

FAiTHweAVER

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



**SPRING 2016
SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**GRADES 3&4
TEACHER GUIDE**



Get your **FREE**, customizable
DIGITAL COPY
of this teacher guide.
It's as EASY as **1-2-3.**

- 1** Visit **group.com/digital** to set up a free online account for your church.
- 2** Enter the Activation Code below to add this teacher guide to your account.
- 3** Download PDF or Word files to your computer and edit, print, or email them to your teachers.

ONE-TIME ACTIVATION CODE:

Group resources really work!

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



Relational

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

Experiential

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

Applicable

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

Learner-based

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

Group

group.com/sunday-school

We know you care about kids...

We do, too!

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.

Let's keep kids safe!

We strive to provide products that are mechanically reliable and hold together during normal, intended usage. Items are also checked for flammability, and both paint and surface coatings are checked for heavy metals—including lead.

You can help your children stay safe by seeing that toys and gizmos are used as designed, for the purposes designed, and that any broken pieces are disposed of promptly and properly. We value your feedback. If you become aware of a problem affecting the safety of any of our products, please inform us immediately.

FaithWeaver NOW® Bible Curriculum, Grades 3 & 4, Spring 2016

Copyright © 2000 and 2016 Group Publishing, Inc.
2016 edition

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any manner whatsoever without prior written permission from the publisher, except where noted in the text and in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews. For information, visit group.com/permissions.



When you see the OK TO COPY icon, this means permission to photocopy the page from FaithWeaver NOW® Bible Curriculum for Grades 3 & 4, Spring, is granted for local church use. Copyright © Group Publishing, Inc. group.com

Credits

Contributing Authors: Jacqui Baker, Heather A. Eades, Jan Kershner, Gina Leuthauser, Jacki Nielsen, Janet R. Reeves, Amy Simpson

Editors: Stephanie Martin, Amy Nappa, Jessica Sausto, Owen Shattuck, Ali Thompson

Copy Editors: Lyndsay Gerwing, Becky Helzer, Sarah Yepishin, Andrea Zimmerman

Chief Creative Officer: Joani Schultz

Cover Design and Art Direction: Jeff Spencer

Interior Design Team: Jared Bigham, Jeff Brunacci, Joyce Douglas, Kate Elvin, Suzi Jensen, Dolly Palmer, Jeff Spencer,

Rebecca Swain

Illustrator: Jan Knudson

Cover Photography: © iStockphoto.com/Rich Vintage Photography

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com

ISBN 978-1-4707-2839-7

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

Printed in the United States of America.



Contents

| | |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Introduction | 4 |
|---------------------------|----------|

The Lessons

| | |
|--|------------|
| Lesson 1: Jesus Teaches About Good Fruit—Luke 6:43-45 | |
| <i>Week of February 28, 2016</i> | 5 |
| Lesson 2: Jesus Tells the Parable of the Lost Son—Luke 15:11-32 | |
| <i>Week of March 6, 2016</i> | 15 |
| Lesson 3: Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet—John 13:1-17 | |
| <i>Week of March 13, 2016</i> | 29 |
| Lesson 4: Jesus Is Tried and Crucified—Luke 19:28-40; 23:1-49 | |
| <i>Week of March 20, 2016</i> | 39 |
| Lesson 5: Jesus Appears to Mary—John 20:1-18 | |
| <i>Week of March 27, 2016</i> | 49 |
| Lesson 6: Apostles Defend Their Faith—Acts 5:12-42 | |
| <i>Week of April 3, 2016</i> | 61 |
| Lesson 7: Saul Meets Jesus Near Damascus—Acts 9:1-20 | |
| <i>Week of April 10, 2016</i> | 71 |
| Lesson 8: Peter Raises Tabitha From the Dead—Acts 9:36-43 | |
| <i>Week of April 17, 2016</i> | 85 |
| Lesson 9: An Angel Frees Peter From Jail—Acts 12:1-18 | |
| <i>Week of April 24, 2016</i> | 95 |
| Lesson 10: Lydia Is Converted—Acts 16:9-15 | |
| <i>Week of May 1, 2016</i> | 105 |
| Lesson 11: Paul's Jailer Believes in Jesus—Acts 16:16-34 | |
| <i>Week of May 8, 2016</i> | 115 |
| Lesson 12: Paul Describes Living by God's Spirit—Romans 8:9-17 | |
| <i>Week of May 15, 2016</i> | 125 |
| Lesson 13: Paul Describes Genuine Love—1 Corinthians 13:1-13 | |
| <i>Week of May 22, 2016</i> | 135 |

The future of Sunday school + family ministry is NOW.



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

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

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

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

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

It's simpler and easier. ■■■■

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

It's made for NOW. ■■■■

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

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

- Families learn the same Bible passage in age-appropriate ways.
- Kids don't just hear the Word. They experience it.
- Simple and easy lessons fit even the busiest lives.
- Kids see God in their everyday world.
- The Scope & Sequence goes through the Bible every three years.
- You can customize it however you like, with both print and digital versions.



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

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

Thom Schultz Joani Schultz

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





Jesus Teaches About Good Fruit

Luke 6:43-45

Third- and fourth-graders are beginning to understand that their actions have consequences, but they may not have enough foresight to always anticipate those consequences. Use this lesson to teach kids that others will look to them to see what Christianity is all about. Help kids be mindful of their behavior because they never know when a nonbeliever will be looking!

| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|-------------------------------|---|--|---|
| 1 Getting Started | What's My Job? <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Play a fun guessing game about occupations. | | |
| 2 Bible Exploration | Light Bulb Lessons <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Begin making a craft to be used later in the lesson. | pans, glue, water, yellow crepe paper, newspaper, small balloons | Cover your worktables with newspaper for easy cleanup. Prepare several pans containing a soupy mixture of glue and water. |
| | Bearing Fruit <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Study a fun picture to understand what Jesus said about bearing good fruit. | Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, pens | Tear out the Lesson 1 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book. |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



Bible Point

Acting like Jesus shows we're Christians.

Key Verse

"Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will show kindness to others.





| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3 Weaving Faith Into Life | Actions Speak Louder <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Create scenarios with different endings to show how faith affects actions. | newsprint, markers | |
| | Shining Lights <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Learn what Jesus says in the Key Verse. | Bibles, CD player, copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD | |
| | Bright Bulbs <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Finish the crafts to help them commit to shining for Jesus this week. | newsprint, tape, permanent markers, aluminum foil, duct tape, mini paper cups, scissors, balloon light bulbs made in "Light Bulb Lessons" | |
| 4 Lasting Impressions | Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word. | Bible Truth Sleuth | |
| | Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families. | Bible Truth Sleuth, lightbulb crafts from "Bright Bulbs" | Tear out the letter to parents from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book. |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Luke 6:43-45

In his references to good and bad trees in this passage, Jesus is obviously drawing an analogy to the fruit that people bear. Notice that the distinction is not between healthy apple trees and diseased apple trees. It is between fruit trees and thorns or briars; it is the kind of tree that makes the difference. Many kinds of trees look good but don't produce fruit. So it is with people. Jesus seems to be saying that a person who is not really a servant of God, no matter how good he or she seems to be, cannot possibly produce fruit for him. Conversely, someone who really is God's servant will automatically produce fruit.

Then in Luke 6:45, Jesus expounds on the principle he introduced in the tree metaphor. What comes out of us through our speech and behavior flows from what is within. If what is inside us is good and God-honoring, our lives will honor God. If what is inside us is evil, our lives will not honor God. No matter how hard we try to make good impressions, no one will be fooled for long if our hearts are deceitful.

As we make our relationship with Jesus a priority, we'll find our actions will bear fruit that will please him.

Read aloud Luke 6:43-45. What can you do to store good things in your heart? In what circumstances can you bring good things out of the good you've stored in your heart? If you passionately follow God, the good you've stored will flow out to a needy world. Ask God to show you someone in your church who has a need. And then do the good thing and help that person.

Don't forget to pray for the person! You can write your prayer here.

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



Light Bulb Lessons Supplies

.....

pans
glue
water
yellow crepe paper
newspaper
small balloons

Light Bulb Lessons Easy Prep

.....

Cover your worktables with newspaper for easy cleanup. Prepare several pans containing a soupy mixture of glue and water.

BALLOON WARNING

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

1 GETTING STARTED

What's My Job?

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Have kids form groups of three. Explain that today you'll be playing a guessing game. Have the first trio come forward to be contestants. Whisper the name of the same occupation to all three contestants, and then have them face the class.

Explain that each person in the rest of the class can ask a yes-or-no question of the contestants, who will take turns answering the questions. If someone guesses the occupation, whisper a new occupation to three new contestants and play again. If everyone asks a question without guessing the occupation, reveal the answer and begin again with new contestants.

Play until all trios have been contestants.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Have kids answer the following questions in their groups. After each question, invite trios to share their answers with the rest of the class.

Ask:

How easy or hard was it to guess these occupations? Why?
How can you tell what someone's job is in real life?

Say: **Sometimes it's easy to tell what a person does by the way he or she dresses. Other times we can tell by what the person talks about. Today we'll look at something a little more difficult to discover about people—what they believe. We'll learn that ACTING LIKE JESUS SHOWS WE'RE CHRISTIANS. Let's get started!**

.....

2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Light Bulb Lessons

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Before we look at today's Bible story, we're going to make light bulb crafts. Later on, you'll see what light bulbs have to do with today's lesson.**





Have kids blow up and tie off small balloons. Tell each child to blow up his or her balloon just until the shape resembles a light bulb. As kids blow up the balloons, set out the pans of glue solution.

Have kids tear 6-inch strips of yellow crepe paper and dip the crepe paper in the glue solution. Demonstrate how to cover a balloon with overlapping strips of solution-covered crepe paper until the balloon is completely covered. Caution kids not to add too many layers of crepe paper. If they do, the strips won't dry before the end of class. Then have kids set aside the balloons to dry.

Say: **A little later, we'll come back to these light bulbs. But right now, let's look at our Bible story.**

Bearing Fruit

What You'll Do ■■■■■

Say: **Today's Bible story is short and sweet. In fact, it's only two verses long. In those two verses, Jesus talks about trees and fruit.**

Distribute pens and today's Bible Truth Sleuth pages. Ask kids to look closely at the picture on the page. Explain that although the picture shows trees and fruit, parts of the picture aren't quite right. Ask kids to study the picture and circle the parts of the picture that don't seem right.

Give kids about a minute to circle parts of the picture. Then have kids form pairs to compare pictures with their partners.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Have kids answer these questions with their partners, and invite pairs to share their answers with the rest of the class.

Ask:

What parts of the picture did you circle? Why?

How could you tell, just by looking, that some parts of the picture were wrong?

Have you ever seen a real apple tree produce bananas or a pine tree produce watermelons? Why not?

Say: **We can tell what kind of tree we're looking at by the kind of fruit it produces. Apple trees produce apples; orange trees produce oranges. We can tell by its fruit what kind of tree we're looking at. Jesus says we can do the same thing with people.**

Give each child a Bible, and have kids turn to Luke 6:43-45. Lead kids in reading the verses aloud in unison. Then have kids form pairs to answer the following questions. After each question, let partners share their answers with the rest of the class.



Bearing Fruit Supplies

Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth
pens

Bearing Fruit Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 1
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.



Actions Speak Louder Supplies

newsprint
markers

Ask:

Jesus talked about fruit and trees in these verses; what does that have to do with people?

How do Christians act differently from people who aren't Christians?

Say: **The Bible says that good trees bear good fruit and that each tree is recognized by its fruit. That means that Christians can be recognized by their fruit—or by the good things they do. ACTING LIKE JESUS SHOWS WE'RE CHRISTIANS. When we follow Jesus, we try to act the way he tells us to. Let's look at that idea a little more closely.**

3

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Actions Speak Louder

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Have pairs join together to form groups of four. Have kids answer the following questions in their new groups, and invite them to share their answers with the rest of the class after each question.

Ask:

How does Jesus want us to act?

How are those actions different from how someone who doesn't know Jesus might act?

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Ask each group to come up with a situation in which kids who are Christians might act differently from kids who don't know Jesus. Explain that kids may either draw a picture of the situation or act out the situation as a group. The only rule is that each group member must be actively involved. Make sure that kids understand they'll need to explain two possible endings to the situation—one ending showing how a Christian might act and one ending showing how someone who doesn't know Jesus might act.

Set out markers and newsprint for kids who want to draw their situations. Be available to help groups if they seem stumped or have questions. Give kids about five minutes to work. Then let each group depict its situation. After each presentation, ask other groups whether they agree or disagree with the depiction or if they have any thoughts to add.

After each group has made its presentation, lead the class in a big round of applause for the performances.

Say: **When we believe in Jesus, our lives show it. We act differently, talk differently, and think differently than if we didn't believe in Jesus. Our Key Verse today tells us why it's so important that ACTING LIKE JESUS SHOWS WE'RE CHRISTIANS. Let's turn to that verse right now.**





Shining Lights

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have kids turn to Matthew 5:16 and read the verse aloud in their groups: **"Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."**

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "Let Your Light Shine" (Matthew 5:16) (track 2). Lead kids in singing along.



Hey! Hey! Yeah!

Hey! Hey! Yeah!

Let your light shine before men that

They may see your good deeds and

Praise your Father in heaven.

Let your light shine before men, yeah,

Let your light shine before men.

(Repeat.)

Let your light shine before men that

They may see your good deeds and

Praise your Father in heaven.

Let your light shine before men, yeah,

Let your light shine before men.

Let your light shine before men, yeah.

Let your light shine before men.

Hey! Hey! Yeah!

Hey! Hey! Yeah!

"Let Your Light Shine" (Matthew 5:16) by Carol Smith. © 2003, 2006 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Say: **Right before this verse, Jesus says that Christians are the light of the world. He says that people don't hide their lights under a bowl but they put the light on a stand so everyone in the house can see. In Bible times, people lit lamps to light their houses. In modern times, this verse would be like saying that when your house is dark, you don't turn on a lamp and then hide it in a closet. You set the lamp in the middle of the room so everyone can see.**

Then, in our Key Verse, Jesus says that our actions should be like those lamps, shining for everyone to see.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

Why do you think Jesus wants us to live lives that shine with faith?



Shining Lights Supplies

Bibles

CD player

copies of the lyrics (at
the end of this lesson)

Teacher Pack

CD: "Let Your Light
Shine" (Matthew 5:16)
(track 2)



Bright Bulbs Supplies

newsprint
tape
permanent markers
aluminum foil
duct tape
mini paper cups
scissors
balloon light bulbs
made in "Light Bulb
Lessons"

Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

Say: **Look again at the end of Matthew 5:16. Pause. Jesus says that we should let our lives shine so that when others see our good actions, they'll praise God. That's the whole point—not to bring attention to us but to bring attention to God. Our actions can light the way to God, or they can add to the darkness and lead someone away from God.**

Let's think for a moment about whether we're giving off as much light as we should be.

Bright Bulbs

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **I want you to think about last week. Think for a minute about how you acted and what you said. Think especially about how you acted when you weren't at home or in church. Don't answer out loud, but silently answer this question to yourself:**

Ask:

Could the people around you tell by your words and actions that you believe in Jesus?

Give kids a few moments to think.

Say: **I hope you were able to answer yes to that question. But we could all do a better job at letting our lights shine before others. Turn to a partner, and think of ways you can let your light shine for Jesus this coming week. Make your ideas as specific as you can, and see how many ideas you can think of in two minutes.**

Call time after two minutes, and write kids' answers on a sheet of newsprint taped to a wall. Then have kids retrieve the light bulbs they made earlier. Set out mini paper cups, aluminum foil, duct tape, scissors, and permanent markers. Have kids write on their light bulbs one way they can let their lights shine and be kind to others this week. Then show kids how to cover a small cup with foil, turn the cup upside down, and use a loop of duct tape to attach the bottom of the cup to the bottom of the light bulb.

4

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's consider that ACTING LIKE JESUS SHOWS WE'RE CHRISTIANS by discussing our Daily Challenge.**



Tell kids that shining their lights for Jesus and being kind to others will be their Daily Challenge, using the idea they wrote on their light bulbs.

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: **ACTING LIKE JESUS SHOWS WE'RE CHRISTIANS. Let's act like Jesus by following through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home

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

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about acting like Jesus. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Gather kids in a circle with their light bulb crafts. Explain that you'll begin the closing prayer by saying one way you'll try to let your light shine for Jesus this week. Then the child to your left will say an idea and hold his or her light bulb in the air. Continue around the circle until each child has said an idea and is holding a light bulb in the air. Then close the prayer by asking God to help each child shine for him this week.



Weaving Faith at Home Supplies

.....
Bible Truth Sleuth
lightbulb crafts from
"Bright Bulbs"

Weaving Faith at Home Easy Prep

.....
Tear out the letter to
parents from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.





Lyrics ■■■■

Let Your Light Shine (Matthew 5:16)

Hey! Hey! Yeah!
Hey! Hey! Yeah!
Let your light shine before men that
They may see your good deeds and
Praise your Father in heaven.
Let your light shine before men, yeah,
Let your light shine before men.
(Repeat.)

Let your light shine before men that
They may see your good deeds and
Praise your Father in heaven.
Let your light shine before men, yeah,
Let your light shine before men.
Let your light shine before men, yeah.
Let your light shine before men.
Hey! Hey! Yeah!
Hey! Hey! Yeah!

"Let Your Light Shine" (Matthew 5:16) by Carol Smith. © 2003, 2006 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.





Jesus Tells the Parable of the Lost Son

Luke 15:11-32

By the time kids are in the third or fourth grade, they have a pretty good understanding of what it means to feel guilty. For the most part, they feel remorse when they do wrong things. They may even start wondering whether God can still love them after they've sinned. They may wonder whether God will really forgive them just because they ask him to. Use this lesson to reinforce the fact that God does love them and that he is a forgiving, compassionate God who they can trust.



►Bible Point



God will forgive us when we sin.

Key Verse

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

Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will ask God for forgiveness.

| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|-------------------------------|---|--|---|
| 1 Getting Started | Knot Me! (about 10 min.) Form a "human knot," and then receive help to untangle. | Bible | |
| 2 Bible Exploration | Story Corner 1: The Father's Mansion (about 10 min.) Begin the Bible story at the father's house, and then make coins to squander. | Bible, scissors, 1 copy per child of the "Inheritance Coins" handout (at the end of this lesson) | Designate a corner of your room as the father's mansion. Simply set four chairs in a square to represent the walls of the father's house. |
| | Story Corner 2: Squander City (about 7 min.) "Waste" the wealth they had; then become poor like the lost son. | Bible, Bible Truth Sleuth, coins from Story Corner 1, trash can | Tear out the Lesson 2 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book. |
| | Story Corner 3: A Stay in the Sty (about 10 min.) Experience life in a pigsty, and then decide whether to ask for forgiveness. | Bible, CD player, newspaper Teacher Pack: CD, "The Prodigal Son" poster  | |
| | Story Corner 4: Home at Last (about 10 min.) Return home to receive the father's forgiveness. | Bible, CD player Teacher Pack: CD, "Home at Last" poster  | |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|---|---|--|-----------|
| 3 Weaving Faith Into Life | Forgiveness Bracelets <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Make bracelets to remind them of God's love. | Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, scissors, tape, markers, pens | |
| | Let's Celebrate! <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Have a party to celebrate God's forgiveness. | CD player, simple snack, copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD | |
| 4 Lasting Impressions | Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word. | Bible Truth Sleuth | |
| | Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families. | | |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





Luke 15:11-32

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Knot Me! Supplies

Bible

1 GETTING STARTED

Knot Me!

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Choose a volunteer to be the helper in this activity. Have the helper stand with his or her back to the rest of the group. Have the other children form a circle and join hands.

Instruct kids to quietly turn their circle into a tangled knot by stepping over arms, crawling under legs, and twisting and turning, all without letting go of one another's hands.

When kids are all tangled together, say: **Wow! What a tangled mess! It looks like you need help.**

Have the kids pretend to call out for help, and then have the helper turn around and face the circle. As kids continue to hold one another's hands, let the helper assist them in untangling the human knot. When the helper has succeeded, or after two minutes, have children drop hands and sit in a circle.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What was it like to be all tangled up?

Did you think [name of helper] could help you untangle? Explain.

What kinds of wrong things do we do that tangle us up in real life and get us into trouble?

How do we get out of those "knots" or problems caused by the wrong things we do?

Say: **In real life, the wrong things we do are called sins. Our human knot was just part of a game, but in real life, sin get us all tangled up!**

Ask:

What does God do when we sin?

Say: ► **GOD WILL FORGIVE US WHEN WE SIN.** God's forgiveness is the only way to become untangled from sin. Our Key Verse tells us that God is the best helper of all! Listen.

Read aloud the Key Verse from Nehemiah 9:17: **"You are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love."**



Say: You became pretty tangled up in our activity, but today we'll hear about someone in the Bible whose life really became tangled up!

2

BIBLE
EXPLORATION

Story Corner 1: The Father's Mansion

What You'll Do

Say: Jesus knew that some things about God would be hard for us to understand. And he knew that we'd get into some sticky, sinful situations. So he told us stories (or parables) to show us just how much God loves us. This is one of those stories.

Invite kids to get comfortable, and then have a volunteer read aloud Luke 15:11-12.

Say: You know, in Bible times, it was almost unheard of for a son to ask his father for his share of the inheritance. In fact, it was almost the same as wishing that his father were dead! This son's request probably hurt his father very much.

The younger son in this story was entitled to one third of everything his father had. And since we learn in the story that the father was pretty rich, the son probably received quite a bit of money. Let's make our own money right now!

Give each child a sheet of "Inheritance Coins," and have kids cut out the coins. As kids work, ask them what they would do if they received a lot of money.

After kids have finished cutting out the coins, tell them it's time to see what the son did with all of his money. Invite kids to move on to "Squander City."

Story Corner 2: Squander City

What You'll Do

Designate another corner of your room as Squander City. If you choose, hang a simple construction paper sign in that corner.

Distribute the Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids turn to the "Quick Riches" section. Have kids form pairs, and give partners a few moments to discuss which items they'd like to buy.

Ask:

Which items would you most like to own? Why?
What would you do if you had lots and lots of money?



Story Corner 1: The Father's Mansion Supplies

Bible
scissors
1 copy per child of the "Inheritance Coins" handout (at the end of this lesson)

Story Corner 1: The Father's Mansion Easy Prep

Designate a corner of your room as the father's mansion. Simply set four chairs in a square to represent the walls of the father's house.

Story Corner 2: Squander City Supplies

Bible
Bible Truth Sleuth
coins from Story Corner 1
trash can

Story Corner 2: Squander City Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 2 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.



Story Corner 3: A Stay in the Sty Supplies

Bible
CD player
newspaper
Teacher Pack
CD: "Pigsty" (track 3),
"The Prodigal Son"
(track 4)
"The Prodigal Son"
poster

Story Corner 3: A Stay in the Sty Easy Prep

"Decorate" the pigsty
by strewing crumpled
newspaper on the floor.

Say: **The son in our story suddenly had lots and lots of money. Let's see what he did with it.**

Ask a volunteer to read aloud Luke 15:13. Explain to kids that to squander means "to waste." Then, to illustrate how the son wasted all of his money, have kids toss their "Inheritance Coins" into a trash can as they tell ways people might waste money today. When they've used up all their coins, have another volunteer read Luke 15:14.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What's a famine?

What does it mean to "be in need"?

What kinds of things are necessary for you to actually live?

What would it be like to be without food or a place to live?

After kids brainstorm things they need to live—such as food, water, clothing, and shelter—lead them in discussing what their lives would be like without those things. Then have kids take off their shoes to remind them of how poor and destitute the son had become. Kids will remain without shoes as you lead them to the "pigsty."

Story Corner 3: A Stay in the Sty

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

As kids enter, have them sit down in the sty.

Ask:

What's the messiest place you've ever seen?

What's the messiest animal you could ever imagine?

Who knows what a pig's pen is called?

Say: **The place where a pig lives is called a sty. That's where the son in our story ended up, and that's where you've ended up, too! Welcome to our very own pigsty!**

Cue your CD to the "Pigsty" segment (track 3), and play it in the background as you continue.

Show children the "Prodigal Son" poster from your Teacher Pack.

Say: **Well, here he is—the son who wasted all of his money and wound up here, right in the middle of a pigsty! I'll bet he really stinks! He even wished he could eat the pigs' leftovers!**

People sometimes hold their noses when they smell something bad. Hold your nose as you answer this question.

Have kids hold their noses as they call out answers to the following question:



Ask:

What's a really smelly place you've been to?

Say: **Yuck! Those sure are smelly places! I bet the pigsty in our story smelled just as bad!**

Have a volunteer read aloud Luke 15:15-16. Ask kids to describe how they think the son must have felt as he tended the pigs.

Say: **Let's see what the son has to say for himself.**

Play "The Prodigal Son" segment from the CD (track 4). Toward the end of the segment, the son will ask three questions. Stop the CD after each question, and encourage kids to describe what advice they'd give to the son.

After kids discuss each question asked on the CD, have children form pairs.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Have kids discuss the following questions with their partners. After each question, ask pairs to report their answers to the rest of the group.

Ask:

Tell about a time you messed up, or did something wrong, like the son in our story. How did you feel?
When have you needed forgiveness from someone? What was that like?
How did it make you feel when you were forgiven for the wrong thing you did?

Say: **The son in our story sure needs his father's forgiveness, just as we need God's forgiveness when we do wrong things.**

Ask:

What does God do when we sin?

Say: **God is forgiving and abounding in love. You know, that's exactly what our Key Verse is all about. Let's say the verse together.**

Lead kids in repeating the Key Verse, Nehemiah 9:17: **"You are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love."**

Say: **This verse says that God is full of love. And because God loves us,**
► GOD WILL FORGIVE US WHEN WE SIN. Now let's go back to the father's mansion and see what happened to the father and son in our story.





Story Corner 4: Home at Last Supplies

Bible
CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: "The Son Returns"
(track 5)
"Home at Last" poster

Story Corner 4: Home at Last

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Lead children back to the corner in your room set up as the father's mansion, and have them sit together.

Say: **The son in the story did decide to go back to his father's house.**

Ask kids to each discuss with a partner what they think happened when the son arrived home.

Cue your CD to "The Son Returns" segment (track 5). This segment will give kids an idea of the father's perspective.

Then have a child read aloud Luke 15:20-22. Show kids the "Home at Last" poster from your Teacher Pack.

Say: **The father in this picture looks awfully happy!**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

Why do you think the father is so happy?

Why would the father be happy to see his son again after how badly the son had behaved?

Say: **The father loved his son so much that he forgave his son for all the bad things he had done. Even though the son was bad, the father was glad! He was so glad, in fact, that he actually ran to meet his son on the road. Running like that is something that important men in Bible times never did!**

Ask:

Have you ever forgiven someone just because you loved him or her? Tell about it.

How are we like the son in the story?

How is the father in the story like God?

Say: **The father in the story loved his son so much that he was willing to forgive him, even after all the bad things the son had done. And that's just how God is! God is forgiving and abounding in love. In fact, God loves us so much that when we're sorry for bad things we've done and we ask him to forgive us, he does! Every time!**

In our story, the father gave his son jewelry as a symbol of his love and forgiveness. He gave his son a ring. A ring is just one form of jewelry; bracelets are another kind of jewelry. Because rings might be too hard for us to make, let's make forgiveness bracelets to remind us that ► **GOD WILL FORGIVE US WHEN WE SIN.**



3

WEAVING FAITH
INTO LIFE

Forgiveness Bracelets

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

First, have kids turn to the “Forgiveness Bracelets” activity on the back of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages. Have kids cut out the forgiveness bracelets along the dotted lines. Then show kids how to fold the strips in half the long way. On the inside of the folded strips, have kids each write something they’ve recently done wrong for which they needed forgiveness. Next, have kids write the Key Verse onto the outside of their strips, and then let them decorate the strips with markers.

Have kids form pairs. Have partners help each other wrap the folded strips around their wrists to measure where to tape the ends together to form bracelets. Be ready to offer help as kids measure and tape their bracelets.

As kids work, challenge them to repeat the Key Verse to each other. When kids have finished, have them put on their bracelets and sit in a circle.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What does God do when we sin?
What does it take for you to get God’s forgiveness?

Say: **God is forgiving and abounding in love. He gives his love and forgiveness as precious gifts, just as the father in our story gave the son jewelry and shoes. And just as the Key Verse you wrote covered the sins on the inside of your bracelets, God’s love and forgiveness cover all the wrong things we’re sorry for.**

In the next part of our story, the father held a big party to celebrate his son’s return. Let’s have a party, too! Have kids put on their shoes and get ready for a fun class party!

Let’s Celebrate!

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have a child read aloud Luke 15:22-32.

Say: **Because music is usually a fun part of many celebrations, let’s learn a song to sing at our party. It’s a celebration song to remind us of how the father celebrated when his son came home.**



Forgiveness Bracelets Supplies

Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth
scissors
tape
markers
pens


Let’s Celebrate! Supplies

CD player
simple snack
copies of the lyrics (at
the end of this lesson)
Teacher Pack
CD: “A New Creation”
(2 Corinthians 5:17)
(track 12)

**ALLERGY
ALERT**



Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play “A New Creation” (2 Corinthians 5:17) (track 12) through once or twice to introduce your kids to the song. Practice the song with your kids a few times.

 **If anyone (if anyone)
Is in Christ (is in Christ),
He is a new creation (a new creation);
The old has gone (the old has gone),
The new has come! (The new has come!)
He is a new creation (a new creation);
We have been made new!**

(Repeat from the beginning.)

We have been made new!

“A New Creation” (2 Corinthians 5:17) by Carol Smith. © 2003 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

After the song, let kids enjoy a class celebration to remind them of how the father and son celebrated. The celebration can be as simple or as elaborate as you choose. For a ready-to-go party, just provide juice or water and a simple snack, such as doughnut holes or cookies and crackers. For extra impact, consider letting kids create the snack themselves.

After the party, have kids form a circle.

Talk With Kids

Say: **God is forgiving and abounding in love. Let's say our Key Verse together again: “You are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love” (Nehemiah 9:17). Now look at your forgiveness bracelets. Your bracelets are circles, and just as circles never end, there is no end to the love and forgiveness that God offers to us.**

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

**What do you think Jesus wants us to learn from this story about the prodigal son?
How does it make you feel to know that God is loving and forgiving?**

Say: **Because God is loving and forgiving, we can be loving and forgiving, too.**



4

LASTING
IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's each choose a Daily Challenge for the week to help us remember that**
► GOD WILL FORGIVE US WHEN WE SIN.

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on the Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- Think of a way you disobeyed this week, and ask God to forgive you.**
- Tell a friend about God's forgiveness, and ask if he or she would like to pray with you.**
- Lead your family in singing a song of praise to God for his forgiveness when we sin.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: **► GOD WILL FORGIVE US WHEN WE SIN. Let's seek forgiveness by following through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about forgiveness. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Have kids form two groups, and have groups stand at opposite ends of the room. Tell kids they'll end with a special group hug. Have groups run toward each other in slow motion, just as the father ran toward the son in the story. After the group hug, have kids form a circle. Close with a prayer, thanking God for his love and forgiveness.

Daily Challenges
Supplies

.....
 Bible Truth Sleuth



Inheritance Coins





Lyrics

A New Creation (2 Corinthians 5:17)

If anyone (if anyone)
Is in Christ (is in Christ),
He is a new creation (a new creation);
The old has gone (the old has gone),
The new has come! (The new has come!)
He is a new creation (a new creation);
We have been made new!

(Repeat from the beginning.)

We have been made new!

"A New Creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17) by Carol Smith. © 2003 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.



 **OK**
 **TO COPY**





Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

John 13:1-17

Third- and fourth-graders are very social creatures and are discovering they can make a difference in the world. These kids devote much of their hearts to reaching out to others (family, friends, and the environment). Kids learn from the attitudes of those who serve them. As you teach kids about Jesus' attitude of servanthood, be attentive to your own character. Use this lesson not only to help children follow Christ's example in seeking ways to serve but also to allow kids to observe a servant's heart in you that they might model.

| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|-------------------------------|--|---|---|
| 1 Getting Started | Who's on First? (about 10 min.) Race to collect cotton swabs while discovering servanthood. | cotton swabs, socks, masking tape, paper plates | Make sure your floor is safe for bare feet. |
| 2 Bible Exploration | Dinner With the Disciples (about 25 min.) Act in an instant drama about the last meal with Jesus. | CD player, copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD | |
| | Other Feet First (about 10 min.) Make the last become first using water and oil. | Bible, plastic 2-liter bottle with cap, water, 1 cup vegetable oil, funnel, food coloring, CD player, copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD | |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



►Bible Point

Jesus wants us to serve others.

Key Verse

"If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all" (Mark 9:35).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will serve others.





| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|---|---|---|--|
| 3 Weaving Faith Into Life | Fancy Feet <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Make a foot craft using sponges. | sponges, permanent markers, scissors | |
| | At Your Service <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Discuss ways they can serve others. | Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, pencils, large piece of paper, marker, tape | Tear out the Lesson 3 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book. |
| 4 Lasting Impressions | Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word. | Bible Truth Sleuth | |
| | Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families. | | |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





John 13:1-17

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Who's on First? Supplies

cotton swabs
socks
masking tape
paper plates

Who's on First? Easy Prep

Make sure your floor is
safe for bare feet.

1 GETTING STARTED

Who's on First?

What You'll Do ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Tell kids that it's Barefoot Day, and instruct them to leave their socks and shoes at the door. Have kids form two groups.

Say: **To begin our lesson today, we're going to play a game. But it may end a little differently than you think!**

Have each child find a partner from the other group. Have groups go to opposite sides of the room, making sure partners stand directly opposite each other. Give each child one sock to put on his or her foot. Then have each child completely wrap the covered foot in masking tape, sticky side out. Set a handful of cotton swabs on the floor in front of each child. In the middle of the room, place a paper plate for each pair (see diagram).

Say: **Let me explain how this game works. The cotton swabs represent the people you're trying to bring to Jesus. The object is for you to try to get as many cotton swabs as possible to stick to your foot, without using your hands. Then you and your partner will hop to the middle of the room to your paper plate. Then you'll sit down and remove the cotton swabs from your partner's foot. You can't remove any cotton swabs from your own foot, though. When you've finished removing the cotton swabs, you can hop back to the line and gather more cotton swabs and repeat the process. You'll have two minutes to gather as many cotton swabs as you can. After two minutes, we'll count the number of cotton swabs on each plate to see how many people you've brought to Jesus! Are you ready? Let's go!**



After two minutes, have kids remove their tape and socks and sit down.

Talk With Kids ■ ■ ■ ■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What was the most difficult part of this game?

How did it feel not to be allowed to clean off your own feet and put your cotton swabs in your pile?

Say: **During this game, you may have thought that if you collected the most cotton swabs, you would be in first place. The Bible says that if anyone wants to be first, that**



person must be the very last, and the servant of all. So actually, in this game you were servants to each other; that puts all of you in first place!

Ask:

How do you think this experience might be like serving others in life?
Why should we serve others?

Say: Jesus came to serve others. And ► **JESUS WANTS US TO SERVE OTHERS.** Sometimes we might think a task is too difficult for us to do or think we've got our own things to worry about rather than help other people with their problems. But Jesus tells us that those who make themselves among the least—meaning those who do things to help others—will become first in the kingdom of heaven!

2

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Dinner With the Disciples

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Explain to your students that they will now appear in a special edition of "The Wrong Show." As actors, they'll perform a retelling of how Jesus washed the disciples' feet at the Last Supper.

Decide which part of your room will be the stage, and assign the following roles: Host, Jesus, Simon Peter, and the other 11 disciples.

Say: **You'll hear today's Bible story told on the CD. However, parts of what you hear will be wrong. You must act out the scene until you hear the sound of a gong. Then you'll say, "That's not what happened!" and move backward to the part of the story you know was correct. So listen carefully for your part, and pay close attention for the "gongs" so you'll know when to "rewind." Is everyone ready? Let's go!**

Cue your CD to "The Wrong Show," and play the segment (track 7). (The CD will include six different scenes, with the sixth one being the correct story.) When kids have finished the instant drama, applaud their efforts.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Ask kids to form trios and discuss the following questions.

Ask:

In our story today, why did Jesus wash his disciples' feet?
How would you feel if Jesus washed your feet?
What does this story show us about serving others?
Why should we serve others?

Have volunteers share their answers with the rest of the class.



Dinner With the Disciples Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "The Wrong Show"
(track 7)



Other Feet First Supplies

.....

Bible
plastic 2-liter bottle
with cap
water
1 cup vegetable oil
funnel
food coloring
CD player
copies of the lyrics (at
the end of this lesson)

Teacher Pack
CD: "Servant of All"
(Mark 9:35b) (track 8)

Other Feet First

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Open your Bible to Mark 9:35, and show the verse to the kids.

Say: **Our Key Verse today is found in Mark 9:35. It says, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all."** Show kids the 2-liter bottle.

This bottle can demonstrate what Jesus meant.

Put the funnel in the neck of the 2-liter bottle, and then fill it half full of water.

Say: **This water represents people who put themselves first in this life. They do whatever they want to do. Have you heard the saying "looking out for Number One"? When people say that, they mean they're looking out for themselves and may not care about what happens to other people. People who put themselves first fill their lives with stuff.** (Add several drops of blue food coloring to the water.) **This food coloring represents things that may be more important than serving others.**

Some people worry about getting the coolest clothes (add several drops of yellow food coloring to the water), **the newest gizmos** (add several drops of red food coloring to the water), **and the fastest cars** (add several drops of green food coloring to the water). Adding all these colors will make the water turn a dingy, brownish-black color. This is intentional. **They worry about these things rather than try to help others who don't have clothes, feed those who are hungry, or take the time to take a walk with a friend. People who take the time to help others put others first and themselves last. This oil represents those who help others. We'll put the oil in last. Let's see what happens.**

Add one cup of oil to the water. The water will stay on the bottom of the bottle, and the oil will float on top.

Talk With Kids ■■■■■■

Say: **Take a look at the bottle. Let's pretend the bottle is the kingdom of heaven.**

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

Which is on top, the water that we put in the bottle first or the oil that we put in last?
How is that like being first in God's kingdom?
Why should we serve others?

Say: **By looking at our bottle, we can see that those who helped others are like the oil, which is pure and clear. It is on top—or first in God's kingdom. Those who put themselves first are like the water on the bottom—last in God's kingdom.**

Seal the bottle with a cap, and invite students to take turns turning the bottle on its side and moving it around.



Say: **No matter what happens in our lives, those who helped others and put themselves last are still first in God's kingdom.**

Ask:

What are some ways you can serve others?

Say: **Jesus told us to follow his example and be the servant of all. Let's sing our Key Verse song.**

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "Servant of All" (Mark 9:35b) (track 8). Have kids sing, referring to the copies of the lyrics.



**If anyone wants to be first,
He must be the very last.
If anyone wants to be first,
He must be the very last,**

**And the servant of all,
And the servant of all,
And the servant of all,
If you want to be first.**

(Repeat from the beginning.)

**If anyone wants to be first,
He must be the very last.
If anyone wants to be first,
He must be the very last.**

"Servant of All" (Mark 9:35b) by Uelese Fa'agutu, Rachel Fa'agutu, and Jay Stocker. © 2007 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

3

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Fancy Feet

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Give each child a sponge, and have him or her draw a picture of a foot on the sponge. Then have kids cut out the foot shapes.

Say: **We've learned today that ► JESUS WANTS US TO SERVE OTHERS. He showed us an example of that by washing his disciples' feet. Write today's Key Verse reference, Mark 9:35, on your foot sponge. Then take your sponge home, and use it in some way to serve your family. You could use your sponge to wash your mom's or dad's feet. Or you could use your sponge to wipe off the kitchen counter.**



Fancy Feet Supplies

sponges
permanent markers
scissors



At Your Service Supplies

Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth
pencils
large piece of paper
marker
tape

At Your Service Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 3
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.

Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

At Your Service

What You'll Do

Have children form pairs and look up John 13:14-15. In each pair, ask the child who was born first to read aloud John 13:14. Then have the other child read John 13:15.

Say: **The Bible says we should follow Jesus' example and wash one another's feet. You probably can think of somebody who "washes your feet." Somebody who helps you, maybe with your schoolwork, like a teacher—or somebody who does nice things for you, like a friend.**

Let's talk about what washing somebody's feet would look like to Jesus today.

Ask:

What does it mean to serve others?

Distribute the Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids turn to the "Who's Serving Who?" activity. Have kids form pairs, and ask pairs to think of ways they can be servants in each of the areas listed on the Bible Truth Sleuth page.

Ask one member from each pair to share with the class the pair's ideas for serving, and write their ideas on a large piece of paper to hang on the door.

Talk With Kids

Say: **We can be servants in so many different ways. Pick one of the areas from your page that you could focus on this week. Share that area with your partner.**

Ask:

What can you do in that area this week to be a servant?

4

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

Say: **Let's each choose a Daily Challenge for the week to help us remember that ► JESUS WANTS US TO SERVE OTHERS.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on the Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

Each morning when you wake up, ask Jesus to help you follow his example of serving others.

Clean your house without your mom or dad having to ask you.



Help a friend at school with his or her homework.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: ► **JESUS WANTS US TO SERVE OTHERS** just as he did. Let's serve by following through on our Daily Challenges this week.

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about serving others. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Ask partners to pray for each other, asking God to help them be servants this week. Then pray for your group as you all join hands.



**Lyrics** **Servant of All (Mark 9:35b)**

If anyone wants to be first,
He must be the very last.
If anyone wants to be first,
He must be the very last,

And the servant of all,
And the servant of all,
And the servant of all,
If you want to be first.

(Repeat from the beginning.)

If anyone wants to be first,
He must be the very last.
If anyone wants to be first,
He must be the very last.

"Servant of All" (Mark 9:35b) by Uelese Fa'agutu, Rachel Fa'agutu, and Jay Stocker. © 2007 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.





Jesus Is Tried and Crucified

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

Third- and fourth-graders want things to be fair. By this age they've developed an inner sense of fairness and a personal system of checks and balances. As you teach your class about Jesus' trial and crucifixion, help kids understand that although Jesus' trial was unfair by judicial standards, it was a gift to us from God, and through Jesus' death and resurrection we can receive life.

| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|-------------------------------|---|---|--|
| 1 Getting Started | WDJD? (What Did Jesus Do?) (about 10 min.) Learn why Jesus had to die on the cross for us. | newsprint, index cards, pens, tape | Draw a cross on a large sheet of newsprint, and hang it on a wall. |
| 2 Bible Exploration | Jesus' Trial (about 20 min.) Act out the trial of Jesus. | Bibles, construction paper, markers, scissors | |
| | Jesus' Crucifixion and Death (about 20 min.) Discuss the way Jesus died and why. | Bible, items from the "WDJD?" activity | |

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



►Bible Point

Jesus died to take the punishment for our sins.

Key Verse

"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will thank Jesus for taking the punishment for their sins.





| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|---|--|---|--|
| 3 Weaving Faith Into Life | Love From Above <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Learn the Key Verse, and create reminders of how God sees us when we believe in Jesus. | Bible, Bible Truth Sleuth, newspaper, crayons, India ink, paintbrushes, water dishes, pens, paper clips, construction paper coats from the “Jesus’ Trial” activity Teacher Pack: crosses | Tear out the Lesson 4 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book. |
| 4 Lasting Impressions | Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God’s Word. | Bible Truth Sleuth | |
| | Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families. | | |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





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

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

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

Pilate Orders Jesus Crucified

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

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

Darkness Falls When Jesus Is Crucified

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

The centurion mentioned in Luke 23:47 was a Roman

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

The Jesus Connection

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

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

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



WDJD? (What Did Jesus Do?) Supplies

newsprint
index cards
pens
tape

WDJD? (What Did Jesus Do?) Easy Prep

Draw a cross on a large sheet of newsprint, and hang it on a wall.

1 GETTING STARTED

WDJD? (What Did Jesus Do?)

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Have kids form groups of three. Give pens and a stack of index cards to each group.

Say: **In your groups, discuss sins that people commit every day. Then write one sin on each of your index cards. Write every sin you can think of.**

When kids have finished writing, have them place their stacks of cards in front of them.

Ask:

What are some of the sins written on your cards?

How would you feel if you had to carry them around with you all the time?

Say: **Let's pretend these cards are the sins in our lives and we have to carry them around with us as we do things.**

Have kids crumple each of their cards and walk in a circle around the room while holding on to the crumpled cards. As kids walk, have them do things such as drink cups of water, write their names on the board, shake hands with each other, and pick up books or magazines. Tell them that they cannot put down their sins.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

How was walking around trying to carry your crumpled cards with sins on them like trying to walk through life carrying around real sins?

How do you think you could get rid of real sins?

Say: **Unlike these cards, we can't just crumple up and throw away our sins. Someone has to take them away for us.**

Have kids uncrumple their index cards and tape them to the cross.

Ask:

How did it feel to get rid of your sin cards?

How would it feel to get rid of your real sins? Why?

Say: **Today we'll find out how we can get rid of our sins and learn that ► JESUS DIED TO TAKE THE PUNISHMENT FOR OUR SINS.**



2

BIBLE
EXPLORATION

Jesus' Trial

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Give a sheet of construction paper to each child. Have each of them design a simple coat and cut it out, using as much of the paper as possible.

Open your Bible, and read aloud Luke 19:28-40. Have kids throw their construction paper coats on the floor, and then have them repeat Luke 19:38 with you.

Say: **"Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"**

Our Bible story today starts with Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Shortly after this event, Jesus was arrested, tried, and crucified. Today we'll go to Jesus' trial to help us understand why Jesus was crucified.

Have kids pick up their coats and set them aside. Then ask for one volunteer to play Herod and one volunteer to play Pilate. The rest of the class will be the crowd. Have "Herod" go to one side of the room, and have "Pilate" go to the opposite side of the room.

Direct the crowd to stand in front of Pilate. Have Pilate read aloud Luke 23:1-7.

Say: **Okay, let's go hear what Herod has to say.**

Lead the crowd to the other side of the room to stand before Herod. Have Herod read aloud Luke 23:8-12.

Say: **Looks like we need to go back to Pilate!**

Lead the crowd back to the other side of the room to stand in front of Pilate. Have Pilate read aloud Luke 23:13-16.

Then have a volunteer from the crowd read Luke 23:18-19.

Say: **The crowd created quite a ruckus, saying that they wanted Barabbas released.**

Have the crowd stand in front of Pilate and babble for a minute or two.

Have Pilate read Luke 23:20-21.

Say: **Pilate pleaded with them, but the crowd continued to shout. They didn't want Jesus released. They wanted to free Barabbas and to crucify Jesus.**

Jesus' Trial
Supplies

Bibles
construction paper
markers
scissors



Jesus' Crucifixion and Death Supplies

Bible
items from the
"WJD?" activity

Have kids babble again for a minute, pretending to try to persuade Pilate. Let kids know they can really ham it up if they want to.

Have the Pilate volunteer read Luke 23:22.

Say: **Pilate said he couldn't find any reason for Jesus to die, but he did what the crowd wanted and released Barabbas instead of Jesus.**

Read aloud Luke 23:23-25.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Have kids form pairs and discuss these questions.

Ask:

Do you think Jesus' trial was fair? Why or why not?
How would you feel if you were accused of something you didn't do?
How do you think Jesus felt when people lied about him?
Have you ever let somebody else take the blame for something you did wrong?

Ask volunteers to share their answers with the class.

Say: **Let's read the rest of our Bible story to hear what Jesus did next.**

Jesus' Crucifixion and Death

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Read Luke 23:26-43.

Say: **Crucifixion is a terribly cruel way to die. First, Jesus was beaten until blood ran down his back. Then the soldiers continued to make fun of Jesus, placing a crown of thorns on his head. And these weren't the little thorns you see on rosebushes. These were long, sharp thorns that the soldiers shoved down on Jesus' forehead. Then with his back ripped and bleeding from being beaten and blood dripping from his head because of the crown of thorns, the soldiers nailed his hands and feet to the cross. Jesus hung on the cross like this for hours. Yet during that time, Jesus answered a criminal's plea to be remembered and forgave those who had done all these things to him.**

Ask:

What sins was Jesus crucified for?

Read aloud Luke 23:44-49.

Say: **Jesus died on the cross after hanging in agony for many hours. When he died, the Bible tells us the sun stopped shining. It also tells us the curtain of the Temple that separates people from God was torn open.**



Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

**Why do you think Jesus was willing to die on the cross?
Who did Jesus die for?**

Say: **Here are just a few of the sins Jesus was willing to die for.**

Look at the index cards, and read the sins written there.

Ask:

What did Jesus do for us?

Say: **On our own, we can do absolutely nothing to be good enough to get to heaven. The sins we wrote earlier are proof of that! ► JESUS DIED TO TAKE THE PUNISHMENT FOR OUR SINS. Let's take a look at our Key Verse to learn more about what Jesus did for us.**

3

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Love From Above

What You'll Do

Open your Bible to Romans 5:8, and read the verse aloud: **"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).** Have kids repeat the verse with you several times.

Ask:

**What are some ways people demonstrate love?
How have you demonstrated love to others?**

Distribute the Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids turn to the "Thank You, Jesus" activity. Ask your students to think of some of the personal sins in their lives and write them in the space provided.

Say: **Now let's look at what happens to us when we confess our sins and Jesus forgives us.**

Cover the table kids will be working on with newspaper or a protective plastic tablecloth. Pull out the crosses from your Teacher Pack, and hand one to each child. Have crayons, dishes of India ink, paintbrushes, and water dishes accessible to children.



Love From Above Supplies

Bible
Bible Truth Sleuth
newspaper
crayons
India ink
paintbrushes
water dishes
pens
paper clips
construction paper
coats from the "Jesus'
Trial" activity
Teacher Pack
crosses

Love From Above Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 4
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.



Say: **In the beginning of our Bible story, we learned that when Jesus entered Jerusalem, people were excited and happy to see him. They threw their coats on the road to welcome and honor him. It must have been a beautiful sight to see all those colorful coats laid out for Jesus on the road! Let's color our crosses to show the beauty of praising Jesus and honoring him. Use the crayons to color heavily on your cross in all sorts of colors, filling the entire area of your cross and leaving no white space!**

Give kids crayons, and have them color their crosses.

Say: **Although crowds cheered Jesus as he entered Jerusalem, crowds later cried out to have him crucified. And Jesus was crucified. He was crucified for the sins of the people in the crowd and for our sins.**

When children have finished, ask them to paint over their crosses with the India ink and give them a few minutes to dry.

Say: **Our sins are like this black ink. When sin takes over, it keeps us from praising and honoring Jesus. Sin can destroy what could be a beautiful relationship with Jesus. But because Jesus was willing to pay the price for our sins and be crucified on the cross, we can each have a relationship with him.**

Give each child a paper clip. Have kids open the paper clips and use the ends to write their names on the crosses by scratching away the ink so the colors show through. If consistent with your church's theology, this would be an excellent chance to provide children with the opportunity to make a faith decision.

Say: **Let's repeat our Key Verse for today, Romans 5:8: "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."**

Look at your cross. When you see your name written there, with the beautiful colors showing through, let it remind you that Jesus died for you. He loved you so much that he was willing to pay the price for your sins.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

**What does sin do to our lives?
What can we do to get rid of sin?
What did Jesus do for us?**

Make sure each child has the coat he or she made during the "Jesus' Trial" activity.

Say: **Attach your cross to the back of the coat you made at the beginning of our Bible story. Pause. Jesus died for all of our sins. He took our sins on his back, much like the coats you made earlier are on your crosses. Even though we are sinners, God loves us and wants us to be with him forever. That's why he sent Jesus! Let's remember ► JESUS DIED TO TAKE THE PUNISHMENT FOR OUR SINS.**



4

LASTING
IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: Let's each choose a Daily Challenge for the week to help us remember that
 ► **JESUS DIED TO TAKE THE PUNISHMENT FOR OUR SINS.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on the Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

Carry a cross in your pocket and each time you reach into your pocket, thank Jesus for taking the punishment for your sins.

Read Luke 19:28-40 and 23:1-49 with a parent. Then discuss how Jesus dying on the cross has changed your life.

Tell a friend about Jesus, explaining that only Jesus can save us from our sins!

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: ► **JESUS DIED TO TAKE THE PUNISHMENT FOR OUR SINS.** Let's remember that by following through on our Daily Challenges this week.

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about Jesus' death. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Close with a blessing. Have kids again repeat the Key Verse: "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Walk up to each child individually, and say: [Child's name], **God loves you so much that he sent Jesus to die for your sins.**

Daily Challenges
Supplies


.....
 Bible Truth Sleuth



Jesus Appears to Mary

John 20:1-18

Most third- and fourth-graders still enjoy the traditional festivities of Easter. They appreciate the candy and Easter egg hunts that often accompany the holiday. However, be sensitive to your students' feelings about the Easter activities you choose. You may find some kids think the holiday festivities are childish and beneath them. Avoid asking third- and fourth-graders to participate in activities that will offend their desire to appear mature.

| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|-------------------------------|--|---|--|
| 1 Getting Started | Do You Believe It? (about 10 min.) Make up unbelievable stories. | paper, markers | |
| 2 Bible Exploration | Dropcloth (about 15 min.) Wrap each other in crepe paper and break out. | Bible, crepe paper, flashlight Teacher Pack: Bible Timeline  | |
| | Vacancy (about 10 min.) Create signs that appear when painted. | Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, white crayons, watercolor paints, paintbrushes | Tear out the Lesson 5 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book. |
| | They Couldn't Keep Jesus Down! (about 15 min.) Use balloons to demonstrate Jesus' resurrection. | cardboard box, 2 identical balloons, masking tape, scissors | Prepare two identical balloons. Blow up one balloon with air, and fill the other balloon with helium. Hide the helium-filled balloon in a cardboard box. |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



►Bible Point

Jesus is alive.

Key Verse

"That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will celebrate that Jesus is alive.



| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|---|---|--|-----------|
| 3 Weaving Faith Into Life | Confess and Believe <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Share with each other what they believe about Jesus. | Bibles, CD player, copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD | |
| 4 Lasting Impressions | Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word. | Bible Truth Sleuth | |
| | Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families. | CD player, copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD | |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





John 20:1-18

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

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

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

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

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

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

The Jesus Connection

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

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

[illegible]



Do You Believe It? Supplies

paper
markers

1 GETTING STARTED

Do You Believe It?

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Have kids form three groups.

Say: **Today we're going to talk about something that seems unbelievable. So, to start, I want each group to come up with some kind of story that's unbelievable. Talk together, and decide on a person, place, or thing, and then tell an unbelievable story about it. When you've finished with your story, you will present it to the rest of the class. You may choose any way you wish to present it. You may act it out, make up a song, draw pictures, or take turns telling different parts of the story.**

Give kids five minutes to come up with their stories and presentations. Then have each group present its story to the class. After all groups have made their presentations, have kids sit together as a large group.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What was unbelievable about these stories?

What was believable about them?

What's the most amazing thing you've ever heard of someone doing?

Do you think that anyone could do something as amazing as rising from the dead? Explain.

Say: **The stories we heard today were ones you've made up. But the Bible story we'll talk about today is true. It's about something amazing and miraculous that happened to Jesus. We'll talk about what happened to Jesus and learn that**

► JESUS IS ALIVE.





2

BIBLE
EXPLORATION

Dropcloth

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Point to the “Jesus Is Crucified and Rises From the Dead” picture on the Bible Timeline.

Say: **In Jesus’ day, after a person died, it was the custom to wrap a person’s body in linen and place the body in a tomb. After Jesus died on the cross, his friends and family wrapped his body in linen before they put it in the tomb. They placed Jesus’ body in the tomb and sealed the tomb by placing a stone in front of the entrance.**

Today we’re going to wrap one another in crepe paper and pretend that the crepe paper is linen.

Have kids stand in a circle. Hand one roll of crepe paper to one child. Have that child wrap the torso of the child next to him or her. When the child has finished wrapping, have him or her tear the crepe paper and pass the roll to the next child. The next child will then wrap the torso of the child who just handed them the roll. Then he or she will pass the roll on to the next person. Continue doing this until all kids except the last one have been wrapped in crepe paper. Then you, the teacher, will wrap the last student. When everyone has been wrapped, have kids sit down. Then turn off the lights.

Say: **Without Jesus, we would have no hope after death. Just as your bodies are bound by the “linen” you’re wrapped in, we’re bound by the sins we commit. Jesus died on the cross so we could have forgiveness for our sins. Without that act of love, we could never be freed from our sins. Think about what that would be like.**

Pause for a moment, and have kids sit quietly.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

How would you feel if you could never be freed from your sins?

What do you think it would take to free you?

What would you think of someone who was able to free you?

Say: **Let’s continue with our Bible story to learn about what exciting thing happened next.**

Open your Bible to John 20:1-2, and read the passage aloud to the kids. Use a flashlight if necessary so you can leave the lights turned off. When you’ve finished reading, turn on the lights.

Dropcloth
Supplies

Bible

crepe paper

flashlight

Teacher Pack

Bible Timeline



Vacancy Supplies

Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth
white crayons
watercolor paints
paintbrushes

Vacancy Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 5
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.

Say: **Jesus was gone! Go ahead and break out of your linen strips. Fold them, and set them down in front of you.**

Ask:

How did it feel to break free?

How do you think Mary felt when she realized Jesus was not in the tomb?

Say: **Let's keep reading to find out what the disciples saw.**

Read John 20:3-10 aloud.

Ask:

What do you think the disciples thought when they saw the linen in which Jesus' body had been wrapped lying in the tomb?

Why do you think neither the disciples nor Mary Magdalene understood that Jesus had risen from the dead?

Is it hard for you to understand? Why or why not?

Say: **Let's take a look at what happened next that helped Mary understand that**
► **JESUS IS ALIVE.**

Vacancy

What You'll Do

Have kids pick up their piles of linen and throw them away. Then have kids form trios, and make sure each group has at least one Bible.

Say: **With your group, read John 10:11-18. Brainstorm ideas for a sign that would have helped Mary understand what was going on. For example, some things that could have been on such a sign might be "Jesus is Alive," "He is not here," or "He has risen."**

Distribute the Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids turn to the "Vacancy" activity. Give each child a white crayon.

Say: **On your Bible Truth Sleuth page, use the white crayon to write the words of your sign in the sign space provided.**

After kids have finished writing, have each child exchange his or her vacancy sign with a child from another group. Have kids use watercolors to paint the signs they've received from another trio. The white crayon will show through the paint, and the message will appear. When everyone has finished painting, gather kids back together.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.



Ask:

What does your sign say?

Why couldn't you read your sign at first?

What do you think Mary was expecting to see when she went to the tomb?

Why didn't Mary recognize Jesus at first?

Have kids return the signs to the original owners to take home.

Say: **The good news of Easter is that ► JESUS IS ALIVE. Now let's take a closer look at the miraculous thing that happened to Jesus.**

They Couldn't Keep Jesus Down!

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Hold up the air-filled balloon.

Say: **After Jesus died on the cross, he was wrapped in linen and buried in a tomb. Let's pretend this balloon represents Jesus' body and that we're going to wrap it in linen.**

Give kids each some strips of masking tape, and have them wrap the air-filled balloon to simulate wrapping Jesus' body in linen. Be sure to completely cover the balloon. Then place the wrapped, air-filled balloon in the cardboard box, being careful not to release the helium balloon or let the kids see it. Have a small pair of scissors handy to discreetly cut the tied-off end of the air-filled balloon so that it will deflate. If you try to poke a hole in the balloon, it will not deflate fast enough. If possible, have an adult volunteer come in to help you with this activity.

Say: **Jesus' friends and followers must have been very sad the day they put his body in the tomb. But Jesus rose from the dead, just as he said he would!**

Release the helium-filled balloon from the box.

Ask:

Why couldn't the grave keep a hold on Jesus?

Reach into the box, pull out the deflated balloon, and hold it up so kids can see it. If the balloon is still somewhat inflated, gently squeeze it before pulling it out of the box. You may want to experiment with this before class by blowing up a balloon, covering it with masking tape, and cutting off the tied end. Then wait to see how long it takes your balloon to deflate. Practice squeezing it as you place it in the box to help the activity go smoothly. (As the air escapes the balloon, it will make a very slight noise, but it shouldn't be noticeable if you talk while you deflate the balloon.)

Say: **All that was left in the tomb was the linen Jesus' body was wrapped in. Jesus was gone! He had risen, just as he said he would.**



They Couldn't Keep Jesus Down! Supplies

cardboard box
2 identical balloons
masking tape
scissors

They Couldn't Keep Jesus Down! Easy Prep

Prepare two identical balloons. Blow up one balloon with air, and fill the other balloon with helium. Hide the helium-filled balloon in a cardboard box.

! BALLOON WARNING

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



Confess and Believe Supplies

Bibles
CD player
copies of the lyrics (at
the end of this lesson)
Teacher Pack
CD: "Confess With Your
Mouth" (Romans 10:9)
(track 9)

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What's the good news of Easter?

What does Easter mean to people who believe in Jesus?

Say: **Jesus' resurrection proved he could conquer death and allows us to live with him forever in heaven. Let's find out what the Bible tells us to do to make that possible.**

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Confess and Believe

What You'll Do ■■■■

Have kids open their Bibles to Romans 10:9.

Say: **We'll find our Key Verse for today in Romans 10:9. Let's read it together: "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." Let's sing that verse to learn it.**

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "Confess With Your Mouth" (Romans 10:9) (track 9), encouraging kids to sing along.

🎵 **For if you confess,
Confess with your mouth
That Jesus is Lord,
If you believe,
Believe in your heart
That God raised him from the dead...**
(Repeat.)

(Chorus)

**You will be saved; you will be saved; you will be saved; o-o-oh.
You will be saved; you will be saved; you will be saved; o-o-oh.
You will be saved; you will be saved; you will be saved; o-o-oh.
You will be saved; you will be saved; you will be saved; oh—YOU WILL BE SAVED!!!**

(Repeat from the beginning; then repeat chorus.)

**Oh—YOU WILL BE SAVED!!!
Oh—YOU WILL BE SAVED!!!**

"Confess With Your Mouth" (Romans 10:9) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.



Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

**According to this verse, what do we need to do to be saved?
What does it mean to “confess with your mouth”?
What does it mean to “believe in your heart”?**

Have kids find partners and tell each other what they believe about Jesus by answering the following questions:

Ask:

**Do you believe in your heart that Jesus rose from the dead? Why or why not?
What can you say, or confess, with your mouth about Jesus that shows you believe Jesus is Lord?**



4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You’ll Do

Say: **Let’s each choose a Daily Challenge for the week to remind us that ► JESUS IS ALIVE.**

Have kids find this week’s Daily Challenges on the Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

**Create a piece of artwork that reflects that Jesus is alive.
Tell a friend or family member about something amazing God has done for you.
Sing a song to God each day, and praise him for raising Jesus from the dead.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What’s a practical way you’re going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: **► JESUS IS ALIVE! Let’s celebrate by following through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth





Weaving Faith at Home Supplies


CD player
copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson)
Teacher Pack
CD: "Let's Go!"
(Ephesians 2:10) (track 16)

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about Jesus' resurrection. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Close by singing "Let's Go!" (Ephesians 2:10) (track 16) as a celebration prayer.

 **We are God's workmanship,
Created in Christ Jesus
To do good works, which
God prepared in advance for us to do.**
(Repeat.)

**Let's go! There's work to do.
Let's go! That means me and you.
God calls us, so...let's go!**

(Repeat from the beginning.)

**Let's go! There's work to do.
Let's go! That means me and you.
God calls us, so...
Let's go!
Let's go!
Let's go!**



Lyrics

Confess With Your Mouth (Romans 10:9)

For if you confess,
Confess with your mouth
That Jesus is Lord,
If you believe,
Believe in your heart
That God raised him from the dead...
(Repeat.)

(Chorus)

You will be saved; you will be saved; you will be saved; o-o-oh.
You will be saved; you will be saved; you will be saved; o-o-oh.
You will be saved; you will be saved; you will be saved; o-o-oh.
You will be saved; you will be saved; you will be saved; oh—YOU WILL BE SAVED!!!

(Repeat from the beginning; then repeat chorus.)

Oh—YOU WILL BE SAVED!!!
Oh—YOU WILL BE SAVED!!!

"Confess With Your Mouth" (Romans 10:9) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.



 **OK**
TO COPY





Lyrics

Let's Go! (Ephesians 2:10)

We are God's workmanship,
Created in Christ Jesus
To do good works, which
God prepared in advance for us to do.
(Repeat.)

Let's go! There's work to do.
Let's go! That means me and you.
God calls us, so...let's go!

(Repeat from the beginning.)

Let's go! There's work to do.
Let's go! That means me and you.
God calls us, so...
Let's go!
Let's go!
Let's go!

"Let's Go!" (Ephesians 2:10) by Carol Smith. © 2003 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.





Apostles Defend Their Faith

Acts 5:12-42

Most third- and fourth-graders are apt to give up when things get difficult or frustrating. They do not completely understand that practice and failure lead to mastery and talent. In addition to showing kids how important it is for them to stand up for their faith, you can also use this lesson to demonstrate how important it is for them to keep trying. Be honest about your own failures, making sure to highlight how you've had to start out on new projects or experiences as a beginner.

| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|-------------------------------|---|--|-----------|
| 1 Getting Started | Balancing Faith (about 10 min.) Have balancing relays. | paper, pencils | |
| 2 Bible Exploration | Jail Break (about 10 min.) Try to get out of a tangled-up mess. | Bibles | |
| | Order in the Court (about 10 min.) Act out a courtroom scene that follows the Bible story. | Bibles, CD player, copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD | |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



►Bible Point

Keep following God, even when it's hard.

Key Verse

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance" (James 1:2-3).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will choose to follow God.





| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|---|---|--|--|
| 3 Weaving Faith Into Life | Don't Be a Dirt Clod <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Discover the difference between rocks and dirt clods | rocks, dirt clods | |
| | Pocket Reminders <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Make reminders that will help them persevere, and listen to a song about perseverance. | CD player, Bible Truth Sleuth, clear self-stick paper, scissors, glue, construction paper, small rocks, markers Teacher Pack: CD | Tear out the Lesson 6 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book. |
| 4 Lasting Impressions | Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word. | Bible Truth Sleuth | |
| | Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families. | | |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





Acts 5:12-42

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

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

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

Gamaliel Advises the Sanhedrin to Let the Apostles Go

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

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

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

The Jesus Connection

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

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

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



Balancing Faith Supplies

paper
pencils

1

GETTING STARTED

Balancing Faith

What You'll Do

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Give each student a sheet of paper and a pencil. Have students fold their papers in half lengthwise (vertically) four times. Then instruct them to turn their papers so that the fold is on the left, and have them write, "faith" vertically down the front. Form four groups. Have each group line up single file at one end of the room.

Say: **This activity will be a "test of faith." The object is to walk as quickly as you can to the other end of the room and back while balancing your "faith" on the back of your hand. If your faith falls, you must go to the back of the line. As soon as the first person returns to the line, the second person may go.**

Have kids begin the game. When kids drop their "faith," remind them to go to the back of the line.

Talk With Kids

After all of the groups have finished, have the kids sit in their groups and discuss the following questions.

Ask:

- What was hard about this game?**
- What was it like to try to balance your faith?**
- How did you feel when you dropped your faith and had to start over?**
- What's hard about being a Christian in a non-Christian world?**
- What should we do when it's hard to be a Christian?**

After kids finish discussing their questions, say: **Sometimes being a Christian can be hard, but we can ► KEEP FOLLOWING GOD, EVEN WHEN IT'S HARD. In our Bible story today, we'll learn about some people who knew what to do when it was hard for them to be Christians. Let's take a look at our story.**



2

BIBLE
EXPLORATION

Jail Break

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have kids form a circle in the center of the room.

Say: **In our Bible story today, the high priest of the Sadducees arrested the apostles because he was jealous of them. The Sadducees were Jewish leaders who opposed the teachings of Jesus. The apostles had been performing many miracles and had led many people to faith in Jesus. The high priest didn't like this and threw the apostles in jail. Let's play a game to see what it was like for the apostles.**

Instruct the kids to take the hands of two different kids across the circle from them.

Say: **You're the apostles, and you're now in jail. Without letting go of one another's hands, you have one minute to try to untangle yourselves and be set free. You may begin when I say "go."**

After one minute, have kids freeze where they are. If they're close to becoming untangled, let them finish. If they are still very tangled, have them let go of one another's hands and re-form their circle.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

**What was it like to be all tangled up like you were?
How was this like the apostles being thrown in jail?**

Say: **Let's look at our Bible story to see what happened to the apostles.**

Open your Bible to Acts 5:18-20, and read the passage aloud to the class. Then instruct kids to play the game again. After kids struggle for a while, tell them that you, like the angel in Acts, are there to set them free. Unclassp several of their hands until they can untangle themselves. Then have them get their Bibles, re-form their circle, and sit down. Join them in the circle, and have a volunteer read Acts 5:21-27.

Say: **The Sanhedrin was an assembly of the religious leaders of those days, and those leaders really didn't like Christians. They were ready for Peter and the apostles' trial. But when the officers went to the jail, Peter and the others were gone. Then someone came and said, "Look! The men you put in jail are standing in the temple courts teaching the people." The officers went to get Peter and the others and then brought them before the Sanhedrin for trial. We're going to pretend that we're there, with Peter and the apostles. Let's listen to the story on the CD and act out the parts as we hear them.**

Jail Break
Supplies

.....
Bibles



Order in the Court Supplies

Bibles
CD player
copies of the lyrics (at
the end of this lesson)

Teacher Pack

CD: "Order in the
Court" (track 10),
"Persevere!" (James
1:2-3) (track 11)

Order in the Court

What You'll Do

Cue your CD to "Order in the Court" (track 10). In this mock trial, ask kids to volunteer to play the following parts in a courtroom scene: judge, Peter, apostles, bailiff, Gamaliel the Pharisee, jury, a male jury member, and the audience. Arrange the room like a courtroom. For example, you could arrange a table or desk and chair for the judge's bench, a separate chair for the witness stand, and a row of chairs for the jury box. Instruct kids to act out their parts as they hear them on the CD. Begin the segment on the CD. When the segment has finished, have kids form pairs to discuss the following questions.

Ask:

How do you think the apostles felt when they heard they would be killed?
What bad situations have you been in that you felt you couldn't get out of?
How did you make it through the situation?
What can you do when it's hard to be a Christian?

Ask a volunteer to read aloud Acts 5:41-42 to finish the Bible story. Then say: **The story ends with the apostles rejoicing because they had been worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name.**

Ask:

What do you think this means?
What are some examples of suffering disgrace for Jesus' name?

Say: **The apostles rejoiced even though they had a hard situation to face because they did what God wanted them to do. You see, not everybody will agree with us and what we believe as Christians. Some people might even hate us. But the Bible tells us to consider it pure joy when it's hard to be Christians, because that means we're learning to persevere, or keep going, just as the apostles did in the Bible story. Let's take a look at our Key Verse.**

Open your Bible to James 1:2-3, and show the passage to the kids. Then have them find the verses in their Bibles. Lead them in reading the verses aloud: **"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance" (James 1:2-3).**

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What do you think James meant in this verse?
What are some trials you face?
How can you be joyful when you face trials?
How do you feel when you've finished something that was really hard to do?

Say: **Now let's sing a song to help us remember our Key Verse.**



Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play “Persevere!” (James 1:2-3) (track 11). Lead kids in singing the song through two or three times, referring to the copies of the lyrics.



Consider it pure joy
Whenever you face trials of many kinds,
Because you know the testing of your faith
Develops perseverance.
Persevere! Hold on!
Troubles make your faith grow strong.
Persevere! Hold on!
Troubles make your faith grow strong.

Consider it pure joy
Whenever you face trials of many kinds,
Because you know the testing of your faith
Develops perseverance.
Persevere! Hold on!
Troubles make your faith grow strong.
Persevere! Hold on!
Troubles make your faith grow strong.

“Persevere!” (James 1:2-3) by Carol Smith. © 2003, 2007 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Say: **Okay, now let's do an activity that will help us understand what it means to persevere when times are tough.**

.....

3

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Don't Be a Dirt Clod

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Take kids outside to an area with rocks and dirt. Instruct each child to find one rock and one dirt clod. If the weather prohibits you from taking kids outside, bring the outdoors in to them! Before class, gather several rocks and clumps of dirt into a large box. Have kids do the activity on newsprint or old sheets spread out on the floor. When everyone has found a rock and a dirt clod, have kids sit together in a circle. You should stand in the middle of the circle.

Say: **Look at the two things I've asked you to gather, the rock and the dirt clod. Now let's see what happens when we put some pressure on our rocks and dirt clods. Let's first stand on our dirt clods.**

Lead kids in standing on their dirt clods.



Don't Be a Dirt Clod Supplies

.....

rocks
dirt clods





Say: **Now let's stand on our rocks.** Lead kids in standing on their rocks.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What happened to your dirt clod when you stood on it?

What happened to your rock when you stood on it?

How are we like these dirt clods and rocks under pressure?

What should we do when it's hard to be a Christian?

Say: **God wants us to be rocks, not dirt clods. We should ► KEEP FOLLOWING GOD, EVEN WHEN IT'S HARD.** When times are tough and it's hard to be Christians, he wants us to stand firm and be solid in our faith, like a rock. He doesn't want us to crumble under the pressure of a difficult time, like a dirt clod. Remember the apostles. They stood strong and continued to tell others about Jesus, even when their lives were at stake. They were rocks! Let's make something to help us remember to be rocks in hard times.

Instruct kids to leave their rocks outside and to each find a smaller rock, the size of a pea, to bring inside with them.

Pocket Reminders Supplies

CD player
Bible Truth Sleuth
clear self-stick paper
scissors
glue
construction paper
small rocks
markers

Teacher Pack

CD: "Persevere!"
(James 1:2-3) (track 11)

Pocket Reminders Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 6 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

Pocket Reminders

What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: **We're going to make something that you can keep in your pocket to remind you of our Key Verse.**

Distribute the Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids turn to the "When Being a Christian Is Tough" section. Give each student one half sheet of clear self-stick paper, a pair of scissors, glue, construction paper, a small rock, and markers. Instruct kids to cut out the "When Being a Christian Is Tough" poem along the dotted lines and cut their self-stick paper in half. Then have them cut some construction paper a little larger than the poems and glue the construction paper to the back of the poems. Then have kids glue their small rocks in the bottom right corner of the poems. Next have them decorate the perimeter of their poems with their markers and place them between the sheets of clear self-stick paper. Finally, have students trim the edges of the clear self-stick paper to approximately ¼ inch.

Cue your CD to "Persevere!" (James 1:2-3) (track 11), and play the song while kids work. Give kids enough time to finish their pocket reminders.

Say: **This poem is a special reminder for you to keep in your pocket. When you have a hard time being a Christian, you can simply pull out your poem, read it, and remember that God will help you stand strong, just as he did for the apostles. Let's read our poems out loud together.**



4

LASTING

IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's each choose a Daily Challenge for the week to help us remember to**

► **KEEP FOLLOWING GOD, EVEN WHEN IT'S HARD.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on the Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

Write the name of someone you can tell about Jesus—and be sure to follow through!

Tell someone in your family today's Bible story. See how much you can remember!

Each morning, pray and tell God that you're going to follow him that day!

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: **The apostles showed us how to ► KEEP FOLLOWING GOD, EVEN WHEN IT'S HARD. Let's persevere by following through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about perseverance. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Lead kids in a prayer, asking God to help them persevere when being Christians is difficult.

Daily Challenges
Supplies

.....
Bible Truth Sleuth



Lyrics

Persevere! (James 1:2-3)

Consider it pure joy
Whenever you face trials of many kinds,
Because you know the testing of your faith
Develops perseverance.
Persevere! Hold on!
Troubles make your faith grow strong.
Persevere! Hold on!
Troubles make your faith grow strong.

Consider it pure joy
Whenever you face trials of many kinds,
Because you know the testing of your faith
Develops perseverance.
Persevere! Hold on!
Troubles make your faith grow strong.
Persevere! Hold on!
Troubles make your faith grow strong.

"Persevere!" (James 1:2-3) by Carol Smith. © 2003, 2007 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.





Saul Meets Jesus Near Damascus

Acts 9:1-20

Usually third- and fourth-graders can read and write well. They also like to succeed when presented with a challenge. In this lesson, you'll challenge kids to investigate today's Bible story. Because third- and fourth-graders need to feel independent, don't be too quick to jump in and give them answers. Allowing kids to discover the answers on their own will help build their confidence and self-esteem.



►Bible Point


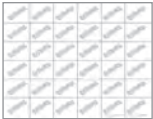
Jesus changes our lives.

Key Verse

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will ask Jesus to change their lives.

| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|-------------------------------|--|---|--|
| 1 Getting Started | Guess the Changes (about 10 min.) Form two groups and create designs with toothpicks. Then try to guess changes made to their designs by the other group. | toothpicks (regular and colored) | |
| 2 Bible Exploration | The New Has Come (about 10 min.) Learn the Key Verse, and sing about how Jesus changes their lives. | Bible, CD player, copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD | |
| | Saul Investigation (about 20 min.) Act as "private investigators" to examine the Bible story. | Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, pencils, crayons, markers Teacher Pack: Bible Timeline  | Tear out the Lesson 7 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book. |
| | Evidence Notebooks (about 10 min.) Create notebooks to record evidence of Jesus changing their lives. | small notepads, glue, markers, crayons, stickers, glitter, scissors, construction paper Teacher Pack: "Evidence Stamps" poster  | Cut apart the "Evidence Stamps" poster. |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|---|--|---|-----------|
| 3 Weaving Faith Into Life | Change Celebration <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Celebrate specific ways Jesus has changed their lives. | balloons, felt-tip pens, CD player, party decorations, copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD | |
| 4 Lasting Impressions | Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word. | Bible Truth Sleuth | |
| | Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families. | | |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





Acts 9:1-20

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

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

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

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

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

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

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

[illegible]



Guess the Changes Supplies

toothpicks (regular and
colored)

1

GETTING STARTED

Guess the Changes

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Have children form two groups, and give each group a box of plain wooden toothpicks.

Say: **Today we're going to play a game called Guess the Changes. Your group must create some kind of design or picture with your toothpicks.**

Have groups work on their toothpick designs on a table. When groups have finished their designs, have kids look carefully at their designs so they'll remember what they look like. Then have the groups switch places so that they're looking at the other group's toothpick design.

Say: **You'll make changes to the other group's design. You can't just mess it up, though. And don't make the changes too difficult to find, because the other group will have to guess what changes you've made.**

After groups have made changes, have groups return to their original designs. Have one group try to guess what changes were made.

As group members state the changes they see, have the group that changed the design confirm or deny the changes. If kids have a hard time identifying changes, ask the changing team to give some hints.

When all the changes have been identified, have the other team guess what changes were made to its design.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What made this game easy or difficult?

How did you decide what kinds of changes to make to the other group's design?

Say: **Now I'm going to make some changes to both groups' designs, and we'll see if you can guess those changes.**

Have groups turn away from their designs, and then add colored toothpicks to each design. When you've finished, have kids turn around and tell you what changes you've made.



Ask:

Was it easier or harder to see the changes this time? Explain.

What are some ways people change?

What kinds of changes in people are easiest to notice?

Say: **We all go through changes all through our lives. But when we believe in Jesus, he changes us in drastic ways, ways that other people notice. Jesus helps us to follow him. ► JESUS CHANGES OUR LIVES!**

.....

2**BIBLE
EXPLORATION**

The New Has Come

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **As we've just learned, Jesus changes our lives when we believe in him. He helps us follow him. In fact, that's just what our Key Verse for today says. Our Key Verse today is about Jesus changing our lives when we believe in him.**

Read aloud 2 Corinthians 5:17: **"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).**

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "A New Creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17) (track 12). Have kids sing the song one time, referring to the copies of the lyrics. When the song has finished, stop the CD.



**If anyone (if anyone)
Is in Christ (is in Christ),
He is a new creation (a new creation);
The old has gone (the old has gone),
The new has come! (The new has come!)
He is a new creation (a new creation);
We have been made new!**

(Repeat from the beginning.)

We have been made new!

"A New Creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17) by Carol Smith. © 2003 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.



The New Has Come Supplies

.....

Bible

CD player

copies of the lyrics (at
the end of this lesson)

Teacher Pack

CD: "A New Creation"
(2 Corinthians 5:17)
(track 12)



Saul Investigation Supplies

Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth
pencils
crayons
markers
Teacher Pack
Bible Timeline

Saul Investigation Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 7
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What does it mean to be “in Christ”?
How does Jesus change our lives?

Say: **When we believe in Jesus, or when we’re “in Christ,” ► JESUS CHANGES OUR LIVES by helping us follow him. He makes us like new people. And he continues to change us for the rest of our lives. Let’s see how Jesus helped a man named Saul follow him.**

Saul Investigation

What You’ll Do

Hold up the Bible Timeline and show kids the “Saul Meets Jesus” picture. Say: **Today’s Bible story talks about the changes Jesus made in the life of one person named Saul. Let’s discover what happened.**

Saul hated Jesus and his followers. After Jesus went back to heaven, Saul made murderous threats against Christians. When one man, Stephen, was killed, Saul helped the people who killed him by keeping watch over their coats while they threw rocks at Stephen. Saul traveled around, finding Christians and putting them in jail. He wanted to stop them from following Jesus.

As we explore this Bible story together, let’s pretend we’re detectives. All we know at this point is that Jesus changed Saul’s life. We’ve been hired to investigate what happened to Saul and how he was changed. We’ll form three teams of detectives to conduct our investigation.

Have kids form three groups. Assign each group one of the following Scripture passages: Acts 7:54-60 and 9:1-2; Acts 9:3-17; and Acts 9:18-20.

Say: **With your team of detectives, you’ll explore your Scripture passage and come up with some clues and evidence that will show us how Jesus changed Saul.**

Distribute the Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids turn to the “Detectives” activity. Give kids pencils, crayons, and markers.

Say: **With your group, read the part of the story that I’ve assigned to you. Then on your student book pages, write the clues you find and any discoveries you make. Use the questions on your student book page to help you find clues and information. And because detectives always need some photographs as evidence, each person in your group should create a photograph in the box marked “Evidence” on the student book page.**

When you’ve finished, you’ll share what you’ve discovered with the other two teams of detectives.



As children work, circulate among the groups to help children understand the Scripture passages, find information, and create their pictures.

When groups have finished, ask them to present to one another what they've learned. Be sure groups make their presentations in the order of the Scripture passages they were assigned. To help groups make their presentations, ask the questions below:

Ask:

What happened in your Scripture passage?
What kind of person was Saul at this time?
As detectives, what kind of photographs did you come up with?

Have everyone who wants to share his or her photograph do so. When all the groups have made their presentations, thank them for their hard work.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

Why did Saul change?
Why do you think Jesus wanted to change Saul's life?
How has Jesus helped you follow him?

Say: **From your investigations, it's obvious that his experience with Jesus changed Saul. Jesus changed Saul into a completely different person. Saul began following Jesus, and he even became a friend to other Christians. In fact, he became one of their most important leaders. Have you ever heard of Paul? Saul later changed his name to Paul, and he traveled around, telling people about Jesus. Jesus really changed Saul's life! And**
► JESUS CHANGES OUR LIVES.

Evidence Notebooks

What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: **When we believe in Jesus, he changes us into new people. But those changes aren't always sudden, as they were in Saul's life. Jesus changes us and helps us follow him for the rest of our lives.**

Give each person a small notepad and a segment of the "Evidence Stamps" poster from the Teacher Pack. Make available glue, markers, crayons, stickers, glitter, scissors, construction paper, and other art supplies.

Say: **We're going to create notebooks to help us keep track of the evidence that Jesus is changing us. These will be like the evidence notebooks detectives use to keep track of clues and discoveries. You can use this notebook to keep track of ways Jesus changes your life by helping you follow him.**



Evidence Notebooks Supplies

small notepads
 glue
 markers
 crayons
 stickers
 glitter
 scissors
 construction paper
Teacher Pack
 "Evidence Stamps"
 poster

Evidence Notebooks Easy Prep

Cut apart the "Evidence Stamps" poster.



Instruct kids to glue their “Evidence Stamps” on the covers of their notepads. Then, to personalize them, encourage kids to decorate the notepads with their names and anything else they’d like.

Say: **Now I want you to open your notepads to the first page and write one way you think Jesus already has changed you.**

When kids have finished working, invite them to display their notepads for one another.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

**What are some ways Jesus has changed your life to help you follow him?
How can we use these notepads to keep track of how Jesus changes us?**

Say: **I encourage you to take your notepad home with you and use it to record the evidence that Jesus is changing your life. As you realize ways he helps you follow him, write them in your notebook. Over time, you’ll have a notepad full of evidence of how ► JESUS CHANGES OUR LIVES!**

3

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Change Celebration Supplies

balloons
felt-tip pens
CD player
party decorations
copies of the lyrics (at
the end of this lesson)

Teacher Pack

CD: “A New Creation”
(2 Corinthians 5:17)
(track 12), “Let Your
Light Shine” (Matthew
5:16) (track 2),
“Confess With Your
Mouth” (Romans 10:9)
(track 9)

! BALLOON WARNING

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

Change Celebration

What You’ll Do ■■■■

Give each person a balloon and a felt-tip pen. Instruct kids to inflate their balloons, and help them tie them off.

Say: **Begin thinking of some ways Jesus has changed your life by helping you follow him. For example, maybe he helped you obey your parents when you didn’t want to. Or maybe he helped you say no to some friends who were trying to get you to do something wrong. Maybe he helped you be kind to someone you don’t like. As you think of ways Jesus has helped you follow him, write those things on your balloon.**

Give children several moments to write on their balloons. Then instruct children to drop the balloons on the floor and scatter them around the room, being careful not to pop them.

Say: **Now we’re going to have a little party to celebrate the ways Jesus changes our lives. Let’s decorate our room and celebrate with some songs!**

Cue your CD to “A New Creation” (2 Corinthians 5:17) (track 12), and have kids sing the Key Verse song again as they decorate.



**If anyone (if anyone)
Is in Christ (is in Christ),
He is a new creation (a new creation);
The old has gone (the old has gone),
The new has come! (The new has come!)
He is a new creation (a new creation);
We have been made new!**

(Repeat from the beginning.)

We have been made new!

“A New Creation” (2 Corinthians 5:17) by Carol Smith. © 2003 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

When the song has finished, ask a few specific kids to pick up some of the balloons on the floor around them.

Ask:

How does Jesus change our lives?

Encourage kids to read aloud some of the items written on the balloons.

Say: **Let’s sing another song of celebration.**

Cue your CD to “Let Your Light Shine” (Matthew 5:16) (track 2), and play the song. Lead kids in singing along, using the lyrics handouts.



**Hey! Hey! Yeah!
Hey! Hey! Yeah!
Let your light shine before men that
They may see your good deeds and
Praise your Father in heaven.
Let your light shine before men, yeah,
Let your light shine before men.
(Repeat.)**

**Let your light shine before men that
They may see your good deeds and
Praise your Father in heaven.
Let your light shine before men, yeah,
Let your light shine before men.
Let your light shine before men, yeah.
Let your light shine before men.
Hey! Hey! Yeah!
Hey! Hey! Yeah!**

“Let Your Light Shine” (Matthew 5:16) by Carol Smith. © 2003, 2006 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.






When the song has finished, ask a few more kids, who didn't pick up balloons the first time, to pick up some of the balloons from the floor around them. Encourage kids to read aloud what's written on the balloons.

Say: **Let's sing one more song of celebration.**

Cue your CD to "Confess With Your Mouth" (Romans 10:9) (track 9), and play the song. Lead kids in singing aloud, referring to the lyrics handout.

 **For if you confess,
Confess with your mouth
That Jesus is Lord,
If you believe,
Believe in your heart
That God raised him from the dead...**
(Repeat.)

(Chorus)

**You will be saved; you will be saved; you will be saved; o-o-oh.
You will be saved; you will be saved; you will be saved; o-o-oh.
You will be saved; you will be saved; you will be saved; o-o-oh.
You will be saved; you will be saved; you will be saved; oh—YOU WILL BE SAVED!!!**

(Repeat from the beginning; then repeat chorus.)

**Oh—YOU WILL BE SAVED!!!
Oh—YOU WILL BE SAVED!!!**

"Confess With Your Mouth" (Romans 10:9) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

When the song has finished, ask the remaining kids to pick up the rest of the balloons on the floor around them. Encourage kids to read aloud some of the items written on the balloons.

Say: **Wow! Jesus has changed our lives! Let's clap and cheer to celebrate and to praise Jesus for helping us follow him!**

Pause and encourage kids to bat the balloons around and to clap and cheer.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

**How does Jesus change our lives?
What can we do to welcome Jesus' changes in our lives?**

Have each child find his or her balloon and pick it up to take home.





4

LASTING
IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's each choose a Daily Challenge for the week to help us remember that**
► JESUS CHANGES OUR LIVES.

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on the Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

Take a walk in your neighborhood and pray for Jesus to change your neighbors' lives.

Tell a friend at school that Jesus changes our lives.

Sing a song to Jesus each night before you go to bed.

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: **► JESUS CHANGES OUR LIVES, just as he did for Saul. Let's see how he changes our lives as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about Jesus changing our lives. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Close in prayer. Say: **Let's pray now to thank Jesus for changing our lives.**

Pray: **Dear Jesus, thank you for changing our lives. Thank you for being our friend and helping us follow you. Help us welcome your changes in our lives. In your name, amen.**

Daily Challenges
Supplies

.....
 Bible Truth Sleuth



Lyrics

A New Creation (2 Corinthians 5:17)

If anyone (if anyone)
Is in Christ (is in Christ),
He is a new creation (a new creation);
The old has gone (the old has gone),
The new has come! (The new has come!)
He is a new creation (a new creation);
We have been made new!

(Repeat from the beginning.)

We have been made new!

"A New Creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17) by Carol Smith. © 2003 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.





Lyrics

Let Your Light Shine (Matthew 5:16)

Hey! Hey! Yeah!

Hey! Hey! Yeah!

Let your light shine before men that

They may see your good deeds and

Praise your Father in heaven.

Let your light shine before men, yeah,

Let your light shine before men.

(Repeat.)

Let your light shine before men that

They may see your good deeds and

Praise your Father in heaven.

Let your light shine before men, yeah,

Let your light shine before men.

Let your light shine before men, yeah.

Let your light shine before men.

Hey! Hey! Yeah!

Hey! Hey! Yeah!

"Let Your Light Shine" (Matthew 5:16) by Carol Smith. © 2003, 2006 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.



 **OK
TO COPY**





Lyrics

Confess With Your Mouth (Romans 10:9)

For if you confess,
 Confess with your mouth
 That Jesus is Lord,
 If you believe,
 Believe in your heart
 That God raised him from the dead...
(Repeat.)

(Chorus)

You will be saved; you will be saved; you will be saved; o-o-oh.
You will be saved; you will be saved; you will be saved; o-o-oh.
You will be saved; you will be saved; you will be saved; o-o-oh.
You will be saved; you will be saved; you will be saved; oh—YOU WILL BE SAVED!!!

(Repeat from the beginning; then repeat chorus.)

Oh—YOU WILL BE SAVED!!!
Oh—YOU WILL BE SAVED!!!

"Confess With Your Mouth" (Romans 10:9) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.





Peter Raises Tabitha From the Dead

Acts 9:36-43

Third- and fourth-graders love to talk—and talk and talk. Every detail of every day is a significant detail meant to be shared with Mom, Dad, teachers, and friends. Kids can become discouraged when others don't have time to listen to every word, become preoccupied, or don't find kids' up-to-the-minute information as life-changing as they do. This is a great time to teach children that God always listens! He cares about every part of their lives. And he not only enjoys listening to prayer but also answers. He's the perfect friend for a child this age—or any age!

| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|-------------------------------|--|---------------------|--|
| 1 Getting Started | Passing the Message (about 10 min.) Try to send a message around the room successfully. | bag of small treats | Hide a bag of small treats somewhere in the classroom. Make sure there are enough treats for each child to have one. |
| 2 Bible Exploration | Emergency! (about 30 min.) Discover what happened when Peter prayed for Tabitha. | Bible | |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



►Bible Point

God answers when we pray.

Key Verse

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

Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will thank God for answering their prayers.





| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|---|---|---|--|
| 3 Weaving Faith Into Life | Hello, God? <i>(about 20 min.)</i> Learn that they can call on God at any time and pray for each other. | Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, markers, stickers, CD player, copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD | Tear out the Lesson 8 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book. |
| 4 Lasting Impressions | Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word. | Bible Truth Sleuth | |
| | Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families. | | |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.







Passing the Message Supplies

bag of small treats

Passing the Message Easy Prep

Hide a bag of small treats somewhere in the classroom. Make sure there are enough treats for each child to have one.

! ALLERGY ALERT

1 GETTING STARTED

Passing the Message

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Have children line up. Stand with them at one end of the line.

Say: **I have an important message for [name of child at the other end of the line]. I'm going to whisper the message to [name of child next to you], who will then whisper it to the next child, who will whisper it to the next child, and so on until the message gets to the end of the line. When it's your turn to whisper the message, you may whisper it only once. No repeats allowed! If you aren't sure what you heard, just whisper what you think you heard to the next person.**

Whisper this message to the child in line beside you:

Say: **Go to [name the hiding place]. Take out a bag of treats. Give a treat to everyone in class.**

If the child at the end of the line follows your instruction (which is unlikely), commend children for being good listeners. If the child at the end of the line doesn't go to get the treats, ask that child to tell you what he or she thinks was said. Then tell the kids that the message didn't correctly get all the way to [name of child] or something would've happened.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What was difficult about getting the message to [name of child at the end of the line]?

Can you think of an easier way to send messages?

What would be the easiest way for me to give a message to [name of child at the end of the line]?

Give the message to the child directly. Have the child get the treats for the class.

Say: **We can't always talk directly to friends and family members. Sometimes they are far away or unavailable. And sometimes we think we understand what others are saying but we really don't understand correctly.**

Ask:

Do you think God always hears everything we say to him? Why or why not? How was our game today different from how we can talk to God?



Say: **We can always talk directly to God, and ► GOD ANSWERS WHEN WE PRAY. He loves us, and what we have to say is important to him.**

.....



2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Emergency!

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Open your Bible to Acts 9:36-43, and show kids the passage.

Say: **In our Bible story today, we'll learn about a woman named Tabitha. Tabitha always did good and helped the poor.**

Have kids form pairs. Have each child do something good for his or her partner. Each partner could do something like get a drink of water, rub the other's shoulders, or get a chair for the other partner.

Say: **Just as you did something good for your partner, Tabitha did good things for other people.**

Ask:

**Do you know anyone who always does good things for others? Explain.
How do you feel about that person?
How would you feel if something happened to that person and he or she
wasn't around anymore?**

Say: **People who knew Tabitha loved her. So when Tabitha got sick and died, they were very sad. They wanted help for her.**

Ask:

**What would you do if someone you knew was sick?
In an emergency, who would you call to help that person?**

Say: **Today in an emergency, people call paramedics to come help. Let's see what might happen if we call the paramedics for Tabitha.**

Ask for a volunteer to be Tabitha. Warn the volunteer that she will need to lie on the floor and be very still. Then instruct her to continue to lie still while the emergency crew tries to revive her. She can only get up when Peter says, "Tabitha, get up." Have your volunteer lie on the floor in the middle of the room.

Ask for another volunteer to be Peter. He will wait on one side of the room until someone goes to get him.

Emergency! Supplies

.....

Bible





Hello, God? Supplies

Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth
markers
stickers
CD player
copies of the lyrics (at
the end of this lesson)

Teacher Pack

CD: "Earnest Prayer"
(James 5:16) (track
15)

Hello, God? Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 8
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.

Have kids pretend to be in emergency vehicles and race around the room two or three times as they make siren noises. Have them stop in the middle of the room and pretend to resuscitate Tabitha.

After kids have tried for a minute or two to help Tabitha, have them stop and stand up.

Say: **Tabitha had died, and no man could bring her back to life. The people were sad. Then they heard that Peter was in Lydda. That was near Joppa, where they were.**

Read aloud Acts 9:38.

Say: **Peter is in Lydda! Go get Peter, and bring him back here quickly!**

Have two volunteers run to Peter; say, "Please come at once"; and bring him back to Tabitha.

When Peter is near Tabitha, read Acts 9:39-40. Ask everyone except Peter to leave Tabitha. Then have Peter say, "Tabitha, get up." Have Tabitha stand up.

Read aloud Acts 9:41-43.

Say: **Peter prayed and asked God to bring Tabitha back to life, and God answered Peter's prayer. Because of this, many people believed in the Lord.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

Why do you think our emergency crew couldn't bring Tabitha back to life?
How do you think the people felt when God brought their friend Tabitha back to life?
Why do you think God brought Tabitha back to life?
What happens when we pray?

Say: ► **GOD ANSWERS WHEN WE PRAY. He doesn't always bring people back to life, but he always listens and always answers because he loves us so much.**

3

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Hello, God?

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Earlier we played a game in which we learned that people don't always hear what we say. But God always hears us when we pray.**



Ask:

What does it mean to pray?

Say: **Prayer simply means talking to God.**

Ask:

What are some ways you talk to your friends?

Distribute the Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids turn to the “Hello, God?” activity.

Say: **One way we can talk to people who aren’t with us in person is to talk on the phone. When we pray, it’s kind of like using a phone to talk to God. The difference is that God always answers our call. We never get a voice mail. He’s always there. On your Bible Truth Sleuth page, you’ll see a phone. Think of some specific prayers you want God to hear. Make an app icon to represent each one. You can draw icons or use stickers to make your icons.** Allow time.

When everyone is finished, have kids find partners.

Say: **Share with your partner what you’ve written on your phone, and then pray for each other’s prayer requests.**

Give kids several minutes to pray for each other.

Say: **Put your phone in your Bible as a reminder that God is always there to hear you and will answer your prayers.**

Ask:

What happens when we pray?

Say: **Let’s read our Key Verse to find out.**

Have kids open their Bibles to James 5:16 and read the verse aloud with you: **“The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective” (James 5:16).**

Once more, have children repeat after you the Key Verse.

Say: **We can always go to God in prayer because he always answers.**

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play “Earnest Prayer” (James 5:16) (track 15). Have kids listen once to the song. Then have them sing along, referring to the copies of the lyrics.



**Confess your sins to each other
And pray for each other
So that you may be healed,
So that you may be healed.**





**The earnest prayer of a righteous person
Has great power and produces wonderful results.**
(Repeat.)

(Repeat from the beginning.)

Wonderful results.

"Earnest Prayer" (James 5:16) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Talk With Kids ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What is a "righteous man"?

Say: **A righteous man or woman is someone who wants to do what is right—someone who lives for God.**

Ask:

Why do you think Peter's prayer was so powerful and effective?

Say: **Peter lived for God. He tried to glorify God in all he did. When we pray, we should want what God wants. If we ask God to show us what he wants and ask him to work things out the way he wants them, our prayers will be powerful and effective! And we can trust that ► GOD ANSWERS WHEN WE PRAY.**

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

What You'll Do ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Say: **Let's each choose a Daily Challenge for the week to help us remember that ► GOD ANSWERS WHEN WE PRAY.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on the Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

Pray and thank God for always answering when you pray.

Tell a friend or parent about a time you knew God answered your prayer.

Practice listening to others this week. If God is always listening, we should listen, too!



Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: ► **GOD ANSWERS WHEN WE PRAY.** Let's see how he does as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about prayer. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Close in prayer. Pray: **Thank you, God, for hearing our prayers. Thank you that you always hear us. We're glad to know that "the prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." You make great things happen when we pray for you to do what's best! You are an awesome God, and we love you! In Jesus' name we pray, amen.**



**Lyrics** **Earnest Prayer (James 5:16)**

Confess your sins to each other
And pray for each other
So that you may be healed,
So that you may be healed.

The earnest prayer of a righteous person
Has great power and produces wonderful results.
(Repeat.)

(Repeat from the beginning.)

Wonderful results.

"Earnest Prayer" (James 5:16) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.





An Angel Frees Peter From Jail

Acts 12:1-18

An interesting transition takes place somewhere between third and fourth grade. Although third-graders still depend on their parents for assurance and care, fourth-graders more readily assert their independence. As a result, you'll probably notice less confidence in the younger children who aren't yet taking those first timid steps toward autonomy. Use this lesson to help kids learn that they each have an important role in serving God and one another. As you teach, assure both age groups that God cares for them so much that he assigns his angels to watch over them. What a comforting thought for children who are striving to grow up!



►Bible Point


Angels protect and help God's people.

Key Verse

"For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways" (Psalm 91:11).

Weaving Faith Into Life


Kids will thank God for his angels.

| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|-------------------------------|---|--|--|
| 1 Getting Started | Stand Guard (about 15 min.) Play a game to guess which of them is the "angel" who frees Peter. | paper, scissors, pen, paper bag | Cut enough 1x2-inch slips of paper for each child to have one. On one slip, write "angel." On all the other strips, write "Peter." Place all of the strips in a paper bag. Designate an area in your room to be the "free area." |
| 2 Bible Exploration | Peter's Rescuer (about 15 min.) Hear from the angel's perspective the story of Peter's escape. | Bible, CD player Teacher Pack: CD, Bible Timeline  | |
| | Who's There? (about 10 min.) Play a game to learn how Rhoda knew Peter was the person at the door. | Bible | |
| | Flashlights (about 10 min.) Learn the Key Verse and make reminders of how the angel served God. | Bibles, cardboard tubes, construction paper, markers, yellow construction paper, scissors, glue | Cut out enough yellow circles, approximately 3 inches in diameter, for each child. |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|---|---|--|--|
| 3 Weaving Faith Into Life | How Can I Serve? <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Come up with solutions as to how they can serve others in specific situations. | CD player, paper, markers, copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD, "How Can I Serve?" cards  | |
| | I Can Serve, Too <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Examine ways they can serve God and others. | Bible Truth Sleuth, markers | Tear out the Lesson 9 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book. |
| 4 Lasting Impressions | Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word. | Bible Truth Sleuth | |
| | Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families. | | |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





Acts 12:1-18

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Stand Guard Supplies

paper
scissors
pen
paper bag

Stand Guard Easy Prep

Cut enough 1x2-inch slips of paper for each child to have one. On one slip, write “angel.” On all the other strips, write “Peter.” Place all of the strips in a paper bag. Designate an area in your room to be the “free area.”

1 GETTING STARTED

Stand Guard

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Have each child draw one of the slips from the bag, but keep secret what the word is on the strip.

Say: **Don't tell anyone what's written on your slip. We're going to play a game, and you'll have to guess which one of you is the “angel.” You must walk around the room and watch carefully. If you draw the piece of paper with the word angel written on it, you must walk up to people and whisper “free” without anyone noticing you. If you've been freed, go to the free area. But don't say who the angel is! Only people who haven't been freed yet can make guesses.**

Have kids play for several minutes or until someone guesses correctly who the angel is. Encourage the angel to make guesses, too. That way other kids won't guess who the angel is because he or she is the only one not guessing! If you have time, play several rounds, letting a different child be the angel each time.

After kids have finished playing, have them sit together in a large group.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

Was it difficult to figure out which one of you was the angel? Why or why not?

How did you feel when the angel freed you?

If you were the angel, how did it feel to free someone?

Say: **In today's lesson, we'll take a look at how an angel obeyed God's command and what happened as a result. Then we'll learn that ► ANGELS PROTECT AND HELP GOD'S PEOPLE.**



2

BIBLE
EXPLORATION

Peter's Rescuer

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Designate an area of your room as a jail. Set up chairs as walls. Make sure you have at least one chair per child because the chairs will be used later in the activity.

Have kids tell two or three other kids in class something they know about Jesus.

After kids have shared something they know about Jesus with two or three other kids, "arrest" them and place them in the area you've designated as the jail. Walk up to each child and ask, "Have you been telling people about Jesus?" When kids answer "yes," tell them they are under arrest and lead them to the jail.

Say: **Peter had been telling all the people he could about Jesus. A lot of people were praying for Peter. King Herod had arrested him for telling people about Jesus.**

Read aloud Acts 12:1-6.

Say: **The night before Peter was supposed to go to trial, he slept bound in chains between two guards. Let's pretend we're bound in chains, too.**

Have all of the kids hold their wrists together as if they were all chained together. Then have everyone place one arm on a chair and put his or her head down, pretending to sleep. Each child's other arm will be on the chair next to him or her as kids pretend to be chained to the people next to them.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

How do you think Peter felt when Herod put him in jail?

How would you feel if you were really thrown in jail for telling people about Jesus?

What do you think would've helped Peter at that time?

Say: **Here's where the angel comes into the story. Let's hear what he has to say about what happened.**

Cue your CD to "An Angel's Tale" (track 13), and play the segment. As the track plays, hold up the Bible Timeline and show kids the "An Angel Frees Peter" picture.

Peter's Rescuer
Supplies

Bible

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "An Angel's Tale"
(track 13)

Bible Timeline



Who's There? Supplies

Bible

Flashlights Supplies

Bibles
cardboard tubes
construction paper
markers
yellow construction
paper
scissors
glue

Flashlights Easy Prep

Cut out enough yellow
circles, approximately 3
inches in diameter, for
each child.

Ask:

**How did God help Peter?
What do angels do?**

Say: **Let's read on and find out what happened to Peter next.**

Who's There?

What You'll Do

Read aloud Acts 12:11-18.

Have all the kids close their eyes. Explain that you will gently tap the shoulder of one child, and he or she should say, "Knock, knock." The rest of the class will then say, "Who's there?" Then the knocker will say, "It's me!" The rest of the kids may then open their eyes and guess who the knocker was. Play several rounds.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

**Was it easy to figure out who knocked? Why or why not?
Why do you think Rhoda knew right away that Peter was the person at the door?**

Say: **When Peter went to Mary's house where people were gathered to pray, Rhoda, the servant girl, came to the door. She was so excited when she heard Peter's voice that she ran back to tell everyone and forgot to open the door!**

Ask:

**Why was Rhoda so happy that Peter was there?
What did Peter's arrival show the people in the house?**

Say: **The rescue let God's people know that he knew of their troubles and cared. God's angel saved Peter and encouraged the church people, too. ► ANGELS PROTECT AND HELP GOD'S PEOPLE.**

Flashlights

What You'll Do

Say: **Our Key Verse for today tells us what angels do. Let's take a look at it.**

Have kids turn to Psalm 91:11, and ask a volunteer to read the verse aloud. Then have kids repeat the verse two or three times: **"For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways" (Psalm 91:11).**



Say: **In our story today, an angel shined a light on Peter to wake him up so he could be freed. We're going to make flashlight reminders of what the angel did for Peter.**

Give each child a cardboard tube, approximately 6 inches in length; a yellow circle; a piece of construction paper; markers; and scissors.

Have kids cut the construction paper so that it fits around the cardboard tubes. Then have each child write the Key Verse on the construction paper and glue it around the cardboard tube. Then have kids place glue around the edge of one end of their cardboard tubes and place them on their yellow circles.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What do angels do?

Say: **Our Key Verse tells us "For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways" (Psalm 91:11). Use your flashlight as a reminder of how ► ANGELS PROTECT AND HELP GOD'S PEOPLE.**

.....

3

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

How Can I Serve?

What You'll Do ■■■■

Pull out the "How Can I Serve?" cards from your Teacher Pack.

Say: **Today we've learned about how one angel served God by freeing Peter from jail. We're very different from angels, but we're like them in one way: We can serve God. We need to set ourselves apart from the world to love and serve God with all our hearts. Let's sing "If We Confess" (1 John 1:9) and ask God to set us apart to do his will.**

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "If We Confess" (1 John 1:9) (track 6) and have the kids sing, referring to the copies of the lyrics. Sing the song through two or three times.



(Verse)

**If we confess, if we confess our sins,
He's faithful and just and will forgive us our sins
And purify us from all unrighteousness.
If we confess, if we confess our sins.**



How Can I Serve? Supplies

.....

CD player
paper
markers
copies of the lyrics (at
the end of this lesson)
Teacher Pack
CD: "If We Confess"
(1 John 1:9) (track 6)
"How Can I Serve?"
cards





**God says he will set us free if we confess our sins
God says he will set us free if we confess our sins**

(Repeat verse.)

If we confess, if we confess our sins.

"If We Confess" (1 John 1:9) by Carol Smith. © 2003, 2006 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

When kids have finished singing, have them form six groups and give each group a "How Can I Serve?" card.

Say: **Look at your card, and discuss ways you can think of to serve the person on your card who needs help. Then I want you to present your solution. You may act out your solution, make up a song, draw a picture, or something else as long as it lets the rest of the class know what your solution is.**

Give kids several minutes to discuss what they want to do. Each group should show the rest of the class the picture on its card and read what's written on the card. Then have groups present their solutions.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

**How did you decide what you should do in each of your situations?
How do you feel when you can serve someone?**

I Can Serve, Too

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Distribute the Bible Truth Sleuth pages. Have kids turn to the "I Can Serve, Too!" activity.

Say: **On your Bible Truth Sleuth page, you'll see two boxes. In the box that says, "I Can Serve God By:" list ways you think you can serve God. Then if you wish, draw a picture of yourself doing one of those things. For example, you may write, "I can serve God by singing a song with the preschoolers in Sunday school." You could then draw a picture of yourself leading a group of little kids in singing.**

In the other box that says, "I Can Serve Others By:" list ways you can serve other people. You may draw a picture in that box, too, if you like. For example, you may write, "I can serve others by helping my dad with the yard work." Then you could draw a picture of yourself pulling weeds while your dad trims the bushes.

Give kids several minutes to complete the activity. When everyone has finished writing and drawing, have kids form pairs and show their answers to their partners. Invite volunteers to share their answers with everyone.

I Can Serve, Too Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth
markers

I Can Serve, Too Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 9
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.



4

LASTING
IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's each choose a Daily Challenge for the week to help us remember that**

► **ANGELS PROTECT AND HELP GOD'S PEOPLE.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on the Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

Tell a friend about a time you felt protected by God's angels.

Watch the sunrise or sunset and thank God for sending his angels to help you.

Have someone read Acts 12:1-18 with you. Praise God for the gift of angels.

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: ► **ANGELS PROTECT AND HELP GOD'S PEOPLE. Let's think about angels by following through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about angels. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Close in prayer.

Pray: **Thank you, God, for angels who serve you so gladly. Thank you for commanding them to guard us in all our ways. Help us serve you in our lives. Show us how we can serve other people, too. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.**

Daily Challenges
Supplies

.....
Bible Truth Sleuth





Lyrics

If We Confess (1 John 1:9)

(Verse)

If we confess, if we confess our sins,
He's faithful and just and will forgive us our sins
And purify us from all unrighteousness.
If we confess, if we confess our sins.

God says he will set us free if we confess our sins
God says he will set us free if we confess our sins

(Repeat verse.)

If we confess, if we confess our sins.

"If We Confess" (1 John 1:9) by Carol Smith. © 2003, 2006 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.





Lydia Is Converted

Acts 16:9-15

Third- and fourth-graders love to share good news. They also care deeply for their friends. As they realize that not all people have heard God's message of salvation, they will want to share this news. Encourage children to pray for their friends, to learn all they can about the Bible so they can teach their friends, and to rely on God to give them opportunities to share with those they love. If children learn to boldly talk of their faith now, they'll have fewer fears as adults.

| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|-------------------------------|--|---|---|
| 1 Getting Started | Get Ready (about 10 min.) Figure out how to be prepared for various situations. | index cards, pen | Write each of the following phrases on a separate index card: "a camping trip," "a test," "a trip to an amusement park," and "a baseball game in which you are playing first base." |
| 2 Bible Exploration | Go! (about 15 min.) Learn how Paul was always ready to go tell people about Jesus. | Bible | |
| | In Season and Out (about 20 min.) Write postcards to children who need to hear about Jesus. | Bible, Bible Truth Sleuth, pens, scissors | Tear out the Lesson 10 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book. |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



►Bible Point

Be prepared to tell others about Jesus.

Key Verse


"Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season" (2 Timothy 4:2).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will tell others about Jesus.





| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|---|---|---|--|
| 3 Weaving Faith Into Life | Be Prepared <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Act out telling others about Jesus in specific situations. | scissors, CD player, copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD, “Be Prepared” poster  | Cut apart the four sections of the “Be Prepared” poster. |
| 4 Lasting Impressions | Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God’s Word. | Bible Truth Sleuth | |
| | Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families. | | |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





Acts 16:9-15

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Get Ready Supplies

index cards
pen

Get Ready Easy Prep

Write each of the following phrases on a separate index card: “a camping trip,” “a test,” “a trip to an amusement park,” and “a baseball game in which you are playing first base.”

1

GETTING STARTED

Get Ready

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Have kids form four groups, and give one card to each group.

Say: **In your group, talk about what you need to do to be prepared for what's written on your card. You'll have a few minutes to talk about it and will then present your answers to the rest of the class.**

When kids have finished talking, have each group make its presentation. After each group has made its presentation, give kids the following additions to their scenarios:

A camping trip: You went on a day hike, and bears ate all of your food.

A test: You've studied for a spelling test, but when you get to school, you discover you're actually having a math test.

A trip to an amusement park: You've been at the park an hour, and it starts raining—hard.

A baseball game in which you are playing first base: Your team's pitcher breaks his arm, and you now have to pitch.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

How did you feel when you found out there was more to your situation than you had thought?

How could you have prepared for the additional situations in your scenario?

How can you be prepared to tell others about Jesus?

Say: **It's not always easy to know how to be prepared for every situation. In today's lesson, we'll learn how we can ► BE PREPARED TO TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS.**





2

BIBLE
EXPLORATION

Go!

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Open your Bible to Acts 16:9-10, and show it to the kids. Have kids sit or lie on the floor, close their eyes, and pretend to sleep.

Say: **Our Bible story today comes from Acts 16.**

Read aloud Acts 16:9-10.

Say: **We need to go to Macedonia! The people there need to know about Jesus! Pack your bags!**

Have kids sit up and pretend to pack bags.

Say: **We're going on a boat ride to get to Macedonia. Let's go!**

Have kids hold out their arms and touch their fingertips together to form a V shape. This will represent the bow of a boat. Then have kids pretend to journey on the sea from Troas to Samothrace to Neapolis and finally to Philippi as you read Acts 16:11-12.

Say: **When they reached Philippi, Paul and his companions stayed for several days. On the Sabbath day, they went to a river to find a place to pray. Let's find out what happened at the river.**

Designate one area of your room as the river, and have kids walk to it and sit down. Read aloud Acts 16:13-15.

Say: **The Bible doesn't tell us why the women were there, but it does tell us that one of the women, Lydia, was a worshipper of God. Even if they were there to worship God, they didn't know about Jesus. They needed someone to tell them.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

**How did Paul react as soon as he was told to go tell others about Jesus?
When should we tell others about Jesus?**

**Go!
Supplies**

.....
Bible



In Season and Out Supplies

Bible
Bible Truth Sleuth
pens
scissors

In Season and Out Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 10
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.

Say: **Paul was ready to tell others about Jesus. He showed that by leaving for Macedonia as soon as he was told to go. When he met a group of people there who needed to know about Jesus, he could tell them about him. We can ► BE PREPARED TO TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS at any time, too. Let's take a look at our Key Verse for today to see what it says about being ready.**

In Season and Out

What You'll Do

Open your Bible to 2 Timothy 4:2, and read the Key Verse aloud: **"Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season" (2 Timothy 4:2).**

Ask:

What does it mean to "preach the Word"?

Say: **Preaching the Word is telling others what the Bible says. When we tell others about Jesus, we're preaching the Word.**

Ask:

When should we tell others about Jesus?

Say: **We should be prepared in season and out of season, or all the time, to tell others about Jesus. We should always watch for opportunities to tell people what we believe.**

Today you'll have an opportunity to tell someone who you don't know about Jesus.

Distribute the Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids turn to the "In Season and Out" activity.

Say: **We're going to write postcards to people in another country to tell them about Jesus. So on the postcard in your Bible Truth Sleuth, write something you know about Jesus. Then cut the postcard from the bottom of your page. We'll give our postcards to a missionary to give to kids who need to know about Jesus.**

Share with kids that just as Paul was a missionary who traveled from place to place, we have missionaries today who do the same thing. Let them know that even if the kids in the country the postcards are sent to don't speak English, a missionary will translate the cards and let the kids know what the postcards say about Jesus.



3

WEAVING FAITH
INTO LIFE

Be Prepared

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **We've just told people in another country about Jesus. But people live right in our own town who need to know about Jesus, too. Let's take a look at some situations and talk about how we can be prepared both in season and out of season to tell others about Jesus.**

Have the class form four groups, and give each group one section of the "Be Prepared" poster.

Say: **Our Key Verse says: "Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season" (2 Timothy 4:2). Let's practice being prepared. Read the situation on your poster, and answer the question as a group.**

Give each group time to answer its question. Then have each group choose a leader to share the group's ideas.

Say: **God gives us many opportunities to tell others about Jesus. We should be prepared to talk with others about Jesus any time.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

**Why do other people need to hear about Jesus?
What might happen if we don't tell others about Jesus?**

Say: **We should be prepared because we have an awesome God who loves us and sent his Son to die for our sins. That's news we should tell to all the nations so they might believe! Let's stand and sing "That You May Believe" (John 20:31).**

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "That You May Believe" (John 20:31) (track 17). Encourage the kids to sing, referring to the copies of the lyrics.



Be Prepared Supplies

scissors
CD player
copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson)


Teacher Pack

CD: "That You May Believe" (John 20:31) (track 17)
"Be Prepared" poster

Be Prepared Easy Prep

Cut apart the four sections of the "Be Prepared" poster.



 **But these are written that you may believe
That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.**
(Repeat.)

**And that by believing, you may have life in his name.
And that by believing, you may have life in his name.**
(Repeat.)

(Repeat from the beginning.)

“That You May Believe” (John 20:31) by Dean-o. © 2003, 2006 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

Say: **Let's each choose a Daily Challenge for the week to remind us to ► BE PREPARED TO TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on the Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

Invite your friend over to watch a movie with you, and tell him or her about Jesus—while sharing some popcorn, too!
Tell each of your family members about Jesus.
When the mail is delivered to your house, tell the postal worker about Jesus' love.

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: **We need to ► BE PREPARED TO TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS. Let's practice telling others about Jesus by following through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth





Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about telling others about Jesus. Kids can also do the activities in the “HomeConnect” section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Close in prayer. Pray: **Thank you, God, for giving us opportunities to tell others about your Son. Help us to be prepared “in season and out of season” every day. We love you, Lord, and want others to know what you have done. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.**



**Lyrics** **That You May Believe (John 20:31)**

**But these are written that you may believe
That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.**

(Repeat.)

**And that by believing, you may have life in his name.
And that by believing, you may have life in his name.**

(Repeat.)

(Repeat from the beginning.)

"That You May Believe" (John 20:31) by Dean-o. © 2003, 2006 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.





Paul's Jailer Believes in Jesus

Acts 16:16-34

Third- and fourth-graders know the difference between right and wrong. They can also choose which they will do. Because they understand cause and effect, they know they will suffer consequences for doing wrong. You can use this lesson to help kids see that by believing in Jesus, they can receive salvation and that Jesus paid the price for their wrongdoing, or sin.

| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|-------------------------------|---|--|-----------|
| 1 Getting Started | All Shook Up (about 10 min.) Simulate an earthquake to help someone find a lost key. | key | |
| 2 Bible Exploration | Earthquake! (about 20 min.) Explore the events and characters in the Bible story. | Bible, CD player, washable markers, flashlight, wet wipes, copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD | |

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



►Bible Point

Jesus saves us.
.....

Key Verse

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

Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will thank Jesus for saving them.
.....



| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|---|--|--|--|
| 3 Weaving Faith Into Life | I Believe! <i>(about 20 min.)</i> Make journals and share with each other what being saved means to them. | Bible Truth Sleuth, scissors, stapler, blank paper, markers | Tear out the Lesson 11 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book. |
| 4 Lasting Impressions | Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word. | Bible Truth Sleuth | |
| | Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families. | | |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Paul Casts a Demon Out of a Girl and Ends Up in Jail

The Jailer Takes Paul and Silas to His Home

The Jesus Connection

Have you believed in Jesus? How committed are you to living out his gift of salvation? Pray about what it means to you that Jesus saved you. You can write your prayer here.

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



All Shook Up Supplies

key

1

GETTING STARTED

All Shook Up

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Say: **Today we're going to start our class by playing a game. I'll hide an object in our classroom, and a "seeker" will have to find it.**

Ask for a volunteer to be the seeker for the first round, and send that person out of the room. (For safety, you may want to have an adult volunteer go with the student.)

When the seeker has left the room, quietly hide the key, letting the rest of the class see where you hide it.

Say: **When our seeker comes back into the room, you'll give clues about where the key is hidden. This is how you'll do it: Whenever the seeker starts to get close to the key, don't say a word but start shaking as though you were in an earthquake. How much you shake depends on how close the seeker is to the key. If he or she is kind of close, you'll shake just a little bit. But if the seeker is really close, you'll need to shake really hard. Is everyone ready? Let's go!**

Have the seeker return to the room, and let him or her know what signs to look for while seeking the hidden key. When the seeker finds the key, have everyone applaud the efforts of both the "shakers" and the seeker. Choose another seeker, hide the key in a different location, and play again. Play several rounds.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What was it like to have clues to help you find the key?

How did you feel once you found the key?

Would it have been more difficult to find the key without any help? Why or why not?

Say: **In today's Bible story, we'll hear the story of two men who were thrown into prison and then miraculously set free because of an earthquake. In today's game, "earthquakes" helped you find the key. In today's Bible story, an earthquake helped the two men in prison. Because of the earthquake in the prison, the jailer found something important. We'll talk about what the jailer found and learn that**
► JESUS SAVES US.



2

BIBLE
EXPLORATION

Earthquake!

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: Today's Bible story comes from Acts 16:16-34.

Open your Bible to Acts 16:16-34, and show the passage to the kids.

Say: **A slave girl followed Paul and Silas as they told people about Jesus. This girl had an evil spirit and distracted people from hearing what Paul and Silas had to say. Paul commanded the evil spirit to leave her, and the evil spirit left. The owners of the slave girl were very angry because they realized they could no longer make money from the girl's fortunetelling. So they dragged Paul and Silas to the authorities, saying that the two men were telling people to do unlawful things, when actually Paul and Silas were only telling people about Jesus. Then the crowd joined in the attack. They stripped Paul and Silas, beat them, and threw them into jail.**

Use the washable markers to draw a couple of lines on kids' arms to represent marks from being beaten. Then have all the kids huddle together in one corner of the room to simulate being in the inner cell of the jail.

Ask:

How do you think Paul and Silas felt about being beaten and thrown into prison for telling people about Jesus?
How would you feel if you were beaten and thrown into jail for talking about Jesus?

Say: **Let's take a look at what Paul and Silas did.**

Read aloud Acts 16:25.

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and have kids review the lyrics and try to learn them by reading. Cue your CD to "I Am the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25) (track 14) and turn out the lights to pretend that it's midnight. Play the song through once or twice so kids can listen. Then have kids sing along with the CD.



I am the resurrection and the life!
He who believes in me will live,
Even though he dies.
(Repeat.)

There's no! other way to the Father.
No! other way to the Son.
No! other way to Jesus.

Earthquake!
Supplies

.....
Bible
CD player
washable markers
flashlight
wet wipes
copies of the lyrics (at
the end of this lesson)
Teacher Pack
CD: "I Am the
Resurrection and the
Life" (John 11:25)
(track 14)





**We must believe, we must believe,
We must believe in him alone!**

**I am the resurrection and the life!
He who believes in me will live,
Even though he dies.
(Repeat.)**

**I am the resurrection and the life!
I am the resurrection and the life!**

"I Am the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Ask:

**Do you think you could sing praises to God if you were really in jail?
How do you think Paul and Silas were able to sing praises?**

Say: **Let's find out what happened next.**

Leave the lights off. Using a flashlight if necessary, read aloud Acts 16:26-27. When you've finished reading the verses, have kids pretend they're in an earthquake. Have kids pretend to shake chains from their hands and feet.

Talk With Kids ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

**How do you think the jailer felt knowing that the prisoners he was responsible for could now escape?
What would you do if you'd been a prisoner?
What do you think Paul and Silas should have done?**

Say: **Let's continue reading and find out what the jailer and Paul and Silas did.**

Read aloud Acts 16:28.

Ask:

**How do you think the jailer felt when he realized Paul and Silas were still there?
Why do you think Paul and Silas stayed?**

Read aloud Acts 16:29-34. Have kids use wet wipes to wash the "wounds" you put on them earlier with the washable markers.

Ask:

What happened to the jailer as a result of Paul and Silas staying?



Say: **Paul and Silas told the jailer that ► JESUS SAVES US, and the jailer believed in Jesus. If Paul and Silas had left the prison, not only would the jailer have killed himself with his sword, but he also would have died without knowing about Jesus.**

Ask:

What does it mean to be saved?

Say: **Being saved means that we can have eternal life with God through Jesus.**

Ask:

How can you be saved?

Say: **We can find the answer in our Key Verse for today. We can find it in Acts 16:31 and in our Bible story. Let's take a look at the verse.**

Read aloud Acts 16:31. Have kids repeat the verse with you a few times: **"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."**

Ask:

What did the jailer do to be saved?

What does it mean in your life to be saved?

3

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

I Believe!

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's make something to help us remember what it means to be saved.**

Distribute the Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids turn to the "I Believe!" activity.

Say: **You're going to create a cover for a journal you'll make. The Key Verse is written on the cover for you. I want you to draw something to help you remember that you will be saved when you believe in Jesus.**

Give kids five minutes to create their covers. Then have kids cut off the "I Believe!" journal covers from the bottom of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages. Give kids each several sheets of paper, and have them fold the sheets in half. Then have them each staple the edge of the "I Believe!" cover to the stack of folded sheets.

Have kids find partners. Say: **Now you'll share with your partner what being saved means in your life. When I yell, "I believe!" I want you to stand up, change partners, and share with your new partner what being saved means in your life.** Allow time.



I Believe! Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth
scissors
stapler
blank paper
markers

I Believe! Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 11 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.



Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

Say: I want you to take your “I Believe!” journal home with you this week, and each day, write new things you learn about God and Jesus. Or you could write about people who you tell about Jesus.

4

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You’ll Do

Say: Let’s each choose a Daily Challenge for the week to help us remember that
► **JESUS SAVES US.**

Have kids find this week’s Daily Challenges on the Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

Make a paper chain and hang it in your room. Each morning take a link off the chain and thank God for sending Jesus to save us.

Ask a parent to read today’s Bible story with you. Then pray and thank Jesus for saving you!

Tell a friend about Jesus, explaining that only Jesus can save us from our sins!

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What’s a practical way you’re going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: ► **JESUS SAVES US.** Let’s celebrate that by following through on our Daily Challenges this week.



Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about salvation. Kids can also do the activities in the “HomeConnect” section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Close in prayer.



**Lyrics**

I Am the Resurrection and the Life

(John 11:25)

**I am the resurrection and the life!
He who believes in me will live,
Even though he dies.**
(Repeat.)

**There's no! other way to the Father.
No! other way to the Son.
No! other way to Jesus.**

**We must believe, we must believe,
We must believe in him alone!**

**I am the resurrection and the life!
He who believes in me will live,
Even though he dies.**
(Repeat.)

**I am the resurrection and the life!
I am the resurrection and the life!**

"I Am the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.





Paul Describes Living by God's Spirit

Romans 8:9-17

Third- and fourth-graders are beginning to exert their independence. They bristle at being treated like “little kids.” Use this lesson to encourage kids that they can live in the Spirit, just as adult Christians can. Use the Key Verse to inspire kids because the fruit of the Spirit can apply to them, too!

| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|-------------------------------|--|---|-----------|
| 1 Getting Started | Follow the Leader <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Play a game about being led by others, and talk about whom to follow in their lives. | 3-foot length of rope for every 10 kids | |
| 2 Bible Exploration | In the Spirit <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Study Romans 8:9-11, and discuss what it means to belong to God and live in the Spirit. | Bibles, paper, pencils | |
| | Adopted by God <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Put on silent plays that depict an orphan's life before and after adoption, and talk about what it means to be children of God. | Bibles | |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



►Bible Point

When we live by God's Spirit, God changes us.

Key Verse

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control” (Galatians 5:22-23).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will thank God for giving them the Holy Spirit.





| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3 Weaving Faith Into Life | Fruit of the Spirit <i>(about 20 min.)</i> Read Galatians 5:22-23, and make mobile reminders of the fruit of the Spirit. | Bibles, white paper, colored construction paper, pens, pencils, hole punches, 3 feet of string per child, 1 wire hanger per child, Bible Truth Sleuth, scissors | Tear out the Lesson 12 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book. |
| 4 Lasting Impressions | Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word. | Bible Truth Sleuth | |
| | Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families. | | |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

The Holy Spirit Helps Us Resist Sin

Our Response to the Holy Spirit

The Jesus Connection

[illegible]



Follow the Leader Supplies

3-foot length of rope for
every 10 kids

1

GETTING STARTED

Follow the Leader

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Say: **Let's start today with a game about leading—and following!**

Have up to 10 children hold on to a length of rope. Tell the person holding one end of the rope to lead the others holding onto the rope around the room, winding back and forth. Explain that the kids holding onto the rope behind the leader must follow wherever the leader takes them.

Give the starting signal, and let the leader weave around the room for a minute or so. Call time and let kids switch positions and play again, so the leader becomes a follower. Then let any kids who haven't had a turn yet repeat the process. (If you have time, play several rounds.)

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Have kids form pairs to answer the following questions. After each question, invite partners to share their answers with the rest of the class.

Ask:

What were you feeling or thinking as you were being led around the room?
How is that like being led by others in real life?
How do you decide who to follow in your life?
When is it hard for you to know who to follow?

Say: **There are a lot of people trying to get us to follow them in life, right? They can be people at school, parents, kids in the neighborhood, and even advertisers on TV or in magazines. It's important to know who to follow. Today's lesson should help!**

In our activity, you had to follow the leader because I told you to hold on to the rope.

Ask:

What would have happened if you had let go of the rope?

Say: **Today's lesson is all about living in God's Spirit. When we live by God's Spirit, it's like letting go of the rope in our activity. Then we're free to do what God wants us to do instead of being led around by others. Today's lesson will help us learn to let go of being led by anyone other than God. ► WHEN WE LIVE BY GOD'S SPIRIT, GOD CHANGES US. Let's find out more!**



2

BIBLE
EXPLORATION

In the Spirit

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have kids form groups of four, and make sure each group has at least one Bible. Also give each group paper and a pencil. Open your Bible to Romans 8:9-17, and show kids the passage.

Say: **Today's Bible passage is Romans 8:9-17. Turn to that passage right now in your group. Help kids find the passage, if necessary. In your group, read the passage together. You can choose one person to read it aloud, or you can take turns reading verses. You decide.**

Give groups several minutes to read the passage. Then encourage group members to come up with one or two sentences that explain what they think the passage is saying. Have each group choose someone to record the sentences and another person to read them to the class.

Walk around the room to offer assistance as needed, but resist the urge to explain the passage to kids at this time. After a few minutes, call time. Let each group's representative read its sentences to the rest of the class. Thank kids for their work, and encourage them by recognizing their good efforts.

Say: **This isn't a particularly easy passage to understand, is it? But let's break it down a little. Let's look at verses 9 through 11 first. Basically, these verses say that if you belong to Christ, God's Spirit lives in you. And if God's Spirit lives in you, you can be dead to sin.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Have kids answer these questions in their groups. After each question, let volunteers share their answers with the class, and thank kids for their participation.

Ask:

**How do you know if you belong to Christ?
What does it mean to be dead to sin?**

Say: **We don't want to make this passage more difficult than it needs to be. If you believe that Jesus is God's Son and that he died for your sins so you can be with him in heaven, then you belong to Christ. And if you belong to Christ, you have God's Spirit inside you. God promised to send the Holy Spirit when we believe. It's that simple.**

But having God's Spirit doesn't mean that we'll always obey the Spirit.



In the Spirit Supplies

Bibles
paper
pencils



Adopted by God Supplies

Bibles

Ask:

What are some ways we do wrong and sin?

Say: **We all still choose to sin, don't we? We all still choose to go our own way sometimes instead of doing what the Spirit prompts us to do. When that happens, we can repent and ask for forgiveness and start over again.**

So from this part of the passage, we know that if we believe in Jesus, we have God's Spirit living in us. The next part of the passage tells us why we should want to follow God's Spirit.

Adopted by God

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **To understand this part of the passage, let's put on a play. Don't worry—you don't have to learn any lines. You'll all play the same part.**

Explain that for the beginning of the play, each child should pretend that he or she is an orphan in olden times. Say that orphans were often homeless and hungry, with no coats in the cold weather and no one to take care of them. They often had to beg for what little food people would throw their way.

Explain that when you give the signal, kids should mill around the room, pantomiming the actions of an orphan. Kids might pretend to shiver, to be hungry, to be sick, or to beg. Give the signal, and let kids playact for a minute or two.

After a minute or two, call time and have kids form pairs to answer the following questions. Let partners share their answers with the rest of the class.

Ask:

**What three words would you use to best describe the life of our orphan?
What do you think an orphan would want or need most in life?
How could the orphan get what he or she most wants or needs?**

Say: **An orphan during the time of our play would probably feel scared and alone, perhaps hungry and tired and sick. Probably more than any one thing, an orphan would want to belong to someone—to be taken care of, don't you think? And the only way for that to happen would be for someone to adopt the orphan. Let's imagine what that would be like.**

Have kids playact what it would be like to be adopted by someone rich and powerful. Kids might skip around the room, pretend to be full, or pretend to sleep peacefully. Give kids the signal, and let them playact for a minute or two.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.





Ask:

What do you think the best part of being adopted would be for the orphan? What emotions do you think the orphan might feel if he or she were adopted?

Say: **Whether you knew it or not, the plays you just put on explain the second part of today's Bible passage. I'll show you what I mean.** Have kids return to their original groups of four, and direct them back to verses 12 through 17. **In these verses, the Bible says that when we have God's Spirit, we are children of God. We can call God "Father." We are heirs of God. It's as if we had been orphans before but now have been adopted by the richest, most powerful father in the world. And that father wants to give us everything he has. That's what it means to be children of God. That's pretty amazing, isn't it?**

3

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Fruit of the Spirit

What You'll Do

Say: **The Bible goes on to tell us specific good things we can have if we have God's Spirit in us. We can read all about it in today's Key Verse: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23).**

Have kids turn to Galatians 5:22-23 and read the passage in their groups. As kids are reading, distribute white paper, colored construction paper, pens, pencils, and this week's Bible Truth Sleuth pages to each group.

Say: **On your Bible Truth Sleuth page, you'll see the fruit of the Spirit you just read about. Of course, the Bible doesn't mean that the benefits of the Spirit are pieces of fruit. But it's a fun, visual way to remember them.**

Think of times you need each fruit of the Spirit. Then think of how you could let God's Spirit help you in those situations. For example, on the fruit that says "patience," you might say that you need patience when your little brother is bugging you. Then you might say that instead of yelling at your brother, you could let God's Spirit lead you to be kind and pay attention to him. Summarize the situation in one sentence, and write the sentence on your fruit. Do the same thing on each fruit of the Spirit.

When kids have finished writing, let them share what they wrote with the members of their groups. Let volunteers share their answers with the rest of the class.



Fruit of the Spirit Supplies

Bibles
white paper
colored construction
paper
pens
pencils
hole punches
3 feet of string per child
1 wire hanger per child
Bible Truth Sleuth
scissors

Fruit of the Spirit Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 12
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.



Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

Then encourage kids to make mobile reminders to help them during the week. Let kids use white paper to trace each fruit shape and then use the shapes to cut the pieces of fruit from colored construction paper. Have kids write the name of the fruit of the Spirit on each shape along with a one-word reminder of the situation they wrote about.

Set out hole punches, wire coat hangers, and string for kids to use in making their mobiles. Show kids how to attach the fruit shapes to the hangers using varying lengths of string. Encourage kids to hang their mobiles at home to remind them that God's Spirit will help them live lives that please God.

4

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's each choose a Daily Challenge for the week to help us remember that**
► WHEN WE LIVE BY GOD'S SPIRIT, GOD CHANGES US.

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

Turn on a fan in your bedroom, and thank God for giving you the Holy Spirit to change you.

Retell today's Bible story to your friends at school, and explain that when we live by God's Spirit, God changes us.

Read a Bible story with a family member, and then thank God for sending the Holy Spirit to help you understand his Word.

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: **► WHEN WE LIVE BY GOD'S SPIRIT, GOD CHANGES US. Let's live by God's Spirit by following through on our Daily Challenges this week.**



Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about living by the Spirit. Kids can also do the activities in the “HomeConnect” section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Close with a circle prayer, asking God to help each child exhibit the fruit of the Spirit during the coming week. Go around the circle during the prayer, letting each child in turn hold up his or her mobile and say the fruit of the Spirit with which he or she most needs help. (Make sure to name your problem fruit, too!)





Paul Describes Genuine Love

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

This lesson will help third- and fourth-graders learn why they need to control emotions such as impatience, selfishness, and anger—because God wants them to love others. Learning what real love is will help them know how to treat others as God wants them to. In this lesson, they'll have the opportunity to think of ways to show love to family members.

| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|-------------------------------|--|---|---|
| 1 Getting Started | Word Play (about 10 min.) Write meanings to words they may not know, and then discover the true meanings. | index cards, pens | Write the words and definitions from the activity on separate index cards. Have plenty of blank index cards available for the kids. |
| 2 Bible Exploration | So This Is Love? (about 20 min.) Think about an imaginary group of people who don't know what love is and come up with ways to tell them. | Bibles, newsprint, markers, Bible Truth Sleuth, pens, paper | Tear out the Lesson 13 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book. |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



►Bible Point

God teaches us how to love.

Key Verse

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs" (1 Corinthians 13:4-5).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will love their family members based on God's definition of love.





| LESSON | WHAT CHILDREN DO | SUPPLIES | EASY PREP |
|---|---|---|-----------|
| 3 Weaving Faith Into Life | Love in Action <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Find ways to show God's love to others. | Bibles, CD player, pens, 1 copy per child of the "What Is Love?" handout (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD | |
| | Acts of Love <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Act out each phrase of the Key Verse. | Bibles, CD player, copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD | |
| 4 Lasting Impressions | Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word. | | |
| | Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families. | | |

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

What Is True Love?

Paul Describes Mature Love

Faith, Hope, and Love Endure

Read 1 Corinthians 13 again, and make a list of the ways Paul described pristine love. Circle the words you think describe your quality of love. Place a star next to any attributes that you want Jesus' help to develop in your life. Pray and ask Jesus to improve the quality of your love. You can write your prayer here.

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



Word Play Supplies

index cards
pens

Word Play Easy Prep

Write the words and definitions from the activity on separate index cards. Have plenty of blank index cards available for the kids.

1 GETTING STARTED

Word Play

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Have kids form groups of three. In this game, they'll have to write definitions of words they probably don't know.

You may use some or all of the words on the following list, or you may come up with your own.

alacrity: cheerful willingness, eagerness

anchorite: one who lives in seclusion; a hermit

argus: an alert and observant person

bollard: a thick post on a ship or wharf used for securing ropes

fletcherize: to chew food thoroughly

jejune: not interesting

oology: the study of birds' eggs

operculum: the bony covering protecting the gills of fishes

sipid: having a pleasing taste or flavor

Read each word, and have groups try to come up with a definition for the word and write the word and definition on their own index cards. When each group has finished, collect the index cards. Read the cards aloud, along with the real definition, and have the class vote on which definition they think is correct.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

How did you decide which definition was the correct one?

Was it hard to tell which definition was the correct one? Why or why not?

Why is it hard to know what some words really mean?

Say: **I want all of you to write what you think the word *love* means.**

Give kids time to write. Then collect the cards, and read the definitions.

Say: **Today we'll learn what love means. Paul wrote a letter to the Corinthians describing God's love. We'll read part of that letter and discover that ► GOD TEACHES US HOW TO LOVE.**



2

BIBLE
EXPLORATION

So This Is Love?

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: Today, we're going to pretend we're missionaries to another country. We're going to that country to tell its people what love really is.

First, I'll need to give you some background on who these people are. These people think that war and violence are good things. This is mostly because they've never known real love. They're people who don't tolerate slowness or weakness and think that anyone who shows kindness is a wimp. If they want something, they just take it. They don't care how or who they hurt. They're very proud and brag about themselves all the time because if they don't, no one else will. If you ever do anything wrong to them, they'll keep track of it and remind you of it constantly. They're very unforgiving. Your job as missionaries is to explain to them what love is according to our Bible passage today, which is found in 1 Corinthians 13:1-13.

Help kids form four groups. Give each group a Bible, and have kids open the Bibles to 1 Corinthians 13:1-13.

Say: In your group, come up with a creative way to tell the people of this violent, warring country what love is.

To each group, assign a different passage and method of telling these people about love. Allow kids to switch groups if they prefer one assignment versus another.

Group 1 will come up with a skit for 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.

Group 2 will come up with a poster for verses 4-7. Give this group newsprint and markers for creating its poster.

Group 3 will come up with a song for verses 8-10.

Group 4 will come up with a commercial for verses 11-13.

When each group has finished, have kids present their explanations of what love is, starting with the group assigned 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 and continuing in order of the verses. Applaud the efforts of each group.

Ask:

How well do you think the people in our imaginary country understand what love is now?

What new things did you learn about love?

Say: ► **GOD TEACHES US HOW TO LOVE.** Let's compare what we've learned about what love is according to 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 with what the people in our imaginary country value.

So This Is Love?
Supplies

Bibles
newsprint
markers
Bible Truth Sleuth
pens
paper

So This Is Love?
Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 13 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.





Distribute the Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids turn to the “So This Is Love?” activity.

Say: **Next to each of the things listed on your Bible Truth Sleuth page that tells what the people in our imaginary country think about things, write what the opposite, loving thought would be. For example, the first phrase listed for the people in our imaginary country is “Do it now!”**

Ask:

**How is that not loving?
What would the loving attitude be?**

Say: **“Do it now!” is a very impatient attitude. But the Bible tells us that love is patient.**

Ask:

What would be a more patient, loving way to express this?

Say: **Someone might say, “Let me help you do that.” That would show love and patience to the person doing the task.**

Ask:

Which phrase would make you want to finish a task: “Do it now!” or “Let me help you do that”? Why?

Have kids work in groups of three to finish the activity on their Bible Truth Sleuth page. Then ask for volunteers to share what they’ve written.

Say: **Now that we have a better understanding of what love is, let’s look at how we can demonstrate that love to the people we know.**

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Love in Action

Love in Action Supplies

Bibles
CD player
pens
1 copy per child of
the “What Is Love?”
handout (at the end of
this lesson)

Teacher Pack

CD: “Love Is”
(1 Corinthians 13:4-5)
(track 18)

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Love is mentioned more than 500 times in the Bible! That’s a lot of times! Our Bible passage today includes just a few of those times. If God’s Word mentions love that many times, it must be pretty important. ► GOD TEACHES US HOW TO LOVE others, and we’re going to find ways we can put love into action in our lives this week.**

Give each child a copy of the “What Is Love?” handout.

Say: **We’re going to fill in all the descriptions about love that we find in our Key Verse for today. Let’s read it.**



Have kids turn to 1 Corinthians 13:4-5, and ask a volunteer to read it aloud: “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.”

Have kids list the descriptions of love from these verses by filling in the arrows with the following descriptions: “patient,” “kind,” “doesn’t envy,” “doesn’t brag,” “isn’t proud,” “isn’t rude,” “isn’t self-seeking,” “isn’t easily angered,” and “doesn’t keep track of wrongs.”

Ask:

Based on these descriptions, how well do you think you show love to others?

In what ways do you think you could show love like this?

Say: **On your charts in the spaces provided, write the names of four people you love.**

Give kids time to write on the lines across the top of the handout.

Ask:

Why do you think love is so important to God?

Why is it important that the good things we do be motivated by love?

Say: **In the squares underneath the names you’ve written and next to the descriptions of love, write how you can show love to that person. For example, ask, “How can I be kind and show I love [Bret]?” The answer might be “Let him ride my bike.”**

Give kids time to decide specific ways they will show love to others this week. Cue the CD to “Love Is” (1 Corinthians 13:4-5) (track 18), and play the song quietly while kids work. When kids have finished, encourage them to take their charts home to remind them to show love to their family members and friends. The acts they’ve listed on the charts will be their Daily Challenges for the week.

Say: **This week keep your chart handy, and when you show love in the way that’s listed, draw a heart over the words in that square. Then at the end of the week, look at how many ways you were able to show love!**

Acts of Love

What You’ll Do

Have kids form pairs, and make sure each pair has a Bible. Tell kids to open their Bibles to 1 Corinthians 13:4-5 and read the passage together: **“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.”**



Acts of Love Supplies

Bibles
CD player
copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson)
Teacher Pack
CD: “Love Is”
(1 Corinthians 13:4-5)
(track 18)





Say: In our Key Verse, ► **GOD TEACHES US HOW TO LOVE.** The verses have several phrases about love. I'm going to assign each pair a different phrase, and you will come up with a way to show us what that kind of love looks like in our lives. For example, if your phrase is "love does not boast," you could show us how you are kind and humble when you win a game with a friend.

Give pairs about three minutes to study their portions of the verses; then have each pair act out its individual section. If kids need help, offer guidance by suggesting practical ways the words can be seen in life. When pairs have finished, say: ► **GOD TEACHES US HOW TO LOVE, and it looks as if you're learning well! I'm going to read the Key Verse to you one more time. This time think about the different ways you can show love while I read each phrase.**

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-5 one more time, pausing after each phrase to allow kids time to think: "**Love is patient** (pause), **love is kind** (pause). **It does not envy** (pause), **it does not boast** (pause), **it is not proud** (pause). **It is not rude** (pause), **it is not self-seeking** (pause), **it is not easily angered** (pause), **it keeps no record of wrongs** (pause)."

Say: Let's sing our Key Verse song to celebrate that ► **GOD TEACHES US HOW TO LOVE.**

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "Love Is" (1 Corinthians 13:4-5) (track 18). Have kids sing along with the CD, referring to the copies of the lyrics.



Love is patient,
Love is kind,
It does not envy,
It does not boast,
It is not proud.
It is not rude,
It's not self-seeking,
Not easily angered,
It keeps no record of wrongs. (No!)
Love keeps no record of wrongs.
Love is, love is...
Love is, love is...
(Repeat.)

Love is, love is...
Love is, love is...

"Love Is" (1 Corinthians 13:4-5) by Carol Smith. © 2003 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.



4

LASTING
IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's discuss our Daily Challenges for the week to help us remember that ► GOD TEACHES US HOW TO LOVE.**

Have kids refer to their "What Is Love?" handouts to remind themselves of their Daily Challenges. To narrow things down, kids might choose one or two actions that they really want to focus on.

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: **► GOD TEACHES US HOW TO LOVE. Let's love others by following through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about love. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

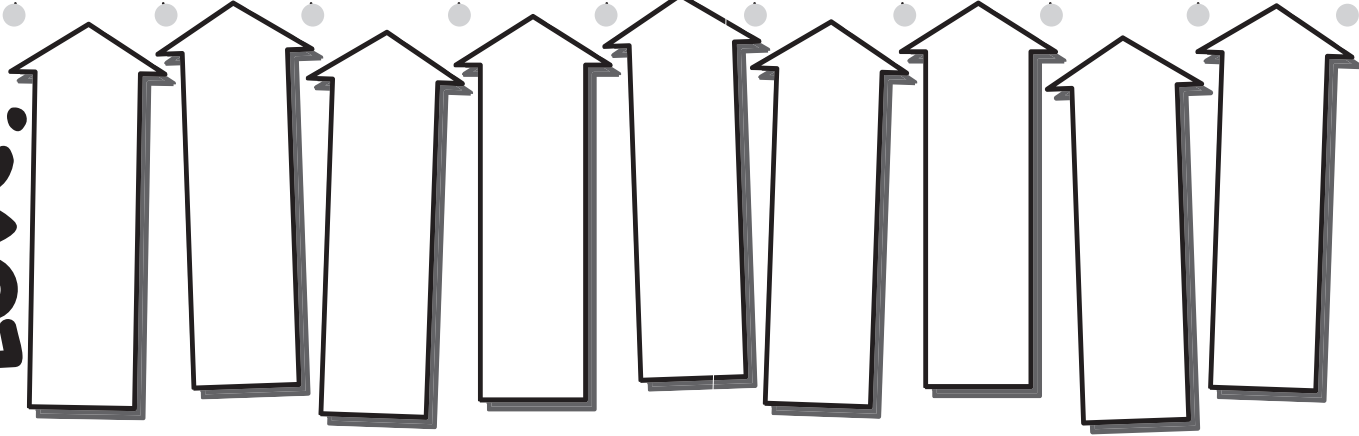
Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Pray: **Dear God, thank you for your love and for showing us how to love others. We want to remember to always love others the way you taught us, even when it's hard. Please give us the strength to do that. In Jesus' name, amen.**



what is

Love?

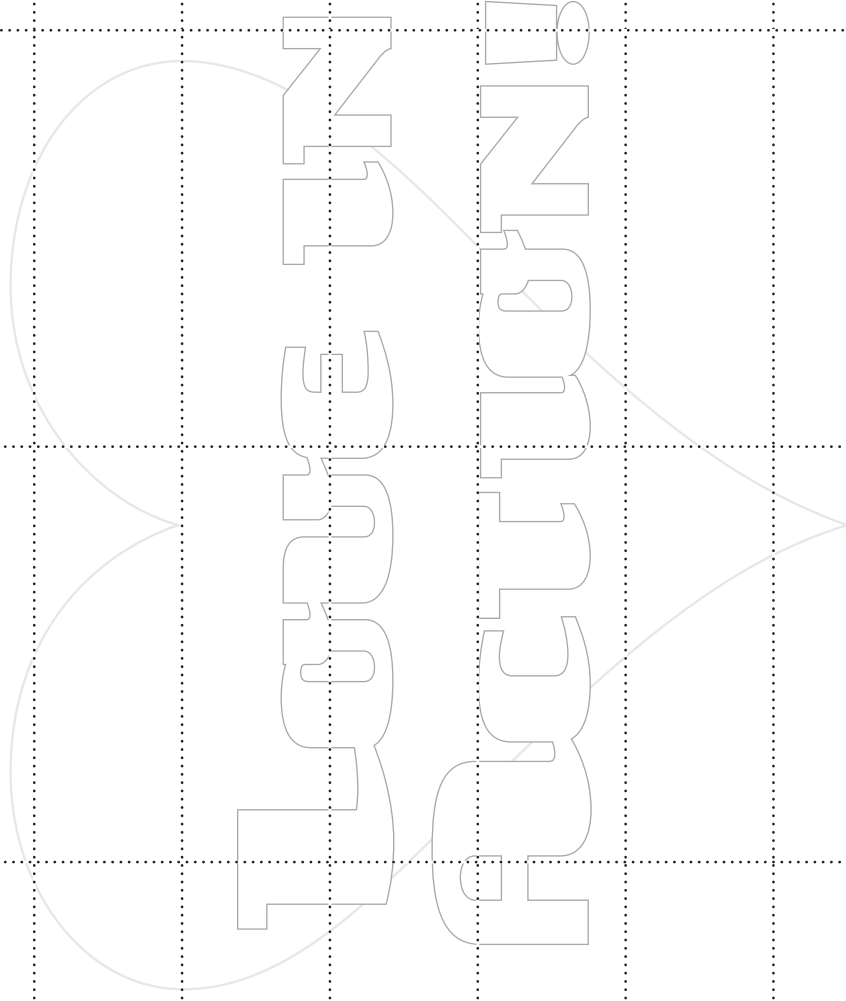


i Love...

I Love...

I Love...

I LOVE...



OK
TO COPY



Lyrics

Love Is (1 Corinthians 13:4-5)

Love is patient,
Love is kind,
It does not envy,
It does not boast,
It is not proud.
It is not rude,
It's not self-seeking,
Not easily angered,
It keeps no record of wrongs. (No!)
Love keeps no record of wrongs.
Love is, love is...
Love is, love is...
(Repeat.)

Love is, love is...
Love is, love is...

"Love Is" (1 Corinthians 13:4-5) by Carol Smith. © 2003 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.



 **OK**
 **TO COPY**

