

INTRODUCTION

2 Timothy 2:15

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” King James Version (KJV)

This is another opportunity again to have this 4th Year Bible Study Lesson for Children our focus is that Children should developed a habit of reading, study the word of God and understand it while they are still young. These studies also make them easier to understand and interpret the story.

The book contains 24 lessons. In every lesson, you find the focus of the lesson, bible verse and chapter for the bible story then the material to use for children so that they get to understand the story

Read it first and understand the story then get ready to help the children.

These Bible Studies lessons are extracts from the Global Children’s Forum

Enjoy thank you

T4T Team

BIBLE STUDY FOR LESSON 1: Trust in God's Care

UNIT 1

TRUST GOD

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- That they can trust in God to care for them, as God cared for baby Moses.
- A definition for "trust" and its importance to our relationship with God.
- In this lesson students, will be invited to DO the following
- To pray prayers of trust in God regarding problems and worries they have.

Theme Verses

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL;

BIBLE VERSE

He cares for those who trust in him.
(Nahum 1:7b NIV)

BIBLE STORY

Baby Moses (Exodus 1-2:10)

TRUST IN GOD'S CARE

OBJECT LESSON: Umbrella

Materials: one umbrella

a bucket of straw, leaves or paper confetti to represent rain

Lesson Aim: To show students that God can protect them from trouble even better than an umbrella protects people from rain.

Before Class: *Prepare the bucket ahead of time and have it hidden off to the side to be used by a fun-loving adult at the end of the demonstration.*

Show the unopened umbrella. **Can someone tell me what this is? What is it used for?** To protect us from rain. **How does it work?** Before opening the umbrella, use it in several silly ways (using it as a pencil, sitting on it as a chair, wearing it as a hat, etc.) Students should finally suggest that you must open it and hold it over your head. **Now will I be kept dry?** Yes!

Tell your students that the umbrella reminds us of God's protection. When we stay close to him by praying and reading his Word, we stay under his care. He protects us, just like an

umbrella covers us from getting wet. But he is even better than this umbrella, because he protects us before we even realize we need it. He is always covering us with his care and love.

"Are you sure?" shouts your assistant as he/she rushes in with the bucket, and dumps it over you. Kids should love this, expecting a bucket of real water to land on your head. Instead they see the confetti, leaves or straw. The umbrella protected you. Enjoy.

Lesson Note: How do you know God cares for you? In what ways, does he protect you?

Bible Verse

(15-20 minutes)

Materials: an erasable board or paper with verse written out

TEACH & EXPLAIN: **Nahum 1:7b** (*briefly discuss the verse together*)

He – This verse is talking about God, the powerful Creator of the universe. He is so powerful and so important that he does not need us. But he still notices. **Why?** Because he loves us. **How do we know he loves us and help us?** This Bible verse tells us so.

cares – **What do you do to care for people you love? If you care for a baby, what will you do? In what ways, does God show his care?** He helps us when we are in trouble, he listens to our prayers, he provides for us, he sends people to encourage us, etc. **Whom do you care about the most?** God cares for you more than anyone else!

for those who trust in him – **What is trust?** It is relying on, depending upon, leaning on someone who you know will not let you down. (*Take turns leaning on a friend.*) **Can our friends always help us through every bad time?** No. But God can. Those who trust in God are people who believe that God is big enough to help and that he really cares. **Is that you?**

Bible Story

(20-25 minutes)

Materials: a Bible and your lesson notes

a basket

BIBLE REFERENCE(S): Exodus 1-2:10

WORDS TO WATCH

Israelites – great-great-grandchildren of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

Pharaoh – Egyptian king (the one in this story is mean)

sin – doing wrong things against God or other people

papyrus – soft rope, like twisted paper bag

slaves – people who are forced to work for others, often treated badly

INTRODUCTION

If available, show a map of the Nile River. **Did you know that the Nile River is the longest river in the world?** It is 6695 km (4160 miles) long. The average person walks about 5 km per hour. To walk the length of the Nile river would take 56 days (without stopping to eat or sleep)! The Nile River is so long, it runs through nine countries. Many animals live in and around the Nile river. The most terrifying is the Nile crocodile. It is the largest of the African crocodiles. Egyptians during Moses' time worshipped the Nile crocodile as one of their many gods. The Nile became a large problem for Moses and his family.

A. The people of Israel lived in Egypt.

1. Many years after Joseph died, God's people, the Israelites, continued to thrive in Egypt.
2. But a new king was afraid of them and decided to make them slaves. They were treated very badly. *(Ask several to pretend to "whip" others as slaves.)*
3. Finally, Pharaoh decreed that all baby boys should be killed. **(Read Exodus 1:22) Why do you think he did that?** He was mean. He was afraid. He did not want to lose all those slaves who worked for him.

B. A baby boy was born to Amram and Jocabed.

1. The mother was glad to have such a beautiful boy. She loved him.
2. But his family was sad that all boys were being killed. Their baby would have to die. They hid him. **Is it easy to hide a baby? Why not?** *(Ask kids to make baby noises for a moment.)*

C. The baby was hidden in a waterproof basket. (Show basket.)

1. They hid Moses. They put him in a basket in the Nile River. **What lives in the Nile River?** Crocodiles. **Did Moses have a big problem?** Yes!
2. Miriam, his older sister, watched. **How do you think she felt? Sad? Afraid?** *(Give several children a chance to "hide" in the covered basket if it is large enough. Would they want to stay there for long? No!)*

D. Pharaoh's daughter found the basket. (Read Exodus 2:5-6a)

1. **What will she do? Throw the baby in the river?** She was the king's daughter. **What would the king want her to do?** She kept the baby.
2. Miriam quickly asked if she could get a "nurse" or babysitter for the baby. She brought her own mother, Moses' mother! *(Cuddle a baby in arms.)*

E. Moses was saved by God.

1. God was watching over Moses the whole time. It was not an accident that Pharaoh's daughter found Moses and decided to adopt him. **Who caused Moses to be saved from being drowned in the river?** God made it all happen in just the right way.
2. Moses grew up to be a great leader because God helped him to be rescued from the Nile River. Moses helped to rescue all the people from slavery.

F. This story reminds us of the most incredible thing God did to care for us.

1. 1500 years after God saved baby Moses, another very special baby was born. And there was a king who wanted to kill him also.
2. **Do you know this baby's name?** Jesus. Like Moses, that baby was very special to God, because God had a very important plan for him.
3. Unlike Moses, however, this baby was the Son of God, and he came to save all of us from our sins so that we could live forever in heaven with him.

Application & Prayer (10 minutes)

STUDENT APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- **In what ways did God show his care for Moses?** He helped him to be rescued from the river. He helped him grow up strong.
- **How does God show his care for you?**

BIBLE STUDY FOR LESSON 2: Trust in God's Power

Trust God

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- That God has power over everything in the earth, and can help them, as he helped the Israelites.
- The difference (comparison) between Pharaoh's power and God's power. In this lesson students will be invited to DO the following:
- To pray prayers of trust in their powerful God regarding big problems in their own lives, or lives of friends, family or community.

Theme Verses

Bible Story:	The Plagues (Exodus 7-10)
Bible Verse:	Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God. Psalm 20:7 NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL

Trust in God's Power

TEACH & EXPLAIN: Psalm 20:7 (*briefly discuss the verse together*)

Some trust – To depend on, rely on, lean on, and know it will stay. It is like sitting in a chair. We trust it will hold us as we sit down.

in chariots and some in horses – These represented strengths in Bible times. **What do we consider strong these days?** Jets, tanks, money, armies, computers, etc.

But we trust in the name of the LORD our God – Jesus, Lord, Savior, Friend, Guide ... the name of the LORD is stronger than any other force on the planet. **Why?** Because it is calling on God, who has all power and can do anything.

REPEAT: Write the verse on an erasable board or on cards (each with one or two words). Display the verse. Instruct students to repeat the verse, with volunteers removing one or two words after each repetition. Choose volunteers who can:

- Tell the name of a horse.
- Tell about a time when they did NOT feel strong.

REVIEW FUN: Power Words

Divide the class into three groups. One group will think of “power words” (cars, money, vitamins, muscles, fighter jets, or other strong things). The next group will think of “power names” (the president, the king, the mayor, the executive, or any person with power). The last group will think of names that describe Jesus or God (wonderful friend, helper, Savior, etc.). You will repeat the verse, but ask each team to fill in the blank with a new word on each repetition. The verses should sound something like this: “Some trust in fighter jets, and some in the president, but we trust in the name of the Lord our wonderful friend.” Play at least ten rounds, thinking of many new words to fill the blanks.

Lesson Note: Isn’t God wonderful?

BIBLE REFERENCE(S): Exodus 7-10

WORDS TO WATCH

Goshen – a section of Egypt where the Israelites lived

plague – a disaster or disease affecting a lot of people

Hebrews – Israelites, Jewish people, Abraham’s descendants

heart – the real, deep, inside YOU!

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever watched people compete in arm wrestling? One person tries to show he is stronger than the other by forcing the other person’s hand to the table first. In this story, there was a competition for power, but not using arms. **Who won?**

A. The Israelites had been slaves for hundreds of years in Egypt.

1. They were mistreated and miserable. **Did God notice?**
2. God prepared Moses, a great leader, to help them.

B. Moses asked Pharaoh to let them go. (Read Exodus 5:1-2)

1. Pharaoh mocked God’s power. He said, “Who is God that I should listen?”
2. Pharaoh made life even harder for the people of Israel. Pharaoh was stubborn and selfish. He thought he was the most powerful. **Was he?**

C. God sent plagues to Egypt to show his power.

1. Each plague showed Pharaoh, the Egyptians, and the Hebrews more about God’s incredible power. *(In your own words, review the God vs. Pharaoh Chart together. You must summarize the story quickly. There will not be time to read each passage with students.)*

The Plague	Shows God’s power over ...
Water turned to blood (Exodus 7:14-24) Fish died and smelled. What could the people drink? They had to dig wells to find water.	<i>Water, life</i>

<p>Frogs (Exodus 8:1-15) Frogs everywhere! Yuck! <i>(Place bowl in the middle of cookie sheet to represent Goshen. Drop split peas all over.)</i> How would you like to have a frog on your food?</p>	<p><i>Water creatures</i></p>
<p>Gnats (Exodus 8:16-19) (tiny, tiny flies) Like fleas? All over!</p>	<p><i>Tiny creatures</i></p>
<p>Flies (Exodus 8:20-32) <i>(Turn bowl over to cover Goshen, drop lots of pepper)</i> God protected his people from these!</p>	<p><i>Flying creatures</i></p>
<p>Livestock (Exodus 9:1-7) All the livestock died, but not in Goshen. Did Egyptians like this?</p>	<p><i>Animals, jobs</i></p>
<p>Boils (Exodus 9:8-12) Big open sores, worse than an insect sting or a burn.</p>	<p><i>Health, bodies</i></p>
<p>Hail (Exodus 9:20-21) <i>(Drop rice on cookie sheet)</i> Ruins crops and food.</p>	<p><i>Weather</i></p>
<p>Locusts – Huge grasshoppers. <i>(Drop cornmeal on cookie sheet.)</i> They ate everything green. What would Israel think of God? (Exodus 10:13-15)</p>	<p><i>Wind, crops, jobs</i></p>
<p>Darkness – It was totally dark everywhere except Goshen. <i>(Turn out the classroom light, shine flashlight on “Goshen.” Remember to turn the light back on!)</i> (Exodus 10:21-29)</p>	<p><i>The sun</i></p>

2.

After each plague, Pharaoh said he would let the people go, then changed his mind. His heart was hard. God was preparing one last show of his power: over death. **Would Pharaoh care?**

STUDENT APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- **In what way did God show himself more powerful than anyone else?** He sent the plagues. Each plague showed his power over a different Egyptian god.
- Jesus came and showed the same kinds of power with miracles. His greatest power was shown when he died on the cross (for your sin) and rose again.
- **Do you think God is strong enough to take care of us? Why do you believe this?**

GAME OPTION: Stop the Plagues

Materials: no materials

Choose one student to be Moses. Invite the other students to pretend to be creatures from one of the plagues (start with frogs, then change to flies, then gnats, etc.) and run around the playing area. Moses must jump with two feet together and try to tag all the other students. When tagged, a child must freeze. Play until everyone is tagged and the “plague is stopped.” Choose a new Moses and a new plague. Play again. To keep the game from becoming too fast-paced, direct students to hop like a frog, crawl like a fly, or hop on one foot, etc.

Lesson Note: Only God could start the plagues. Only God could stop them. **Why?** He is God over all creation.

ACTIVITY OPTION: Show of Power?

Was God’s power over nature really that impressive? Invite every student to try these experiments with a friend. Or, if your group is large, invite several students to demonstrate this in front of the class and report what they see.

POWER OVER TINY ANIMALS: Invite students to work in pairs. Give each pair an ant. Ask them to tell the ant where to go without touching it. **Does the ant follow directions? Why not? Why can God tell insects what to do?**

POWER OVER CLOUDS AND WEATHER: Create a cloud of steam with a cup of hot water or other source of steam. **Can students tell it where to go? Can they move the cloud with their hands?** Try (*but keep hands well away from the heat source*). **Can God do this? Is he different?**

Lesson Note: God’s power is so much greater than ours. And he loves to help us when we ask.

BIBLE STUDY FOR LESSON 3: Trust in God's Salvation

TRUST GOD

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- That God wants to save them from punishment for sin, just as he saved the Israelites from the angel of death and Egyptians.
- What Jesus did to save us from our sin.
In this lesson students will be invited to DO the following:
- To receive Jesus as their Savior, forever.
- To thank him for saving them from their sin so they can belong to him.

BIBLE STORY

The Passover (Exodus 11-14)

Bible Verse:

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

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL LESSON 3

TRUST IN GOD'S POWER

INTRODUCE THE LESSON: The Chair

Show students the chair. Invite a very brave person to come forward and sit in the chair. Before the child is seated, ask whether he or she is sure about this activity. **Are you SURE the chair will hold you up? Are you SURE that it is sturdy? Are you SURE that it is strong enough?** Yes! The student should be glad to take a seat and show the sturdiness of the chair. Teach students that what this child did was demonstrate belief. The child not only KNEW something to be true, but the child was willing to DO something about it. This is what it means to believe. This will be an important part of our lesson today.

OPENING PRAYER: Invite students to bow their heads as you talk to God. Ask him to help your students learn about how they can believe in God for salvation.

OBJECT LESSON: **Jump for Your Life**

Materials: rope or other markers to indicate beginning and end
 cloth or board to use as a bridge

Lesson Aim: To help students recognize the impossibility of earning their way to heaven without the gift of salvation given by Jesus when he died on the cross.

Mark two lines on the floor (use ropes, masking tape or other markers as needed). The lines must be very far apart, impossible for any child to jump across (*at least several meters; or mark out a distance just over ten meters – which is the world record long jump*). Designate one line as the starting point. Invite anyone who wishes to try jumping across the divide. How close can he or she get? Enjoy the fun.

After many attempts, bring out a large strip of cloth, long board or other item, and lay it down across the divide as a bridge. Now, invite children to cross the divide. They should be able to walk across on the bridge.

Lesson Note: Can anyone make it across the divide in one jump? Why not? It is too far. The distance between God and sinful people is greater than across this room. It is impossible for anyone to cross the gap themselves. We need help, a bridge. This is why God sent Jesus. We could not cross the divide that keeps us from heaven. We could not fix our sin problem. Only Jesus could help. And he did. He paid the price so we could live forever in heaven with God.

TEACH & EXPLAIN: Acts 16:31 (*briefly discuss this verse together*)

Believe – This word has a lot of meaning. It starts with believing something is true in your mind. The belief is not just a nice thought or a wish. It is a belief so strong that a person is willing to do something about it. Like sitting on a chair.

In the Lord Jesus – Believing in Jesus is more than just thinking he was a nice man. It means believing that he is God’s Son, that he lived a perfect life, that he died on the cross to pay the price for our sins, and that he rose again. This is a lot to believe about one person. But these are all true about Jesus.

and you will be saved – When a person believes in Jesus, they receive the gift of salvation. They will be saved from death and an eternity separated from God. Instead they will be rescued to know and live with God forever.

REPEAT: Write the verse on an erasable board or on cards (each with one or two words). Display the verse. Instruct students to repeat the verse, with volunteers removing one or two words after each repetition. Choose volunteers who can:

- Tell the name of a truth you believe about something not related to church.
- Tell about a time you have sat on a chair.

NOTE: If board or cards are not available, spend more time with review activity.

REVIEW FUN: Talking Chair

Set a chair in front of the class. Give any student who wishes a chance to sit on it. If they sit on it, however, they must say the Bible verse for the rest of the class to hear.

Lesson Note: When we KNOW, something is true, we DO something about it.

How will people know you believe in Jesus?

BIBLE REFERENCE(S): Exodus 11-14

WORDS TO WATCH

Goshen – a section of Egypt where the Israelites lived

plague – a disaster affecting a lot of people

Pharaoh – mean Egyptian king

heart – the real, deep, inside YOU!

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever met someone who is deaf? What is wrong? Their ears do not work properly. They cannot hear, even if they want to. Today's story is about someone whose ears worked, but who would not listen with his heart and do what God wanted. We met him last week: Pharaoh.

A. Pharaoh refused to let the people go (*Briefly review the plagues*)

1. **What was his problem?** He had a hard heart. He would not listen to God speaking through Moses.
2. It was like he was wearing earplugs. (*Have students cover ears. Stop.*)

B. God prepared to send his final plague (*Read Exodus 11:4-7*)

1. The firstborn, oldest child in each family – even cow families – would be killed! **Are you the oldest child? How would you feel?**
2. **How did the Israelites feel about this?** Respectful of God's power.
3. **How did Pharaoh feel?** He had a hard heart toward God.

C. God gave a plan to save the firstborn.

1. A perfect, spotless lamb should be killed for each family.
2. The blood was to be sprinkled on all the doorposts.
3. When the angel went through Egypt, he would "pass over" the house where this had been done. **Could anyone do this in their home? Yes. Was it magic?** (*Kids pretend to paint doorposts.*) No! But it required listening, believing God's promise to save, and obeying.
4. The Israelites did what God commanded. **Did Pharaoh? No!**

D. The Lord passed over Egypt. (*Read Exodus 12:29-30*)

1. In every Egyptian household, someone died, even Pharaoh's son.
2. Any home with blood on the doorpost was protected from death.

E. God saved the Israelites from death, like Jesus saved us.

1. We all face eternal death because of our sin, like the firstborns.
2. Like the lamb was killed, Jesus, the perfect sinless man died on the cross.
3. God made a plan to save us: we can believe in Jesus and receive the gift of eternal life. It requires listening to what God said to do and doing something about it.
4. Jesus' blood pays the price for our sins to be forgiven. If we ask, it is like his blood sprinkles onto the doorposts of our hearts.

5. Then, when God looks at us to give us what we deserve, he sees Jesus' blood, and "passes over" us, giving us life instead of death.

F. The Israelites left Egypt.

1. After the Passover, when every oldest child in Egypt had been killed, Pharaoh finally told Israel to go.
2. There were about 600,000 men, plus women and children. God led the people toward the Red Sea. The pillar and cloud let them know where to go – fire by night and cloud by day (**Read Exodus 13:21-22**).
3. Pharaoh changed his mind and chased them with his army. He still had a hard heart. He and 600 of his best chariots went faster than the big, slow group of Israelites with all their belongings and families. Israel was afraid.

G. God rescued Israel.

1. He parted the Red Sea (**Read Exodus 14:21-22**).
2. ALL the people walked through! (*If you have room, lead students to crawl through a channel made with two parallel rows of chairs.*) **How did it feel? Could they touch the water and get a drink? Could they see fish, like in a bowl or pool? Did they have to watch for sea creatures?**
3. The Bible says it was dry, like sand. **How did God do that?** His power.
4. Pharaoh and his army followed. God let the waters return. Egyptians died.

Application & Prayer

(10 minutes)

- **How do you think the Israelites felt the morning after the Passover?** Thankful because they had been saved. No one died.
- **Who was fighting for Israel?** God. **Could God be trusted even in a hard place? Did he surprise Israel with his care?** Yes.
- **What do we have to be thankful for?** God's gift of eternal life through Jesus.

BIBLE STUDY FOR LESSON 4: Trust in God's Word

Lesson Focus

TRUST GOD

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- That God gave his words to holy men, like Moses, who wrote them down so we could read and follow them.
- That God's Word and God's ways are good for them.
In this lesson students will be invited to DO the following:
- To read (or learn) God's Word in and out of class.
- To review the Ten Commandments and privately consider one commandment that is most difficult.
- To pray for God's help to follow his ways.

Theme Verses

Bible Story:	The Ten Commandments (Exodus 19-20)
Bible Verse:	Your word is a lamp to my feet and light for my path. Psalm 119:105 NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL

TRUST IN GOD'S WORD

INTRODUCE THE LESSON: Follow the Recipe

Show students the bread. **Can you tell me how to make a loaf of bread?** Students should begin to list ingredients to gather, like flour, water, yeast, etc. They might also give instructions, like, "mix it well," or, "let it rise," or "bake it," etc.

If we forget to do one of these things, will the bread still turn out? It might not. The recipe needs to be followed. Teach students that this is what today's lesson is about: learning about ingredients and instructions for following God, from God's Word.

OPENING PRAYER: Invite students to bow their heads as you talk to God. Ask him to help your students learn about how deeply they can trust in God's Word.

TEACH & EXPLAIN: Psalm 119:105 (*briefly discuss the verse together*)

Your word – This Bible verse was written by King David, who loved God with all his heart. He was talking about God’s Word, the Scriptures. We know it as the Bible. God gave his words to people, like Moses and others, who wrote them down for us to read.

is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path – His Word helps us know what to do, how to live, what is important to God, etc. It shows us how to take good steps and make good decisions in our lives.

BIBLE REFERENCE(S): Exodus 19-20, Deuteronomy 5:6-22

WORDS TO WATCH

commandment – an order, a rule to be followed absolutely

covenant – a forever-lasting promise between two people or groups

Mt. Sinai – a mountain in the Sinai desert where Israel was wandering
(*refer to a Bible map if possible*)

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever been around when something really important was happening? When someone was getting married? A sports championship game? Or the president was coming to town? Today, our true story from the Bible is about one of the most important events in history. What happened on that day still affects billions of people in our world today. Listen closely.

A. Moses and the people of Israel prepared for something big.

1. Israel had been traveling in the desert. Moses was their leader.
2. The cloud of the Lord led them to Mt. Sinai, sometimes called the mountain of God.
(*Show this on a Bible map, if available*)
3. God was going to speak with Moses. **Have you ever heard God speak?**
4. There was thunder, lightning, smoke, earthquakes and loud trumpet blasts. **How did the people feel?** Afraid, amazed.

B. Moses went up to the mountain to meet with God.

1. The people waited for Moses. They heard thunder, saw lightning.
2. God wrote the commands with his own finger in stone.

C. Moses received the Ten Commandments from God

(*Read and BRIEFLY discuss commands in Deuteronomy 5:6-22. Or use Ten Commandment cards, if available, from page 2-49 and 2-50.*)

1. **+You shall have no other gods before me.** No spirits, foreign gods, etc. Make God the MOST important!
2. **+You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above, on the earth beneath or water below.** No statue or thing to be worshipped as if it is God, etc.
3. **+You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.** Do not talk about God like he is ordinary. Do not swear with his name.
4. ***Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.** Keep one day of rest each week. Sabbath was Friday night to Saturday night.

5. ***Honor your father and mother so that you may live long and all may go well with you.** Obey, love, listen, help, etc.
6. **+You shall not murder.** To kill someone.
7. **+You shall not commit adultery.** To fall in love or have relations with someone besides your husband or wife.
8. **+You shall not steal.** To take what belongs to someone else.
9. **+You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.** Tell a lie.
10. **+You shall not covet ... anything that belongs to your neighbor.** To want things that you do not have.

+Most of the rules were "DO NOT" rules.

**Some were "DO" rules.*

D. The people were to obey these.

1. These were written on stone tablets (*Invite students to try writing on the stone with screwdriver or awl*). Any mark made will last. The laws were meant to last. They have lasted!
 2. They were to be careful to obey. It could be easy to forget.
 3. **Can anyone keep all the laws and commands of God?** No one, except Jesus, the perfect Son of God! These commands show us how much we each need Jesus' help and forgiveness.
- **Which of the commandments is especially for kids?** Honor your father and mother. **What does "honor" mean?** Ask each student to think about one of these words: respect, care for, help, listen to, serve, obey, talk nicely to, etc. Pick one of these honor words to practice on parents this coming week.
 - **GAME OPTION:** Funny Commandment Game

Materials: Ten Commandment Cards (*see page 2-49 and 2-50*)

People Needed: one assistant

Use Ten Commandment Cards for reference, if available. Invite students to work in pairs. Each pair must create a new funny commandment. For example, "You shall eat candy for every meal," or "You shall always burp louder than your sister," etc. Next, invite each pair to come forward. One student says one of the Ten Commandments. Another gives their funny commandment. The class must decide which one is the true command and which one is false. Enjoy the humor. Enjoy reviewing God's good commands.

Lesson Note: How do we know what is important in life? God's Word helps us. We can trust his Word to guide us.

GAME OPTION: Good for You Game

Materials: Ten Commandment Cards (*see page 2-49 and 2-50*)

Use Ten Commandment cards for reference, if available. Divide the class into two or three teams. You will read a commandment, then give each team a turn to tell a reason why this commandment is good for kids. Choose another command and do the same. Play several times through the Ten Commandments. Continue playing several rounds until one team cannot think of a new reason the command is good for us. Students may not repeat a reason that has been given before, so the game will get more difficult. Enjoy the challenge.

BIBLE STUDY FOR LESSON 5: Trust God to Provide

TRUST GOD

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- That they can trust God to provide for their needs, as he provided for the people of Israel.
In this lesson students, will be invited to DO the following:
- To discuss the difference between needs and wants.
- To pray and ask God to provide for their needs.

Theme Verses

Bible Story:	Manna & Water from the Rock (Exodus 16-17)
Bible Verse:	My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. Psalm 121:2 NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL

: Trust God to Provide

INTRODUCE THE LESSON: The Water Quiz

Invite students to try to answer the questions about water:

- 1) Can a person live longer without food or without water? (*We could live about one month without food; but only 3 days without water.*)
- 2) How much water is in a tomato (percentage)? (*90% water*)
- 3) How much water is in a potato? (*80% water*)
- 4) How much water do you think is in an ear of corn? (*70% water*)
- 5) How much of an elephant is water? (*70% water*)
- 6) How much of a human is water? (*65% water*)
- 7) How much water can a camel drink in ten minutes? (*143 liters*)
- 8) Can a person live on sea water? (*No; too much salt for humans*)

It is interesting to learn these facts about water. ***Did you know you were made of so much water?*** It does not look like it from the outside. Water is one of the things people need to have on a regular basis. ***Does God care about helping us get the things we need?*** Yes! He not only cares about our physical needs, but our spiritual needs also. This is what we will learn about in today's lesson.

OPENING PRAYER: Invite students to bow their heads as you talk to God. Ask him to help your students learn about how deeply they can trust in God to provide for their needs of all kinds.

Object-Demonstration (10-15 minutes)

OBJECT LESSON: Dry Sponge

Materials: one dry sponge or dried out cloth rag
container of water

Lesson Aim: To discuss being thirsty for God and how dry our lives are without Jesus.

Can anyone tell me what this is? A sponge. **Is this sponge in very good shape?** No. **How would you describe it?** Dry, scratchy, not useful. **What does it need?** Water. We might say it is thirsty.

Teach students that the sponge is like a person who needs Jesus: dry, empty, not filled. We are all like this in one way. We might say our hearts were created thirsty for God. We might feel like something is missing, but we are not sure what it is. The Bible says that God “satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.” This is a lot like this sponge. (*Dip it in the water until it is well saturated and pull it out.*) **What does this sponge look like now?** Wet, clean, ready to use. It is full! This is how God wants to supply the biggest need of our hearts: the need for more of him. He wants to fill our hearts with good things like joy, peace, love and forgiveness. These are like water to our souls.

Lesson Note: Are you thirsty for God? Do you want more of him? He loves to provide more of himself to you as you trust in him.

Bible Verse (15-20 minutes)

Materials: an erasable board or paper with verse written out
two small cups or glasses; a large container of water

TEACH & EXPLAIN: Psalm 121:2 (briefly discuss this verse together)

My help comes from the LORD – Only God is able to help us with every problem we have. He cares about problems at school, with friends, with parents, with money (or without). He even offers to help us with our biggest problem: sin. He forgives our sin through Christ and shares his power with us to help us do right.

the Maker of heaven and earth – If he made the whole universe, the earth, everything in it, and he designed the animals, the plants, our fascinating bodies, and more, he can also help us. **Would your problems seem difficult to God?** Not at all.

Materials: a Bible and your lesson notes
bowls of porridge or rice (one fresh, one spoiled)
a rock, stick
water with lemon or vinegar

BIBLE REFERENCE(S): Exodus 16-17, John 6:48-51, Matthew 6:25-34

WORDS TO WATCH

manna – a grain; the word means, "What is it?"

omer – about two liters (or two quarts)

Canaan – the land God promised to Israel

Show the rock to students. **What can you use this rock for?** Next, display the stick. **What can you do with this?** (*List students' ideas*). **If you were hungry, would you look for a rock? How about thirsty? Or this stick? Why not?** They cannot help hunger or thirst. Today's true story from the Bible is about how God used a rock to care for his people.

A. The Israelites worried and grumbled in the desert (Read Exodus 16:2-4)

1. It was dry, hot, no crops, no stores (no ice-cold soda pop).
2. They followed the cloud of the Lord. But they complained and grumbled. They forgot to be thankful. They forgot about God's power.
3. There were 1-2 million people who needed water and food.
4. They said they would rather have died in Egypt. **What had that been like?** Slavery, beating, misery.

B. God sent manna and quail to feed them. (Read Exodus 16:14-15 and 16:31)

1. God sent a swarm of quail to the camp. The people ate and were full.
2. God sent bread from heaven. Manna means, "What is it?"
3. When the morning dew dried, it was there, like frost. **How did they pick it up without getting sand mixed in?**
4. Every morning, it was a new miracle. (*Pretend to gather manna together.*)

C. The Israelites were to follow the instructions.

1. Each person would get about an omer (2 quarts or 2 liters).
2. If they gathered too much (greedy) it would rot, except on the Sabbath.
3. Some people did not follow instructions (**Read Exodus 16:20**) (*Show a bowl of fresh porridge or rice. Mmmm. Then show the moldy one. Yuck! It is much better to follow directions.*)

D. Every day, God provided until they had reached Canaan (Read Joshua 5:12)

1. Every morning for 40 years, they gathered food from the desert floor.
2. The people became so used to it, they forgot it was a miracle.
3. God had promised to bring them to Canaan. He could not let them die in the desert. It was up to him to keep them alive.

E. The people were out of water, also.

1. There were 1-2 million people who needed water. This is a LOT!
2. Their problem looked so big. They questioned whether God was really with them at all. (**Read Exodus 17:7**) **How could they know he was there?** The cloud was always with them, they found manna every day, etc.

F. Moses brought the problem to God.

1. **How mad were the people about this?** They were ready to stone him — throw rocks on him until he died. (*Ask students to show anger at Moses.*)

2. He cried out to God (a loud and desperate prayer for HELP). This is one kind of prayer. It does not have a lot of fancy words. It is simple, honest, and real. God heard.

G. God provided water from the rock. (Read Exodus 17:5-6)

1. **What did God tell Moses to do?** He hit the rock, probably a rock wall or the base of a cliff. **Was it a hard thing for Moses to do?** No!
2. **What did God do?** He sent water flowing out of the rock for EVERYONE to drink. **Was it hard for God to do?** No! He can do anything.

Activities & Review (10-15 minutes each)

GAME OPTION: Gather the Manna

Materials: uncooked grains (beans, rice, corn)
a small bowl for each team

Scatter the grain around a clear classroom floor area. Teams will race to see who can fill their bowl with manna first. Continue until all cups are filled or all the seeds are gathered. Arrange one team along one border of the playing area and the other team on the opposite side. Ready, set, go. Enjoy the race. The first team to bring their filled bowl to you wins.

Supply Note: *If grains are not available or appropriate to use, find small stones, beads, or shredded paper to use instead.*

Lesson Note: The people of Israel gathered manna every morning. God sent it to them. He helped his people get food.

BIBLE STUDY FOR LESSON 6: Trust God with Big Problems

TRUST GOD

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- That God promises to help them with problems that cause them to feel afraid, even as he helped Joshua and Caleb. In this lesson students, will be invited to DO the following:
- To discuss things that cause kids to feel afraid.
- To trust God to help them whenever they are afraid.

Theme Verses

Bible Story: The Twelve Spies (Numbers 13-14)

Bible Verse: So, do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. Isaiah 41:10a NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL

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Trust God with Big Problems:

INTRODUCE THE LESSON: Spying Out Giants

Before class, draw the outline of a “giant.” It does not need to be human sized. Cut the drawing into 12 pieces and hide these around the room or in a nearby playing area. After welcoming students, invite children to look around and find the puzzle pieces. Do not tell them what the puzzle pieces create. Enjoy the process.

After all, twelve puzzle pieces are found, assemble the puzzle. **What is it?** It represents a giant. Today’s story is about how the Israelites spied in the promised land and discovered giants. What did they decide to do about them? We will see.

Optional: Invite children to each write down ONE PROBLEM they can think of that is very big. It is giant. It is too big for people to solve on their own. Kids can write down a personal problem or one that is community-wide, national, or even global. Remember these later.

OPENING PRAYER: Invite students to bow their heads as you talk to God. Ask him to help your students learn about how God can help us with our biggest problems.

OBJECT LESSON: **Road Map**

Materials: a real road map

Lesson Aim: To discuss how a life trusting God is a lot like following a road map.

Tell students about the area that is shown in the map. Tell them someone told you the map can really help us. **How can this map help us?** We must open it up, read it. We must find where we are, find the place where we want to go, and look for roads that lead there. **But how can we know the map is right?** People spend lots of time and money to make them right. Most maps can be trusted. **What if we try to follow it and get lost?** We get the map out and look again. We get back on the main roads.

This reminds us of trusting God and his Word. His words may seem ordinary, but they can really help us in our lives. We can find out where we are (sinners saved by grace) and see where we are going (to walk with God and live right, to heaven). We can find directions for how to get along with others. We can find help and wisdom for our problems, even big ones. But we have to read it and trust it to be true.

Lesson Note: Do you trust God to show you where to go and what to do about big problems?

He loves to help you!

Bible Verse

(15-20 minutes)

Materials: an erasable board or paper with verse written out

TEACH & EXPLAIN: **Isaiah 41:10a** (*briefly discuss this verse together*)

So do not fear, for I am with you – These words were written by Isaiah as a message to God’s people. He told them not to be afraid. **What might make a child afraid?** Loud noises, fighting, being alone, etc. **Who is always with us, even when we encounter fearful experiences?** God. He never leaves us.

do not be dismayed, for I am your God – Dismayed means “discouraged.” It could mean that a person feels helpless. It might mean that a person has no hope of having victory or a good outcome against a big problem. **Why do we not need to be dismayed?** Because God is our God. He is bigger than any issue or problem we face. He can help us. Always.

I will strengthen you and help you – God promises to give us strength to overcome our fear and to face the obstacle or problem. He promises to help us. We must ask. Then he will show us what to do. We listen for his direction and help.

REPEAT: Write the verse on an erasable board or on cards (each with one or two words). Display the verse. Instruct students to repeat the verse, with volunteers removing one or two words after each repetition. Choose volunteers:

- Someone who can name a HUGE problem.
- Someone who can name something that children might fear.

Materials: a Bible and your lesson notes
fruits, grains, vegetables, blindfold

BIBLE REFERENCE(S): Numbers 13-14

WORDS TO WATCH

Canaan – the area of land promised by God to Israel

tribe – a family division of the nation of Israel; about 50,000 people in each

INTRODUCTION

Select two volunteers for a comparison test. Ask one to wear the blindfold for the rest of the test. Invite each volunteer to perform the following actions:

1. Walk over, touch the back wall and return to the same spot. (*Enjoy the attempts of the person with blindfold. Watch for safety.*)
2. Count all the people in the room with ribbons in their hair.
3. Count the number of people sitting in the back row.

Ask each volunteer to answer the questions. **Did you have any trouble with these tasks?**

Why? The person wearing the blindfold could not see very well.

This reminds us of faith. Our lives without faith are a lot like the person with the blindfold. We can not see anything, light does not get in, we have trouble finding our way. We even have trouble seeing the people around us in God's light. But with faith, our lives are a lot like the person without the blindfold. We can see more clearly to do the right things and safe things. We see others as God sees them. Today's story is about the people of Israel and their level of faith.

A. The spies explored Canaan (Read Numbers 13:1-2 & 17-20)

1. They were to choose one man from each tribe (family group).
2. These men were to explore the whole land.
3. The spies were preparing Israel for war. They knew they would have to do at least some fighting. God had promised to give them victory.

B. They all saw the same thing.

1. The food was great, especially grapes. (**Read Numbers 13:23**) (*Show fruits to children; these grew enormous in Canaan.*)
2. It was a good, prosperous land. It flowed with milk and honey.
3. There were lots of strong people already living there.

C. The spies had different reactions.

1. Ten of the spies said the people in Canaan were too powerful to defeat.
 - a. They were afraid to take the land (the promised land).
 - b. They felt like grasshoppers in comparison.
 - c. They spread the bad news. (*Pretend to whisper bad reports.*)
2. Two of the spies said the opposite. (**Read Numbers 14:6-9**)
 - a. They were not afraid. **Why?**
 - b. They trusted in God's promise to defeat the people.
 - c. They knew that God was on their side.

D. The people believed the bad report.

1. They wanted to stone Joshua and Caleb. *(Show how they felt.)*
2. They grumbled and wanted to return to Egypt – again!
3. They were afraid of the giants, even though God had promised to give them victory.

E. God responded to each group.

1. He sent a plague that killed the 10 spies
 2. God made Israel wander for 40 years in the wilderness, a fairly small area. *(Show this on a Bible map, if available.)*
 3. Joshua and Caleb were spared. **Why?** They had faith in God's power, not in their own. And they remembered God's promises.
 4. God promised to bring them to the land.
- **What can we learn from this story?** When we face something hard, we should still do the right thing. Joshua and Caleb still trusted God, even though they faced powerful enemies to fight. Were they like the student walking with the blindfold on his or her head? No! They had clear vision to trust in God. Others did not.

Closing

(5-10 minutes)

REVIEW OPTION:

Ten Commandments Game

Materials:

Ten Commandment Cards *(see page 2-49 and 2-50)*

Play a review game with two teams (girls versus boys, or left side of room versus right, etc.). Give each team the chance to answer a question about the day's lesson. As they get the answer correct, the team earns one of the Ten Commandment Cards. Each time a commandment is earned, say it aloud together. The first team to win a full set of commandments wins. To finish, read all of the Ten Commandments together.

NOTE: Ten Commandment Cards are optional. Simply let children keep score without using the cards, if necessary.

BIBLE STUDY FOR LESSON 7: Trust God to Help You

Lesson Focus

TRUST GOD

The **focus** of this lesson is that **children know**:

- That God wants to help them at all times, as he helped Joshua at Jericho.
- In this lesson students, will be invited to DO the following:
 - To discuss/list ways in which kids show their trust in God.

Theme Verses

Bible Story: The Battle of Jericho (Joshua 2, 5, 6)

Bible Verse: Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL

Trust God to Help You:

INTRODUCE THE LESSON: Where Are You Going?

Invite all students to stand. Ask them to close their eyes (tightly) and do exactly as you say. **Are you ready?** Use the following instructions, or make up your own to fit your setting and kids (always watch for safety). Turn to the right. Take two steps forward. Turn to the left. Pat your head five times. Turn to the left. Turn to the left. Turn to the left again. Take two steps backward. Turn to the left. Open your eyes. **Do you know where you are?** You should be right back where you started.

Sometimes, God directs us to do things, and we don't understand why. His directions do not make sense. To us, it would be better to do things our own way. Today's lesson is about trusting (and obeying) God as he helps us.

OPENING PRAYER: Invite students to bow their heads as you talk to God. Ask him to help your students learn about how much God can be trusted to help them.

OBJECT LESSON: How Many Ways to Peel a Banana?

Materials: several bananas

Lesson Aim: To discover that just as a banana can be peeled in many different ways, God can give us help with our problems in ways we cannot always imagine.

Show students the banana. **How many ways are there to peel a banana?** Some students might say ONE (by peeling back the stem). Others might say TWO (by starting to peel it from the bottom instead of the top stem). If students do not offer these ideas, show them your other ideas: use a knife to slice the banana; make an opening in the center of the banana; break the banana in half, etc. Enjoy discovering that a banana can be peeled in many different ways. Some animals might even eat it with the peel on.

What does this have to do with God? God tells us to trust him. He offers to help us. But we never know exactly how he will do it.

How many ways are there to win a battle? We might say there is only one or two ways. All have to do with the might of armies and their weapons. In today's story (the Battle of Jericho), we will see that God was very creative in telling the people what to do to win the battle. It was very different.

Lesson Note: Do you trust God to help you? Will you follow his directions, even if they are unusual? Or will you insist on doing things your own way? God loves when his people trust him and obey him!

Bible Verse **(15-20 minutes)**

Materials: an erasable board or paper with verse written out

TEACH & EXPLAIN: **Proverbs 3:5-6** (*briefly discuss this verse together*)

Trust – to have full confidence in something; to believe that God will do what he says. It can be as natural as believing a chair will hold us up if we sit on it.

in the Lord – anyone or anything else will eventually let us down

with all your heart – This means not just trusting with a small part of our hearts, but with full trust. Our heart is the deepest part, inside of us.

and lean not on your own understanding – Do not depend on your own thinking or wisdom to get you through the difficult times in life. God's way is always smarter.

in all your ways acknowledge him – Everywhere we go we must remember God. Let him know we are trusting him.

and he will make your paths straight – he will help us walk God's way; not crooked, confused, mixed up, or lost.

BIBLE REFERENCE(S): Joshua 2:1-24

Joshua 5:13-6:27

WORDS TO WATCH

ark of covenant – a special chest with stone tablets, manna and Aaron's staff to remind people of God's promises and presence

Jericho – a city in Canaan

Levites – one of the family tribes of Israel; they were the priest

INTRODUCTION

(Show the drawing of a trumpet, if you have one) **Have you ever seen a trumpet? What is it used for?** It is a musical instrument. It is wonderful for loud celebrations, announcements, and other songs. **Have you ever heard of it being used as a weapon to take over an entire city?** Today, our true story from the Bible is about a battle using trumpets. It is one of the most exciting stories in the Bible. We will read a lot of it straight from the Bible.

A. Spies met Rahab when they were checking out the strength of the city. *(Read Joshua 2:11-12)*

1. Rahab hid them in her house so rulers would not find them.
2. She asked to be rescued from the battle. She feared God's power.
3. She was to keep the scarlet (red) rope hanging from her window as a signal of her faith, fear of God and her desire to be saved.

B. Joshua waited for God's plan. *(Read Joshua 6:2-5)*

1. **Was Joshua praying?** We know he was trusting, even if he was not sure what to do next.
2. The Lord spoke to Joshua through an angel.
3. He told him what to do to conquer the city: march, use trumpets and shout.
Does this sound like the way to win a battle? No. But God can do ANYTHING!

C. The people obeyed.

1. The priests and soldiers marched around the city with trumpets.
2. They did this for six days, not saying a word! **How do you think the people inside felt? Afraid? Wishing they could run away?**
3. They did not give up. **Did they have a very hard job? Did it look like it was the way to defeat enemies?**

D. The walls of Jericho came down. *(Read Joshua 6:15-20)*

1. *(Stack building blocks in the shape of a wall on the floor. Invite students to march around them. Ask all students to shout, when you count to "3." Children may be seated again.)*
2. **Does the wall fall? No! How was it possible with a big stone wall?** God did it.

E. Rahab and her family were saved.

1. After the walls crumbled, the warriors went in and killed their enemies.
2. Rahab's house was built into the wall. **Could a red scarf really save her from the tumbling rock?** No! But she had faith in God and had shown it by helping the spies.
3. The spies spared Rahab. *(Read Joshua 6:22-23)*
4. God protected her from being destroyed when the walls fell down.

- **God honors faithful obedience.** The Israelites kept on obeying, even though they knew marching, blowing trumpets and shouting were not good battle techniques. If God reminds us to obey him, even in something simple (praying, reading his Word, being kind to others), we need to do it. He will honor our obedience and help us with the tough situations in our lives. He helps each of us in a different way.
- **God honors faith in his power.** Rahab and her family could do nothing to save themselves. *(Their home was built into the wall of Jericho!)* God's power to destroy the city could easily have destroyed them, too. But she had faith. This is a lot like us and our salvation. We can do nothing to save ourselves from the punishment we deserve for our sin. But when we have faith in God's mercy and trust in Christ as our Savior, he saves us. Salvation is impossible without Christ!

BIBLE STUDY LESSON 8 Pray Every Day

**UNIT 2:
Make Jesus Most Important**

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- The importance of talking with God in prayer, every day.
- Basic elements of prayer as outlined by Jesus in the Lord's Prayer (PRAY). In this lesson students, will come to DO the following:
- To discuss different ways God answers prayer (yes-no-wait).
To consider prayer requests, pray together and watch for (and accept) God's answer

Theme Verses

Bible Story:	Jesus Teaches His Disciples to Pray (Matthew 6, Luke 18)
Bible Verse:	Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Matthew 6:9b-10 NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL
PRAY EVERY DAY

INTRODUCE THE LESSON: Best Friends

Invite children to work with a partner to list as many ways as possible to help people grow to become best friends. Write these down, or just discuss them. Best friends have lots of common interests, they spend time together, they enjoy each other's company, they care about each other, they help each other when trouble comes, they listen, they play together, etc.

How many of these things describe you and your relationship with Jesus? He wants to be your very best friend. This friendship with him grows in many similar ways. First of all, he is with you always, so he spends a lot of time with you (even if you are not aware of him). One of the best ways to grow a best friendship with Jesus is through prayer: talking with him, listening to him. **Do you spend time in prayer with Jesus?** We will learn about this together today.

OPENING PRAYER: Invite students to bow their heads as you talk to God. Ask him to help your students learn the importance of praying every day.

OBJECT LESSON: **Plastic Bag**

Materials: one plastic bag (*clear, if possible*)
 wrapped candies or small prizes for each (*optional*)

Lesson Aim: To show that prayer helps hold the pieces life together like a bag helps hold together lots of loose items.

Show students the bag of candy. Choose a quiet volunteer. **How well can he or she hold lots of items?** Begin giving the student one handful of loose candy at a time from your bag. Keep doing this until the student is dropping pieces all over the place. **Is something wrong? Why are you having a hard time holding the candy?** Because it is hard to hold all the pieces without the bag.

This experiment reminds us of prayer. Without prayer, the little worries that crowd into our lives become hard to hold together. We find that we cannot keep things in order. We feel like we are confused. We even start losing things – sometimes important things. But prayer helps us, like this plastic zipper bag. It helps to contain all the little things that come along in life. It helps keep things calm. It helps keep things in order. **Why?** Because when we pray, we give our worries to God to hold.

Lesson Note: Are you spending time praying to God? Can you begin to make time for this each day?

TEACH & EXPLAIN: **Matthew 6:9b-10** (*briefly discuss this verse together*)

Our Father in heaven – Jesus taught his disciples to pray to God as their Father. A good father cares for his children. He helps them grow up healthy and strong. The people of Israel had never been taught to talk about God as their Father. This seemed too familiar, too disrespectful. But Jesus was teaching that God wanted a close relationship, like best friends, like family members.

hallowed (holy) be your name – These words reminded them to love God only. The prayer reminded them to worship God as holy, perfect.

your kingdom come – Jesus reminded his disciples that God’s Kingdom was more important than any other kingdom we might be part of on earth. He alone is in charge of the universe.

your will be done on earth as it is in heaven – When his will takes place, it is always good and righteous. We must pray for God’s ways to reign in all areas of our lives. In heaven, the angels immediately do whatever God asks them to do. On earth, people can choose whether to obey God or not. **Does God’s way always happen around us?** No. People sin. People make mistakes. People ignore God.

REPEAT: Instruct students to repeat the verse, with volunteers removing one or two words after each repetition. Do this until kids repeat the verse from memory. Choose eraser volunteers in fun ways related to today’s verse:

- Choose someone who has memorized a prayer.
- Choose someone who can tell what “holy” means.
- Name something on earth that God would want to happen (his will).

NOTE: If board or cards are not available, spend more time with review activity.

THE GAME: Praying Motions

Repeat the verse several times with the whole class. For each phrase, make up motions. Our Father (put hands up into air, as a child to a father), in heaven (point to heaven), hallowed be your name (bow down in honor), etc. Say the verse several times using the motions.

Lesson Note: Jesus taught his disciples to pray. His prayer taught them that God was more important than anyone or anything else.

Materials: a Bible and your lesson notes

BIBLE REFERENCE(S): Matthew 6:5-15

Luke 18:9-14

WORDS TO WATCH

synagogue – Jewish church building

Pharisee – religious leader in Jesus' time

INTRODUCTION

Teach students that Jesus wanted his disciples to learn to pray on their own, not only when other people would hear. He wanted them to practice true prayer to God. He knew they would need it to grow in him.

A. Jesus taught his disciples about prayer. Why?

1. Prayer is talking to God, the Creator of the universe. It is awesome that he will spend time listening to us.
2. Prayer is talking to God, the mighty God. He can do anything. It is exciting to see how he answers prayers for big and small needs.
3. Prayer is talking to God, who wants to grow a best friendship with us.
4. Prayer is talking to God about others. Prayer helps us see others through God's eyes. We pray God's best for them.

B. Jesus teaches about prayer (*Read Matthew 6:5-8*)

1. Do not pray like hypocrites. They act like they trust God as they pray loudly. They just want to seem spiritual in front of others.
2. Pray alone, where no one but God will see or hear. **Is this prayer easy to do? Why or why not?** God is invisible. It is easy to think he is not listening. We may forget. (*Imagine going to a secret place to pray.*)
3. God rewards private prayer. He listens and answers prayer. He will honor the people who truly trust him.
4. Do not be like pagans (non-believers) who repeat meaningless words.
5. God knows our needs before we ask. He loves when we talk to him.

C. Jesus taught his disciples the Lord's Prayer (Read Matthew 6:9-13)

1. The prayer reminded them to talk to God about daily needs: "Give us today our daily bread." This would help them trust God for what they needed, not just what they wanted.
2. The prayer reminded them to ask God for forgiveness: "Forgive us our debts (*our wrongs*) as we forgive our debtors (*those who have wronged us*)." He reminded them to keep their hearts clean of sin.
3. The prayer reminded them they needed God's help to be strong against sin: "lead us not into temptation."
4. The prayer reminded them they needed God's help to be strong against the devil: "But deliver us from the evil one."

D. Pharisee's and Sinner's Prayers (Read Luke 18:9-14)

THE PHARISEE (He liked to look good when people were watching.)

1. He stood up and prayed loudly for all to hear. (*Pray like Pharisees.*)
2. He honored himself more than he honored God or others.

TAX COLLECTOR (They were despised, considered cheaters)

1. He did not even go into the temple. He was too ashamed to look up to heaven. (*Pray like the tax collector.*)
2. He was full of grief about his sin. He begged God for mercy.
3. God heard and answered the prayers of the tax collector. He rewards those who pray to him from the heart.

Application & Prayer (10 minutes)

- **What kind of things can we pray about? How can we know God listens? How do we know he will help?**

PRAYER: Practice Praying

Teach: The Lord's Prayer has building blocks for great prayer. Practice these:

- P – Praise (praise God for anything you can, worship him)
- R – Repent (confess your sins and receive forgiveness)
- A – Ask (for things you need, others need)
- Y – Yes (say yes to God's will again for today)

Listen: Ask for any other prayer requests. Record these in a notebook.

Pray: Pray for listed requests. Close by thanking Jesus for teaching us to pray so we can grow to be closer friends with him.

Activities & Review (10-15 minutes each)

GAME OPTION: Dump the Worries

Materials: lots of bean bags, potatoes or shoes

Divide the class into teams. Line teams up facing each other, each with a bag of potatoes. On your cue, team members take turns running to the center with a potato between their elbows, dropping the potato in the center and running back to their team. The team getting rid of all their potatoes first (one at a time, relay style) wins.

Lesson Note: We can “dump our worries” on God by praying to him about them. He cares about us and will help us.

ACTIVITY OPTION: Never Ending Prayer List

Materials: ball
Invite children to think of a prayer request they would like to pray for. It can be for themselves or someone else. Toss a ball to one child. Ask him or her to tell you the prayer request. The student then tosses the ball to another student, who tells the class another prayer request. Continue. Count how many prayer requests the children think of. Can they reach 100? (*When you do, or when students are done with requests, stop and pray for as many of the requests as students can remember.*)

Lesson Note: **Does God answer prayer? Will he help you when you ask?** Yes. He may answer yes, no, or wait. But he always hears and answers in a way that is best.

Closing (5-10 minutes)

REVIEW GAME: Parable Charades

Materials: no materials

One at a time, invite children to act out characters from Bible parables (or other stories) that they know. Ask others to guess what characters they are portraying. People who guess correctly may have a turn acting out a character. Give others turns, also. Enjoy.

AFTER CLASS

- **Evaluation:** How did your lesson go? Did children understand what was presented? What will you want to discuss again in your next meeting together?
- **Preparation:** Begin to pray and think about next week’s lesson and Bible story early. What else do your students need to know? How will you help them?

BIBLE STUDY LESSON 9: learn God's word

MAKE JESUS MOST IMPORTANT

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- The benefits of learning and obeying God's Word, as illustrated by the parable of the House on the Rock.
In this lesson students, will come to DO the following:
- To discuss how the Bible is different from all other books in the world.
- To learn more of God's Word in the coming week (read it for themselves, or learn it with others) and practice obeying what they learn.

Theme Verses

Bible Story:	House on the Rock (Matthew 7:24-29)
Bible Verse:	All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness. 2 Timothy 3:16 NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL

LEARN GOD'S WORD

INTRODUCE THE LESSON: What Is It For?

Tell students that you would like their help to understand how to use some tools that people have allowed you to borrow. Show one of the unusual tools. **Do you know what this is? What it is used for? Can you show us how to use it?** Enjoy the guessing process and then telling students about the tools.

Finally, show the Bible. **Do you know what this is?** The Bible. **What is it used for?** It is used to teach us the truth about God, so we can grow strong in our relationship with him.

Do you spend time learning God's Word? How does God's Word help you grow? We will talk about it together today.

OPENING PRAYER: Invite students to bow their heads as you talk to God. Ask him to help your students learn the importance of spending time with God's Word.

OBJECT LESSON: Air

Materials: timer or clock with second hand

Lesson Aim: To show that just as much as people need air to live, Christians need to obey Jesus' words to grow strong love for him.

Invite the whole class to participate in today's demonstration. Ask students to hold their breath. Watch the timer. (*Instruct children to plug their noses with their fingers if you suspect some might try to take a secret breath.*) **Who can hold it the longest?** Enjoy finding a winner (*and watch for the safety of some who may hold their breath too long*). **Can anyone hold his or her breath forever? Why not?** People need air. Without air, our bodies will not keep living. Our bodies automatically want to keep breathing.

This reminds us of a truth about the Bible. Jesus' words are as important to our hearts as air is to our bodies. A Christian cannot survive, cannot grow, cannot love, without obeying his words. There is no shortcut to growing a strong friendship with Jesus. God's Word is a very important part of growing this friendship.

Lesson Note: Are you "breathing in" and learning his words?

Materials: a Bible and your lesson notes

BIBLE REFERENCE(S): Matthew 7:24-29

WORDS TO WATCH

wise – to make good choices, to know right from wrong

foolish – to make poor choices

INTRODUCTION

Jesus gave his Sermon on the Mount. In it, he challenged people with his most important teachings. Those who obeyed would be rewarded in many different ways. This story explains one way.

A. Jesus traveled with his disciples

1. Jesus healed sick people. He helped sad people.
2. One day, Jesus taught many disciples the lessons of the Sermon on the Mount.
3. He ended with a parable, a story with a lesson. It was about two different kinds of people.

B. The foolish man

1. Foolish means to make a bad choice about something important. **What might be foolish?** To jump off the top of a roof, to run out into a busy street, to eat a whole bucket of candy at once. **What else might be foolish?**
2. This man wanted to build a house. He wanted it to be a good house.
3. But he decided to build his house on the sand. **Is sand very strong? Will it be a good, hard foundation for the house? Do sand castles last very long? Why not?**

4. When the house was built, a big storm came. It rained. The wind blew. **What happened to the house? (Read Matthew 7:27)**
5. The house fell with a great crash.

C. The wise man

1. Wise means to make a good choice about something important. **What might be wise?** To walk on the side of a busy road instead of down the middle. To be kind to others. To stay close to parents in the city or at the market. To love others! **What else?**
2. This man wanted to build a house. A good house.
3. He decided to build his house on a large rock. **Is a rock strong? Will it be a good, hard foundation for the house? Do brick houses last very long? Why?**
4. When the house was built, a big storm came. It rained. The wind blew. *(Make storm noises.)* **What do you think happened to the house? (Read Matthew 7:25)**
5. The house stood strong.

D. What words did Jesus want people to obey?

(Ask a different student to read each verse.)

Matthew 5:13 – be like salt

Matthew 5:16 – shine like light

Matthew 5:24-25 – get along

Matthew 5:44 – love your enemies

Matthew 6:3-4 – give to the needy

Matthew 6:6 – pray on your own

Matthew 6:20 – store up Jesus treasure

Matthew 6:25 & 33 – do not worry

Matthew 7:1-2 – stop judging

Matthew 7:7 – ask, seek, knock

Matthew 7:12 – do good to others

Matthew 7:14 – find narrow way

How are Jesus' words different from other people's words? They are true. They are

from God. They lead to eternal life and friendship with Jesus forever.

Application & Prayer (10 minutes)

- **Do you believe?** The foolish man's house did not last. The wise man's did. Jesus offers to give everlasting life to those who believe in him as Savior. Those who do not believe will not have everlasting life with him. **Have you received him as your Savior?**
- **Whose words will you build your life upon? How will you learn God's Word for yourself? Can someone help you read?**

PRAYER: Pray for Understanding

Teach: The Bible is not always easy to understand. Some stories are strange. Some words are strange. **Can kids still learn from God's Word?** Yes! **Read James 1:5.** This is God's promise. If we ask for wisdom, God will give it to us.

Listen: Ask for any other prayer requests. Record these in a notebook.

Pray: Pray for listed requests. Close by thanking Jesus for teaching us the importance of knowing his words AND obeying them. Ask for his help to understand the Bible and to obey it. Ask for his help to make Jesus most important.

Activities & Review (10-15 minutes each)

GAME: Sand Castles

Materials: tubs of sand or dirt
water in watering can
measuring stick
damp towels

Divide the group into small teams. Or select two students to build at each tub while others cheer them on. Challenge students to build the strongest "castle" out of sand or dirt. When students are finished, pour water onto the castles. The one measuring the tallest after this wins.

Lesson Note: Can you make your life strong on your own? What are you building your life on? Rock or sand?

ACTIVITY: Wall of Words

Materials: several Bibles, erasable board or papers and writing supplies

Invite children to work in pairs or small groups. Let kids choose a favorite scripture verse or promise from God's Word. Write it on the board or on a paper (attach these to the wall). Read these together. Notice how good God's words are.

Lesson Note: Do you know God's Word? How will you learn more about the Bible? God's Word helps you grow a strong friendship with him.

Closing (5-10 minutes)

REVIEW GAME: Parable Charades

Materials: no materials

One at a time, invite children to act out characters from Bible parables (or other stories) that they know. Ask others to guess what characters they are portraying. People who guess correctly may have a turn acting out a character. Give others turns, also. Enjoy.

AFTER CLASS

- **Evaluation:** How did your lesson go? Did children understand what was presented? What will you want to discuss again in your next meeting together?
- **Preparation:** Begin to pray and think about next week's lesson and Bible story early. What else do your students need to know? How will you help them?

BIBLE STUDY FOR LESSON 10: love Jesus the most

UNIT 3

MAKE JESUS MOST IMPORTANT

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- That Jesus wants to be more important to them than any of their blessings or belongings, unlike the example of the rich young ruler. In this lesson students, will come to DO the following:
- To discuss things students might need to "give up" as they follow Jesus daily.
To create personal reminders kids can wear for the coming week to remind them of the daily choice to put Jesus first in their lives

Theme Verses

Bible Story: Rich Young Ruler (Matthew 19:16-30)

Bible Verse: If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. Luke 9:23 NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON MATERIAL

INTRODUCE THE LESSON: Lasting or Not?

Divide the class into two groups. One group must tell you names of things that LAST FOREVER (or for a very long time). The other group must tell you names of things that DO NOT LAST forever. Each child in each group takes a turn. Go back and forth from one team to the other. **Can the whole group finish? Can you think of many, many things that last and that don't last?**

Tell your students that this lesson reminds us of our relationship with Jesus. It is one of those things that lasts forever. People may enjoy many good things for a while on earth. Though fun for a while, they will not last. Jesus and his love are real. They last. They are more valuable than anything or anyone else.

OPENING PRAYER: Invite students to bow their heads as you talk to God. Ask him to help your students learn to love Jesus the most.

OBJECT LESSON: Rocks & Sand

Materials: two tall, clear plastic or glass containers

two sets of sand, rocks and pebbles to fit in containers
Lesson Aim: To teach students that if they seek Jesus and his righteousness first, other parts of their lives will fall into place, too.

TEACH & EXPLAIN: **Luke 9:23** (*briefly discuss this verse together*)

If anyone would come after me – Jesus was talking to his disciples when he taught this lesson. Lots and lots of people were following Jesus. It was exciting. He had some instructions to help find out who REALLY wanted to follow closely after him. He did not just want uncommitted followers.

he must deny himself – Does this mean we never take care of ourselves or give ourselves the things we need? No! That would not honor God. Instead, this means to be willing to give up our own way and do things the way Jesus wants.

and take up his cross – To daily do things that honor God, even if they are hard for us.
When is it hard for you to love? This is the time we show ourselves as true disciples. We do not have to carry a real wooden cross around. But a true disciple is always willing to obey God, easy or not.

daily – How often? Only weekly? No. Only monthly? No. Only on Easter and Christmas? No. Every single day, all day long. **Do you forget about Jesus on some days?**

and follow me – To always be learning to do things the way Jesus would do them by staying close to him.

REPEAT: Instruct students to repeat the verse, with volunteers removing one or two words after each repetition. Do this until kids repeat the verse from memory. Choose eraser volunteers in fun ways related to today's verse:

- Choose someone who thought about God last week.
- Choose someone who has followed another person.

NOTE: If board or cards are not available, spend more time with review activity.

THE GAME: Carry a Load

Your class does not have a cross in it. Instead, give students the opportunity to carry a friend across the front of the class. Anyone who does this must also repeat the verse for the rest of the class. After several students do this, repeat the verse together.

Lesson Note: What will you endure in order to follow Jesus? What will Jesus ask you to do? It will be a joy if you love Jesus the most.

Bible Story (20-25 minutes)

Materials: a Bible and your lesson notes

BIBLE REFERENCE(S): Matthew 19:16-30

WORDS TO WATCH

commandment – a law given by God

Old Testament – the first part of the Bible has stories about Israel and prophecies telling of the Messiah; it means “old covenant” or promise

INTRODUCTION

How many of you would like to be rich? We might think that riches bring us happiness. A man in today's story was rich. But he was not happy.

A. A rich young man came to Jesus.

1. He was a very fortunate young man.
2. He had lots of money. (*Pretend to count lots of money together.*)
3. He was a good person.
4. But he was still worried. He was not sure he had eternal life. (**Read Matthew 19:16**)

B. Jesus talked to the man.

1. He asked the man what he thought was necessary. **What do you think we need to do to get eternal life?**
2. The man answered that he should obey the commands. Jesus asked him which ones. There are lots and lots of commands in the Old Testament. (*Show Old Testament portion of the Bible.*) Jesus wanted to know if he understood the most important ones.
3. The man said they were to love God and to love your neighbor as yourself. (**Read Matthew 19:18-19**)
4. The man still wanted to know what he was missing. He still wasn't sure, even though he SAID he had kept all the laws. **Have you kept the laws? Can anyone?** No, all of us have sin. No one can be perfect. This is why God sent Jesus to pay the price for sin. (*Remember the Ten Commandments together.*)
5. Jesus told him to go and sell everything and give it to the poor, then come and follow him. **Would he do it?** Jesus' disciples left their homes, work, families, etc. But this man could not. He walked away sad.

C. Jesus told his disciples about riches. (**Read Matthew 19:23-24**)

1. He said it is harder for a rich man to get into heaven than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. **Which part is the eye? Is it easy to fit anything through the hole?**
2. **Why did Jesus say this?** Rich people often trust in their money and love their things more than they love God. They think their money can help them with any problem. **Can it?** Their trust in money keeps them from trusting God.
3. The disciples were worried. They wondered how anyone could get into heaven. Jesus said that it was only possible with God.
4. **What did God do to make it possible for us to receive eternal life?** He sent Jesus to die on the cross for our sins. He made a way for us to be forgiven so we could come close to God.

PRAYER: Prayer of Commitment

Teach: Have you committed your life to follow Jesus as the very most important leader in your life? Many people know about Jesus. Many Christians have started a friendship with him. But some have never heard a lesson like this, where Jesus talked about how serious it was to follow him. **Why do you think Jesus was so serious about this?** He knew that he was the only one worth loving and serving forever. Privately, quietly, give students time to talk with Jesus about these matters. **Listen:** Ask for any other prayer requests. Record these in a notebook. **Pray:** Pray for listed requests. Close by thanking Jesus for being so amazing, wonderful, incredible and worthy. Ask for his help to love him always, more than anything or anyone else.

PROGRAMME FOR LESSON 11: give from your heart

MAKE JESUS MOST IMPORTANT

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- That Jesus wants them to be generous with whatever they have, as the widow was generous with her small offering. In this lesson students, will be invited to DO the following:
- To discuss the danger of comparing ourselves and our possessions with others.
- To consider what kinds of gifts God has given to children that they can share with others.
- To share something, they have with others in the coming week.

Theme Verses

Bible Story: The Widow's Offering (Luke 21:1-4; Mark 12:41-44)

Bible Verse: Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give ... for God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians 9:7 NIV

LOOKING INTO BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL

GIVE FROM YOUR HEART

INTRODUCE THE LESSON: Think of a Number

Play a short guessing game with your students. You think of a number between one and 100. Write it down secretly. Next, invite students to guess which number you have chosen. Each child may have a guess. Some may even choose the same number. Finally, announce the number. Celebrate the winner (invite him or her to choose the secret number for the next round).

In today's lesson, we will learn what God thinks of numbers that we secretly think of in our heads. In fact, these numbers have to do with money. **What number is God thinking about when it comes to our giving?** We will learn more in today's lesson.

OPENING PRAYER: Invite students to bow their heads as you talk to God. Ask him to help your students learn to give from their hearts, as Jesus has given to us.

Object-Demonstration (10-15 minutes)

OBJECT LESSON: **Balance the Scales**

Materials: several fun kids' items (gum, toys, skates, etc.)
 one heavy item (rock or bucket of rocks, etc.)

Lesson Aim: To discuss differences in the weights of some items and recognize our total inability to ever give enough to equally balance what God has given to us.

Ask for volunteers. Give each two objects and ask each to choose which item is the heaviest. Play several rounds with different objects and different students. Finally, ask one person to try to hold the bucket (rocks), and compare it to a slip of paper. **Which is heavier?** The rocks.

Teach students that all our giving and sharing with other people, even though it seems like a lot to us, probably amounts to about this much (*weigh the paper in your hand*). In comparison, God's love is endless, weighing even more than this bucket of rocks in importance. No matter how much we give to God or to others, God always gives more. **What does he give to us?** He helps us with money needs and other needs, but he especially fills our lives with endless love, salvation, forgiveness, comfort, joy, peace, etc. When we realize how much God gives to us, it is easy to give and to share with others.

Lesson Note: How much has Jesus given to you? Can you ever give more than he has given to you?

Bible Verse (15-20 minutes)

Materials: an erasable board or paper with verse written out

TEACH & EXPLAIN: **2 Corinthians 9:7** (*briefly discuss the verse together*)

Each man – These words are written for all people, not just men or boys.

The apostle Paul wrote these words to teach a large group of believers about giving.

should give – **In what ways can we give to God or to others?** We can give money at church, or money to others when they are in need. But we can also give other things. **Like what?** Time, attention, caring, sharing, toys, clothes, prayers, friendship, etc. **Do you ever give these?**

what he has decided in his heart to give – **But how much should a person give? Do we have to give as much as someone very rich? Do we need to give everything away every day? How do we know?** We need to pray and ask God to help us decide. He is the one who directs us. He shows us how much we should give. And we do not need to compare ourselves to others who give more ... or less.

- *Help your students really understand the verse.*
- *If possible, keep verses from week to week in a basket or bag for review. Choose one or two verses as review each week.*

for God loves a cheerful giver – There are incredible rewards for those who give, especially to honor God. God did not plan for us to give out of duty or guilt. He designed for us to give out of hearts that love Jesus the most. We WANT to share with others if his love fills us.

REPEAT: Instruct students to repeat the verse, with volunteers removing one or two words after each repetition. Do this until kids repeat the verse from memory. Choose eraser volunteers in fun ways related to today's verse:

- Choose someone who has given a gift (what was it?).
- Choose someone who has received a gift.

NOTE: If board or cards are not available, spend more time with review activity.

THE GAME: Laughing Game

Bible Story **(20-25 minutes)**

Materials: a Bible and your lesson notes
two envelopes (see below for instructions)
a can with coins

BIBLE REFERENCE(S): Luke 21:1-4 or Mark 12:41-44

WORDS TO WATCH

- offering** – a willing gift to God, often of money
- widow** – a woman whose husband has died
- Pharisees** – religious teachers in Israel

INTRODUCTION

*Lay two envelopes in front of the class (on table or floor). Inside one, have a piece of paper that says "greed." Inside the other, have a piece of paper that says, "generosity." **What is inside these envelopes? Can you tell?** We would need to look inside to answer the question. (Do not look inside until later.) In the same way, God looked at the hearts of the people in today's story.*

A. Jesus and his disciples went to the temple.

1. Jesus taught about God to the people. He worshipped the Father.
2. Many of the teachers and Pharisees did not like him to teach. They would come and try to trick him with hard questions. But Jesus answered every question perfectly. They were amazed.

B. People would drop money in a box near the entrance to the temple. (Read Mark 12:41-42)

1. One day, Jesus and his disciples stood watching. Many people stopped by and gave their money. Everyone could watch. It was not secret.
2. Some rich people came. They threw in some money. It might have made a lot of noise. *(Allow several students to shake the money can loudly.)*
3. Everyone would have noticed that they put in the money. **Do you think God liked this?** It was good to give, but not to try to get attention.

C. A widow woman came to the box.

1. She was poor. It was very hard for anyone to live alone in those days, especially women. She was alone. Life was hard.
2. She had very little money. She might not even have had enough money to pay for her food that day.
3. She placed two small coins in the box. *(Take all the change out of the can except two pennies. Listen to the noise these make.)* She did not give a lot. **Was she stingy? Did she not love God very much?**

D. Jesus knew the real story.

1. The rich were giving only a small part of all they had.
2. **What about the woman? (Read Mark 12:43-44)** She was giving all that she had. She had faith to believe God would help her. She loved God so much she wanted to give her last pennies to him.
3. **Which kind of giver are you?**

(10-15 minutes each)

GAME OPTION: Two Coins Game

Materials: several pennies for each team
one small jar or container for each team

Divide the class into teams of 4-5 students. Give each team several pennies. Place jars at least ten feet from kids. Students compete to see which team can be the first to toss only two coins into their team's jar from the distance. *(Some players may not be able to get their coin into the jar at all.)* Applaud the winners. Play again, if you have time.

Lesson Note: How much are two pennies worth to God? A lot, if they are given with a cheerful and generous heart.

ACTIVITY OPTION: Passing Notes Game

Materials: slips of paper, pencils, bag

Count out one slip of paper for each student. Write the word "Pharisee" on two of these papers (just use one "Pharisee" for small classes). Place papers in a bag. Arrange the class in a large circle. Give each student a slip of paper. Hold it. Look at these all at the same time. Any students with the word "Pharisee" must leave the circle. Remove two blank slips of paper from the pile and play again. Continue in this fashion, removing one of the "Pharisee" words near the end, until only one student is left. He or she is the "widow" and has won the game.

Lesson Note: Pharisees were often rich. They gave to show off. God looks into the secret places of our hearts to see if we are giving in a way that is proud or humble. The widow honored God.

BIBLE STUDY LESSON 12: Tell Jesus You Are Sorry

MAKE JESUS MOST IMPORTANT

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- Invite several students to come forward the importance of asking God for forgiveness, as the prodigal son asked the father to forgive him.
- The Bible's definition of God's forgiveness through Christ. In this lesson students, will be invited to DO the following: To privately ask Jesus to forgive them for things they have done to break God's laws.

Theme Verses

Bible Story: The Prodigal Son (Luke 15)

Bible Verse: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9 NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL

TELL JESUS I AM SORRY

INTRODUCE THE LESSON: **Hammer & Nails** and help you pound several nails into a block of wood. Do not pound them in all the way. Thank students for helping you.

Next, realize that you did not plan to do this. You needed to use the nails for something else. Remove the nails, then look at the wood. Realize that you just ruined a perfectly good piece of wood. **How can I fix this?** It cannot be fixed. The nails already made the holes. If it is repaired, the repairs will be noticed.

This reminds us of the way that sin hurts our lives. We do something wrong, and damage comes to our lives. **Can the damage be repaired?** We will talk about this today.

OPENING PRAYER: Invite students to bow their heads as you talk to God. Ask him to help your students learn the importance of confessing their sin ... and receiving God's forgiveness.

Materials: a Bible and your lesson notes
a facial tissue

BIBLE REFERENCE(S): Luke 15:11-31

WORDS TO WATCH

inheritance – money and property given to a man's children after he dies

famine – a severe shortage of food

INTRODUCTION

Show a facial tissue. **When do people normally need to use these?** When they have colds or have been crying and need to blow their noses. Give one student a tissue. Ask that student to pretend to cry and blow his or her nose every time a person "mourns" in today's story.

A. Jesus taught his disciples important truths with parables.

1. These were stories with big lessons. They were fun to remember. They helped disciples learn about God and his kingdom.
2. He taught several parables about items which were first lost and then found. This was one such story.

B. A man had two sons. (Read Luke 15:11-12)

1. The older son would receive the largest inheritance when his father died. This was the custom in those days.
2. The younger son knew he would receive a smaller inheritance.
3. The younger son was not happy. He wanted his share now. He wanted to get away from his brother. He was impatient. *(Show how this son feels.)*
4. The father must have been hurt and disappointed.

C. The son took his inheritance and left. (Read Luke 15:13)

1. He took his entire inheritance and went to a far-off country. **How would his father have felt?** Mournful! *(Students should cry here.)*
2. He did not save his money. He did not invest it. He did not start a business. He did not get an education. He did not give it to the needy.
3. He spent his money on wild living. **What might he have done?**

D. He spent all his money.

1. Soon, there was a famine in the land. Even those who did have money were hungry. There just was not enough food.
2. One day he saw something he wanted. His mouth watered. **What was it? (Read Luke 15:15-16)** The pigs' food. (He had a job feeding pigs.)
3. Pigs were especially unclean to Jewish people. Jews were not allowed to eat the meat of a pig. Pigs were unholy animals. And here he was feeding them! **Was he doing well?** No. *(Cry again with students.)*

E. He came to his senses and went home.

1. He suddenly realized that his father's servants ate better than he.
2. He decided to go home and beg to become a servant of his father's. **Would the father want him home? Would he forgive him? Would he be happy to hear that the money was gone?**
3. The son was sorry for his sin. He was mourning. *(Cry again.)*

F. His father was glad to receive him home. (*Read Luke 15:22-24*)

1. When he saw, his son coming, he ran to him. The son apologized.
2. But the father put a robe on him and a ring on his finger.
3. He slaughtered a calf and gave a feast in his son's honor.
4. His only thought: "My son was lost, but now he is found."
5. He was glad to forgive. He loved him a lot.
6. Father and son had two different kinds of mourning, but both were comforted.

BIBLE STUDY LESSON 13: Follow Jesus Forever

MAKE JESUS MOST IMPORTANT

Lesson Focus

The **focus** of this lesson is that **children know**:

- That they must choose whether or not to follow Jesus forever, as Peter did.
- That there are many obstacles keeping people from following Jesus forever. In this lesson students, will be invited to DO the following:
To commit themselves to following Jesus forever, with God's help

Theme Verses

Bible Story: Peter Denies Christ (Matthew 26, John 13, John 21)

Bible Verse: Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. Hebrews 12:1b-2a NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL

Follow Jesus Forever

BIBLE REFERENCE(S): Matthew 26, John 13, John 21

WORDS TO WATCH

the Romans – the government power during the time of Jesus

INTRODUCTION

Many people did things to hurt Jesus. Roman soldiers beat him. King Herod made fun of him. Even his own disciples let Jesus down. Judas led Roman soldiers and Jewish leaders to Jesus to arrest him. And Peter, who wanted to do right, lied and said he didn't even know Jesus. **Would Jesus forgive him?**

A. Peter loved Jesus.

1. He was one of Jesus' first disciples. He gave up fishing to follow Jesus.
2. Peter wanted to do all the right things. He often made mistakes.

B. Peter promised to stay with Jesus, no matter what.

1. As the disciples ate Passover, sharing their last supper together, Jesus predicted his death.
2. Peter told Jesus he would never desert him, even if he had to go to jail or die with Jesus. He didn't want anyone to kill Jesus.
3. Jesus predicted Peter would deny he knew Jesus. He would do it three times before a rooster crowed the next morning. **(Read John 13:37-38)**

C. Peter denied he even knew Jesus.

1. Soldiers arrested Jesus and took him to court. Peter followed.
2. Some people asked Peter if he knew Jesus. **Did he?** He was his best friend! But Peter said, "No." **Why would he do that?**
3. Another person asked him. Again Peter said he didn't know Jesus.
4. A third time, someone asked him if he knew Jesus. "No!"
5. After the third time, he heard a rooster crow. He left and wept bitterly. **(Matthew 26:73-75)** *(Act out Peter saying, "No" three times. Weep.)*

D. Jesus died and rose again.

1. Jesus was led away to the cross. He died there for us. He was buried.
2. On the third day after his death, he rose again. He saw the disciples several times.
3. At one key meeting, he saw Peter.

E. A while later, Peter and some disciples decided to go fishing.

1. They fished all night and did not catch anything.
2. A man on shore told them to throw their net out on the other side.
3. Their net became so full of fish, they couldn't even haul it in.
4. They realized Jesus was on the shore. **(Read John 21:7-8)**

F. Jesus talked to his disciples

1. He spent special time talking to Peter.
2. Three times he asked Peter if he loved him. He used the Greek word "agape" meaning God's perfect unconditional love. Peter answered yes, but that he had "phileo" love, meaning friendship love for Jesus. Peter knew that he had disappointed Jesus. He had not shown agape love for Jesus. **(Read John 21:16-17)**
3. Jesus still wanted him to be his disciple. He forgave Peter.
4. He treated Peter with kindness, putting him in charge of helping the new Church grow.
5. For the rest of his life, Peter told thousands of people about Jesus. He was not ashamed of Jesus. He preached, healed, prayed and followed Jesus. Tradition tells us that Peter was later executed upside down on a cross for believing in Jesus.

GAME OPTION: **Rooster, Rooster, Peter**

Materials: no materials

Play a game like Duck, Duck, Goose. Arrange children in a large circle. Sit on the ground, facing toward the inside of the circle. Choose one student to begin. He or she walks around the outside of the circle, tapping each child on the head saying the word “rooster” each time until he or she chooses to say the word “Peter.” At this point, the student whose head was tapped must get up and chase after the player, trying to tag him or her before that student runs around the outside of the circle and sits back down in the second student’s empty spot. Is the first student fast enough? Play many rounds. Enjoy the race.

Lesson Note: Peter denied he knew Jesus as his friend. But he received forgiveness. Then he went on to follow Jesus forever. **Do you love Jesus like Peter?**

BIBLE STUDY FOR LESSON 14: Jesus Changes You

Get New Attitudes

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- That Jesus brings good changes to people's lives, as he did to Zacchaeus.
In this lesson students, will be invited to DO the following:
- Discuss the kind of new attitudes Jesus brings.
- List specific ways in which Jesus changes children's lives.
- Thank God for making them new creations, to be more like him.

Theme Verses

Bible Story: Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)

Bible Verse: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 2 Corinthians 5:17 NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL

Jesus Changes You, **Jesus changes me**

INTRODUCE THE LESSON: Opposites Challenge

Invite students to play a challenge game. One student sits in a "challenge chair." Each other student takes a turn naming a word with an opposite (hot-cold, dark-light, old-new, etc.) The student in the chair must quickly respond with the opposite of the word named. Play quickly to try or confuse the challenge chair student. Give several students a turn in the chair. You judge on disputable words. **Who can answer the most without stumbling?**

Do you ever act opposite of what you should? Why? Perhaps we did not know a different way. Perhaps we forgot the right thing to do. When Jesus comes into our lives, he begins to make changes: **from selfish to unselfish**, **from unloving to loving**, **from fearful to confident**, etc. **What changes has Jesus made in you?**

OPENING PRAYER: Invite students to bow their heads as you talk to God. Ask him to help your students learn about the incredible changes Jesus brings to our lives when we decide to follow him.

Object-Demonstration**(10-15 minutes)****OBJECT LESSON: Butterfly****Materials:** a picture, real sample, or simple drawing of a caterpillar and a butterfly**Lesson Aim:** To discuss how, just as a butterfly starts out ordinary and even ugly as a caterpillar or worm and becomes a beautiful butterfly, people start out ordinary before knowing Christ then change to become new and beautiful creations as they follow him as Savior.

Show students the picture of the caterpillar. **What is this? Where can we find it? Where does it live?** Caterpillars live in trees or on the ground. **Are they beautiful?** They might have interesting coloring or designs. But they seem like worms. They do not seem special.

Show students the picture of the butterfly. **What is this? Where can we find it? Where does it live?** It is a butterfly. We find them flying around our homes. They also live in trees or around plants. They are free, flying and beautiful.

The amazing thing is that a butterfly starts out as a caterpillar. It is hard to believe, because the caterpillar seems ordinary, not beautiful at all. But it changes.

This reminds us of a truth about people as they come to know Christ. Before knowing him, they may be interesting, but their lives are ordinary and unfinished. When Jesus comes into people's lives as Savior, something new begins. Jesus changes them. They do not stay ordinary. God begins to do new things inside them. They become new creations. **Will we all become like beautiful butterflies?** Not necessarily. But we will become more like Jesus, the most amazing person who ever lived.

Lesson Note: Have you changed since coming to know Jesus? How?**Bible Verse****(15-20 minutes)****Materials:** an erasable board or paper with verse written out**TEACH & EXPLAIN:** **2 Corinthians 5:17** (*briefly discuss this verse together*)**If anyone** – Any person in the whole wide world, including you.**is in Christ** – To be part of God's big family, to believe in him, to be a recipient of his forgiveness and salvation.**he is a new creation** – **Do you get a new body when you believe in Jesus? Does your hair change color? Does your nose grow longer?** No! People become new on the inside, in **their hearts**, when they believe in Jesus to be their Savior.**the old has gone** – **What kinds of things do people do before they know Jesus?** They do what people have been doing since the days of Adam and Eve; they choose to break God's laws. **Let us discuss.** God wants to clean away the old behaviors in us through Christ.**the new has come** – Jesus forgives sin. He makes our **hearts brand new**. He gives us a new start. He helps us live in new loving ways, not in old ways.**REPEAT:** Instruct students to repeat the verse, with volunteers removing one or two words after each repetition. Do this until kids repeat the verse from memory. Choose eraser

volunteers in fun ways related to today's verse:

- Someone who names a **new** thing they saw last week.
- Someone who names **old** thing they saw last week.

NOTE: If board or cards are not available, spend more time with review activity.

REVIEW FUN: New Way, Old Way

Invite children to consider an attitude that becomes new when a person follows Jesus (for example: forgiving instead of angry). First, repeat the verse in the old attitude (angry voice). Then repeat the verse in the new attitude (loving voice). Ask students for other ideas of new attitudes or behaviors and old attitudes or behaviors. Repeat the verse several times with these new and old attitudes.

Lesson Note: When Jesus comes into our lives, he changes us to be more like him!

Bible Story (20-25 minutes)

Materials: a Bible and your lesson notes

BIBLE REFERENCE(S): Luke 19:1-10

WORDS TO WATCH

- tax collector** – someone who collects money from citizens to give to the rulers
- sycamore-fig tree** – a short, sturdy fig tree; grows tall in the wild

INTRODUCTION

What job would you LEAST like to have when you grow up? Some would never want to collect garbage. Others would never want to teach in a school. Others would never like to be in charge. Others would never like to work with people who were injured. We might all have a different answer. In Jesus' day, tax collectors were a group of people that were least liked. They had an unpleasant job of coming to collect money from people. They were often dishonest. Today's story is about one of these despised people.

A. Zacchaeus was a tax collector.

1. Most people did not like him and other tax collectors.
2. They were supposed to collect money for the king or government. But they often asked for more than they should and kept it for themselves.
3. They often became rich this way. They were selfish and greedy. **Does this please God? No.**
4. Zacchaeus was this kind of tax collector. He was wealthy. *(Count money)*

B. He had heard about Jesus.

1. He had heard of the miracles that Jesus did.
2. He had heard that Jesus was a special kind of teacher who taught with authority like God.
3. People were saying he might be the perfect Son of God. Zacchaeus wanted to see for himself. **Would you want to see Jesus? What would you ask him?**

C. Zacchaeus meets Jesus.

1. Jesus was travelling through his town. Big crowds followed Jesus.

2. Zacchaeus was short. He couldn't see over the crowds. So he climbed a tree. *(Invite a smaller child to stand behind several taller ones. **Can he see?**)*
3. Jesus saw him in the tree and asked him to come down. He did not make fun of a grown man in a tree. *(Ask all children to imagine climbing a tree.)*
4. He said he would come to Zacchaeus' house for dinner. Wow! Great!
5. Then people began to make fun of Jesus. They thought Jesus, a holy man, should not associate with bad people like Zacchaeus. **What do you think? (Read Luke 19:10)**

D. Zacchaeus changed.

1. While people were complaining, he responded in a surprising way. **(Read Luke 19:7-8)**
2. He offered to give away half of his money to the poor. He paid back those he had cheated, paying four times more than he had taken in the first place. *(Pretend to give everyone lots of money back.)*
3. Zacchaeus would never be the same. Jesus had noticed him and loved him. It made a big difference in his life.

Application & Prayer (10 minutes)

- **Why did Zacchaeus change?** Because he met Jesus. **What do you think Jesus helped him to understand?** That God loves him. That he is special. That God can help him learn to do right things.
- **How does Jesus help people change?** His Holy Spirit in us shows us our sin, teaches us the right way, guides us, comforts us, helps us. As we listen for his gentle voice and obey, we grow to be different than we would have been without Jesus in our lives.
- **What difference has Jesus made in your life?**

Pray: Pray for listed requests. Close by thanking Jesus for making us new creations in him. Ask him to help us become A LOT like him as we grow to love him more.

BIBLE STUDY FOR LESSON 15 Get New Attitudes

UNIT 3

Get New Attitudes

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- . That God's Spirit brings a whole new set of attitudes to their lives
 - To define and discuss the different fruits of the Spirit.
- In this lesson students, will be invited to DO the

Theme Verses

Bible Story: Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23a)

Bible Verse: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Galatians 5:22-23 NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON MATERIAL

Get New Attitudes

INTRODUCE THE LESSON: Taste Test

As class begins, invite several volunteers to come forward and help you identify several mystery foods (*be sure children are not allergic to any foods before choosing volunteers*). Seat several children up front. Place blindfolds over their eyes. Give the first a sample of a fruit. **What is it? Can they tell what it is, even if they don't see it?** Enjoy bringing in unusual fruits, cut very small, so the tasting is not always easy. After they have tasted the fruits, ask them to be seated.

The Bible talks a lot about fruit. **Why?** Bible fruit is another word for attitudes and behaviors or changes. **What kind of fruit is growing in your life?** We will talk about it today.

OPENING PRAYER: Invite students to bow their heads as you talk to God. Ask him to help your students learn about God's desire to grow wonderful fruit in their lives.

OBJECT LESSON: Fruit Basket

Materials: a variety of fruits in a basket
(bananas, apples, oranges, grapes or whatever is available)

Lesson Aim: To show that just as fruits grow from trees, good character grows from Christians.

Choose a variety of volunteers. Give each a different kind of fruit. Ask each to answer one question. Ask different, simple questions related to growing fruit, like . . . **How does this fruit grow?** On a tree. **Can the fruit grow without the tree?** No. **Can oranges grow on a pear tree?** No. **How does this fruit taste?** Sweet, good, etc. Applaud your very smart volunteers. Let them keep their fruit as a prize, if possible.

Did you know that many fruits are listed in the Bible? They do not look like oranges or apples or bananas. But they are very real and very wonderful. They do not grow on a tree, like these others. No fruits can grow by themselves. **Do you know what causes God's fruit to grow?** The Holy Spirit: God who lives in us. He causes good character and attitudes (love, joy, peace, gentleness, patience, etc.) to grow in our hearts and become part of our behavior. Spiritual fruit cannot grow without God's help. He is the universal expert on their growth. We will learn about these fruits today.

Lesson Note: Is God's fruit growing in your life?

TEACH & EXPLAIN: Galatians 5:22-23a (*briefly discuss this verse together*)

But the fruit of the Spirit – God's Spirit lives inside every believer. With God inside, will your life stay the same? No! The only way we might stay the same is if we do not listen to God's suggestions and whispers on how to treat others. **What are these fruits?**

is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control – Would you like to spend time around someone with these attitudes? Why? Does everyone have these all the time? No. But God grows them in Christians who say, "yes" in their hearts daily, obeying his Spirit in them. This kind of fruit shows that we are becoming more like Jesus every day.

REPEAT: Instruct students to repeat the verse, with volunteers removing one or two words after each repetition. Do this until kids repeat the verse from memory. Choose eraser volunteers in fun ways related to today's verse:

- Someone who names a favorite fruit to eat.
- Someone who names their favorite fruit of the Spirit.

NOTE: If board or cards are not available, spend more time with review activity.

THE GAME: Be a Fruit

Invite children to imagine that they are a piece of fruit. Imagine the fruit can speak. Repeat the verse in a voice that kids think sounds like this fruit. Try speaking like a banana, an apple, grapes, a coconut, tomatoes, etc. Repeat the verse in more serious attitudes (like the fruit of the Spirit) also.

Lesson Note: What fruit is God growing in you?

Materials: a Bible and your lesson notes

BIBLE REFERENCE(S): Galatians 5:22-23a, various scriptures

WORDS TO WATCH

Spirit – the third person of the Trinity; he lives in us, is with us to help and teach

INTRODUCTION

When did you last have a visitor to your home? Do you behave differently when visitors come? Usually. The Bible teaches that every believer has a permanent visitor inside. **Who?** God's own Holy Spirit. **Who is he?**

A. The Holy Spirit

1. He is not a ghost. He is the invisible part of God who lives in every person who loves and obeys God. **(Read Acts 2:38)**
2. He does all sorts of things to help us. *(Ask students to read:)*
 - **John 14:15-16** - He comforts believers
 - **John 14:26** - He teaches and reminds us of God's Word
 - **John 16:13** - He guides us to understand truth
 - **Acts 1:8** - He gives us power to witness to others
 - **Romans 8:11** - He gives us ability to live life for God

When would you need each of these kinds of help?

3. **How do we know he's there?** By what comes out of our lives. Just as fruit trees produce fruit, Christians produce Spirit "fruit."
4. **The importance of the Holy Spirit (Read 1 Corinthians 6:19)** Christians are the temple of the Holy Spirit. God lives in them and with them always.
5. **What does the Holy Spirit do in us?** Makes us new. **(Read 2 Corinthians 5:17)** All people who receive Christ become new. They will become different with God changing them from the inside out.

B. The Trinity

1. God has chosen to describe himself to us as three persons who all make up one God. **(Read Matthew 28:19) Is this hard to understand?**
2. An egg can help us understand. **What are the three parts of an egg?** The yolk, the white, the shell: one egg. God, three in one, is like this. Three parts – one God.
3. **Why is it important?** First of all, because the Bible teaches it. Secondly, the three persons all help us understand God better. The Father loves us; Jesus is our Savior and example. The Holy Spirit is with us.

C. The Fruit of the Spirit (Read Galatians 5:22-23)

- **love** - God's unconditional love; not just a friendly feeling we have for people one day that is gone the next. **Is this easy?**

- **joy** - A happiness deep inside because we know everything is going to be fine with God in control. **When is this hard?**
- **peace** - A calm feeling that God is taking care of us and we are on good terms with him. Peace almost sounds boring. But it is not. It is being free from stressful worries – especially about sin.
- **patience** - Waiting calmly for others and for answers to prayer. **Easy?** No. We usually want things to hurry and happen our way.
- **kindness** - Being nice to others from the heart. **How do you feel when someone is kind to you?**
- **goodness** - Being good to others – from the heart. This word comes from the word for "God." It is total, pure, honest, perfect goodness. **When is it easy to be this way?**
- **faithfulness** - Trustworthiness; doing what you should do day after day; loyalty and a quiet perseverance. **How is God faithful?**
- **gentleness** - Treating others softly, with quiet respect. Being "cool" is not usually gentle. **Did Jesus demonstrate gentleness?**
- **self-control** - Doing what we know we should do; keeping ourselves in order. **When do we need self-control?**

BIBLE STUDY FOR LESSON 16: Get New Love

Get New Attitudes

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- That just as the Good Samaritan shared love with the injured man, Jesus calls us to share a new kind of love with people in need. In this lesson students, will be invited to DO the following:
- To discuss and define God's kind of love (as compared to the world's kind of love).
- To consider one way to practice showing God's love to others in the coming week.

Theme Verses

Bible Story: The Good Samaritan (Luke 10)

Bible Verse: A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. John 13:34-35 NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL

: Get New Love:

INTRODUCE THE LESSON: Medical Supplies

Show your class the bandages and ointments. **Do you know what each of these is for?** Show them each item. Discuss its use. Consider whether children have ever been wounded and needed any of these supplies. **How did it feel to be hurt? Who helped you? Pretend to help a student who is in need of these supplies.** Though these supplies were not available during Bible times, people still cared for the wounded.

Do you care for those in need? Why would we care more as followers of Jesus? We will talk about it today.

OPENING PRAYER: Invite students to bow their heads as you talk to God. Ask him to help your students learn about God's desire to grow new love toward others in their lives today.

OBJECT LESSON: **Spices**

Materials: a variety of spices familiar to students (cinnamon, garlic?)

Lesson Aim: To compare compassion (concentrated love), to spices and discuss how they need to be opened up and poured out and mixed in to be useful and enjoyed.

Show the spices to students. **Can you tell me what this is? How do you use it?** Discuss different meals that might include these spices. Finally, open the spice sprinkle some out and eat it. Mmm. It is wonderful by itself. It tastes even better when cooked in our favorite foods.

Teach that these spices remind us of compassion. **Do you know what that is?** Concentrated love. If we have received God's love and forgiveness, we have this kind of God's love stored up inside our hearts. **Does it do any good staying in our hearts?** No! It is meant to be shared, just like this spice needs to get out of the container and into the places where it will make food tasty and enjoyable. God wants us to open up our hearts, pour out his love and mix it into the world around us by helping others. In this way we bring refreshing to people who are in need. God's compassion is love that is so concentrated that it moves us to action. **Can you think of someone who has a need that REALLY concerns you?** God may want you to open your heart and pour out some of his love to that person.

Lesson Note: Whom does Jesus want you to show his love to today?

EXPLAIN: John 13:34-35

A new command I give you – Jesus gave this command to his disciples. It is one of Jesus' FEW commands. It must be important.

Love one another – It sounds so simple, but it is not always easy. **Is it always easy to love people in your family? When it is not easy?** Sometimes it takes work to keep loving someone when they do things we do not like. Sometimes we must choose to love, even when it is hard.

As I have loved you, so you must love one another – **How did Jesus love us?** By setting aside his glory as God in heaven, becoming a man and dying on the cross for us. He sacrificed to show his love for us. **Is this an easy kind of love? Why not? What are the rewards for this kind of love?** Happiness, joy for obeying, etc. **What are the results for refusing to love?** Bitterness, bad feelings, enemies, etc.

By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another This is an amazing promise. When we love each other, people notice. They notice we belong to Jesus. Perhaps more people will want to know him when they see his love in us.

REPEAT: Instruct students to repeat the verse, with volunteers removing one or two words after each repetition. Do this until kids repeat the verse from memory. Choose eraser volunteers in fun ways related to today's verse:

- Someone who had a hard time loving someone last week.
- Someone who can name a way to show love to families.

NOTE: If board or cards are not available, spend more time with review activity.

REVIEW FUN: Announce It

This Bible verse is a command. Jesus gave few commands. Say the Bible verse as a very loud announcement. Next, repeat it as a soft, gentle command. Next, whisper it. Next, say it in a military-style voice. Enjoy announcing this wonderful command.

Lesson Note: In what way is the fruit of God's love growing in you?

Bible Story

(20-25 minutes)

Materials: a Bible and your lesson notes

BIBLE REFERENCE(S): Luke 10:25-37

WORDS TO WATCH

Samaritan – a foreigner to Israel; hated by some people

Levite – a religious leader in Israel

parable – a story with a lesson, told by Jesus

INTRODUCTION

Ask students to tell you about one of their favorite childhood fairy tales or fables. Discuss the story briefly with students. Notice that the story has a moral, or a lesson. Jesus also taught stories with lessons. They were called parables. The lessons he taught through these stories are very, very important. They are not just good lessons about how to live, like some fables. They are not just interesting stories. These stories teach us about how God wants us to live. One day, Jesus taught this story to his disciples. (*Guide student to act this whole story out as you tell it.*)

A. A man went on a trip (*Read Luke 10:30*)

1. On the way, some robbers beat him up, took his money and clothes, and left him on the side of the road.
2. He really needed help. **Would you have helped him?**

B. First a priest went by (*Read Luke 10:31*)

1. He knew about God's law. He knew about worshipping God.
2. But he saw the man, moved to the other side of the road and walked away. **Why did he do this? Did he think the man was dead? Why didn't he check?** (*Show the attitude of the priest*)

C. Then a Levite (or teacher of the Law) went by (*Read Luke 10:32*)

1. He taught people about God. He knew all the right things to do.
2. He also saw the hurt man, moved to the other side of the road and walked away. **Did he do the right thing?**

D. Finally, a Samaritan came.

1. He was a foreigner. Samaritans were especially disliked by many people in Israel. **Would he know the right thing to do?** Maybe. Maybe not.
2. He saw the man was badly hurt. He went to help him. He put medicine and bandages on his cuts and bruises. (*Pretend to bandage up injuries.*)
3. Then he carried the man on his own donkey to the nearest place to stay.
4. He paid the owners to take care of the man.

E. Jesus taught his people to love others from the heart.

1. He wanted them to treat others like they would treat themselves.
2. **Did the Samaritan do this?** Even better!
3. Jesus wanted his people not just to TALK about love, but to really love. He wanted people to care for each other with his kind of love.
4. **What did Jesus do to show his love to us?** He came from heaven and died on the cross to forgive our sins. He shows his love to us by helping us and staying close to us every day.

BIBLE STUDY FOR LESSON 17: Get Forgiveness

Get New Attitudes

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- That God can help us forgive others when they have wronged us, just as the master forgave his servant.
In this lesson students, will be invited to DO the following:
- To define God's kind of forgiveness and discuss the benefits of forgiving others.
- To challenge students to forgive friends and family and others with God's help when they do wrong toward us.

Theme Verses

Bible Story:	The Unmerciful Servant (Matthew 18)
Bible Verse:	Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:32 NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL

: Get Forgiveness

INTRODUCE THE LESSON: Weighed Down

Show students the knapsack. Invite several volunteers to take turns holding the bag for 1-2 minutes each. Invite them to try participating in normal activities: jumping rope, dancing, clapping their hands. After several have taken turns, think about the activity. **How hard was it to do normal activities? Would you want to carry this type of weight with you all the time?** No!

What weighs down people's hearts? What makes getting along like carrying a bag of rocks? Unforgiveness. We will talk about it today.

OPENING PRAYER: Invite students to bow their heads as you talk to God. Ask him to help your students learn about the importance of forgiveness today.

OBJECT LESSON: **Eating the Insides**

Materials: ice block or cubes, small handful of salt (rock salt is best),
plate or tray to catch melting ice

Lesson Aim: To show that just as the salt eats a hole in the ice, anger and unforgiveness can destroy good family relationships from the inside out.

Set today's demonstration in a position where all students can see it easily. Show the ice block or cube. Describe it. Ask a student to touch it to verify that it is ice. Then place a small handful of rock salt on the block. Wait a few moments. Talk about last week's lesson, or sing another song. Then return to the cube. **What has happened?** The block has a huge hole in the middle! **How did it get there?** The rock salt caused the ice to dissolve prematurely.

Invite your students to imagine this ... "Pretend that you and a brother or sister just had a big argument. You both go to bed. You are still angry. You never want to see that person again. You hope to stay angry for a long time. **At this point, what starts to happen in your heart?** It is similar to what happened to this ice. The anger starts to eat away at your insides, just like the salt in the ice. If you let it keep going, the anger can grow and grow until your relationship with your brother or sister is totally destroyed. The anger can also turn to bitterness which will affect your personality in a bad way. **What's the answer?** When you fight (everyone does!), do not stay angry for long. Ask God to help you work out your differences. It will keep your heart and life healthy and ready for loving others.

Lesson Note: Do you ever hold grudges or become bitter? Jesus can help you forgive.

TEACH & EXPLAIN: **Ephesians 4:32** (*briefly discuss this verse together.*)

Be kind – The apostle Paul wrote these words, telling Christians to be kind to one another.

What is kindness? Goodness in action. **Do most kids like to think of themselves as being good? Do they do anything about their feelings of goodness? How does it feel when someone is kind to you?**

and compassionate to one another – Compassion is an even stronger word. It is love in action. Just like kindness cannot stay seated when it sees the chance to do a good deed, compassion cannot keep still when it sees the chance to serve someone with love.

When have you felt compassion? What did you do?

forgiving each other – One of the most important ways we show kindness and compassion is by forgiving each other. When we forgive, we erase the memory or grudge against a person who has wronged us. **Have you ever forgiven someone? Have people forgiven you?**

just as in Christ God forgave you – **How is Christian kindness different from ordinary kindness?** It starts with God's love shown to us through Christ. When we are kind to others, we are sharing the love of Christ with them. There is no love better than this, anywhere.

REPEAT: Instruct students to repeat the verse, with volunteers removing one or two words after each repetition. Do this until kids repeat the verse from memory. Choose eraser volunteers in fun ways related to today's verse:

- Someone who has shown kindness to a friend or family member. **How?**
- Someone who names at least one way God has been kind to us.

REVIEW FUN: Pass Forgiveness

Imagine that the entire class has just had an argument. Everyone has been angry with each other. What can we do? Forgive. Ask one person to begin. He or she goes to someone and gives them a hug, and says today's verse. This person then hugs two more people and says the verse. They each hug two more people until the whole class has received a hug and forgiveness.

Lesson Note: How did God show kindness to us? Forgiving us through Christ.

Materials: a Bible and your lesson notes

BIBLE REFERENCE(S): Matthew 18:21-35

WORDS TO WATCH

- mercy** – undeserved love and forgiveness
- servant** – a person who serves a master
- parable** – a story with a lesson, told by Jesus

INTRODUCTION

Did any of you do wrong things last week? Ask everyone to close their eyes and bow their heads. Ask them to raise their hands and, with a show of their fingers, let you know how many times a day they think they do something God doesn't want them to do. (*Take a quick, secret count.*) Then multiply the number times seven days. Then times 52 weeks. (*Ask a good math student to help you.*) Announce the large number. **Do you think this is too many things for God to forgive in one year? Why or why not?** Today's true story from the Bible will help us learn about God's answer to these big numbers.

A. One day, Jesus' disciples asked, "How often should I forgive?"

1. They wondered if there was a limit. **When has a person been too bad to forgive? What do you think?**
2. Peter wondered if 7 times was enough. **Is it?**
3. Jesus said 70 times 7. (*Let a child figure this.*) That's 490 times! **Do you think Jesus wants us to spend all day counting? No.**
4. Jesus told a parable to teach his disciples about real mercy and forgiveness.

B. A man owed a large amount of money (perhaps several million dollars) to his master, the king.

1. The master called the man in to pay. The man did not have the money.
2. The king ordered that the man and his family and all his possessions be sold to pay for his debt. Sold as slaves!
3. He fell to his knees and begged for mercy. (**Read Matthew 18:26**)
4. The master felt sorry for him, so he canceled the whole debt. The man went free. **How would you feel? Great!**
5. **What similar thing has God done for us?** Forgiven all our sin.

C. That same man met a friend who owed him a few dollars.

1. The man asked his fellow servant for the money.
2. The fellow servant could not pay. He had nothing.

3. The man grabbed his friend, choked him and demanded money.
4. The servant begged him to be patient. But the man was not.
5. He took him to prison, where he had to stay until he could pay the whole amount.

How would the servant feel?

6. **Was this fair, considering how the first man's great debt was canceled? No!**

D. Some others saw what happened and reported it to the king

1. He called the first man and had him thrown into jail until he could pay his large debt.
2. **What was the lesson in this parable? (Read Matthew 18:33)**

- the price for us, even though we don't deserve this love. He wants us to show his love to others.
- God keeps showing us his incredible forgiveness. **How?** Forgiving all our sin (wrong things against God like unthankfulness, selfishness, etc.) We always find more things needing his forgiveness. He always forgives when we ask.
- **Do you have extra mercy to share? What are some ways you can share it with friends? With family members? At school?**

GAME: Partner Races

Materials: balloons (or balls of socks) for half the class

Divide the class in two. Line groups in long lines facing each other. Pair one person from each line with a person from the other. Try to pair kids with partners who are not necessarily their best friends. Give each pair a balloon. Line pairs up on one end of the classroom. Designate a simple classroom course (around the table, or across the room and back). Instruct pairs to hold the balloons (or balls of socks) between their hips (no hands) and run the course. When balloon drops, students must start at the beginning again (and also say "I Forgive You"). The first pair to finish the round wins. Play several rounds, if possible.

Lesson Note: Is it always easy to forgive each other and get along? No, but Jesus taught that it is always worth it. And this is how he treats us!

GAME OPTION: Guess the Price Auction

Materials: unusual items from around your classroom

Divide students to two or more teams. Invite them to participate in a pretend auction. Show them several items. Ask them to try to guess what price you are "selling" it for. (all items will be returned to you after the game). You whisper your price to a market assistant. Then, let student offer their guesses. Finally, the auction assistant tells them your arbitrary price. Feel free to assign very strange values to each item. The student whose guess is the closest receives that item for their team. Students who have an item, may not bid on others. Play again and again until all the items are gone. The team with the most items wins.

Lesson Note: What price did God pay so we could be close to him? He sent his only Son, Jesus, who died on the cross for us. He gave himself for us.

BIBLE STUDY FOR LESSON 18: Get Self-Control

GET New Attitudes

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- That God helps children learn to be disciplined and self-controlled as they serve him, like the wise virgins.
- In this lesson students, will be invited to DO the following:
- To discuss and define the benefits of self-control and discipline for children.
- To list areas in which children are working to learn self-control, and pray together for God's help as they practice self-discipline in these areas, with God's help.

Theme Verses

Bible Story: The Ten Virgins (Matthew 25)

Bible Verse: For God, did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. 2 Timothy 1:7 NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL

Get Self-Control

TEACH & EXPLAIN: 2 Timothy 1:7 (*briefly discuss this verse together*)

For God did not give us – The apostle Paul wrote these words to a young man named Timothy. He was training to be a pastor and leader, like Paul. Usually, Paul told people about what they DID have from God. He loved to tell about God's gifts and benefits. Here he tells about something God did not want us to have.

a spirit of timidity – Fear. God does not want us to be afraid. **What makes kids afraid? Why do we feel insecure? Why do we get nervous and anxious?** Because we take our eyes off God and all he has given to us. **What has he given us?**

but a spirit of power – **What does this mean?** It means God will give us all the strength and power we need, when we ask. He gives us strength to love, to forgive. He gives us power to pray for people and their problems and needs.

of love – **Who showed God's love to you? How does this change your attitude toward other people?** God fills us with love to love others.

and of self-discipline – Finally, God has given us a spirit of self-control. **What would the world be like without self-control? Why do kids have to learn it?** It helps us stay ready, always, to do what God wants us to do.

REPEAT: Instruct students to repeat the verse, with volunteers removing one or two words after each repetition. Do this until kids repeat the verse from memory. Choose eraser volunteers in fun ways related to today's verse:

- Someone who tells about a time kids might be afraid or feel insecure.
- Someone who can tell how a kid might show God's power, God's love or self-discipline.

Materials: a Bible and your lesson notes
a lamp or flashlight

BIBLE REFERENCE: Matthew 25:1-13

WORDS TO WATCH

- virgin** – an unmarried woman
wise – able to make good choices

INTRODUCTION

Light the lamp or flashlight for the telling of the story. Turn out other classroom lights, if possible. Imagine waiting in a dark street in Jerusalem for a bridegroom and his men in waiting to come dancing through the streets to take the bride away. Although this story is just a parable, this is how weddings began in ancient Israel.

(Guide a few children to act this story out as you tell it.)

A. Jesus was almost done with his work on earth.

1. He was just a few weeks away from dying on the cross.
2. He had trained his 12 disciples to be leaders after he was gone.
3. He was giving them some final instructions to help them.
4. He told them to keep guard, watching to make sure their hearts stayed full of love for God. He knew they might get tired of waiting. (It has been 2000 years since Jesus said he would return. **How do we know he will come?**)
5. Jesus taught them a parable to help them learn to wait.

B. Ten virgins were waiting for a bridegroom.

1. Ten ladies waited to give light to a bridal party.
2. Weddings were not held at predetermined times. Instead, the bride and her maids had to be ready, waiting for the time when the bridegroom and his men would dance through the streets to the bride's home and take her away to the wedding. It would be a surprise.

C. There were two kinds of women waiting.

1. Five of the women were wise. They had their lamps and extra oil. They made good choices. They were thinking ahead.
2. Five of the women were foolish. They did not bring extra oil.
3. The bridegroom took so long, they fell asleep. *(Dim the lamp, if possible.)*

D. The bridegroom came at midnight.

1. The women woke. He was coming! They all hurried to turn their lamps up.
2. The wise women's lamps shone brightly. *(Turn lamp light up, if possible.)*
3. The foolish women were nearly out of oil. They wanted to borrow some from the wise women. But the wise women knew they could not share.
4. The foolish women had to go buy oil. It was the middle of the night. While they were gone, the bridegroom arrived for the wedding.
5. When the foolish women returned, they were locked out.

E. What lessons did Jesus want his disciples to remember?

1. That they must watch over their hearts and keep them full of love, even if Jesus took a long time to do what he said he would do.
2. Jesus planned to come back unexpectedly. He did not want to find his disciples empty of love for God when he returned.
3. The wise women practiced self-control. They kept themselves ready.

Application & Prayer

(10 minutes)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **How can you keep love for Jesus strong and "burning"?**
 - Pray regularly – *(Read 1 Peter 4:7)* How does prayer help kids grow?
 - Study God's Word *(Read 2 Timothy 2:15 and 3:16)*
 - Obey – *(Read Hebrews 5:14, Psalm 119:11)* How does obeying help us?
 - Love others *(Read 1 Thessalonians 5:8)* How does loving others help us grow to be like Jesus?
- **Why might a person's love for God grow cold or be forgotten?** Busyness, tiredness, distractions. *(Read Matthew 25:13)*
- **What condition will your heart be in when Jesus returns?**

GAME OPTION: Bible Drill

Materials: Bibles for as many students as possible

Divide students into groups of 2-3. Give each group a Bible. Play a Bible drill game. Make a list of Bible verses children have learned about in this unit. Add some from the Old Testament. For the first few rounds, challenge groups to be the first to find the verse. Applaud winners. After that, think of a number between 1 and 5. Write it down secretly. Play another Bible Drill round. Number groups in order as they find the verse. Then look at your number: this is the winner. If your number was 3, then the 3rd group to find the verse wins. This gives more students the chance to win.

Lesson Note: How does practice and training in God's Word help us grow? We learn more about Jesus; we grow to be more like him. It keeps our heart of love burning strong for him.

BIBLE STUDY FOR LESSON 19: Get Real Joy

Get New Attitudes

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- That Jesus brings a new kind of joy to their lives, as demonstrated by Jesus himself, when he suffered and died on the cross for them.
- To discuss and define true joy, in spite of troubles.
In this lesson students, will be invited to DO the following:
- To list times in which children may find it difficult to be joyful.
- To pray specifically for God to give them joy even as they face a difficult problem in their lives.
- To thank God for always being with them, even in difficult times.

Theme Verses

Bible Story: Jesus to the Cross (Luke 22-24)

Bible Verse: Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Philippians 4:4 NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL

Get Real Joy

OBJECT LESSON: Music Box (or Radio)

Materials: a box which plays music when opened
(or radio which plays when turned on)

Lesson Aim: To show that just as a music box hides music inside, we can hide a song of praise in our hearts at all times.

Show students the music box. Open the box and listen to the music for a moment. Notice how it does this every time you open it. Notice how it does this in all parts of the room, in all places (in a corner of the room, on your head, upside down, under a chair, in a box, etc.) **Why can this music box work in all these places?** Because it is made to work when we open it up, no matter where that is. The music does not go away.

This music box reminds us of Christians. Hidden inside their hearts is a song of thankfulness and praise to God. No matter where God puts a Christian, whether on this side of the world or the other, whether in a good situation or bad, whether alone or with others, there is always a song hiding inside. **Where does the song come from?** From the Holy Spirit inside each person.

No matter where Christians go, they know that God is with them, helping them and loving them. **Is God hiding in your heart and giving you a glad song?** This is God's joy in you.

Lesson Note: Do you have real joy, even during times of trouble? How can you get it?

Materials: a Bible and your lesson notes
optional: thorns, spikes, whip, robe

BIBLE REFERENCE: Hebrews 12:1-3, James 1:3, Luke 22-24

WORDS TO WATCH

cross – a heavy wooden frame used for Roman executions

crucify – to execute someone on a cross

prophet – a person who gives messages from God to people about the future

tomb – a cave where dead people were buried in ancient times

INTRODUCTION

God had a plan for Jesus. He told people about it in the Bible. It was like a map. Today's true story is about how Jesus followed God's plan – perfectly – and saved the people of earth. But it was not easy.

A. Jesus ministered on earth for three years.

1. When he was 30 years old, he began to do the things that he became famous for.
2. He healed people with all kinds of diseases: blind, deaf, crippled, old, young, bad people, foreigners, anyone.
3. He taught people about God's love and forgiveness of sin. He was amazing.
4. He raised people from the dead. One man had been dead for four days when Jesus commanded life to come back into him. God's power was in Jesus. He had power over death.

B. Religious leaders tried to kill Jesus.

1. Surprisingly, the religious leaders in Israel did not like Jesus. He was more popular. They liked to be most important. They planned to kill Jesus.
2. One of Jesus' own disciples, Judas, helped them find Jesus in a secret place and arrest him. Judas did not really love God. ***How would you feel if a friend did this? Would you feel joyful?***
3. Jesus was led through several unfair trials. They lasted all night. Roman soldiers finally put a robe on him, placed a crown of thorns on his head, spit on him and made fun of him. They thought his claim to be king, Messiah, was silly. *(Show the items Jesus experienced. Touch them.)*
4. Then they nailed his hands and feet to the cross with huge spikes. They left him there to die. ***What would you think? Would you feel joy?***

C. Jesus died.

1. When Jesus died, the region became dark for about three hours – even though it was the middle of the day. The temple curtain was torn in two.

2. When Jesus died, he made the way for all sin to be forgiven, so people could come close to God's presence forever. ***(Read Hebrews 12:2) Why did Jesus experience joy during this terrible trial?***

D. Jesus rose from the dead.

1. Three days after he was buried, followers of Jesus visited the tomb, the cave where he was buried. The huge stone in front of the cave was moved. Jesus was not in the tomb.
2. Angels were there. They told the women who visited that Jesus was alive.
3. Jesus came to his disciples. He showed them the nail prints in his hands. He also ate in front of them. He was really alive!

E. The Jesus Plan

1. God loved us so much he sent his only Son Jesus to die on the cross to pay the price for our sins to be forgiven.
2. Everyone sins, including us. Sin keeps us from coming close to a holy God. Sin keeps us from eternal life.
3. When we believe in Jesus, asking him to forgive our sins, he saves us from the punishment we deserve for our sin.
4. Then we can grow to be close friends with God now and forever. ***Do you want to ask him to be your Savior and friend today?***

Application & Prayer ***(10 minutes)*** **How does Jesus' example help us learn about joy?** He knew God was still in charge. He had joy even on his way to the cross because of his great love. He knew we would be saved to be his after he died and rose again.

- **Does Jesus expect us to have hardships, too?** ***(Read James 1:2-4 and 1 Peter 1:6-8.)*** Yes. He works in us and through us during trials and hardships. His example can keep us going. ***(Read Hebrews 12:2-3 again.)***

BIBLE STUDY FOR LESSON 20; Belong Together

**UNIT 4:
Grow with God's Family**

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- That they (children who have received Christ) belong to God's big family, as did the 3000 people who received Christ on the day the Church was born.
- To discuss and define various Bible names for the family of God (Body of Christ, the Church, etc.)
In this lesson students, will be invited to DO the following:
- To regularly attend a local church group that teaches the truth about Jesus (if they do not do so already).
- To thank God that they belong to his big family of believers around the world.

Theme Verses

Bible Story: A New Church Is Born (Acts 1 & 2)

Bible Verse: Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. John 1:12 NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL

Belong Together

INTRODUCE THE LESSON: Families

Invite several children to come forward and tell the class about their families. After telling about parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles, also ask them some fun questions. **What is your family's favorite word? Dessert? Time of day? Game? Holiday? Who has the longest nose?** Ask if their families have any other interesting qualities.

What do all the families have in common? How are they different? Some families are large, some are small. Some have both parents. Some do not. Some have lots of children. Some have just a few. Some have grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc. Families are interesting.

God’s family is even more interesting. It is made up of people all around the world who love and follow Jesus. There are over two billion people who follow Jesus around the world. **Did you know that you belonged to such a big family?**

Lesson Aim: To show that unlike our houses, which only have room for a few family members, God’s home (heaven) has room for an unlimited number of family members.

Before class, mark out a three meter by three meter square on the floor. Make the square larger or smaller depending on the size of your class and the space available in your classroom.

Ask one or two students to tell you about the size of his or her home. **How many people can fit into your home?** Enjoy listening to the guesses. Tell students that you have a small “home” set up in the classroom. For fun, you want to see how many students can fit inside. Call up more and more volunteers until children are squeezed tightly into your “home” area marked out on the floor. Enjoy the laughter. Count how many children fit. Ask students to be seated.

What about God’s home? When Jesus left the earth, he told his disciples he was going to heaven to prepare a place for them so they could live there. **How many people can fit in God’s house?** His house does not have any boundaries. In fact, there is room for millions and millions of people. Right now, only one out of three people on earth believe in Jesus and are part of his family. **What about the others? Is there room in God’s house for them?** Yes. There is room.

Lesson Note: Who will invite more people into God’s family? Will you?

Bible Verse (15-20 minutes)

Materials: an erasable board or paper with verse written out
TEACH & EXPLAIN: **John 1:12** (briefly discuss the verse together)

- Help your students really understand the verse.
- If possible, keep verses from week to week in a basket or bag for review. Choose one or two verses as review each week.

Yet to all – Who is this Bible verse for? It is for all people. It was not just written for Jewish people. It was not just written for people who lived during the time of Jesus. Was this written for you? Yes!

who received him – What does it mean to receive someone? It means to welcome them and treat them as a guest. **If Jesus lives with you all the time, how might your behavior be different? How might you feel when you have troubles?**

to those who believed in his name – To believe in Jesus’ name means to believe that he is Jesus Christ (Christ means messiah, the anointed one or chosen one). It also means to believe that he is the Son of God.

he gave the right – If we receive Jesus and believe in him, he gives us the right to do something. **What is a right?** It is a privilege that belongs to us.

to become children of God – Not only will Jesus forgive our sin and give us the gift of eternal life, but we become part of God’s family forever. It is as if we are adopted. He will not change his mind and send us out of his family. We become his forever. **How does a great father care for his children?** With great love. He protects them and watches out for them. This is what God does for us as his children.

REPEAT: Instruct students to repeat the verse, with volunteers removing one or two words after each repetition. Do this until kids repeat the verse from memory. Choose eraser volunteers in fun ways related to today's verse:

- Someone who tells the name of a family member.
- Someone who can tell of a gift he or she received.

NOTE: If board or cards are not available, spend more time with review activity

REVIEW FUN: Finding Family

Invite everyone who is wearing blue to gather in one corner of the classroom. Pretend they are your family. Repeat the verse. Everyone who is wearing green goes to a different corner and does the same. Repeat the verse. Gather other "family groups": those wearing shoes with laces, those with ribbons in their hair, those wearing socks, etc. in different parts of the classroom. Each new "family" repeats the verse together.

Lesson Note: Do you belong to God's family?

BIBLE REFERENCE: Acts 1 & 2

WORDS TO WATCH

Holy Spirit – a name for God who lives in us and helps us. Other names of God are "Jesus" and "Father."

witness – to tell people something you have seen firsthand

Great Commission – Jesus' command to tell all people about him

INTRODUCTION

Inflate one balloon. Leave the other empty. **What is the difference between these balloons?** Your students will notice that one is full and one is empty. Remind them that in today's true story from the Bible, God filled his disciples with special help: himself! Before, their hearts had been like the empty balloon (*Make it flop!*). Afterwards, their hearts were full, like the other balloon.

A. Jesus was done with his work on earth.

1. He healed people, taught them about God, died on the cross and rose again. **Why did he do this?** Because he loves us.
2. But the work was just beginning for his disciples. He wanted them to tell people all over the whole world about himself.
3. He knew the disciples could not do this job on their own. He promised to send help. (*Read Acts 1:8*)

B. The disciples and other believers waited together for his help.

1. 120 of them prayed in a room together.
2. They prayed and waited. They believed Jesus would send help.

C. He sent his Holy Spirit. (Read Acts 2:2-4)

1. Suddenly, the praying believers inside the house heard a huge rushing wind. **Would you have been afraid?** (*Show surprised faces.*)
2. Small flames of fire appeared above each person, like candle flames. Crazy! **Did their hair burn?** No.
3. The people spoke in languages they had never learned before.
4. God had filled them with his own Holy Spirit.

D. People from every country were in Jerusalem.

1. Jews had come to Israel to celebrate the Festival of Tents (Pentecost). This holiday celebrated how the cloud of God had been with them in the wilderness for 40 years. *(Invite one person to be the cloud and lead several students around the room.)*
2. The people heard the believers talking in their own languages.
3. Jesus told his disciples to tell every nation about him. He surprised them by bringing every nation to them. *(Clap for God's incredible plan.)*

E. Then Peter preached.

1. As Jesus' disciple, he had not always been strong for God.
2. But after receiving the Holy Spirit, Peter preached. He told the people about Jesus. He talked boldly from the Bible. He invited people to believe in the message about Jesus.
3. The crowd listened. 3000 people were saved.
4. Now there were believers from places all around the world!
5. Each one would go home to tell others the message about Jesus.

- **In what way does it help our lives with Jesus to know there are so many other people following him, too?** We do not feel alone. We know we belong to a big family of people to love and serve Jesus. We can always get help.

Teach: Invite children to each find someone in the classroom whom they do not know very well. Introduce kids to each other, if they need help. Invite these small groups or pairs to tell each other what they think about Jesus. Pray for each other to grow strong in God's family.

Listen: Ask for any other prayer requests. Record these in a notebook.

Pray: Pray for listed requests. Close by thanking God for sending Jesus to make a way for us to be part of his family forever. Ask him to help us grow to love others in his family, as he loves us.

GAME: 'Round the Earth

Materials: one ball or balloon per team

Divide the class into two large teams. Have them each stand in a large circle. Give each team a ball or balloon. Teams race to pass the ball around their circle, from one student to the next, hand to hand. The team whose ball gets back to the first person first, wins. Play again, making the ball travel TWO TIMES around the circle. Then THREE TIMES. Enjoy.

Lesson Note: God wants the message about Jesus to move and reach every person in the whole world. **Will you help move the message by telling a friend about Jesus?** God will be with you and help you.

ACTIVITY: Matching Game

Materials: objects or drawings for each of the items below

Each of the words/headings below on a card or paper with verse

Followers of Jesus have many different names in the Bible. Give your students the challenge of matching the word/heading to the object that matches. After students have correctly matched

all the objects and words, read the scripture verses together and talk about the Church, God's family, the Body of Christ, etc.

Phrase/Scripture

Object

Body (<i>Romans 12:4-5</i>)	a doll or action figure or outline of a body
Flock (<i>Acts 20:28</i>)	sheep, cotton ball or drawing of a sheep
Family (<i>John 1:12</i>)	a family portrait or drawing of a family
Bride (<i>Revelation 19:7</i>)	a wedding dress drawing or photo of a bride
Kingdom (<i>Luke 17:20-21</i>)	a castle, a crown or drawing of one of these
Building (<i>1 Peter 2:5</i>)	bricks or building blocks, or drawing of building

Discuss how each of these helps us understand more about the Church, the Body of Christ, his family. Celebrate that Jesus is the head over all!

back in the bag. Continue giving teams turns to answer questions until there is a winner.

Lesson Note: Jesus wants all peoples throughout the earth to have the chance to know him.

Whom can you tell about Jesus?

BIBLE STUDY FOR LESSON 21: Pray Together

Growing with God's Family

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- That God listens and helps when people in God's family pray together, as he listened to believers praying for Peter.
In this lesson students, will be invited to DO the following:
- To discuss and define ways in which people pray together.
- To pray with other believers (in class) about problems.

Theme Verses

Bible Story: Peter Escapes Jail (Acts 12:1-19)

Bible Verse: If two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.
Matthew 18:19 NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL

Pray Together

INTRODUCE THE LESSON: What's News?

Show students the newspaper. Ask a student who can read to come forward and look at the newspaper with you. **What do you see that is news today? Are there things to celebrate? Are there problems? Is there a new interesting discovery to report?** Discuss some of these news items together.

God sees every report about every news item in the whole world. He even sees the news about us. These truths might not get printed in the newspaper, but they are important to us: problems, celebrations, new information.

What does God want us to do about the problems we see (both in our own lives and in the world around us)? He wants his people to pray about them.

OPENING PRAYER: Invite students to bow their heads as you talk to God. Ask him to help your students to understand the importance of praying together today.

OBJECT LESSON: **Microphone**

Materials: a microphone (or cell phone with a speaker button)

Lesson Aim: To show that just as a microphone takes a quiet message and makes it loud so it can be heard far away, praying together takes our prayers and makes them even more noticeable to God. He loves to hear and answer prayer.

Begin the demonstration by speaking to your children in a very quiet voice. Speak so quietly that they cannot hear you well. **What is the problem? What are you saying?** Students should be telling you that they cannot hear you.

Take out the microphone. Turn it on. Turn it up. Speak into the microphone so students can hear you loudly. **Can you hear me now?** Yes. Say several fun greetings to children and ask them to respond. Enjoy the communication.

This microphone reminds us of a truth about God and prayer. Though God can hear everything, even when we just think a prayer in our hearts without saying anything out loud, he seems to give special importance to prayer that is prayed together with other believers. It is almost as if the prayer becomes louder and more noticed by God. God loves to listen when we pray together. He loves to answer.

Lesson Note: Do you pray together with God's people?

Bible Verse

(15-20 minutes)

Materials: an erasable board or paper with verse written out

TEACH & EXPLAIN: **Matthew 18:19** (*briefly discuss the verse together*)

If two of you on earth – These words were spoken by Jesus to his disciples, his followers. He knew that he was preparing them to follow him, even after he had returned to heaven. He was telling them what to do when they were alone – without him alongside them, as he had been for several years.

agree about anything you ask for – He said that if two of his disciples agreed about anything and asked for it, he would listen. **What kinds of things might we want to ask Jesus for help with?** Almost any type of problem, either in our personal life, or one that is bigger and in the news.

it will be done for you – If we pray and ask, he will hear and answer. This is an amazing promise. Jesus loves to hear us pray and ask for his help with our problems. **Does this mean we can boss God around and tell him what to do? If two of you agree that God should bring ice cream to your house today, will he do it?** He can do anything. But he does not listen to selfish prayers like this. He loves to answer and help with any real prayers and real problems.

by my Father in heaven – God answers prayer. He has the power to help with ANYTHING. He is not small. He is not uncaring. He knows just the right thing to do.

REPEAT: Instruct students to repeat the verse, with volunteers removing one or two words after each repetition. Do this until kids repeat the verse from memory. Choose eraser volunteers in fun ways related to today's verse:

- Someone who tells about a wish he or she has for help from God
- Someone who can tell a story of God answering prayer.

NOTE: *If board or cards are not available, spend more time with review activity.*

REVIEW FUN: Two or Three Agree

Invite children to find two or three friends and repeat the verse together. Find two or three different friends. Repeat the verse again. Find two or three more friends. Repeat the verse one more time.

Lesson Note: Do you pray together with others? God loves to hear and answer these prayers.

Materials: a Bible and your lesson notes
current newspaper

BIBLE REFERENCE: Acts 12:1-19

WORDS TO WATCH

Holy Spirit – a name for God who lives in us and helps us. Other names for God are "Jesus" and "Father."

witness – to tell people something you have seen firsthand

apostles – the key leaders of the new church; Jesus' disciples

INTRODUCTION

Choose three willing volunteers to participate in a demonstration lasting the entire Bible story time. **Which one of you would like to be the prisoner? Which two will be the guards?** Attach one guard's hand to each of the prisoner's hands. For the next five minutes (or less if students are especially disruptive), the guards must keep the prisoner from trying to escape. The prisoner does the opposite.

A. Peter and the apostles helped the Church grow. (Read Acts 4:31-33)

1. Many people listened to them teach and became believers.
2. They prayed for people to be healed. They cast out demons from some. God showed his power through the apostles.
3. Many Jewish leaders did not like the new message. They wanted the apostles to stop. They had already arrested some.
4. The king was one of these. He had already killed James, one of the apostles. He had his soldiers arrest Peter. He planned to kill him also.

B. Peter was in jail.

1. He was watched by four groups of soldiers. They were everywhere. They would be killed if Peter escaped.
2. He was chained to two of the guards. **Could Peter get away?** (*Has the student prisoner figured out how to get away yet?*)
3. Somehow, when nighttime came, Peter fell asleep, still chained to the guards. (*Would the student prisoner like to sleep like that?*)
4. **What could Peter do?** Trust God. Even though he had denied Christ earlier, he was now ready to die for his belief in Jesus if he had to.

C. The other believers did the only thing they could do: they prayed.

1. This was probably not silent prayer. They were probably crying and praying loudly, asking God to help. (*Pray loudly together, with tears.*)
2. Only God could help Peter now, anyway. They gave their worries to him. **What worries do you have? Are they this bad?**

D. Suddenly, back at the jail, an angel came from God.

1. There was a very bright light in the room. It woke Peter up.

2. Peter's chains suddenly fell off. (*Guards let the prisoner go.*) But the guards did not wake up.
3. The angel told Peter to follow him. He led Peter right out of prison.
4. At first, Peter thought he was dreaming. But he woke up free.

E. Peter went to John Mark's house where they were praying.

1. This was where the believers were praying. (***Read Acts 12:12-16***)
2. The servant girl, Rhoda, came to the door when Peter knocked. It was the middle of the night. (*Knock on the door of the house.*)
3. She was so excited to see Peter, she ran to tell the others and forgot to let Peter in. They didn't believe her report.
4. Finally, they all saw Peter. God had taken care of him. God had helped when they prayed. They were so glad.
5. The guards tried to find him in the morning, but he was gone. Herod ordered the guards to be executed instead of Peter.

- **How did the believers show their trust in God?** By praying about serious problems. They prayed together.
- **How can you show your trust in God?** By praying about problems, giving them to him in prayer. And asking others to pray with us.

PRAYER: Pray Together

Teach: God hears and answers prayer. He loves when we pray together. Divide students into small groups. Give each group a small section of newspaper. Invite them to read through it, looking for problems to pray about. Pray together.

Listen: Ask for any other prayer requests. Record these in a notebook.

Pray: Pray for listed requests. Close by thanking God for hearing and answering prayer. Thank him that he can be trusted to help, always.

Activities & Review (10-15 minutes each)

GAME OPTION: Escape from Jail

Materials: no materials

Ask all the students in the room to close their eyes. Quietly, move around the room. You will choose an "angel." Whisper to several different students, but only the student whom you tap on the shoulder is the angel. After you return to the front of the room, invite the children to open their eyes. Then instruct them to mill around the room. Imagine they are in jail, like Peter was. The person who is the "angel" privately winks at students, trying not to be noticed. As children are winked at, they must quietly move to the outside wall of the classroom and say "I've been set free!" Continue until either the "angel" is discovered by other students, or all the students are free. Enjoy.

- Choose one or two activity options that fit your students and your time.
- Continue to teach and love your students as you enjoy these activities together.

Lesson Note: Peter escaped from prison, because God sent an angel to help him. God heard the believers' prayers. God hears us when we pray together.

ACTIVITY OPTION: Build a Prayer

Materials: a ball

Arrange the class in a large circle. Let one person start with the ball and say a one-sentence prayer for a need around the world. He or she gives the ball to a friend who adds another one-sentence prayer. Continue until everyone has had a turn.

Lesson Note: As we agree with others in prayer, God hears and answers.

Closing

(5-10 minutes)

REVIEW GAME: All Peoples Game

Materials: All Peoples Game Card (*see page 8-37*)

All Peoples Game Pieces (*see page 8-36*)

Create this game to use many weeks during the quarter. Give a game card to each team or group. Copy and trim apart the slips of paper with names of nations and peoples. Place these in a bag. Give each team a chance to answer a question about the day's lesson. If they answer it correctly, they may take a slip of paper from the bag and match it with one of the continents on their card. Each team tries to be the first to place two nations or people groups on each continent space. If a nation or people is drawn, and the team already has enough of that one, they must place it back in the bag. Continue giving teams turns to answer questions until there is a winner.

Lesson Note: Jesus wants all peoples throughout the earth to have the chance to know him.

Whom can you tell about Jesus?

AFTER CLASS

- **Evaluation:** How did your lesson go? Did children understand what was presented? What will you want to discuss again in your next meeting together?
- **Preparation:** Begin to pray and think about next week's lesson and Bible story early. What else do your students need to know? How will you help them

BIBLE STUDY FOR LESSON 22: HELPING EACH OTHER

Grow with God's Family

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- That believers in God's family can help each other, as they helped Saul. In this lesson students, will be invited to DO the following:
- To discuss the kinds of help people around them might need (especially kids).
- To choose one way to help people around them and work together to practice serving other believers.

Theme Verses

Bible Story: Believers Help Saul (Acts 9)

Bible Verse: Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2 NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL

Help Each Other

INTRODUCE THE LESSON: A Spark

(If possible, turn the lights off.) **When the lights go out, or it is night, how might this spark help us? Does it give off a lot of light?** It can be used to start a lantern or a fire which gives a lot of light and helps people who are around it. **Can the lantern or candle start without a spark?** No. The spark is small, but it plays an important part in making the bigger lantern work.

This is a lot like something that believers should find in their hearts: love – God's love. This is genuine care and concern for someone in need. God's love or genuine caring is like a spark. It starts a flame of God's love in our hearts. It starts us sharing that love with others. God did not fill our hearts with his love, just to keep it to ourselves. He wants us to share it with other believers and all people.

OPENING PRAYER: Invite students to bow their heads as you talk to God. Ask him to help your students understand the importance of helping and loving each other today.

Materials (optional): musical instruments, music player, song words

- Enjoy singing several favorite songs together.
- Be sure to explain new words and concepts, especially for newcomers.
- Choose songs related to love, caring, encouragement, etc.

Object-Demonstration (10-15 minutes)

OBJECT LESSON: Body Demonstration

Materials: a bowl of small fruit

Lesson Aim: To show how much individuals in the Body of Christ need each other.

- *Enjoy involving as many children as possible in this demonstration.*

Before class, place the bowl of fruit either outside the classroom and down the hall slightly, or on a far side of the classroom. Also, be sure to watch for tripping hazards on the pathway from the classroom to the fruit.

Divide the group into teams of 5-6 students. If your class is large, select enough children for two teams. You would like the teams to each bring you a piece of fruit. Tell them they need to search for the fruit. It is not far away. However, all of the students must pretend they are blind (*closing their eyes tightly for the duration of the demonstration*). Only one of the students can see. However, this student cannot walk. So the entire team must create a chair or carrier with their hands, carrying the other student, so he or she can see and direct them to find the fruit and bring it back to the teacher. Ready, begin! Enjoy the process. (*Students may open their eyes to return to class after finding the fruit.*)

Ask the teams how the demonstration felt. **Was it easy to find the fruit? Was it easy to do this when you could not see? How much did the team members need each other's help?** A lot. The seeing person could not walk, others could not see. In many ways, this is how the Body of Christ is. No one has all the gifts (except Jesus). We must all help each other. God gives us each different gifts and abilities to share with others. (**Read Romans 12:4-5**)

Lesson Note: What gifts has God given to you? How can you help others?

Bible Verse (15-20 minutes)

Materials: an erasable board or paper with verse written out

TEACH & EXPLAIN: Galatians 6:2 (*briefly discuss this verse together*)

Carry each other's burdens – These words were written by the apostle Paul. He did a lot of teaching to new believers in the Church. He taught people how God wanted them to live and to care for each other. **Does "carry each other's burdens" mean that others should carry our school books or carry our bags from the market for us?** Not necessarily. To carry someone's burden means to help them with their problems. **How can we carry each other's burdens?** Sometimes we carry them to God in prayer, helping to pray for someone with troubles. Other times, we listen to them as friends and encourage them. Sometimes, God asks us to give practical help to someone: bring them meals, help them with a broken bicycle, share our food with them, etc.

and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ – Why are we to do this? This spreads God’s love to the world. Jesus gave very few commands. One of them was, “Love one another as I have loved you.” Love is the main theme of the law of Christ. He wanted his followers full of love, always.

REPEAT: Instruct students to repeat the verse, with volunteers removing one or two words after each repetition. Do this until kids repeat the verse from memory. Choose eraser volunteers in fun ways related to today’s verse:

- Someone who tells about someone he or she has helped recently.
- Someone who can tell about someone he or she knows who has a big need.

NOTE: If board or cards are not available, spend more time with review activity.

REVIEW FUN: Help Each Other

Invite each child to find a partner. Instruct students to repeat the verse, with each partner saying just one word, then the other partner saying the next, until the whole verse is finished. Do it again, faster. Do it again, even faster.

Lesson Note: God’s plan is for his people to help each other in love.

Bible Story

(20-25 minutes)

Materials: a Bible and your lesson notes

BIBLE REFERENCE: Acts 9:1-31

WORDS TO WATCH

Christians – people who believe in Christ

witness – to tell people something you have seen firsthand

INTRODUCTION

Ask your students to think of a favorite movie or children’s story. **Who is the good character in the story? Who is the bad character in the story? Could these two ever become friends?** No. Not unless one of them changes a lot. Today’s true story from the Bible is about someone who changed like that.

A. Saul thought it was his job to get rid of the Christian message.

1. He did not want people to believe in Jesus. He wanted their message to stop. He did not like Jesus or Christians.
2. He tried to hurt Christians. He arrested many of them. He watched some die. But they did not stop talking about Jesus. **Why not?**

B. Saul met Jesus

1. He was traveling on his way to arrest some believers.
2. On his way to Damascus, a bright light stopped him. It was Jesus. Saul finished his trip and arrived in Damascus, but he was blind.
3. God told Ananias, a believer, to visit Saul. **Would you be afraid?** Ananias obeyed.
4. He prayed and Saul’s eyes were healed. He prayed for Saul to be filled with God’s Holy Spirit. He was. He called him brother.

C. Saul started telling people about Jesus.

1. He had been trained by the best Old Testament teachers. He knew a lot about the Bible. *(Pretend to teach your friends about the Bible.)*
2. He could show others the descriptions of the Messiah, the promised Savior. He could prove that Jesus fit the descriptions perfectly. **(Read Acts 9:22)**
3. He was smart. He was full of God's wisdom. He was so glad to tell the true message to others.

D. Believers helped Saul.

1. Jewish leaders in Damascus did not understand the sudden change in Saul. They wanted him to keep on trying to get rid of the Christians. They even wanted to kill Saul. *(Have several plot to kill Saul in secret.)*
2. Believers helped Saul escape. **(Read Acts 9:25)** They lowered him in a basket over the city wall. He ran to Jerusalem for help.

E. Saul went to Jerusalem.

1. There were lots of believers there. The disciples were there.
2. They were still afraid of Saul. They did not let him into their group. They thought he was pretending to be a believer. **Was he?**
3. Barnabas met Saul. His name means, "son of encouragement."
4. Barnabas brought Saul to the disciples. He helped them see Saul had really changed. **(Read Acts 9:27-28)**. Saul was their brother in Christ.

F. Saul began to do what God called him to.

1. Saul began to preach in Jerusalem. He spoke boldly about Jesus. He knew the good news was true.
 2. Saul became one of the most important preachers, teachers and missionaries of all time. **(Read Acts 9:15)** Saul helped non-Jewish people (like us) learn the truth about Jesus.
 3. Many parts of the New Testament were written by Paul (his new name).
- Eg to help Saul. **What did they each do? What would have happened if they had each refused to help?**
 - **How did Barnabas help the message move?** He helped the apostles accept Saul, who then told lots and lots and lots of people about Jesus, including us! We read his words many places in the Bible.
 - **What small things can you do to show love to others? How might this help others come to know Christ?**

covered box with wrapped candies inside

Seat the class in a large circle. Begin the music. Pass the box around the circle. When the music stops, the student holding the box must take one candy out of the box and give it to another person. Begin the music for another round. Continue in this fashion until everyone in the group has received some "encouragement" (candy) from another student.

Lesson Note: God loves to see his people love each other, encourage each other and help each other. **Whom can you help or encourage in the coming week?**

ACTIVITY: Do It Together

Materials: an orange or apple for each team

Divide the class into several teams. Give each team an orange and an apple. Start play at one end of the classroom or a long hall. Instruct the group to hold hands or link arms in a circle, facing outward. The fruit must stay on the inside of the circle. Then challenge groups to move their fruit on the ground from a starting point to the finish. In a smaller classroom, use a timer and give each team a turn to move the fruit around the edges of the room. See who does it fastest. Applaud the winners.

Lesson Note: What difference can working together make? How can God help us work more easily together?

REVIEW GAME: All Peoples Game

Materials: All Peoples Game Card (*see page 8-37*)

All Peoples Game Pieces (*see page 8-36*)

Create this game to use many weeks during the quarter. Give a game card to each team or group. Copy and trim apart the slips of paper with names of nations and peoples. Place these in a bag. Give each team a chance to answer a question about the day's lesson. If they answer it correctly, they may take a slip of paper from the bag and match it with one of the continents on their card. Each team tries to be the first to place two nations or people groups on each continent space. If a nation or people is drawn, and the team already has enough of that one, they must place it back in the bag. Continue giving teams turns to answer questions until there is a winner.

Lesson Note: Jesus wants all peoples throughout the earth to have the chance to know him.
Whom can you tell about Jesus?

AFTER CLASS

- **Evaluation:** How did your lesson go? Did children understand what was presented? What will you want to discuss again in your next meeting together?
- **Preparation:** Begin to pray and think about next week's lesson and Bible story early. What else do your students need to know? How will you help them?

BIBLE STUDY FOR LESSON 23: Accept Each Other

Grow with God's Family

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- That the family of God is made of many different kinds of people, as God taught, all of whom God wants us to accept.
- To define God's kind of acceptance and discuss its importance to God and to our lives.

In this lesson students, will be invited to DO the following:

To consider the value of every different kind of person a child might meet during the week, even those who might be different from themselves

Theme Verses

Bible Story: Peter's Vision (Acts 10)

Bible Verse: God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right.
Acts 10:34b-35 NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL

Accept Each Other

INTRODUCE THE LESSON: People Like You

On the board or paper, write several large headings: people who like ice cream, people who like math, people who love soccer, people who have a large family, people with a best friend, people who like to eat vegetables, etc. Include up to ten different headings.

Give children access to the writing supplies. Allow students to write their names under any of the headings that apply to them. Notice how many children like the same things. Notice that everyone does NOT like all of the same things. **What would the world be like if everyone liked everything the same?** Today's lesson is about differences and what God wants us to do about them.

OPENING PRAYER: Invite students to bow their heads as you talk to God. Ask him to help your students understand the importance helping and loving each other today.

Materials (optional): musical instruments, music player, song words

- Enjoy singing several favorite songs together.
- Be sure to explain new words and concepts, especially for newcomers.
- Choose songs related to love, caring, encouragement, etc.

OBJECT LESSON: **Cups**

Materials: a variety of cups and glasses (old, new, chipped, polished)
a pitcher of water

Lesson Aim: To show that just as different kinds of cups and glasses are made to be filled with water, different kinds of people are all made to do good things, through Christ.

Line up the cups, mugs and glasses on a table visible to all students. Ask for volunteers to help with this experiment. The goal of the test is to see which of these containers is capable of holding water. Invite one student at a time to pour water into any empty cup or glass. Act surprised each time it works. Applaud the volunteers. **Did all the cups hold water? Are you surprised?** No. All cups and glasses were meant to hold water, no matter what their size or shape. Though they look different, they are all equally useful. They are all just as capable of holding the precious water.

These cups remind us of how God sees us. Drinking glasses were made to hold water. **What were we made for?** To know Christ, first, but also to do good works. To begin with, every person was made with the ability to have a relationship with God, just as all cups hold water. **Read Romans 12:4-5 and Romans 9:20b-21.** God also notices our differences; in fact, he is responsible for those differences. Every person was made with unique gifts and abilities to use to serve the Kingdom of God. **Will we all look the same as we serve Jesus?** No. Every person is different. Every person is needed. Sometimes we find that we don't like ourselves the way God made us. Other times, we don't like another person. God's heart is to accept everyone. He has a purpose for each one.

Lesson Note: Do you accept people who are different from you? Do you appreciate how God has made you different from others, also?

Materials: an erasable board or paper with verse written out

TEACH & EXPLAIN: **Acts 10:34b-35** (*briefly discuss this verse together*)

God does not show favoritism – Do you own a favorite pencil? Or a favorite shirt? Or a favorite toy? We have lots of favorites. We might even have a favorite friend. But not God. To him, everyone is a favorite. He loves every person the same.

but accepts men from every nation – God loves and accepts men and women from every different kind of background we can imagine. **What kinds can you think of?** African, Asian, European, dark-skinned, light-skinned, tribal, educated, scientific, farmers, etc. He

wants everyone in the whole world to know that he loves them and sent Jesus to die for their sins.

who fear him and do what is right – God accepts everyone as a person, a human being. He accepts everyone into his family who believes in Jesus as their Savior.

REPEAT: Instruct students to repeat the verse, with volunteers removing one or two words after each repetition. Do this until kids repeat the verse from memory. Choose eraser volunteers in fun ways related to today's verse:

- Someone who knows a person from another nation.
- Someone who can name a difference between themselves and a friend.

NOTE: If board or cards are not available, spend more time with review activity.

REVIEW FUN: Name That Nation

Today's game challenges the class against you. They must try to name as many nations as possible. When they hesitate, they must say the verse. Then it is your turn. Name as many nations as possible. When you hesitate, you must say the verse. Assign one student to count all the nations being mentioned, to see how many you and the class can think of together.

Lesson Note: Which nations of people does God love? All of them.

Materials: a Bible and your lesson notes
a large sheet

BIBLE REFERENCE: Acts 10

WORDS TO WATCH

centurion – soldier/captain over 100 men in the Roman army

vision – a dream that seems to have a spiritual meaning

INTRODUCTION

What is the strangest food you have ever heard of someone eating? Would you want to eat snake meat? Or rats? People around the world eat all kinds of things. Today's story is about things people eat – and much more.

A. God gave his special message to the Jews to care for.

1. Abraham received God's promise and began the nation of Israel.
2. Moses received laws from God for his people, telling them many things, including what kinds of animals they could and could not eat. For example, they could not eat reptiles or any unclean animal without a split hoof. There were lots of other rules.
3. Prophets like Isaiah told them that a Savior, a Messiah, was coming to deliver them from the nations that ruled over them.

B. Then the Church of believers was born.

1. Jews from every nation were visiting Jerusalem. When God sent his Holy Spirit to his disciples, they spoke in the languages of all the visitors. They praised God in every language.
2. Thousands of people believed in Jesus. They were all Jewish.

3. Peter, one of Jesus' closest disciples, knew God loved all people. But he thought each person had to become a Jew first, then a Christian. God was going to teach him the truth.

C. Peter had a vision. (Read Acts 10:9-14)

1. He saw all kinds of four-footed animals, reptiles and birds in a sheet lowered from heaven. *(See how many kids you can fit within the borders of the sheet. Act out the rest of the story together.)*
2. The voice told him to kill and eat one of the animals. Peter was shocked. As a Jew he would be disobeying God's laws if he ate an unclean animal. He refused to disobey the laws.
3. Then the voice said something new. **(Read Acts 10:15)** If God made it, he was not to call it unclean.
4. This happened three times. Peter didn't quite know what to think. **Did God always speak to Peter this way?**

D. Cornelius sent for Peter.

1. He was a Roman centurion in the Italian regiment, not Jewish.
2. But he feared God, he prayed, and he gave to the needy.
3. An angel came to Cornelius and told him to call for Simon Peter. This was a special vision, too.

E. Peter and Cornelius met.

1. Cornelius was told that Peter would have a message for him.
2. They each told their stories. Peter realized God was teaching him an important lesson. **(Read Acts 10:34-36)**
3. God wanted to accept all men, not just Jews.
4. Not only did God love people who ate according to these laws; he loved everyone, no matter what they ate.
5. Jesus died on the cross to save all the people of the world from their sin and invite them to have a relationship with God.

Application & Prayer (10 minutes)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **Did you know God wants you?** Inside each person is an empty place that only God can fill. It does not matter what our background, family, likes or dislikes are; he loves us and wants us.
- **When you know God loves everyone this much, how do you think God wants you to treat others who are different from you?** In the same way that he would: with love and acceptance. **Do you accept everyone?**

PRAYER: Pray for One Person

Teach: Instruct your students to think of one or two people who have been difficult for them to love recently. Invite students to find a partner and pray about these people. Ask for help to love. Ask for help to understand this person. Ask for help to forgive. Ask for God's wisdom.

Listen: Ask for any other prayer requests. Record these in a notebook.

Pray: Pray for listed requests. Close by thanking God for his wonderful love. Thank him for inviting us to be part of his family forever. Thank him for sending Jesus to be our Savior. Ask him to help us grow to love more.

Materials:

Give students turns trying to act out various cultural items for others in the class to guess: favorite local foods, different holidays, types of dress, different local animals, etc. Think about many different items and practices that people enjoy.

Lesson Note: God loves all people everywhere. He wants them all to know him as their Savior and King.

ACTIVITY: Name Game

Materials: no materials

Arrange the class into one large circle. One by one, ask students to state their first name and an item they like that begins with the first letter of their name ("My name is Mary, I like mangoes.") Continue around the circle, asking each person to repeat the names and items of all students who spoke before them. The last person will have a VERY LONG list of names and items to remember. Can he or she do it? Play again, if the game goes quickly, using middle names and a food item that begins with that letter. Enjoy.

Lesson Note: Each of us has a different name and likes different things. Jesus loves each one of us as we are.

Closing (5-10 minutes)

REVIEW GAME: All Peoples Game

Materials: All Peoples Game Card (*see page 8-37*)
All Peoples Game Pieces (*see page 8-36*)

Create this game to use many weeks during the quarter. Give a game card to each team or group. Copy and trim apart the slips of paper with names of nations and peoples. Place these in a bag. Give each team a chance to answer a question about the day's lesson. If they answer it correctly, they may take a slip of paper from the bag and match it with one of the continents on their card. Each team tries to be the first to place two nations or people groups on each continent space. If a nation or people is drawn, and the team already has enough of that one, they must place it back in the bag. Continue giving teams turns to answer questions until there is a winner.

Lesson Note: Jesus wants all peoples throughout the earth to have the chance to know him.
Whom can you tell about Jesus?

AFTER CLASS

- **Evaluation:** How did your lesson go? Did children understand what was presented? What will you want to discuss again in your next meeting together?
- **Preparation:** Begin to pray and think about next week's lesson and Bible story early. What else do your students need to know? How will you help them?

BIBLE STUDY FOR LESSON 24: Invite the World to KNOW JESUS

Grow with God's Family

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children know:

- That God wants his people to share the love and truth about Christ with others who do not know him, as Philip shared the good news with the Ethiopian. In this lesson students, will be invited to DO the following:
- To discuss and define "the good news."
- To practice sharing the good news (gospel) with other students in class. To consider, pray for and look for opportunities to share the love and truth of Jesus with one other person outside of class in the coming week

Theme Verses

Bible Story: Philip & the Ethiopian (Acts 8)

Bible Verse: Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Mark 16:15 NIV

LOOKING INTO OUR BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL

Invite the World to Know Jesus

INTRODUCE THE LESSON: Multiplication Game

Start by telling your students about people in the world. There are over six billion. About one out of three knows Jesus. Two out of three do not know him. Imagine your classroom represents the world full of people. Show students how many would know him and how many would not by dividing the class (one third know Jesus; two thirds do not). Notice that a lot of people still need Jesus.

Choose one student to become a messenger for Jesus. All that student needs to do is lead two people to know Jesus. (Ask this child to go and take two other children by the hand (from the non-believer side of the room) to the other side. Next, these two children return to the non-believer side and get two more. This pattern continues until ... the whole classroom (world) is reached.

This is how God intended his family to grow, also. If we each tell just a few people about Christ, people around the world can come to know Jesus.

OPENING PRAYER: Invite students to bow their heads as you talk to God. Ask him to help your students understand the importance of inviting people to know Jesus.

OBJECT LESSON: **Alarm Clock**

Materials: one alarm clock or timer with a loud bell

Lesson Aim: To discuss how important NOW is to God and to people who do not know Jesus yet.

Show students the alarm clock. **Can you tell me what this is? Why do people need it?** To remember to get up on time for school or work. Explain that an alarm clock reminds people that NOW is very important. It is time to do something. If a person turns the alarm clock off in the morning and goes back to sleep, that person does not let the alarm clock help him or her.

Tell your students that in some ways, the clock is like God's Spirit. His Spirit is not loud. It is not annoying, like this bell might be. But every day, God's quiet voice inside whispers that NOW is very important. Today is the day for loving a brother. Today is the day for obeying Mom or Dad. Today is the day for being friendly to a lonely child at school. Today is the day to act more like Jesus. Today is the day to tell someone about Jesus. Tomorrow might be too late.

Lesson Note: What are you doing today? Are you listening for God? Are you ready to obey him and invite others to know Jesus?

TEACH & EXPLAIN **Mark 16:15** (*Briefly discuss the verse together.*)

Go into all the world – Jesus gave this message to his disciples, those who loved him and wanted to follow him. This is any place outside your bedroom door where people live who do not know Jesus: your home, your neighborhood, your school, your sports team, your country, a country nearby, the countries across the world.

and preach the good news – **Does this mean we all have to be preachers?** No! It means to be willing to tell others about the good news and explain it to them. **Do you know what the good news is?** The news about salvation through Jesus.

to all creation – All the people of the world need to hear about Jesus, no matter where they live. Jesus loves each one. Jesus died for each one. Jesus wants to be close with each one. **Who will tell the world about him?** His disciples, including us.

REPEAT: Instruct students to repeat the verse, with volunteers removing one or two words after each repetition. Do this until kids repeat the verse from memory. Choose eraser volunteers in fun ways related to today's verse:

- Someone who has heard a friend speak a foreign language.
- Someone who gave a person a message last week.

NOTE: If board or cards are not available, spend more time with review activity.

REVIEW FUN: Into All the World

Divide the class into two or three groups of 5-8 students each. Give each team a handful of coins and ask them to stand at least ten feet away from the world map. One at a time, teams take turns tossing a coin toward the map. Each time a student hits a country that does not already have a coin, their team needs to say the verse. Continue until coins have been used up. **Was all the world reached?**

Lesson Note: Why do Christians go to other countries to tell the good news? Because Jesus told them to.

Materials: a Bible and your lesson notes

BIBLE REFERENCE: Acts 8

WORDS TO WATCH

eunuch – an unmarried royal servant man

Ethiopia – an area in north Africa

baptize – to immerse a believer under water as a sign of their new life

INTRODUCTION

Ask for a student volunteer. Enjoy allowing him or her to think about how to prepare for a race.

What would you put on your feet? What clothing would you wear? Would you need sunglasses? In addition to the right clothing, what else does an athlete need to compete well?

Strong muscles, water, food energy, etc. (*Thank your volunteer.*) In today's true story from the Bible, Philip needed something special to be ready for the job God had for him. **Do you need it?**

Do you have it?

A. Philip worked hard telling people about Jesus.

1. He was one of the twelve disciples, now called apostles.
2. The Holy Spirit helped him preach, work, travel, perform miracles, heal people, etc. It was incredible.
3. Every day, he was ready to obey God. His heart was WILLING. He knew GOD'S WORD. God's HOLY SPIRIT was with him.
4. One day, God told him to walk along a desert road. He was all alone. **What did God want him to do out in the desert?**

B. The Ethiopian was seeking truth.

1. An Ethiopian eunuch (unmarried royal servant man) was riding in his chariot. He had been to Jerusalem to worship at the temple.
2. He wanted to know more about God. He knew he needed something in his life. But he didn't understand what.
3. He was reading a scroll, trying to find some answers, but he did not understand what the Bible was all about.
4. Most people did not have their own scrolls, like we have easy access to Bibles. Copies of the Old Testament were mostly kept in synagogues or the temple. This man was very fortunate. Maybe his rich queen enabled him to afford the scroll.

C. Suddenly, he met Philip.

1. Philip ran up alongside the chariot and asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?"
2. **How did Philip know the man needed help? How did Philip find the man in the desert?** God's Holy Spirit led Philip there.
3. The Ethiopian read something from the book of Isaiah. It was about Jesus. (**Read Acts 8:32-35**)
4. Philip knew God's Word. He began to teach the man about Jesus. He told him of Jesus' death and sacrifice for our sins.

5. The man wanted Jesus.

D. They came to an area with water.

1. The Ethiopian asked if he could be baptized NOW. He was very serious about following Jesus, starting that day. **(Read Acts 8:36-38)**
2. The eunuch ordered the chariot to stop. They went into the water. Philip baptized him (immersed him under water). This showed he was serious about living a new life for Jesus.
3. Then Philip disappeared. God's Spirit took him to another place. There he also preached the gospel. He was ready. His heart was WILLING. He knew GOD'S WORD. God's HOLY SPIRIT was with him at all times, helping him.