned about from the Bible.** Give each child a plate, napkin, knife, and mini bagel. Place about a tablespoon of jelly and a tablespoon of cream cheese on each plate, and let the kids mix the ingredients together.

#### Ask:

■ What if I told you that now I wanted the jelly and cream cheese separated again? How would you do that?

After kids have answered, have them spread the yummy mixture onto the mini bagels. Then invite a child to pray before everyone enjoys the snack.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- Why do you think separating the jelly from the cream cheese is possible or not possible?
- What do you think about Jesus being able to separate the evil spirit from the man?

Say: Other people may have tried to help the man, but only Jesus could heal the man and separate the evil spirit from him. For anyone else it would've almost been like trying to separate the jelly from the cream cheese. ▶ JESUS IS STRONG and he can do anything—even things that none of us could do no matter how hard we try.



#### CENTER 3:

## Jesus Made You!

#### What You'll Do

Have children gather in the play area you set up beforehand. Point out the balance beam, hopscotch, balls, and jump-rope.

Say: Our bodies can do amazing things. We can balance and use coordination to play with the world around us. Even if we've never done something before, we can learn how thanks to our incredible bodies. Remember that ▶ JESUS IS STRONG, and he made our bodies strong, too.

Play "The Power!" (track 7 on the CD) in the background as kids participate in this center.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- Which one of these activities was your favorite? Why?
- Tell about a time you learned to do something new. How did you feel when you were able to do it?

Say: We can count on Jesus to help us when we learn something new. JESUS IS STRONG and there's nothing he can't do. He made each one of you in such cool ways. You can do so many things because he helps you.

#### CENTER 4:

## **Power Play**

#### What You'll Do

Have kids spread out around the room.

Say: We're going to test our strength today. Give me 10 sit-ups as fast as you can. Go! Allow time; then say: Form pairs. Between the two of you give me 10 sit-ups—not 10 each, but 10 total between both of you. Go! Allow time.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- How hard or easy was it to do the sit-ups?
- What made the challenge easier the second time?

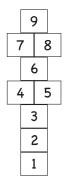


#### Center 3: Jesus Made You! Supplies

balls jump-rope masking tape CD player **Teacher Pack** CD: "The Power!" (track 7)

#### Center 3: Jesus Made You! Easy Prep

Place a long strip of wide masking tape on the floor as a balance beam. Also tape squares on the floor to make a hopscotch grid.





Say: Sometimes we're challenged to do difficult things. The sit-ups were a hard challenge on our own, but when we had a friend to help we were stronger. We can find help and strength in other people. > JESUS IS STRONG, and he gives us other people to help us when we're weak.



#### LASTING

#### **IMPRESSIONS**

#### Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground

# Daily Challenges

#### What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up the centers, bring everyone back to sit in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage children to share what they learned 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. Use this challenge for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

#### Talk With Kids

Say: Today we learned that JESUS IS STRONG. Choose one of these Daily Challenges to praise Jesus because he is strong and can do anything.

Give kids these three challenges to choose from:

- 1. Be on the lookout for powerful things such as trains, bulldozers, or planes. Every time you see a powerful thing, say "Jesus is strong," and thank Jesus for being strong for you.
- 2. Try something you've never done before and ask for Jesus' strength to help you.
- 3. Make up a poem or action rhyme about the amazing things that Jesus can do. Do the poem or action rhyme for your family.

Say: If you want to watch for powerful things, circle choice number 1. If you want to try something new, circle choice number 2. If you want to make up a poem, circle choice number 3. Check that each child circled a choice. 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!



# Can-Do Prayer

#### What You'll Do

Lay the "Jesus Can Do Anything" poster on the floor.

Say: In a moment, you'll each have the opportunity to say a prayer out loud, thanking Jesus for the amazing things he's done. Show kids the poster. Jesus made the sunshine and the oceans and all of you. 

JESUS IS STRONG and we can thank him for many things he's made and done for us.

One at a time, point to a picture on the poster and thank Jesus. Then pray silently for what you pointed at on the poster. Allow time for prayers. Then have children close the prayer by saying with you: 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.



#### Can-Do Prayer Supplies

**Teacher Pack**"Jesus Can Do
Anything" poster



# Jesus Heals, Prays, and Preaches Mark 1:29-39

ive- and six-year-olds still need help with many things, although they're becoming more independent every day. Learning to do new things independently is exciting and sometimes scary. Kids will be comforted to know that just like moms, dads, teachers, and others are in their lives to care for them, Jesus is here, too. Use this lesson to help kids understand that Jesus will never leave them and that they can always trust Jesus to care for them no matter the challenges they face.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Getting Started about 10 min.	Welcoming Song Sing or listen to praises for God.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
Key Verse Activity about 10 min.	Calm and Peaceful Tell Jesus their worries.	Bible	
3	Theo's News Find out what an adhesive bandage has to do with the Bible.	Surprise Box (ay box will do), Theo puppet, CD player, adhesive bandage <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD	Put the bandage in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
Bible Exploration about 15 min.	Bible Time: Jesus Heals Hear how Jesus cared for people, and tell ways that Jesus cares for us today.	Bible, CD player  Teacher Pack: CD,  "Jesus Helps Us" cards, separated, "Jesus Heals" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



# ►Bible Point Jesus cares for us.

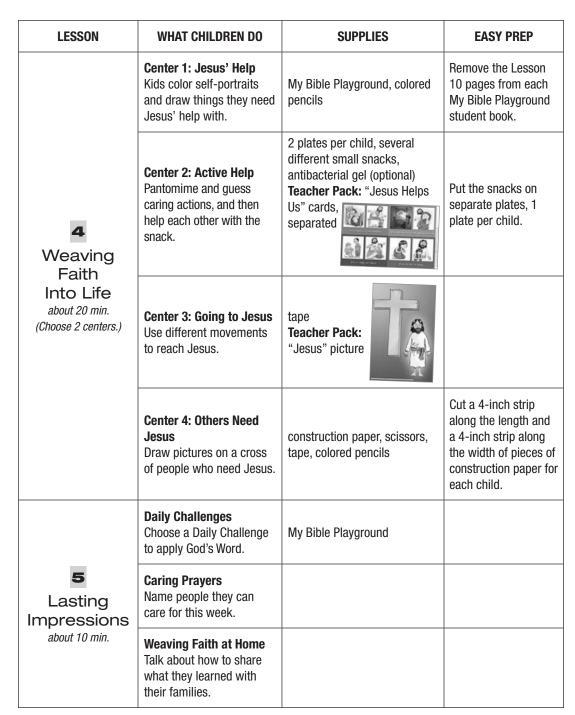
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Key Verse "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

#### Weaving Faith Into Life Children will ask Jesus

.....

Children will ask Jesu to care for them.



Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



# Jesus Heals, Prays, and Preaches

Mark 1:29-39



#### Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-in-Law

We learn from the beginning of this passage that Peter (called Simon in this passage) was married, because it tells us he had a mother-in-law. Luke tells us that she was ill with a high fever (Luke 4:38). The fact that she was able to get up and start serving her guests immediately after being healed by Jesus demonstrated the completeness of her healing.

# Jesus Heals People and Casts Out Demons

Not a single day had passed since Jesus healed the demon-possessed man in the synagogue, yet at nightfall people from all over town brought their sick to him for healing. It's interesting to note that in that culture, without electric lights, all outdoor activity generally ceased when darkness came. But not that night—when the sun set, the Sabbath was over. At that point, the work involved in bringing these people to Jesus was permissible. Jesus met the needs of those who came to him, healing diseases and casting out more demons.

#### Jesus Tells the Demons to Be Silent

Why did Jesus silence the demons that knew who he was? Perhaps because he didn't want his identity to be made known by demons but rather by his own words and actions. After a strenuous day and evening, Jesus apparently stayed at Peter's house that night. Jesus got up before dawn to be alone and pray. As he was praying, Peter and the others found him and presented him with more requests. However, Jesus wasn't interested in building his popularity. Instead, he was ready to move on to where he could minister to people who didn't already know him.

Jesus knew his mission. He knew that people in other parts of the region had physical needs he could meet. He also knew that those people needed to know who he was. So he continued on, sharing his message of the coming kingdom, demonstrating his power, and freeing people from the bondage of evil.

#### The Jesus Connection

What do you need right now? Whatever it is, Jesus cares, and he can help. All the resources of heaven and earth belong to him, and he's ready to help you today.

Lots of people care about what happens to us, but nobody cares like Jesus. He has the power, the wisdom, and the love to know what's best for us. Jesus tirelessly cares for us and our needs. What cares can you leave in Jesus' capable hands today? What can you learn about caring for others from Jesus' example? You can write your prayer here.

-	



# Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player **Teacher Pack**CD: "Found a Friend"
(track 18), "God Is the
King" (Psalm 47:7)
(track 6)



# **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.

Say: Isn't it great to have friends? Friends are here when we need them. Let's sing about friends—and our friend Jesus.

Lead the kids in doing the motions and singing "Found a Friend" (track 18 on the CD) to the tune of "Found a Peanut." After the first verse, have the kids say "Hello" to friends on their right and left. After the second verse, have the kids say "Jesus loves you, [child's name]" to the children on their right and left. There's enough time for kids to do this so that you won't have to pause the CD.

Found some friends, found some friends, Found some friends right here in church. Found some friends, found some friends, Found some friends right here in church.

Jesus loves you, Jesus loves you, Jesus loves you every day. Tell your friends, tell your friends: Jesus loves you every day.

(Repeat from beginning.)

Say: Thanks for welcoming each other to church today! You showed you care about each other by saying "hello" and being friendly. ▶ JESUS CARES FOR US, and he likes it when we treat each other with care, too. Let's praise Jesus by singing "God Is the King."

Play "God Is the King" (Psalm 47:7) (track 6 on the CD), and encourage kids to join you in singing and marching to the beat in a circle. Change directions every few lines.



Let's sing about the Lord, The greatness of our God, God is the King of everything. We're wild about his love And all that he has done, God is the King of everything.

I know God; I talk about him every single day.
I pray to him at all times; he's the only way.
I love him! He loves me no matter where I go,
And everything I do will be for God and God alone.

Let's sing about the Lord, The greatness of our God, God is the King of everything. We're wild about his love And all that he has done, God is the King of everything.

Let's sing about the Lord, The greatness of our God, God is the King of everything. We're wild about his love And all that he has done, God is the King of everything, God is the King of everything, God is the King of everything.

"God Is the King" (Psalm 47:7) by Jay Stocker and Ben Glover. © 2005, 2006 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Say: Today we'll learn that JESUS CARES FOR US. When Jesus came to live on earth, he healed people and told them about God's love for them. I'm so thankful Jesus came to help us. Let's take a look at today's Key Verse to learn more about the way JESUS CARES FOR US.



## Calm and Peaceful

#### What You'll Do

Have the children sit in a circle. Open your Bible to Matthew 11:28, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.



Calm and Peaceful Supplies

Bible



Say: Our Key Verse from the Bible, Matthew 11:28, says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." That means that Jesus wants us to come to him and rest. Let's say our Key Verse together. Lead children in saying the simplified version of the Key Verse with you: Come to me and rest (Matthew 11:28).

#### Ask:

What are some things that make you worry?

Say: We might worry about our parents getting sick or friends moving away.

Sometimes we feel better when we talk to parents or caring adults. ▶ JESUS

CARES FOR US, and he wants us to always come to him so he can help us feel better.

Think of one thing that worries you. Pause. Now walk around the room as you say that worry over and over. Keep going until you hear me say the Key Verse. Allow about 30 seconds for kids to walk.

Say: Jesus says, "Come to me and rest!" Pause.

Stop what you're doing and "rest." You can sit on the floor and tell your worries to Jesus in a silent prayer.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

What was it like when you were resting and talking to Jesus?

In a quiet voice, say: When you're resting, you're calm and peaceful. Jesus wants us to feel that way all the time. The next time you're worried, remember that Jesus says, "Come to me and rest." Pray to him, and he'll help you feel calm and peaceful.

#### Theo's News Supplies

Surprise Box (any box will do)
Theo puppet
CD player
adhesive bandage
Teacher Pack
CD: "Here, Theo"
(track 4)

#### Theo's News Easy Prep

Put the bandage in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.



**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 4 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.

Winter Quarter

Lesson 10

Pre-K & K/Ages 5 & 6



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.

(Invite a child to open the Surprise Box, and have the kids pass the bandage around the circle so everyone can see it up close. Give kids time to guess what they'll learn from the

Bible today.)

**Teacher:** Friends, when do we use a bandage? (Pause for kids to answer your question.)

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

Theo: Well, we use a bandage when someone is hurt and needs help. Can someone tell

me about the last time you had to use a bandage?

(Allow a couple of kids to share.)

**Teacher:** Theo, do you ever use bandages?

**Theo:** No way! Those things gets stuck in my fur, and they hurt when you pull them off! In today's Bible passage, there are a lot of people who are hurt and need help. But they

need more help than they can get from a bandage. They need Jesus!

**Teacher:** Let's find out how Jesus cared for them!

**Theo:** Have fun, boys and girls! **Teacher:** 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: Jesus Heals

#### What You'll Do

Have kids sit in a circle. Open your Bible to Mark 1, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Show kids the "Jesus Heals" poster, and then place it in the center of the circle. Say:

Today we're learning from the Bible that JESUS CARES FOR US. Let's listen to
a young friend named Jonathan who'll tell us what it may have been like to live in
Bible times. Jonathan isn't the actual person from the Bible; he's just here to tell
us what happened. Let's find out how Jesus cared for people.

Play "Jesus Helps Us" (track 21 on the CD), and pause the CD for discussion as directed.

Say: Lie on your backs like the woman in the Bible. Pause. Try to get up without using a muscle. Pause. When a person is very sick, like the woman in the Bible, it can be hard to get up and do anything. But Jesus healed her! You can use your muscles to jump up now.

#### Ask:

- How does Jesus show us he cares about us?
- What do you need Jesus to do to care for you today?

Bring out the "Jesus Helps Us" cards, and talk about what's happening in the pictures.



#### Bible Time: Jesus Heals Supplies

Bible
CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: "Jesus Helps Us"
(track 21)
"Jesus Helps Us" cards,

separated
"Jesus Heals" poster
(from the Big Bible
Poster Pack)



#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What do the pictures on these cards tell us about Jesus?
- What can we do to care for others like Jesus cares for us?
- What do you like about caring for others?

Say: Jesus gives us people to care for us. We can care for others by being loving and kind, by being forgiving, and by sharing. We can tell everyone that ▶ JESUS CARES FOR US because he loves us!



#### 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: Jesus' Help Supplies

My Bible Playground colored pencils

#### Center 1: Jesus' Help Easy Prep

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

#### CENTER 1:

## Jesus' Help

#### What You'll Do

Help kids write their names on their My Bible Playground pages.

Say: The picture shows Jesus with a child in front of him. Let's pretend that the child in front of Jesus is you! Color his or her clothes the colors you're wearing today. Then draw on the page something you want Jesus' help with—maybe you want help to tell someone you're sorry or maybe you want help the next time you're scared. Allow time.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What did you color on your page?
- Tell about a time you prayed to Jesus and he helped you.
- Tell about people you know who need Jesus' help.

Say: You can tell Jesus about all of your worries or needs for help because

JESUS CARES FOR US. The next time you're not feeling well or you're scared

Winter Quarter

Lesson 10

Pre-K & K/Ages 5 & 6



or worried, pray to Jesus and he'll care for you. Remember that no matter what happens, Jesus has a plan for your life. And someday everyone who loves Jesus will live forever in heaven with him!

Say a quick prayer for the things the kids drew on their pages.

#### CENTER 2:

# **Active Help**

#### What You'll Do

Mix up the "Jesus Helps Us" cards, and place them facedown in a pile.

Say: Take turns choosing a card and acting out—without any words—a helping action such as what's shown on the card. Everyone else will try to guess what you're doing.

After kids each have a turn, have them gather together and sit in a circle.

Say: **Now let's stop pretending and help each other for real!** Have kids clean their hands. Then give each child an empty plate and a plate of snacks.

Sit in a circle and place your empty plate in front of you. One at a time, you can walk around the circle with your plate of snacks and share the snacks with the other kids. Invite a child to start, and then continue around the circle. Then invite another child to pray and thank Jesus for the snack.

#### Talk With Kids

Allow kids to eat their snacks while you lead them in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What was it like to help one another?
- What things do you do to help your family?

Say: We just showed care for each other and helped each other with our snack!

JESUS CARES FOR US because he loves us. We can care for others when we pray for them, share toys with them, and are kind and loving. It feels good to care for others.



# Center 2: Active Help Supplies

2 plates per child several different small snacks antibacterial gel (optional)

#### **Teacher Pack**

"Jesus Helps Us" cards, separated



#### Center 2: Active Help Easy Prep

Put the snacks on separate plates, 1 plate per child.



#### Center 3: Going to Jesus Supplies

tape

#### **Teacher Pack**

"Jesus" picture

#### Center 4: Others Need Jesus Supplies

construction paper scissors tape colored pencils

#### Center 4: Others Need Jesus Easy Prep

Cut a 4-inch strip along the length and a 4-inch strip along the width of pieces of construction paper for each child.

#### CENTER 3:

# Going to Jesus

#### What You'll Do

Tape the "Jesus" picture to a wall at one end of your room. Have the children form four groups at the other end of the room. Assign each group a different, specific direction for moving, such as hop, skip, crawl, or jump.

Once all the groups have their directions, say: **Go to Jesus and rest. Move toward the picture of Jesus using the motion I gave your group.** 

Allow time for kids to reach the picture. Say: Now rest on the floor below Jesus.

Play the game several times, having kids move in a different way each time.

Say: Many sick people came to Jesus and Jesus cared for them. Whether they walked, crawled, or were even carried to Jesus, he cared for them.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What was it like to rest by the picture of Jesus?
- Tell about someone you know who needs Jesus' care.

Say: Jesus wants each of us to come to him when we need help because

JESUS CARES FOR US. You can go to Jesus about anything and he'll help you.

And you can tell others that Jesus cares for them, too.

#### CENTER 4:

## Others Need Jesus

#### What You'll Do

Distribute supplies. Say: **Tape the strips of paper together so they look like a cross.** Demonstrate this for kids if needed.

People today need Jesus, just as the people in the Bible did. ► JESUS CARES FOR US and wants to help us. We can ask Jesus to help us and to help others.

Have kids draw pictures of people in need on their crosses.



#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What can Jesus do to care for the people in your pictures?
- What can we do to care for people in need?

Say: We can pray and trust that Jesus cares for all people. Jesus has a plan for you and me and for every person in the world. JESUS CARES FOR US, and we can be like Jesus and care for others, too.



#### ASTING

#### **IMPRESSIONS**

# **Daily Challenges**

#### What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up the centers, bring everyone back to sit in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage children to share what they learned 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 for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

#### Talk With Kids

Say: Today we learned that JESUS CARES FOR US. Choose one of these Daily Challenges to ask Jesus to care for you this week.

Give kids these three challenges to choose from:

- 1. Draw a picture of Jesus, and place it near your bed at night. Remember that Jesus cares for you while you're sleeping.
- 2. Sometimes Jesus uses other people to care for us. Thank your mom or dad for caring for you.
- 3. In the morning, ask Jesus to care for you during the day. Ask Jesus to also help you care for others who need help.

Say: If you want to draw a picture of Jesus, circle choice number 1. If you want to thank your mom or dad for caring for you, circle choice number 2. If you want to ask Jesus to care for you, circle choice number 3. Check that each child circled a choice. 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!



Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground



# **Caring Prayers**

#### What You'll Do

Say: Think of someone you can care for this week. It might be someone in your family, or it might be a friend or neighbor. Caring for someone can mean doing a job for someone, or it can mean praying for someone.

Then have the kids pray with you.

Pray: Thank you, Jesus, for your care. We want to be like you and care for people. Please help us care for...Go around the circle and have the kids name the people they'll help. In your 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.



# Jesus Calms a Storm

Mark 4:35-41

ears are very real to 5- and 6-year-olds. Pay close attention when children discuss the things they worry about or are afraid of. Take kids seriously and treat them with respect, no matter how insignificant their fears may seem to you. Young children don't have the perspective and wisdom that adults have. Use this lesson to introduce kids to talking to Jesus about their fears in order to find relief and comfort.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Getting Started about 10 min.	Welcoming Song Sing or listen to praises for God.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
Key Verse Activity about 10 min.	A Worry-Free Rest Tell partners their worries, pray, and then sing and give Jesus their worries.	Bible, CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
	Theo's News Find out what an empty box has to do with the Bible.	Surprise Box (any box will do), Theo puppet, CD player <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD	Hide the empty Surprise Box where it's easily accessible.
Bible Exploration about 15 min.	Bible Time: Stopping the Storm Listen to the CD and act out the Bible passage to learn that Jesus helps them when they're afraid.	Bible, CD player, large blanket, bedsheet, 3 or 4 plastic bowls or buckets, spray bottle with water <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD	Make a boat by spreading the blanket on the floor. If it's not large enough for the entire group to sit on, bring extras. Place the bedsheet and bowls on the "boat."

**Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.



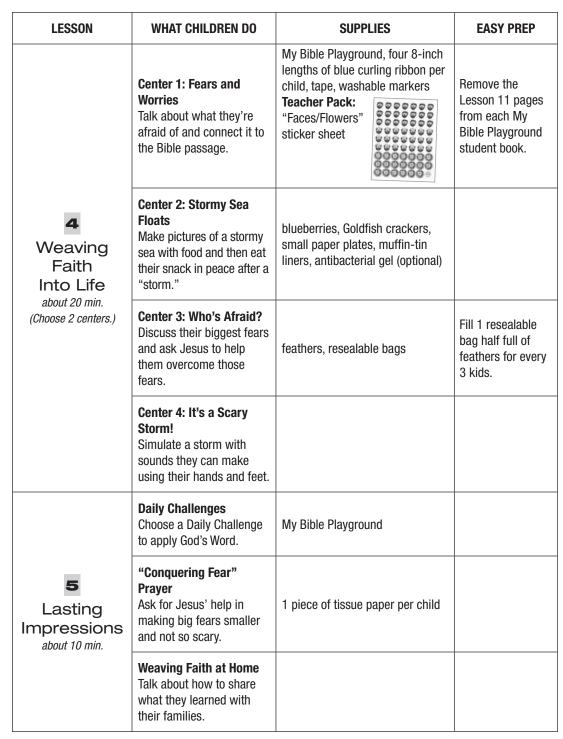
# ►Bible Point Jesus helps us when we're afraid.

.....

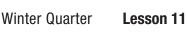
# Key Verse "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

#### Weaving Faith Into Life Children will discover

they can trust Jesus to help them when they're afraid.



Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





# Jesus Calms a Storm

Mark 4:35-41



# Jesus Tells the Disciples to Sail Across the Sea of Galilee

Jesus' suggestion to go to the other side of the Sea of Galilee sounds to us like a simple procedure. However, several factors made such a journey difficult. First, it's unlikely that many Jews from the west side of the lake ever ventured to this area of the east side, inhabited mostly by Gentiles. Second, the boats were small fishing boats not intended for crossing the lake. And finally, the geography surrounding the lake made it vulnerable to sudden storms that could turn this calm lake into a violent sea. Such a storm arose, and though many of the disciples were experienced sailors, they woke Jesus for help.

# Jesus Calms the Chaotic Storm

When Jesus awoke, he immediately demonstrated his power and control. There was no hint of worry or concern in his words. He simply said, "Quiet!" He then said, "Be still," a term which literally means "muzzle yourself and continue to be silent."

We have the benefit of knowing the end of the story. But imagine the disciples' amazement when the raging waves instantly became calm. Even today, with our advanced technology, we don't have any control over the weather and can't even forecast it very accurately. In the instant the storm ceased, the disciples began to realize more fully who Jesus was. He'd demonstrated his power in healing people, but never before had he done anything of this magnitude.

## Jesus Uses the Storm to Teach the Disciples About Trust

Jesus seemed surprised that the disciples' faith was so weak. After all they'd seen, they still hadn't fully grasped who Jesus was or what he was capable of. But now they'd seen something so powerful, so awesome, that they were terrified to think of who Jesus really was.

The disciples' terrified response is understandable when we consider God's power and purity in light of our own weakness and imperfection. But the disciples came to learn that no matter how bad a situation seemed, the first thing they needed to do was turn to Jesus.

# The Jesus Connection

Who or what do you trust when life gets scary?

So often we seek security in money, possessions,

position, or human relationships. But all these things

can fail. It's far better to invest in a relationship with the Son of God. We have the comfort of having the all-powerful Jesus as our best friend. What can you do today to put your trust more fully in Jesus? You can write your prayer here.



# Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player **Teacher Pack** CD: "Found a Friend" (track 18), "Jesus Loves Me Rock" (track 3)



# **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.

Lead the kids in doing the motions and singing "Found a Friend" (track 18 on the CD) to the tune of "Found a Peanut." After the first verse, have the kids say "Hello" to the friends on their right and left. After the second verse, have the kids say "Jesus loves you, [child's name]" to the children on their right and left. There's enough time for kids to do this so that you won't have to pause the CD.

Found some friends, found some friends, Found some friends right here in church. Found some friends, found some friends, Found some friends right here in church.

Jesus loves you, Jesus loves you, Jesus loves you every day. Tell your friends, tell your friends: Jesus loves you every day.

(Repeat from the beginning.)

Say: Today we'll learn that ► JESUS HELPS US WHEN WE'RE AFRAID. That's because Jesus loves us! Let's sing a song about Jesus' love.

Begin the CD, and lead kids in singing "Jesus Loves Me Rock" (track 3 on the CD). Encourage kids to sing and do the motions with you.

Jesus loves me, (echo) (cross arms over your chest to sign "love")
This I know. (echo) (point to head)
For the Bible (echo) (put hands together as if they're a book)
Tells me so. (echo) (point to self with thumbs)
Little children (echo) (hold hands out, palms down)
To him belong. (echo) (raise arms)

Winter Quarter

Lesson 11

Pre-K & K/Ages 5 & 6



They are weak, but (echo) (swing arms from side to side) He's so strong! (echo) (show muscles)

Jaaayyy! (J) (cup hands around mouth)

**Eeeeee!** (E) (cup hands around mouth)

Sssssss! (S) (bend arms at elbows, and swing them back and forth)

**Uuuuuuuu!** (U) (raise arms)

Sssssss! (S) (bend arms at elbows, and swing them back and forth)

And what's that spell? (Jesus!) (cup hands around mouth as you shout "Jesus!")

And who do you love? (Jesus!)

And who loves you? (Jesus!)

Who died for you? (Jesus!)

And who's your guy? (Jesus!)

The apple of your eye! (Jesus!)

And who's your friend? (Jesus!)

He'll love ya to the end!

(Repeat from the beginning.)

Say: Jesus loves us and cares for us so he wants to help us feel safe. That's why JESUS HELPS US WHEN WE'RE AFRAID. Let's look at our Key Verse to learn more about that.



# A Worry-Free Rest

#### What You'll Do

Have the children sit in a circle. Open your Bible to Matthew 11:28, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Our Key Verse from the Bible, Matthew 11:28, says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." That means that Jesus wants us to come to him and rest. Let's say our Key Verse together. Lead children in saying the simplified version of the Key Verse with you: Come to me and rest (Matthew 11:28).

Form pairs, and let kids tell their partners something that worries them today. Then lead children in saying the following prayer line by line.



#### A Worry-Free Rest Supplies

Bible CD player **Teacher Pack** CD: "Jesus Can Do Anything" (entire) (track 22)

<sup>&</sup>quot;Jesus Loves Me Rock" by Dean-o. © 2003 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.



Pray: Dear Jesus, I give you my worries, And I give you [partner's name]'s worries, too. We want to come to you and rest. In your name, amen.

Say: We feel better when we give Jesus our worries and come to him to rest. Let's sing a song to help us remember that we can come to Jesus and rest. Jesus will help us with our worries because Jesus can do anything.

Begin the CD, and lead the children in singing "Jesus Can Do Anything" (entire) (track 22 on the CD) to the tune of "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean."

Jesus is God and he loves me; (cross arms across chest)
Jesus loves me every day.
Jesus is God and he loves me; (cross arms across chest)
My Jesus can do anything!

Jesus, Jesus – Jesus can do anything, amen! Jesus, Jesus – Jesus can do anything!

Jesus is God and he helps me; (stoop down and reach out with arms) Jesus helps me every day.

Jesus is God and he helps me; (stoop down and reach out with arms)

Oh, come to Jesus and rest. (put head on hands as a pillow)

Jesus, Jesus—come to Jesus and rest, amen! (put head on hands as a pillow) Jesus, Jesus—come to Jesus and rest! (put head on hands as a pillow)

Jesus is God and he helps me; (stoop down and reach out with arms) Jesus helps me every day.
Jesus is God and he helps me; (stoop down and reach out with arms) Give God your worries today. (raise arms up in the air)

Worries, worries—oh, give God your worries today, okay! (raise arms up in the air)
Worries, worries—oh, give God your worries today! (raise arms up in the air)

(Repeat from the beginning.)

Say: Jesus is God and he loves all of us. We can talk to Jesus about anything, even our biggest fears. ► JESUS HELPS US WHEN WE'RE AFRAID because he loves us so much.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What are some things you worry about?
- Tell about a time you told your worries to somebody else.

Winter Quarter

Lesson 11

Pre-K & K/Ages 5 & 6



Say: We might worry about school or mean people or family members getting sick. We can tell our families, friends, or teachers when we're worried, and that helps us feel better. We can also tell our worries to Jesus. ▶ JESUS HELPS US WHEN WE'RE AFRAID. We can give Jesus our worries when we come to him and rest.



#### 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 4 on the CD). When the CD segment ends, bring out the Surprise Box, and put the Theophilus 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.

(Invite a child to open the Surprise Box, and have the kids pass the empty box around the circle so everyone can see it up close. Give kids time to guess what they'll learn from the Bible today.)

**Teacher:** Friends, what's in the box? (Pause for kids to answer your question.)

**Teacher:** Theo, why didn't you put anything in the Surprise Box today?

**Theo:** Well, I tried to trap the wind in the box. It's hard to do! **Teacher:** Why did you want to put wind in the box, Theo?

Theo: There was a time that Jesus and the disciples were in a boat during a very bad

storm. Have you ever been in a scary storm? (Pause for children to respond.) **Teacher:** During this storm, the disciples were very afraid! Let's find out how Jesus

helped them when they were afraid! **Theo:** Have fun, boys and girls! **Teacher:** 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: Stopping the Storm

#### What You'll Do

Open your Bible to Mark 4, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Today we'll learn from the Bible that JESUS HELPS US WHEN WE'RE AFRAID. Have the kids repeat the Bible Point after you. Say: A boy named Jonathan



#### Theo's News Supplies

Surprise Box (any box will do)
Theo puppet
CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: "Here, Theo"
(track 4)

#### Theo's News Easy Prep

Hide the empty Surprise Box where it's easily accessible.

#### Bible Time: Stopping the Storm Supplies

Bible
CD player
large blanket
bedsheet
3 or 4 plastic bowls or
buckets
spray bottle with water
Teacher Pack
CD: "Jonathan and the
Stowaways" (track 23)

#### Bible Time: Stopping the Storm Easy Prep

Make a boat by spreading the blanket on the floor. If it's not large enough for the entire group to sit on, bring extras. Place the bedsheet and bowls on the "boat."



will tell us what happened in the Bible. Jonathan didn't really live during Bible times; he's just here to tell us about a time the disciples were with Jesus in a scary storm. Let's listen and act out what we hear. Sit near the blanket and be ready to climb aboard when Jonathan tells us to get into the boat.

Begin "Jonathan and the Stowaways," (track 23 on the CD) and lead children in the motions as suggested on the CD. Invite kids to make the wind by blowing and spray a fine mist from the spray bottle for "rain" as these words are mentioned.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What do you think of the way Jesus helped the disciples when they were afraid?
- Tell about a time you were afraid.

Say: Jesus is God and he can do anything—he can even calm the wind and the waves! The next time you're in a storm, or you're worried or afraid about something, you can pray to Jesus. JESUS HELPS US WHEN WE'RE AFRAID.



## **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: Fears and Worries Supplies

My Bible Playground four 8-inch lengths of blue curling ribbon per child tape washable markers **Teacher Pack** "Faces/Flowers" sticker sheet

#### Center 1: Fears and Worries Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson 11 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.

#### **CENTER 1:**

## **Fears and Worries**

#### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Help kids write their names on their My Bible Playground pages. Give kids the ribbons.

Say: Wind your pieces of ribbon around one of your fingers and lay the ribbons on the page so it looks like waves in the storm. Pause. Find a partner, and show each other frightened faces to show how the disciples may have looked in the storm. Pause. Now tell your partners something that makes you afraid, such as stormy weather or being alone in the dark. Allow time.

Next, straighten the ribbons and tape them flat across your pages, like the water

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after Jesus calmed the wind and waves. Allow time. For the last step, stick two stickers of the smiling disciples to your pages.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- Tell what you think would be scary about being in a small boat during a big storm.
- What other things scare you?
- What ways can you ask Jesus to help you when you're afraid?

Say: Jesus helped the disciples when he calmed the wind and the waves!

JESUS HELPS US WHEN WE'RE AFRAID because he loves us. Let's trust him this week to help us when we're afraid.

#### CENTER 2:

# Stormy Sea Floats

#### What You'll Do

Have children clean their hands, and give each child a paper plate. Say: **Take enough blueberries to cover half of your plate and make a blueberry sea.** Allow time. **Next, take a few Goldfish crackers and put them in your blueberry sea.** Allow time. Give each child a muffin-tin liner. **Let's pretend these muffin liners are boats traveling on the blueberry sea.** They can rest on top of the blueberries the way the disciples' boat rested on top of the waters in the Bible. Now, move your plate around to move the blueberries as if a great storm has come. Allow time. **Jesus calmed the wind and the waves. Let's calm our storms, too.** Wait until everyone has stopped moving their plates.

Invite a willing child to pray, and then allow kids to enjoy their snack.

Say: The disciples were afraid when the storm came, but Jesus helped them when they were afraid. ▶ JESUS HELPS US WHEN WE'RE AFRAID, too. Jesus is always here for us no matter what scary things we face.

#### CENTER 3:

## Who's Afraid?

#### What You'll Do

Have kids form groups of three. Then have trios move to different areas of the room. Give each trio a bag of feathers.



#### Center 2: Stormy Sea Floats Supplies

blueberries Goldfish crackers small paper plates muffin-tin liners antibacterial gel (optional)



# Center 3: Who's Afraid? Supplies

feathers resealable bags

Center 3: Who's Afraid? Easy Prep

Fill 1 resealable bag half full of feathers for every 3 kids.



Say: Talk with your group about your biggest fears. For each fear you name, take one feather from the bag and hold on to it. Allow one minute.

Now talk about what you'd like to tell Jesus about those fears. Take another feather for each fear you'd talk to Jesus about. Allow one minute.

Let's take a minute and everyone will silently pray to Jesus about our fears and ask him to take away our worries. Fold your hands together with your feathers as you pray. Allow time for prayer.

Then close by praying: **Thank you for listening to us, Jesus, and thank you for helping us with our fears. In your name we pray, amen.** 

Say: Now blow the feathers out of your hands to show that ▶ JESUS HELPS US WHEN WE'RE AFRAID and makes our fears as light as feathers.

#### Talk With Kids

Have kids help pick up feathers, and then lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- When does your fear feel heavy to you?
- What do you do to help your fear feel lighter and not so scary?

Say: It must've been scary to be in the boat in the storm with the wind blowing and the waves of water getting in the boat. The next time we're worried or afraid, we can remember that ▶ JESUS HELPS US WHEN WE'RE AFRAID. We can do what the disciples did and ask Jesus for help.

#### CENTER 4:

## It's a Scary Storm!

#### What You'll Do

Have kids sit in a half-circle around you.

Say: Watch me closely and do what I do, but only start doing the motion when I've passed in front of you. Ready? Continue what you're doing until I pass in front of you with a new motion. Start rubbing your hands together quickly, and slowly walk to the other end of the half-circle. See that all kids are following the motion. Pause and let the sound fill the room for a moment.

Start at one end of the half-circle and begin clapping your hands slowly and move to the other end of the half-circle until all kids are following the new motion. Pause and let the sound fill the room.

Now begin clapping your hands rapidly and move to the other end of the half-circle until all kids are following the new motion. Pause and let the sound fill the room.



Start stomping your feet as you continue to clap your hands and move to the other end of the half-circle until all kids are following the new motion and the loud sound fills the room.

Say: **Then Jesus calmed the storm.** Stop stomping your feet and start slowly clapping and move to the other end of the half-circle until all of the kids are following you. Pause to let the quieter sound fill the room.

Start rubbing your hands together again and move to the other end of the half-circle until all kids are following you. Then fold your hands together in silence and move to the other end of the half-circle until the room is silent.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What do you think of the storm we just made?
- What makes storms or other things you're afraid of scary?
- Tell about a time you asked Jesus to help you when you were afraid.

Say: Jesus wants us to pray to him and tell him our worries and fears when scary things happen. ▶ JESUS HELPS US WHEN WE'RE AFRAID by comforting us. Whenever and wherever you're scared, you can ask Jesus to help you. Jesus can calm your fears and make things peaceful again—the way our room was quiet and calm after our storm.



#### **IMPRESSIONS**

# **Daily Challenges**

#### What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up the centers, bring everyone back to sit in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage children to share what they learned 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 for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

#### Talk With Kids

Say: Today we learned that ▶ JESUS HELPS US WHEN WE'RE AFRAID. Choose one of these Daily Challenges to trust Jesus to help you when you're afraid this week.



Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground



Give kids these three challenges to choose from:

- 1. Add bubbles to your bath water and then use a toy boat to tell about Jesus calming the storm. When you're finished, ask Jesus to help you when you're afraid, just as he helped the disciples.
- 2. If you're learning to do something new like riding a bike or going down a tall slide, ask Jesus to help you and be with you.
- 3. Draw a picture of something very scary. Then draw Jesus in the picture, too, to show that Jesus is always with you—even during scary times.

Say: If you want to use a toy boat in your bath, circle choice number 1. If you want to ask Jesus for help when learning something new, circle choice number 2. If you want to draw a picture, circle choice number 3. Check that each child circled a choice. 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!

# "Conquering Fear" Prayer

#### "Conquering Fear" Prayer Supplies

1 piece of tissue paper per child

#### What You'll Do

Have kids stand in a circle. Give each child a piece of tissue paper.

Say: Share one of the fears you've talked about today as you hold your tissue paper. Allow time. Then have kids repeat this prayer after you.

Pray: **Dear Jesus, please help us face our fears. With your help we can do it!** 

Say: Now let's pretend our papers are our fears. Crumple up your tissue paper as tight and small as you can get it and toss it behind you. Allow time. Jesus helps us make our big fears into small worries we can leave behind us.

Pray: Jesus, thank you for helping us get past our fears. We love you! In your name, amen.

Have kids help you gather and throw away the tissue paper.

# 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.

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Lesson 11

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# Four Friends Help a Paralyzed Man Mark 2:1-12

ive- and 6-year-olds are beginning to understand the need for forgiveness when they've done something wrong. They also can easily fall prey to feelings of guilt over wrongdoing. It's important to communicate clearly and joyfully to children that we're always forgiven when we ask God to forgive us. Use this lesson to show children that Jesus forgives us when we ask.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Getting Started about 10 min.	Welcoming Song Sing or listen to praises for God.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
Key Verse Activity about 10 min.	Changed! Learn that Jesus helps them change when they're forgiven.	Bible, crayons Teacher Pack: "Forgiveness" cards, "Faces/ Flowers" sticker sheet	If you have more than 20 children in your group, bring in extra stickers. If you don't have enough "Forgiveness" cards, use 3x5 cards.
	Theo's News Find out what mud and twigs have to do with the Bible.	Surprise Box (any box will do), Theo puppet, CD player, resealable plastic bag of mud and twigs  Teacher Pack: CD  Put the bag of mud in the Surprise Box, and hide the where it's easily accessible	
Bible Exploration about 15 min.	Bible Time: Bringing a Friend to Jesus Learn about friends who lowered a man through the roof of a house to see Jesus.	Bible, tape, shoe box, scissors, bag of mud and twigs from "Theo's News" Teacher Pack: "Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)	Cut out the man and the mat from the poster, and attach the man to the mat with a small piece of rolled tape. Turn the shoe box upside down, and tape the poster to the side of the shoe box (don't worry if the poster is bigger than the shoe box). Cut a hole in the top of the shoe box so the figure of the man and the mat will fit through.



# ► Bible Point Jesus forgives us.

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# Key Verse "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

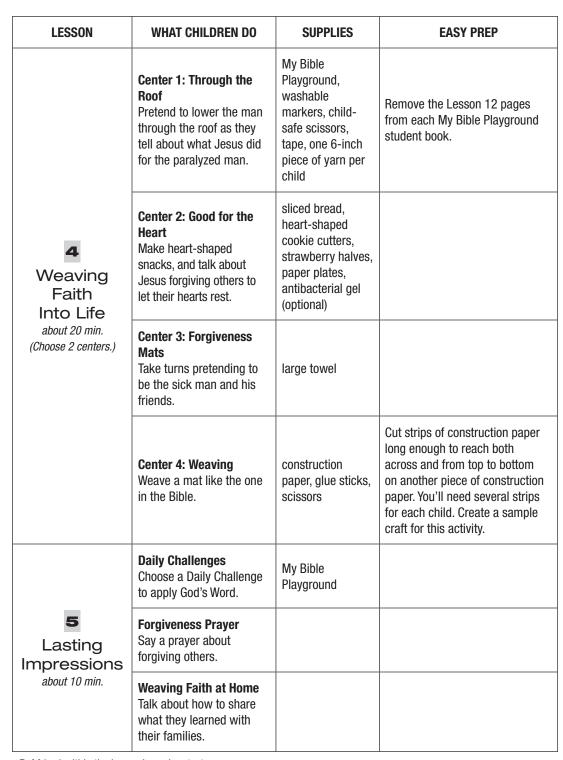
#### Weaving Faith Into Life Children will thank Jesus for forgiving

•••••

them.

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Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



# Four Friends Help a Paralyzed Man

Mark 2:1-12



# Jesus Makes Capernaum His Home Base

From this passage and others, it's apparent that Capernaum was Jesus' home base for much of his ministry.

Jesus was now drawing a crowd everywhere he went, and Capernaum was no exception. Even though Jesus had just arrived, no one was turned away and everyone was welcomed until the house was filled and people were standing outside the door!

# Four Friends Help a Paralyzed Man Get to Jesus

The persistence the four friends showed in getting the paralytic before Jesus demonstrated their faith that Jesus could heal him. Some suggest that it was their faith alone that prompted Jesus to heal the man and forgive his sins. However, that seems inconsistent with the rest of Scripture, which consistently emphasizes personal repentance and faith. Instead, it's likely the paralytic's faith was similar to that of his friends and that his faith simply wasn't mentioned here—his friends probably wouldn't have done what they had without their paralyzed friend's consent. And it's possible that the paralyzed man was unable to speak clearly enough to express his own faith.

## Jesus' Healings Amaze and Shock His Critics

Everyone in the house (and on the roof!) was likely shocked when Jesus first forgave the paralytic's sins. The skeptical teachers of the Law who were present didn't have to say anything for Jesus to know what they were thinking. He clearly intended to force them to face head-on who he really was. Evidence that sins were forgiven was not immediately visible, but healing the man's paralysis was. When Jesus healed the man,

he demonstrated that he had the power to do both. And by the order he chose, he also demonstrated that in his priorities the forgiveness of sins is more important than physical healing.

This passage says the people were amazed. In Matthew's and Luke's accounts of this incident (Matthew 9:2-8; Luke 5:17-26), we see that people also were filled with awe, the Greek word for which can also be translated as *fear*. They went away praising God, knowing that forgiveness is available in Jesus.

A relationship with Jesus satisfies all our needs. Jesus provides help comfort, healing, and forgiveness

### The Jesus Connection

Because of his five friends, this man found healing and forgiveness! Praise God for the forgiveness you've received, and thank God for the people who helped you find friendship with Jesus and his forgiveness. Praise God for these good things today. You can write your prayer here.



## Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player **Teacher Pack**CD: "Found a Friend"
(track 18), "The
Power!" (track 7)



# **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.

Lead the kids in singing "Found a Friend" (track 18 on the CD) to the tune of "Found a Peanut." After the first verse, have the kids say "Hello" to the friends on their right and left. After the second verse, have the kids say "Jesus loves you, [child's name]" to another child. There's enough time for kids to do this so that you won't have to pause the CD.

Found some friends, found some friends, Found some friends right here in church. Found some friends, found some friends, Found some friends right here in church.

Jesus loves you, Jesus loves you, Jesus loves you every day. Tell your friends, tell your friends: Jesus loves you every day.

(Repeat from the beginning.)

Say: Today we'll learn that JESUS FORGIVES US. Let's praise Jesus for his power to forgive us. Remember: Jesus can do anything!

Play "The Power!" (track 7 on the CD), and encourage kids to sing and do the motions with you.

He's got the POWER! (flex muscles)

Everybody come with me; (motion toward yourself)

It's time to sing (cup hands around mouth)

About Jesus' power all around me. (extend arms and turn in a circle)

We gotta let the whole world know

That Jesus Christ is on the throne! (point up)

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Lesson 12



(Chorus)

He's got the POWER! (flex muscles)

Everybody's talkin' 'bout his POWER! (turn to another person as you sing)

**Look up,** (look up) **look down,** (look down) **look all around,** (hold a hand at your brow and look around)

And you will see his POWER! (spread and wiggle fingers)

Everybody come with me; (motion toward yourself)
It's time to sing (cup hands around mouth)
About Jesus' power all around me. (extend arms and turn in a circle)
We gotta let the whole world know
That Jesus Christ is on the throne! (point up)

(Repeat chorus 2x.)

The power to be thankful! (echo)
The power to be brave! (echo)
The power to lend a helping hand! (echo)
To live forever, you know we can! (echo)

**POWER!** (flex muscles)

Everybody's talkin' 'bout his POWER! (turn to another person as you sing)

**Look up,** (look up) **look down,** (look down) **look all around,** (hold a hand at your brow and look around)

And you will see his POWER! (spread and wiggle fingers)

(Repeat chorus.)

**Look up,** (look up) **look down,** (look down) **look all around,** (hold a hand at your brow and look around)

And you will see his POWER! (spread and wiggle fingers)

**Look up,** (look up) **look down,** (look down) **look all around,** (hold a hand at your brow and look around)

And you will see his POWER! (spread and wiggle fingers)

"The Power!" by Jay Stocker. © 2008 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Say: It can take a lot of strength to forgive others when they've hurt us, and it takes a lot of strength for others to forgive us, too. Jesus is very powerful and strong, and will give us the strength we need. ▶ JESUS FORGIVES US when we do wrong and loves us always. That can bring wonderful peace and rest to our hearts. Let's look at our Key Verse and learn about why Jesus wants us to come to him for rest.





## Changed! Supplies

Bible crayons

# Teacher Pack

"Forgiveness" cards
"Faces/Flowers" sticker
sheet

## Changed! Easy Prep

If you have more than 20 children in your group, bring in extra stickers. If you don't have enough "Forgiveness" cards, use 3x5 cards.



# Changed!

### What You'll Do

Sit in a circle with kids. Open your Bible to Matthew 11:28, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Our Key Verse from the Bible, Matthew 11:28, says, "Come to me all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." That means that Jesus wants us to come to him and rest. Let's say our Key Verse together. Lead children in repeating the simplified version of the Key Verse after you: Come to me and rest (Matthew 11:28).

Say: When we go to Jesus and ask forgiveness for the things we've done wrong, JESUS FORGIVES US and then we can rest. We don't have to struggle and worry and feel bad about those things anymore.

Give each child a "Forgiveness" card and a crayon.

Find a partner and tell each other something you've done that you're sorry for. Allow time. Now use a crayon to make a dot on your card to represent that sin. Allow time.

Put your card down in front of you, and close your eyes and tell God you're sorry for the wrong things you've done. We've all done wrong things, it's just part of being human. Don't open your eyes until I tell you to. While the kids are praying, put a flower sticker over the dot on each child's card.

Say: Now open your eyes. Pause. When Jesus forgives us, he changes our hearts. Look at the change on your card! When we say we're sorry to God, he forgives us.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- Tell about a time you've asked God to forgive you.
- What do you like about knowing that God forgives us?

Say: Jesus wants us to come to him and rest. When we go to him and say we're sorry, he'll forgive us and we can be happy and rest. Keep your cards as a reminder that JESUS FORGIVES US. Let's say our Key Verse together one more time. Lead children in saying the Key Verse with you: Come to me and rest (Matthew 11:28).





# 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 4 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.

(Invite a child to open the Surprise Box, and have the kids pass the bag around the circle so everyone can see it up close. Give kids time to guess what they'll learn from the Bible today.)

**Teacher:** Friends, what do you think mud and sticks have to do with the Bible?

(Pause for kids to answer your question.)

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

Theo: Well, you might think that I gave you the mud and sticks because I'm a dog and I

like to dig in the mud and fetch sticks. **Teacher:** Well, that would make sense.

Theo: But actually, I know that in Bible times, the roofs of houses were often made with

mud and sticks. So I brought things to make a roof. Roof, roof!

Teacher: Let's find out what happened when a man's friends wouldn't let a roof stand in

the way of getting to Jesus! **Theo:** Have fun, boys and girls! **Teacher:** 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

Surprise Box (any box will do)
Theo puppet
CD player
resealable plastic bag of mud and twigs
Teacher Pack
CD: "Here, Theo"
(track 4)

## Theo's News Easy Prep

Put the bag of mud in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.



## Bible Time: Bringing a Friend to Jesus Supplies

Bible tape shoe box scissors bag of mud and twigs from "Theo's News" **Teacher Pack** 

# "Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man" poster

(from the Big Bible Poster Pack)

# Bible Time: Bringing a Friend to Jesus Easy Prep

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Cut out the man and the mat from the poster, and attach the man to the mat with a small piece of rolled tape. Turn the shoe box upside down, and tape the poster to the side of the shoe box (don't worry if the poster is bigger than the shoe box). Cut a hole in the top of the shoe box so the figure of the man and the mat will fit through.

# Bible Time: Bringing a Friend to Jesus

### What You'll Do

Open your Bible to Mark 2, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Today in the Bible we'll learn that ▶ JESUS FORGIVES US. Have kids repeat the Bible Point with you. Set out the box with the "Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man" poster taped to it.

Say: Jesus taught many people. So many people had come to see him that it was very crowded in the house and there was no extra room, not even outside the door.

Some friends wanted to bring a sick man to Jesus. The man was paralyzed—that means he couldn't walk—so the friends carried him on a mat. Show kids the man on the mat from the poster. The friends were sure that Jesus could help the sick man, but they couldn't get through the crowd!

#### Ask:

What would you do to help a friend get somewhere if he or she couldn't walk?

Say: The man's friends decided to go up on the roof of the house. Point to the top of the shoe box and put the man and his mat on top of the shoe box. In Bible times, the roofs were flat, and people sometimes sat up on their roofs in the evenings to cool off. Remember, when we were talking to Theo we learned that roofs were made of mud and sticks, which dried nice and hard. Pass the bag of mud and twigs from Theo's News around so everyone can see it again. But the man's friends dug a hole through the roof! Then they lowered the man on the mat down through the hole, right in front of Jesus! Take the figure of the man on the mat, and lower it through the hole in the shoe box. Then place the man outside the shoe box so it looks as if he's in the room with Jesus.

Say: Now each of you can lower the man on his mat down to Jesus. Pause while willing children each pretend to lower the man from the roof of the shoebox house. When Jesus saw how much the men believed in him, he said to the sick man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Some people in the crowd still doubted that Jesus was God. So Jesus said to the man, "Get up, take your mat, and go home." The man got up, picked up his mat, and walked out through the crowd! Carefully remove the man from his mat and make him stand up and walk away from the "house." All of the people were amazed. They'd never seen anything like it before, and they praised God. Let's make a joyful noise to praise God, too! On the count of three, shout, whoop, sing, laugh, or make another kind of happy noise for God. One, two, three!



### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- The friends were very determined to get the paralyzed man to Jesus. What does that tell us about these friends?
- Jesus forgave the man's sins and then healed him. Tell about a time you needed to be forgiven. How did being forgiven help you?

Say: Jesus forgave the sick man, and then Jesus healed the man. > JESUS FORGIVES US, too.



# 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:

# Through the Roof

### What You'll Do

Help kids write their names on their My Bible Playground pages and cut out the figures of the man and the mat.

Say: Take the paper figure man and tape it on top of the mat. Allow time. Tape one end of a piece of yarn to the back of the mat and tape the other end to the roof of the house. Allow time. Find a partner and pretend to raise and lower the man to Jesus as you take turns telling about how Jesus forgave and healed the man. Allow time.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

- What do you think about what the friends did for the paralyzed man?
- What can you do with your My Bible Playground page to help someone else know that ▶ JESUS FORGIVES US?



## **Center 1: Through the** Roof Supplies

My Bible Playground washable markers child-safe scissors one 6-inch piece of yarn per child

## Center 1: Through the Roof Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson 12 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.



Center 2: Good for the Heart Supplies

sliced bread heart-shaped cookie cutters strawberry halves paper plates antibacterial gel (optional)

# ALLERGY ALERT

Say: The friends brought the man to Jesus to be healed. What great friends! The best thing we can do for our friends is tell them about Jesus. ▶ JESUS FORGIVES US and loves us. He wants us to live forever in heaven with him, and his forgiveness makes that possible.

### CENTER 2:

# Good for the Heart

### What You'll Do

Have children clean their hands. Then gather everyone around the supplies.

Say: Jesus' forgiveness is good for our hearts. When Jesus forgives us, we can go to him and rest—just like our Key Verse says—and that brings peace and happiness to our hearts. When Jesus forgave and healed the paralyzed man, the man probably was *very* happy! Let's make a happy heart snack to remember that JESUS FORGIVES US.

Put a piece of bread on a plate and work with a partner to cut a heart shape in the bread using a cookie cutter. Allow time for both partners to cut out their bread hearts. Take some strawberry pieces that also look like hearts and place them on your bread heart. Allow time.

Pray: Jesus, thank you for forgiving us and helping our hearts find peace and rest. Thank you for our snack, too! In your name, amen.

### Talk With Kids

Allow kids to eat their snack as you lead them in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What are you happy about today?
- What can we do to help others find forgiveness and rest with Jesus?

Say: The men helped their friend get to Jesus, and Jesus healed the man and forgave his sins. We can help our friends get to know Jesus, too. Jesus forgave the man in the Bible, and ▶ JESUS FORGIVES US, too.



### CENTER 3:

# **Forgiveness Mats**

Tip You can use blankets as mats, too.

## What You'll Do

Use an open space in the room for this activity. Help kids form trios, and give one group the towel to use as a mat. Other groups will have a chance to use the mat, too.

Say: In this game, you'll take turns pretending to be the paralyzed man and the friends who brought the man to Jesus. Have the person who's pretending to be the paralyzed man lie on your group's mat. Allow time. Now the other two people in your team will carefully pull the person on the mat to the other side of the room. Ready? Go. Allow time. Great! Now, friends pulling the mat, say to the person lying down, "Jesus forgives you." Allow time. The person on the mat can get up, pick up the mat and walk with your group back to the starting place. When they get back, have the children affirm each other with high fives or pats on the back and say, "Thanks for being an awesome friend!"

Give the other trios a chance to do the activity.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

- What made carrying a friend on a mat hard or easy?
- The friends of the man in the Bible worked hard to carry him up onto a roof and then they dug through the roof to lower him down to Jesus. What hard thing can you do to help your friends get to know Jesus and his forgiveness?

Say: In the Bible, the sick man couldn't walk, so his friends carried him even though it was hard to get him to Jesus. Jesus forgave the man for his sins, and Jesus healed him. Aren't you glad that ▶ JESUS FORGIVES US, too? We'll face challenges introducing our friends to Jesus, too, but we can keep trying so they don't miss out on knowing Jesus' forgiveness and love.

### CENTER 4:

# Weaving

### What You'll Do

Say: Mats were very common during Jesus' time on earth. The mats were woven out of materials such as straw and wool. Today, we'll make a woven mat using paper.



### Center 3: Forgiveness Mats Supplies

large towel

# Center 4: Weaving Supplies

construction paper glue sticks scissors

## Center 4: Weaving Easy Prep

Cut strips of construction paper long enough to reach both across and from top to bottom on another piece of construction paper. You'll need several strips for each child. Create a sample craft for this activity.

Pre-K & K/Ages 5 & 6

Lesson 12

Winter Quarter



Give each child a full piece of construction paper, strips of cut-up paper, and glue. Have kids glue the strips of paper in a criss-cross pattern so it looks like a "woven" mat. Show the kids the one you made beforehand as a sample.

As children work, say: In the Bible, the sick man's friends worked hard to carry him on a mat that was probably woven in a pattern like what you're making now. The mat held strong as the friends lowered the sick man down to Jesus through the hole they'd dug in the roof. Then after Jesus forgave the man and healed him, the man jumped up and Jesus told him to take his mat with him. That ended up being a pretty special mat! What a journey!

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- Tell about a time you were so sick you had to stay in bed or lie down all day.
- What do you think would make it hard to not be able to move at all—ever?
- What do you like about getting better when you've been sick?
- What makes Jesus' forgiveness of the wrong things we've done like getting over a sickness?

Say: Jesus healed the paralyzed man and made him able to walk again. That's very exciting! But Jesus did something even better than that for the man—Jesus forgave the man! ▶ JESUS FORGIVES US, too! Each time you see your mat, you can remember the man who was healed from spending his life on a mat and remember that Jesus forgives you, too.



**LASTING** 

**IMPRESSIONS** 

## Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground

# **Daily Challenges**

### What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up the centers, bring everyone back to sit in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage children to share what they learned 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 for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

### Talk With Kids

Say: Today we learned that FIESUS FORGIVES US. Choose one of these Daily Challenges to thank Jesus for forgiving you this week.

Winter Quarter

Lesson 12



Give kids these three challenges to choose from:

- After you eat dinner or a snack, ask your mom or dad if you can wash your plate. As you're washing your plate, remember that Jesus can wash away the wrong things we've done.
- 2. When a friend or family member does something that upsets you, forgive him or her. Then tell about how Jesus forgives us and how that can make our hearts happy.
- 3. When you do something wrong, ask Jesus to forgive you. Then thank Jesus for his forgiveness and for helping you not to worry.

Say: If you want to wash your plate, circle choice number 1. If you want to forgive someone, circle choice number 2. If you want to ask Jesus to forgive you, circle choice number 3. Check that each child circled a choice. 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!

# Forgiveness Prayer

## What You'll Do

Have kids stand in a circle.

Say: A great way to show Jesus you're thankful for his forgiveness is to show forgiveness to others. When we do that, we share the happiness in our hearts that comes from Jesus' forgiveness. Think about a person you need to forgive for doing something that upset or hurt you. Pause. As we pray, you can say the name of the person you're going to forgive and then we'll ask for Jesus' help in forgiving others.

Pray: Jesus, thank you for forgiving us and giving our hearts rest and happiness. We want to follow your example and forgive these people...Invite willing kids to say the name of the person they'd like to forgive. Please help us forgive others and tell them about your forgiveness. In your 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.





# Jesus Heals the Blind Man

Mark 10:46-52

ive- and six-year-olds understand the concept of being cared for. Use this lesson to help kids learn that Jesus always cares for them, and encourage them to ask Jesus for help and then trust him to answer their need. You're building faith in each of your children's hearts when they ask Jesus to take care of them!

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
Getting Started about 10 min.	Welcoming Song Sing or listen to praises for God.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
Key Verse Activity about 10 min.	Comforter Take comfort from a blanket, and learn the Key Verse.	Bible, blanket	
3	Theo's News Find out what a blindfold has to do with the Bible.	Surprise Box (any box will do), Theo puppet, CD player, blindfold <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD	Put the blindfold in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
Bible Exploration about 15 min.	Bible Time: Jesus Listens and Heals Hear how Jesus healed Bartimaeus.	Bible, CD player <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





# ► Bible Point Jesus cares for us.

Key Verse
"Come to me, all
you who are weary
and burdened, and
I will give you rest"
(Matthew 11:28).

# Weaving Faith Into Life

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Children will remember that Jesus cares for us and that they can care for others, too.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
	Center 1: Now I See!  Make blind Bartimaeus see, and talk about how Jesus helped him.	My Bible Playground, pencils, scissors	Remove the Lesson 13 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.
Weaving Faith	Center 2: Bartimaeus Snack Try to make a yummy snack while their eyes are closed.	sliced summer sausage, crackers, cheese spread, plastic knives, paper plates, antibacterial gel (optional)	For each child, put a piece of sausage, some cheese spread, and 2 crackers on a paper plate.
Into Life about 20 min. (Choose 2 centers.)	Center 3: Care Share Discuss times they've been cared for and cared for others.		
	Center 4: Worship Art Make praise prints as they worship Jesus and thank him for his care.	plastic tablecloth, masking tape, washable tempera paint, paper, CD player	
	Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Playground	
<b>5</b> Lasting Impressions	"My Request" Prayers Hold specific written requests over their hearts as they pray.	3x5 cards, pen	
about 10 min.	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



# Jesus Heals the Blind Man

Mark 10:46-52



# Blind Bartimaeus Cries Out to Jesus for Healing

Leaving Jericho on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus had gathered a crowd. Bartimaeus' blindness didn't prevent him from hearing the ruckus of the approaching crowd and from asking who was creating all the fuss. When he found out, his cries of "Son of David" in addressing Jesus were not just a way of identifying Jesus' lineage. Since the term "Son of David" is clearly a reference to the Messiah, Bartimaeus was shouting both to the crowd and to Jesus that he believed Jesus was the promised Messiah.

Although Jesus was surrounded by a crowd and was set on reaching his destination, his ears and heart were attuned to the cry of one calling out for mercy. Bartimaeus needed Jesus' mercy, and Jesus heard his cry.

## Bartimaeus Hails Jesus as the Son of David

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In acknowledging Bartimaeus' identification of him as the Son of David, Jesus was also making a statement. Earlier in his ministry, he'd avoided being identified as the Messiah. But now, as he was making his last trip to Jerusalem, where he would be crucified, he was ready for his identity to be known.

# **Bartimaeus' Faith Initiates the Healing**

Notice that Bartimaeus' faith in Jesus initiated his healing. Jesus didn't say, "Because you've lived a good life in spite of your hardship, I'll heal you." He didn't say, "Because your parents were so faithful to me, I'll give you your sight." Jesus responded to Bartimaeus' faith. Things haven't changed. Jesus responds to our needs on the basis of our faith, not

because of anything good we've done or any specific set of words we repeat. Jesus shows us he cares for us by taking care of our needs as we acknowledge our dependence on him and trust in him to meet those needs. And what Jesus asks in return is that we do as Bartimaeus did and follow Jesus along the roads of our lives, no matter how old or young we may be.

# The Jesus Connection

Do you have a good friend who you usually talk to about your problems? Jesus is the ultimate friend. As Bartimaeus learned, we can cry out in faith when we need Jesus' help! And we can have faith in Jesus to meet our needs in one way or another.

Pray honestly about your needs, and then focus on the reasons you have faith in Jesus to help you, heal you, or simply hear you. You can write your prayer here.



# Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player **Teacher Pack** CD: "Found a Friend" (track 18), "God's Not Dead" (track 26)



# **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. Lead the kids in doing the motions and singing "Found a Friend" (track 18 on the CD) to the tune of "Found a Peanut." After the first verse, have the kids say "Hello" to the friends on their right and left. After the second verse, have the kids say "Jesus loves you, [child's name]" to the children on their right and left. There's enough time for kids to do this so that you won't have to pause the CD.

Found some friends, found some friends, Found some friends right here in church. Found some friends, found some friends, Found some friends right here in church.

Jesus loves you, Jesus loves you, Jesus loves you every day. Tell your friends, tell your friends: Jesus loves you every day.

(Repeat from the beginning.)

Say: Great singing, everyone! Today we'll learn that ► JESUS CARES FOR US. Let's keep worshipping God because he's alive and cares for us every day!

Begin the CD, and lead kids in singing "God's Not Dead" (track 26 on the CD). Encourage kids to join you in singing and doing the motions.

God's not dead, no! (cup both hands around mouth, and then shake a pointer finger on "no!")

He is alive. (wave both hands overhead)

God's not dead, no! (cup both hands around mouth, and then shake a pointer finger on "no!")

He is alive. (wave both hands overhead)

**God's not dead, no!** (cup both hands around mouth, and then shake a pointer finger on "no!")

Winter Quarter

Lesson 13



He is alive. (wave both hands overhead)

I know he's living in me. (point to your forehead, and then point to your chest)

I see him in my hands. (wiggle your hands)

I see him in my feet. (wiggle your feet)

I see him in the air. (place one hand above your eyes)

I see him everywhere. (place both hands above your eyes)

I see him at the church. (hold both hands like a roof over your head)

I see him on the street. (point to the ground)

And I know he's living in me. (point to your forehead, and

then point to your chest)

No, no, no, no, no, no, no... (shake a pointer finger)

**God's not dead, no!** (cup both hands around mouth, and then shake a pointer finger on "no!")

He is alive. (wave both hands overhead)

**God's not dead, no!** (cup both hands around mouth, and then shake a pointer finger on "no!")

He is alive. (wave both hands overhead)

God's not dead, no! (cup both hands around mouth, and then shake a pointer finger on "no!")

He is alive. (wave both hands overhead)

I know he's living in me. (point to your forehead, and then point to your chest)

Say: God is alive and with us. He sent his Son, Jesus, to make a way for us to have a relationship with God. Jesus did exactly that because ▶ JESUS CARES FOR US. Let's read our Key Verse to learn about another way ▶ JESUS CARES FOR US.



# Comforter

### What You'll Do

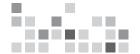
Have kids sit in a circle. Open your Bible to Matthew 11:28, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Our Key Verse from the Bible, Matthew 11:28, says, "Come to me all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." That means that Jesus wants us to come to him and rest. Let's say our Key Verse together. Lead children in repeating the simplified version of the Key Verse after you: Come to me and rest (Matthew 11:28).



Comforter Supplies

Bible blanket



### Ask:

What do you think it means to be comforted?

Take out the blanket and say: When something comforts you it makes you feel better. Like a blanket! Many of us have blankets that are special to us. I'll bring the blanket to each of you, and you can wrap the blanket around yourself and have a quick snuggle with it.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- Why are blankets so comforting to us?
- How does Jesus comfort us?
- What do you think our Key Verse means when it says that we can "come to Jesus and rest"?

Say: ► JESUS CARES FOR US and wants us to come to him for comfort. He can make us feel better.



**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 4 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.

(Invite a child to open the Surprise Box, and have the kids pass the blindfold around the circle so everyone can see it up close. Give kids time to guess what they'll learn from the Bible today.)

**Teacher:** Friends, what are some things we can do with a blindfold?

(Pause for kids to answer your question.)

**Teacher:** Theo, why did you hide this blindfold in the Surprise Box? Is there something you don't want us to see?

Theo: Oh no, I don't want to blind you. There's a man in the Bible who was never able to see. Today, you'll learn about what happened when he met Jesus.

## Theo's News Supplies

Surprise Box (any box will do) Theo puppet CD player blindfold

Teacher Pack

CD: "Here, Theo" (track 4)

## Theo's News Easy Prep

Put the blindfold in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.



**Teacher:** Let's find out how Jesus showed he cared for that man and how ▶ **JESUS** 

**CARES FOR US!** 

**Theo:** Have fun, boys and girls! **Teacher:** 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: Jesus Listens and Heals

## What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: Today the Bible tells us that > JESUS CARES FOR US.

#### Ask:

- Who are some people who care for you?
- What do those people do for you that shows they care?

Say: Our parents, guardians, grandparents, or big brothers and sisters care for us. They teach us, make us feel better when we're sick or hurting, and they love us.

▶ JESUS CARES FOR US always, even when our family or friends aren't around.

Let's listen to a blind man named Bartimaeus. He's not the actual man in the Bible, but he'll tell us how Jesus cared for Bartimaeus, just like ▶ JESUS CARES FOR US!

Have kids form pairs and have one child in each pair pretend to be blind Bartimaeus and one child pretend to be Jesus. Say: Everyone pretending to be Jesus, follow along with what you hear Jesus say and do on the CD. Everyone pretending to be blind Bartimaeus, follow along with what you hear him saying and doing.

Begin "Blind Bartimaeus" (track 27 on the CD). Have kids follow along with the actions described on the CD. When the track ends, turn off the CD player.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What did Jesus do to show Bartimaeus that he cared for him?
- What does Jesus do to show us he cares for us?

Say: Jesus showed he cared for Bartimaeus by calling him over to talk with him. Jesus listened to Bartimaeus, and Jesus healed him. Jesus shows that he cares for us by listening to us, too. He listens to us when we talk to him, he cares for us, and he gives us friends, food, and a place to live. Jesus cared for Bartimaeus and JESUS CARES FOR US, too, because he loves every one of us.



Bible Time: Jesus Listens and Heals Supplies

Bible CD player **Teacher Pack** CD: "Blind Bartimaeus" (track 27)



# Center 1: Now I See! Supplies

My Bible Playground pencils scissors

### Center 1: Now I See! Easy Prep

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Remove the Lesson 13 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.

## Center 2: Bartimaeus Snack Supplies

sliced summer sausage crackers cheese spread plastic knives paper plates antibacterial gel (optional)

### Center 2: Bartimaeus Snack Easy Prep

For each child, put a piece of sausage, some cheese spread, and 2 crackers on a paper plate.



# 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:

# Now I See!

### What You'll Do

Help kids write their names on their My Bible Playground pages.

Say: Carefully cut off the strip at the bottom of the page. Assist kids in cutting the slits in the eye area. Then show children how to insert the strip and slide it back and forth to alternate the eyes between closed and open. Say: Tell a partner about what Jesus did for Bartimaeus while you use the strip of paper on your pages.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

### Ask:

- What things do you like most about what Jesus did for Bartimaeus?
- What would you like to do to care for others the way Jesus does?

Say: Bartimaeus must've been sad when he couldn't see. Move the strips to show closed eyes. After Jesus listened to him, talked with him, and healed him, Bartimaeus must've been so happy! Move the strips to show open eyes. Jesus cared so much for Bartimaeus that he changed his life. ▶ JESUS CARES FOR US that much, too, and he will continue to show you care for your entire life. Jesus' love and care changes our lives!

#### CENTER 2:

# **Bartimaeus Snack**

#### What You'll Do

Have children clean their hands. Then gather everyone. Keep the food hidden so kids won't know what the snack is yet.

Winter Quarter

Lesson 13



Say: A big part of caring for people is doing our best to understand what someone else is experiencing. Jesus understands all of us better than anyone else and that's one reason he's able to care for us better than anyone else. Jesus knew about Bartimaeus' life-long troubles with blindness. Let's try to understand what Bartimaeus' life may have been like. Close your eyes and keep them closed until I say you can open them again.



Place a plate with the snack ingredients in front of each child and a plastic knife to the side of each plate.

Do your best to follow my directions to put your snack together without opening your eyes even a little bit. Ready? Pause.

Using only your senses of touch and smell, find one cracker on your plate. Pause.

Now find the cheese spread on your plate. Pause.

Next, find the plastic knife next to your plate and spread the cheese on your cracker. Pause.

Find the piece of sliced sausage. Pause.

Place the sausage on top of the cracker. Pause.

Find the last cracker on your plate and put it on top of your other ingredients. Pause.

Okay, now you can open your eyes.

Invite a child to pray for the snack.

#### Talk With Kids

Allow kids to eat their snack as you lead them in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What would it be like to be blind?
- After trying to understand a blind person's struggle, what will you do to care for a person who might be struggling in some way?
- Why does understanding a person's struggle help you care for him or her?

Say: Jesus understands every challenge we face. Because he understands us so well, ► JESUS CARES FOR US in a special way. We can follow Jesus' example and get to know others so we can understand and care for them, too.



#### CENTER 3:

# Care Share

### What You'll Do

Help kids form trios, and have the trios sit apart from others around the room.

Say: In your group, tell about times other people have shown they really care about you. Tell about what those people did and what you liked about being cared for. Allow time.

Tell about times you've made a big effort to show others you care about them. Tell what you did to care for others and why. Allow time.

Tell your group about any people you know like Bartimaeus who need extra help and care. Allow time.

Have kids come back together and sit in a circle.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What makes it easy or difficult to care for others?
- What can we do to have Jesus help us care for people such as Bartimaeus who need extra care?

Say: In the Bible today, we learned that Jesus cared for blind Bartimaeus. Other people cared for Bartimaeus, too. They helped him get to Jesus. We know that JESUS CARES FOR US. Jesus cares for every person in the world. We can show Jesus' love to others by helping them with daily tasks and helping them get to know Jesus.

# Center 4: Worship Art Supplies

plastic tablecloth masking tape washable tempera paint paper CD player

#### Teacher Pack

CD: "Love Is Patient and Kind" (1 Corinthians 13:4-5a) (track 25)

#### CENTER 4:

# Worship Art

**Tip** If you don't have a sink in your room, you can use wet wipes to clean kids' hands after painting.

### What You'll Do

Place the tablecloth on a table and use masking tape to mark off each child's painting area to match the size of the paper you're using.

Say: One way we know that JESUS CARES FOR US is that he gave us the

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Lesson 13



world. And the world has beautiful creations, family, friends, and our wonderful church. Let's use our eyes, hands, and hearts to worship Jesus. Let's show him our thankfulness for his care.

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Play "Love Is Patient and Kind" (1 Corinthians 13:4-5a) (track 25 on the CD) in the background as children work. Put paint on the plastic tablecloth, and have kids rub it around on the tablecloth with their hands to make pretty designs of things they're thankful for, such as family, friends, Jesus, and so on.

When kids finish, have them wash their hands. Then give children each a sheet of paper to press onto their paint design on the tablecloth. Let the designs dry in a designated area.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

#### Ask:

- What do you want to thank Jesus for today?
- What are other things we can do to thank Jesus for caring for us?

Say: When we thank Jesus for his care, we let him know he's special to us.

I JESUS CARES FOR US, so we show him we're grateful for all he does for us.

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# **Daily Challenges**

#### What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up the centers, bring everyone back to sit in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage children to share what they learned 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 for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

### Talk With Kids

Say: Today we learned that JESUS CARES FOR US. Choose a Daily Challenge to help you remember that Jesus cares for each and every one of us.

Give kids these three challenges to choose from:

- 1. Thank your mom or dad for taking care of you each day, and tell him or her that Jesus cares for us.
- 2. Draw a picture of something Jesus has done to show you he cares about you.

Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground



"My Request" Prayers Supplies

3x5 cards pen 3. Look in a mirror and tell yourself, "Jesus cares about you." Then thank Jesus for the good things he does to care for you.

Say: If you want to thank your mom or dad for taking care of you, circle choice number 1. If you want to draw a picture, circle choice number 2. If you want to look in a mirror and tell yourself that Jesus cares for you, circle choice number 3. Check that each child circled a choice. 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!

# "My Request" Prayers

## What You'll Do

Say: Take turns telling me about things you need from Jesus, such as help finding new friends, healing for a sick relative, courage to tell others about Jesus, or anything else you need.

Write each child's prayer requests on a 3x5 card as children speak.

Give the cards to the correct children, and then have kids fold their hands over their hearts with the cards. Say together: 

JESUS CARES FOR US.

Pray: Dear Jesus, we have prayer requests on our hearts. We know they're on your heart, too. Please hear our prayers. In your 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.