

Just Us Little Guys

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

Series 5

The Early Church

- Lesson 1 God Sends the Holy Spirit (Pentecost)
- Lesson 2 The Church Grows (New Believers)
- Lesson 3 Little Churches All Around (Missions)
- Lesson 4 Light of the World/ Salt of the Earth
- Lesson 5 Body of Christ
- Lesson 6 Bride of Christ (Wedding Supper of the Lamb)

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 belongs 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 at least one 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

ABOUT THESE LESSONS: WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

We go to church every week. But what is the Church? How did the church get started and what does it do? Happily, the answers to these questions are found in the pages of the Bible. In these lessons, we will learn how the church began and about how it grows. We will hear about missionaries, like Paul, who went and told others about Jesus, and about how people became new believers. We will also explore what the church does. We will learn about how Jesus called those who believed in Him the Salt of the Earth and the Light of the World, and that, as believers, we are each members of the Body of Christ. In addition, we will learn that the Future of the Church is to be united with Christ. During these lessons we will begin to understand what it means to be saved (or to have saving faith in Jesus.) The Bible tells us that all who call on the name of the LORD shall be saved. *(This might be a good time to have your pastor come and talk to the children in your classroom about salvation, which is provided to us by the Grace of God, through faith in Jesus Christ.)*

God Sends the Holy Spirit (Pentecost)

Teacher Pep Talk: It had been 10 days since Jesus ascended into Heaven. He had promised to send the Holy Spirit to be with His disciples forever. On Pentecost, when they were all together, suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven, and what seemed to be tongues of fire separated and came to rest on each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Peter preached the best sermon ever, and 3,000 people believed. The Church was born!

You will need: Various items depending on the Activities chosen

Major Points: Jesus Promised the Holy Spirit would Come
God Sent the Holy Spirit
The Holy Spirit Empowered the Believers
The Believers Talked about Jesus
New People Believed in Jesus
Those Who Believed were Added to the Church

Scripture Ref: Acts 2

Memory Verse: Acts 2:21 *...everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.*

Lesson: **Jesus Promised the Holy Spirit would Come**

- Jesus had gone back into heaven.
- He had left the disciples on earth. *(That seems sad, doesn't it?)*
- But... Before Jesus left He had promised that God would send the disciples the Holy Spirit, who would be with them forever.
- He told them to wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit came.
- Have you ever had to wait for something? *(Yes!)* What did you have to wait for? *(Wait for children to answer. Some ideas are: Birthdays, Christmas, School to be out, Babies to be born, etc.)*
- It is fun to wait? *(NO!)* No, not usually. How long do you think the disciples had to wait for God to send the Holy Spirit? *(Wait for answers.)*
- After Jesus went back into heaven, the disciples had to wait 10 days before the Holy Spirit came. Can you count to 10? Let's count together. *(Count to 10 together... on your fingers!)*
- But after waiting for 10 days, the Holy Spirit came! And you know what?! He came on a special holiday that was called Pentecost. *(Repeat Pentecost.) Pentecost means "50." It was a Jewish celebration, held 50 days after the Passover. Can you count to 50? Let's Count by tens to 50. (Use both hands for 10.)*

God Sent the Holy Spirit

- The Bible tells us that it on the morning of Pentecost (at about 9 o'clock) all of the Disciples were together in one place (Acts 2:1)
- All of a sudden, there was a sound, like a big rushing wind.
- Can you make a “whooshing sound” like the wind? (*Everyone blows air, making a whooshing sound. Teach the children a signal for “stop”.*)
- That’s great. But the Bible says it was a LOUD like a BIG wind. Can you make a louder whooshing sound? (*Everyone makes a LOUDER whooshing sound. Stop.*)
- OK! Great! Thank you! The sound they heard was just like that... And then, the Bible says, that they saw what seemed to be “tongues of fire” or “flame” that separated and came to rest on each of them
- And then each of them were filled with the Holy Spirit
- And they began to speak in other tongues (*or languages*) as the Spirit enabled them
- Wow! That’s an amazing story! (**NOTE:** *You may need to go back through parts of the story slowly, answering questions. Try and stick to the words in the Bible. Just explain what the words mean, as best you can. You may need to explain that the tongues of fire weren’t real fire... No one got burned, etc. ☺*)
- But the REALLY amazing part is what happened next!

The Spirit Empowered the Believers

- Because of the celebration of Pentecost, there were lots of extra people in the city of Jerusalem. These people were from lots of different countries and spoke lots of different languages.
- But guess what!! All the people (*who had come to see what all the noise was*) heard the disciples talking to them in their OWN languages from their OWN countries!! HOW did they do that?!!
- The Holy Spirit (who had come to the disciples) had empowered them (*had made them able to do something*) that they had never been able to do before. Now they were talking in different languages! Languages they had never known before!
- Amazing! And what do you think they were saying?

The Believers Testified of Jesus

- The Bible says that they were “declaring the wonders of God.” (*Maybe that means praising God and saying how wonderful He is, and telling about all the wonderful things He had done.*)
- Some of the people listening made fun of them. They said, “They’ve had too much wine!” (*Or, they are drunk!*)
- Then Peter (one of the Disciples) stood up and gave a great sermon. He told them that the men were not drunk. (After all, it

was only 9 o'clock in the morning!) He explained that what they saw was God keeping His promise to send the Holy Spirit.

- Then he told the people all about Jesus; and how He had come, and died, and was raised from the dead.
- He told them how God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ.

New People Believed in Jesus

- Think about it... Lots of these people had been in Jerusalem just a few weeks before when Jesus had been crucified, died, and was buried. Most of them had heard how He had risen from the dead, and how He was seen by lots of other people.
- Now here were His Disciples, through the power of the Holy Spirit, speaking in languages they could not have known.
- Suddenly the people knew that what Peter was saying was true!
- Many new people believed in Jesus that day

Those Who Believed Were Added to the Church

- Those people who believed on Jesus as their Lord and Savior that day were added to the church
- On that one day over 3,000 people believed in Jesus! (That's a LOT of people!)
- Can you count to 3,000? Yeah, maybe so, but let's not try it. (*Or maybe we can count to 3,000 by thousands! One... Two... Three thousand!*)
- Anyway... This was the beginning of the Church!
- And now the Holy Spirit lives in the lives of all who believe in Jesus. And He helps the Church accomplish everything that God has for us to do!

Let's pray and thank God for sending His Holy Spirit and starting the Church!

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you that you for sending your Holy Spirit to us!
Thank you for starting the Church!
Thank you for loving us!
We love you back!
Amen.

Suggested Activities: Choose 2-3 activities that seem to work well with your group.

Like the Wind – *The children will do activities to explore the movement of air and wind.*

Before Class: Bring a fan (either electric or handmade) to class

During Class: Explain that you are going to talk about the air and how it moves. Say that air is the stuff around us that we breathe and that, even though we can't see it, we can usually feel it when it moves. Ask the children some of the following questions:

Can you whistle? (*Wait to see if they can whistle.*)

Can you blow air, like you are going to blow out candles on a birthday cake?

Can you sing? (*La, la, la, la, la...*)

All of these things, as well as talking, are done by you moving air.

Take a deep breath, and hold it. Now, let it out. That's air coming out of your lungs!

How else can we move air? (Wave our hands/feet, run, walk, hop up and down.)

Turn on the fan. Can you feel the air moving?

When the air outside moves around us we call it the wind.

Learning About Me – *The children will listen to themselves breathing*

Before Class: Ask someone with a stethoscope (nurse or physician) if you may borrow it, or if they will bring it to class, so that the children may listen to themselves breathing.

Be very careful with the stethoscope. It is not a toy, it is a medical instrument.

During Class: Have the children sit down. Explain to the children that they will be listening to their own breath sounds with the stethoscope. Tell the children that the stethoscope is not a toy, it is a medical instrument and must be handled very carefully. If anyone does not handle it carefully, they will not be allowed to participate with the others. Show the children how the tips of the stethoscope go in their ears. (*NOTE: This can be a little uncomfortable. Some children might not like it.*) Then show them how to hold the other end up to their chest and how to “listen” to their breathing. Have them breathe in and out. They will probably be able to hear it fairly clearly. Let the children take turns. Put the stethoscope away carefully when you are done with it as a group.

Napkin Parachutes – *Older children will make parachutes with handkerchiefs/ napkins.*

Before Class: Obtain handkerchiefs or paper napkins; one for each child. Also provide 4 pieces of thread (or fishing line) and a small weight (like a washer) for each child.

(*NOTE: Make a model of your “parachute” to test out before you go to class.*)

During Class: Give one napkin or handkerchief, 4 pieces of fishing line, and one washer to each child. Have the children tie the pieces of line onto the 4 corners of the handkerchief. Thread the other ends of the 4 pieces of fishing line through the washer and tie them to it securely. Now you have a parachute. Show the children how to throw the washer up in the air, so that the parachute will float down. The thing that keeps the napkin or handkerchief open, while it's falling, is the air that's trapped under it.

Plastic Tablecloth Play – *The children will move air with a big plastic tablecloth.*

Before Class: Obtain a plastic tablecloth; preferably a round one. Bring it to class.

During Class: Place the round plastic tablecloth on the floor and have the children stand around it and take hold of the edges of the cloth with both hands. Move the cloth up high and down low, seeing how it moves the air and billows out.

Make a Fan – *The children will make a hand held fan to take home*

Before Class: Provide a sheet of paper, or a copy of the Activity Sheet, for each child. Also provide something to secure the end of the fans: staples, tape, or paper clips.

During Class: Give each child a copy of the Activity Sheet or a piece of paper. Show the children how to fold the paper “accordion style” so that it folds back and forth on itself. Use the dotted lines as a guide. Pinch the folded paper together at one end, and secure by stapling, taping, or by paper clip. Let the other end of the paper “fan” out.

Languages – *The children will talk about and hear about different languages.*

Before Class: Consider asking someone (or more than one person) who speaks a different language to come to class and talk with the children.

During Class: Invite the children to sit down. If you have a guest (or guests), introduce him/them to the children. Remind the children that people in different parts of the world speak different languages than they do. Ask your guests to speak to the children in their native languages. Perhaps they will say “Hello, I’m glad to be here with you today” or something to that effect. They could also say simple words or phrases that the children might repeat. (Example: Yes, no, thank you, please, excuse me. It might also be fun to have them say, “Jesus loves you.”) Talk with the children about how the language sounds. Does it sound different? Did you understand any of the words? Are any of the words like our language? If you do not have a guest, repeat some words from various languages. For example: Say “hello” in several different languages. You may need to do some research for this. Be sure to ask the children if they know how to say things in a different language.

Map of the World – *The children will study a map of the world or a globe.*

Before Class: Obtain a map of the world or a globe for the children to review.

During Class: Make the map or globe available for the children to see. Where do you live? Where did Jesus live a long time ago? What country is there now? (Israel) Talk about other countries where they speak your language. What kinds of languages do they speak in other countries?

Lock and Key – *The children will discuss the Great Commission and the Holy Spirit.*

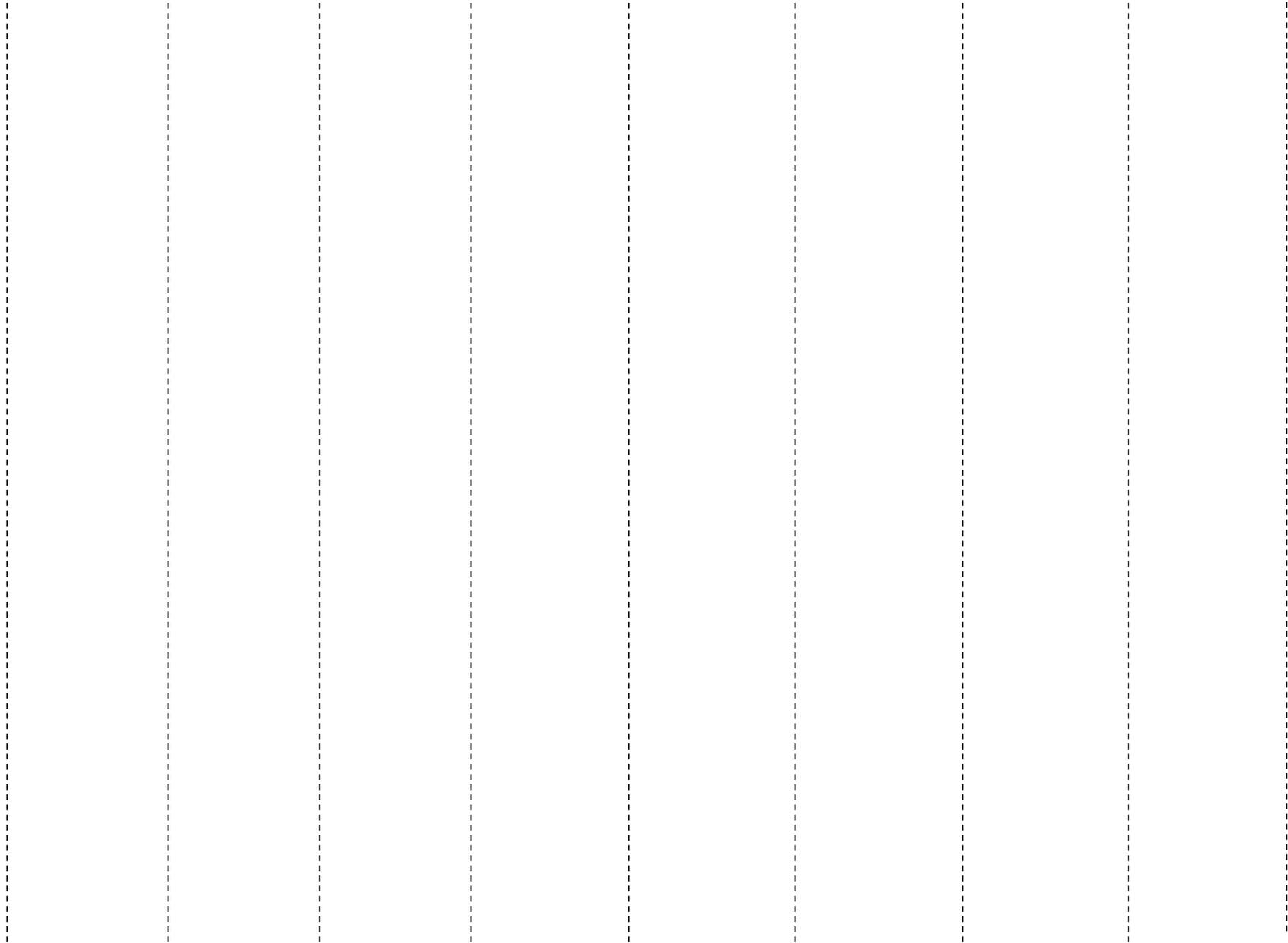
Before Class: Obtain a large lock with its key and bring them both to class.

During Class: Close the lock, and keep the key where it is not seen. Show the children the closed lock. Let them examine it. Let them try and open it, or pull it open. They cannot. It is too hard. It is too big of a job. Show them that even you cannot open it.

Hold the lock. Discuss how when Jesus gave His disciples “The Great Commission” He was giving them a really big job. It was a job that was too big and too hard for anyone (or any one group of persons) to do. He wanted them to go out into the world, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them (in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit) and teaching them to obey everything He had commanded them. Wow! That is a really big job! How were they supposed to do all of that?

(Now, produce the key!) Say, “They needed a key!” Unlock the lock with the key. How simple and easy! Just like the key opens the lock, Jesus gave us the key for doing this really big job. He sent His Holy Spirit to live in us and to help us do this big work... Without the Holy Spirit it would be impossible. (In addition Jesus is always with us; and He has all authority in heaven and on earth!) Now we can do this big job, because we have the key.

Open and close the lock a few times. Allow the children to open and close the lock with the key.



The Church Grows (New Believers)

Teacher Pep Talk: Can you imagine the first church? The Bible says that on the morning of Pentecost all of the believers were together in one place. *(There must not have been too many of them yet. Maybe they met in somebody's living room! ☺)* Then they received the Holy Spirit, Peter preached a powerful sermon, and over 3000 people believed and were added to the church on that day. *(Now what? Whose living room would they meet in now? ☺)* From that time until this, the church has grown in similar fashion: Believers tell others about Jesus; new people believe and are added to the church. Then the process repeats itself... *So many living rooms!*

NOTE: This lesson involves a discussion on Salvation (how we come to know Jesus and accept Him as our Savior.) Consider talking to your pastor about the lesson ahead of time, and/or invite him/her to visit your class to discuss salvation with the children.

You will need: Various items depending on the Activities chosen

Major Points: The Holy Spirit Came and Things Changed
The Believers Told Others about Jesus
New People Believed in Jesus (Salvation)
New Believers were added to the Church
The Church Grew (and Keeps on Growing!)

Scripture Ref: Acts 2 and John 3:16

Memory Verse: Acts 2:21 *...everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.*

Lesson: **The Holy Spirit Came and Things Changed**

- Do you like things to change... or for things to stay the same? *(Wait for answers.)* How about birthdays? Do you like having birthdays (and getting older)? How about growing? Do you like to grow and get taller? *(After each question, wait for answers.)*
- All living things grow. Did you know that the church grows? It does. And we are going to talk about how it grows.
- Jesus promised His Disciples that the Holy Spirit would come
- On the day of Pentecost, that happened. (And things changed!)
- The Holy Spirit came and empowered the Believers!
- Because of the Holy Spirit, the believers were able to speak to others about Jesus very powerfully (and in different languages!)
- **All of a sudden, things had changed!** *(Before the Holy Spirit came, the Believers had been keeping to themselves. Now they were talking to others about Jesus... in the streets of the city!)*

The Believers Told Others about Jesus

- When the Holy Spirit came, He gave the Disciples (Believers) the power (ability) to talk to other people about Jesus
- Peter and the other disciples found themselves in front of a crowd of people, praising God in various languages and telling people about Jesus.
- The crowd asked them what they were doing
- Peter stood up before them all and preached a mighty sermon. (Some say that it was the best sermon ever preached.) He told them that:
 - God had promised to send a Savior.
 - Jesus was that Savior
 - All the things that had happened to Jesus were just like what God had said would happen to the Savior.
 - After Jesus died on the cross, God raised Him from the dead
 - God had made this Jesus (that they had crucified) both Lord and Christ!
- Uh, oh. The people Peter was talking to had been there when Jesus was crucified. Maybe some of them had even been in the crowd that shouted “Crucify Him, Crucify Him.” Maybe they hadn’t helped Jesus, or spoken up for Him. Maybe they had just turned their heads the other way, when it all happened.
- The Bible says that the people listening were “cut to the heart” which means that all of a sudden they knew Peter was telling the truth! (*The Holy Spirit was there, helping them know that.*)
- The people in the crowd begged the Disciples, “Brothers, what shall we do?” (Or... “We know we were wrong... Now what?”)

New People Believed in Jesus (Salvation)

- “What shall we do?” That’s a good question. What do you do when you realize down deep that you have done something wrong? (*Wait for answers. This is important. Take some time.*)
- Do you feel sorry? Do you admit to your parents or to someone else what you have done? Do you apologize?
- Sometimes we say, “I’m sorry. Please forgive me.” We know in our heart that we don’t want to do the wrong thing anymore. And then something wonderful happens... We change!
- The people in the crowd had been wrong about Jesus. They had heard Him speak. They had seen Him do miracles. They knew that God had promised a Savior, but they didn’t think that Jesus was Him. Or if they did, they didn’t want it to be Him.
- They turned away from Jesus. They rejected Him. They crucified Him.
- But then, something wonderful happened. God raised Jesus from the dead! **Things had changed!** Jesus was alive!

New Believers were added to the Church

- “What shall we do?” the crowd had asked. What now?
- Peter told them, *“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”* Acts 2:38-39.
- (In other words: Turn away from your wrong thinking and your wrong actions about Jesus. He is the Savior. Believe on Him and in what He did for you by coming here and making you right with God. And be baptized in His name to show others what God has done for you. And the Holy Spirit will come to live in your life as well. This promise is for you and your children, and for everyone else whom God will call.)
- The people in the crowd listened to Peter. The Holy Spirit had helped them understand that they had been wrong about Jesus. Now they knew the truth down deep in their hearts.
- The Bible says that “Those who accepted his message were baptized.” The people believed and then they were baptized. (*Baptized means “to dip in water” like you put a dish into water to wash it. It is an outward symbol of an inward change.*)
- Over 3,000 people were added to their number that day!

The Church Grew (and Keeps on Growing!)

- This was the beginning of the church.
- The church is made up of all people who believe in Jesus as their Savior. It includes all the people who believed way back then, and who believe now, and who will believe in the future. It includes people here, where we live, and in other towns nearby, and in far off lands on the other side of the world.
- Every time someone new believes in Jesus, the church grows.
- And the way it grows is the same every time:
 - First, someone who believes in Jesus tells someone else about Him
 - The Holy Spirit helps the new person understand that the believer is telling the truth about Jesus
 - The new person (turns away from their wrong thinking and) believes on Jesus as their Savior
 - The new believer is baptized in the name of Jesus Christ and receives the gift of the Holy Spirit
 - And the church grows!
- Now the new believer can go and tell others about Jesus! And the process repeats itself again and again.
- And the church keeps on growing!

Let’s pray and thank God that He is growing His church all over the world!

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you that you are growing your church all over the world.
Thank you that Jesus came for us, as our Savior.
Thank you that you love us.
We love you back.
Amen.

Suggested Activities: *(Choose 2-3 activities that seem to work well with your group.)*

Pastor Talk – *The children will hear from you or their pastor regarding salvation.*

Before Class: Make an appointment with your pastor to come to your class at a convenient time to discuss salvation with your students. Churches vary in this outreach towards children. It is important to discuss your plans to teach this lesson with your pastor, before the day of class. Find out what your particular church teaches regarding children accepting Christ as Savior, being baptized, and becoming a church member. It might be a good idea to inform parents that you will be discussing it that day as well.

During Class: Introduce the pastor to the children. Participate as much or as little as the pastor requests in the discussion with the children regarding salvation, baptism, and/or church membership. Pray with the children, asking God to bless your students. If a child seems interested in accepting Christ, pray with them individually. Involve parents (and the pastor) if any child shows interest in accepting Christ as Savior.

How the Church Grows – *The children will learn how the church grows.*

Before Class: Make up some signs that say “Come and Believe,” “Stay and Learn,” and “Go and Tell.” For emphasis the signs can be in different colors of ink or marker.

During Class: Tell the children about how the church grows; as you speak show the 3 different signs. Say, “First we tell people about Jesus and invite them to **Come and Believe.**” (Repeat Come and Believe with the children.) “Then people are part of the church where they **Stay and Learn** about Jesus.” (Repeat Stay and Learn with the children.) “And that’s really nice, but then there are still lots of people who don’t know Jesus yet; so then we send people out in groups (of at least 2) to **“Go and Tell”** others. Use the signs to go through the different parts again with the children.

Come and Believe - Wave your hand as if asking someone to come to you
Stay and Learn - Motion as if offering a person a chair
Go and Tell - Point off in the distance

Come and Believe – *The children will play a game to learn how the church grows.*

Before Class: Mark off one small area in your room to be your first “church.” The easiest way to do this is to place a large towel on the floor (or to tape off a small rectangular area.) Have several large towels available to make new “churches” around the room.

During Class: Everyone sits down. Now, invite three students to stand in the first small area with you by saying, “Come and Believe.” This represents the first church. Now each of you goes and invites one other person to “Come and Believe.” Other students join you inside the small area. Now it is crowded! And there are others who still haven’t

heard about Jesus. Send two of the original students to a new location in the room to start a new “church.” (Put down a towel to denote new church.) Now they go out and invite others to “Come and Believe.” Soon the new church is crowded too; send out two new persons to start a third church, and so forth. Of course, people in the first and second churches can continue to invite people to come and believe and continue to send out people in two’s to start new churches. Play until everyone is involved. Repeat.

Sing Jesus Loves Me – *The children will praise God that Jesus loves them.*

Before Class: Write the words of “Jesus Loves Me” where the children can see them.

During Class: Encourage the children to sing this wonderful song with you. Remind them of Jesus’ love for each of us. We can say that Jesus Loves Me because we know that God’s Word, the Bible, tells us that. We can always trust God to tell the truth.

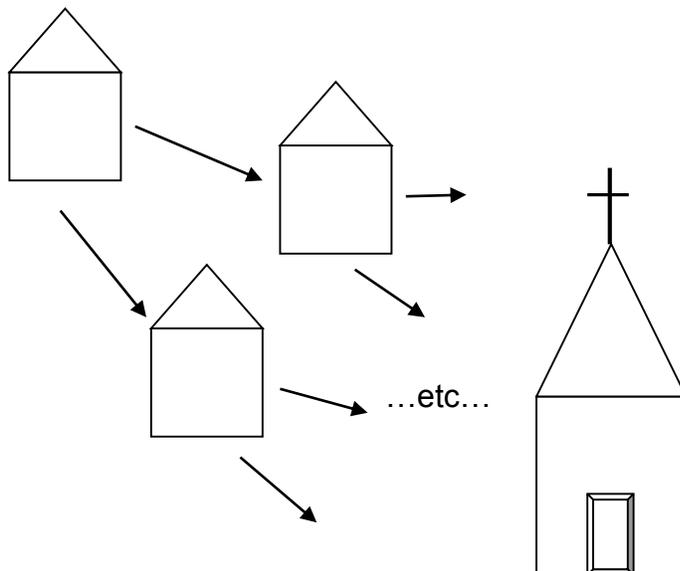
Growing Churches – *The children will learn more about how the church grows.*

Before Class: Bring a large pad of paper to class to draw upon, or use a chalk board.

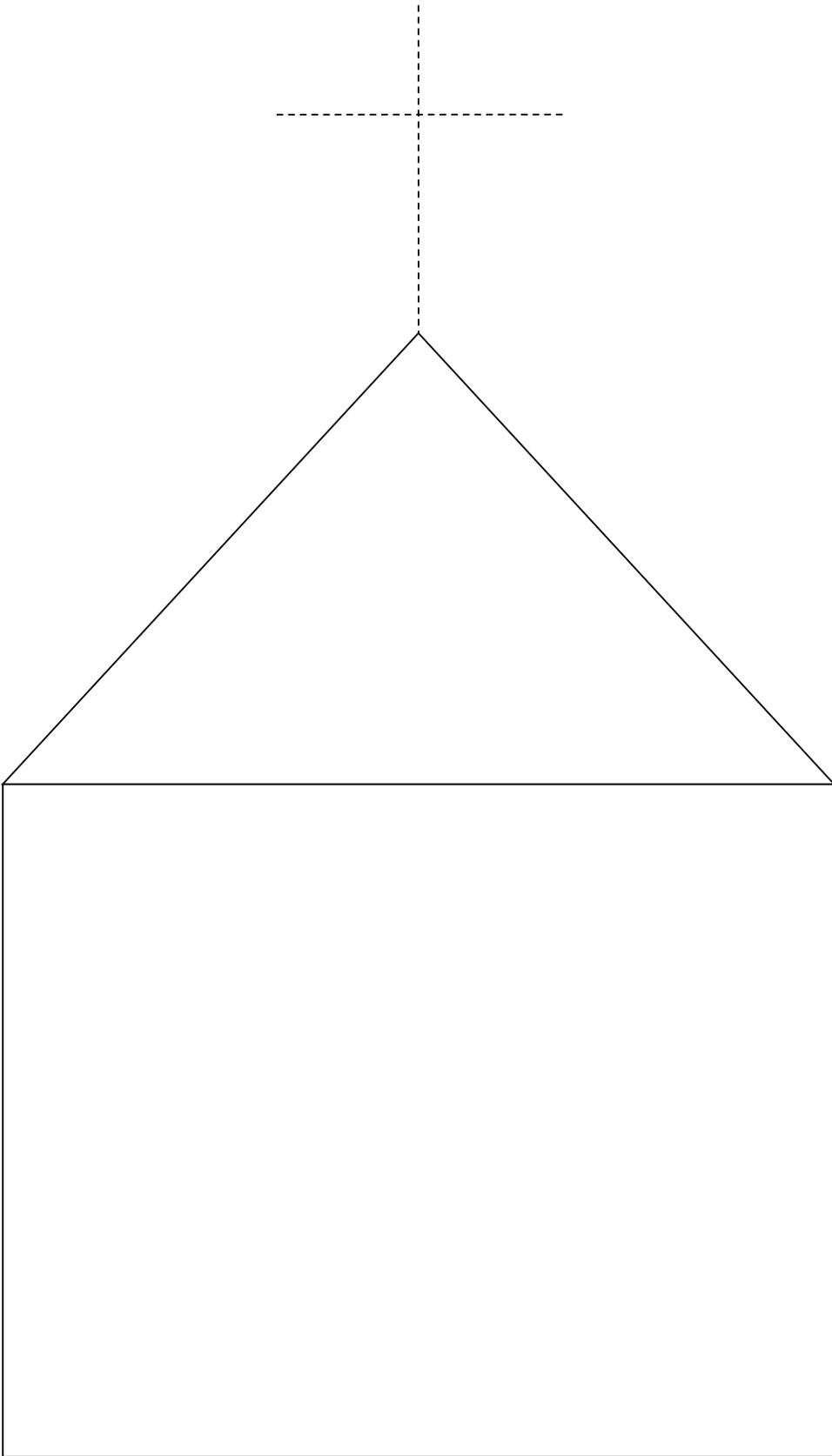
Make a copy of the activity sheet for each child. Provide crayons or markers.

During Class: Talk to the children about the church. (As you talk draw little houses with people in them and then more houses with more people in them.) Say that the church isn’t really one building or another. The Church is actually made up of all people, through all time, who trust in Jesus as their Savior. (If people don’t believe in Jesus, they are not really part of His Church.) When we look around there are lots and lots of church buildings. How did we get so many?! Where did they all come from?

Imagine the first church... there probably weren’t many people in it. Maybe they all met in one place... like someone’s house. But then pretty soon they told other people about Jesus and more people believed on Him as their Savior. Now there were too many people to meet in one house, so they started meeting in different people’s houses. Then more people believed and filled up even more houses. Eventually people began building special buildings called “churches” for the people to meet in together. And that’s one way we ended up with so many different church buildings. But (and this is important) everyone who believes on Jesus as their Savior is part of His Church.



- 1.) Draw first house.
- 2.) Fill first house with people.
- 3.) Draw an arrow and then another house.
- 4.) Fill second house with people....Continue...
- 5.) Eventually draw a church building with cross on top.
- 6.) **Hand out the Activity sheet.**
- 7.) Let the children draw people in the church.
- 8.) Color the cross at the top.
- 9.) Draw windows, etc...



Little Churches All Around (Missions)

Teacher Pep Talk: So, the church grew. The Great Commission was a BIG job, and God had provided the power to do this big job by sending the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Now the Believers would never be alone. They had received the Spirit of Power from on high, just as Jesus had promised, and now they were ready to get started on this big job! As they moved around they told others about Jesus. And soon the first missionaries were sent out by the church to other places.

You will need: Various items depending on the Activities chosen

Major Points: The Believers were to Tell Others about Jesus
The Holy Spirit would Help Them Do This
The Believers went to New Places
They Told People About Jesus (Missions)
Now We Can Know About Jesus

Scripture Ref: Acts 2, Acts 8:1, and Acts 9 (Saul's Conversion)

Memory Verse: Acts 9:31 ...the church (encouraged by the Holy Spirit) ...increased in numbers.

Lesson: **The Believers were to Tell Others about Jesus**

- Can you keep a secret? (*Wait for answers.*) What if it was a really BIG secret? Would you tell anyone? Who would you tell?
- What if you knew really great news and it wasn't a secret? What if you could tell other people? Would you tell them? Who would you tell first? (*Wait for answers.*)
- The Disciples (the ones who first believed in Jesus) had been given a BIG job. Jesus had asked them to out into the world and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to do everything he had commanded them to do.
- Wow! That is a BIG job!
- The Believers were to tell others about Jesus.

The Holy Spirit would Help Them Do This

- God had sent the Holy Spirit to all of the Believers.
- The Holy Spirit was called the Spirit of Power. Let's all say that together... "The Spirit of Power!" (*Have some fun with this!*) Sounds sort of like a super-hero doesn't it? The Spirit of Power!
- Anyway, God had sent the Holy Spirit to all of the Believers. And since the Holy Spirit is The Spirit of Power (!) He was able to help the Believers do that really big job they had been given to do. That is really great news! (We should tell someone!)

The Believers went to New Places

- So, Jesus had told His Disciples to go into all of the world. (Hm... What about that?)
- Actually, at first they were pretty happy right where they were.
- They were busy telling everyone in Jerusalem all about Jesus
- And, at first, lots and lots of people listened and believed too!
- But then, almost all of a sudden, some of the people in the town became really unhappy with them.
- They didn't want to hear about Jesus any more. They said things that weren't true about the Believers. (It got really bad.)
- Some were forced to leave town because it was too dangerous.
- So, many of the Believers went out into new places.
- And guess what they did when they got there?

They Told People about Jesus (Missions)

- Everywhere the Believers went they told people about Jesus.
- They told them the "Good News" about Jesus. (The Gospel.)
 - That God had sent His Son, Jesus, who was the Promised Savior (or the Messiah.)
 - That (like the scriptures said) He died (paying for our sins) and He was raised from the dead to live forever.
 - That Jesus is both Christ and Lord!
 - And that if we believe on His name we will be saved
 - That was Good News!
- When people believed, they started more churches
- When people go far away to tell about Jesus we call it missions.

Now We Can Know About Jesus

- So, the Believers told people about Jesus everywhere they went
- People heard them and believed. Then they told other people.
- And on and on and on... for years and years and years
- Until at last someone told me about Jesus and I believed. And now I am telling you about Jesus (and you can believe too.)
- And one day, maybe you will tell someone else about Jesus so that they can know Him and believe in Him as well!

Let's pray and thank God that we can know Jesus.

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you that we can know Jesus
Thank you that you sent the Holy Spirit.
Thank you that you love us.
We love you back.
Amen.

Suggested Activities: (Choose 2-3 that seem to work well with your group.)

Good News – *The children will make a poster saying “I’ve Got Good News!”*

Before Class: Make a copy of the activity sheet for each child, or provide blank paper for them to draw upon. Also provide markers, crayons, glue, scissors, and newspaper.

During Class: Give each child a copy of the activity sheet or blank paper. Have them color the words “I’ve Got Good News!” Alternatively, older children may enjoy tearing or cutting out small pieces of newspaper to glue on the letters of the words “Good News!”

Globe or Map of World – *The children will look at a globe or a map of the world.*

Before Class: Bring a globe or a map of the world to your class and display it.

During Class: Show the globe (or map) to the children. Discuss where your country or state is. Show some of the neighboring countries. Look at different continents. Also look at the oceans and talk about how since they are water they are shown as blue, etc. Find the country of Israel (located in the Middle East) and identify the city of Jerusalem. Point out that this is where Jesus was crucified and where He was raised from the dead. It was in Jerusalem that the Holy Spirit came to the Believers at Pentecost. It was here that the church started. And it was from here that the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ has gone out around the world. Where did it have to travel to get to your country, to your town, to your classroom, and to you? Consider the following questions: What is near to you? What is far away from you? Who could you tell about Jesus?

Missions Story – *The children will hear a mission story.*

Before Class: Determine which mission story will be told and who will tell it. Do you have a missionary at your church? Does this person work well with children? Perhaps you might consider inviting him/her to your classroom to tell part of their story. Discuss with the missionary ahead of time what they will tell the children. Alternatively, choose a story of a famous missionary to read to the children. (Example: Hudson Taylor, who was a missionary to China in the mid 1800’s.) Check your church library or with your pastor for ideas. Or tell the story of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus (to Paul the Apostle) on the Road to Damascus (found in Acts 9:1-19.) You may read “The Story of a Changed Man” found below. **NOTE:** *If you tell the story of the conversion of Saul, you may need an extra day of classroom time to allow time to tell the story and finish the lesson.*

During Class: Tell the mission story to the children. Use “Show and Tell” items to make the story more realistic and to help focus the children’s attention.

The Story of a Changed Man – *The children will hear the story of Saul of Tarsus.*

Before Class: Read through the provided story several times to familiarize yourself with it; so that it will be easy for you to present. Consider having a child stand in for the part of Saul/Paul and maybe for Ananias too as you tell the story. If so, have some cards (or nametags) with the names SAUL and PAUL on them, to show the children that Saul’s name changed. Also bring a blindfold to show that Saul was blinded and then healed.

During Class: Present the story. Put a nametag on the child representing Saul that says Saul (or have him hold a card.) When he is blinded, put the blindfold on him. When Saul is healed, remove the blindfold. Change nametags (or sign) when name changes.

The Story of a Changed Man – The Conversion of Saul of Tarsus

Once a long time ago (*notice that I didn't say "once upon a time," because once upon a time is for pretend stories and this is a real story...*) Once a long time ago there was a young man named Saul. Saul was a hard man; a very well educated, Jewish man. He knew everything there was to know about the Law and the Scriptures, and he was so committed to his beliefs that he actually picked on people who believed differently.

Saul knew there were people around who believed in Jesus as their Lord and Savior; they were called Believers. He thought they were wrong – AND he did EVERYTHING he could do to stop them; including throwing some of them in to prison! Everyone who believed in Jesus knew about Saul... and they tried very hard to stay away from him!

Then, one day Saul was out walking on a road to a city called Damascus. He had gotten permission to go there and to arrest the Believers who lived there and put them in to jail! But while Saul was out walking on the road, suddenly he saw a bright light and heard a voice calling his name. "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. (*Uh, oh. Now things had changed! Now Saul knew that Jesus was the Lord! This changed Saul forever.*)

Then Jesus told Saul – "Get up and go into the city. There you will be told what to do." So, Saul got up and went into Damascus, but his friends had to lead him by the hand, because now Saul was blind! Saul stayed blind for 3 days then God sent one of the Believers (named Ananias) to see Saul, to lay hands on him, and cure his blindness.

Ananias had already heard about Saul and about all the bad things he had done to the Believers. So, when God told him to go visit Saul and to help him get back his sight, old Ananias said something like, "Excuse me? You want me to do WHAT, God? Because, I've heard stories about this guy and I don't really want to go over there and talk to him."

But Ananias trusted God. He believed Him when God told him that Saul would now be used to tell others about Jesus. So he went and did what God had said. He found Saul and told him: "Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." The Bible says that immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. And then Saul was baptized right away. Isn't that wonderful?

Then something else wonderful happened. Because Saul was a changed man, he became a missionary. He went all over the world telling people about Jesus. Yes, Saul was a changed man because he believed on Jesus as his Lord. In fact, Saul was so changed that people even began calling him by a new name. Now they called him Paul!

Later Saul (*I mean Paul*) wrote letters to the Believers in the churches he had started. We still have those letters in our Bibles today; they are called "books" are called by the names of the churches they were first sent to. These letters still help Believers (like you and me) to this very day! I'm so glad Saul became a changed man! – **THE END**

Letters Paul Wrote – *older children will learn about the letters of Paul the Apostle.*

Before Class: Familiarize yourself with the books of the Bible that were written by the Apostle Paul (who was formerly known as Saul of Tarsus.) A list is provided below. You may want to make a poster of the names of the books of the Bible along with the names of the towns. That way the children can see the similarity in the names and understand why these books of the Bible have such unique names.

During Class: Explain to the children that Saul of Tarsus became a changed man, after he met the risen Christ (Jesus) on the Road to Damascus. People even started calling him by a new name: Paul. Paul became a missionary. He traveled all over the known world at the time, telling people everywhere about Jesus. Wherever he went people believed in Jesus, and they started new little churches in those places. As Paul traveled, he would sometimes write letters back to the people in those churches, helping them understand what God had done for us as Believers and how we should live.

We still have these lovely letters today. God has preserved them for us in the Bible. Now Paul's letters are called "books" of the Bible. They are called by the names of the people who received the letters. Some of the letters were to whole churches, and so they are now known by the places or towns where the churches were. Other letters were written to just one particular person or another. They are known by the name of that one person.

Book of the Bible	Place Where the Church Was
Romans	Rome
Corinthians (I & II)	Corinth
Galatians	Galatia
Ephesians	Ephesus
Philippians	Philippi
Colossians	Colossi
Thessalonians (I & II)	Thessalonica
These letters were written to one person	
Timothy (I & II)	
Titus	
Philemon	

Other Missionaries – *The children will learn of other missionaries and their journeys.*

Before Class: Obtain a map of the missionary journeys of Paul, or a similar map. Locate Jerusalem. Also find places such as modern day Turkey, Greece and Rome. This is where some of the first missionary journeys went. Show the children in class.

During Class: Tell the children that when new people believed in Jesus, they set up new churches that met and grew. But there were still people who didn't know about Jesus. So, at God's instructions, the church began to send out men to go to new places to tell others about Jesus. Some of the first ones were Paul, Silas, Barnabas, and Mark. These men went on long trips (journeys) in other countries to tell others about Jesus. Today, when we send out people to tell others about Jesus, we call them **missionaries**; and we say that they are doing mission work, because they are sent on "a mission."

I've Got

GOOD

NEWS!

Light of the World/ Salt of the Earth

Teacher Pep Talk: God uses a variety of word pictures to describe the Church. During the next three lessons we will be learning about some of these pictures, including: the Light of the World, the Salt of the Earth, the Body of Christ, and the Bride of Christ. These pictures reveal how members of the Church relate to the world, to one another, and to Christ Himself. They also tell us of the Present work of the Church and the Future destiny of the Church. And besides, they're just fun to go through with the kids, so that they will know that God has thought through all of this, and that He has a plan for us all!

First up... We are the Light of the World and the Salt of the Earth. Or, in other words, let's learn how the Church relates to the World.

NOTE: You may want to consider presenting this material in two separate lessons.

You will need: A picture of something that you like (*preferable a fun picture with lots of things in it. EX: People having a meal or playing a game.*)
Various items depending on the Activities chosen

Major Points: Jesus Sometimes Gave Us Word Pictures
Jesus Said the Church is the Light of the World
Jesus Said the Church is the Salt of the Earth

Scripture Ref: Matthew 5:13-16

Memory Verse: Let your light shine...Matthew 5:16
You are the salt of the earth. Matthew 5:13

Lesson: **Jesus Sometimes Gave Us Word Pictures**

- (*Bring a picture of something that you like to class.*)
- I brought something for you to see today. Do you see this picture? (*Show the picture to the children.*)
- What do you see in the picture? (*Take some time and let the children describe the picture.*)
- It takes a while to say all the things that are going on in this picture, doesn't it?
- People sometimes say that "A picture is worth a thousand words." (*Wow! 1,000! That's a lot of words!*)
- When we see a picture we're able to understand things fast, but sometimes it would take longer to explain it with words.
- Jesus sometimes gave us word pictures to help us understand things better and faster.
- Today we are going to learn about 2 of these word pictures.

Jesus Said the Church is the Light of the World

- One day Jesus was talking to His followers
- He wanted to tell them what they meant to the world
- He used some word pictures to tell them about it.
- The first one He told them was “You are the Light of the World.”
- Hmmm... I wonder what that means. Let’s think about that for a minute. I wonder what it means to be the Light of the World.
- What is a light like? *(Wait for answers. It is bright, gives light, helps you see, gets rid of the dark, etc.)*
- Do any of you have a night light? *(I used to have one)*
- *(At this point in the lesson, consider turning off the lights in the room or darkening the room in some way – See Demonstration.)*
- So, if it’s dark and you turn on a light
 - You can see
 - Maybe you can move around and do stuff better
- What if you had to live in the dark all the time and there was no light? *(That would be sad.)*
- Jesus said, “You are the Light of the World.” So, that must be a good thing. It means that the world doesn’t always have to be in darkness

Demonstration:

Darken the room

Light a candle and put it on a candle holder OR Turn on a flashlight

(Alternatively: Use an electric candle, if you have one available.)

- Jesus also said, “When you light a lamp” (or a candle) “you don’t hide it under a bushel” (or a basket or something)
- When you light a candle, you put it on a candle holder so that everyone can see it and use the light
- (By the way, boys and girls, never put a real lighted candle under anything... it might cause a fire!)

If you are using a flashlight or an electric candle, put them under a basket or something to hide the light for a minute. Show how it gets darker in the room with the light covered Then uncover the light and let it shine!

NOTE: DO NOT put a lighted candle under a basket – FIRE HAZARD!!

- Jesus said “Let your light shine before others!”
- Since the church is the Light of the World, we are to do good things to help others learn about Jesus

Activity: Sing “This Little Light of Mine”

This little light of mine,
I’m gonna let it shine.
(Repeat x 2)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!

(Hold first finger up, like a candle.)

Hide it under a bushel? NO!
I’m gonna let it shine.
(Repeat x 2)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!

(Take other hand and cover finger.)
(Remove hand at the word “NO!”)

Don’t let Satan (whhh) it out!
I’m gonna let it shine.
(Repeat x 2)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!

(At “whhh” make a blowing sound)

OPTION: Either you can continue with the lesson or skip to the activities and do the second part of the lesson during the next class time.

Jesus Said the Church is the Salt of the Earth

- Jesus gave us word pictures to help us understand what He was saying.
- One day Jesus said to His followers, “You are the Salt of the Earth.”
- Hmm. Let’s think about that. I wonder what that means.
- What is salt like? (*Wait for answers: “Salty, tastes icky, you can use it with pepper, we put it on our food sometimes.”*)
- Believe it or not, salt is actually really important. Your body needs some salt (*actually there is already quite a bit of it in our food.*) Animals have to have salt, too. (Cows, sheep, etc.)
- Another use for salt is drying or “curing” meat to keep it good.
- Before refrigerators the only way to keep meat from going bad was to cure it (by using smoke)OR to dry it by using SALT
- This helped keep the meat good
- The salt helped to “preserve” things.
- This is the meaning that Jesus was talking about
- When Jesus said that His followers were the salt of the earth, He meant that the church was to help preserve the world.
- The church helps keep the world from going completely bad

Demonstration

Bring in a small dish with a little salt in it
Let all the children taste a little of the salt

- Jesus also gave us a warning with this word picture, too. (*Just like when He said, "You are the light of the world."*)
- Jesus warned that the salt should not lose its saltiness
- He said that if the salt loses its saltiness, then it's not worth anything anymore.
- He said that then it was just worth throwing out and walking on it
- Only salt is salty.

Demonstration (continued)

Now bring in a small dish with a little sugar in it

Set it down next to the dish with the salt in it.

Talk about how the two things are alike.

They are both white

They are both crystals

They look just alike.

Allow the children to see the sugar and taste it.

- Even though the sugar and the salt may look alike, they aren't!
- Only salt is salty.
- In the same way, all religions are not alike
- Believing in Jesus is different from everything else!
- Don't be tricked by things that aren't the same!
- Let's pray and thank God that we can be salt and light!

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you for Jesus.
Thank you that He makes us the Light of the World.
Thank you that He makes us the Salt of the Earth.
Thank you that you love us.
We love you back.
Amen.

Suggested Activities: Choose 2-3 activities that seem to work well with your group.

NOTE: If you are taking two classes for this lesson, then choose either Light of the World or Salt of the Earth activities to do, depending on your lesson. You may want to continue larger art projects from one class time to another.

Candle Drawing – *The children will color an activity sheet of a candle and flame.*

Before Class: Make a copy of the activity sheet for each child in class. Provide crayons, colored pencils, markers, or watercolors. May use yarn as well for colors; if so, provide scissors and glue as well. Allow project to dry before taking home.

During Class: Give each child a copy of the activity sheet. Explain that flames are not always just one color. They may have some blue or green at the base, and red, orange, and yellow at the top. Ask the children to color both the flame and the candle.

Talk about Stars – *The children will learn about letting our lights shine.*

Before Class: Bring something to represent the stars to class. For example: A picture of some stars in the sky, or a flashlight to shine on the ceiling in the dark, or some star cut-outs that you can hang from the ceiling with fishing line.

During Class: Talk about the stars in the sky at night. Tell the children that the stars have been in the sky for a very long time, and that for a long time people have used the stars to help find their way; especially in ships on the sea at night. But, what if some of the stars decided they would just quit shining? OOPS! That would be a problem for us! We need those stars to know where we are! We don't want them to quit shining!

We have talked a lot about being the Light of the World today. Sometimes we may wonder, since our light is so small, if it is helping anyone else. The truth is that people all around us really need the light! And, believe it or not, they are paying attention; even though we may not know it at the time! We need to keep letting our light shine! And if it gets darker around us, it will only make our lights seem brighter!

Constellations – *The children will learn about stars and make a constellation or two.*

Before Class: Provide large dark sheets of construction paper and white crayons or little star stickers (EX: white, silver, or gold.) Or choose light colored paper, yellow crayons and watercolors. (See *alternative*.) Bring examples of constellations to class. (Attached, there is an example sheet of constellations for the teacher.)

During Class: Show the children some examples of constellations. (Use the reference sheet if it will help you.) Discuss how the stars are like our sun (or maybe even bigger) but that they are so far away from us that they seem tiny and not very bright. Even though the stars are in the sky all of the time, we are only able to see the stars at night. When the sun comes up, it is so bright that we can't see the stars in the daytime.

Sometimes we think of the stars in groups, that we call "constellations". We give these groups of stars names like: The Big Dipper, the Little Dipper, Orion, the Pleiades, etc. (See attached sheet.)

The stars have helped us find our way for a long, long time. Most of the stars seem to move across the sky at night, but that is only because our earth is always turning on its axis. The only star that doesn't seem to move (for us) is the North Star. It is over the north most part of the earth, and that's why it doesn't seem to move. The North Star is the last star in the handle of the Little Dipper. When we see the North Star in the sky, we can always know which way is north.

Show the pictures of the various constellations. Draw them on the chalkboard, so that the children can see them better. Ask the children to choose a constellation and recreate it on their dark construction paper with the little stars or with white crayons.

Alternatively: Use light colored crayons (yellow) on white paper to make the stars. (Make sure that you press the crayon down firmly when drawing the stars!) Now use dark shades of watercolors to color in the night sky around the stars. You can watercolor right over the stars, if you have pressed down hard enough with the crayon!

Find the Salt – *The children will learn to distinguish between salt and sugar.*

NOTE: You may want to do this activity during the lesson!

Before Class: Bring two small, similar containers to class. Bring salt and sugar to class. Just before class, pour some salt into one container and sugar into the other container.

During Class: Tell the children that one of the things in the containers is sugar and that the other is salt. Ask them if they can tell which one is salt and which one is sugar. (Don't let them taste of them yet!) Note how they both look alike. They are both made of tiny, white crystals. They look a LOT alike. They are hard to tell apart.

SAFETY NOTE: Tell the children "Since we know that these are just salt and sugar, it's ok for us to taste them. We don't want to go around tasting things just to try and figure out what they are...No! That's not safe. But since I poured these into these bowls just before class, we know what they are and that it's safe for us to taste them."

Now taste the salt and the sugar. Allow each child to taste each one and decide which one is the salt and which one is the sugar. Even though they look the same, they do not taste the same. Remember that Jesus said that for salt to be worth anything it has to remain salty! Accepting Jesus as our Savior is what makes Christians different from people who try to get to God some other way. Not all religions are the same. Don't be fooled by things that may look the same, but are actually different!

The Spice of Life – *The children will learn about different types of cooking spices.*

Before Class: Obtain different kinds of cooking spices. Examples: Cinnamon, Oregano, Cumin, Nutmeg, and Thyme. Consider also Bay Leaves, Rosemary, etc. Check out your spice cabinet for some good smelling ideas! Put samples of each into small containers. Make two sets of 3x5 cards with the names of all the spices on them. Bring masking tape to class. Put one set of the cards out next to their correct spices, but turn the cards over, so the names are hidden! Tape down one edge of each card, so that when the children flip over the card they will be able to read the answer! Place the other set of cards (with the names on them) in a pile nearby.

During Class: Show the children the various spices and explain that they all smell differently. Allow the children to smell each one and tell them the names of the spices. Show them the extra set of cards with the correct names of the spices on them. Place the extra cards in front of each spice as you tell them about them. Then flip over the hidden card and show them that the names match! After everyone has heard about the spices, let the children work alone or in small groups, to decide which card name goes with which spice. Have them put down the card next to the spice and then flip over the answer card to see the answer. This allows them to check their own work!

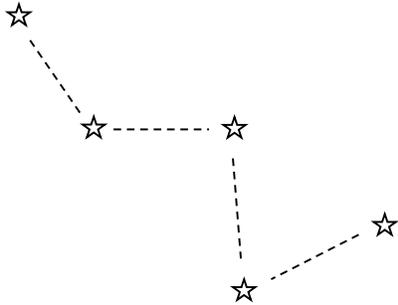
Salt of the Earth – *The children will make a poster decorated with glue and salt.*

Before Class: Provide copies of the activity sheet, glue and salt. You will need a lot of salt! (Use an edible salt: table salt, kosher salt, or edible rock salt – like you put around the ice cream freezer.) Use newspaper or a plastic tablecloth to cover the work area.

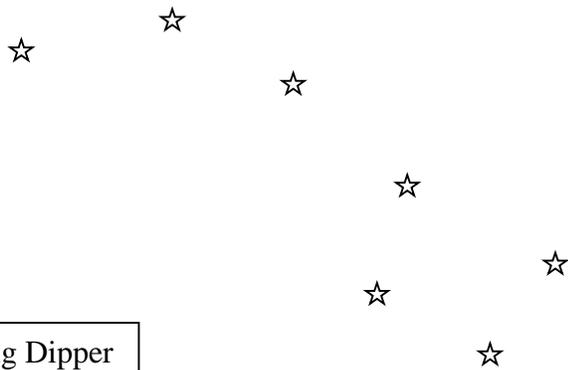
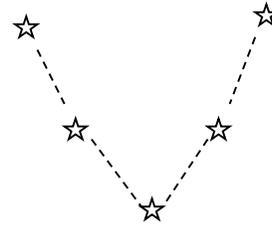
NOTE: Do not use the "salt" that is used for de-icing sidewalks! It can be poisonous!

During Class: Color the page as you like. Then put a light film of glue over the letters in SALT. Pour salt over the glue. Tap off the extra. Allow to dry. Take home when dry.

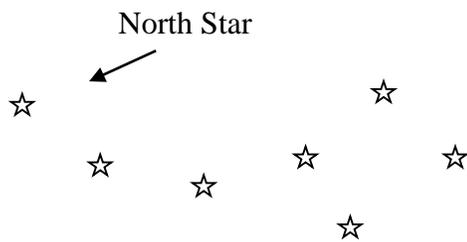
Cassiopeia



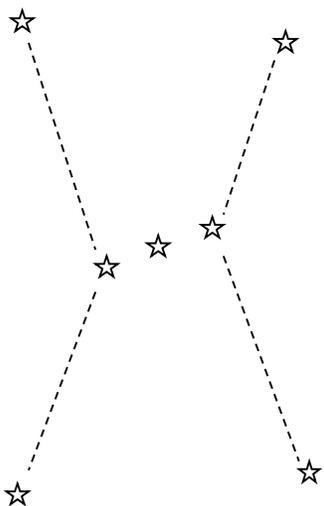
Taurus



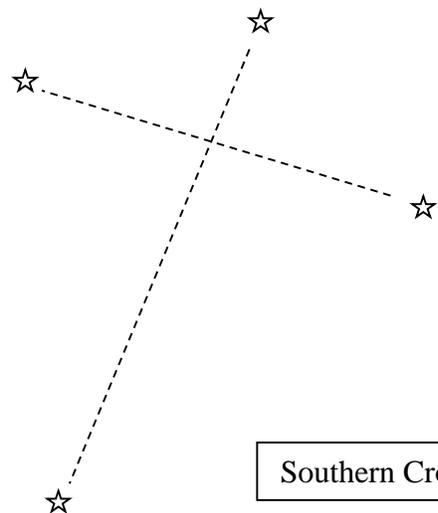
Big Dipper



Little Dipper



Orion



Southern Cross



*Jesus said, "You are the
Light of the World."*

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

You are the

SALT

of the Earth!

The Body of Christ

Teacher Pep Talk: So, the church grew. The Great Commission was a BIG job, and God had provided the power to do this big job by sending the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Now the Believers would never be alone. They had received the Spirit of Power from on high, just as Jesus had promised, and now they were ready to get started on this big job! As they moved around, they told others about Jesus. Soon, the first missionaries were sent out by the churches to other places.

You will need: Various items depending on the Activities chosen

Major Points: Our Bodies are Wonderfully Made
The Church is the Body of Christ
Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church
Each Believer is Part of the Body of Christ (the Church)
We are Each Different

Scripture Ref: Romans 13:2-8; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 5:23, and Psalm 139:13-15

Memory Verse: Ephesians 5:23 – *Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.*
Psalm 139:14 – *I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;*

Lesson: **Our Bodies are Wonderfully Made**

- Who can touch their nose? (That's great!) Now who can show me their eyes? Point to your hair... (Ears, mouth, arms, feet.)
- Very Good! These are all parts of us.
- They are all parts of our bodies.
- Each part of our body is important.
- Each part helps the other parts. (*For example: Your eyes help your body see where you are going, and your feet help you to get there. Your tummy tells you when you are hungry, and your hands help feed your mouth, so that you can be full again!*)
- I'm glad we have so many parts of us that all work together so well, aren't you? Our bodies are wonderfully made by God!
- The Bible says "*For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.*"
- God made us very, very special.

The Church is the Body of Christ

- Just like we have a body, God says in the Bible that the church is also like a body
- God calls the church the “Body of Christ.”
- Now let’s stop a minute and think about what that means.
 - First of all what does God mean by the “church?”
 - The “church” is all the people who have ever believed in Jesus, or who ever will, through all time.
 - So, the church includes all the people who believe in Jesus here in this room, and in our church building here, and in other churches around our city, state, country, or even in the whole world.
 - But for right now, let’s just think about our church here, because we can see it and we know what it’s like.
- The church is called the “Body of Christ” here on the earth.
- Now, we know that Jesus is in Heaven with His Father (God)
- And of course, His body is there with Him (*Ha! That’s funny! Where else would it be? It’s not in the grave, Jesus rose from the grave... and He took His resurrected body with Him! ☺*)
- BUT... the church is still here on earth, and God calls the church the “Body of Christ” here on the earth

Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church

- Now, if you have a body, you have to have a head.
- God says in the Bible that **Jesus** is the Head of the Church.
- Since the church is called the Body of Christ and since Jesus is the Head of the Church, then Jesus is also the Head of the Body of Christ. (That makes sense, doesn’t it?)
- *[NOTE: You may get questions about the Pastor or the Pope, etc. If so, say something like “In our churches we have people who are in authority (people who are in charge) and those people have special titles like the Pastor, etc. But even if they are in charge, they are still under someone else. They are still under the Lordship of Jesus, who is the Head of the Church.]*
- So, Jesus is Head of the church (or the Body of Christ.)

Each Believer is Part of the Body of Christ (the Church)

- So the church is the Body of Christ, and Jesus is the Head of it.
- Each of us who believes in Jesus is part of the church, and so we are also part of the Body of Christ!
- Our bodies have many parts that help us do things and to help others...
- The “Body of Christ” also has many parts that help the church do things and to help others... just like Jesus would want us to!

We are Each Different

- Our bodies are wonderfully made!
- Our bodies have many different parts that work together.
- Just like that, the church is made up of lots of parts too!
- Each of us is part of the church and also the Body of Christ
- What if all of us were the same? (That would be boring!)
- It would also be a problem. What if the body didn't have different parts? What if our body was just one big eyeball? (Ewww.... Gross!)
- Uh, oh... that wouldn't work! If our body was just one big eyeball then we could see really well, but we couldn't get anywhere because we didn't have any feet!
- No, our bodies have to have different parts so that they can work together to get things done!
- We each have our different gifts that God has given us
- God wants us to work together to do all the things that He has given for the Body of Christ to do here on the earth
- We have to work together and **care for each other** in order to get everything done that God wants us to do
- Isn't it wonderful that God has made us all so different and special so that we can work together?
- Let's pray and thank God for making us to be part of the Body of Christ.

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you for making each of us special.
Thank you for making us part of the Body of Christ.
Please help us to care for each other.
Please help us to work together.
Thank you for loving us.
We love you back.
Amen.

Suggested Activities: Choose 2-3 activities that seem to work well with your group.

Gifts and Talents – *The children will learn that they have different abilities and gifts*

Before Class: Think about your own gifts and talents. What are they? (*You are already a teacher!* 😊 *That is a really big thing!!*) You may also have some other talent or skills. Make a list of 2 or 3 things that you do well, or that are gifts from God. Bring examples of things you have done with your gifts and talents. Be sure to include "Teaching" as one of your gifts! To show it, you might bring pictures of other classes, or something you have made for class, etc. If you sing or play an instrument, show the children that.

During Class: Ask the children to sit with you as you speak to them. Tell them that God has made each one of us special. He has given us different gifts and talents. A talent is something that you are naturally good at. A gift is something God gives you through

His Holy Spirit, when you believe in Jesus. We can use these things to help do what God wants us to do. God has planned good things (in advance) for us to do (or to help with). Each of us needs to do what God has for us. While we are little, we are growing and learning about Jesus. That is very important! That is a big job! While we are little we can also care for each other and help each other! Just like in a body, the different parts work together to do things and help the other parts. We are all different. Each of us has our special things we are good at. *[Do your demonstration now, of what you are good at. Don't worry, the kids will be amazed!]*

Ask the children: What are you good at?

- Listening
- Helping
- Organizing
- Running
- Jumping
- Playing
- Encouraging
- Telling others about Jesus

That's great! I'm so glad you are so good at so many different things. We can't all be good at all things. We need each other. We must work together to get the things done that God has for us to do.

Additional information for older children:

God has a plan for our lives. The Bible says "We are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do the good works that He has prepared in advance for us to do." (Ephesians 2:10)

A little advice: As we go through our lives we must look for the good things that Jesus has for us to do. God does them through us. It is very exciting! Many people go through their lives feeling sad or even disappointed; not knowing what they are supposed to be doing. If you ever wonder what you should be doing with your life, start by doing your best at what is right in front of you. Pray and ask God to lead you into the things He has for you to do. Walk in the light that you have. Learn about Jesus. Read the Bible. Pray. Draw close to God and trust Him. He never fails.

Smelling Some Spices – *The children will smell different types of cooking spices.*

NOTE: A similar activity is suggested for Lesson #4.

Before Class: Obtain different kinds of cooking spices. Examples: Cinnamon, Oregano, Cumin, Nutmeg, and Thyme. Consider also: Bay Leaves, Rosemary, Vanilla, etc.

Check out your spice cabinet for some good smelling ideas! Bring samples to class.

During Class: Show the children the various spices and explain that they all smell differently. Allow the children to smell each one while you tell them the names of the spices. Explain to the children that it is God who has made each of the spices different. Each one has its own special aroma. Isn't God good to give us so many wonderful smelling spices to choose from and to make our food taste so delicious!

Taste and See – *The children will taste different cooking spices and ingredients.*

NOTE: Check ahead of time with family members for Food Allergies of any kind!

Before Class: Bring different types of “taste-able” spices and other ingredients to class. Ideas include: sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt, cocoa, chocolate, peppermint, caramel. Consider bringing paper plates to class, and drawing on them (with permanent marker) to divide the plates into 4-6 parts.

During Class: Show the various cooking ingredients to you class. Allow the children to taste them. Consider putting a little of the different tasting ingredients on various parts of the paper plates. Let the children taste each one. Can they guess the names? Remind the children that it is God who made the different kinds of spices and ingredients. Isn't God good, to make so many different things that make our food taste so delicious? We can praise God for making all these things different!

Object Bag – The children will try and identify common objects by touch alone.

NOTE: Do not choose sharp, pointed, or dangerous objects. And... No glass!

Before Class: Obtain a dark sack, pillowcase, or a large, soft purse. Choose some common objects for the children to identify by touch alone. Make sure the objects do not make noise. (No keys!) Consider using: a hairbrush, a spoon, a tennis ball, a block, a bracelet, a ring, and a toy car or doll.

During Class: Place one or more of the objects in to the sack secretly. (Don't let the children see the various objects.) Taking turns, allow one or two of the children to feel the object in the sack; using one hand only. Allow them to guess what it might be. Remind them that they aren't using their sense of sight to see the object, and that they aren't using their senses of hearing, or taste, or smell, to identify the object. They are only using their sense of touch to figure out what it is. That makes it harder. When you take the object out of the bag, then everyone can SEE what it is. God is so good to give so many way of identifying things in the world around us; especially our sense of touch!

The Whisper Game – *The children will hear a whispered message and pass it along.*

Before Class: Think up some phrases or words that your class might easily recognize and be able to pass along from one to another. Make a list of these for your reference. Examples: “Jesus Loves You.” “God is BIG!” “Sunday School” “Time for snacks!”

During Class: Ask the children to sit in a circle with you. (Limit the number of children in the circle to 5-8. Take turns if necessary, or get additional adult or teen helpers to do other small groups.) Explain that you are going to play the Whisper Game. “I will say a few words to my neighbor, who will pass the words along to the next person. We will only whisper in this game. We have to be very quiet so that people can hear.” Start the first set of words around the circle. If the children lose the words somewhere in the middle of the circle, ask the last child to repeat the whisper again. If the words are still lost, ask the child to say the words they heard out loud. Now you say what the original phrase was out loud. Enjoy the moment together when words are mixed up, or lost. Don't allow teasing among the children. Remind the children how good God is because He gave us our sense of hearing!

Dance with the Music – *The children will wiggle to music; and stop when it stops.*

Before Class: Bring a source of music to class. (Christian music is a nice choice.)

During Class: Clear an area for “dancing.” Start the music. Everyone dances or wiggles. Stop the music. Everyone stops and stands still. Decide who is the stillest. Now that person starts and stops the music, and chooses the next one who is stillest. Play again.

Head and Shoulders – *The children will sing “Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes.”*

Before Class: Learn the words which are sung to the traditional tune of, “*There is a Tavern in the Town.*” Practice the movements.

During Class: Sing the song, moving both hands to touch each body part as it is named. Speed up on the second or third time through. (This is really tiring! 😊)

Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes, Knees and Toes.
Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes, Knees and Toes.
And Eyes and Ears and Mouth and Nose.
Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes, Knees and Toes.

Alternative Movement Games to play: Twister, Simon Says, Hopscotch

The Five Senses – *The children will learn about the Five Senses.*

Before Class: On a large sheet of paper, draw a “stick person” with a big face and big hands. Be sure to show the Ears, Eyes, Nose, and Mouth on the face. Bring 5 pieces of yarn and 5 index cards (3x5 cards) on which are written the words “Hearing” “Smell” “Sight” “Taste” and “Touch”. Attach one end of a piece of yarn to each of the cards. Bring Sticky Tack to put all of these things on the wall, if possible; plus some extra Sticky Tack to put in a little ball on the free end of the pieces of yarn.

During Class: Put the picture of the person’s face and hands on the wall, next to the cards with the pieces of yarn attached. Allow the children to move the loose ends of the yarn across to the body part that goes along with that particular sense. They can use the Sticky Tack to stick that end of the yarn on to the picture for a while. Allow the children to check their own work with an answer key, or by making sure that when the yarn is up correctly the strings do not cross.

Eyes – Sight
Ears – Hearing
Nose – Smell
Mouth – Taste
Hand – Touch

The Bride of Christ

Teacher Pep Talk: Sometimes people wonder if Jesus was married. (No, He wasn't.) But the Bible tells us that one day there will be the Wedding Supper of the Lamb in Heaven to celebrate the "wedding" of Jesus Christ to His Bride (The Church.) The church is made up of all those who have believed in Jesus, through all time. One day, as Believers, we will be at the Wedding Banquet of the Lamb, and the Lord Jesus will be there too. What a great day that will be! See you there!

You will need: Items a Bride might wear or carry (*Example: a veil and a bouquet*)
Photos of weddings (*Yours, your family's, or other families'*)

Major Points: The Church is the Bride of Christ
There will be a Wedding Supper in Heaven
Jesus is Preparing His Bride
Jesus will be with His Bride (the Church) Forever

Scripture Ref: Revelation 19:6-9 *Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God's holy people.) Then the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!" And he added, "These are the true words of God."*

Ephesians 5:25-27 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

Ephesians 5:32 This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.

Memory Verse: Rev. 19:9 *Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!*

Lesson: **The Church is the Bride of Christ**

- (*Before you start the lesson, put on your veil and hold a bouquet of flowers. Or you may ask an assistant or one of the children to do so.*) Hum "Here Comes the Bride." (*"La, da, tee dah.... La, da, tee dah... La da tee dah, la tee dah, la tee dah!!!!"*)
- Don't you think I'm a beautiful bride? (*Giggles, some opinions.*)

- Oh, come on! You don't think I'm BEAUTIFUL? I thought ALL brides were beautiful! (*Smile... Have some fun with them.*)
- (*You can take off the veil and put down the flowers now.*)
- Have any of you ever been to a wedding? (*Wait for answers.*)
- I have been to a wedding. I have some photos of a wedding. (*Show some photos from weddings – either your own or others.*)
- See, I was right... the bride is always pretty! ☺
- I'm going to tell you about another bride. This bride is going to be extra special pretty, because Jesus is getting this bride ready for Himself.
- This bride is going to be The Church!
- That's right. One day in Heaven there's going to be a BIG party for Jesus and His Bride... The Church!
 - We have been studying about the Church.
 - We know that the Church is made up of all the people who have ever believed in Jesus through all of time.
- The future of the Church is to be with Jesus forever.
- What does that mean for us?
- It means that all of us who have trusted in Jesus as our Savior will be with Him forever in Heaven.
- Wow! That's great! That's a good reason to have a Big Party!

One day there will be a Wedding Supper in Heaven

- And that's just what's going to happen!
- The Bible says that one day in Heaven there's going to be a party called the Wedding Supper of the Lamb.
- Everyone who has ever trusted in Jesus as their Savior will get to be there at this party.
- And then we will be in Heaven with Jesus forever and ever!
- The Bible says "Blessed are those who are invited to the Wedding Feast of the Lamb." That's us!

Jesus is Preparing His Bride

- Whenever there is a wedding, people have to get ready for the wedding. Who do you think has to get ready? (*Wait for answers: The Bride, the Groom, the families.*)
- The Bride always makes herself beautiful.
- How would she do that? (*Wait for answers. EX: Wash her hair. Take a shower. Put on new clothes and shoes. Fix her hair. Paint her fingernails. Put on lipstick and other makeup. Etc.*)
- Whew! That sounds like a lot of work! It makes me tired just thinking about it all!
- But how would the church ever make itself ready for Jesus? (How could we ever be clean enough or nice enough for Him?)
- The **Good News** is that we don't have to do that at all! (Whew!)

- Jesus is preparing His Bride (The Church) for Himself
- He has done all the hard work of getting His Bride ready.
- The Bible tells us that Jesus died to make the church holy
- And that He continues to cleanse her (by washing her with water) through the Word of God.
- It also says that one day He will present her to himself, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.
- Oh, that will be so pretty! The church will be the most beautiful bride ever, because Jesus is making her that way.
- What fun it will be to be at the Wedding Supper of the Lamb!
- Let's pray and thank God that we can be invited to the Wedding Supper of the Lamb.

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you that we can be invited to the Wedding Supper of the Lamb.
Thank you that you are preparing (your bride) the church for that day.
Thank you that you love us!
We love you back!
Amen.

Suggested Activities: Choose 2-3 activities that seem to work well with your group.

The Big Party – *The children will pretend to have a big wedding party or supper.*

NOTE: If you want to make this a special outreach to the children, you might invite your pastor or youth worker to come to class and to explain the Gospel to the children.

Before Class: Arrange to have a long low table available on the day of class. If no table is available, substitute a large sheet spread out on the floor where the children may sit along the edges and pretend it is a table. Arrange for paper plates, cups and napkins for everyone. Also you will need other things that might be at a wedding party: flowers in the room, place cards around the table, special clothing ideas, and food for snacks. (Consider cake or other treats, water to drink, ice, and maybe those little mint things. But... **NO NUTS!!** Nuts are a **choking hazard!** Also watch for food allergies!)

During Class: Be certain to set up the wedding supper so that there are enough places for everyone present! Invite the children to attend the wedding supper. Help each child find his/her place around the table. Let everyone be seated. Pray together thanking God for the food. Serve the food. Let the children eat. Remind the children that because of what Jesus has done for us, we are all invited to accept Jesus as our Savior. We can accept His very kind invitation, if we want to. This is something we each get to decide for ourselves. One day in Heaven there will be the Wedding Supper of the Lamb, and all of those who have accepted Jesus as their Savior will be at that Big Party. What a great day that will be! Pray again, thanking God that, because of what Jesus did for us, we can accept His very kind invitation to the Big Party if we want to.

Dance to the Music – *The children will play a game with movement and music.*

Before Class: Bring a music playing device to the classroom with appropriate music for the age group. (*Christian music is a nice choice.*)

During Class: Remind the children that there is always music at weddings. Sometimes there is even dancing at the big party afterwards! Have the children stand so that there is some space between them. Explain that you are going to play a “dancing” or a “moving” game. When you turn on the music, everyone will dance (or move) to the music. When you turn off the music, everyone will freeze in place. Now, turn the music on and let it play for a minute or so; then turn it off suddenly. The children will “freeze.” Choose the child who is the stillest. Let that person turn the music on/off the next time, and also let them choose the next person who is stillest. **Repeat.** Have fun!

Here Comes the Bride – *The children will enjoy some time dressing up for a wedding.*

Before Class: Bring in to the classroom some fabric to create “wedding clothes.” You might have some hats, big shoes, old shirts/coats, and ties, to dress up as the Groom. Also bring some pieces of white cloth (dress) and netting (veil material) for the Bride. Other fun things are: fancy headbands or tiaras, gloves, high heels, and tutus. Consider silk flowers for “bouquets.” You might also want to bring some clothespins to help keep on the outfits. Make sure all costumes and fabric pieces will go over the children’s regular clothes.

NOTE: “Angel” costumes from the Christmas pageant work GREAT for bride outfits.

During Class: Set aside a special area for “dressing up.” Work in small groups allowing the children to dress up a few at a time. Consider photos of finished “outfits” done in a special “Photo Spot” in the classroom. (*Photos are a lot of fun at weddings!*) Be sure that all fabrics and/or materials are handled carefully and returned where they belong.

A Place for You – *The children will create a placemat with the Memory Verse on it.*

Before Class: Provide contact paper (lots!), crayons or markers, scissors, and rulers. (Construction paper and glue.) Also bring copies of the activity sheet for the children.

During Class: On the activity sheet, have the child to fill in his/her name on the space in the place card. Color the silverware, plate, and glass. Cut out all the pieces. (Glue pieces on to a large piece of construction paper, if you like.) Pull the backing off a rectangular section of contact paper and lay it on the table sticky side up. Put the various pieces on the contact paper. Place another piece of contact paper on top to seal it. Press out the air bubbles as you go, using a ruler by scraping it along on its side. Trim off the edges of the contact paper. Display or send placemats home.

Alternatively: Color the place settings on the activity sheet, making sure that each child writes his or her name on the place card at top left. Send the papers home with the children, or make a bulletin board for your class, using all of the finished artwork.

Idea: For your bulletin board, you might arrange the place settings as if they were around a large table. **Make sure that everyone is accounted for!** For display in older classrooms or in the hallway, you could add (in the center of the bulletin board) the words “Have you reserved your place?”

My Name is...

