

# Just Us Little Guys

*A Series of Bible Study Lessons  
For Children 4-7 Years Old*

## Series 3

### Things Jesus Did and Said

Lesson 1	Jesus at the Temple (at age 12)
Lesson 2	The Baptism of Jesus
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## Using these Lessons

### Each of these lessons:

- Is designed to work with children, ages 4-7 years old
- May be used separately, or in a series of lessons
- Is Bible-based and Christ-honoring

### Each of these lessons consists of 7 parts:

<u>Teacher Pep Talk:</u>	A few words of encouragement written especially for you, the teacher who will present the lesson. You'll also find a few Bible verses to review prior to teaching the lesson.
<u>What You will Need:</u>	A list of items you will need to present the lesson. Review over the suggested activities to see if you need any items for the ones you choose.
<u>Major Points:</u>	A list of the major points to be made during the lesson.
<u>Memory Verse:</u>	A verse of appropriate length for the age of the children.
<u>Lesson:</u>	Step by step ideas for presenting the Major Points to the children. Use your own words, embellish with your own stories or examples.
<u>Prayer:</u>	Pray with and for the children
<u>Suggested Activities:</u>	Games, crafts, or activities that allow the children to respond to the Lesson

### Teaching Tips:

**Read** over the **Teacher Pep Talk** and review the suggested **Bible Verses** in advance, so that the Bible truths will be in your own heart before you try to teach the children....

***This is the secret of being a good teacher!***

**Suggested Activities** are just that... **Suggestions**. You may think of even better games, crafts, drawings or activities to do with the children. If so, then **DO THEM!** Remember, you have different gifts and talents than anyone else. You may have different resources available. Ask God to help you be creative in ways to reach out to the children with His message!

The **Major Points** are the ideas that are to be conveyed to the children during the Lesson. These are stated in very simple terms, but they are vast concepts to propose. Children are amazing in that they can understand these very big things, even if they are stated in very simple words. Perhaps this is why our Savior instructed us that the Kingdom of Heaven belonged to "such as these".

**Each time** you teach children **YOU SHOULD NOT FAIL TO DO THESE 3 THINGS:**

- LISTEN to them
- PRAY with and for them
- Let them see you READ from THE BIBLE

**LISTEN:** Sit on the floor with the children and ask them how their week went. Then LISTEN to the various children as they tell you something that is on their heart or mind. Often this takes time and effort, but the children NEED to be able to tell you about them, so that you can connect.

**PRAY:** At the beginning of your time together, pray with the children and for the children. You may wish to pray for some of their concerns or for your time together. Ask God to help you teach the lesson so that they will be blessed by it. Do this out loud. Children need to know that you pray and that they can pray as well.

**READ from the BIBLE:** Hold the Bible in your hands or in your lap and let the children **SEE** you read a verse from it. It is good for them to know that there is a reference where we may go to seek God's answers. If they see you read from it, they will learn that they may do so as well.

God bless you as you work with the children to present these great spiritual truths to them! May your work in the field bring a great harvest for the Kingdom of God!

With love in Christ,

*Sharon*

## Jesus at the Temple (at age 12)

Teacher Pep Talk: Twelve sounds so grown up, *especially when you are a Little Guy!* But to us adults, 12 seems really young to be doing some of the things Jesus was doing at that age! The teachers at the Temple thought so too! They couldn't believe it when Jesus discussed the scriptures with them in such detail, especially since He hadn't had any formal training! Jesus was amazing in so many ways!

He was at once completely human and completely God. This is demonstrated very tenderly in the story of Jesus in the Temple.

Although Jesus already knew who He was (the Son of God) and was able to discuss the scriptures with the teachers, He was still obedient to his earthly parents, and was submissive to them.

**NOTE:** Consider asking a 12 year old boy to come and sit with your class during this lesson, just so the children can see how old 12 really is. Maybe you and the class could ask him questions like: "How tall are you?" "What grade are you in?" "What is your favorite activity?" "Have you ever been in a big city all by yourself for 3 days?" or "Have you ever sat for 3 days discussing the Bible with a bunch of pastors?" etc. *(Make sure that he has some of these questions ahead of time so that he isn't taken by surprise!)*

You will need: Blankets, towels and simple costumes for the skit

Major Points: Jesus is the Son of God.  
Jesus grew up strong and in favor with God and man.  
At 12 years old, Jesus talked with the teachers in the Temple.  
The teachers were amazed at Jesus' knowledge!  
Jesus knew that God was His Father, as early as age 12.  
Jesus was obedient to His earthly parents.

Scripture Ref. Luke 2:40-52 (The Story of Jesus in the Temple)

Memory Verse: Luke 2:49 "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. **"Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"**

Lesson: **Jesus is the Son of God**

- For the next few weeks we will be talking about stories of Jesus.
- At Christmas we celebrate that Jesus was born here
- You remember that Jesus was born to a woman named Mary
- Mary was Jesus' mother, but GOD was Jesus' father.
- Jesus is very special because Jesus is the Son of God!
- OK... so, Jesus was born... and He was a little baby... So tell me... What do little babies do? *(Wait for some answers.)*

- Yes, yes... Babies do all of those things. But let me ask you this: Do babies stay little or do they grow? (*Wait for answers.*) That's right! They grow!

### **Jesus grew up strong and in favor with God and man**

- Jesus grew! Little babies grow! And Jesus started growing up! (Just like you are growing up!) His mother, Mary, and her husband, Joseph, took good care of baby Jesus, and He grew!
- The Bible tells us: "And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him."
- That sounds really good, doesn't it? And, it was.
- Now I have a Bible story to tell you about Jesus when He was growing up. In fact, it happened when He was 12 years old.

### **At 12 years old, Jesus talked with the teachers in the Temple**

- While Jesus was growing up, every year His family (Mary and Joseph and all their relatives) would go to the Temple in Jerusalem. There they celebrated a holiday!
- It was a long way from where they lived (Nazareth) and it took them a few days to get there.
- One year, when Jesus was 12, they went and had their holiday as usual and then headed back home, with all their relatives.
- The first night out of town they stopped to sleep and realized that Jesus wasn't there! **Uh, oh!** Where was Jesus? They looked all around. No. He wasn't with any of His relatives. Where was Jesus? What do you think? (*Wait for answers.*)
- The next morning Mary and Joseph headed back to Jerusalem. Why do you think they did that? (*Wait for answers.*) That's right! Jesus wasn't with them, so He **MUST** still be back in Jerusalem!
- Mary and Joseph looked and looked for Jesus! Where would you look first? (*Wait for answers.*) They probably looked in a lot of different places. Finally, do you know where they found Him?
- In the Temple! The Temple then was like church is to us now. Back then, the Temple was the place where the people could go to worship God.
- There were teachers there, who taught the people about God. (Sort of like our preachers now.) Jesus was talking to them!

### **The teachers were amazed at Jesus' knowledge!**

- Jesus sat among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.
- The teachers were **AMAZED** at how much Jesus knew and understood about God! (After all, He was only 12 years old!)

**Jesus knew that God was His Father, as early as age 12.**

- Mary and Joseph were delighted to find Jesus safe and sound!
- But they had ONE BIG question: Mary asked Jesus “Son, why have you treated us like this? **Your father and I** have been anxiously searching for you.” (*meaning she and Joseph*)
- Jesus had ONE BIG answer for them: “Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn’t you know I had to be in **my Father’s** house?” (*meaning God the Father*)
- By His answer to their question, Jesus showed that, even at age 12, He already knew that **God was His Father.**
- Jesus IS the Son of God!

**Jesus was obedient to His earthly parents.**

- But the story doesn’t end there. The Bible tells us that Jesus went home with Mary and Joseph and was obedient to them. (*That means that He obeyed them and did what they said.*)
- And after that, Jesus continued to grow up.
- The story ends with these words: “And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”

Let’s pray and thank God for this wonderful story that tells us about Jesus!

Prayer:

Dear God,  
Thank you for this story about Jesus.  
Thank you that Jesus grew up, just like we do.  
Thank you that He had parents to take care of Him, just like we do.  
And thank you that Jesus knew that You were His Father!  
Thank you for sending your Son to us!  
Amen

Suggested Activities: (*Choose a few activities for your class!*)

**Invite a Guest**

Invite a 12 year old boy to come sit with your class during this lesson. Introduce him to the class when he arrives. Explain that he is 12 years old and that Jesus was 12 years old during the Bible story you will hear today. Allow the children to ask him some questions like “How tall are you?” “Do you play sports?” “What grade are you in?” etc.

After the lesson, ask your guest a few questions that pertain to the story; questions like: “Have you ever been in a big city all by yourself for 3 days?” or “Have you ever sat for 3 days discussing the Bible with a bunch of pastors?” etc. (*Make sure that he has some of these questions ahead of time, so that he isn’t taken by surprise!*)

Thank your guest for attending class with you. Allow him to decide if he will stay for things like snacks or not. Say good-bye! Have the class send him a thank you letter for attending their class. Allow the children to sign their names on the card. Twelve is BIG!

### **Act out the Bible Story**

Use this narrated Bible Story to act out the story of Jesus in the Temple. If you wish, stop at different points during the skit to discuss with the class how Mary and Joseph must have felt at that point in the story. (*For example: When they first realized Jesus was missing; When they were searching high and low for Him in Jerusalem; When they finally found Him in the Temple; and When they heard Him talking with the Teachers.*) Have the children switch roles, and do the skit again. Use simple costumes if you like.

Simple Costumes: *Things like large pieces of fabric make great costumes when draped across the shoulders or used as head coverings. For fun, belt the costumes at the waist with soft rope or long strips of cloth. Take off your shoes for even more fun!*

Simple Stage Settings: *Large towels or blankets spread on the floor can help denote different towns or areas of town. For example, a blanket on the floor on one side of the room (or perhaps even at the back of the room) can represent Jesus' hometown of Nazareth. Another blanket in the front of the room can represent the town of Jerusalem. Use a beach towel to represent the Temple in Jerusalem. Have the children start at "Nazareth" and make the long trek to the front of the room to get to "Jerusalem."*

*NOTE: If you have older children in the classroom (those who can read already) consider making signs that say things like "Nazareth" "Jerusalem" and "The Temple" as these will help them in making the connection with the locations in the Bible story.*

### **SKIT – Jesus in the Temple (at Age 12)**

Type: A Narrated Bible Skit for children 4-7 years old

Scripture: Taken from Luke 2:39-52

Time: 3-5 minutes

#### Characters:

MARY	The mother of Jesus
JOSEPH	Mary's husband
JESUS (Age 12)	The Son of God
FAMILY	Relatives of Mary and Joseph
TEACHERS	Teachers in the Temple at Jerusalem

Synopsis: Mary, Joseph, Jesus and their family travel from Nazareth to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover at the Temple. After 7 days they start home, only to realize that Jesus is not in the group. Mary and Joseph return to Jerusalem and search everywhere for Him. After three days, they find Jesus sitting among the teachers in the Temple, who are amazed at His wisdom and understanding. When asked by Mary why He did this to them, Jesus answers "Why were you searching for me? Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" By this Jesus reveals that He already knows that He is the Son of God. Then Jesus returns home with Mary and Joseph and is obedient to them.

**Jesus in the Temple (at Age 12)**  
*A Narrated Bible Skit*

*[The stage (or room) is divided into two main parts: Nazareth and Jerusalem. TEACHERS sit in an area of Jerusalem designated as the Temple. MARY, JOSEPH, and JESUS (and other FAMILY members) start in Nazareth and will travel across the room to Jerusalem.]*

**NARRATOR:**

Every year, Jesus and His family (Mary and Joseph and all their relatives) went from Nazareth to Jerusalem to worship God at the Temple. There were lots of people there!

There were also special teachers at the Temple. They told the people about God.

*[TEACHERS stand up and wave to audience.]*

*[MARY JOSEPH, JESUS and FAMILY all sit down with the TEACHERS.]*

Everyone worshipped God at the Temple for 7 days. Then Jesus' family started back to Nazareth. But Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, without His parents knowing about it!

*[MARY, JOSEPH and FAMILY start back to Nazareth but only get part way. JESUS goes and sits in the Temple with the TEACHERS.]*

That night, when they stopped to sleep, Mary and Joseph realized Jesus wasn't there.

"Where is Jesus?" Mary asked.

"I thought He was with our friends and family." Joseph answered.

*[MARY and JOSEPH return to Jerusalem. FAMILY all goes back to Nazareth.]*

Mary and Joseph returned to Jerusalem to look for Jesus. They looked all through the town. They searched high and low. Where was Jesus? They couldn't find Him!

Finally, after 3 days, they found Him at the Temple sitting among the teachers. He was listening to them and asking them questions.

Everyone who heard Him was amazed at His understanding and His answers.

*[TEACHERS all look amazed!!]*

When his parents saw him, they were astonished.

Mary asked Him: “Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.”

But Jesus said to them: “Why were you searching for me? Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?”

*[MARY, JOSEPH, and JESUS all start back to Nazareth. As they walk, the Narrator reads the following.]*

Jesus returned with Mary and Joseph to their home in Nazareth and was obedient to them. And the Bible says that: “Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”

From this wonderful story we know that, even at the tender age of 12, Jesus already knew that God was His Father and that He was the one and only Son of God!

*[MARY, JOSEPH, and JESUS arrive in Nazareth.]*

**THE END**

## The Baptism of Jesus

Teacher Pep Talk: Teaching about the Baptism of Jesus is really important and can be a lot of fun. There is so much to learn about it! Be sure to adjust the lesson to relate to the ages of the children in your classroom.

NOTE: You may want to ask your Pastor or Sunday School Director to come to your class to talk to the children about how your church celebrates the ordinance of baptism.

Jesus' baptism marks the beginning of His earthly ministry. When He was baptized, Jesus (the sinless Son of God) was identifying fully with us, sinful mankind. He told His cousin, John the Baptist, that he did so to fulfill all righteousness. God the Father then is heard from heaven and God the Holy Spirit appears and descends on Jesus as a dove. This is a very rare occurrence, in that all three persons of the Godhead are either seen or heard all at once.

You will need: Jar with lid, construction paper, copies of coloring page.

Major Points: Jesus, the Son of God, lived a sinless life.  
Jesus was baptized.  
God the Father was pleased with His Son, Jesus.

Scripture Ref. John 1:29-36 and Matthew 3:1-17 The Baptism of Jesus

Memory Verse: Matthew 3:17 ...“This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

Lesson: **Jesus, the Son of God, lived a sinless life**

- How many of you ever get a little dirty? Just now and then? How many of you ever get Really Dirty? I mean ALL OVER.
- What do you do when you get dirty? How do you get clean? (*Take a bath or shower. Jump in the pool/ lake/ stream/ bucket of water/ etc.*) Do you wash your clothes, wash your hair, or brush your teeth? Do you need a water hose, fire hose or sprinkler? Whatever it takes you can wash up... these are all excellent ways to get clean if you are dirty... on the outside.
- Now, what do you do to get clean if you are soiled/dirty on the INSIDE? (*No answers... you can hear crickets...*)
- That's right! There is no way for us to clean ourselves up if we get dirty on the inside. Things that make us dirty on the inside are called **sins**.
- Sometimes we know are wrong, on purpose. We hurt other people or we do other things that God has told us NOT to do in His Word. All of us here have done things we know are wrong.

- But Jesus was different. Jesus NEVER did anything wrong.

### **Jesus was baptized**

- John was a preacher, who preached near a river. The people of John's day had done wrong things and they knew it. He spoke to the people and said: You have done wrong things! Repent and be baptized.
- Hey, what does that word "Repent" mean? Repent means to admit you have done the wrong thing, to be sorry, and to ask God to forgive you.
- To be baptized means that they should come and be washed in the water in the river. It was a sign of the cleaning up that was taking place on the inside
- Many people were sorry for their sins. They lined up to be baptized by John.
- One day Jesus came to be baptized by John (who was His cousin)
- John didn't want to baptize Jesus. John knew that Jesus had NEVER done anything wrong. He had nothing to repent of.
- But Jesus said it was important for Him to do all things that were right to do.
- So, John baptized Jesus.

### **God the Father was pleased with His son, Jesus.**

- Jesus was baptized and so identified Himself with us, sinful mankind, even though He'd never done anything wrong.
- When Jesus came up out of the water, at that moment, heaven was opened and the Spirit of God descended on Jesus like a dove. And he heard the voice of God the Father from Heaven who said "...This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."
- God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit were present all at the same time.
- God the Father never called anyone else His Son.

Let's pray and thank God for sending His Son Jesus, with whom He was well pleased.

PRAYER: Dear God,  
Thank you for sending your Son, Jesus, with whom you are well pleased.  
Thank you that He never did anything wrong.  
Thank you that He did all things that were right, like being baptized.  
Thank you that you love us. We love you back.  
Amen

Suggested Activities: *(Choose a few activities for your class!)*

### **The Glass Jar**

**Before Class:** Obtain one clean, clear jar with a lid. From white construction paper, cut out a cross that fits inside the jar. Also cut out several strips of black construction paper. **During Class:** Have the children sit in a circle around you. Have the jar with the lid and all the construction paper pieces available. (Optional: tape)

Start the discussion with the children.

- Hold up the jar and say “We are like this glass jar. When we do bad things, we get “dirty” on the inside.
- Put a couple of strips of black construction paper in the jar and close the lid. Shake the jar. Turn it upside down and shake it again. Say, “There is no way to get them out. They just stay in there and get worse.”
- Put a few more slips of black paper inside and say: “And when we do more bad things, it just looks worse and worse in there.”
- “Poor us... We can’t clean up the inside by ourselves. All the washing on the outside doesn’t clean up the inside.”
- “But the Good News is that when we accept Jesus as our Savior, He comes to live in our lives. He cleans up the inside and gives us His righteousness. (Take off the lid, dump out the black strips of paper, and put in the white cross.)
- “Now on the inside there is Jesus. He takes away all of our sins.” (Because of what Jesus did on the cross, God takes away all of our sins.)
- “When we have Jesus on the inside we may still occasionally do bad things. But this time they only can only bump up against (or stick to) the outside.” Toss black strips at the jar. They do not stick. (Optional: Use tape to stick black strips on outside of jar.)
- When we ask God to forgive us, He gives us His forgiveness and He washes away our sins. (Take black strips off the outside of the jar or let them simply fall to the ground.) God will never take His forgiveness (or love) away from us. He wants us to have them.
- After we ask for forgiveness and accept Jesus as our Savior, we can be baptized to show obedience to God.

### **Target Practice**

**Before Class:** Create a target out with paper and markers and put it on the wall. Obtain a plastic bow and arrows with rubber tips. Alternatively obtain soft balls which can be easily thrown at the target or at a bucket.

**During Class:** Set up the target (or bucket) and let everyone take turns shooting at it. Congratulate everyone on their performance! Tell the children that sin is defined in the Bible as “missing the mark” or, in other words, as not hitting the center of the target every time. As you can see, none of us is perfect! But God is Perfect!! By grace through faith in Jesus, God gives us His perfect score!

**Draw a Picture of the Baptism of Jesus**

**Before Class:** Make a copy of the coloring page for each child in class. Provide crayons, pencils or markers so that the children can draw on it.

**During Class:** Give each child a copy of the coloring page with the Memory Verse on it. Ask the children to draw some part of the story of the Baptism of Jesus. Things the children might include in the picture include: Jesus, John the Baptist, the river (Jordan), and the Holy Spirit as a dove. **OPTIONAL:** Ask the children about their picture and write down exactly what they say on a little note pad. Attach the note to the picture and send it home.

**Baptism is a Picture** (for older children)

Explain to the children that Baptism is a picture for us of the Life, Death and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. When we are baptized, we are identifying fully with Him in His Life, Death and Resurrection.

**During Jesus' Life:**

Hold arms out in front of you crossed, one on top of the other.

Hold right arm up

Jesus was Alive

Dip right hand under left elbow

Jesus Died and was Buried

Raise right hand again

Jesus was Raised from the Dead

**During Baptism:**

Hold arms out in front of you crossed, one on top of the other.

Hold right arm up

During Baptism

Dip right hand under left elbow

We are Buried with Christ in Baptism

Raise right hand again

And we are Raised to walk in New Life

...  
**“This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”**

Matthew 3:17

## Jesus Chooses His Disciples

Teacher Pep Talk: This is a great lesson about how Jesus began His ministry and chose His disciples. You will get to teach about the first disciples and how He told them He would make them fishers of men. The lesson is packed with energetic activities and my favorite craft of all time: **Fishers of Men Fishing Poles!**

Jesus decided to choose some disciples. Disciples are people who learn from someone else. Imagine the excitement of getting to be with Jesus every day and to learn directly from Him! As Christians we are taught by the Holy Spirit continually. Jesus said of the Holy Spirit “He will call to mind all the things I have taught you.” Jesus picked 12 helpers/disciples. Let’s get started learning about them.

**NOTE:** *I wish I was there with you to teach this lesson. It contains my very favorite craft idea: The “Fishers of Men Fishing Poles”! The children will be parading through the halls with them after class. Have fun!*

You will need: Cardboard tubes off the bottom of pants hangers from the cleaners (OR thin wooden dowels OR Heavy-duty long plastic straws.)  
Ball of yarn/ Handout page/ scissors/ tape or staples  
Various colors of construction paper for one of the activities

Major Points: Jesus picked out 12 Disciples.  
Some of the disciples were fishermen.  
Jesus told them “Come, follow me.”  
Jesus said that He would make them “Fishers of Men.”

Scripture Ref. Luke 4:18-20  
Matthew 5:1-11 (Jesus picks His first Disciples)

Memory Verse: Luke 4:19 “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.”

Lesson: **NOTE:** *This special lesson BEGINS with an opening activity. It is part of the lesson. Please don’t skip it. It will help!*

### Opening Activity (Do just before you start the lesson)

Do an activity where you all work together to accomplish a task. EX: Dump out a box full of blocks and hurry to put them all back in again. Everyone helps. Have more than one team if you have lots of children in class. Objects must be small and easy to pick up (miniature cars, etc.) Raise the clock. Be excited! Sit down in a heap and breathe heavily afterwards. You are tired out! But you are sure glad you had your helpers!!

Lesson: **Jesus picked out 12 Disciples**

- That was great! You all did so good! We got all of the blocks back into the box!! And we did it so fast!! (That's because there were so many of us working together to get it done!) You are great helpers!!
- Have you ever needed a helper? (Wait for answers.) How did you choose who you would get as a helper? (Wait for answers.)
- In our Bible story today, Jesus was about to start His ministry. He had already started preaching to the people. It was time for Him to choose His Disciples.
- Hey! What's a "disciple" anyway?
- Disciples are at once "learners" and "helpers."

**Some of His Disciples were Fishermen**

- There is a great story in the Bible about how Jesus picked His first disciples.
- They were fishermen and they worked every day by a big lake in their boats. One of them was named Simon, who had a brother named Andrew. Also there were two brothers named James and John.
- One day Jesus was teaching the crowds of people down by the lake.
- There were so many people that they almost crowded Him into the water. So Jesus hopped in Simon's boat and asked him to push back from the edge of the land a little.
- From there it was easier for Jesus to talk to the crowds. Jesus finished his preaching and then started talking to Simon and his brother.

**He told them "Come, follow me"**

- Jesus told the fishermen "Come, follow me"
- Jesus was picking them as His first disciples

Jesus told them He would make them fishers of men

- Jesus told the fishermen that from now on they would be fishers of men (like a little play on words... but Jesus meant it.)
- He didn't mean that they would try and catch men like fish, but that they would be like Jesus, telling people all around how God loves us and cares for us.
- Jesus chose His disciples to be His helpers and also to learn all of the things He was to teach them about God the Father
- What an exciting thing to be chosen by Jesus to follow Him!
- The men left their nets and followed Jesus!!

Let's pray and thank God that each of us is invited to follow Jesus!

Prayer: Dear God,  
Thank you that Jesus came here for us!  
Thank you that each of us can follow Him! Amen.

Suggested Activities: *(Choose a few activities for your class!)*

**Fishers of Men Fishing Poles** *This is my favorite craft of all!!*

**Before Class:** Obtain one short “fishing pole” for each child. I suggest using the cardboard tubes found at the bottom of hangers that come from the cleaners (the ones used for hanging pants.) If you don’t have these at home, consider asking for some at your local cleaners. Take care removing the tubes from the hangers; you will need to bend the hanger to get the tubes off without damaging them. **Alternatively:** Use short thin wooden dowels, heavy-duty plastic straws, or thin sticks from a tree. You will also need a hole punch, yarn, enough copies of the activity sheet so that each child has one paper “hook”, along with scissors, tape or staples, and crayons or markers.

**During Class:** Distribute copies of the activity sheet and allow each child to color a fishing hook and cut it out with scissors. Use a hole punch to punch a hole in the top of the fish hook. Cut an 18-24 inch piece of yarn for each child. Loop one end through the paper fish hook and tie securely. (Alternatively tape or staple it on.) Tie the other end of the yarn to the end of the “fishing pole”. (You may also tape it on.) Now you have your “Fishers of Men” Fishing Pole!

IMPORTANT RULES:

- No swatting each other with the poles. (Don’t even pretend to do it!)
- No “sword fighting” with the poles.
- Don’t pull on the yarn... it may come off!

**Sing “Fishers of Men”**

After you have made your fishing poles, sing this song with the children:

**Fishers of Men** *(Words & Music by Harry D. Clarke)*

I will make you fishers of men  
Fishers of men, fishers of men  
I will make you fishers of men,  
If you fol-low me.

Chorus:

If you fol-low me!  
If you fol-low me!  
I will make you fishers of men  
If you fol-low me!

This song is really great to sing as you are marching around the room with your homemade fishing poles. You can even march in the hallway *(if you won’t disturb other classes.)* Consider singing and marching to a Senior Adult classroom to show them your new fishing poles. *(Be sure to arrange this with the other teachers in advance!!)*

**Act out the Story** *Older children will love this!*

Tell the Bible story of Jesus and the Miraculous Catch of Fish found in Luke 5:1-11.

Try out these suggestions:

- Use a blue tarp, blanket, or sheet to represent the water of the Sea of Galilee.
- Use a brown box (or construction paper cut out in the shape of a boat) to represent one of the fishing boats of the soon-to-be disciples.
- Place the tarp on the floor and the box on the tarp.
- Have the children represent the crowd and sit right along the “shoreline.”
- You act out the part of Jesus. Stand in the brown box out in the “water” and tell the rest of the story.
- Have a second box, if you wish, to represent the second boat in the story.
- Summarize the story in your own words.

**Summary:**

Jesus was preaching but the crowd was too big. The people were so crowded that Jesus asked Simon if He could step inside his boat and that they could push back from the edge of the shore a little. They did. From there He finished preaching to the crowds.

After the sermon, Jesus talked to Simon and Andrew. He told them to go out into deep water and let down their nets to catch some fish. Simon said “Master, we have worked hard all night and have not caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.”

So they did what Jesus said, and they caught so many fish that their nets began to break. So they signaled to their partners (James and John) who came out in their boat. They caught so many fish that they filled both boats and the boats started sinking.

Can you imagine what Simon said after that? (Maybe something like “thank you,” etc.) No! He ran to Jesus, fell at His feet, and said “Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!” He said this because they were all astonished (and a little afraid) because they knew that Jesus had done a miracle!

Jesus told them “Don’t be afraid; from now on you will catch men.”

And this is the most amazing part. The Bible says that then they “pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.” They did! They left their boats, their jobs, their fish... Everything... Just to follow Jesus!

They were fishermen no more. Now they were disciples, and they would become “Fishers of Men!”

And just like Jesus invited the fishermen to “Come, follow me” He invites each and every one of us to come and follow Him! The invitation is ours as well!!! What will you do? Will you follow Jesus? What do you say?

**Collage on Paper**

Create a picture of Jesus speaking to the crowds at the Sea of Galilee using construction paper, glue, and markers. IDEA: Use a blue background paper to represent the Sea of Galilee, brown paper for the boats, and strips of green or white for the seashore. Cut out the various parts and glue them together. Draw Jesus in the boat, speaking to the crowds on the shore.



## Jesus Turns the Water into Wine

Teacher Pep Talk: A series of lessons on the Miracles of Jesus wouldn't be complete without His first miracle performed at a marriage at Cana in Galilee: Turning the Water into Wine. Performing miracles is something only God can do, and turning the water into wine is no exception! Jesus didn't draw attention to what He did. Some people at the marriage ceremony realized what had happened. Others did not. God is still doing miracles today; the question is "Are we noticing them or not?"

You will need: Masking tape and paper for Bible Memorization Hopscotch  
Pitcher, water, and grape concentrate for making grape juice.  
"Wedding Cake" for snacks.  
Alternatively have grapes and water for snacks.  
Dress up items for Wedding Dress Up

Major Points: Jesus and His Disciples were invited to a wedding.  
Jesus' mother, Mary, was at the wedding too.  
During the wedding feast, they ran out of wine.  
Jesus performed a miracle changing water into wine.  
Jesus' Disciples believed in Him!

Scripture Ref. John 2:1-12

Memory Verse: John 2:11(b) "...and his disciples believed in him."

Lesson: **Jesus and His Disciples were invited to a Wedding**

- How many of you have ever been to a wedding? (*Wait for answers; some of them may have even been IN a wedding – flower girl, ring bearer, etc. Allow the children to tell you a little about weddings.*)
- During a wedding a bride and a groom come together and are married.
- They invite their friends and family to be there.
- They used to have weddings a long time ago (during Jesus' time) too.
- Jesus and His Disciples were invited to a wedding at Cana in Galilee.

**Jesus' mother, Mary, was there too!**

- You remember Mary, Jesus' mother.
  - *Review who Mary is.*
  - *Talk about the Christmas story some, if necessary.*
- Mary was invited to the wedding as well.
- She was there along with Jesus and His Disciples.
- Mary is an important part of this story.

**During the Wedding Feast, they ran out of wine.**

- Wedding feasts back then usually lasted several days.
- During the feasts, the families of the bride and groom would stay together and eat and drink together.
- It was considered very important to have enough food and drink for everyone who was at the celebration for all those days.
- But at this celebration, they ran out of wine! (Uh oh!)
- Mary came to Jesus and told Him.
- Jesus said to her “Woman, why do you involve me? My hour has not yet come.”
- But Mary told the servants, “Do whatever He tells you.”

**Jesus performed a miracle: He turned water into wine.**

- There were 6 big stone water containers sitting there.
- Jesus told the servants to fill them all up with water.
- They filled them all the way up (20-30 gallons each!)
- Then He told them to dip out of one of the containers and take it to the Master of the Feast.
- When the servants took him the cup, it was full of wine!
- It was the best wine of all!

**His Disciples believed in Him!**

- Jesus would do other miracles later, but this was the first one He did.
- The only reason He could do a miracle like this was that He was the Son of God!
- Jesus’ Disciples were there and they saw what happened.
- His Disciples believed in Jesus!

Let’s pray and thank God that His Son Jesus came, and that we can believe in Him.

Prayer: Dear God,  
Thank you that Jesus came here.  
Thank you that He was able to do miracles.  
Thank you that we can believe in Him because He is your Son.  
Amen

Suggested Activities: *(Choose a few activities for your class!)*

### **Memory Verse Hopscotch**

John 2:11 "...and his disciples believed in him."

Before class: Using chalk or masking tape, mark out a hopscotch game on the floor with 7 blank spaces on it. On pieces of paper write out each word of the memory verse and tape each piece to the center of a Hopscotch square.

During class:

Say *"Jesus had picked His Disciples and they were following Him. But when they saw this first miracle they were really amazed and believed in Him. The man who wrote the words in our memory verse was actually there that day when the miracle happened."*

Have the children take turns hopping across the squares and saying the words of the Bible verse out loud as they hop. Do this a couple of times each until most of them learn the verse. NOTE: Don't have them hop back, just forwards!

### **Make Grape Juice or Grape Drink**

Use a clear pitcher full of water and frozen grape juice concentrate to make "grape juice". Alternatively use powdered grape drink mix and water. (Ex: Kool-Aid) Be sure to stir it up in front of the children. Point out that although we can make grape juice this way, that Jesus only used water, and He didn't even touch the jars or the water!

Drink the grape juice for snack!

### **Wedding Cake Snack**

For fun bring in white cake with white icing for the snack today. *(To make it more like a wedding cake, use white fondant to cover the cake instead of regular icing.)* Other options include having either "petits fours" *(consult your local bakery)* or white cupcakes with white icing. (See below for other option.)

### **Have your Cake and Eat it too!**

Before class: Obtain enough plain cupcakes for each student to have one. Bring small plastic bags, twist ties, a spoon, and plenty of prepared icing. Consider a plastic tablecloth for the table, as well as water and cloths for clean up!

During class: Place a spoonful of icing in one corner of each plastic bag. Close the top of the bag with a twist tie. Snip a tiny hole in the corner of the bag. Allow the children to "decorate" their own "wedding cupcake." Now you can have your cake and eat it too!

### **Wedding Dress Up**

Dress up like for a wedding. *(With some notice ahead of time parents may even want to send flower girl dresses to church on that day.)* Bring pieces of fabric reminiscent of a wedding. For example: tulle or netting (for veil material), crepe, or other light airy fabric to drape the girls in. Bring ties, big shirts, and hats for the boys. Bring some plastic or silk flowers for a "centerpiece". Consider taking photos of your class all dressed up!

## Jesus Healed People

Teacher Pep Talk: Jesus performed many miracles and healed many people. These miracles were meant as a testimony to the fact that Jesus is the Christ. When the Jewish leaders asked Jesus to tell them plainly if He was the Christ, He answered them “I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father’s name speak for me...” In John 14:11 Jesus tells His Disciples “Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.”

It is important for us to remember that what God could do back then, He can still do today. We don’t hear much about miracles nowadays, but surely God still heals. Whether or not we are healed in this life of all our physical ailments, God is always able to heal our hearts and our hurts through His Son, Jesus Christ.

You will need: A copy of the handout printed on red cardstock or red construction paper for each child.  
A hole punch, scissors, and yarn.  
A blindfold for the “Faith Walk” activity.

Major Points: Jesus Healed Many People  
These People Had Many Different Kinds of Problems  
God does not change.  
Jesus forgives sins and heals our spirits as well.

Scripture Ref. John 2:1-12  
John 10:24-25  
John 14:11

Memory Verse: John 2:11(b) “...and his disciples believed in him.”

Lesson: **Jesus Healed Many People**

- How many of you have ever been sick? (*Wait for answers.*)
- It’s no fun is it? (*Talk to the children about being sick.*)
- Remember how much better you felt when you got well? That’s a good feeling isn’t it? (*Talk to the children about getting well.*)
- When Jesus was here on the earth, there were people who were sick back then too. Some of them were very sick, and they didn’t have all the good medicines and treatments that we have now.
- When Jesus was here, many people would come to Him and ask Him to make them well.
  - Sometimes moms and dads would bring their children.
  - Sometimes people would bring their friends.

- They all asked Jesus to make them well.
- Jesus made all of them well!

### **These People had Many Different Kinds of Illnesses**

- Some were blind and could not see.
- Some were deaf and could not hear.
- Some were lame and could not walk.
- Jesus healed them all!
- One lady had been sick for 15 years! She had been to lots of doctors, but they couldn't help her. She thought "If I could just be near Jesus and touch the hem of His robe, I would be healed." When she got close enough to touch his garment, she was healed. Jesus told her "Your faith has made you whole." She believed in Jesus and she was healed!

### **Nobody else could do the kind of miracles Jesus did**

- Nobody else had ever done all the types of miracles that Jesus did
- Nobody else had ever healed as many people as Jesus did
- The people believed in Jesus because of the miracles!

### **God does not Change**

- The Bible tells us that God DOES NOT change.
- Jesus is the Son of God, so He does not change.
- What God has done in the past, He can still do.
- We can always pray and ask God to make us better when we are sick

### **God Forgives our Sins and Heals our Spirits**

- Whether we are healed of all of our illnesses or not, we know that God hears us when we pray
- We also know that in heaven there will be no more sickness or death.
- Through Jesus, God always forgives our sins and heals our spirits.

Let's pray and thank God that He is able to heal us

Prayer: Dear God,  
Thank you that you love us.  
Thank you that you hear us when we pray.  
Thank you that you heal our hurts and our hearts.  
Amen

Suggested Activities: *(Choose a few activities for your class!)*

**Jesus Heals our Hurts and our Hearts** - Craft

**Before Class:** Copy the activity sheet onto red paper for each child (*construction paper works very well.*) Provide scissors, a hole punch, tape, and yarn. Cut a piece of yarn (approximately 18 inches long) for each child.

**During Class:** Allow students to cut out the two halves of the heart on the activity sheet. Punch holes along the edges as shown. Overlap the two parts of the heart. Put a piece of tape around one end of the piece of yarn. Weave the yarn back and forth through the holes in the pieces of paper. Tie off the ends of the piece of yarn at the back of the heart OR tape them to the back. Display at home!

**Faith Walk** – *Children will learn a lesson about faith.*

*Say: Jesus told the woman who was sick “Your faith has made you well.” What is faith? Faith is believing on someone (or in someone.) Faith is also relying on someone. We will demonstrate what faith looks like.*

Set up a mini-obstacle course around the room. Now, blindfold a volunteer. Take the volunteer by the arm and steer the blindfolded volunteer around the room and back to his/her original spot safely. Tell the children that this is what faith is like: trusting and relying upon the other person, especially when you can't see what's going on.

Take other volunteers on a Faith Walk.

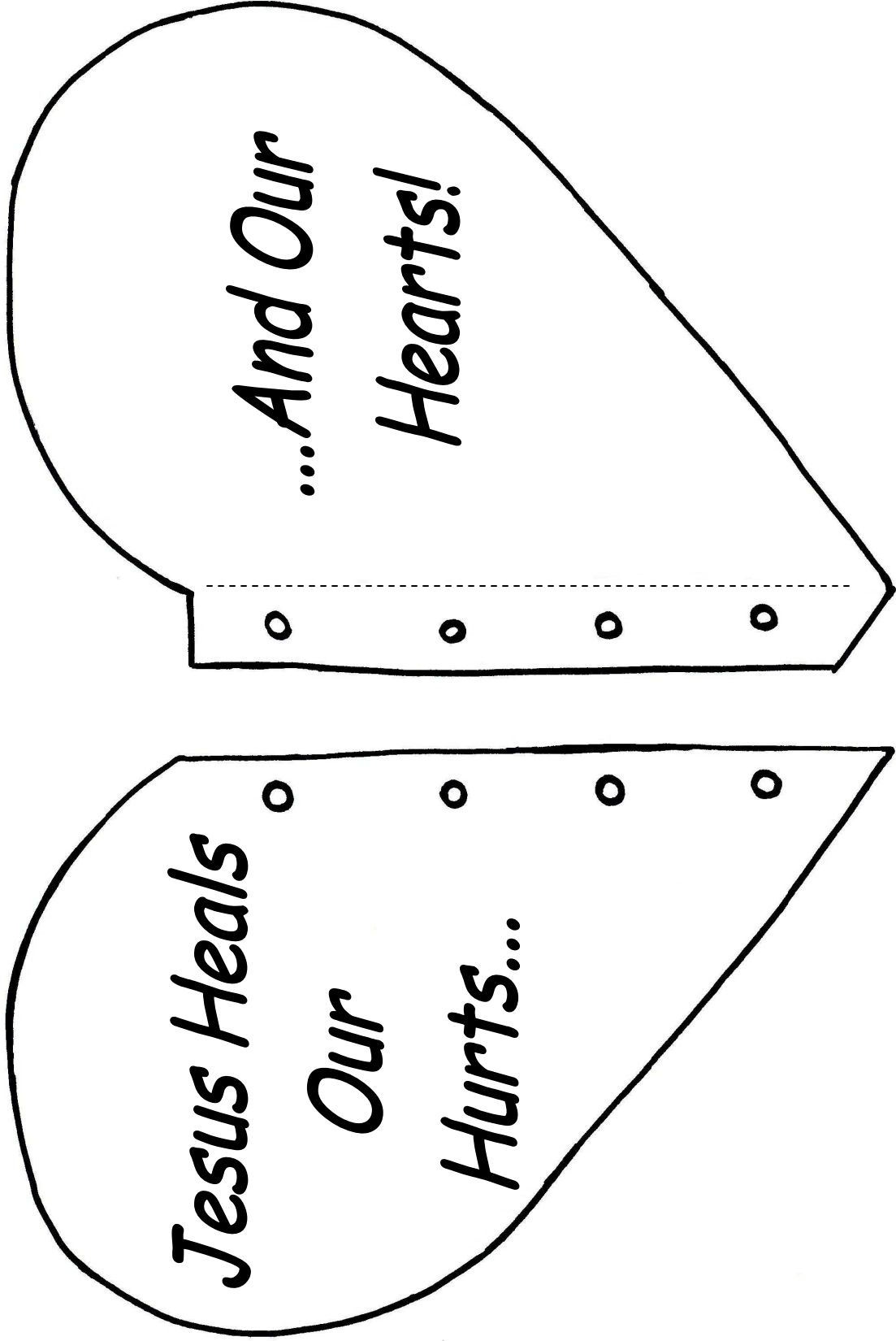
**Five Senses** – *Children will learn to match the 5 senses with pictures.*

**Before Class:** Draw or obtain a large picture or poster of a person's face and hand. Write the words: “See” “Hear” “Smell” “Taste” and “Feel” on separate 3x5 cards. Display the poster on the wall. Cut lengths of yarn long enough to go from the cards to the poster and tape them onto the backs of the 3x5 cards. Tape the 3x5 cards on the wall near the poster, letting the yarn hang down loose.

**During Class:** Talk about the Five Senses with the children. *“The eyes see, the ears hear, the mouth tastes, and the nose smells! And fingers are what we feel with!”* Show the 3x5 that says “Hear”. Take the yarn attached to it and connect it to the ear on the picture (poster). Put a little piece of tape to hold it in place for a few minutes. Repeat with the other senses until all the pieces of yarn are taped on the poster. Let everyone have a try. NOTE: This makes a very good activity for one or two persons at a time!

**Doctor, Doctor** – *Invite a medical person to class*

Have an actual doctor, nurse, or other medical person, visit the classroom with some of his/her medical equipment. *(For example: A stethoscope for listening to hearts.)* Let the doctor talk to the children about what the equipment is and what it does. If possible, let some of the children hold the equipment and practice trying it on themselves. *(For example: Let the children listen to their own heartbeat or someone else's.)* Talk about what it is like to be a doctor. Also talk about how Jesus healed so many people that the people called Him the “Great Physician.”



## Jesus Calms the Storm

Teacher Pep Talk: Sometimes in life, we feel as if we are on a little boat out in the middle of a great BIG storm. During those times it is important for us to remember that we serve a Risen Savior, who is able to calm the storms of our life, just as He once calmed the Sea of Galilee.

It's ok for us to be concerned and even to cry out to Him when we are frightened. It may seem to us that He is unaware of our situation, or even blissfully asleep somewhere, while we face the very real possibility of drowning in our difficulties. For some reason, even though we pray and cast our cares upon Him, it continues to amaze us each time we see Him come and quiet the wind and waves. Why do we doubt? Oh, we of little faith...

You will need: One or two sheets (blue, if you have them)  
Metal spoons and metal pans (for noisemaking)  
Small plastic buckets or containers (for pretending to bail water)  
A life jacket and/or a sailor hat to wear while you teach  
Colors or markers, yarn, tin foil, scissors and glue for one activity

Major Points: Jesus and His Disciples were on a Lake in a Boat  
A Terrible Storm Came  
The Disciples were Afraid and Woke Jesus Up  
Jesus Spoke and Calmed the Storm

Scripture Ref. Matthew 8:23-27 and Mark 4:35-41 (Jesus Calms the Storm)

Memory Verse: Matthew 8:25 "Lord, save us."

Lesson: **Jesus and His Disciples were on a Lake in a Boat**

- *(Bring out your life jacket or sailor hat, if you have one, and put it on.)*
- How many of you have ever been in a boat? *(Wait for answers.)*
- Were you out on the water on the boat? *(Ask some follow up questions such as where, with whom, day or night, what were you doing, etc.)*
- It's fun to be on a boat isn't it? *(Describe being on a boat. Perhaps you have a nice story of your own.)*
- Yes, when it's a nice day and the sun is shining and the wind is blowing gently and it's not too hot and not too cold, it can be very nice and beautiful on a boat out in the lake (or on the water.)
- Our story today is about one time when Jesus and His Disciples went out in a boat on a great big lake. The lake is still there, of course. It is so big that they call it the Sea of Galilee.

### **A Terrible Storm Came**

- While Jesus and His Disciples were out on the boat, it became nighttime.
- Jesus was very sleepy, so He found a place to lie down in the boat and fell asleep.
- The Disciples were sailing the boat. Some of them had been professional fishermen before they became Jesus' disciples. They had grown up fishing and sailing in boats on that lake.
- But while they were out on the lake that night a terrible storm came up!
- The wind and waves beat against the little boat.
- The Disciples became worried.

### **The Disciples were Afraid and Woke Jesus Up.**

- The storm got worse and worse!
- The Disciples were very afraid and woke Jesus up!
- They said to Jesus "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!"

### **Jesus Spoke and Calmed the Storm**

- Jesus woke up and said to the Disciples "You of little faith, why were you afraid?"
- Then Jesus **rebuked** the winds and the waves, and they became completely still and quiet.
- What do you think that word "**rebuked**" means? (*Wait for answers.*)
- Basically "rebuked" means to tell them to stop doing what they are doing. How do you think Jesus said that? (*Wait for answers. The children will probably do very good imitations of Jesus telling the winds and the waves to "Stop that!"*)
- And after the winds and the waves settled down and got still and quiet, the amazed Disciples said to each other... "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!"
- Who was Jesus that even the winds and the waves obeyed Him? (*Wait for answers.*)
- That's right! Jesus is the Son of God!

Let's pray and thank God that Jesus is His Son and that even the winds and the waves obey Him!

Prayer: Dear God,  
Thank you that Jesus is your Son.  
Thank you that you made everything.  
Thank you that even the winds and the waves obey you when you speak!  
Amen.

Suggested Activities: *(Choose a few activities for your class!)*

### **Act out the Story**

**Before Class:** Bring to class several items to help recreate the story of Jesus Calming the Storm. Suggestions include: blue sheets or blankets to represent the water and waves. Pans and metal spoons for noisemaking. Small plastic buckets or containers for pretending to bail water. And a pillow, for the person playing Jesus to fall asleep on.

**During Class:** Explain to the children that together you are going to recreate the story of Jesus rebuking the winds and the waves. Arrange chairs in the room to form a “ship” with seats in it. Put the blue sheets around the “ship.” Allow some of the children to sit in the boat and be Disciples. One will pretend to be Jesus and fall asleep. (Perhaps that child could snore, etc.) Other children will pretend to be the “winds” and the “waves.” Show the children how to make “waves” by moving the blue sheets up and down rhythmically, allowing them to billow around the boat. The children with pans and spoons will bang them to make the noise of thunder or lightning.

### **Tell the story.**

One night Jesus and His Disciples got on a boat to go across the Sea of Galilee.  
*(Get on the boat and sit down.)*

Jesus was very tired, so He lay down and went to sleep.  
*(Child playing Jesus lies down and “goes to sleep.”)*

Suddenly the winds began to blow.  
*(Children make blowing sounds.)*

And the waves began to swell.  
*(Waves begin to move.)*

But, the Disciples on the boat weren’t worried. Some of them were fishermen. They knew all about boats and all about wind and waves.  
*(Children in boat are not worried. Jesus is still sleeping.)*

However... the wind got louder....  
*(Children make more wind noises.)*

And the waves got BIGGER!  
*(Waves get bigger.)*

And now the Disciples on the boat were a little worried. This was a bad storm. But still, they thought that they knew all about boats and all about wind and waves.  
*(Children in boat are getting a little worried. Jesus is still sleeping.)*

However... the wind got even louder... and NOW there was thunder and lightning!  
*(Children bang on pans and make lots of noise!)*

And the waves got so big that water started coming into the boat.  
*(Waves get even more energetic!)*

Now the Disciples in the boat were very worried. They started bailing water out of the boat! This was unlike any storm they had ever seen!  
*(Children in the boat bail water. Jesus is still sleeping... even snoring, maybe.)*

And so the Disciples went to Jesus, because they were afraid they were going to drown. They cried out “Lord, save us!”  
*(Children wake Jesus up and say all together: “Lord, save us!”)*

And Jesus woke up. He said to them: “You of little faith, why are you so afraid?”  
*(Jesus wakes up and says “You of little faith, why are you so afraid?”)*

Then Jesus got up and rebuked the winds and the waves.  
*(Jesus gets up and tells the winds and the waves to be quiet and still. The wind stops and the waves are still.)*

And the amazed Disciples said to each other, “What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!”  
*(Disciples look amazed and whisper to each other!)*

Who was Jesus that even the winds and the waves obeyed Him?  
*(Children say, “Jesus is the Son of God!”)*

### **The End**

*Now, switch parts and tell the story again.*

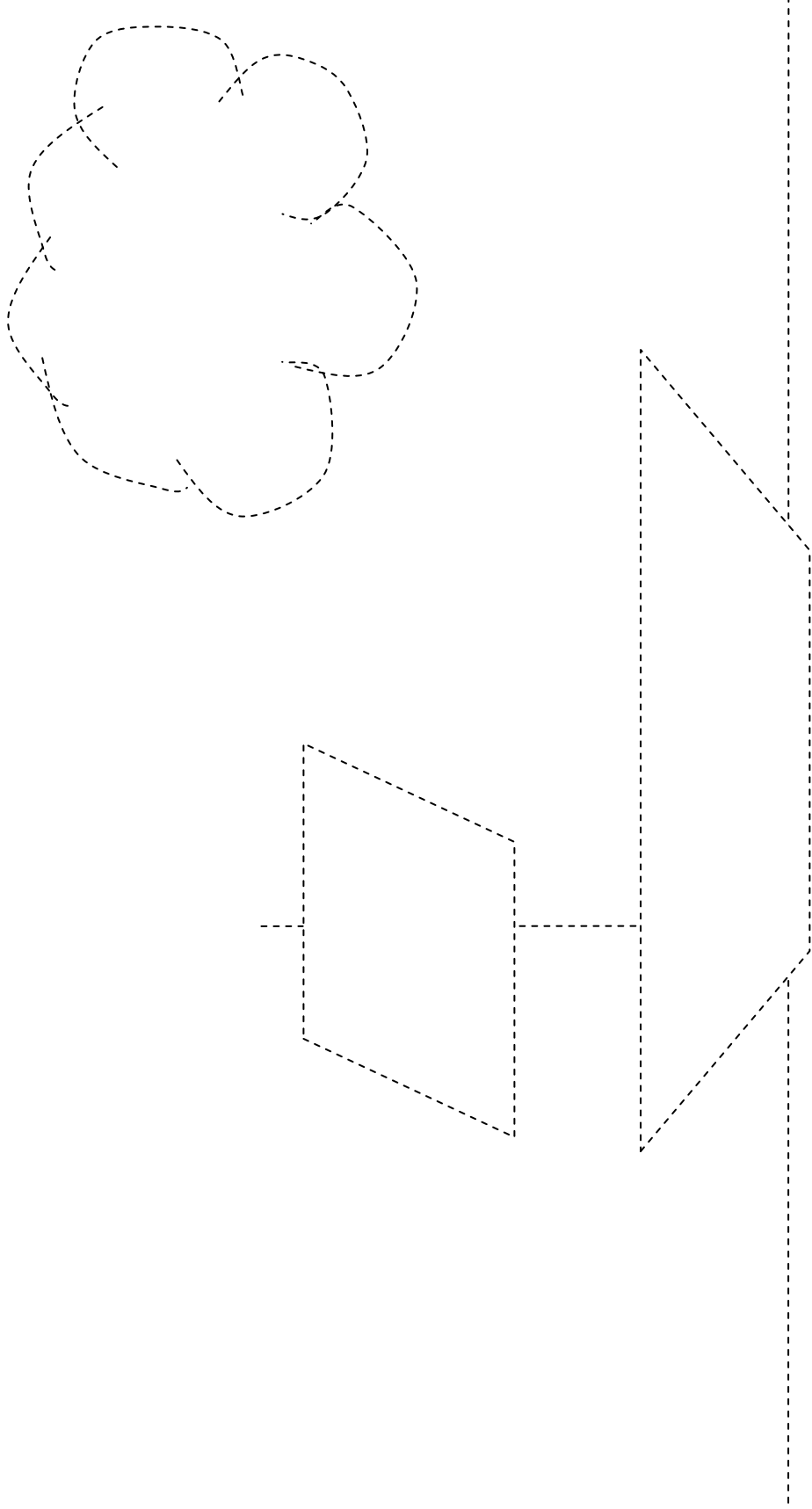
### **Jesus Can Calm the Storm**

*The children will create a picture of Jesus Calming the Storm.*

**Before Class:** Obtain blue construction paper or make copies of the Calming the Storm activity sheet for each child. Write “Jesus Can Calm the Storm” at the top of the construction paper. Bring tin foil or tinsel, dark yarn, markers, star stickers, and glue.

**During Class:** Allow each child to create a picture of Jesus Calming the Storm. On one side of the paper draw storm clouds, lightning, and rain. On the other side of the boat, draw a perfectly clear night sky with a calm sea. In the boat draw Jesus and the disciples. Use yarn to symbolize waves, rain or storm clouds (You could outline the storm clouds in yarn.) For fun cut out strips of tin foil for lightning, or silver tinsel also makes great lightning! On the calm side of the paper, consider using silver or gold star stickers to symbolize the now clear night sky.

# Jesus Can Calm the Storm



## Jesus Feeds the 5000

Teacher Pep Talk: Feeding a multitude is a daunting task. If we are asked to do it, we often stand there with our 2 fish and our 5 little loaves of bread and wonder how they can possibly help the situation. The answer is that we simply need to give them to Jesus. After all, it is He who blesses our offering and gives it back to us to distribute to the crowd. Then, miraculously, everyone gets fed; and we are left with more than we started with! We end up wondering why we ever doubted in the first place.

You will need: A copy of the activity sheet for each child  
Crayons or markers  
Consider construction paper, yarn, scissors, paper sacks, and glue.  
Small Rolls in a small basket or a paper sack (+/- Gummy Fish)

Major Points: Crowds of people followed Jesus to hear Him teach  
One day a crowd of over 5000 people was listening to Him  
The crowd got hungry, but there wasn't any food nearby  
One boy had 2 fish and 5 small loaves of bread  
Jesus blessed the food and fed all the people with it  
There were 12 baskets of food left over!

Scripture Ref. Matthew 14:14-21 (Jesus Feeds the 5000)

Memory Verse: Matthew 14:16 "You give them something to eat."

Lesson: **Crowds of people followed Jesus to hear Him teach**

- How many of you have a teacher? (*Wait for answers. Ask if they like their teachers, etc.*)
- What kind of things do teachers do? (*They teach. They talk, etc.*)
- That's right! Teachers talk, and they show us things and teach us things that we need to learn. That's called teaching!
- Jesus was a teacher! He taught people about God.
- He was a wonderful teacher and people would follow Him all around and sit for hours just to hear what He had to say.
- Crowds of people followed Jesus just to hear Him teach

**One day a crowd of over 5000 people was listening to Him**

- How many is a "crowd?" (*Wait for answers. There will probably be some discussion on this. Talk about numbers of people and how many is "a lot", etc.*)
- A crowd can be different numbers of people, but mostly a crowd is a LOT of people. Maybe even more than you can count easily.

- The Bible tells us that one day a crowd of over 5000 people was listening to Jesus.
- There were 5000 men, and then there were also women and children there with them.
- That is a LOT of people! That is a real crowd!

**The crowd got hungry, but there wasn't any food nearby**

- Late in the day, the people started getting hungry
- But the problem was there wasn't anywhere nearby to buy food (*They were in a remote place.*)
- Jesus' disciples suggested to Jesus that they send the crowd away so that they could go and find food to eat
- But Jesus said, "*They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.*"
- Wow! That surprised the Disciples. They weren't expecting that! They didn't have any food to feed that many people!!!
- In fact, no one had any food except for one little boy.

**One boy had 2 small fish and 5 little loaves of bread**

- (*If you have your sack or basket of rolls, consider showing them now. You may do activity now if you so choose.*)
- One little boy had brought some food with him. It was to be his meal. He had 2 tiny little fish and 5 little rolls of bread. (*Like a sack lunch.*)
- The disciples came to Jesus and said "We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish."
- Jesus told them to bring them to Him.

**Jesus blessed the food and fed all of the people with it.**

- Jesus directed all of the people sit down on the grass.
- Jesus took the 5 loaves and the 2 fish.
- He looked up to heaven, gave thanks, and then broke the loaves.
- Then He gave the loaves and fish to His disciples and they gave it to the people.
- All the people ate until they were satisfied.

**There were 12 baskets of food left over!**

- When everyone had eaten, Jesus had the disciples gather up the food that was leftover so that it wouldn't be wasted.
- There were 12 baskets full of extra fish and loaves!
- That means that even if there had been more people there, they would have been able to eat as well!
- It was a miracle!
- God is able to use what we offer to Him to do great and wonderful things! All we have to do is trust Him and offer Him what we have.

Let's pray and thank God that He can do anything! And that He can use what we offer to Him to do really BIG things.

Prayer: Dear God,  
Thank you that you can do anything!  
Thank you that you can use what we offer you to do really BIG things!  
Thank you for loving us!  
We love you back!  
Amen

Suggested Activities: *(Choose a few activities for your class!)*

### **Coloring Page: Loaves and Fishes**

**Before Class:** Provide one page of the activity sheet for each child, along with crayons or markers for coloring. *For older children, consider allowing them to cut out their own loaves from construction paper and to paste them on to the activity sheet. They may also use yarn to outline the fish. Provide construction paper, scissors, glue, and yarn.*

**During Class:** Tell the children that you are going to color a picture of the 2 fish and the 5 loaves. *For younger children have them count and show you on their fingers how many is 2 and 5. Then have them count the fish and the loaves in the picture. They may even write the numbers near the loaves and the fish.* For older children allow them to cut out rolls from construction paper and glue them on their papers. They may also like to outline the fish with glue and yarn.

#### **OPTIONS:**

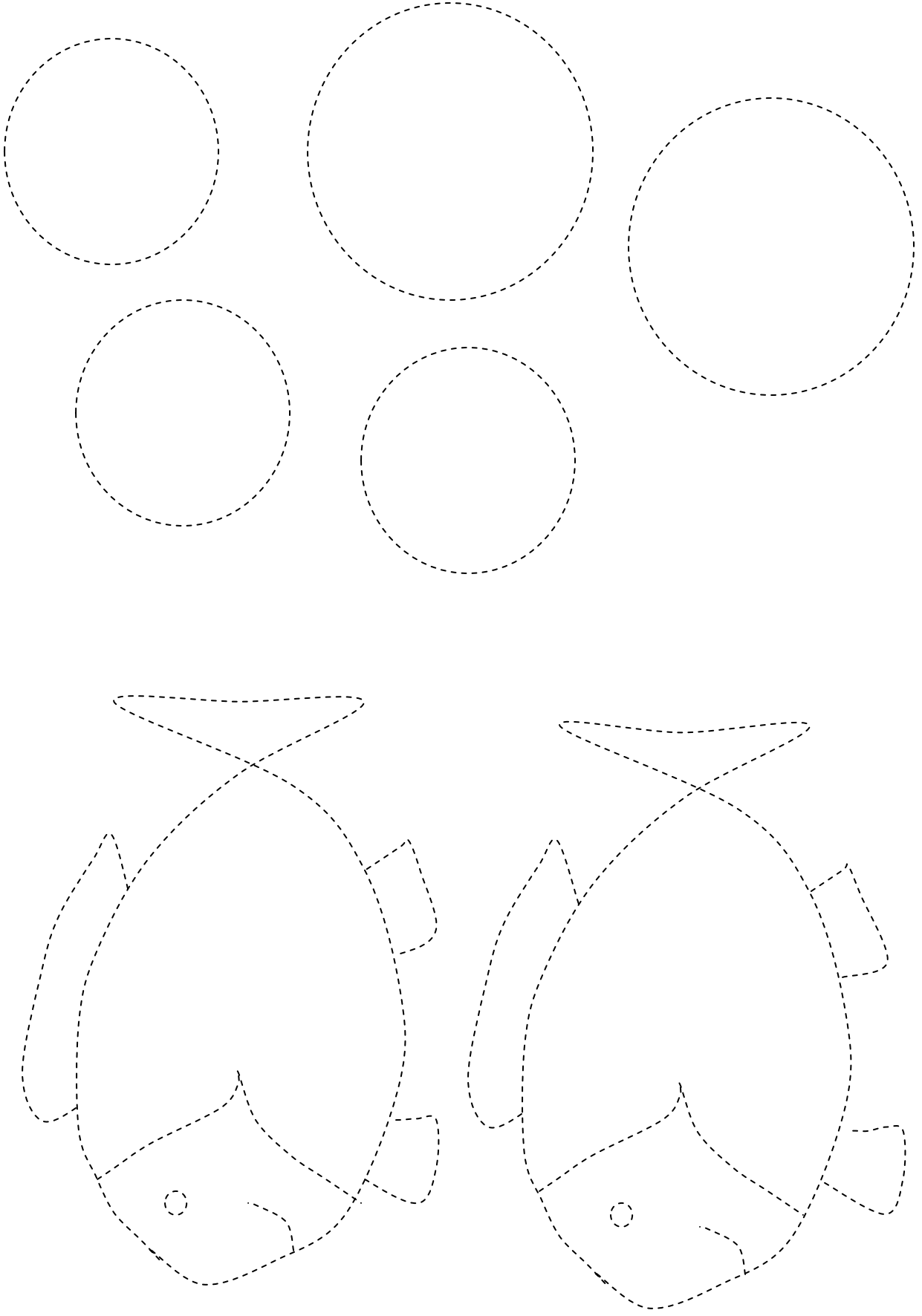
- Use a hole-punch to make two holes at the top of the paper. Put yarn through the holes and tie it, so that the paper may be hung up on the wall or on a door knob. OR
- After coloring the picture, cut out the fish and the loaves with scissors, and place the fish and the loaves in a paper sack for each child. *(Like a sack lunch.)* You could also use a small plastic bag with a closeable top.

### **Snack Time: Enjoy Eating Loaves and Fishes**

Re-enact part of the story of the loaves and the fishes. You may choose to do this during the actual lesson or after the lesson. *(Watch for food allergies!)*

#### **Jesus blessed the food and fed all of the people with it.**

- Jesus directed all of the people sit down on the grass. (Ask the children to sit down on the ground.)
- Jesus took the 5 loaves and the 2 fish. (Take the small basket of rolls.)
- He looked up to heaven, gave thanks, and then broke the loaves. (Look upwards, thank God for providing the rolls, and then break them into pieces.)
- Then He gave the loaves and fish to His disciples and they gave it to the people. (Distribute the pieces of roll to each of the children.)
- All the people ate until they were satisfied. (Allow the children to eat.)
- Consider Gummy Fish to represent the fish in the story!



## Let the Little Children Come to Me

Teacher Pep Talk: We wonder if God will accept us; if we can be smart enough, or good enough, or brave enough to impress Him somehow. But none of that makes any difference to God. God loves us. And the Kingdom of God is offered to each of us. The question is whether we will accept it or not.

If we are to receive it, Jesus tells us that we must do so like a little child. Little children receive things humbly and in faith from the people who love them. They do not try to earn or deserve the thing offered. They simply receive it. Jesus holds up these little children as an example to us. God the Father offers us the Kingdom of God (*which is a very good thing.*) The question is, “Will we receive it?”

You will need: Measuring stick or measuring tape to measure the children  
Copies of the activity sheets, allow one heart & one arrow per child  
Scissors and colors  
A large sheet of paper to tape on the wall (also painter’s tape)

Major Points: God loves us (no matter how big we are.)  
People brought their children to Jesus, so He could bless them.  
Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me.”  
Jesus said, “The kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”  
We must receive the kingdom of God like a little child.

Scripture Ref. Mark 10:13-16 *People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.*

John 3:16 *For God so loved the world...*

Ephesians 2:8-9 *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.*

Memory Verse: Mark 10:14 Jesus said: “Let the little children come to me...”

Lesson: **God loves us (no matter how big we are.)**

- How old are you? (*Ask each child, wait for them to answer.*)
- How old will you be on your next birthday? (*Wait for answers.*)
- Let me ask you this: Does God love you? (*Yes!*)

- Will He love you when you have your next birthday? (Yes!)
- How about the birthday after that? (Yes!)
- How about your last birthday; did God love you then? (Yes!)
- How about the birthday before that? (Yes!)
- VERY GOOD! That's right! God loves you this birthday and next. God loves you this birthday and last birthday. God loves you, no matter how many birthdays you have had!
- God loves you no matter how big or little you are! God loves you no matter how young or old you are!

**People brought their children to Jesus, so He could bless them.**

- A long time ago, when Jesus was here on the earth, crowds of people would follow Him around to hear Him preach, to be healed of their illnesses, and to talk to Him.
- Some of the people brought their children to Jesus so that He could touch them and bless them. (*Consider demonstrating, by placing your hand on a child's head and saying "God bless you."*)
- The people thought this was very important.
- But the disciples tried to stop them from doing this. Perhaps they thought Jesus was too busy, or too important, to do this kind of thing for little children.
- (*Sometimes adults make the mistake of not wanting to take time for little children. Have you ever noticed that?*)

**Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me."**

- But when Jesus saw what the disciples were doing, He was indignant. (*What does "indignant" mean? It means he was upset!*) Jesus knew it was wrong and He didn't like it!
- Jesus said to His disciples: "Let the little children come to me..."
- Let's say that together: "*Let the little children come to me.*" (*Repeat once or twice together.*)
- That's right. Jesus said: "*Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them...*" What does "hinder" mean? It means to stop or to keep from doing something. Jesus said something like, "Hey! Don't do that! Don't stop them from coming to me!"
- Jesus wanted to allow the children and their parents to come to Him. Jesus wasn't too busy, or too important, to take time for them. In fact, they were important to Jesus!

**Jesus said, "The kingdom of God belongs to such as these."**

- Jesus knew that the children were very important. Jesus said "Let the little children come to me, (*Pause and let children repeat*) and do not hinder them, (*Pause and let children repeat*) for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these."

- Wow! The Kingdom of God belongs to such as these! That sounds really important!
- Jesus was saying that children are an example to the rest of us about who can enter the Kingdom of God.
- Watch, it gets better.

**We must receive the kingdom of God like a little child.**

- Jesus said “Let the little children come to me, *(Repeat together)* and do not hinder them, *(Repeat together)* for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.” *(Repeat together.)*
- And then He said: “I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”
- Wow! Now that’s HUGE! Not only is Jesus saying that children are important, but He is showing them as an example to everyone else about how they must receive the kingdom of God!
- Do you have a little brother or little sister? *(Wait for answers.)* Do you ever hand them something? *(Yes, like what? Do you give them good things? Food, toys, etc.)* How do little children receive things? *(They just take them!)*
- Little children don’t ask a lot of questions. They don’t try and earn what you are giving them. They accept what you give them in faith. They have faith in you (or mom or dad) that you are going to give them something good for them.
- God the Father loves us and wants to give us His Kingdom, which is very, very good. Jesus tells us that we must receive it like a little child would receive something, in faith.

Let’s pray and thank God for the gift of His Kingdom. And let’s thank Him that we may come to Him in faith.

Prayer: Dear God,  
Thank you that you love us!  
Thank you that you offer us the gift of your Kingdom!  
Thank you that we may come to you in faith.  
Amen

Suggested Activities: *(Choose a few activities for your class!)*

**How Tall are You?** *(A fun activity for finding everyone’s height.)*

**Before Class:** Provide a safe way of measuring everyone and marking the results somehow on a wall in your room. One easy way is to provide a large piece of white wrapping paper (or butcher paper) taped to the wall with painter’s tape.

**During Class:** Measure each child by having them stand with their back to the wall and making a mark on the paper at the top of their head. Record each child’s name and height. At the top of the paper write the words “On     *(Today’s Date)*    , we were this tall!” Display the paper in class.

**Heart and Arrow Cut-out** (A craft with crayons and scissors)

**Before Class:** Provide a copy of the Heart page, along with one arrow from the Arrow page, for each child. Provide scissors and colors. Bring a measuring stick or measuring tape to class with which to measure the children.

**During Class:** Measure each child and record the heights. Write each child's name and height on an Arrow from the Activity Sheets. Allow the children to color the heart and the arrow. Cut out the heart, as well as the arrow. Snip along the dotted lines in the heart making two slits. Put the arrow through the slits, allowing the child's name to show on the back of the project. Take the projects home to display there.

**Count Your Blessings** – (Discussion, Song and Finger Game)

Talk to the class about blessings. Say something like: "In the story, Jesus blessed the children who were brought to Him. God gives us MANY blessings each day! If we were to try and count them all we would get tired just counting!" Talk about some of God's blessings. For example: sun, rain, life... All good things come from God!

Bible References to help with your Discussion:

James 1:17 *Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.*

Matthew 5:45b *He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.*

**Song and Finger Game:** (Sung to the tune of "Frere Jacques" or "Brother John")

**Sing these words:**

Count your blessings  
(Count your blessings)

One, Two, Three  
(One, Two, Three)

God gives many blessings  
(God gives many blessings)

To you and me  
(To you and me)

**Do these actions:**

Hold up fingers on both hands and  
wave hands back and forth

Count on fingers 1, 2, 3...

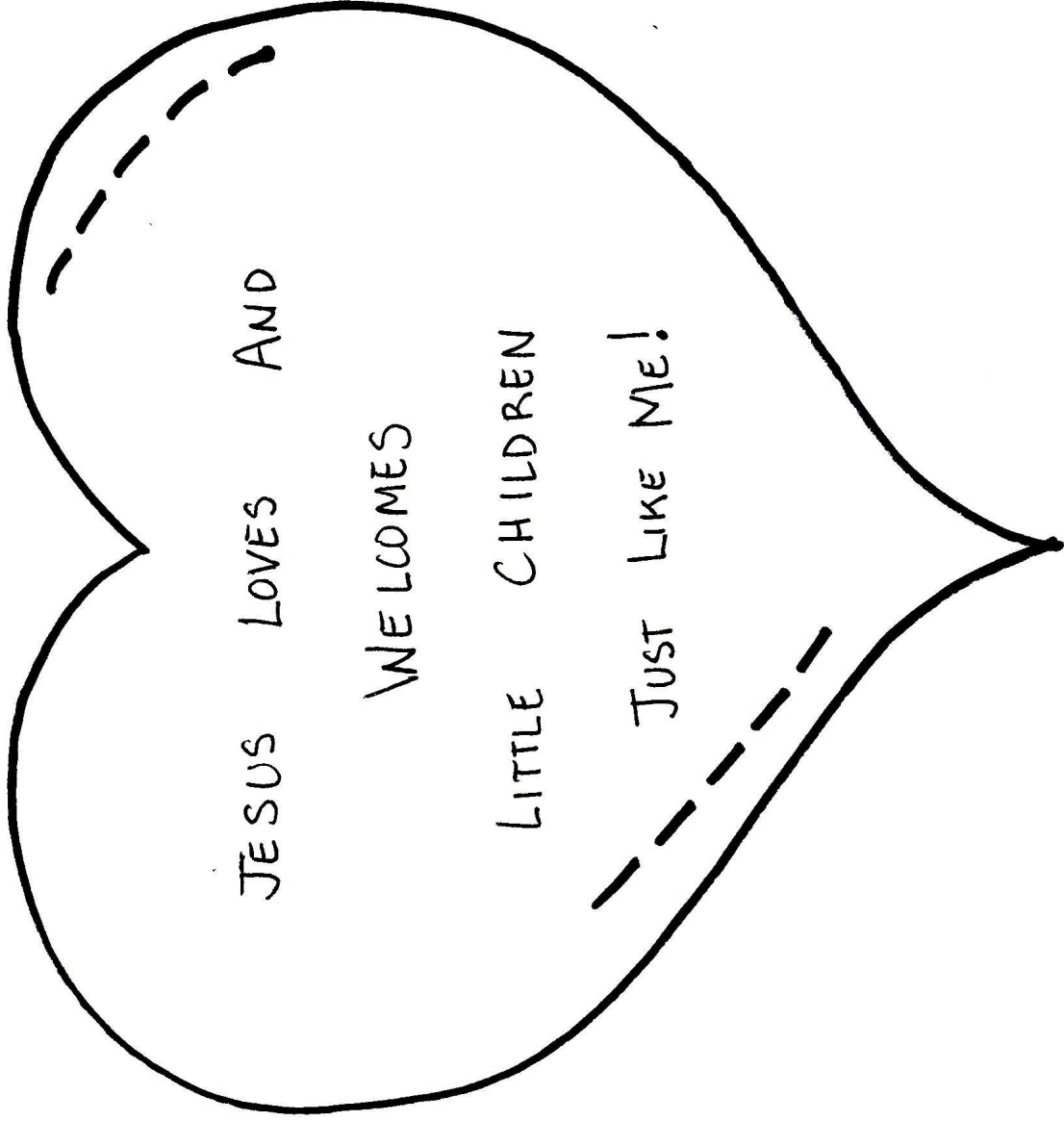
Open and close fingers repeatedly  
as if counting many numbers!

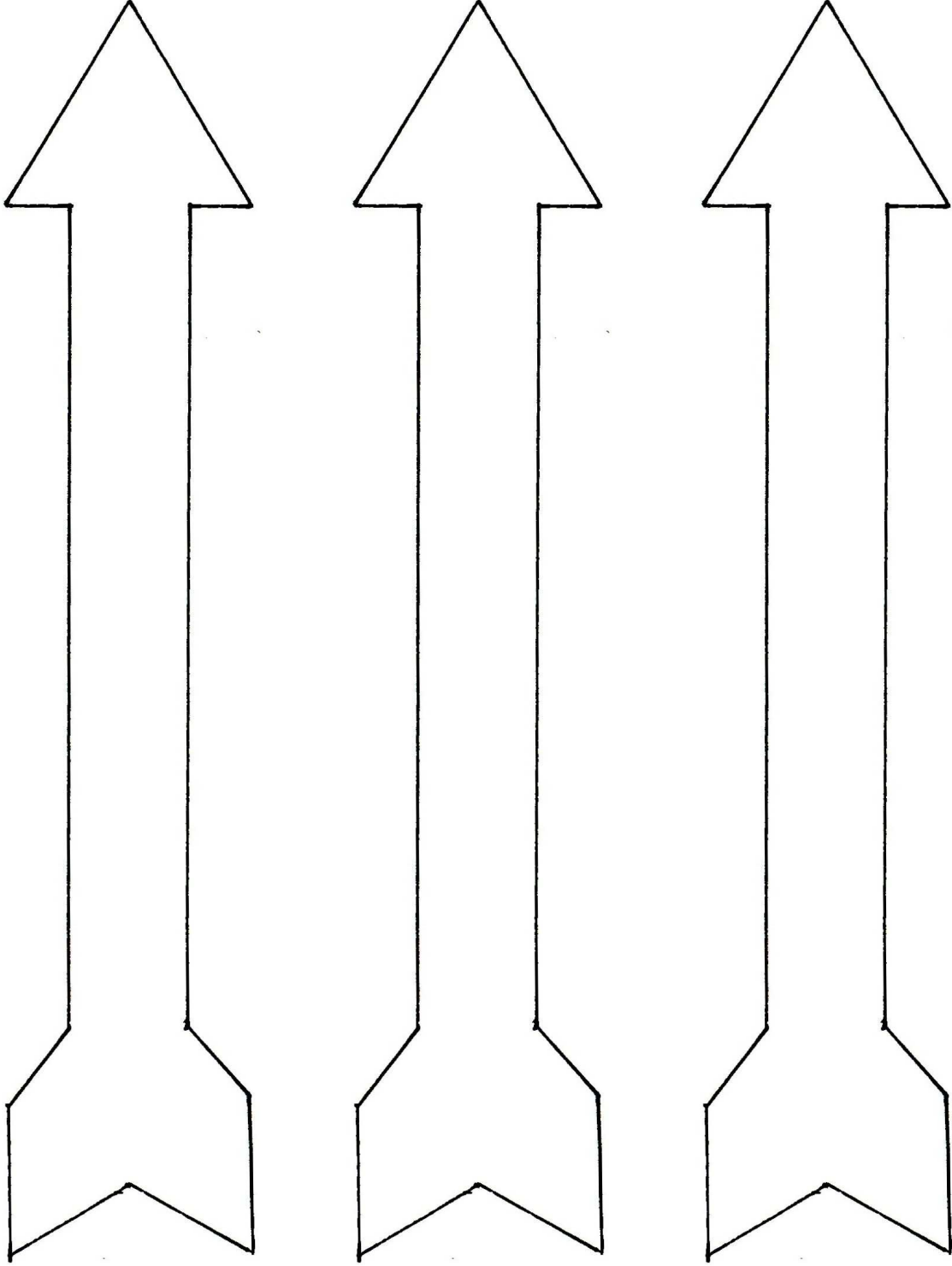
Point to others and then to self

**Bible Verse Memorization** - (For fun and some much needed physical activity time)

*"Let the little children come to me..."*

Stand on one side of the room with the children on the other side. You say, "Let the little children..." and they respond "...come to me!" and then they all run across the room towards you. Be prepared to get trampled on a little...but they will learn the verse... ☺





## Parable of The Prodigal Son

Teacher Pep Talk: Children need to know that they are loved unconditionally. In fact, we all need to know it! In the Parable of the Prodigal Son, Jesus assures us that God will always take us back; that there is nothing we can do that will keep God from watching for us and receiving us when we return to Him. We are His children, and He loves us.

In fact, it is His amazing love that makes it possible for us to come home again at all!

You will need: Copy of the “Pig” page or plastic toy “piggies” of your own  
Copy of the “Road” page for each child  
Pencils, crayons or markers

A NOTE about Piggies: Once, when my friend, Lynn, taught this lesson, she went around ahead of time to various toy stores and bought all the different little plastic piggies she could find. (*I think she ended up with 23.*) She placed them in a container and, at just the right moment in the story, she brought them all out. The children were thrilled! (*They probably still remember the lesson.*) If you don't want to buy little plastic piggies from the toy store, you may want to color the “Piggy” page and cut out the little pigs to use as examples. Have fun!

Major Points: God loves us (no matter how bad we have been.)  
A parable is a story that tells us something about God.  
(The Parable of the Prodigal Son)  
God always welcomes us home.

Scripture Ref. Luke 15:11-32 (*The Parable of the Lost Son*)

Memory Verse: Luke 15:32b “...*he was lost and is found.*”

Lesson: **God loves us (no matter how bad we have been.)**

- Have you ever been bad? (*Wait for answers.*) How bad have you been? (*Pause and then go on...*) Have you ever been so bad that you got in trouble? Have you ever been so bad that you got sent to “time out?” Have you ever been so bad that... your parents wouldn't love you anymore? (*No!*)
- We are going to hear a story of a man's son who went far away from home and then was very, very bad. Then we'll hear about what happened when the son was sorry and came home...
- But first I must tell you that God loves us very much! In fact, God loves us no matter what we've done or how bad we have been!

### **A Parable is a Story that tells us Something about God.**

- Do you like stories? I'm going to tell you a story that Jesus once told.
- This story is called a "parable." It is a type of story that Jesus used to tell. In it we usually find out something about God and what He is like.
- In this story, you must listen to the part about the Father. The Father in this parable describes what God is like. Since God is Jesus' father, we can trust Jesus to describe Him correctly.

### **The Parable of the Prodigal Son**

- Jesus told this story: A certain man had two sons. One day the younger one came and asked his father for all the money that was to come to him later on.
- The father gave the younger son the money.
- A few days later, this son went to a far away country.
- There he stayed and spent his money doing very bad things.
- He had lots of new friends while he had money; but when his money was gone, all his new friends were gone too!
- After his money was gone, there was a famine in the land.
- Everyone began to be hungry, including the son!

### **Eating with the Pigs!**

- The son looked for work, but couldn't find any.
- Finally he got a job working for a man who owned pigs!
- NOTE: If you have plastic "piggies," bring them out here. If not, show the piggies from Piggy page, which you may have colored.
- His job was to feed the piggies their food! (It smelled really bad!)
- The young man was very hungry. Every day when he fed the pigs, even the food the pigs were eating looked good to him!

### **The Son "Comes to Himself"**

- Finally the son remembered something! He remembered that in his father's house even the hired workers had plenty to eat!
- He decided that he would go home and tell his father that he was really sorry. He thought that he had done so many bad things that he didn't even deserve to be called his son anymore.
- Wow! Can you imagine a child thinking he done something so bad that he couldn't be called a son anymore? (*No!*)
- The son hoped his dad would just take him in as a servant, so he wouldn't be hungry anymore.
- So, the son said "Good-bye" to the pigs and went home. (*Wave good-bye to the piggies.*)

### **Arriving Home**

- All the way home the son practiced what he would say to his dad
- *“Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.”*
- What would his father say? The son worried all the way home.
- Remember when I said that we had to watch the Father in this story? The Father represents God and tells us what He is like.
- Let’s see what the Father does when his son comes home.
- Jesus said that “While the son was still a LONG way off, his father saw him coming and RAN out to meet him!”
- He was so happy to see his son that he ran up to him, threw his arms around him, and kissed him!
- Then, while the boy was trying to say all the things he’d been planning to say, the father sent his servants to go get the best robe, and the best ring, and new clothes for his son!
- Then the Father said they would have a big party to celebrate!
- The Father welcomed his son home!

### **God Always Welcomes us Home**

- God loves us! He loves us so much that He is ALWAYS glad to see us come back!
- No matter how bad we have been, God will always take us back, when we return to Him.
- The Father was very happy and said these words about his son, “...he was lost and is found!”
- Let’s practice those words “he was lost and is found.” (Repeat.)
- Those sound like VERY happy words! The Father was very happy! And God is very happy whenever we come back to Him.

Let’s pray and thank God that He loves us, just like the father in the story loved his son.

Prayer: Dear God,  
Thank you that you love us!  
Thank you that you always welcome us home!  
Amen.

Suggested Activities: *(Choose a few activities for your class!)*

**Lost and Found** -*The children will help find “lost” objects in the room.*

**Before Class:** Take several similar objects (such as balls, teddy bears, blocks, etc) and “hide” them around your classroom. Put some (or all) of them in fairly obvious places, depending on the ages of the children in your class. Provide a container that will hold all of the objects (such as a laundry basket or large cardboard box.)

**During Class:** Explain to the children that you had several items (like the teddy bears) with you earlier but that you seem to have “lost” them. Ask the children to help you find them and to put them back in the laundry basket or box. When you have found all of the objects say “They were lost and now they are found.” Consider allowing one or two of the children to “hide” the items again, so that you can all play a second time.

**Learn Memory Verse** (*“He was lost and is found.” – Luke 15:32b*)

**Before Class:** Bring a Teddy Bear (or another stuffed animal) to class.

**During Class:** Hold the Teddy Bear in front of you. Tell the children: **In the story we heard today the father said about his son, “He was lost and is found.”** As you say the words “He was lost...” pass the Teddy Bear behind your back, so that it is out of view of the children. As you say “And is found” bring the bear back in front of you so that the children can see it. Repeat this a few times, saying the words together as a group. Allow volunteers to hold the bear and to say the words just like you did.

**Sing “Old McDonald”**

In this lesson you talked about how the son in the parable fed the pigs and was so hungry that he thought their food looked good! Sing Old McDonald and don’t forget to sing about the pigs... with an “Oink, Oink here, and an Oink, Oink there...”

**Count the Piggies** (*Children will work with plastic toy piggies, or color activity page.*)

**Before Class:** Bring plastic toy piggies for the children to see, or make copies of the “Piggy” Page activity sheet for each child. Provide crayons or markers.

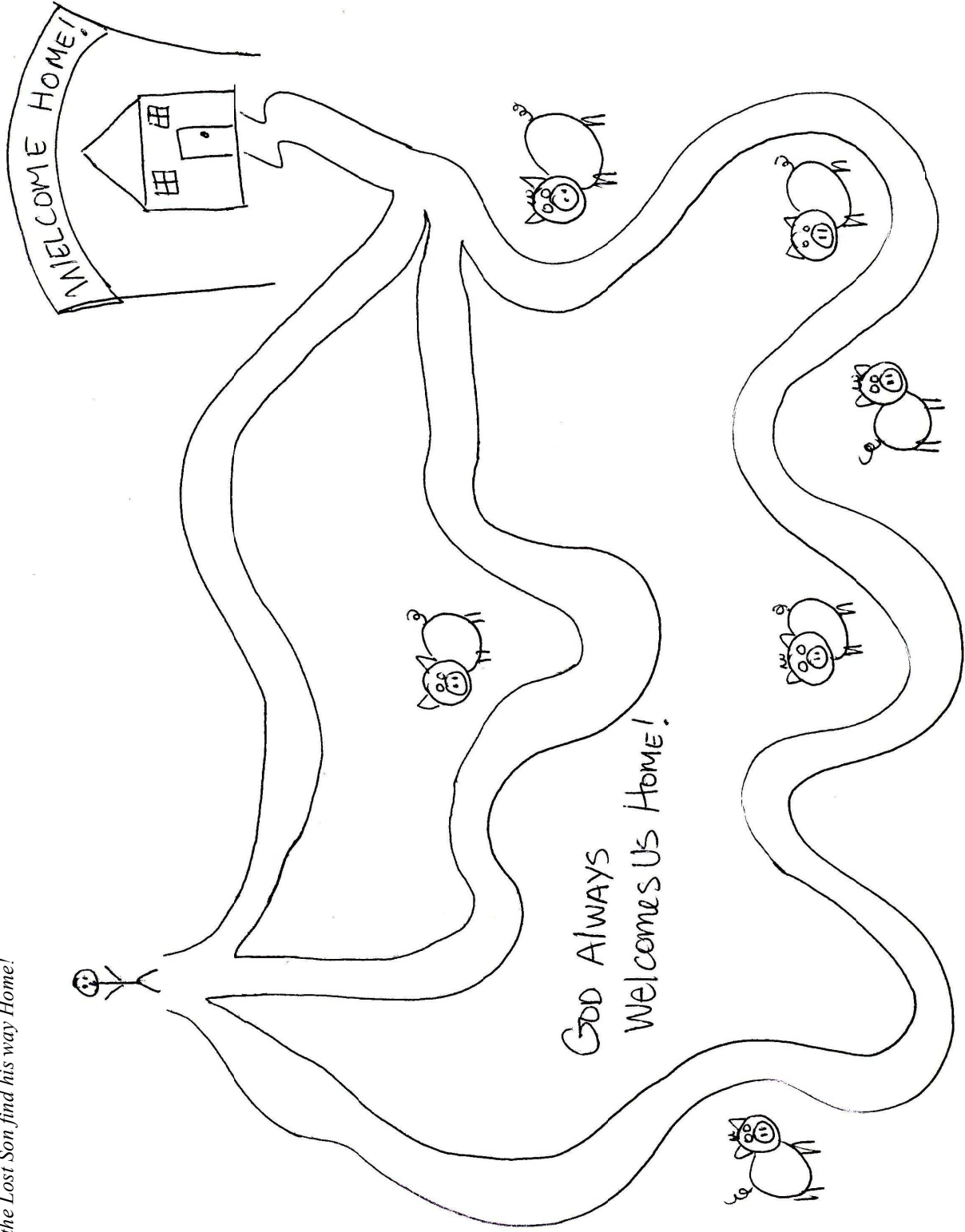
**During Class:** If you have brought little plastic piggies to class, bring them out and let the children look at them and play with them some. Make up some ways of “working” with the pigs. (For example: count the pigs, match up the ones that seem similar, move them around on the table, make “oink, oink” noises, put them in and out of a container, etc.) If you have not brought plastic piggies, consider letting the children color copies of the piggy page. Count how many there are on the page. Write the numbers.

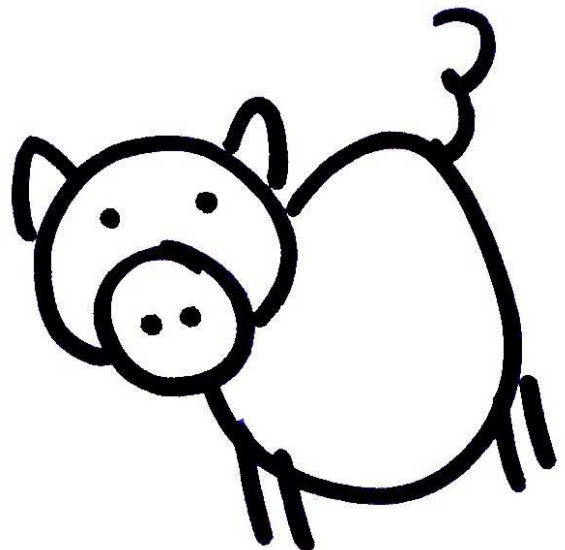
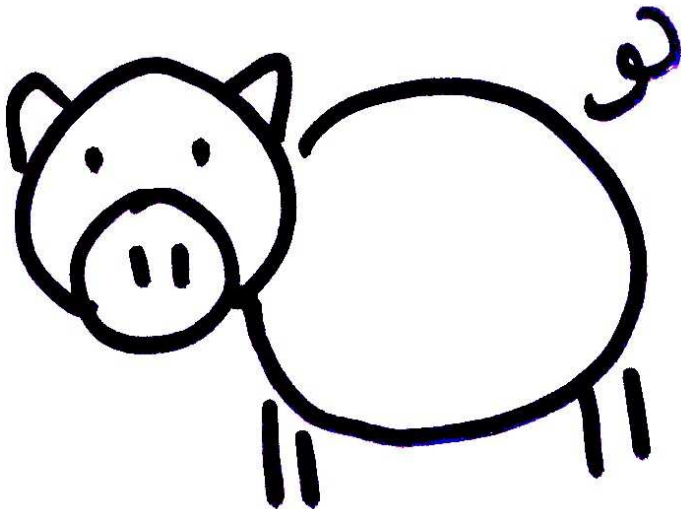
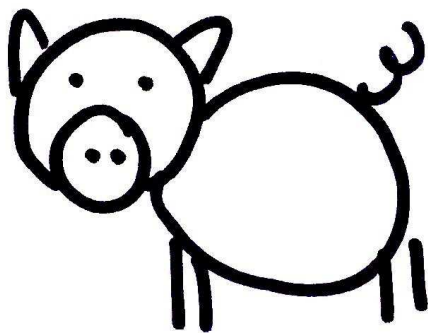
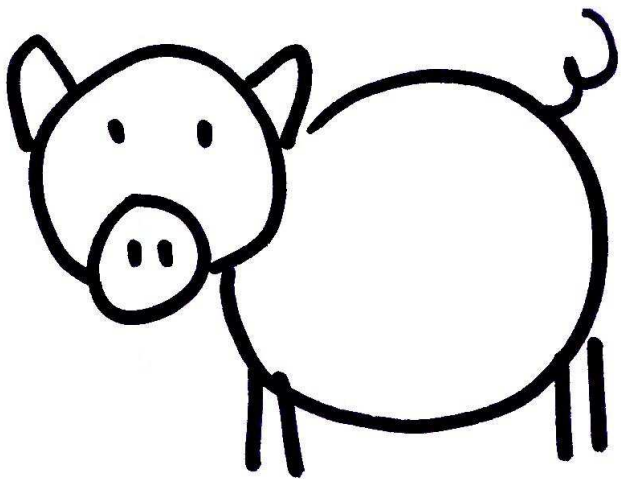
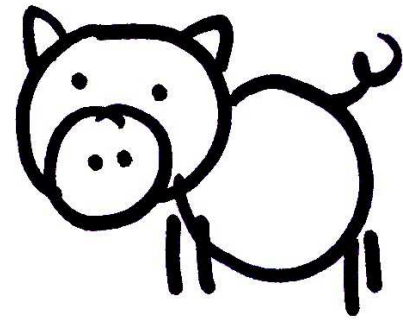
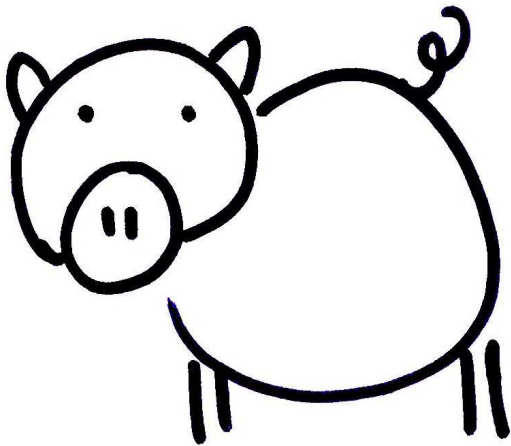
**On the Road Again!** (*Activity Sheet – Children will help the son find his way home.*)

**Before Class:** Make copies of the “Road” page for each child. Provide pencils/ crayons.

**During Class:** Tell the children that the son in the parable had to travel a long way to get back home to his father’s house. Explain that God is always happy when we return to Him, no matter how far away we have wandered. He welcomes us home no matter how bad we have been. Trace the ways home with your finger. (*You will notice that some of them have more piggies along the way than others.*) Chose one of the paths and mark the way home with a pencil or a crayon.

Help the Lost Son find his way Home!





## Parable: The Workers in the Vineyard

Teacher Pep Talk: The parable of the Workers in the Vineyard teaches about the generosity of God in salvation. The Vineyard Owner hires workers at various times during the day, and then generously pays them ALL a full day's wages at the end of the day. This seems "unfair" to those who have worked hard all day in the hot sun. But the Vineyard Owner points out that He has not been unfair to those who came first. (After all, they agreed to work for a day's wages.) He has simply been as generous to those who came last. In this way, Jesus said, that the "last will be first and the first will be last."

The parable teaches us that everyone who believes in God and accepts His call receives the same reward (salvation) at the end of the day (or of time.) Those who work an hour receive the same reward (salvation) as those who work all day: not because the vineyard owner (God) is being unfair to those who worked all day, but because He is being generous to all (with His grace.)

Though we will each receive individual rewards for what we have left for Jesus' sake (Matthew 19:28-29), our salvation isn't earned by our own work or the length of it; it rests in God's grace alone.

You will need: Yard working implements to act out the parable.  
(Examples: Rakes, shovels, gardening trowels, etc.)  
Something to "pay" your workers with. (*How about Lollipops?*)  
Paper plates, brads, scissors, & 1 set of clock hands for each child  
Crayons & a copy of the Coloring Sheet-Activity Page for each child

Major Points: God loves us and calls each of us to come to Him.  
(The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard)  
God rewards each of us generously.

Scripture Ref. Matthew 20: 1-16

Memory Verse: Matthew 20:16 "...the last will be first, and the first will be last."

Lesson: **God loves us and calls each of us to come to Him.**

- God loves us! He wants us to be with Him always.
- How do you call someone? Do you say "Hey, Fred, come over here!" or "Hey, Susie, you want to come with us?" You might say something like that. Did you know that God calls to us? He does! We may not hear Him just like that, but He calls to us.
- When we come to Him, we do so at different times in our life.
- Whenever we will come to Him, God gives us good things to do.
- God is always generous with His rewards.

### **The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard**

- Jesus told parables (or stories) to help us learn about God.
- A parable is a story that teaches us what God is like. In each parable there is one person who represents God. When we find that person in the story, we can learn something about Him.
- Since Jesus is God's Son, we know that He describes God perfectly! So let's listen to the story and learn about God!
- In this parable, the man who owns the vineyard represents God. *(A vineyard is a big farm where they raise grapes.)* We will need to keep our eye on the Vineyard Owner to learn about God!

### **The Vineyard Owner Hires the Workers**

- One day a man who owned a vineyard went into town to hire some men to work for the day. *(Back then the men of the town would come to the marketplace when they were ready to work, and landowners would come out and hire them for the day.)*
- The Vineyard Owner came very early in the morning *(like 6 AM)* and hired some men, telling them that He would pay them a day's wages to work all day. They agreed and went out to work.
- At 9 AM the Vineyard Owner went back and found some other men standing around doing nothing. He said, "You go work in my vineyard and I will pay you what is right." They agreed and went out to the vineyard to go to work.
- At Noon the Vineyard Owner went out and found some other men just standing around doing nothing, so He sent them to work too, telling them that He would pay them what was right.
- He did this again and again during the day... until at last it was about 5 PM *(almost quitting time!)* and He went and found some men who had been standing around ALL day doing nothing!
- He asked them, "Why have you been standing here ALL day, doing nothing?!" and they said, "No one would hire us."(!!!)
- *(That was pretty silly to say, wasn't it? ... especially since He had already been there several times that day hiring people!)*
- But the Vineyard Owner told them to go work in His vineyard and He would pay them what was right. *(These last men just barely had time to get to the vineyard before quitting time!)*

### **The Vineyard Owner pays His Workers**

- At last it was the end of the day! Time to pay the workers!
- The Vineyard Owner called to His Servant to pay the workers. He told Him to start with the last and to go to the first.
- The men who had been hired last (and had worked for about an hour) got paid enough money for working for a whole day!
- When the others saw this they thought things like: "Wow! I'm going to get paid more than that! I worked longer than he did!"

- But, as the others got paid, they realized that all of them were paid a whole day's wages; no matter how long they had worked!
- When they saw this, the ones who had worked all day grumbled. *(Do you know what grumbling is? What does grumbling sound like? Can you grumble? Let me hear you. "Grump. I'm not happy! That's not fair!" "Yes!" that's just what it sounds like!)*

### **The Workers Complain to the Vineyard Owner**

- Some of these workers were UN-happy!
- They went to the Vineyard Owner to complain!
- One of them said: "Hey! These guys only worked an hour and you paid them the same that you paid us for working all day!"
- *(Now remember, in this parable the Vineyard Owner is the one who represents God. We have to keep our eye on Him to find out what God is like. Let's see what the Vineyard Owner says...)*
- The Vineyard Owner answered: "Friend, I am not being unfair to you. Didn't you agree to work for a day's pay? Take your money and go. I want to give the man who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you upset (*envious*) because I am generous?"
- The Vineyard Owner was willing to pay those who showed up last the same as those who had come to work first. He wasn't cheating the ones who had worked all day. He paid them what He had promised them. He was just being generous to those who had come along later! *(In fact, He had been generous to all of them, since He had given them all work in the first place!)*

### **God Rewards Each of Us Generously**

- God is that way! He is GENEROUS! He gives and gives to us!
- God loves us and wants us to be with Him always.
- God calls to each of us and invites us to come to Him.
- When we come to Him, He gives us good things to do. *(Like the Vineyard Owner put the men to work in His vineyard.)*
- In the end, God rewards each of us generously!
- *(There will be individual rewards: Jesus told His Disciples that "at the renewal of all things" those who left anything in this world for His sake would receive 100 times as much, PLUS eternal life.)*
- But this parable teaches us that Salvation is the same generous gift for everyone. *(It is not based on how long we serve God here on earth, but on God's generosity, provision, and grace.)*
- So it is that "the last will be first and the first will be last."

Isn't God good to love us so much that He rewards us all generously? Let's pray and thank Him for loving us that much!

Prayer: Dear God,  
Thank you that you love us!  
Thank you that you are so generous to us!  
We love you back!  
Amen.

Suggested Activities: *(Choose a few activities for your class!)*

**Act Out the Story** *(The children will act out the Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard)*

**Before Class:** Gather together several yard working implements (Fairly safe ones like: Rakes, Shovels, Gardening Trowels, etc.) Bring them to class on the day of the lesson. Clear off one area of the room to be designated for “The Vineyard” and have another part of the room designated as “The Marketplace.” Consider making signs for those.

You will also need something to “pay” the workers with in the play. Consider lollipops!

**During Class:** Explain to the children that you are all going to “act out” the story in the lesson. Choose one child to be the Vineyard Owner, one to be His Servant, and the rest of the children will be the Workers. Put the yard working implements in the part of the room marked “The Vineyard.” Have the children sit fairly close to the place marked “The Marketplace.” Now tell the story, much like it is written in the lesson. Allow the children to act out the parts. Send a few children to The Marketplace at a time, to get work. When each group is hired, send them to the Vineyard to work. Let them pretend to rake, dig, etc in The Vineyard. *(Not enough yard working implements to go around? Let the new workers have the implements each time you get a new group.)* Continue until everyone is hired and everyone is working in the Vineyard. Now have The Servant “pay” everyone starting from the last to the first. Everyone gets paid the same. *(Bring in the Lollipops!)* Enjoy! Discuss how God is good to give salvation to each of us!

**First and Last** *(The children will learn and practice the concepts of “First” and “Last.”)*

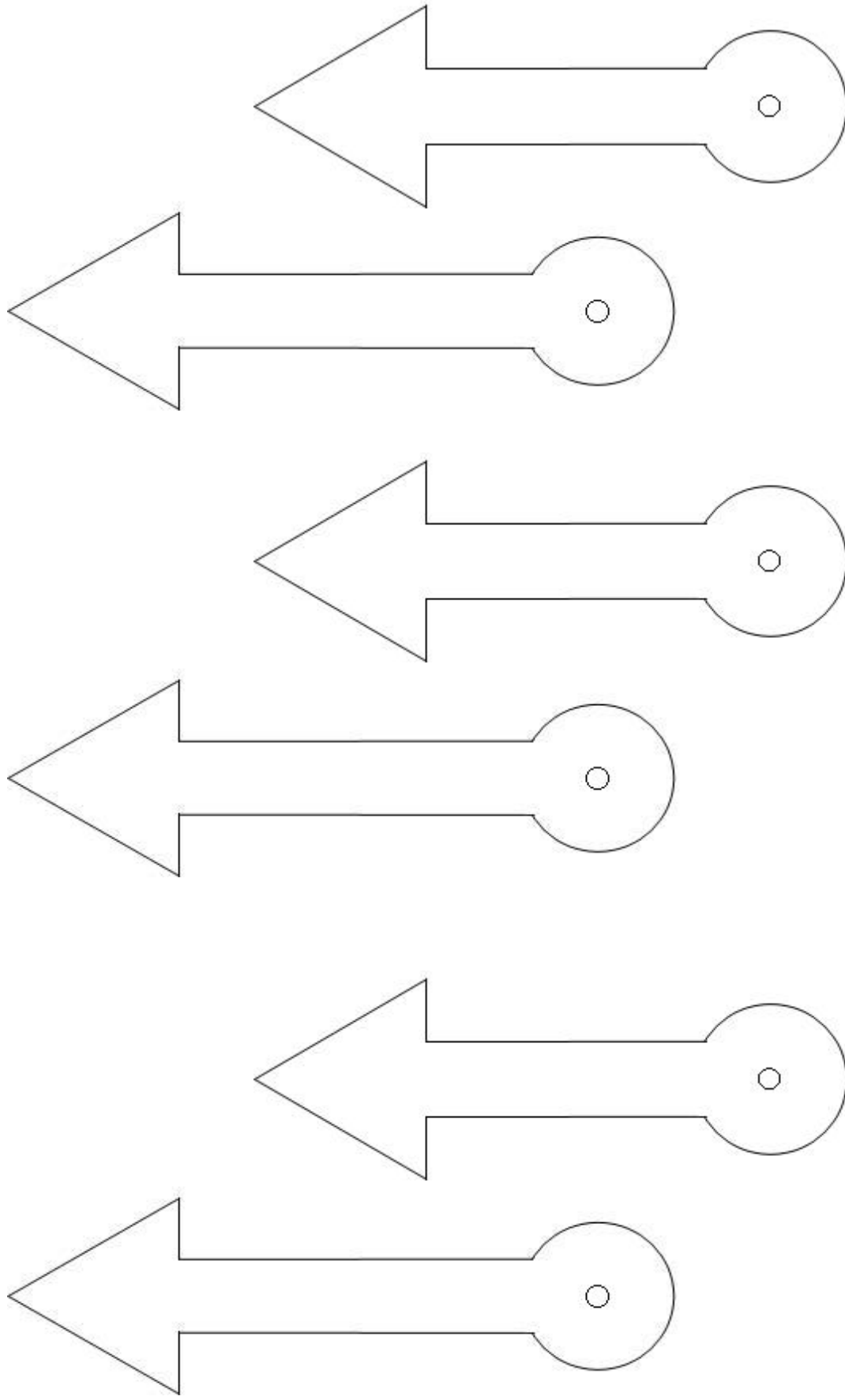
Have everyone stand up and get in a long line (or several lines if you have lots of students.) Then have the children “count off” in this way: The first child says “First!” the next child says “Next!” All the others continue to say “Next!” until you reach the last child in line, who says “Last!” Now, have everyone stand in place and TURN AROUND. Go to the child at the end (the one who said “Last!”) and point out that NOW the one who was LAST is FIRST! Have the child say “First” and repeat the opposite direction. Note that the one who was FIRST is also now LAST! Switch up so that different children are on the ends of the line and repeat.

**What Time is It?** *(Older students will enjoy making a clock face.)*

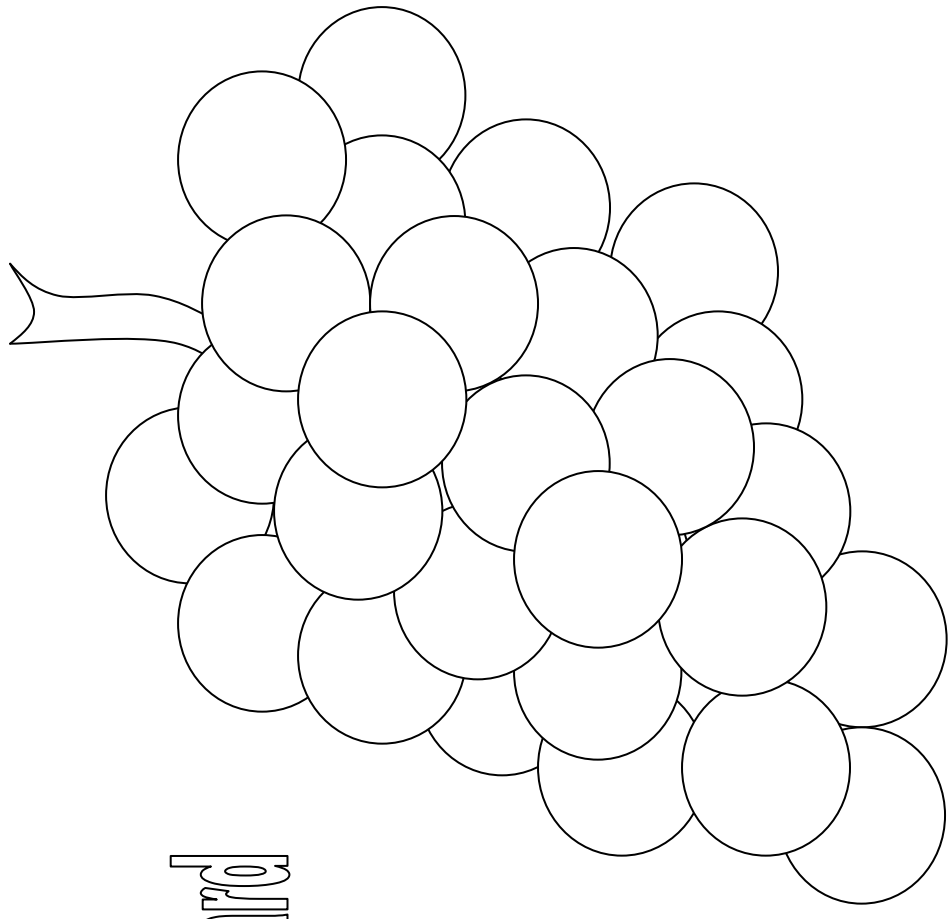
**Before Class:** Provide paper plates, brads, markers, and scissors. Provide one set of clock hands (copied on card stock or paper) for each child. Put a small hole in the center of each plate. Make a sample with 12, 3, 6, and 9 on the face of the plate.

**During Class:** Ask the children to cut out a set of clock hands, and to draw the numbers 12, 3, 6 and 9 on the face of their plate. Use a brad to secure the clock hands to the center of the plate. Enjoy moving the clock hands around; showing the various times.

**Coloring Sheet** Invite the children to color the grape cluster with crayons or markers.



# The Parable of The Workers in the Vineyard



## Light of the World: Salt of the Earth

Teacher Pep Talk: Jesus said “You are the light of the world.” That seems to be an exciting reality and a daunting challenge, all at the same time. It also raises several questions: What does it mean to be the light of the world? Is our light shining? And, if so...How bright is it?

Sometimes we may wonder if our lights are bright enough for anyone to benefit from them. Whatever happens, we must not lose hope or give up. Remember, the stars in the sky may seem tiny and very far away, but travelers depend on them to find their way. Just like the stars up in the sky, we don't always know who's watching us or using our light to guide them on their way. Let's stay as close as we can to Jesus, and trust Him for the results.

You will need: A flashlight/ a candle with matches/ or some other light  
Salt (*Also bring Sugar – if you choose the salt/sugar activity.*)  
One copy of the activity sheet for each child  
Crayons or markers

Major Points: God thinks we are very important  
Jesus said that we (His followers) are the LIGHT of the world.  
Jesus said that we (His followers) are the SALT of the earth.  
By being salt and light we help others and teach them about Jesus

Scripture Ref. Matthew 5:13-16 (Jesus said...)  
*“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.”*  
*“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”*

John 9:5 (Jesus said...)  
*“While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”*

Memory Verse: Matthew 5:16 ...let your light shine...

**FIRE SAFETY NOTICE:** If you choose to use a lit candle as an example for light, be sure to check your church's fire safety policy first. **Always ask permission before using open flames!** Be sure to keep the matches put up, out of reach, in a locked cabinet. Place the candle in a candle holder on a table before lighting. Watch for hot dripping wax. Only an adult should be allowed touch the candle or the matches. Extinguish both the candle and matches carefully. Immediately after use, put the matches away in a locked cabinet, out of reach of children.

Lesson:

**God thinks we are very important**

- Do you ever feel important? (*Wait for answers.*) Do people act like you are important to them? (*Wait for answers.*)
- When people love you, when they are glad to see you, when they teach you things or take care of you, it means that they think you are important. You are important to them! (*Your parents, grandparents, and loved ones think you are very important.*)
- Did you know that God thinks you are very important? He does!
- When Jesus was here on the earth, He used to talk to His followers (to those who believed in Him.)
- He taught them things and told them important things.
- Jesus knew that they were important. He told them how important they were.
- All the things Jesus said to them, He also says to us today.
- Jesus says that we are important to God!

**Jesus said that we (His followers) are the LIGHT of the world.**

- Jesus taught His followers lots of important things.
- One day He said “You are the LIGHT of the world.”
- Wow! What does that mean? I’m a person. I’m not a light!
  - I’m not a flashlight! I’m not a lamp! I’m not even a light bulb!
  - I’m a Mommy ...not a light bulb!
  - (OR... I’m a Daddy...not a flashlight!)
- Is Jesus calling me a lamp?! Is Jesus saying you’re a light bulb?
- No! 😊 I don’t think that is what Jesus meant! 😊

**Jesus said that we (His followers) are the SALT of the earth.**

- Jesus also told His followers other important things.
- One day He said “You are the SALT of the earth.”
- Wow! What does that mean? I’m a person. I’m not salt!
  - I’m not even pepper!
  - I’m a person with hands and feet! How about you? (*Yes!*)
- Is Jesus calling me SALT like in a salt shaker?
- No! 😊 I don’t think that is what Jesus meant at all! 😊

**So... What is Jesus saying to us?**

- So... if Jesus isn’t calling us light, like from a light bulb ... or salt, like in a salt shaker... WHAT is He talking about?
- Let’s see if we can figure it out together. REMEMBER... God thinks we (who follow Jesus) are IMPORTANT!

### **You are the Light of the World**

*[NOTE: If you can darken your room some... please do so now. Take a little break and move the class to a new part of the room.]*

- Do you like the Dark? (Yes/No) How about when you are walking around in the dark? (Yes/ No) How about when you are trying to FIND something in the Dark? *(It's not easy. Not fun.)*
- *[NOTE: Turn on the flashlight or light the candle.]* What if there was some light... even just a little bit. *(Maybe like a night light.)* That would help, wouldn't it? Then you could see better.
- Jesus was saying that the world is in darkness. People (who don't know Him) are stuck in the dark. *(That's sad. Very sad.)*
- Jesus was saying that we (who believe in Him) are like the light. The light shines in the darkness. And you know that when it is really, really dark even a little bit of light really helps an awful lot.
- We can help people find their way out of the darkness by letting our light shine! We can tell people about Jesus!

*[NOTE: If used, extinguish candle and matches carefully!]*

### **You are the Salt of the Earth**

*[NOTE: If you have some salt, bring it out here. Let the children taste it, if you like.]*

- Jesus said we were the salt of the earth. Why did He say that?
- A long time ago... before refrigerators, or freezers, or air-conditioners even... people wanted to keep their food fresh.
- One way they could do that was to cover it in salt. That way the food would stay nice and fresh. It wouldn't go bad, or get rotten! *(Eeewwhh!)*
- Jesus said we are the Salt of the Earth. We are what keep it nice and fresh! We help keep the world from going bad, or getting totally rotten. *(Eewwwhhh!)*
- We do this by helping others and loving them like God loves us.

### **Being SALT and LIGHT...**

- Jesus said that we are the Light of the World and the Salt of the Earth. These are important things. Jesus gave them to us to do.
- We are important to God!

Let's pray and thank God that He has made us the Light of the World and the Salt of the Earth!

Prayer: Dear God,  
Thank you that you have made us the Light of the World.  
Thank you that you have made us the Salt of the Earth.  
Thank you that you love us.  
We love you back.  
Amen.

Suggested Activities: *(Choose a few activities for your class!)*

**Sing “This Little Light of Mine”** – *the children will learn a new song*

*This is a wonderful song to do with little children, especially with the hand motions. It is especially fun to see them sing the part about “Don’t let Satan (whhh!) it out.” When they blow, sometimes they look at their finger as if it might really go out. Amazing!*

Before Class: Familiarize yourself with the music and lyrics of “This Little Light of Mine.”

During Class: Tell the children you are going to teach them a new song. Have them sit facing you so that they can see you demonstrate the hand motions.

Follow this pattern, or you may repeat the chorus between verses:

*(Chorus)*

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.  
This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.  
This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.  
Let it shine, Let it shine, Let it shine!

*(Hold up pointing finger.)*

Don’t let Satan blow it out, I’m gonna let it shine.  
Don’t let Satan blow it out, I’m gonna let it shine.  
Don’t let Satan blow it out, I’m gonna let it shine.  
Let it shine, Let it shine, Let it shine!

*(Blow on finger instead of saying the word “blow”)*

Hide it under a bushel... NO! I’m gonna let it shine.  
Hide it under a bushel... NO! I’m gonna let it shine.  
Hide it under a bushel... NO! I’m gonna let it shine.  
Let it shine, Let it shine, Let it shine!

*(Cup other hand and cover finger. Uncover it when you yell “NO!”)*

Let it shine ‘til Jesus comes, I’m gonna let it shine.  
Let it shine ‘til Jesus comes, I’m gonna let it shine.  
Let it shine ‘til Jesus comes, I’m gonna let it shine.  
Let it shine, Let it shine, Let it shine!

*(Stand and point to heaven.)*

*(Repeat Chorus)*

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.  
This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.  
This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.  
Let it shine, Let it shine, Let it shine!

*(Hold up pointing finger.)*

**The Mystery of the Missing Salt** – *The children will learn about salt and sugar.*

**Before Class:** Obtain two similar bowls. In one put sugar and in the other one put a similar amount of salt. Bring along an empty salt shaker and some paper napkins.

**During Class:** Tell the children you want them to do some detective work for you. (*Deputize them, if necessary!*) Tell them that there is a mystery that needs solving! It is The Mystery of the Missing Salt. Explain that you had a salt shaker full of salt and now it is nearly empty. You need to put salt back in the shaker so that it can be used. The problem is that you know one bowl has salt in it and the other has sugar in it, but you aren't sure which one is which. Ask them to help you solve the mystery!

**Rules:** You may look at, but do NOT touch, either bowl or its contents.

Ask your detectives questions like:

- 1.) What does salt look like? (*It is white and granular, with hard, shiny crystals.*)  
Sugar looks just like that too.
- 2.) What does salt smell like? (*It doesn't smell like much at all.*) Sugar doesn't either.
- 3.) How does salt look in the bowl? (*It sits there in mounds and moves when you shake the bowl.*) So does sugar.

So, which one is which do you think? (*Ask some opinions.*) We don't know for sure yet!

Hey! How are we going to tell the salt from the sugar? (*We can taste it!*)

That's right! Salt and Sugar taste different! We will have to taste them to tell.

Hand out napkins; put a small amount of sugar on each napkin. Have the children taste the sugar. Which one is that? (*The sugar!*) Great! If that one is the sugar, then this one must be... (*The salt!*) Hand out samples of the salt to make sure. (*It is the salt!*)

OK! Good work, detectives! The Mystery of the Missing Salt is solved!

**Learning the Bible Verse** – *The children will memorize part of Matthew 5:16*

*...let your light shine...*

Tell the children: The Bible says that we are to be the light of the world. We can't do that unless we let our light shine. The Bible says to ...let your light shine... What does it say we should let our light do? Shine!! When I say "let your light" you say "Shine!!" So... Let your light... (Shine!) Repeat this a few times.

[*Divide the room into two groups. Let one half say "Let your light..." and let the other side respond (loudly) "Shine!!" Switch and repeat.*]

**Light of the World** – *The children will color the activity sheet.*

Provide crayons or markers and a copy of the activity sheet for each child. Allow the children to color the candle with its flame. Remind them that Jesus said we (His followers) are the Light of the World!

*Jesus said, “You are the  
Light of the World.”*

*...let your  
light  
shine...*



## Jesus is The Way

Teacher Pep Talk: How do we get to heaven? It seems like such a simple question, and it deserves a straightforward answer. Jesus gave that answer to His disciples on the night before His Crucifixion. In the gathering sorrow of the evening, Jesus reassured them that in His Father's house there were many rooms and that He was going there to prepare a place for them (and all of us to follow.) "And if I go and prepare a place for you," He said, "I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." Then He told them that they knew the way to the place where He was going.

Thomas (always one to need more info) said that since they didn't know where he was going, how could they know how to get there?! Then, Jesus told them... "I am the Way."

Mankind wonders how to get to heaven. Whole religions are based on being good enough, or knowing enough, or attaining some thing that we must chase either within or without... When in reality the Way is right there staring us in the face.

Jesus is the Way. It doesn't rest in us at all. It is fully Him. If we know Jesus, we know the Way. He is the One who is able to take us to Heaven. No man comes to the Father, except through Him. God provided a way for us: that Way is Jesus.

TEACHER'S NOTE: Lesson #12 – "Jesus is The Way" includes an additional lesson plan called "Leading Children to Jesus as their Savior." If you feel led to present the Gospel Message to your class, this outline may prove useful. PLEASE speak with your Pastor ahead of time regarding this. Consider inviting your pastor to visit your class to speak with the children directly about the Gospel Message. – *God bless you!*

You will need:           A copy of the activity sheet for each child  
                                  A hole-punch  
                                  Crayons, scissors, yarn, and double-sided tape  
                                  Duct tape for one activity

Scripture Ref.           John 14:2-6  
*In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

Memory Verse: John 14:6 Jesus answered, “I am the way...”

Major Points: The disciples were sad Jesus was going away  
Jesus told them about His Father’s house  
Jesus told them the way to Heaven  
Jesus is the Way  
To know Jesus is to know the Way

**The disciples were sad that Jesus was going away**

- Have you ever gone on a trip? Where did you go? (*Wait for answers.*) Before you left, what did you do? (*Packed a bag, said good-bye, etc.*)
- One night Jesus told His friends (His disciples) that He was going away.
- His friends (the disciples) were very sad. Why do you think they were sad? (*They didn’t want Him to go. Maybe they even wanted to go with Him.*)
- Jesus knew that His friends couldn’t go with Him right then, and He told them so. That made them even sadder. (*Really sad!*)
- Then Jesus told them something to make them feel better. The things He told them are for us to hear as well!

**Jesus told them about His Father’s house**

- Jesus told His friends (the disciples) about His Father’s house
- Who is Jesus’ Father? (*God!*) And where is God? (*In Heaven!*) So, where would God’s house be? (*Heaven!*) Right!
- Jesus said, “In my Father’s house there are many rooms.”
- Think of that... Lots of rooms in God’s house... one for each of us, if we want it! That sounds great, doesn’t it?! (Yes!)
- Jesus also said, “I am going there to prepare a place for you...” Wow! That sounds REALLY great! There are lots of rooms in God’s house, and Jesus Himself is getting a place ready for us!
- Then Jesus said something else... Jesus said “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.” Wow! That’s really, Really, REALLY great!! If He goes away, He’s coming back, AND He’s going to take us with Him so we can be with Him!

**Then Jesus told them the way to Heaven**

- Jesus said, “You know the way to the place I am going.”
- Uh, oh... there was a problem... One of Jesus’ disciples (Thomas) pointed this out to Him. He basically said something like: “*Whoa! Uh, excuse me... Jesus... We don’t even know where you are going... so, how can we know the way there?*” (*Maybe they needed some sort of heavenly GPS or something!*)

- Seriously! How were they going to get there, if they didn't know the way?

### **Jesus is The Way**

- Then Jesus told them something marvelous. He told them something wonderful, that is as much for us as it was for them.
- **Jesus said, "I am the way."**
- Wow! That is really, really, really, REALLY great! Jesus is the Way to God the Father. Jesus is the Way to God's house... (the house with many rooms!) Jesus is the Way to Heaven.
- Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."
- That means that Jesus is the way, AND that He is the only way.

### **To Know Jesus is to Know the Way**

- Jesus wanted us to know that He had to leave, but that He is coming back.
- Jesus also wanted us to know that there is room for any of us who want to come, in Heaven with God the Father.
- Jesus wanted us to know that He is the Way to the Father.
- That is a VERY good thing, because just think if Jesus wasn't the way. If He wasn't the way, maybe we would run around all over the earth looking for the way. Maybe we would try being extra special good, so God would pick us. Maybe we would try to get extra special rich, so we could buy our way into heaven. Maybe we would do all sorts of silly things to try and get into heaven on our own somehow. But we don't have to do those things. Because it is all Jesus. He did everything. We accept Him as the one who is the Way... and that's it... we get to go to Heaven.
- So easy, even a child can do it. So simple, people fall over it. So fair, anyone can do it. So free, anyone can afford it. So amazing, only God could make it happen.
- I'm so glad that Jesus is the Way. Jesus sets us free from all the tyranny of possible other ways. Only Jesus is the Way.

Let's pray and thank God that Jesus is the Way.

Prayer: Dear God,  
Thank you that you love us.  
Thank you for sending Jesus, your Son.  
Thank you that He is the Way to you and to heaven!  
Thank you for making a way for us to you!  
Amen.

**Leading Children to Jesus as their Savior**  
(Optional Lesson Plan – See Note Which Follows)

Major Points:	God loves us. God wants us to be with Him forever. Mankind is separated from God. (Sin) God provides the Way to Him: Jesus
Scripture Ref.	John 14:6 <i>Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.</i> John 3:16 <i>"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."</i> Romans 3:23-2 <i>...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.</i>

**God Loves Us**

- God loves us! Did you know that? (Yes!) We can know that!
- God loves every person everywhere. There is no one, no where, that God does not love!
  - Whether you are tall or short, God loves you.
  - Whether you are young or old, God loves you.
  - Whether you are sick or well, God loves you.
- God loves you, and you, and you, and you, and you... and everybody!

**God wants us to be with Him forever**

- God loves us and He wants to be with us
- God made us so that we could be with Him forever

**Mankind is separated from God (Sin)**

- God wants us to be with Him... but there is a problem!
  - Uh Oh! What's the problem?
- God wants us to be with Him forever... but we messed up!
- Mankind sinned. The first Man and Woman sinned against God, and, because of that, we couldn't be with God forever.
  - Uh Oh! What does that word mean? What is "sin"?
  - Sin is when we choose on purpose to do something wrong
  - Sin is when we choose on purpose to do something God told us NOT to do... and we know it!
- Have you ever done anything wrong? You don't have to tell what it was. Just say Yes or No. (Wait for answers. Remember: Older children will usually know that they have done wrong things. Younger children may have no sense of doing wrong.)

- OK, so some of us can say that we have definitely done things that were wrong. I know that I have done wrong things. These wrong things we do are what the Bible calls “sin.”
- These sins keep us from God.
- Something had to be done about them!

**God provides the Way to Him: Jesus**

- God made a way for us to be with Him forever
- God’s Son, Jesus, came here to earth and He paid the price for all of these wrong things (these sins) we have done.
- What Jesus did on the cross made up for all of our sins
- *(The wrong things we have done deserved punishment. Jesus took that punishment on Himself. He died in our place on the cross, and then God raised Him from the dead to live forever.)*
- Now, because of what Jesus did, we can be with God forever!
- Jesus is The Way to God!
- We are grateful to God for providing us the way to come to Him and to be with Him forever
- That way is Jesus – The Son of God!

Let’s pray and thank God for sending Jesus, who is the Way to be with God forever.

Prayer: Dear God,  
Thank you that you love us.  
Thank you for sending your son, Jesus.  
Thank you that He is the Way.  
Thank you that because of Jesus we can be with you forever!  
Amen

After this lesson, some children may want to say a very special prayer. For example:

Dear God,  
I know that you are God.  
I know that you are always good.  
I have done wrong things (sins.)  
I am sorry for these wrong things I have done.  
I know that Jesus is your Son.  
Thank you that He paid for all of the wrong things we have done.  
Thank you that you raised Him from the dead.  
Thank you that He is alive with you forever.  
Today I thank you for what Jesus did for me, (child’s name).  
Today I ask Jesus to come live in my heart forever.  
Thank you that, because of Jesus, I will be with you forever.  
Amen

**Optional Lesson Plan** – *Leading Children to Jesus as their Savior*

**TEACHER'S NOTE:**

You will have noticed that Lesson #12 contains a lesson plan called “Jesus is The Way” and another one called “Leading Children to Jesus as their Savior.” You may, of course, use either or both of these lessons during any class.

“Leading Children to Jesus as their Savior” is included with this lesson in the hope that it may be useful to you. If one or more of the children in your classroom seems interested in having an assurance of heaven, it is possible that this lesson plan may prove helpful. *It is meant to be a simple, straightforward, Biblically-based explanation of the Gospel Message, presented in a way that young children may follow easily.*

Please discuss this with your pastor ahead of time. Consider inviting your pastor to come to your classroom to talk with the children directly about the Gospel Message.

Suggested Activities: *(Choose a few activities for your class!)*

**Wide Way/ Narrow Way** – *The children will enjoy walking on a line on the floor*

Before Class: Place a long piece (10') of duct tape in a line on the floor.

During Class: Tell the children that Jesus said that wide is the way that leads to destruction but narrow is the way that leads to life. We are to make every effort to find that narrow way. Jesus is that way. Discuss the difference between wide and narrow with the children. Allow them to try and walk on the narrow strip of tape you have placed on the floor. Put one foot in front of the other. Put your arms out for balance.

**Sing “Jesus Loves Me”** – *The children will sing Jesus Loves Me*

Sing some old familiar tunes with the children. Be sure to include the wonderful song, “Jesus Loves Me.” It will be very appropriate for this particular lesson.

**One Way/ Jesus** – *The children use the activity sheet to make a fun craft to take home.*

Before Class: Obtain a copy of the activity sheet for each child. Provide crayons, scissors, yarn and double-sided tape (or glue.)

During Class: Allow the children to color the signs on the activity sheet. Fold the sheet in half using the dotted line as a guide. Use double-sided tape or glue to stick the two sides of the sign together, back-to-back. (The arrows should line up on top of each other.) Cut them out as one piece. Add more tape or glue as needed. Punch a hole in the top of the arrows at the circle. Place a loop of yarn (8”) through the hole and tie its ends together in a knot. Allow sign to dry, if necessary. Hang on a doorknob to display.

